

Growth and Collapse of Societal Power

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Focus of Power

- *Homo sapiens sapiens* is instinctively gregarious
- Fundamental, inescapable urges:—
 - **Propagate**—the prime directive
 - » Families exist to nurture and protect offspring, band together for mutual protection
 - **Create (perception of) order**
 - » Principle goal of human left-brain cortex
 - **Control local environment**
 - » I.e. create surrounding order, hunter/gatherer (*still...!*)
 - **Extend domain of order**
 - » I.e extend control and dominion

Infant development, bonding, assertion, control
freaking, empire building—all *very human*

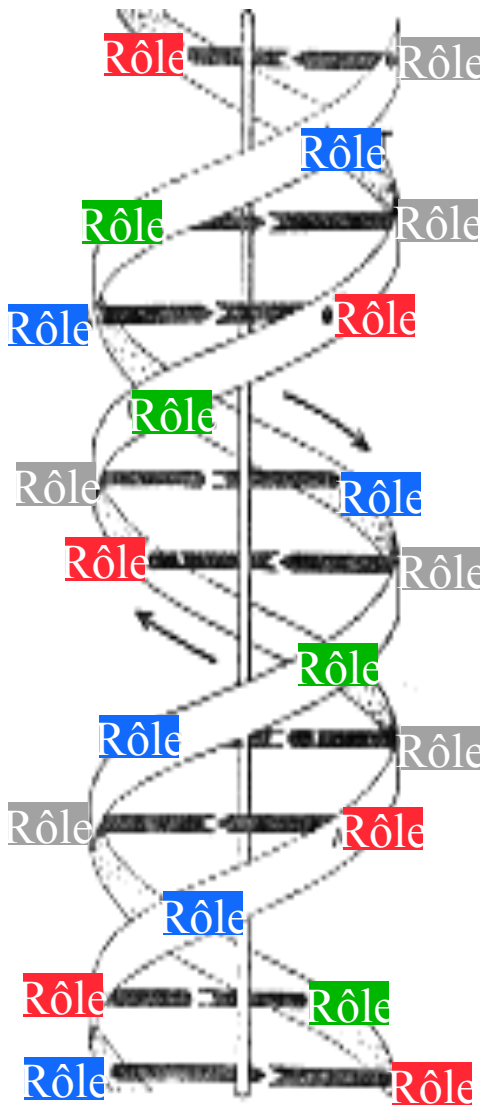
The Growth of Power

1. The ©Social Genotype
2. Belief Systems
3. Behaviour
4. Battles between Belief Systems

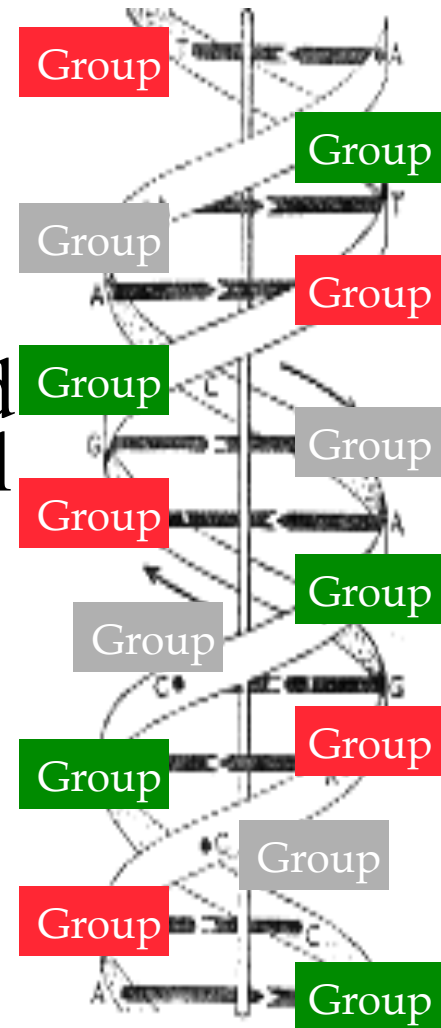
The ©Social Genotype

A Theory of Social Structure,
Belief and Behaviour

The Social Genotype[©]—Basis of Identity, Culture and Adaptive Social Behaviour



- Analogue/extension of DNA
 - expresses identity of individual.
- Social Genotype expressed in identity/culture of social group
- Rôles/groups and relationships form stable, palpable structures
- Relationships mediated by shared beliefs



Social Genotype—Aspects

- Social Genotype takes time to form within nascent social group, and time to set
- Once set, evolves only slowly, resists rapid change
 - rôle-relationship mesh “glued” by shared beliefs
- Determines the identity/culture of society or group
 - Individual behaviour coloured by cultural norms
 - New Recruits accepted only if “likely to fit in”
 - New Recruits “learn the ropes”—adopt rôle—or ejected—“immune response”
- Individuals come and go, rôle-relationship structure—and so, group behaviour—eternal (c.f. body cells replaced, identity of individual remains)

