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AN ALTERNATIVE TO CONFLICT

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International Center on Conflict and Negotiation

AN ALTERNATIVE TO CONFLICT

A Collection of Works

Edited by George Khutsishvili, Ph.D.

This is the second in the series of collections of works by a team of Georgian scholars involved in the Conflict Resolution Training Program in Georgia implemented by the International Center on Conflict and Negotiation (ICCN). The publication is based on the translations from Georgian of the articles written by the Program participants and the ICCN Board and staff members, originally published in the Program bulletin *An Alternative to Conflict*.

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Our Choice

Dali Berekashvili

Now that the issue of choice has become so topical for Georgian population, I would like to touch upon the following problems: What do people choose and why? What is the psychological mechanism underlying this or that choice?



Here we will be talking about free choice or real choice, only. It sometimes happens that an action only seems to be based on free choice, whereas, actually, it is not. If a person chooses one of the options and, rather than being determined by free will, his choice is imposed from outside or his behaviour is an imitation of someone else's behaviour, we can hardly say that what we are dealing with is free choice (By the way, some people could argue that such an action is also determined by free choice, because if a person prefers to neglect his own needs or prefers to be driven by other people's will, such a preference also implies a certain choice, *choice not to be free*. However, a further elaboration on the freedom of will goes beyond the scope of this article).

Let us assume that a person is making free choice, that he chooses what he really wants to choose. The relevant questions concerning this situation would be the following: "Why does he want what he wants?" and, "Does he really know what he wants?"

What is the motive of our behaviour or choice?

The well known American psychologist Abraham Maslow, whose diagram we are going to use to highlight the problem, calls a human being a willing creature.

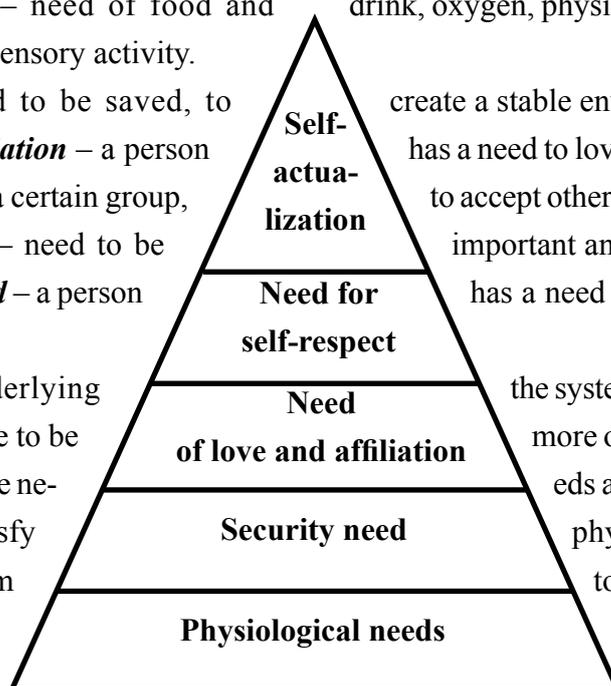
It is true that a human being always wants something or is always in need of something.

Maslow elaborated a hierarchical system of needs forming a pyramid.

The pyramid includes

1. **Physiological needs** – need of food and drink, oxygen, physical activity, avoiding extreme temperature, need for sensory activity.
2. **Security need** – need to be saved, to create a stable environment.
3. **Need of love and affiliation** – a person has a need to love and to be loved by others, to feel that he belongs to a certain group, to accept others and to be accepted by others.
4. **Need for self-respect** – need to be important and competent.
5. **Self-actualization need** – a person has a need to actualize his potential to a maximum extent.

The assumption underlying the system is that the basic needs at the bottom of the pyramid have to be more or less satisfied in order for the person to feel and realize the needs at the top. For instance, in case a person is unable to satisfy physiological or vital needs, it will be less probable for him to have any high-level needs.



A person suffering from the cold or hunger is not stimulated to obtain quick promotion or compose a piece of music. He is too obsessed with a search for food, etc. It should be noted, that Maslow makes an exception and says that there are also people with a strong will who endure severe physical discomfort for the sake of high level needs. But, in general, he believes that high level needs are formed after the satisfaction of basic needs. According to Maslow, some needs will never reveal themselves unless the lower, basic needs are, at least partially, satisfied.

The higher is the person's position in the hierarchy of needs, the better his personality is developed and the more powerful his potential is.

Maslow thinks that the average person satisfies his physiological needs by 85%, security need by 70%, need for love and affiliation by 50%, need for self-respect by 40% and self-actualization need by 10%, only.

Maslow defines the need at the top of the pyramid, that is the self-actualization need, as a person's desire to become what he is able to become. The person, reaching this level can fully use his capacities and personality potential. Self-actualization does not necessarily imply the creation of pieces of art. A person can actualize himself in the role of parent, worker or athlete. What matters here is a maximum use of one's own potential and doing in the best way whatever you do. Maslow's mother in law could serve as an example here. Maslow considered her a person who had actualized herself, even though she had never written a piece of poetry or music. He said that she was very creative in making soup, and that there is more creativity in making a good soup, than in writing a bad poem.

Maslow believed that only 1 % of people could really actualize its Self. One of the reasons is that many people do not at all realize their potential. Social environment and culture often restrict the self-actualization tendency through different norms and conditions. Mass self-actualization can only take place in "good conditions", that is a person needs a society creating favourable conditions for his development. We cannot point to any society in the history of mankind that created favourable conditions for the self-actualization of all its members. Nonetheless, societies widely differ in this respect. It is also true, that a free society, where a human being is highly valued, creates more favourable conditions for the self-actualization of its members.

The greater is the number of self-actualized people in a society, the better it functions, and, consequently, there is more possibility for a full satisfaction of lower needs by many people. In other words, the greater is the number of self-actualized people in a society, that is of the people making a maximum use of their potential, the more probable it is that such a society will have food, heating, stable and safe environment, guarantees for the future, etc.

If we go from the psychological theory back to our everyday life, we have to say that a consciously made choice should be based on the awareness of its contribution to the creation of a society, enabling people to satisfy both higher and lower needs. Development of self-actualized people necessarily requires a free environment. Any society where many people have a chance to actualize themselves is more ethical, stronger and better developed. This is a society that cares for each of its members.



National Stereotypes in the Soviet Anecdote

Gaga Nizharadze

A generalized Soviet anecdote: Brezhnev and Chapaev are lying in the same bed and both are Jews.

About anecdotes in general:

Z. Freud said that anecdotes were created around three themes: sex, toilet and politics, which is not, naturally, coincidental. Each of us has a deeply buried secret desire to overturn the existing reality, to break rules. Every society has rituals, customs, and other means enabling people to release the tension caused by such impulses. But if these customs or rituals are unable to do so, the tension mounts and might even end up in explosion.

One of the most important social functions of an anecdote is just the violation of taboos, but it does this through words rather than action. Sex and toilet are the themes that are not normally discussed in public, and the picturing of those in power as idiots or fakers, breaks the existing rules and creates the illusion of power in the people deprived of it.

