America as Eve-ill Empire
and the Evocation of Authenticity Elsewhere

Global emergence of transcendental meaning in a world of monopolar materialism

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Introduction

The outlines of an agenda on the part of key groups associated with the US government is becoming apparent beneath the declared strategies of "war against terrorism" and "regime change in Iraq". Features of this undeclared strategy appear to include taking over control of the world and its resources in a variety of ways.

Given that the attack against Iraq is likely to go ahead at the time of writing, and that other countries will then be similarly attacked or threatened, this article explores the unforeseen advantages of the resulting situation -- irrespective of whether it is to be regretted from many current perspectives.

The argument focuses on the manner in which engaging in the war on Iraq will make clear worldwide the distinction between:

- the principles driving the American accumulation of resources at the expense of the remainder of the world and
- the authenticity engendered elsewhere, hitherto obscured by the misleading propaganda regarding the reality of democratic values associated with the American Way of Life (AWOL)

The argument combines the insight of general systems theory regarding a degree of isomorphism between systems of every level (from cell to galaxy) with insights from the relevance of metaphor to governance [more]. Within this framework, the argument compares the dynamics and attributes of the AWOL to those of an astrophysical black hole. It celebrates the way in which these dynamics will function to drain from the global system the preoccupation with accumulation of material resources -- so as to enhance transcendental meaning and authenticity worldwide. Comments are made on the degree of symmetry and synchronicity associated with the passage of a very high mass astronomical object (dangerously close to the Earth in March 2003) with the level of expectant alert created by the attack on Iraq and the "war against terrorism".

Whilst Bush may indeed be sensitive to the increasingly dissolute nature of America, there is a curious irony to the possibility -- long stressed by feminists -- that the core problem for America is that it is becoming what might be appropriately termed an "Eve-ill Empire". The unilateral action against Iraq could be encapsulated in the phrase: "Eve is ill in the American Empire and Adam goes off to war". Not only has the feminine perspective been repressed, as long-analyzed by feminists, but through that repression "Eve" has become "ill" -- as
Outline of the imperial agenda: some indications

Egon Matzner, author of Monopoly World Order (2000) states that:

The obvious fact of US global hegemony has taken quite some time to enter public awareness. It is frequently described now, sometimes quite critically, sometimes celebrated as a great blessing to the world - e.g. in Thomas L. Friedman's The Lexus and the Olive Tree. Understanding Globalisation (1999). Even the notion of an American Empire has come into use, the term often being used in a complacent manner. The most spectacular acknowledgement of US dominance was presented by the US historian Paul Kennedy. Until recently the prophet of American decline, he celebrated the one remaining global superpower with a brilliant essay in the London Financial Times. Its telling title is "The Eagle has landed" (Kennedy, 2002). [more]

The Washington-based Project for the New American Century (PNAC) is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to a few fundamental propositions: that American leadership is good both for America and for the world; that such leadership requires military strength, diplomatic energy and commitment to moral principle; and that too few political leaders today are making the case for global leadership. It is committed to promoting American world leadership and notably to the control of international cyberspace. The philosophical underpinnings of these neo-conservatives are acknowledged to be the writings of Machiavelli, Hobbes and Edmund Burke - heralding in Robert Kaplan's terms The Return of Ancient Times (2000).

PNAC produced Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategies, Forces And Resources For A New Century in September 2000. It supports a 'blueprint for maintaining global US pre-eminence, precluding the rise of a great power rival, and shaping the international security order in line with American principles and interests'. This 'American grand strategy' must be advanced for 'as far into the future as possible'.

When Bush assumed the Presidency, the men who created and nurtured the imperial dreams of PNAC became the men who run the Pentagon, the Defense Department and the White House. Vice President Dick Cheney is a founding member of PNAC, along with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Defense Policy Board chairman Richard Perle. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz is the ideological father of the group. It has been argued that the desire for these freshly empowered PNAC men to extend American hegemony by force of arms across the globe has been there since day one of the Bush administration. [more; more; more; more]

For, Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP, "father of the House of Commons" and one of the leading rebel voices against war with Iraq, said:

This is a blueprint for US world domination -- a new world order of their making. These are the thought processes of fantasist Americans who want to control the world. I am appalled that a British Labour Prime Minister should have got into bed with a crew which has this moral standing. [more]

For Jim Garrison, President of the California-based State of the World Forum, and author of America as Empire:

If 9/11 reframed everything within the context of national security and the war on terrorism, the invasion of Iraq will recontextualize the world yet again within the new reality of overwhelming U.S. power in the world. The U.S. is choosing to do this by seizing the most strategic point in the Middle East, possibly in the entire world. .... For the United States to take control of this region at America's moment of power is profound. It will be seizing the most sacred and fought over soil in the history of the world.

A strong U.S. presence along the Tigris-Euphrates will make starkly clear that history has moved from an era of multipolarity, where there is a balance of power between nations, to a unipolar world, in which the United States holds global dominion. The consequences of this will be enormous and will raise many questions, one of the most profound of which is how the U.S. intends to act in the new unipolar world. [more]

The title of this paper was partly inspired by Jim Garrison's : America as Empire. Curiously, given his presidency of the State of the World Forum, the relationship between the title "State of the World" and "America as Empire" has not been explored. The first could be considered a worrying precursor of the second in the minds of some. Is America indeed to be considered to be the State of the World -- extending "America" to encompass the World?

As a conclusion to an analysis of the internal woes of the USA, Norman Mailer (Only in America, 2003) notes that from Bush's perspective:

He also fears that the country is rapidly growing more dissolute, and the only solution may be to strive for World Empire. Behind the whole push to go to war with Iraq is the desire to have a huge military presence in the Near East as a stepping stone to taking over the rest of the world. That is a big statement, but I can offer this much immediately: At the root of flag conservativism is not madness, but an undisclosed logic. While I am hardly in accord, it is, nonetheless, logical if you accept its premises. From a militant Christian point of view, America is close to rotten....Flag conservatives truly believe America is not only fit to run the world but that it must. Without a commitment to Empire, the country will go down the drain. This, I would opine, is the prime subtext beneath the Iraqi project...

Mailer points to the most thorough explanation, of this as yet unadmitted campaign toward Empire, by Jay Bookman (The Atlanta
This war, should it come, is intended to mark the official emergence of the United States as a full-fledged global empire, seizing sole responsibility and authority as planetary policeman. It would be the culmination of a plan 10 years or more in the making, carried out by those who believe the United States must seize the opportunity for global domination, even if it means becoming the "American imperialists" that our enemies always claimed we were.

Many of the arguments about, and against, American hegemony are made via links on the website of Americans against World Empire ("a Conservative/Libertarian coalition for peace, opposed to the bombing and hypocrisy which brings retaliation from enemies that we ourselves create, turning our free Republic into a military empire"). They notably provide information on the Armageddon Lobby in the US political system that is "trying to hurry up God".

Robert Cooper is a senior UK civil servant, currently Director General for External Relations and Politico-Military Affairs (Secretariat General of the EU Council). In his private capacity, Robert Cooper (Re-ordering the world: the long-term implications of 11 September. 2002) elaborated on the need for a "new imperialism" in the aftermath of the September 11 terror attacks, in a compilation published by the Foreign Policy Centre, with a foreword by Prime Minister Tony Blair [comment; text]. He argues that:

"What is needed is a new kind of imperialism, one acceptable in a world of human rights and cosmopolitan values. We can already discern its outline: an imperialism which, like all imperialism, aims to bring order and organisation but which rests today on voluntary principle."

According to Cooper, it could take two forms. First, there is the 'voluntary imperialism of the global economy'. This would entail "failed" or "failing" nations being helped into the global economy in return for which they "open themselves up to the interference of international organisations and foreign states". The second form, is the "imperialism of neighbours", whereby as the price for keeping security in their own backyards, the more powerful nations basically take over neighbouring countries, again voluntarily (as in the case of the UN protectorates in Bosnia and Kosovo where much of the aid, military hardware and personnel, and economic restructuring are the responsibility of the EU). As one reviewer writes "Every statement Cooper makes is a barely concealed apologia for the forcible subordination of much of the world's people to the dominant powers" [more] One may rightly ask how much credibility is to be given in a world of spin to the notion of "human rights and cosmopolitan values" and "voluntary principle". [more]

Gwyn Prins (The Heart of War) of the London School of Economics states bluntly (Goodbye to the old world):

But Iraq is simply a subplot within the play, whose major theme is the definitive end of the past cold war interregnum and the opening of the American imperial moment. We are at the passing of the age of Middle Earth. All the agents and the institutions of that age will be profoundly affected...For make no mistake, the ships of elves and hobbits are sailing from the grey haven as the age of Middle Earth passes." (Guardian, 15 March 2003)

It could be argued that the hegemonic project is but a momentary aberration of particular political tendency within the USA. The tragedy for Americans who do not support this view is that their president was elected according to their principles of the democracy that they are seeking to export to others globe -- but seemingly without the provision of the Second Amendment to the US Constitution, considered so vital to citizen's rights in a democracy (and so effectively explored in Michael Moore's documentary Bowling for Columbine). Even though they may deplore that project, they are complicit in it according to those principles. What American would protest the declaration of President Bush Sr that the "American Way of Life is not negotiable" or his declaration that "I will never apologize for the United States. I don't care what the facts are."?

The neo-conservatives are quite open about the common cultural and ethnic background they share, despite accusations of "dual loyalty". Given their geopolitical biases, David P Ryan (Financial Times, 26 May 2003), himself a conservative, recalls the phrase in George Washington's Farewell Address (1796):

So likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation), facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding, with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

This hegemony is now being extended by the Bush Administration in the form of military control of what it terms "near space," thereby laying claim to the area of the Solar System that lies between the Earth and the Moon's orbit. "A key objective is not only to ensure U.S. ability to exploit space for military purposes, but also as required to deny an adversary's ability to do so," is how the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review (2001) explained the strategy (see Joel Bleifuss. Rods from God. 2003)
Tony Blair, as handmaiden for the new American strategy, has vigorously promoted the need for the rest of the world to come to terms with this new reality of the world dominated by a single superpower preoccupied with promoting its own way of life. The question is what this new reality may mean for social processes around the world.