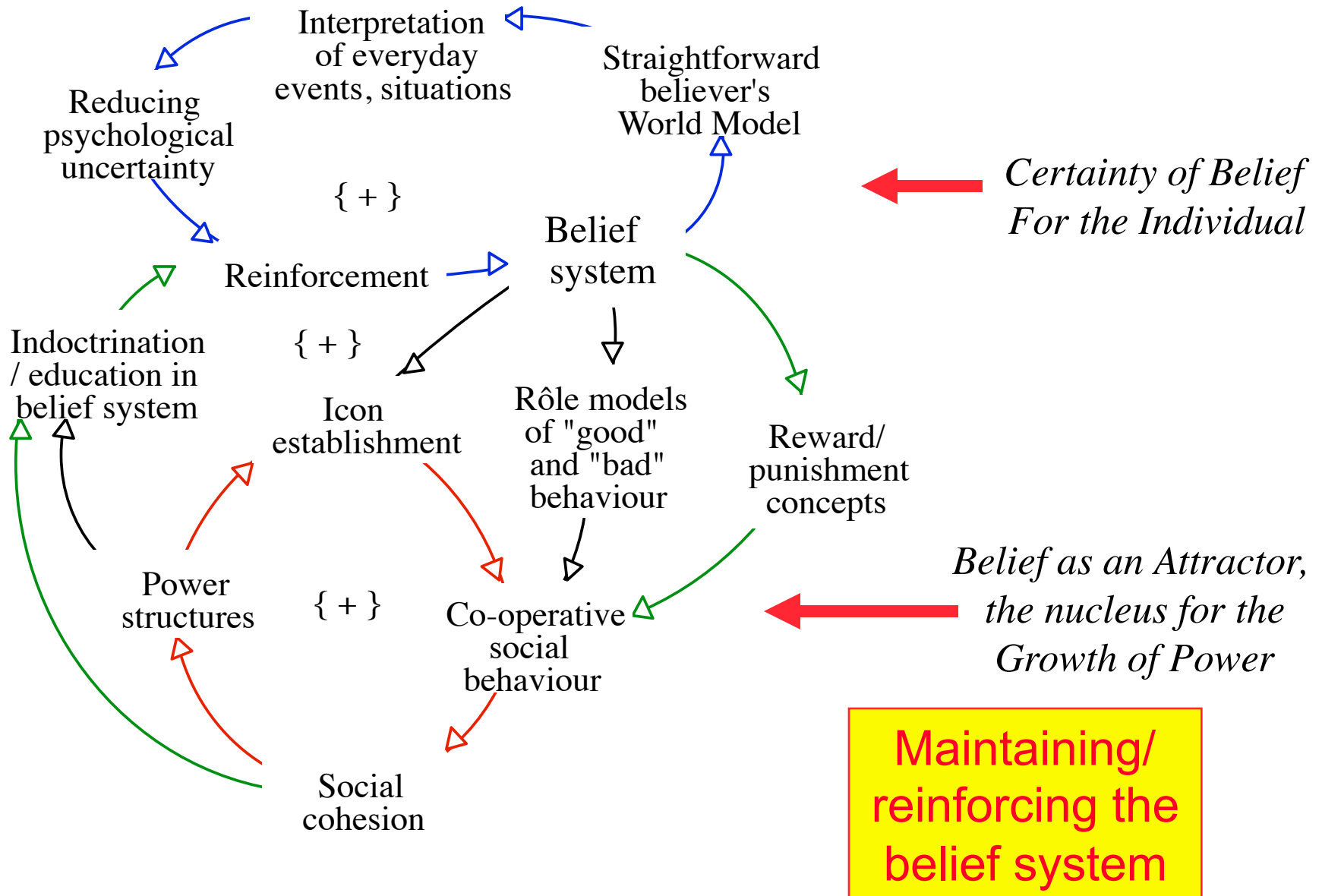
The Nature of Belief

- Beliefs permits rapid reaction in uncertain situations
 - homo sapiens evolved through swift fight or flight decisions
 - based on ability to categorize, like stereotypes
- Beliefs persist if they give “*satisfactory explanations*”
 - Belief in drugs, crime, music, youth...tenable *if* they *work*
 - “Ground truth” *irrelevant*. Beliefs not rational/logical
 - “New” beliefs continually being generated and tested
 - » without check in an individuated society with no institutionalized counter—ethics, morality, etc.
 - » Process may be chaotic in Open Societies
- Self-perpetuating through generations—in Social Genotype? (N. Ireland, Yugoslavia, Russian Religion...)