Starting from the 60-s, that is Khrushchov's period, political anecdotes began to flourish in the USSR and other East Bloc countries. Before that, during the Stalin regime, this form of folk art was a definite pre-condition for travelling to the least hot regions of Arctic and, consequently, had no suitable environment for its development. Later... They say that in KGB, which had a good understanding of the "discharging" function of anecdotes, there was a special division where political anecdotes were created. Anyway, the spiteful jokes about Stalin, Khrushchov, Brezhnev and others became wide spread, indeed, and developed into the symbol of the epoch.

About "national" anecdotes

Three wishes of a French woman: a glass of cognac before and a cigarette after.

There is another category of anecdotes, not mentioned by Freud but used by him as an example in his book "Wit and its relationship with the Unconscious". These are, of course, the anecdotes about representatives of different nations. They just picture one or more national stereotypes. Such anecdotes can be encountered in every country and apart from humor, they also serve a social function – raise self-esteem, compensate the inferiority complex or the complex of guilt, discharge accumulated aggression or irritation by transferring them on imaginary representatives of some other ("not our") nation. Such a psychotherapeutic effect of national anecdotes is small, and is almost never noticed by the person who tells the anecdote or by the listener, but in spite of this, it does exist and does its job.

The Chukchi

At a military training a tank, with a Chukchi man inside, gets out of the rank. The commanding officer becomes furious and roars into the microphone. The Chukchi man with the radio-helmet on his head – “Commander, the cap is talking!!!”

The characters of anecdotes, i.e. representatives of an individual ethnic group, are selected according to the function of the national anecdote described above. The character can be a representative of the ethnic group falling behind “the group that tells an anecdote” in terms of culture, education, living standard, etc. In this case the distribution of roles resembles the circus situation: the clown, who looks like a fool, drops everything and says only stupid things makes children roar with laughter, which soothes the spectator, his self-esteem (“I am not like him!”).

I don't know how it is in other countries, but in the USSR such a role was given to the Chukchi. For some time the Chukchi lived on their own – hunted the walrus and drove herds of deer. Other nations in the USSR only knew that such a nation did exist. From the beginning of the 70s, the Chukchi burst into every house and organization and became a part of our everyday life. Here is a Chukchi man painting a black and white TV to make it a colour TV. Another Chukchi throws an arrow to notify rescuers that he is in danger or asks for a new passport after receiving one a week ago (“I have already smoked the old passport”). In short, one day a Chukchi man held a stable position among the traditional characters of national anecdotes and placed himself next to the Jew and the Georgian, even though the function of these two was somewhat different.

A little more of theory

The English anthropologist Victor Turner described an interesting phenomenon, which he called “power of the weak”. The essence of the phenomenon is the following: it often happens that a weak and oppressed ethnic group acquires the signs of strength in the eyes of the domineering group. As if the weak group has some secret knowledge or some mystic power inaccessible to the domineering group. The Gipsy, who have the ability to foretell the future, could serve a good example here. Eventually, the domineering group forms an ambivalent attitude towards the weak group: it feels respect on the one hand, and irritation on the other, because “we” are open to “them” whereas “they” are closed to “us”. But it is possible to overcome irritation by making its source ridiculous. This is how the second category of national anecdotes is formed.

It is unquestionable that the domineering group in the USSR was Russians; besides, the most popular characters in anecdotes were the Jews and the Georgians. There were also Ukrainian anecdotes but I find it difficult to conduct their psychological analysis because of the insufficient knowledge of Russia-Ukraine relations.

The Jews

After visiting a doctor, a Jewish person says to his wife: You know, Sarah, what we thought to be passion turned out to be asthma.

Anecdotes about Jews have quite a long history in Russia. In the second half of the previous century the Jews managed to hold an important position in Russian social life (especially in the field of commerce) despite the existing discriminating rules. The rich are not favoured in Russia, which shortly showed

itself. There appeared a lot of foolish stories about the worldwide conspiracy of Jewish people (power of the weak!), but, in parallel, anecdotes about Jews also appeared. The plots were built around common topics – adultery, mother in law, school, etc. But at the same time clearly formed a dominant feature ascribed to the Jews – greed. It is interesting to note that in German speaking countries, where the Jews are not favoured either, to the character of like anecdotes ascribe a different trait - so to say, attachment of little value to personal hygiene (Two Jewish people meet each other in the baths. One of them sighs bitterly: “One more year has elapsed”). This is a good example of how culture emphasizes the values, which it considers most important.

But let’s go back to Russia. In the Soviet period, for quite understandable reasons, Rabinovich was no longer able to run legal private business. But he followed his mission and started to work in an institution where money was made. (A voice with the Jewish accent: Hallo, is that the base? (meaning supply base) – Yes. - Who am I talking to? – To Ivanov. – Sorry, I must have dialed the wrong number. This must be a military base...)

But in the 60s Rabinovich acquires a new role, which becomes leading in the Soviet anecdote: a Jewish person becomes someone who opposes the Soviet regime in a passive, but, nevertheless, sarcastic way and is at the same time a victim of discrimination because of his ethnic origin. (Khrushchov receives a list of candidates for the post of the chief rabbi of Moscow. Suddenly he starts shouting as he looks at the list: Have you gone mad? Here are only Jews on the list!)

In this series of anecdotes, rather than being the object of humiliating sarcasm, a Jewish person is someone who makes fun of political or social reality, that is he is pictured in anecdote as a positive character. This shows that like anecdotes were born in the circle of Jewish intelligentsia. So, the Jewish political anecdote is something different. In particular, it is a reaction aimed against “power of the strong” (in this case against the political regime, rather than an individual nation).

The Georgians

A Georgian person stands on Arbat and counts money. A passer-by: Tovarish, (Comrade), how can I get to the Mausoleum? – (With an awful Georgian accent) Go, go, get down to business.

Anecdotes about Georgians also appear in the 60s, which is the period of important developments in the Soviet life. The most important thing was that the “bodies” at the top of the social pyramid were replaced with party nomenclature. As we know one has to pay for everything and the nomenclature had to pay for being in power with certain liberalization of social life. Among other points, the authorities had to close their eyes at the commercial activity prohibited by the official legislation. It seemed as if the regime made an unwritten agreement with its subordinates: Do whatever you want, make money, but mind some limits and what is most important never get involved into ideology or politics.

In Georgia people learned the rules of the new game quite fast and efficiently. Many of our compatriots got to a steady process of money making, and, what is extremely important, differently from the Jews, readily demonstrated their wealth to the public. This was the fact that irritated “the wide circles of Soviet public” most. Georgian characters, Givi or Gogi, that appeared in that period, did not suffer from too much intellect and spoke Russian with an awful accent (a frequent reason of ludicrous incidents), but their main features were a craving for women (a Georgian man can endure hunger for one week and thirst for one day, but he cannot stay without a woman for more than two hours) and a pocket full of money.

Anecdotes about Georgians often emphasized that Georgia, in general, had its own living style, different from the Soviet one. It does not mean that anti-Soviet attitude was ascribed to Georgians. Georgians were just considered people with other interests, who did not know many of the things a Soviet person was supposed to know, for instance, the authors of the Marxist ideology or the names of politbureau members. (Who is Brezhnev? The one who plays in “Vremia”?).