Martin Woolacott. Collaboration and coercion is building this new Rome (archived under the title: Something is being born, but let's not call it empire, Guardian, 20 June 2003) however concludes: "Free states may occasionally use the methods of empire to restore other free states. But let us not call this empire, lest it become one."

**Implications for the majority of the world**

A sense of how the imperial regime might be experienced can be gained by revisiting any of the following and considering how they might be interwoven under the new world order:

- democratic imperialism of classical Athens: the term "democratic imperialism" is already explicitly used to name the foreseen world order;
- imperialism of classical Rome: this is the most obvious model, from architecture to Senate, and including the use of "circuses" to distract the masses and punish dissenters (the modern counterparts to ancient Christians);
- enlightened slavery as claimed to have been practiced in the US Confederacy (or in the classical period); here the emphasis is on the care accorded to slaves and assertions of their interest in remaining bonded and unfree
- British Empire: this is the classical relationship from which colonial countries dissociated themselves (as extensively documented and facilitated by the UN during the process);
- fascist regime as implemented and envisaged in Nazi Germany ("Das tausendjährige Reich")
- totalitarian regimes of the Soviet bloc and other Communist countries: exemplified by the use of surveillance, gulag systems and arbitrary executions;
- apartheid regime: this exemplified a separation between the races and classes of citizenship (increasingly echoed in gated communities, and policies with regard to international freedom of movement and "asylum seeking);
- system of "robber barons" (exemplified by the situation in the USA in 1900, but now recognized as re-emergent with the corporate scandals of 2002);
- incarceration policy: this approach is increasingly used as a one-step response to the failure of modern social system policy, notably in the USA.

The challenging question is which features of these regimes would be retained and which excluded from the new vision of an imperial vision Pax Americana -- recognizing that some promoting this agenda might aspire to more repressive regimes and others to more enlightened variants. Spin would of course be the prime device through which to present any degree of repression and brutality as an enlightened reflection of the highest values of civilization: "democracy", "human rights", "peace", etc

**Striking, if not blatant, features of the new world order are already becoming evident as a result of new legislation purportedly in response to "terrorism". These features include:**

- surveillance of telephone communications, e-mail and web usage, post, financial transactions (as exemplified by Echelon tracking, the bugging of UN and EU delegate offices, and voluntary reporting under the US Terrorism Information and Prevention System (TIPS), etc);
- political campaign funding abuses, vote buying and failure of democratic consultation processes (as exemplified in the UN Security Council, in the formation under duress of a Coalition of the Willing, and in government assertions that public opinion is irrelevant or misguided);
- assassination and hit/death squads (as exemplified by policies of the US, UK and Israel, and of Latin American dictatorships);
- non-physical intimidation with respect to decision-making (as exemplified by threats on access to aid on country voting in intergovernmental arenas, or the threats of parliamentary "whips" to democratic representatives if they fail to follow the party line);
- retribution for failure of support (as exemplified by treatment of countries opposing US foreign policy, notably post-Iraq);
- physical intimidation (as exemplified by police brutality, cases of "dirty tricks" by major corporations, and the justifications for use of torture, even when it proves fatal);
- pitilessness (as exemplified by withholding aid to refugees in camps and to those suffering of AIDS in Africa);
- broken promises of relief or compensation (as exemplified by the pattern of promising reconstruction and nation-building funds and then failing to make them available, notably as in Afghanistan or for the 15,000 killed in Union Carbide's Bhopal disaster in 1984);
- extensive use of propaganda and spin (as exemplified by news management in both peace and war time, facilitated by unconstrained consolidation of media empires);
- harassment of dissidents (as exemplified by treatment of academics critical of government policy in the US);
- transformation of dialogue into tokenism, targetting, threats, and even torture, to ensure conformity;
- appropriation of resources (as exemplified by genetic patenting initiatives, aggressive acquisition of foreign cultural artefacts, or the appropriation of Middle East oil resources);
- appropriation of international institutions (as exemplified in the case of the Bretton Woods institutions and the UN itself, and especially prefigured by the pattern in the early days of those bodies);
- destabilizing and then replacing national currencies with the American dollar (exemplified by the case of countries extending from the Mediterranean to China's Western border under the US Silk Road Strategy [more]);
- appropriation of discourse (as exemplified by imposition of use of English and associated cultural patterns and assumptions);
- imposition of legal obligations (as exemplified by requirements on countries to reciprocate unilateral legal provisions of the US
reviewing these events Orville R Weyrich Jr (through the Law of Empowerment, which provided a form of martial Security); 24 Mar 1933 the Enabling Law was passed. Through fire occurred on 27 Feb 1933; to enact “Enabling

terrorists -- and condemned by Bush as unacceptable to civilization. Necessary to a downhill skier. Curiously this

Other commentators have spoken of Bush’s Middle East initiative as an act of naked power. Others have noted how the policy is free of any of the traditional constraints of human rights or environmental concern. The ethical constraints might be compared with those necessary to a downhill skier. Curiously this realpolitik, and its rationalization, bears a strong resemblance to the logic associated with terrorists -- and condemned by Bush as unacceptable to civilization.

It is therefore important to be able to distinguish the steps taken after 9/11 from those whereby the Ermächtigungsgesetz (also known as "Enabling Law", "Law of Empowerment", or "Law for Terminating the Suffering of People and Nation") authorized the Nazi government to enact laws without recourse to the parliament or to the president. Hitler was appointed chancellor on 30 Jan 1933; the Reichstag fire occurred on 27 Feb 1933; civil liberties were suspended on 28 Feb 1933, with a supplemental decree creating the SS (Special Security); 24 Mar 1933 the Enabling Law was passed. Through this process Hitler was able to eliminate constitutional civil rights "for the protection of the German people" and, after the burning of the Reichstag "for the protection of the German state and people", resulting in a form of martial law. The elections of 5 Mar 1933 effectively allowed Parliament to be immediately cut out of the political process through the Law of Empowerment, which provided for the right of the executive to pass law, in fact making it the legislative as well. In reviewing these events Orville R Weyrich Jr (Reichstag Fire), makes the points:

While it is not clear whether the Nazis intentionally set the Reichstag fire in order to create a national crisis, or whether the Nazis simply were opportunistic, the event was used as justification for a sharp curtailment in constitutionally guaranteed civil liberties. The Nazis took advantage of the additional Federal police powers to suppress opponents. It is clear that in other situations, the Nazis did use the tactic of creating a "law and order" crisis so that they could provide a solution which further eroded civil liberties and entrenched their power.
The right-wing Nazis and the left-wing communists were cut from the same cloth -- the point is not that the far right destroyed civil rights. Rather, the point is that a democracy can be destroyed by creating a law-and-order crisis and offering as a 'solution' the abdication of civil liberties and state's rights to a powerful but unaccountable central authority. [more]

The possibility that the crisis of 9/11 might have been used by some to similar ends has been explored, notably by Harvey Wasserman (Bush's 9/11 Reichstag Fire, 2002), by Thom Hartmann (When Democracy Failed: the warnings of history, 2003), and by Bill Molson (Operation Northwoods And The Reichstag Fire, 2002). Operation Northwoods was a proposal by the US Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1962 to engage in activities such as assassination, hijacking airplanes, blowing up ships, orchestrating violent terrorism in cities of the USA -- in order to pin the blame on opponents. In the case of Cuba, for which it was initially conceived, this would whip up necessary public support for a full-scale invasion, which the military believed was necessary (see James Bamford. Body of Secrets) [more]. There are however eerie parallels in the pattern of development in the USA of the Patriot Act of 2001, the Homeland Security Act, a Total Information Awareness (TIA) program, Terrorism Information and Prevention System (TIPS), the Domestic Security Enhancement Act ("Patriot II"), and the Office of Strategic Influence (OSI) (now abandoned) -- all of which constrain civil liberties in highly controversial ways, and create new kinds of security apparatus. Finally, for the first time, the USA goes to war after Congress abdicated its responsibility as the sole branch of government holding the power to unleash the full might of the USA.

Hazel Henderson, in a syndicated editorial for InterPress Service (The New Bi-polar World, March 2003), points out:

The corporate takeover in the USA and its culture of "winner-take-all", revealed following the collapse of Enron, has been the subject of endless press coverage, public hearings, lawsuits and public outrage.... The conglomeration of mass media in giant corporations, which is accelerating under Republican control of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), chaired by free-marketeer Michael Powell, son of Secretary of State Colin Powell.... The Center for Public Integrity broke the story of widespread conflicts of interest and war profiteering within the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board (DPB). This led Richard Perle, longtime Bush advisor and "hawk" to resign as its chair. DPB's 30 members who advise Donald Rumsfeld include nine with ties to companies that have won over $76 billion in defense contracts in 2001 and 2002... Other DPB members with ties to Pentagon contractors include Rear Admiral David Jeremiah, Rear Admiral Ronald Fogleman; former CIA Director James Woolsey, now a V.P. of Booz Allen Hamilton; former defense secretaries Harold Brown and James Sikesinger and four registered lobbyists. These include Chris Williams, former aide to Rumsfeld and Senator Trent Lott, who now lobbies for Johnston and Associates whose clients include Lockheed Martin, Northrup Grumman, TRW and Boeing. Other DPB members are Henry Kissinger, Newt Gingrich, Dan Quayle, former US Vice President and other well-known conservatives. No wonder the US public is confused, divided and misinformed.

**Monopolar system of world order**

Reference was made above to recognition of US global hegemony as articulated by Egon Matzner (Monopolar World Order). Prior to the collapse of the Soviet bloc the world order tended to be perceived as "bipolar" -- despite the existence of the Non-aligned Movement. The ideologues of the new America imperium now speak of a "monopolar" world -- again despite the continuing existence of the Non-aligned Movement. Since there is but one superpower, such logic dictates the need to think in terms of a monopolar system.

The concept "monopolar" is however highly problematic to the extent that as a metaphor it derives from electromagnetism and the hypothesized existence of "monopoles". There are two difficulties with this use of the metaphor:

- Magnetic monopoles have never been observed experimentally. The most sensitive experiments obtain negative results. [more]
- If they did exist, it is probable that their existence would be highly unstable in relation to their environment.

