

Comparison between the power paradigm (Alt. A) and the emerging paradigm (Alt. B)

By Karin Utas Carlsson, inspired by **John W. Burton**, the farther of Human Needs Theory.

	The power paradigm (A)	The emerging paradigm (B)
View of conflicts	<p>Conflicts are negative, bad, and should be avoided as far as possible.</p> <p>Narrow definition of conflict. Violence may be regarded as just physical violence. Conflict may be viewed as armed conflict only.</p>	<p>Conflicts are necessary for growth and life.</p> <p>A broad definition gives increased action preparedness. The handling of the conflict decides the outcome.</p>
Unit of analysis	<p>Nations, regions, institutions are in focus.</p> <p>Conflicts at the macro and micro levels are essentially separate. They are handled differently.</p>	<p>The individual and the identity group are the units of analysis. Basic needs of individuals are in focus. This applies also to groups.</p> <p>Conflicts at the micro and macro levels have many things in common. They are handled in accordance with the same principles.</p>
Deterrence	<p>Deterrence, threat, and coercion are used to reach goals.</p> <p>This is central to power politics and the defence of all countries, resulting in escalation of the conflict.</p>	<p>Deterrence, threat, and coercion do not work since it gives rise to resistance and trust is reduced.</p> <p>This way of thinking in security politics would give wonderful consequences: <i>The idea of nuclear deterrence would be gone!</i></p>
Reason of conflict	<p>Reasons of conflict are lack of resources and the aggressiveness of nations, groups and humans.</p>	<p>The core or the problem is that humans feel their basic needs are threatened. This decides how conflicts are handled and escalation is avoided. Basic needs such as security, recognition, belonging, and meaning. Herein lies the opportunity for win-win solutions.</p>
Focus	<p>Positions are stated. Declared issues are those on which settlement is sought, sometimes as a compromise. This without taking into account needs, values, and concerns.</p>	<p><i>Underlying</i> needs, values, and concerns are sought through analysis of the situation. In particular fear and esteem needs/identity are taken into account.</p>
View on the other party	<p>The other party is looked upon as <i>adversary</i> or enemy</p>	<p>The other party is looked upon as partner in solving the conflict. The problem is separated from the person or groups of persons viewed as the other party.</p>
Responsibility	<p>The responsibility lies with the other party.</p>	<p>The responsibility is common. Common problem solving is looked for.</p>
Contact with the other party	<p>Contact may be broken. Breaking the contact is often</p>	<p>The contact is kept to solve the problem.</p>

	used for pressure, for instance sanctions and blockades.	
Different perspectives of the parties is looked for to solve the problem..	One's own perspective is in focus. Solutions are quickly sought in accordance with one's own thoughts and needs. Enemies are sought – or were there in advance. Thoughts of right and wrong, good and evil. Solutions are allowed to be short-term, temporary. Conflicts are “regulated.”	The perspective of all parties are investigated and considered. The problem is analysed. Causes are sought. No thinking in terms of enemy. The person and the problem are separated. Solutions are to be long-term sustainable.
Aim	The aim is to win the conflict which is win-lose (zero-sum) in its outcome as there is scarcity of resources; what one wins the other loses. The starting point is one's own needs and wishes and the analysis looks after one's own perspective.	The aim is that the needs of all parties are met, win-win. Resources may be increased. Conflicts are potentially positive sum outcomes. The challenge is to achieve these. There are immaterial needs of no short supply. Both sides' gratification of needs may grow simultaneously, for instance security, love, self-esteem, and belonging.
Power	The outcome is based on power. There is a struggle for power. Power <i>over</i> (domination) Power is used to meet one's own needs, resulting in power play. Escalation leads to more of the same methods. Win-lose may lead to lose-lose, especially in the long run.	The outcome is based on objective standards, also legal norms. Power <i>to...</i> Power <i>with</i> (the other) Power <i>over one's self</i> (Gandhi) Reaching a mutual aim with the other party, a solution which is long-term sustainable. Power play is avoided. Nonviolent methods are used to solve the problem and make peace. Win-win. Trust and confidence are created.
Authority	There is a hierarchical structure where power comes from above.	Those in power are dependent on those who are governed. There is a bottom-up perspective. None is powerless since there is a reciprocity, a dependency both ways.

The advocates of the power paradigm differentiate between the micro and macro levels while Alternative B takes the opposite view stressing the similarities. This is because they try to **meet human needs** avoiding power play by solving the problem in cooperation with the other party separating the person from the problem.

In understanding and solving conflicts we can benefit from the knowledge of behaviour science. Together we must make media and politicians learn and implement the deep knowledge of conflicts: their causes, dynamics and handling that behaviour science has collected and developed through the centuries. *According to Alternative B the same principles work on the two levels.* Therefore there is a great potential in taking advantage of theoretical and practical knowledge from the local level to solve conflicts and promote peace at the global level.

Dissertation "Violence Prevention and Conflict Resolution..." see www.tradet.org
I am thinking of founding "Burton's Friends", a digital association to cross borders. **Let me know if you are interested!**

Karin Utas Carlsson k.utas.carlsson@gmail.com, See www.laraforfred.se