It is worth mentioning here that starting from the 90s, that is the dissolution of the communist system, the number of Georgian anecdotes in Russia considerably declined and the “free ecological niche” was occupied by “new Russians”. “The new Russian” in the anecdote resembles the Georgian character in many respects – easily made money, uneconomical spending of money and vulgarness (Two new Russians talking with each other: Look, what a tie I bought for two thousand bucks! – What a fool you are! They sell the ties like this for three thousand bucks round the corner”). Craving for women and accent are differentiating features, of course. Otherwise, these two characters can mostly replace each other, especially, if an anecdote involves the theme of money. Such a derision of richness, pointing to an extremely negative attitude, is something to think about: will Russian culture allow the establishment of market economy and democratic institutions in its own country? Is it possible that October 1917, described by the historian Iakovenko as a global reaction of Russian culture aimed at the restoration of the collapsing basic value – the value that can be called a general equality in poverty, repeats itself in the future?

A Jew is an occupation, a Georgian is a life style, a Chukchi is a diagnosis and a Russian is a destiny...

***Note:** The anecdotes in the article might be lacking their genuine sparkle due to translation, but hopefully, they are understandable enough to enable the reader to get their gist.*

Why cannot we understand each other?

Material Prepared by Nana Berekashvili

Some scientists think that men and women have a different conversation style, as different as that of representatives of totally different cultures.

It's known that women talk a lot, but the scientists, who recorded the participation of men and women in discussions, meetings, etc., found out that men usually speak more frequently and for a longer time than women do.

And yet, who speaks more and what is the difference between these two conversation styles?

Most men feel more comfortable and confident when talking in public, whereas women feel better during private conversation. These two styles could be labeled report-talk and rapport-talk, respectively.

Most of the women fall under the second category. For them, rapport-talk is a way of establishing and improving relationships. Besides, an emphasis is made on the revelation of similarities with the

person a woman is talking to and matching experiences. As a rule, the best contacts are established with close people, who make us feel comfortable and free, that is during a frank conversation. But cannot we approach talking in public in the same way as private conversation?

For most men, public talk is a means of preserving independence and establishing one's own place in society. This is done through the demonstration of intelligence and knowledge or the attraction of others' attention by telling interesting stories. But sometimes private relationships are treated in the same way as talking in public, rather than communication with close people.

And yet, where does the stereotype of talkative woman come from?

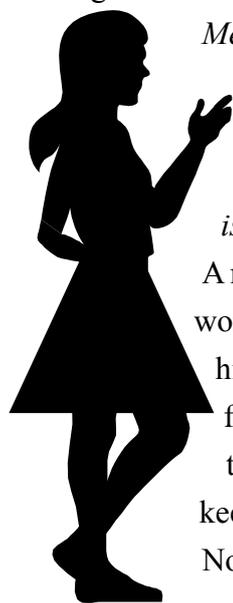
Research shows that if a man and a woman give the same time to conversation, the listener gets an impression that the woman speaks more than the man does.

Men accuse women of being too talkative, since they hear them speaking in such situations where they would never speak themselves and on such topics, which they, themselves would never discuss (in the circle of close people or on the phone, women do not discuss the topics that are interesting for men, for instance, the broken engine of the car).

Let's imagine a common situation: a family with the talking wife and the silent husband. Wives often express their dissatisfaction because of the taciturnity of their husbands at home, which can't be explained by their tiredness or business. Working women also get tired but they still try to share their ideas or feelings related to this or that news.

The problem here is a conversation style. Men and women talk in a different way. They acquire this style from their childhood. Most people, especially women, regard communication as a means of protecting oneself from hostile world. Friendship between girls is based on the exchange of secrets and sharing of ideas. When a woman is asked who her best friend is, she always names someone with whom she regularly communicates. When asked the same question, a man names his classmate, whom he meets once a year or sometimes even less frequently.

Women and men also have a different idea of what is important and when it is relevant to talk about important things. For instance, a woman, who had problems with her marital relations told the following story: she asked her husband what was new in the life of their common friend. The answer was "Nothing". Later she found out that the friend was planning to get married. "How can you call this nothing!" – said the resentful woman.



Men talk to transmit information. For this reason, a wife can interrupt her husband's activity (for instance, reading a newspaper) only when she has to say something useful or necessary. *But for a woman, talking means communicating. It is a way of showing one's own participation, is a manifestation of listening interest and care.*

A man does not usually show that the deterioration of relationships worries him. When he is dissatisfied, he says nothing and demonstrates his dissatisfaction through cold estrangement. This is the reaction that frightens a woman most. She prefers to express dissatisfaction in order to avoid estrangement and reticence, which are inevitable if you try to keep everything to yourself.

Now let's see what determines the publicity and formality of con-



versation.

Audience is not the only place in front of which report-talk takes place. The bigger is the number of people participating in conversation, the less we know them, and the bigger is the difference in the social position, the more conversation resembles report-talk. On the other hand, the smaller is the number of people participating in conversation, the better we know them and the closer they are to each other by their social position, the more their conversation can be defined as rapport-talk. Besides, women perceive a situation as public when men participate in it. Some men create a formal, public conversation style even at home, when children are required to behave especially “well” in their father’s presence.

Talking in public can resemble private conversation if it contains many examples and stories from one’s own experience. As a rule, men never take seriously the arguments put forward by a woman in conversation or debates if they are based on her personal experience. Such arguments even make men feel somewhat uncomfortable. Men only believe in rigorous, objective arguments.

For this reason, our relationship often faces difficulties. However, the only problem is that when talking with a person of the opposite gender, we don’t or can’t take his/her conversation style into consideration.

“The Conflict Resolution Training Programme” is going on

Tina Asatiani

The second stage of our programme completed in August 1999. In September of the same year the programme renewed without any actual suspension. Here I would like to share the experience, which I acquired as the leader of the facilitators’ team and training facilitator. I hope that the numerous ideas and impressions, which are emotionally charged and rich in content, will be interesting for the reader.

What do I think about the aim of each person involved in the programme? It can be clearly stated that these aims were fully consistent with the following basic objectives stipulated by the training programme: transmission of knowledge in conflict prevention and resolution and the development of the skills helping people to communicate and manage conflict. I think that the clearly defined and understood goal



determined and facilitated a successful performance of our common task.

From September 1998 to September 1999, 22 groups (527 people in total) participated in training. Training was conducted not only in Tbilisi but also in Mtskheta, Gori, Kutaisi, Zugdidi, Poti and the Tskhinvali region. At the end a summarizing conference was held and a report was produced to reflect the activity carried out during the year. I would like to mention several points,

which, in my opinion, were especially interesting and exciting.