By analogy with the Earth's magnetic field, there are necessarily two "poles" usually designated "north" and "south". Such terms are of course also used to distinguish contrasting geopolitical poles of the world -- with the USA as a centre of the "North" and the Non-aligned Movement as a focus of the "South". The annual World Economic Forum (Davos) might be considered the organizational focus of the "North", whereas the newer World Social Forum (Porto Alegre) might be considered an "organizational" focus of the "South".

Physicists have searched extensively for magnetic monopoles better to understand how they might function. The fact that they have not yet been detected does not mean that they cannot exist. According to Monopole FAQ their existence improves the symmetry of Maxwell's basic equations for electromagnetism and is consistent with quantum mechanics and with quantum field theories.

In some theories, namely Grand Unified Theories (GUTs), they are not only "okay" they are required. 'tHooft and Polykov both showed (using lots of math and group theory) that any simple theory that was "broken" into everyday EM (something all GUTs do) has magnetic monopoles. In terms of particle physics these monopoles have lots of interesting properties. First of all, they are big. REAL big! Depending on the theory, their mass is around $10^{23}$ GeV or so. This is about the same mass as an amoeba, or put best by Preskill, the energy of a charging rhinoceros. They are so big that they could only be produced during the Big Bang.

The question is whether the complete absence of normal circumstances signals the probability of inherent instabilities in any system in which a monopole emerged -- including socio-political systems. But, most interesting, is the indication that in electrodynamics magnetic monopoles can only exist in relation to singularities -- of which black holes are a prime manifestation in astrophysics. This focuses the question on whether in metaphysical terms the new American world order can usefully be associated with what amounts to a socio-political -- and possibly psych-spiritual -- "black hole". Should the ideology underlying and driving the new American empire be understood in terms of a form analogous to a Grand Unified Theory?
The Black Hole metaphor and the American Way of Life (AWOL)

Characteristics of black holes relevant to their significance as a societal metaphor include (see: Matt McIrvin, FAQs on Black Holes; Ted Bann, Black Holes FAQ; Cole Miller, Black Holes and Neutron Stars) are noted in the table below. The metaphor was explored by Peter Russell (The White Hole in Time, 1992) to reconcile understandings of future human evolution and the "meaning of now" -- although significant his focus was on the contrasting metaphor of "white" holes. The black hole metaphor is presented here as being more consistent with the dynamics of the USA within the world system -- namely as a semantic black hole.

As explicitly affirmed by George Bush Sr (Earth Summit, 1992): "The American Way of Life is not negotiable". This way of life must therefore be sustained by resources continually drawn from the surrounding system -- irrespective of whether this is thereby endangered. The notion within such dynamics of any endangerment elsewhere is in fact then meaningless. The principal resource acknowledged as vital to sustaining this way of life is oil. However other primary commodities are similarly drawn in from "developing countries". The "black hole" also serves as a prime attractor for individuals -- as associated with the "brain drain" process from other countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Some similarities between material and societal black-hole dynamics (tentative)</th>
<th>Astrophysical black hole</th>
<th>Societal black hole (AWOL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simplest objects in the universe having only 3 characteristics: mass; spin rate (angular momentum), and electric charge</td>
<td>Simplest form of social organization having only 3 characteristics: &quot;material resources&quot;; &quot;spin&quot; (capacity to &quot;play the angles&quot;); &quot;binary&quot; orientation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A region of space that has so much mass concentrated in it that there is no way for a nearby object to escape its gravitational pull</td>
<td>The pattern of resource concentration in the monopolar system supporting the AWOL and its function as an attractor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependence on mass concentration pulled in from neighbouring regions of space</td>
<td>Dependence on resource concentration as in the monopolar system supporting the AWOL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravitational attractor</td>
<td>Societal attractor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulation of matter</td>
<td>Accumulation of resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration of mass such that there is no way for a nearby object to acquire the escape velocity to escape its gravitational pull</td>
<td>Concentration of society making it impossible for people to escape its attractive power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe distortion of space and time; strange properties because the usual rules of geometry no longer apply</td>
<td>Severe distortion of conceptual frameworks and normal rules of society (legality, morality, ethics, boundaries) notably regarding property and the role of time</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Event horizon, namely a spherical boundary that can be crossed to enter but cannot be crossed to exit; known as the Schwarzschild radius; it is the radius below which gravitational attraction between the particles of a body must cause it to undergo irreversible gravitational collapse.</td>
<td>Event horizon that makes it impossible to commit to any alternative attractor, once the line has been crossed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Invisibility due to the fact that no light can exit across the event horizon</td>
<td>A form of invisibility in that it is impossible to communicate its nature to people before they are already captured by it; information cannot be communicated out of it because things change so rapidly within it; the invisibility may be described in terms of processes of denial (as with the institutionalized inability within the USA to recognize its support of state terrorism in Nicaragua)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement within the black hole inexorably closer to the singularity at its centre which cannot be avoided -- due to reversal of the roles of time and radius</td>
<td>Accelerating movement to accumulate, consume and emulate that draws people into a tunnel logic</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Singularity at the centre having unknown properties</td>
<td>Ultimate singular transformation as a process of rapture</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Stripping morganic atomic and sub-atomic bonds</td>
<td>Stripping organic and psychosocial bonds</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Usually formed in the final stage of the evolution of an extremely massive star collapsing (via a high density neutron star) in a supernova; density of a neutron star is one hundred trillion times the density of water.</td>
<td>Possibly formed by the process of collapse of an extremely massive social system such as a superpower, notably through the collapse of its logical framework and value system</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any amount of mass can in principle be made to form a black hole if it can be compressed to a high enough density, as with the Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC)</td>
<td>Types of &quot;black hole&quot; have been described in relation to extreme negativity; it is also possible that one could be created as a result of the collision of heavy egos -- &quot;Relativistic Heavy Ego Collider&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial weightlessness in falling in</td>
<td>Initial experience of freedom on entering the AWOL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subsequent tidal forces (caused by the difference in gravitational force between two points) pulling differentially to tear any mass apart. This difference may be greatly enhanced over smaller and smaller distances causing the famed spaghettification effect on an object closing in on the black holes event horizon, such that an object approaching a black hole is stretched lengthwise and compressed widthwise.</td>
<td>Subsequent psychosocial forces pulling differentially to break any psychosocial bonds</td>
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</table>

Ironically one of the prime features of the dynamics associated with a singularity, like a black hole, is the manner in which "mass" is subjected to enormous forces and is effectively distorted and "destroyed" -- through action of compressive forces. The matter that forms a black hole is crushed out of existence; a black hole represents matter that leaves only its gravity behind. A monopole could then indeed be described as a "weapon of mass destruction" -- being dependent on such destruction for its survival.
In general systems terms, there is a case for exploring the isomorphism between the evolution of stars -- as portrayed by the Hertzsprung-Russell diagram in terms of a star's luminosity vs. its temperature [more; more; more] -- and the evolution of civilizations. Ironically the HR diagram has been extensively used as a basis for predicting extraterrestrial life [more; more], but not apparently for exploring how hegemonic civilizations collapse and engender "black holes".

The monopole metaphor also draws attention to the socio-political dynamics of monopoly -- notably of economic form. The monopolistic system reinforces the engendering of economic monopolies through the progressive consolidation of independent undertakings. Indeed it might be argued that it is the pressures of the "black hole" dynamics which inexorably "crush" social entities forcing them into consolidated form in a manner echoed by the "crushing" of matter as it enters a black hole.

A major characteristic of a black hole is the degree to which its dynamics distort the movement of light effectively causing the black hole to be invisible except by contrast with its surroundings. Much has been made of the existence of an event horizon that constrains vision from within the dynamics of the black hole. Any event inside the event horizon can never be communicated to the universe. This phenomenon might prove to be a useful way of exploring the degree of denial within the AWOL, distorting facts known elsewhere (notably with respect to state-supported terrorism) so as to blame the victim or opponent. From within the AWOL it will never be possible to accept any proof regarding the numbers slaughtered by AWOL initiatives -- notably in the light of the levels of proof required of Iraq in relation to weapons of mass destruction. But, conversely, the AWOL will never be able to prove that it has not covered-up the slaughter of thousands or planted evidence to legitimate its logic.

Another major characteristic of a black hole is the speed of movement associated with its dynamics -- with which the rapid pace of the American Way of Life is consistent. Typically change is perceived as increasingly mechanical or inorganic -- in contrast with the kinds of change characteristic of organic systems, ecosystems and human learning systems which "take time" to grow. In addition to the speed is the acceleration within a black hole. Again the acceleration of the American Way of Life has been the subject of extensive comment (James Gleick, Faster: the acceleration of just about everything, 1999; Jeremy Rifkin, Time Wars: The Primary Conflict in Human History, 1989).

There is also a recognition, notably tracked by the Singularity Watch of the Institute for Accelerating Change, that the ever-increasing rate of technological change in our local environment will undergo a "singularity," becoming effectively instantaneous from the perspective of current biological humanity. It has been postulated that events after this point must also be "future-incomprehensible" to existing humanity.

Peter Russell (The Whitehole in Time, revised as Waking Up in Time: finding inner peace in times of accelerating change ) has explored the doubling effect of such acceleration in social systems in terms of black hole dynamics and has commented on Terence McKenna's computation of such a point of total collapse at 21 December 2012 [more].

Of special interest is the singularity that is the centre of black hole dynamics. In the psycho-social terms relevant to the Armageddon Lobby mentioned earlier as "trying to hurry up God", notably the Christian right associated with the PNAC initiative, this singularity may be best understood in terms of Armageddon and the biblically prophesied "rapture" on which there are many web resources [more; more; more]. As with a black hole singularity, the evangelical perspective holds that the world is being driven inexorably towards the moment of rapture. The term "rapture" does not appear in the scriptures. There are however references to the manner in which people will be caught up and raised up -- expressions that could well be associated with an analogue to the strange physics at the centre of a black hole -- the enraptured become enveloped and entrapped. Access to this process is restricted in biblical prophecy to a limited group of people -- namely the evangelical Christians with which George Bush is explicitly associated and by which he is notably supported [more; more].

Meaninglessness and insignificance engendered by AWOL

**Accumulation of material:** A striking feature of the monopolar system, in the light of the black hole metaphor, is the way in which it is primarily (if not solely) an attractor for mass and any mass-related properties. It is the mass associated with light that distorts the movement of light near a black hole. In a social system, this effect on mass might be usefully understood in terms of materialism, or mass as property.

As frequently remarked, the current socio-political system is fundamentally sustained by an economic system based on "greed" -- celebrated as such on Wall Street with the slogan "greed is good". The acquisitive tendency of greed is very similar to the acquisitive tendency of a black hole for any material. A monopolar system might well be understood as a dynamic "fortress America" which "star wars" technology is designed to protect in order to preserve the integrity of the pole.

**Accumulation of carriers of non-material significance:** In addition to material "resources", the "black hole" dynamics also endeavour to appropriate other material that is a carrier of non-material significance. Typically The pattern of acquisition includes:

- the systematic deprivation of societies of their cultural artefacts -- as evident in aggressive museum acquisition policies (sacred objects, ancestral bones, etc), strikingly evident following the war against Iraq;
- physical occupation of culturally significant locations -- as with the displacement of American Indians from lands sacred to them.
- may also include recordings of information obtained through the electronic surveillance of the Echelon system;
- "acquisition policies" of corporations may also be understood in this way -- destroying the significance of local corporations through their integration into control systems centered elsewhere.

The pattern is echoed in the American effort to acquire control of the cradle of human civilization in the Tigris/Euphrates basin of Iraq through acquisition or destruction (as with the burning of the Baghdad library). All these processes are part of the dynamics of control of tangibles by the monopolar American system in a desperate effort to control significance.

**Separator function:** The consequence of this focus on attraction of material is the operation of the monopolar dynamics as a
This separator function is exemplified by "important" museum collections of cultural artifacts whose meaning derives from their use in the human community contexts such use helps sustain -- contexts from which they have been removed, possibly as part of their destruction. The same may be said of museum collections of species (insects, etc) designed to be representative -- when in fact the significance of the species lies to a large degree in the dynamics of its relations to other species in an ecosystem, not in its morphology. The same is seen in assuming that a species incarcerated in a zoo is representative of the species in the wild -- other than in terms of morphology and physiology -- exemplified by the case of the lead stallion of a herd of wild horses. The "importance" of the collection in a monopolar context lies in the material rewards it brings to the collecting institution and those associated with it.

**Nature of acquisitive tendency:** Such examples point to the nature of the acquisitive tendency in monopolar dynamics -- where the focus is on tangibles because possessing them is believed to capture and hold the significance associated with them. This belief has been frequently explored in literature, notably in cases such as:

- the spirit of freedom of slaves, especially in the Americas, as sustained by their music, and their capacity to develop jazz (in contrast to the unmemorable quality of music developed by their captors)
- the spirit of freedom in a woman, whatever steps undertaken by a man to possess her
- widely publicized cases of animals escaping the slaughterhouse at the last minute through unusual determination
- extraordinary focus on the "authenticated original" in the collection of books, art and music when the significance lies not in the material support so acquired but in the significance of what is articulated therein, often requiring its performance
- extraordinary focus on acquiring a signature -- even when extensive torture is used to obtain it -- as an indication of genuine assent
- emphasis on labelling as a definition of contents when a label may be applied to products whose quality no longer corresponds to that which the label is assumed to define (for example in the case of wine)

**Commodified celebration of values:** These examples point to the vain attempts in monopolar systems to celebrate values that only remain on offer as ersatz commodified experiences that are merely reminders of the significance of genuine experiences. This is notably evident in theme restaurants and parks (exemplified by the plastic significance of Las Vegas) constructed in imitation of environments that are no longer accessible. Although values such as honour, taste, respect, democracy, courage, etc are celebrated in word and in ritual -- their manifestation is progressively demeaned and increasingly unauthentic. However it is the AWOL attractor that is demeaned in its efforts to demean others -- for it accumulates only that with which meaning has been associated. This is stated most succinctly in the *Tao Te Ching*.

Nobel Prize laureate, Günter Grass (*Preemptive war: the moral decline of a superpower, IHT, 11 April 2003*) records a tragic moment in history as Iraq is bombed:

> Disturbed and powerless, but also filled with anger, we are witnessing the moral decline of the world's only superpower, burdened by the knowledge that only one consequence of this organized madness is certain: Motivation for more terrorism is being provided, for more violence and counterviolence....It is President Bush and his government that are diminishing democratic values, bringing sure disaster to their own country, ignoring the United Nations, and that are now terrifying the world with a war in violation of international law.

**Commodified authenticity:** The assumption that significance can be acquired, through purchase of the material that may be associated with carrying it, tends to become increasingly false in the black hole dynamics. Authenticity becomes increasingly rare, except in its commodified version under the label "authentic". This tendency is aggravated by the indiscriminate proliferation of fast food outlets, notably in culturally meaningful areas, homogenizing such areas worldwide. This is perceived as making the American Way of Life available to people around the world. In effect, anything that is touched by the black hole dynamics acquires meaning -- the significance is drained from it, or rather the material support is pulled away from the context in which that significance can be experience and lived.

**Authenticity surrogates:** For those entrapped in the black hole dynamics, this accelerating tendency to meaninglessness and unauthenticity is partially compensated by:

- substance abuse: The challenge of this to the American Way of Life is evident in the continuing preoccupation with alcoholism and drug addiction -- and the continuing failure of the "war on drugs"
- sex-related distractions: This dynamic evident in the statistics relating to pornography on the internet, as well as the proliferation of video porn, strip clubs, S&M clubs, and the like.
- collective group dynamics: Such efforts to offset the black hole dynamics can be seen in the case of therapy groups, religious groups, recreational groups, and the like
- consumerism and acquisitiveness: Efforts are made to counter the depressive effect of black hole dynamics through acquisitions - the shopping syndrome -- which are reinforced by the logic of those dynamics (marketing, etc)

Each of these responds to a sense of existential insecurity. The difficulty is that, as with any drug, the compensatory effect tends to diminish over time and stronger and stronger "doses" have to be used. An overdose is the ultimate response to the unmeaning of black hole dynamics.
Emergence of "Eve-ill" Empire (and an "Axis of Eve-ill")

With regard to George Bush's presidency, Norman Mailer (Only in America, 2003) argues:

> The gap between his school of thought and that of old-value conservatives could yet produce a dichotomy on the right as clearly cut as the differences between Communists and socialists after World War I. "Flag conservatives" like Bush paid lip service to some conservative values, but at bottom they didn't give a damn. If they still used some of the terms, it was in order not to narrow their political base. They used the flag. They loved words like "evil." One of Bush's worst faults in rhetoric... was to use the word as if it were a button he could push to increase his power. When people have an IV tube put in them to feed a narcotic painkiller on demand, a few keep pressing that button. Bush uses evil as a narcotic for that part of the American public which feels most distressed. Of course, as he sees it, he is doing it because he believes America is good. He certainly does, he believes this country is the only hope of the world. He also fears that the country is rapidly growing more dissolute, and the only solution may be -- fell, mighty, and near-holy words -- the only solution may be to strive for World Empire.

It was Ronald Reagan who first labelled the enemy of the USA as "Evil Empire" in 1982 [more]. In a separate paper it was argued that much of the rhetoric of Bush against the evils of Iraq offered highly valuable insight -- provided it was understood as addressed to Americans. Namely that unconsciously Bush was articulating exactly what American's needed to hear in relation to their own way of life and the need for "regime change". It is a basic factor in psychotherapy that labels one attributes to characterize others need to be carefully examined for their applicability to one's own condition.

The neo-conservative move towards an American imperium, articulated by a group of men in the Project for a New American Century (PNAC), suggests the possibility of looking at the current crisis in a new way. Whilst Bush may indeed be sensitive to the increasingly dissolute nature of America, there is a curious irony to the possibility -- long stressed by feminists -- that the core problem for America is that it is becoming what might be appropriately termed an "Eve-ill Empire". This may prove to be a key feature of an emergent "Axis of Eve-ill".

The new, monopolar geopolitical concept of "America as Empire" can therefore be usefully understood as "America as Eve-ill Empire", suggesting the existence of an "Axis of Eve-ill" states as psychodynamic counterparts to the "Axis of Evil" rogue states. The "illness" may be understood as a pathological inability to deal in a healthy manner with those of different values and ways of knowing -- the archetypal "other" -- as exemplified for men by their relationship with women and for both by their relationship with their "shadows". This manifests in the criminalization of those who disagree, legitimated by evoking violence from those whose concerns are ignored. The most obvious manifestation of this illness is in the significant breakdown in family relationships and the extraordinary level of incarceration in American society. From such a perspective, concerns with terrorism can usefully be explored in terms of "fear of one's own shadow".

The unilateral action against Iraq could be encapsulated in the phrase: "Eve is ill in the American Empire and Adam goes off to war". By that is meant that the feminine dimension of society -- that should be counter-balancing the PNAC perspective -- is no longer able to perform this function. "Eve" is here understood as the archetypal carrier of feminine values in the Jungian sense. Not only has the feminine perspective been repressed, as long-analyzed by feminists, but through that repression "Eve" has become "ill" -- as with any person incarcerated with inadequate care. Critics of the feminine dimension are now able to focus on the illness as justification for continuing isolation.

Given the numerous failed efforts made by a superpower to contain, subvert and overturn Castro and his 45-year old Cuban revolution, it is the greatest of historical ironies that the Cuban liberation song Guantamarena, famed worldwide, should be about the "girl from Guantanamo" -- the location of the prison camp (now, with Abu Ghraib, more famed than Auschwitz). Will this forever be the most memorable symbol of American culture and its betrayal of its own constitutional values by "self-hating Americans"? Based on a poem by Jose Marti, the father of Cuban independence, the freedom song is narrated by "an honest man from where the palm tree grows." In stark contrast, the post 9/11 Guantamano Bay is home to a veritable "concentration camp," in the words of the Cuban government, the National Lawyers Guild, and the American Association of Jurists [more]. It would appear that "Eve" has her own ways of responding to threat -- making an anticipatory mockery down the years of the display of unrestrained brutality at the extrajudicial prison camp of the USA. Curiously, both the Guantamano Bay prison camp and the song exemplify totally contrasting understandings of liberation and freedom. In the American case, given the exclusion of women from Guantanamo, the equivalent to the "girl from Guantanamo" is Lyndie England, famed worldwide for the photos of her with naked prisoners in the associated facility of Abu Ghraib -- ensuring their comprehension of American values of freedom and justice [more].