I remember not only individuals, but also groups with their specific traits, with all their peculiarities. Which one was best or most interesting? It is difficult to answer such a question. There was something very peculiar about every group. These groups were composed of people of different age, occupation and interests, basically the IDPs from Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region. Some of them were desperate, suspicious and sad, others were hopeful, full of trust and cheerful and expressed a vivid interest in the process and issues offered by training. An example of the latter was the group from Gori – the people open to everything delivered at the training and willing to use in the future the acquired knowledge (in the broad sense of this word). I remember the groups of young people from Poti. These were extremely peaceful, cooperative groups. When working with them

we even had to say that conflict and competition could be also useful sometimes (this is something we have not mentioned in any other group). With the Zugdidi group – job oriented, active people, we basically focused on trust building and as a result of established cooperation talked about future plans. For “the most difficult” groups from the Tbilisi Sea and Mtskheta (very warm and trusting people), the training was a means of discharging negative emotions, the place where they could feel peace and communicate



with others in a pleasant way. But, in addition to this, the group always showed willingness to work on the proposed issues. I can't help mentioning the groups from Kutaisi (representatives of the Abkhazian government bodies in the Imereti region) and the group of ex-combatants, IDPs from Abkhazia now living in Tbilisi. These were goal directed people, with a huge experience in conflict and a firm decision to search for new, alternative ways of conflict resolution. And also... The feedback from the trainees at the end of meetings and sometimes after a certain period of time – (“When I go to a jungle, I will take a compass with me rather than a gun”. “You know, I met a neighbour yesterday. He is very aggressive and is in conflict with everyone. I listened to him actively and it worked...” “I have realized that the success of any activity largely depends on how well we understand the information at our disposal”. “The good will of our parties is most important...”). These and other like “discoveries” made by individuals and groups were extremely important to me since they pointed to the fact that our work has real, tangible outcomes.

When I try to evaluate and analyze our work (for this purpose we use the “plus-minus-interesting” principle when getting feedback at the end of training) and think about positive and interesting points, what comes to my mind first is the cooperative, supportive atmosphere of every training session and as a result



of this joint future plans and relationships; new contacts, communication and the increased clarity of those difficult problems which were so important for each of us. And finally, which is no less important,

highly professional activity of our team, composed of people committed to their work (Maia Razmadze, Khatuna Sanikidze, Dali Berekashvili, Rusudan Mshvidobadze, Tina Asatiani) and the support of those people (I mean the members of our programme, first of all), who did not directly conduct training but provided us with a significant technical and emotional support.

There is a lot to do and as it usually happens the more you work the more has to be done. In particular, it is very important to work in the future with those people who displayed a significant interest in the training and issues proposed and also manifested the abilities necessary for a facilitator. For such people we have planned a further training – training of trainers. It also became evident that it is necessary to work with all the parties involved in conflict, rather than one party only. Certain steps have already been taken in this direction (training has been delivered not only to the IDPs from the Tskhinvali region but also to the region’s population). I think that it would be very important and useful to conduct a joint training (especially considering the fact that a certain preparatory work has already been performed for the Tskhinvali region).

We have several ideas the accomplishment of which is planned for the future and what is most important, there is a hope that future work will be even more efficient and useful.

“Internally Displaced Persons and Conflict Resolution” – ICCN conference.

On September 7, 1999, the ICCN arranged a conference on internally displaced persons and conflict resolution. The conference was held within the framework of the conflict resolution training programme in Georgia. The participants were government bodies from the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic, diplomatic missions accredited to Georgia, non-government organisations and journalists.

The opening speech was made by professor Giorgi Khutsishvili, Director of the ICCN, and Frank Johansen, Co-ordinator of the Norwegian Refugee Council.

Presentations were made by G. Khutsishvili (“IDP’s potential that has not yet been used for conflict resolution purposes”), Tina Asatiani, leader of the facilitators’ team (“Some peculiarities of the training”),



Gaga Nizharadze, leader of the psychological monitoring team (“Outcomes of the psychological analysis of the conflict resolution programme”), Manana Gabashvili, NRC, project co-ordinator (“Ethnic-political conflicts and forced migrants: prospects of return”) and Manana Darjania, the Centre’s public relations manager (“The problem of estrangement with IDPs”).

According to G. Khutsishvili the analysis of current international developments shows that even a slight stimulus is enough to trigger the formation of a new

source of tension. For this reason we have to direct all the efforts at the early identification of conflict and its avoidance. For this purpose we can use the non-actualised potential of IDP's experience, conduct the relevant analysis of the events and elaborate effective mechanisms and recommendations enabling us to successfully conduct the neutralisation process in conflict situations.

Tina Asatiani, leader of the facilitators' team spoke about the training methods and objectives as well as the results of the conducted work. An emphasis was made on the trainees' attitude towards the following themes: the essence of conflict and the stages of its development, early identification of conflict, conflict resolution methods, effective communication, etc. It was mentioned that the work with the people experienced in conflicts is interesting for both facilitators and participants.

G. Nizharadze, leader of the psychological monitoring team, familiarised the attendees with the criteria and tests distributed to participants at the beginning and at the end of the sessions and used for the assessment of training efficiency. The tests show that most participants manifest small, but statistically significant improvement by a number of psychological parameters. In addition to this, in the last eighteen months IDPs displayed positive trends in terms of adjustment. During the training the participants are given an exercise – they have to invent a conflict situation and then stage it. The analysis shows that during the eighteen months considerably changed the themes of imaginary conflicts. If in the past family conflicts prevailed, in the recent period the most frequent theme was related to work. From the psychological perspective this implies the expansion of the field of interests and the increased integration into the society.

Manana Darjania, the public relations manager of the Centre, noted that if in the past IDPs from Abkhazia clearly blamed politicians when discussing the reasons and outcomes of the conflict, today many of them realise that the responsibility for the conflict has to be shared by the entire society, by each person. There is no totally right party in conflict. Such a trend points to the development of civic consciousness and



also to the willingness to participate personally in peacemaking negotiations within the framework of folk diplomacy. Apart from many progressive developments, the conflict resolution training programme in Georgia made a certain positive contribution to the process mentioned above. But at the same time, there is also observed the estrangement of IDPs from the society which is fostered by the unresolved protracted conflict, difficult economic and social situation and the attitude of the public which from sympathy gradually developed into irritation. All this arouses the relevant reaction in IDPs – the feeling that no one needs them. Their intellectual potential remains unused and they continue to live in the past. All this hinders their integration into the society. Besides, IDPs are not sure about the peacefulness and quality of their life back home. For this reason the participants often ask the following questions: Do people in Abkhazia undergo the same kind of training? Do they have enough knowledge of the peaceful means of conflict resolution? Are they ready for peaceful co-existence with us?

The participants of the conference showed especial interest in the presentation of Manana Gabash-

vili, the project co-ordinator of the NRC. She told the meeting about the conflict in Croatia – the reasons for its onset, stages of development and its resolution methods, about the pain and losses of the IDPs, the difficulties they encountered when starting a new life in their home place and the actions undertaken by the authorities for the settlement of relationships with the ethnic groups. The attendees asked the speaker many questions and drew parallels between the Croatian and Abkhazian conflicts.

The participants of the training also expressed their opinions about the programme. “The conflict resolution training programme in Georgia is extremely necessary for today’s post-conflict society. Such training is especially useful for those who went through the most difficult type of conflict – war.”

Zaza Chachava, Chief advisor on educational and cultural issues of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic in the Imereti Region said; “The work carried out by the Centre is strategically important for Georgians, for the people who have experienced the horror of war and destruction. The May training delivered in Kutaisi had an important impact on the listeners’ world perspective. Using my own example I can firmly state that such work plays an extremely positive role in the post-conflict period. I think, it is time to start actively the establishment of the regional offices of the Centre. We have to take efforts to accelerate this process”.