It is another great historical irony, although perhaps a natural phenomenon in psycho-social systems, that it is in the USA that the liberation of women has been so successfully pursued. Yet it is in the USA that the image of woman -- through which understanding of the archetypal Eve is cultivated and sustained -- has been most subject to manipulation through omnipresent advertising. This has been undertaken in a society that is especially riven by the double standards associated with "decent" dress codes on the one hand, and strip joints, porn, etc, on the other. Both have been ambiguously exported to other cultures: one in the form of missionary values, the other in the form of internet porn. Such values have been used by American women to justify attack on an Afghan society where the burkha was worn [more]. But feminine values are not reflected in American strategic policy and military endeavours -- being then confined to the double standards of "writing home" and Saigon-style R&R. As Norman Mailer (Only in America, 2003) puts it:

> So one perk for the White House, should America become an international military machine huge enough to conquer all adversaries, is that American sexual freedom, all that gay, feminist, lesbian, transvestite hubbub, will be seen as too much of a
For America, as a Christian nation, Norman Mailer (The current crisis might then be usefully framed as a clash between two understandings of authenticity that are paradoxical in their quite different connotations of any pairing of monopole and black hole, and the war-mongering in its pursuit, merit reflection.

More generally still, the curious combination of Christian, Muslim and Jewish mindsets in framing the current crisis in the Middle East is far from being unrelated to the problematic relation of men to women amongst the fundamentalists of all three religions [more]. Each has a problem with "Eve" outside the home -- in the wider world. This dysfunctionality inhibits manifestation of corrective dynamics from outside those mindsets. To what extent should such fundamentalism be associated with the "illegitimacy" sustaining an "Axis of Evil"? Aspects of this theme are now recognized as having been explored by Margaret Atwood in a prescient novel (The Handmaid's Tale, 1985) about a future dystopic Republic of Gilead (formerly the USA) where the regime spins news of war and terrorism to its advantage [more]. Civil rights have been extinguished, books have been banned and culture has been terminated with extreme prejudice. Women are forbidden to hold jobs, property or money. Pollution and disease have decimated fertility rates -- birth control and homosexuality are now crimes punishable by death. The few remaining fertile women, called handmaids, are used as brood mares for regime officials and their barren wives.

Irrespective of Atwood's speculative vision, reminiscent of George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-four, what of the future? How can humanity respond to the illness of Eve and ensure the collective therapy vital to recovery of the health of Eve and of Adam?

**The Other Pole?**

**Authenticity elsewhere:** The sense of existential insecurity in the Eve-ill Empire is well-founded. However it is only the material support for it that is drawn into the "black hole" dynamics. Meaning, significance and existential security are not pulled in this way, except to the extent that there is over-identification with the material -- conflating and collapsing categories. The question is how these non-material dimensions are expressed and experienced and through what forms their integrity is maintained -- especially when their material supports are pulled away.

The argument of this paper is that the hyperactivity of the superpower "black hole" dynamics evokes authenticity elsewhere to compensate for undue attachment to material only superficially suggestive of such authenticity -- it is the natural reaction to the operation of the separator. The separator function highlights the authentic by pulling the unauthentic material into supporting the dynamics of the American Way of Life. Ironically "spin" is required within the "black hole" dynamics to create the impression that such dynamics are associated with expression of authenticity.

The intriguing aspect of a superpower monopolar system, that self-defines itself as central, is that the "other pole" is then effectively omnipresent as the periphery. The "centre" becomes the centre of power whereas the periphery becomes the "centre" of powerlessness. The "periphery" may be anywhere, and notably within the USA -- where increasing numbers are excluded from the full privileges of the American Way of Life, and many live in great poverty. Correspondingly, the "centre" may act through elites, institutions, and urban centres in countries around the world -- effectively seamlessly coopted into the dynamics of the monopolar system.

**Clash of authenticities:** The "clash of civilizations" (Sam Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order, 1996) presented as a clash between Christianity and Islam, might be better represented as the dynamics of the relationship between materially-focused and non-materially-focused worldviews and behaviours. Robert Kagan, the American who first identified the growing transatlantic rift (and coined the phrase "Americans are from Mars and Europeans are from Venus"), argues:

> In the maelstrom of transatlantic relations unleashed by the present Iraq crisis, one question goes begging: Is there a middle path between the increasingly pacifist, Kantian worldview of Europe and the increasingly belligerent Hobbesian worldview of the US, a workable compromise between Europe's suspicion of power and faith in an international legal order, on the one hand, and America's belief in power and suspicion of international legal order, on the other? (The Heater, Guardian, 3 March 2003)

The current crisis might then be usefully framed as a clash between two understandings of authenticity that are paradoxical in their quite distinct relationship to the material world.

For America, as a Christian nation, Norman Mailer (Only in America, 2003) argues:

> And, of course, we were not in shape to feel free of guilt about September 11. The manic money-grab excitement of the Nineties
Contrasting authenticities: How is Christian authenticity in such a context -- and its spiritual tradition of poverty -- to be compared with that of the millions of Muslims in conditions of material poverty? It is much to be regretted that practicing Christians and Muslims have been unable to acknowledge their respective authenticity -- and have become complicit in the polarization of the crisis. For a born again Christian to fail to respect authenticity in the practitioner of an alternative religion is a condemnation of the nature of that authenticity.

How is the authenticity of the leading democracy of the world to be compared with that of the individuals in their millions demonstrating around the world in opposition to the attack on Iraq? Does a democracy cease to be authentic when its leaders significantly fail to reflect the views of the people -- as has become apparent in many countries that are part of America's Coalition of the Willing? Such demonstrations are a vivid illustration of the process by which the black hole dynamics of the monopolar system evokes authenticity in millions.

The "war against terrorism" can readily be interpreted as a deliberate distraction from the arguments supported by millions relating to opposition to an exploitative view of globalization. Indeed legislation against "terrorism" has been designed to make it easier to control those demonstrating against such globalization. Again how authentic are the majority of protesters, taking attendant physical and resource risks, compared to the elites negotiating behind security barriers to ensure further increase in their own wealth on the basis of totally questionable arguments?

Localization of the other pole -- globally: The "other pole" -- to match the "monopole" -- is then essentially of a different nature. The monopole is being effectively erected through monolithic institutions of the US government and its protected harem -- the Coalition of the Willing. The other pole is essentially dispersed around the globe as a multiplicity of individuals in their authenticity -- an authentic "We the Peoples" of which the undermined United Nations is now but a pale echo.

This other pole is recognized and celebrated in many forms and locations. The World Social Forum (Porto Alegre) is one such -- as a counterpart to the World Economic Forum (Davos) implicated in black hole dynamics. Under the label global civil society, the other pole has its own challenges of coherence, self-image and development [more].

The pattern of liberation initiatives towards national independence from colonial domination under previous empires may now be reborn as a pattern of liberation initiatives from AWOL domination into personal authenticity. Matching a Washington-centred world of AWOL significance would then be one which derived its significance from the global pattern of relationships between authentic entities around a "centre" that remained empty and unoccupied -- according to the best insights of Taoism.

Emergence of new modality: Irrespective of particular labels, it is intriguing to explore the possibility that the dynamics between the centred monopolar system and the dispersed other-polar system may be equivalent to the encounter between the Neanderthals and the Cro-Magnon that gave rise to homo sapiens as now known. The current clash of civilizations may be between homo sapiens and an emergent new species -- whose characteristics are explored elsewhere under the name homo conjugens (Authentic Grokking: Emergence of Homo conjugens. 2003)

The terrible irony of the focus on rapture for the few, by the Christian evangelists with whom George Bush is so closely identified, is that it is the many so-called "left behind" [more; more; more] who may together hold the rich pattern of insights that is excluded from the singularity of Christian rapture. Curiously this mindset of "salvation for the few" is echoed in plans to save the "best" people (including government leaders) in secret bunkers in the eventuality of nuclear, biochemical or asteroid disasters -- leaving the "left behind" to care for themselves. This is of course a prime characteristic of imperialism. This logic is also applied in response to "terrorism" -- dangerously so in that, for born again representatives of God, any dissenter from that perspective can legitimately be marked as "left behind" and effectively declared to be "fair game".

Paradoxical complementarity: Strange properties are associated with black hole dynamics. Curiously it is two deeply religious Christians, who explicitly claim as world leaders to be acting out of their understanding of authenticity -- one having been "born again", the other because he claims to know instinctively what "is right". And yet as world leaders their actions have become increasingly abhorrent to millions around the world. It is their actions that increasingly give to their words the biblical quality of "sounding brass" -- Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal (1 Corinthians 13:1). It is the shallowness and duplicity of their monopolar perspective (and what they fail to address) that is evoking an unprecedented degree of creative protest in millions -- however repugnant Saddam Hussein is judged to be. Despite the spin at their daily command, it is the perceived unauthenticity of these leaders (through heavily spun media) that evokes authenticity elsewhere.
Saddam Hussein is, in archetypal terms, an authentic player through all his repressive, brutality. He has been well-matched by Bush, father and son, as the agents of civilization. However, demonizing Saddam Hussein does not successfully sanctify George Bush. Authenticity for many now lies in the manner whereby that polarity makes it clear that the truth is elsewhere -- in transcending such simplistic polarization.

It is a fact that terrorism and its response, however Iraq is woven in, is primarily a male activity -- rare are the female suicide bombers or the female strategists of the new American Empire. The complementary spirit of Eve has been distorted in ways that match the distortion to the war-mongering Adam.

It is curious that in these supposedly secular times, that there is a strange complementarity between Christian leaders working towards rapture at some time (and soon if they can "hurry God into Armageddon") and suicide bombers guaranteed instant access to heaven. The inference that such leaders and the terrorists may have shared a common rationale -- a belief that the deaths of thousands of innocents are a price worth paying to achieve one's political ends -- does not seem to be one that can be made in the mass media controlled by US corporations [more]. Then there is the equally curious complementarity between the "singularity" of Guantanamo Bay, favoured by those aspiring to rapture, and the fatalistic sense of the immediacy of Allah that supports Muslim terrorists. Again the question is how such divergent understandings of authenticity are part of the trap of black hole dynamics -- and what is the nature of the authenticity elsewhere for those who are "left behind"?

Bush and Blair are to be applauded for challenging the world to recognize their authenticity and courage, and to trust in it in justifying a massive attack -- in defiance of the views of many of the spiritual authorities of the world. The attack is purportedly designed to eliminate a threat exemplified by suicide bombers, defending their peoples, who evoke another sense of authenticity -- if only in their personal courage and faith. In contrast with Bush and Blair, these terrorists lose more than their "face" if they are wrong (in anticipating early access to heaven). Faced with these two contradictory and highly questionable forms of authenticity, the peoples of the world are increasingly, and powerfully, forced to evoke their own. Unfortunately no effort is made to explore reconciliation of such distinct authenticities.

### Sustainability through pattern destruction

From the perspective of the metaphorical black hole dynamics of the AWOL, the latter survives and grows through feeding on "mass". An astrophysical black hole gets its energy by stripping mass of its molecular and atomic structure -- reducing it to its particulate form. The process is accelerated by recognition within the AWOL of the intellectual inadequacy of the arguments justifying their action. This proven incapacity to innovate in response to reasoned criticism and proffered socio-political alternatives forces a regression to "might is right" approaches of the most blatant forms of the "robber baron" and colonial pasts.

**Psycho-social pattern stripping:** The societal black hole, the AWOL, survives and grows through stripping psycho-social structure of its bonds, whether between people or within an individual's psychic structure. This is strangely reflected in the progressive transfer of support for such bonding relationships from organic materials ("saying it with flowers", etc) to inorganic materials, and from inorganic materials to electronic circuits and the movement of electrons (internet, SMS, etc). This transfer enables relationships to be sustained at greater distance and independently of time. It also progressively concentrates such supporting media at the atomic and sub-atomic level, so reducing the significance of the complexity of molecular bonds in organic materials -- justifying further destruction of ecosystems ("who needs trees?"). The forthcoming revolution in nanotechnology is part of this process -- despite the much debated "grey goo" risks of global ecophagy -- which provide an apt metaphor for the AWOL's notion of a values-based future. This progress is hailed by some groups who look forward to the day when their "identities" can be "uploaded" and "downloaded" to ensure "immortality". The spiritual implications have been documented by Jennifer Cobb (Cybergrace: the search for God in the digital world, 1998).

Ironically the current direction of evolution has been exemplified by Newt Gingrich, former Republican speaker of the US House of Representatives, who is a member of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board. He strongly criticized the US State Department's posture during the Iraq crisis (perceived outside the US as constituting an element of mediation) as reflecting a conflict of world views. The State Department initiatives had been based on "process, politeness and accommodation", considered to be "ineffective and incoherent", while those more closely associated with the President and the Defense Department were wedded to "facts, values and outcomes" (Financial Times, 23 April 2003).

The problem is that the "facts" are now manufactured or subject to spin, the "outcomes" are those advancing the interests of the AWOL at the expense of any other consideration, and the "values" are best understood as the market values of shares or income to Americans. A striking example of this trend is the case of right-wing ideologue William Bennett -- secretary of education under Reagan and drug "czar" in the first Bash administration -- who as a "values guru" made his fortune as a promoter of "values" (The De-Valuing of America: the fight for our culture and our children, 1992; The Book of Virtues: a treasury of great moral stories, 1996 ; The Broken Hearth: reversing the moral collapse of the American family, 2001;) but achieved notoriety in 2003 as a hypocritical loser of millions of dollars as a very high-stake gambler [more; more].

There are now no overriding ethical values -- upheld by institutions within the US as applicable to non-Americans -- to curtail any initiative against non-Americans (however unthinkable) that might be presented as being to the advantage of Americans.

**Conceptual stripping:** Such psycho-social stripping is accompanied by a conceptual stripping and reductionism. Like others, Colin Powell portrays the crisis of terrorism and Iraq as "It's binary...yes or no" [more]. Meaning, within the black hole, the dynamics becomes increasingly binary. This is strange for a society that has claimed to assemble the best and brightest to focus on the new levels of meaning to be derived from complexity [more] -- none of which seems to have proven relevant in the responses to the complex challenges of society. We are now witness to a collapsing logical framework to match the collapsing values framework that feeds the black hole power dynamics. The response to Iraq exemplifies the tendency:
- to substitute investment in weaponry dependent on complex (inorganic) electronics (to solve what are defined as closed system problems) instead of
- any investment in the complexities of (organic) societies (to solve what are certainly open system problems).

For James Mann (Bush Wanted His Doctrine and the Allies, Too) of the Center for Strategic and International Studies:

We are witnessing a major intellectual failure by the Bush administration...It turns out that the underlying assumptions, coherent as they sounded, weren't valid. The Strength Hypothesis failed, because displays of power by the United States seemed to worry or even frighten America's friends and allies rather than winning them over. The Follower Hypothesis didn't work out because other nations were discomfited or downright insulted by being treated as though they were expected to simply get in line. (Washington Post, 16 March 2003)

The binary approach ("yes or no"), precludes even the complexities with which many are familiar in the simple con-game of "finding the pea" under one of three cups. This game exemplifies the challenge to certainty in practice that is excluded from binary thinking. The philosopher Paul Feyerabend (The Conquest of Abundance, 1999) has explored the advancing tendency to simplify the abundant richness of a complex reality.

The intellectual failure has in some way become institutionalized as exemplified by the admission that the unexpected resistance of the Iraqis, and the failure of the citizenry to "rise up" and welcome the invaders, had not been "wargamed" [more]. Given that it was precisely such unexpected resistance that paralyzed American operations in Vietnam, it is clear that inability to learn from history has now been embodied in military thinking. It is this resistance that exemplifies the non-material meaning and authenticity that cannot be conceptually grasped or programmed as the AWOL mindset is drawn deeper into the black hole dynamics it engenders.

In processing information relating to psycho-social organization, black hole dynamics are increasingly forced to use the totalitarian tools of control-freakery, like Echelon, to survey the movement of information -- but are increasingly challenged by how to derive patterns of meaning from it, despite the use of pattern detection tools and intelligent agents (i2, Netmap, etc). Common search engines such as Google now collect systematically information on all web searches to facilitate such tasks [more]. It would be interesting to explore the planned consequences within the black hole logic -- as a conceptual parallel to the historical process of the "enclosure of the commons" that was instrumental in the destruction of wilderness areas and the "tragedy of the commons" [more; more].

**Speed and power**: In the case of the astrophysical black hole, the physical structure is converted to speed, power and gravitational effects. In the case of the societal black hole, the pace is accelerated (as noted above). Failure to keep up the pace is of great importance. The acquisition and manifestation of power become a prime concern. Interestingly, those lacking it are described as "nothing" or as "nonentities". An analogy to "gravitational effect" is to be found in the use of that term in relation to networks, which have a centre of gravity -- people gravitate around institutions and people.

In recognition of this transformation, David Hare, a playwright, explores the possibility that there is no evidence-based reason for the war against Iraq (Don't look for a reason, Guardian, 12 April 2003):

I understand no more than anyone, no more than this: at some level I believe this administration does not even know why it chose Iraq. I believe it cannot even remember the reasons. The reasons have changed so many times....But to me, the more frightening possibility is this: what if no such reason exists? If there is indeed no casus belli?...It appears that something so profound is happening in the world that none of us is yet able to grasp it. How can we consider and speak to the possibility that america is deliberately declaring that the only criterion of power shall now be power itself....Bush chose Iraq not because it would make sense, but because it wouldn't. He did it, in short, because he could. No better reason than that....America is now deliberately declaring that the only criterion of power shall now be power itself. [emphasis added]

It might be said that the astrophysical and societal forms of black hole have in common their survival through the conversion of potential energy into kinetic energy. In the societal case, the conversion of the complexities of patterns of nature into speed and power is nicely illustrated by the parasitical dependence on the conversion of oil (as an organic non-renewable product) into an energy source, and notably to power speeding vehicles. This focus is perhaps symbolically caricatured by the importance of the "movies", and the dependence of many on "speed", and the shift towards AWOL dependence on the electronic (noted above). Tragically "speed", in the form of amphetamines, are are standard issue in the US Air Force (where they are known as "go-pills") to help pilots stay awake during long combat missions. Their use has notably been associated with "friendly fire" incidents in Iraq and elsewhere [more; more; more; more], but no information is available regarding their impact on precision targeting of enemy forces and their civilians.

**Pattern loss**: The challenge of this pattern destruction process has been aptly noted by Gregory Bateson (Mind and Nature: a Necessary Unity, 1979): "The pattern which connects is a meta-pattern. It is a pattern of patterns. It is that meta-pattern which defines the vast generalization that, indeed, it is patterns which connect." And it is from this perspective that he warns, citing Jung: "Break the pattern which connects the items of learning and you necessarily destroy all quality." [more]

Meaning in Bateson's sense of pattern might be understood as associated with configuration -- not with the mass that may render that configuration perceptible.

It is Eve in her various forms that is holder and protector of the pattern. With Eve severely health-challenged under the AWOL, there is a real problem for the "Eve-ill Empire". It is noteworthy that the weapons of choice of that Empire are "weapons of mass destruction", complemented by "weapons of mass distraction" [more].
Celebrating the American initiative

It would seem that the 21st century is witnessing a truly awesome social experiment of greater scope than that undertaken by Lenin and Stalin, or by Mao Tse Tung. Morality aside, the PNAC plan for the future of Americans (and for non-Americans by inference) may be compared by history with the Wannsee Protocol (20 January 1942) that scoped out a "Final Solution" for the non-Aryans.