In her speech, Dagmara Ninidze, a representative of the Ministry of Education of the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic, especially stressed the professionalism of the psychologists-facilitators as well as their valuable personality traits.

“The conflict resolution training programme enables each of us to go deeper into the essence of conflict, learn the ways of conflict resolution, and acquire certain practical skills which are important and useful in today’s difficult life” – said Eteri



Tolordava, a representative of the government bodies of the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic.

Giorgi Nodia (Director of the Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development), Guram Kvaratkhelia (Ombudsman’s office), Konstantin Kokoev (Chairman of the Committee for National Minorities and the Protection of Human Rights) and Akaki Gasviani (Chairman of the Commission on Information and Ideological Issues, Abkhazian Autonomous Republic) participated in the debates concerning the ways and means of conflict resolution.

Hajan Hajiev (Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Georgia), Irakli Machavariani (President’s representative on security, political and conflict resolution issues), Irakli Jobava (ethnic issues, State Chancellery of the President of Georgia), Iulia Kharashvili (Chairman of the IDP Women Association, NGO), Marina Pagava (Chairman of the non-government organization of IDPs from Abkhazia “Help Yourself”) and Roza Kukhalashvili (Chairman of the Abkhaz Women’s Association) shared their impressions regarding the Centre’s activity and the conference.

Frank Johansen, NRC representative, summarised the conference’s work.

“Groupthink” and Elections

Gaga Nizharadze

Multi-party elections have a very short history in Georgia, so, it is not surprising that constituents, parties and blocs have not yet acquired enough experience regarding the development of election campaign, its regularities and nuances. A voter easily believes in what actually represents pre-election maneuvers; parties are not able to use well-known and approved technologies and make bad mistakes due to the lack of knowledge of social-psychological regularities. These are the regularities the present article focuses on.

Each of us remembers the TV speeches of political parties’ leaders during the last election campaign. We also remember, that every speaker was absolutely sure about overcoming the seven percent threshold. Such a confidence was not something played off in front of the public for the purpose of one’s own image. Besides, this would not make any sense because election results were supposed to be known within several hours already. So, what we witnessed was a definite over-evaluation of one’s own potential.

I think, this was based on a social-psychological phenomenon called “groupthink”. This phenomenon was described by the American psychologist Irving Janis, who immediately labeled it “groupthink” following George Orwell’s term “doublethink”. Janis analyzed in detail several significant political and military failures of the US (the Japans attacking the Pearl Harbour navy base in 1941, the 1961 landing on Cuba, the war in Vietnam, etc). It turned out that in

every case the fatal decision was taken (or the relevant decision was not taken) by a well-organized team of highly intellectual professionals, whose members had shown their competence many times before. The fatal mistakes were caused by the fact that decision making groups were trying to suppress critical ideas for the purpose of group harmony. Janis himself defined the phenomenon as a regime of thinking. It reveals itself in such cases when the search by a harmonious group for in-group agreement becomes so dominant that it



overweighs the realistic assessment of potential alternative actions. Since the above might sound too complicated I will try to show the essence of the phenomenon in more detail.

Thus, there is a coherent group of like minded people (for instance, the leadership of a party or a bloc), who aims at the achievement of clearly defined goals in a competitive, or even hostile environment. The group has a more or less directive leader. The team takes decisions, plans actions, gives orders, takes certain steps on its own initiative or in response to the existing situation. Unanimity is a very important factor, since any inner split is immediately used by competitors. But as it is known, we have to pay for everything. The effort aimed at the achievement of unanimity often prevents us from the relevant per-

ception of reality. “Groupthink” starts working. Its symptoms are:

- **Illusion of invincibility**, or exaggerated optimism, which often prevents the team from seeing a danger. *The Pearl-Harbour headquarters had information about the Japanese planning a military action, but they just neglected it. Several hours before the attack an American admiral joked “The Japanese are about to show up”, which later turned out to be true. The admiral’s joke ruled out a serious consideration of such a possibility.*
- **Belief in one’s goodness**. Team members believe from the very beginning that they are “good” and right. Any discussion of ethical issues is rejected. *The members of Kennedy’s team knew that two of their colleagues were suspicious about the ethical aspect of invading Cuba, but this issue never became a topic of discussion.*
- **Rationalization**. The group gives a lot of time to the justification of its own action. *President Johnson’s team gave much more time to the explanation and justification of his decision about the continuation of the war than to the consideration of other options.*
- **Stereotype vision of the opponent**. The team perceives its competitor or enemy more “wicked” than it really is and by doing so rules out, from the very beginning, the possibility of any negotiations; or it perceives it weaker and more stupid, and consequently does not consider it necessary to defend itself from its planned measures. *Kennedy’s team convinced itself that Castro had a weak army and that people were against his regime, which would make it possible to beat it with small military forces.*
- **Censorship and self-censorship**. Critical thinking and doubt are rejected often by means of sarcastic comments (What a bore !). *When one of Johnson’s assistants, who was known for his critical disposition, joined the meeting, Johnson “welcomed” him with the following words: “Here is our mister stop-bombing!”* On the other hand, team members suppress any doubts to preserve the harmonious atmosphere in the team.

_____ There are also some less significant signs, but we are not going to elaborate on them, here. I don’t know whether the described symptoms revealed themselves in the party headquarters, but judging by speeches on TV and also by election results, they were also present there. In fact, the only party whose leaders did not seem to be in the grip of “groupthink” was the Citizens’ Union. But this was before the elections only. It seems that the Citizens’ Union did not expect to win with such a big difference of votes. And now, after the elections, the speeches of the leaders of the party sound somewhat euphoric. Besides, the leaders seem to over-estimate their position (signs of “groupthink”). This is more dangerous for the State than the fact that several good politicians have remained outside the Parliament.

The losing parties (and not only they) also found themselves in the grip of “group-think”. One of the signs was that they did not at all use sociological surveys, did not trust professional research or relied on a poor quality research. My friend, who is highly professional, regularly published the ratings of the parties, and the dynamics of the rating. The election results do not actually differ from the pre-election rating. Results obtained by several other sociological groups also proved to be reliable. Representatives of the parties with low rating regularly approached my friend in the pre-election period and accused him of an intentional distortion of the statistics. They based their accusations on the data of their own sociological service, providing the customer with at least 20% showings (i.e. “groupthink” again). Undesirable results are fabricated by the enemy, but my results are valid. In fact, also a victim of “groupthink” or an indecent sociologist gives his superiors desirable results that do not at all reflect reality.

Let’s wait for future elections and see what our politicians will learn by their own mistakes.

The Norwegian Refugee Council Assessed the Efficiency of the Project

Manana Darjania

In December, the Norwegian Government sent a mission to Georgia to assess the efficiency of the conflict resolution training programme. The mission was composed of the independent expert Graham Dyson, Director of the Centre for Conflict Management (Norway) and Chris Hunter, Director of the International Centre for Peacemaking and Community Development based in Moscow.

To assess the efficiency of the training, the independent expert planned to visit the centres densely populated with IDPs. In this relation, we proposed to visit the IDP population located in the Tbilisi Sea area, where, in the summer of the last year, about 50 IDPs participated in training.