The Americans are faced with the "shock and awe" of having lost their symbolic cojones (in what history will regrettably judge to be the most professionally elegant and effective act of military strategy -- requiring only the threat of paper cutters) and compounded by the subsequent inability of the pride of the aerospace industry to "get it up" (for related analyses, see George Lakoff. Metaphors of Terror, 2001). It is completely understandable that the frustration should be transformed into righteous anger justifying an exercise in evoking "Shock and Awe" from another people, however poorly protected and subject to a decade of preliminary "softening up". It is understandable that evocation of hidden menace offers a strategically logical means of ensuring the integrity and pride of a people -- even if they have to be made petrified of their own shadow [more].

By deliberately creating a "black hole" dynamic, and seeking to ensure its worldwide controlling effect, the world is for the first time to be engaged in a process that can concentrate unmeaning and insignificance through conversion of their material carriers into power of little qualitative import. By so doing it is evoking an unprecedented degree of authenticity and significance everywhere else. As suggested by the sub-title of this paper, it is ensuring the global emergence of transcendental meaning in a world of monopolar materialism. This is a marvellous achievement, through the sacrifice of the highest values of the American people, for the self-realization of others.

The world should therefore honour both the men of PNAC for engaging in this enterprise for the world's salvation, as well as the American people (so courageously led by George Bush) for sacrificing meaning and significance as a gift to those outside the AWOL event horizon. In terms of their aspiration, the sacrifice of any number of Iraqis (together with citizens of other countries to be subject to future military intervention) conforms to the classic phrase of US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright: "we think the price is worth it" (in response to Lesley Stahl's query on the death of 500,000 Iraqi children in 1996). As she said, it is indeed a "hard choice".

There will be those who question the reality of the effective transfer of authenticity out of the AWOL, perhaps citing the many beauties associated with the AWOL or the manner in which God's blessing on strategic decisions is carefully sought through prayer by the White House. Unfortunately some have remarked on the fact that even the Nazis explicitly recognized God's support of their endeavours through the phrase "Gott mit Uns" on military belt buckles (as noted by Douglas Herman, Achtung! Are We the New Nazis?, 2003). [more]

The argument that the AWOL civilization has engendered much natural beauty -- if only in "developments" and downtown hotel atriums - - can be usefully compared with an assessment of the famed Aztec gardens where Mexico City is now located. Robin Lane Fox (A sacrifice too far) explains his reasons for refusing to attend an exhibition celebrating their gardens:

There are two reasons why I have been refusing to see the Royal Academy's remarkable show about the Aztecs. One is that the Aztecs sacrificed so many human beings to their non-existent gods. The other is that they were patrons of some fascinating gardens, although the exhibition, and its catalogue never mention them. These two facts bear on lively questions about the role of gardening. Are gardeners usually very charming and caring people? (Financial Times, 8-9 March 2003, pp. xxi)

History may wonder at the functional isomorphism between the "non-existent gods" of the Aztecs and the appeals made by the modern imperium to invisible principles like "democracy", "freedom" and "justice" whose existence many would dispute, especially in the light of American actions. Fox then comments on the Spanish eye-witness account of the conquest of the Americas (Bernal Diaz del Castillo. Historia de la conquista del Nueva España y Guatemala, 1632):

In a famous scene, he describes how he met some of the local Indian priests. Their hair was matted with blood, their ears were pierced and their skin smelled like sulphur. The smell turned out to be rotting human flesh. The victim's skins were flayed and given as cloaks for Aztecs to wear.

The gardens also featured in wooden cages: "albinos, dwarfs and physically challenged people with the most unusual personal defects". He notes that recent studies have demonstrated that the Aztecs do indeed seem "to have combined their extraordinary style of life with a spellbinding love of flowers. As we now read it, their poetry repeatedly points out the fleeting beauty of flowers...Like flowers, we die too and our beauty is a transient asset." Poetic thoughts shared by poets worldwide that "occurred to a flower-loving people among the ritual blood and robes of human skin"

Like the Aztecs, the leaders of the new imperium will accept the need to make the hard choice -- paying the price in the blood of children and innocents -- in order to bring about a world order blessed by their God and the priestly advisors of the leadership. Like the Aztecs, this will indeed be framed as acting from the highest principle to safeguard their civilization and the contemporary version of the "Aztec Way of Life". It is ironic that the "Great Seal of the United States", includes a pyramid -- resembling the sacrificial pyramid of the Aztecs -- that figures so prominently on the US dollar bill [more].

The paradox of the times is that Christian evangelists will evoke in others that which they genuinely intuit -- by sacrificing themselves on the altar they have erected to their misunderstanding of it. Similarly genuine freedom will be achieved as a reaction to the AWOL monopoly of understanding of it.

Little research is in fact required to demonstrate that new legislation seldom acquires credibility on rational argument alone. It usually requires preliminary and sufficient human sacrifice (notably in the form of "accidents") -- that the new hegemony may hopefully
celebrate more respectfully. Many have long suspected that human sacrifice is necessary to accomplish civilizational ends. The past century has been enfeebled by the weak strategies of those influenced by "bleeding hearts". The time has come, in the light of the PNAC insights, for global strategies formulated by those capable of making hearts bleed -- who are willing to sacrifice others for a greater good they may not necessarily understand or appreciate. Under the circumstances, it is a tragedy that Christianity through the centuries should have made such a symbolic theme of the "bleeding heart" of Jesus.

The announcement by Billy Graham, spiritual advisor to George Bush, that missionaries, disguised as relief workers with NGOs, are "poised and ready" to roll into Iraq to provide the post-war "spiritual needs" of Iraqis [more; more], compounds the nature of the involvement of the 50 chaplains to the invading military forces [more]. Graham and his son have publicly declared Islam to be a "wicked" religion [more]. In psychosocial analytical terms issues of projection might usefully be raised.

George Bush explicitly rejected the views of the Pope on the sinful nature of the war against Iraq. The situation for Tony Blair is more complex as a devout church-going high Anglican, whose wife is Catholic, with the children brought up as practising Catholics. Faced with the Pope's explicit condemnation of the war on Iraq as a sin [more; more], it is curious that Blair failed to take account of a judgement which would ensure his excommunication were he to convert to Catholicism. However, as with an earlier Pope's failure to explicitly excommunicate Hitler [more], this may be more of an indication of the complicity of Christianity in an unregretted crusading tradition.

It is curious that such governmental crusading is muted when the problems are at home, however much the advantage of others changing is promoted. Gary Younge, in an article originally entitled Modern Missionaries (The limits of generosity, Guardian, 7 April 2003) writes with regard to the UK Home Secretary:

More consistent and more repugnant is the missionary position, which is best articulated by the home secretary, David Blunkett. Like a 19th-century crusader, Blunkett genuinely believes that while Iraqis don't know what's best for them right now, they will understand, after they have been conquered, colonised and thoroughly humiliated, that all of this murder and destruction is in their best interests. "We know that for the moment we will be seen as the villains," he said. But he promises that views would change "once this is over and there is a free Iraq, with a democratic state, building the affluence that can come from an educated people with enterprise and capability".

The symbolic echoes of the choice of a General Franks as leader of the liberating armies (recalling the Franks of crusader times) is only matched in cynicism by the choice of General Garner to head the Pentagon's "Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance" in Iraq [more]. Given his strong business preoccupations, and links to the contractors with which key members of the Bush administration are involved, his role in "garnering the spoils of war" for the US may become only too evident.

Perhaps AWOL should be understood as a "value-free" culture - a truly amoral culture. The values it repeatedly claims to have could then be understood as worn by its "priests" like the human skins worn by their Aztec counterparts -- torn off those sacrificed those sacrificed to the values. Alternatively, maybe the values donated by the leadership of the emerging AWOL empire are to be understood like the emperor's new clothes in the classical tale of Hans Christian Andersen -- in which none dare comment on their illusory nature. What is clear is that these values, for which many have struggled in the past, are now being used as rhetorical devices in a form of moral blackmail typically encountered in family therapy and in dealing with alcoholics. The merit of the American initiative is that it engenders a new level of collective awareness of this kind of game and of possible responses.

It is sad for the American people that the loyalty of its friends in the Coalition of the Willing and elsewhere has been purchased -- and will cease when pay-offs can no longer be made.

**Creating a black hole**

In considering the efforts in place to ensure the optimum operation of the societal black hole, it is worth considering the practicalities and dangers in the light of current efforts in the USA which may indeed result in the creation of a black hole at the world's largest, Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC) -- now operational at Long Island, New York State. Such experiments do not come without risks however. As indicated in one comment:

What happens during an experiment at RHIC? The RHIC consists of two circular tubes, 2.4 miles long. The electrons from gold atoms are removed and they are accelerated to a speed 99.9% of the speed of light (about 300,000 km/second). When they collide incredibly dense matter is created with a temperature in excess of 1 trillion degrees - 10,000 times hotter than the centre of the sun. Conditions are being created that have not existed since the formation of the universe in the Big Bang, when all the current laws of physics broke down. What could be the effects of such experiments?

**Scenario 1:** A Black Hole is created

- The first is that a black hole is created in the laboratory. A black hole is where matter becomes so dense that nothing can escape from it - even light (hence the name, 'black' hole). This is caused by their incredible gravity, and the more they suck in the greater it becomes. When the particles are smashed together which such incredible speed, the result would be extremely dense matter - perhaps dense enough to form a black hole. One created in a laboratory could be as small as $10^{-15}$ metres (0.000000000000001 metres). However from this minute size it would grow and grow, devouring subatomic particles, then atoms, then the materials in the laboratory and eventually it would start digging a hole into the centre of the Earth before consuming it all. It would then start on the rest of the Solar System. [more] [more]

The argument of this paper is that the initiatives being taken in the USA with respect to the new Pax Americana -- America as Empire --
can usefully be understood in terms of the dynamics of black hole creation. In effect the many so-called "repressive" forces associated with the forceful construction of the new imperium can then be creatively reframed as the coming into play of societal forces analogous to those in an astrophysical black hole. By reframing the repressive forces as necessary to the operation of the societal black hole -- the "hard choices" required may be more easily recognized as consistent with a larger spiritually-inspired vision blessed by divinity through prayer.

It could be interesting to view the initiatives successively undertaken by George Bush, against Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hassein, as amounting to the design and operation of a Relativistic Heavy Ego Collider -- by which a psycho-social black hole gets engendered.

There is however a curious resonance between the concern with astrophysical black holes, and the danger they might constitute, and the challenges of managing a world with conceptual tools that have proven increasingly inadequate. As a preamble to discussion of this challenge, José Chung (Color Space) cites Ronald Reagan:

> In our obsession with antagonisms of the moment, we often forget how much unites all the members of humanity. Perhaps we need some outside, universal threat to make us recognize this common bond. I occasionally think how quickly our differences worldwide would vanish if we were facing an alien threat from outside this world." (Speech to the United Nations General Assembly 42nd session, 21 September 1987)

Chung raises the issue of whether Reagan was right and therefore possibly -- as explored by others -- whether crises such as terrorism and Iraq are designed to simplify the challenge of world governance [more]. George Soros (Bush's inflated sense of supremacy) confirms this:

> Terrorism is the ideal enemy. It is invisible and therefore never disappears. An enemy that poses a genuine and recognised threat can effectively hold a nation together. That is particularly useful when the prevailing ideology is based on the unabashed pursuit of self-interest. Mr Bush's administration deliberately fosters fear because it helps to keep the nation lined up behind the president. (Guardian, 13 March 2003)

But the resonance becomes more curious in the light of an extremely unusual, current, astronomical threat on which Chung reports -- sifting NASA information (and cover-ups) from astronomical fringe commentary, including Planet X (Nibiru / Marduk) and speculation on aliens. Surprisingly he concludes that a massive collapsed star (a possible precursor to a black hole) -- liable to trigger major geophysical disasters -- is now passing close to the Earth:

> *Early to Mid March, 2003. Passing just south of the main ecliptic plane of our solar system at a point very close to our own position, the collapsed star (or Black Dwarf) known as Enigma will pass by our planet at a speed of about 120 kilometres per second, trailing a tail of debris and cinder-like iron and carbon filaments. When these strike the atmosphere, they will almost immediately oxidize and precipitate in the form of red rain. This may also occur during November, 2002, as it did during the month of August, when several reports of this phenomenon came in from Vietnam and India. Red fireballs streaking across the sky are also to be expected as what it may mean as we get closer to Spring 2003. [more with links]*

Gwyn Prins' recognition (noted above) that the "elves and hobbits" are leaving "Middle Earth", is now ironically compensated by the activities of a "Black Dwarf"! Speculation relating to Planet X and Nibiru offers an interesting opportunity to reframe current US strategic preoccupations with Iraq in the light of a hypothetical Nibiru interplanetary strategic concern with respect to Earth [more; more].

**Interface with unmeaning and insignificance: challenge of authenticity**

For Lawrence Silverman (Guardian, 17 March 2003):

> Instead of lamenting the lost world of "international law", or pretending that it still exists, we now have to work out how to live together in the world as it actually is. Don't be surprised if, like it or not, that means accepting a "Pax Americana"

Egon Matzner (Conditional Co-operation: Coping With US Hegemony) explores 4 ways for dealing with American hegemony. There is a strong case for reviewing the experiences of those who successfully survived totalitarian and fascist regimes with integrity. The exercise could be usefully extended to cover experience in multi-class societies such as those of the British Empire, pre-civil rights USA, the Hindu caste system, and South African apartheid. As with ancient Athens or Rome, few will enjoy the privileges of the nomenklatura of the new empire.

But, for those beyond the pale of the AWOL attractor, there is the exciting challenge of authenticity and how it is to become manifest in the ruins associated with the AWOL separator. Make no mistake -- the AWOL separator will be used to appropriate or destroy any patterns of quality that might otherwise be used to reinforce a sense of authenticity.

The challenge for many levels of society will be the nature of the interface that it is possible to sustain with the AWOL dynamics. Many will be drawn inexorably into those dynamics. But the reality of the situation is that the resources are not available to sustain those dynamics for the majority of the world's population. This is the tremendous learning offered by the AWOL separator. It frees people from dependence on the material support associated with those dynamics.

From the dynamics of astrophysical black holes, it has been theorized by Stephen Hawking that the tidal forces are strong enough to tear
apart pairs of antiparticles and virtual particles producing enough energy to make the virtual particle materialize in space. Due to spontaneous creation of these particle pairs at the Schwarzschild radius (the event horizon), one drops into the black hole, the other escapes -- black holes can thus radiate energy. This process is known as Hawking radiation and counterbalances a black hole's ability to absorb matter and grow. When the black hole creates this virtual particle some of its energy gets used, thus lowering its mass due to Einstein's famous equation $E = Mc^2$. This causes a cascade effect called evaporation since it will lead to all of the black hole's mass being changed into tremendous amounts of energy. It is possible, as intimated by Peter Russell, that social systems (namely those outside the AWOL dynamic) may benefit from this process. The AWOL may also collapse under its own weight, return to a high entropy system, and no longer be attractive to anyone (or only to those with a high "charge").

From a social perspective the current status of AWOL could be explored in terms of "collapsing civilizations" -- a theme much studied by Christians fascinated by "End Times" scenarios [more] and more generally by historians (for example Galtung and Inayatullah, 1997). For example under "nihilism" in the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy:

> Since Nietzsche's compelling critique, nihilistic themes--epistemological failure, value destruction, and cosmic purposelessness--have preoccupied artists, social critics, and philosophers. Confirmed that Nietzsche's analysis was accurate, for example, Oswald Spengler in The Decline of the West (1926) studied several cultures to confirm that patterns of nihilism were indeed a conspicuous feature of collapsing civilizations. In each of the failed cultures he examines, Spengler noticed that centuries-old religious, artistic, and political traditions were weakened and finally toppled by the insidious workings of several distinct nihilistic postures: the Faustian nihilist "shatters the ideals"; the Apollinian nihilist "watches them crumble before his eyes"; and the Indian nihilist "withdraws from their presence into himself." Withdrawal, for instance, often identified with the negation of reality and resignation advocated by Eastern religions, is in the West associated with various versions of epicureanism and stoicism. In his study, Spengler concludes that Western civilization is already in the advanced stages of decay with all three forms of nihilism working to undermine epistemological authority and ontological grounding. [more]

At this stage one can only speculate on the possible use of collapsing superpowers as a source of energy for the surrounding social system. As summarized by Ryan Weaver (Black Holes: The Power Source for Future Space Travel?), in the case of astrophysical black holes:

> There are three ways physicists believe it is possible to harness energy from black holes: through accretion discs, by super radiance, and with Hawking radiation. Using Hawking radiation is the only process that requires a primordial black hole because as a black hole increases in mass the amount of Hawking radiation decreases exponentially. The other two processes can be carried out on a black hole of any size, but the large the better. Accretion discs around black holes generate large amounts of energy. All the matter swirling around these black holes heats up through friction with other matter. This hot, fast-moving gas emits lots of radiation, ranging from optical light to X-rays which could be collected much in the same way as solar panels collect power from our sun (Zabarenko, 1999). In the future it may be possible to build a sphere around a black hole and have the inside walls coated with this energy absorbing material which will convert it into electrical energy. This power can then be transferred to a collecting station where it can then be used or transferred for use elsewhere. Another advantage to this process is that the black hole can be used as a dumping site for our waste, which then will then actually be the matter that ends up producing energy. This process is known as the rotational vortex method of Roger Penrose (Controlling a Black Hole, 1999).

In general systems terms, although apparently distant, abstruse and speculative, the patterns implicit in the possible control of black holes may offer vital clues to the manner by which smaller social system "black holes" of community, or even of individual, proportion may be integrated as a source of energy. In this light it is useful to meditate on how the AWOL attractor functions in daily life and how its effects can be beneficially managed. This may reframe issues of alternative patterns of consumption as well as any personal understanding of the jungian human "shadow".

The prime characteristic of the interface will be the omnipresence of spin. This will use as its material every nuance of human value and sense of quality. It will be designed to associate quality of life uniquely with the AWOL -- seeking to demean life beyond it by every means. But, thanks to the AWOL separator, the insignificance and unmeaning of such dynamics will be apparent to a much higher degree than has been the case in past centuries. Its strenuous "positive" efforts to pretend the contrary may be increasingly seen as the value analogue to "false positives". Just as Saddam Hussein makes repugnant use of "human shields", the AWOL will continue to make use of the highest human values as "shields" and "Trojan horses" in order to protect its power-and-greed agenda.

It is in this context that the eloquent pleas of George Bush and Tony Blair to "just trust me" must now be assessed in the light of their significant failure to provide evidence of sufficient significance to justify their wreckage of the international community and civil rights -- and their barbaric destruction of the archaeological sites at the birthplace of civilization (caricatured in a BBC documentary as The Raiders of the Lost Art). As noted in an editorial of the Financial Times 45 days after the war's end (Deception on WMD has hurt the case for preventive war. 30 May 2003):

> It is time for a reality check: we have been deceived. The US/UK occupation of Iraq has done nothing to prove the case for war. On the contrary, it has undermined, possibly fatally, their casus belli against the Iraqi regime - namely that it was stockpiling chemical and biological, if not nuclear, weapons.... So did the US and UK intelligence services get it wrong, or were their political masters lying? It seems a bit of both.... Paul Wolfowitz, has now tellingly admitted that WMD was chosen as the casus belli "for bureaucratic reasons, because it was the one reason everyone could agree on."
Were Bush and Blair being blackmailed? What are they hiding? In the black hole dynamics they have engendered, they are now unfortunately unable to communicate with any credibility, beyond the AWOL, the basis for their belief and sense of righteousness -- especially in the light of the many hard facts regarding the past complicity of their countries with the Iraqi regime, that they choose so willfully to ignore.

Grief comes to those who think to win this world
By doing something to it.
For the world is a sacred entity, not to be controlled.
Only nothing can be done to it.
Doing anything else is to damage it.
To grasp it is to lose it.
(\textit{Tao Te Ching}, chapter 29)

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