Graham, a facilitator himself, had a good understanding of the difficult psychological and emotional climate prevailing in the IDP's place of location. This is caused by extremely severe social and living conditions the IDPs have been facing for seven years now. The only hope of these people is that some day they will be back in their home places, but such a hope is not realistic at the present stage. In spite of this, the people, who met the Norwegian guest, turned out to be benevolent and spontaneous. They answered willingly and with humour the questions about conflict resolution (when, where and with whom they managed to solve conflict relationship). This basically involved relationship with family members, neighbours and close people. They mentioned that the climate in such high-density centres often created conflictive and stressful situations. It is interesting to note that these people now better realise the reasons of conflict and stemming from this manage to control it. This result of our training was quite obvious. Most IDPs noted that one course of training was not enough and that they were willing to acquire deeper knowledge in this field (the comment quite familiar to us).

"I have met IDPs in many countries. Some of them live in better conditions. But this is not what is most important. The most important thing is that you managed to preserve your dignity. How did you manage to do this?" – was Graham's question.

The answers had a lot of implications, but the most significant was the fact that the people gave quite a realistic assessment of the situation not only in their own world and the IDP's world in general, but also in the entire country.

Meetings with IDPs lasted several days. It was up to the expert to identify the people for meetings (who to meet, people of what occupation, etc). He met with the training participants Colonel Suliko Khubulava (Chief of the Abkhazian Criminal Police), Vladimer Esartia (Abkhazia's Young Manager's Association, Vice President), Guram Kvaratskhelia (ex-combatant, veteran of the war in Abkhazia), student Tamuna Grigolia, etc.

Does the knowledge acquired here help you to relate with the Government? Do you manage to influence the Government in a peaceful way? The answers to these difficult questions of the Norwegian expert were quite different. Most respondents said that it would be advisable to deliver this kind of training to senior officials. This would make easy for the government to relate with people, would enable them

to learn the technique of active listening, and consequently, to understand and solve the people's problems. Some answers were definitely negative: the knowledge acquired is not enough to use it efficiently in difficult situations, like influencing senior officials or managing conflict with high level authorities. The answers to the expert's next question ("Would you like to deepen your knowledge?") were mostly positive.

Graham Dyson had the opportunity to attend the training elaborated by the centre and delivered to the people who had already undergone the first stage of training and were in the process of acquiring the facilitation technique. Dyson thinks that this new programme is necessary for the people to hold an active position in society.

The independent expert will first present his final evaluation to the Norwegian Government. At the last meeting with our centre he said that the training delivered by the centre and the quality of its work not only matched the European standards but also contained some novelties to be taken into consideration by a European facilitator working in Georgian culture.

P.S. The above was the evaluation given by Graham Dyson. Now several words about Graham Dyson himself. **Dali Berekashvili:** My impression is rather positive. I like Graham as a professional, and I also like his personality. I might be quite biased in my evaluation. It is difficult to be impartial, when the evaluator himself assesses the work of your group as highly professional. But, on the other hand, he did not mention anything promising regarding the material support, that would ensure the further viability of the programme. So, in this respect, the evaluation is not at all biased.

I liked the method, which he used for the assessment of the efficiency of our team's work. Out of the list of participants (150 people) that have undergone the training, Graham randomly selected those for future meetings. At these meetings, that took place in our absence, he asked the participants what impressions they got from the training, whether they were using the acquired knowledge, etc. Later, Graham used this information as a basis for the evaluation of the team's work.

It was interesting to learn Graham's ideas about the issues related to the work of international organisations or representatives of developed countries (that are usually very well paid) in the developing countries where they arrive to provide assistance. Upon the arrival in such a country they form their staff (driver, secretary, translator, cook, etc). The staff is composed of qualified people, since it is mandatory to know a foreign knowledge and the computer. So, seems that the people serving foreign assistants are the best, the most active and educated part of the population. The salaries of local staff are much lower as compared to the foreigners and at the same time much higher than the average salary in the country and since this is always a full time work, social life in the country somewhat dies away with the arrival of a mission there. This is one of Graham Dyson's interesting observations.



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Protracted Conflict

Material prepared by Rusudan Mshvidobadze

After the armed opposition has ceased in Georgia (opposition between Georgians and Ossetians on the one hand and Georgians and Abkhazians on the other hand), conflict has developed to a new stage, the stage known as protracted conflict in conflict resolution studies. Since this stage of opposition is quite important for the history of Georgia, this article focuses on the specialists' ideas about the nature and role of protracted conflict.

In a broad sense, conflict is a social phenomenon involving individuals, societies, states and their collectivities. Several scholars attempted to group various forms of conflict (family, community, political, ethnic, class) under one entity: social conflict. Interstate wars and other external conflicts were interpreted as subsets of social conflicts. Thus, the study of conflict was framed by multidisciplinary and holistic approaches.

Such an understanding, characteristic of the 1950s, proved to be rather justified. General principles of conflict investigation formed in that period created a basis for the development of conflict resolution studies. In the following years research gradually became compartmentalised and differentiated. While sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists and others were preoccupied with internal or domestic conflicts (civil wars, insurgencies, revolts, coups, riots, revolutions, etc), external conflict behaviour (interstate wars, crisis, invasions, border conflicts, blockades, etc), became an exclusive domain of investigation by international relations scholars. Some attempted to link these internal and external dimensions of conflict. Several approaches emerged depending on what was considered the source of internal or external conflict. A number of scholars traced domestic sources of external conflictive behaviour by focusing on domestic political structures, domestic conflict and disorders, population pressures and resource base. On the other hand, several sociologists identified external-systemic factors as independent variables responsible for domestic conflicts. S. Eisenstadt and R. Rokkan drew a conclusion that domestic conflict, revolutionary crisis, or regime breakdown could be accounted for by looking into the pattern and structure of intrusion by international political, economic and military systems into the domestic realm.

The second important development was the theoretic approach to conflict analysis following Q. Wright. K. Waltz emphasised the importance of multiple-level causation of conflict and the utility of analysing interstate conflict in terms of contrasting images of man, state and society. The study of domestic conflict was also dominated by theories addressing different levels of causation, organised around concepts like cognitive frustration-aggression, structural deformity or inter-group competition. By coupling this multilevel understanding of causation with functional issue areas, conflicts were further subcategorised into psychological, political, economic and military conflicts.

Finally, apart from this internal-external polarisation of conflict types, some students of conflict describe them by behavioural dynamics. However, regardless of source and type, conflicts are generally conceived as such only when they are overt and violent. Covert, latent or non-violent conflicts are seldom regarded as appropriate objects of study. Moreover, conflicts are understood from an organic cycle perspective. Each conflict is thought to go through a cycle of genesis, maturity, reduction and termination.

The termination of violent acts is often equated with the state of peace, which does not reflect

reality. The phase of conflict often formed in this situation does not fit into the above classification. Following E. Azar this phase is called protracted conflict. Protracted conflict does not fit into the existing classification due to a blurred demarcation between internal and external sources and actors. Moreover, there are multiple causal factors and dynamics, reflected in changing goals, actors and targets. Finally, protracted conflict does not show clear starting and terminating points.

What are the factors triggering protracted social conflict? Students of conflict resolution point to the following factors: communal content, human needs, governance and the State's role, and international linkages.

Communal content. Perhaps the most significant factor related to a protracted social conflict is the communal content of a society (We use the term 'community' as a reference to politicized groups whose members share ethnic, religious, linguistic or other cultural "identity" characteristics). There are factors responsible for the rise of politically active multicomunal societies. The first is colonial legacy. Application of the principle "divide and rule" by colonialists produced a unique political landscape in many parts of the world where a state artificially incorporated a multitude of communal groups or a nation became divided into two or more states. The second factor is a historical pattern of rivalry and contest among communal actors.

Human needs. Individuals strive to fulfil their human needs through the formation of identity groups. The most obvious ontological need is individual and communal physical survival and well-being which is contingent upon the satisfaction of material needs. In the world of physical scarcity, these basic needs are seldom evenly met. While one group of individuals may enjoy satisfaction of these needs in abundance, others do not. Grievances resulting from need deprivation are usually expressed collectively. Failure to redress these grievances by authorities cultivates a niche for a protracted social conflict.

In reality, however, the deprivation of basic material needs *per se* does not directly give birth to conflicts. The allocation or exchange of the means to satisfy such needs is a function of access to the superstructure of society, i.e., the social institutions such as political authority or market.

The lack of means to satisfy basic physical needs in Third World countries is often attributed to the nature of the economic development strategy adopted. Typically, an unbalanced, rapid-growth development strategy has distorted the traditional allocation of resources, leading to sectoral and regional imbalances. Certain groups of individuals, especially minority groups, tend to be marginalized by such rapid development strategies.

In such situations, the marginalized groups create a menu of responses and try to participate in economic decision-making, in turn determined by the overall distribution of political power.

Access to political and economic power is by and large influenced by the level of acceptance of each community. Formation and acceptance of identity thus also may be understood as a basic development need, with collective identity manifest in terms of cultural values, images, customs, language, religion, and racial heritage.

The satisfaction of needs for physical security, provision of access to political and public institutions and acceptance of communal identity are the functions of *the state*. Most states participating in protracted conflict are not able to satisfy basic human needs. At the same time, to sustain their monopoly of power, these dominant groups limit access to social institutions by other identity groups and thus often precipitate crisis of legitimacy. Such crisis exacerbates already existing conflictive situations. Protracted

social conflicts seem to be concentrated in the developing countries.

Formation of domestic social and political institutions and their impact on the role of the state are greatly influenced by the patterns of *linkage with the international system*. Two models of international linkage can be conceived

The first of these models focuses on economic dependency within the international economic system. Such a dependent relationship not only limits the autonomy of the state, but also distorts the pattern of economic development and causes the escalation of conflict.

The second of these models focuses on political and military client relationship with strong states. In a client relationship, the patron provides protection for the client state in return for the latter's loyalty, which involves some sacrifice of autonomy and independence. A final resolution or protection of conflict is largely determined by the decision of a powerful state.

Most conflicts, as classically understood, involve zero-sum outcomes in which winners and losers can be differentiated, but protracted conflict is different in this respect. It always entails negative results for the parties. This is determined by the properties of protracted conflict, which are fluctuation, excessiveness of actors and problems and the protractadness of the process. There are no winners. All the parties to these conflicts tend to be victimised. Protracted conflicts, unlike other forms of conflict, do not have clear termination points. Outcomes (military victories, negotiated agreements, etc.), insofar as they do not satisfy basic needs, contain latent conflicts, which cause further cycles of manifest conflict.

Does protracted conflict change the relationship between the involved parties comparing to what it was at the pre-conflict stage or in comparison with the relationship typical of armed conflict? If the answer is positive, what are the spheres that are most influenced by protracted conflict?

E. Azar thinks that during protracted conflict a certain psychological coarseness takes place. This is caused by permanent pressure on the involved parties, which freezes mutual perception. The cynical mood and pessimism become prevalent. Conflict demoralises leaders and immobilises the search for a peaceful solution. At the same time, there is less possibility of satisfying the parties' needs.

During protracted conflict leaders become more dependent on others' support and help. Stemming from this, external forces actively interfere into the conflict and impose on the leaders their own vision of the problem.

Decision Making

Tina Asatiani

Decision making is quite a difficult process, indeed. Every day we have to make numerous important and unimportant decisions. Which school shall I choose for my children? How shall I distribute my family budget? How shall I improve the difficult relationship with my neighbours?

We speak about decisions, successful and unsuccessful, in the spheres of political, economic and social activity and also in our everyday life, whenever we encounter a problem for which we try to find a solution. Problems are solved on the basis of an efficient decision. Presidents, big businessmen and politicians experience the strongest emotions of joy (in case of success) and frustration (in case of failure) just in this relation. Each of us has to take decisions, may be not presidential, but, nevertheless,

very important.

What is the essence of the decision making process?

Upon first inspection, we are alone when making decisions and the result in the form of the adopted alternative solely depends on our firmness, analytical ability, intelligence, etc. But if we go deeper into the process, we will be probably faced with the following questions: Can we regard this phenomenon separately from other events and processes, and, consequently, independently from other people? Can we always have adequate information on the relevant issue? Is it always possible for us to solve the issues related to others to a certain extent? If yes, how probable is it that the others will implement our individual decisions? Can we solve the problems related to other people without considering their opinion or interests? Can we make individual decisions related to those who are supposed to share and implement them?

Decision making is a social process. In most cases we depend on others' decisions and the information at their disposal. On the other hand, we often share information with others and delegate not only activity but also our responsibility. Without such an approach, the efficiency of our activity and decisions would be much lower. It is known that Richard Nixon who was a brilliant analyst and could excellently solve problems at an individual level, often experienced failure, because it was difficult for him to conduct the social process of decision making.

Stemming from the above, it is illusory to think that decisions are made at a purely personal level. It is important not only to realize and recognize this fact, but also to acquire the relevant knowledge and skills in this sphere.

So, what should we do in the situations which require from us a certain decision? In the first place, it would be reasonable to consider the following:

- *Is the problem related to other people?* You might not have enough information or knowledge, or the decision you are taking might have to be implemented by other people. In such a case, it seems to be better to spend time and energy on the involvement of corresponding people in the decision making process.
- *Are you limited in time?* If the answer is positive, you will have to take an individual decision, but remember that you will be 100% responsible for the successfulness of such a decision.
- *Are you sure that others will readily accept your decision, that is, the people whom this decision concerns will not object to it?* If the answer is negative, try to clarify this point.
- *Have you determined to what extent and in what respect you will have to involve people in the decision making process?* You might need information, only, or it might be necessary to engage all the interesting parties in this process. Another option is the delegation of the entire decision making process to the corresponding people.
- *What is the relationship between these people in terms of conflict?* If they are in conflict, the implementation of your decision might face a problem.

If you think of the above points, you will see all the aspects of the process and will try to take them into consideration. This will give firmness to your decision and will increase the probability of its implementation.

Conflict and Manipulation

Dali Berekashvili

This article presents a review of E. Shostrom's conception, which splits people into two categories –manipulators and actualizers.

E. Shostrom's predecessor, the prominent psychologist Maslow defined manipulation as an action, which aims to get a grip on the other person. Through manipulation the other person is controlled in such a skilful way that he feels himself an independent agent of his own action. A skilful manipulator inconspicuously stimulates such decisions or behaviours of his partner, which are inconsistent with the goals or interests of the latter, but are desirable for the manipulator himself.

According to E. Shostrom the typical traits of the person-actualizer are frankness and honesty, awareness of his own life, freedom, openness, spontaneity, and trust. Such a person follows his own principles. Contrary to this, the manipulator often lies to himself and other people, has a poor awareness of life, and lacks spontaneity, which leads him to apathy and boredom. He is closed, cynical and trusts no one.

The manipulator has an obsessive idea of controlling people, but the more he controls others the more he needs to be submitted to someone. The manipulator treats others like things, like tools for the achievement of his own goals, but finally he himself becomes a tool of his mercenary game. As a result he loses the ability of experiencing natural, real feelings. He loses freedom and happiness. The manipulator rigidly externalizes his inner conflict and tries to involve surrounding people into the drama of his passions.

The classification offered by Shostrom (see below) clearly describes the different life styles of these two types of personalities.

It is true that both types can be involved in conflict with surrounding people, but conflict itself largely differs in these two cases. The actualizer puts himself into danger and takes a risk, since he clearly expresses his feelings and interests. But at the same time he has a chance to really satisfy them. The actualizer's conflicts are constructive. They are like thunder. They emerge naturally and serve the solution of the problem and emotional discharge. As for the manipulator, his conflicts are planned, initiated on purpose and serve as a tool for getting material or other gain. Even when at first sight the manipulator "behaves well" (for example, avoids conflict), tension sometimes mounts to such an extent that the situation gets out of control. The reason is that the manipulator skillfully avoids open conflicts leading to the solution of the problem or the clarification of relationships, because he does not at all intend to get such a result. His is always driven by hidden interests.

Shakespeare's Richard III could serve as the most striking example of such a person. Read this book once again! Richard ruthlessly manipulates all the people, reaches the peak of power, but his life ends up in a total failure.

It is difficult to find pure actualizers or pure manipulators in real life. Most people combine the qualities of these two types. Each of us is a manipulator and actualizer at the same time and even though it might be easier for manipulators to live in modern society, this does not at all mean that their life is of a better quality.

Actualizers	Manipulators
1. Honesty (sincerity, transparency). Sincerity in every feeling, no matter what this feeling is. They are considerate and expressive	1. Lie (insincerity, slyness). Use methods, tricks and maneuvers. Ply roles. Try to impress as much as possible.
2. Awareness (response, interest, fullness of life). They are well aware of themselves as well as of other people; can have their own opinion about a piece of art or life, in gene-	2. Lack of awareness (apathy, boredom). Cannot realize the real meaning of life; have a tunnel like consciousness, that is only see and hear what they want to see and hear.
3. Freedom (spontaneity, openness). They are free to express their potential. They master their own life.	3. Control (closeness, lack of spontaneity in action). For them life is playing chess. They try to control the situation. They are also controlled by others. They try to look calm, to conceal their plans from the opponents
4. Trust (faith, principles). Deeply believe in themselves and in others, always try to be in touch with life and overcome difficulties here and now.	5. Cynicism (lack of faith). Do not trust anyone, neither yourself, nor other people! Deep in their heart, do not at all trust the human nature. They divide people into two broad categories: those, who control and those who are controlled.

Time in the Cinema and Time in Life

Gaga Nizharadze

Georgians know American movies almost better than Americans do. Georgians see them before Americans, at least. So, traditional American characters can be even considered part of our everyday life. But there is a “character” in American films (and almost only in American films) who usually remains unnoticed by the audience or cinema critics.

I mean the timer (or a clock) here, which periodically appears on the screen and records the inevitable reduction of a certain period of time. This is the period, during which the hero has to do a lot of things - beat hundreds of bad guys and switch of the timer when the figures on it are about to vanish. Otherwise a global disaster will take place. Our hero is young and brave, so he always manages to solve this extremely difficult problem. But, anyway, the blinking and squeaking timer is typical of American cinema only, and even though it sounds strange, this “character” can be regarded as a symbol of Western

civilization. The thing is that it is the West where an absolutely new understanding of time emerged, the understanding related to the invention and spread of a rewindable clock. Before and after that, in non-western cultures prevailed a dual understanding of time. According to one of the understandings time is cyclic, nothing new happens and the rule of life is established once and for all. Such a philosophy is brilliantly expressed in the book of Ecclesiastes. The other understanding implies that some things do happen, life changes, but these changes are determined by physical or external forces. So, you have to live in the present moment; anyway, you cannot change the future and the events will develop in their own way.

Upon the invention of such a clock, i.e. in about XII or XIII century, Europeans placed it just on the chapel of the church (can you imagine a mosque or an Orthodox church with a clock on it?). From that period a new understanding of time is gradually introduced. Time is unidimensional, irreversible, it runs forward and what is most important, people are able to change the future. Moreover, the future depends on man's activity. In short, the concept of progress emerged.

An impressive picture, indeed: once in fifteen minutes thaqe chime of bells would spread all over Europe. Another fifteen minutes have elapsed. Remember! You have less time left to fulfil your duty on this earth.

The new philosophy of time was not of course introduced overnight, but in Europe more and more people realized the value of time. This process was largely accelerated with the formation of capitalism, especially in England and then in America, where Benjamin Franklin (the one pictured on a hundred dollar note) imposed price on time ("Time is money").

No other civilization in the history of mankind developed as rapidly as Western civilization. The new understanding of time significantly shaped its type, with all its weak and strong sides. The West is a rapid formation and change of architectural styles, fashions, ideas, and technical inventions. History has preserved a dialogue of a Japanese aristocrat and Dutch merchant about the advantages of their countries. One of the arguments of the Japanese person was such: Does it make any sense to talk with you? Every year you are dressed in a new way. The irony of history is that once stationary Japan has shared Western philosophy. Today it values time even more than the West does and the timer participating in American films is mostly of Japanese production. But Japan is still exceptional in this respect – in no other country or culture time is valued as much as here.

In Georgia, attitude towards time more corresponds to traditional non-western models. In other words, Georgians believe that life goes on and the situation is getting better (You can often hear people saying – This country will settle down, eventually, will not it?) but this is ensured by some external forces, which are not quite clearly defined. People focus on the present but long term plans and, especially their implementation is quite an unusual thing with us. We can say that Georgians are optimists – fatalists. But time is not valued here. Lack of punctuality could be almost considered our national trait. In Tbilisi, with the exception of the underground, there is only one clock (the clock on the municipality building) that works properly.

There is something attractive in such an attitude towards time, and, I would add here, money. But on the other hand such a perspective (if the word perspective is relevant here) is extremely inefficient and in addition to that, is characteristic of the mentality of the poor. It is known that the mentality of the poor (including the irrational use of time) is the cause of poverty rather than its effect. Today Georgia is a poor country and it is up to us whether it remains like this in the future.

Readers are asked to address their feedback to the International Center on
Conflict and Negotiation (ICCN)

The Conflict Resolution Training Program in Georgia is an ICCN activity

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