GRM—Behaviour Management



- Beliefs
- Rôles
- Stereotypes
- Categories
- Values
- Ethics
- Morals
- Ideologies
- Training



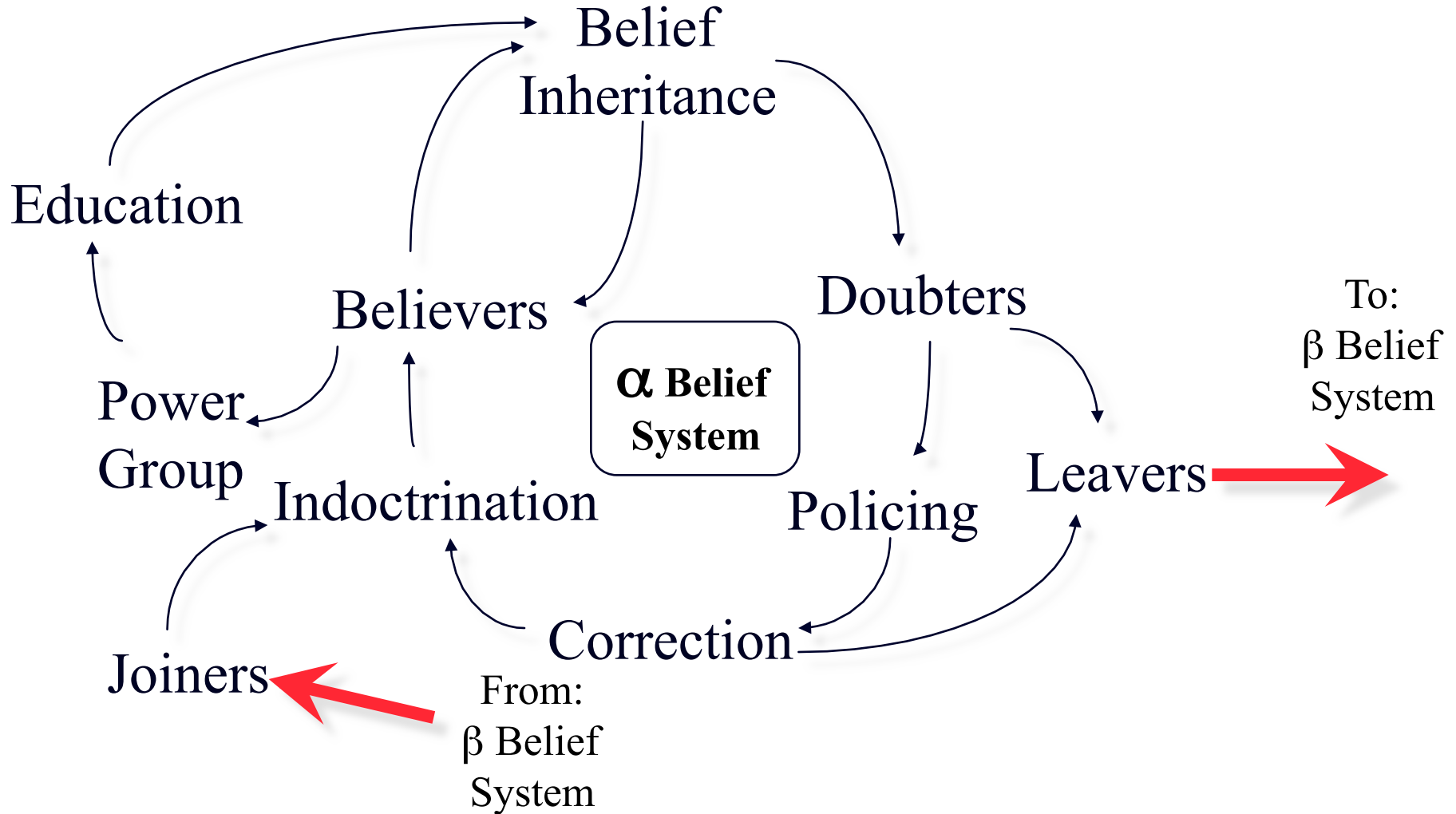
Central Rôle of Belief

- Beliefs emerge to explain the unexplainable
- Beliefs propagate *comforting perception* of order, understanding and control
- Culture and Power build around powerful ideas, ideologies and beliefs
- Shared Beliefs, it seems, are at the heart of social power, both for good and for evil
- Opposing beliefs are at the heart of power struggles
- Fundamentally, conflict is a “battle between belief systems”

C.f. *Clausewitz*— “war is an extension of politics”

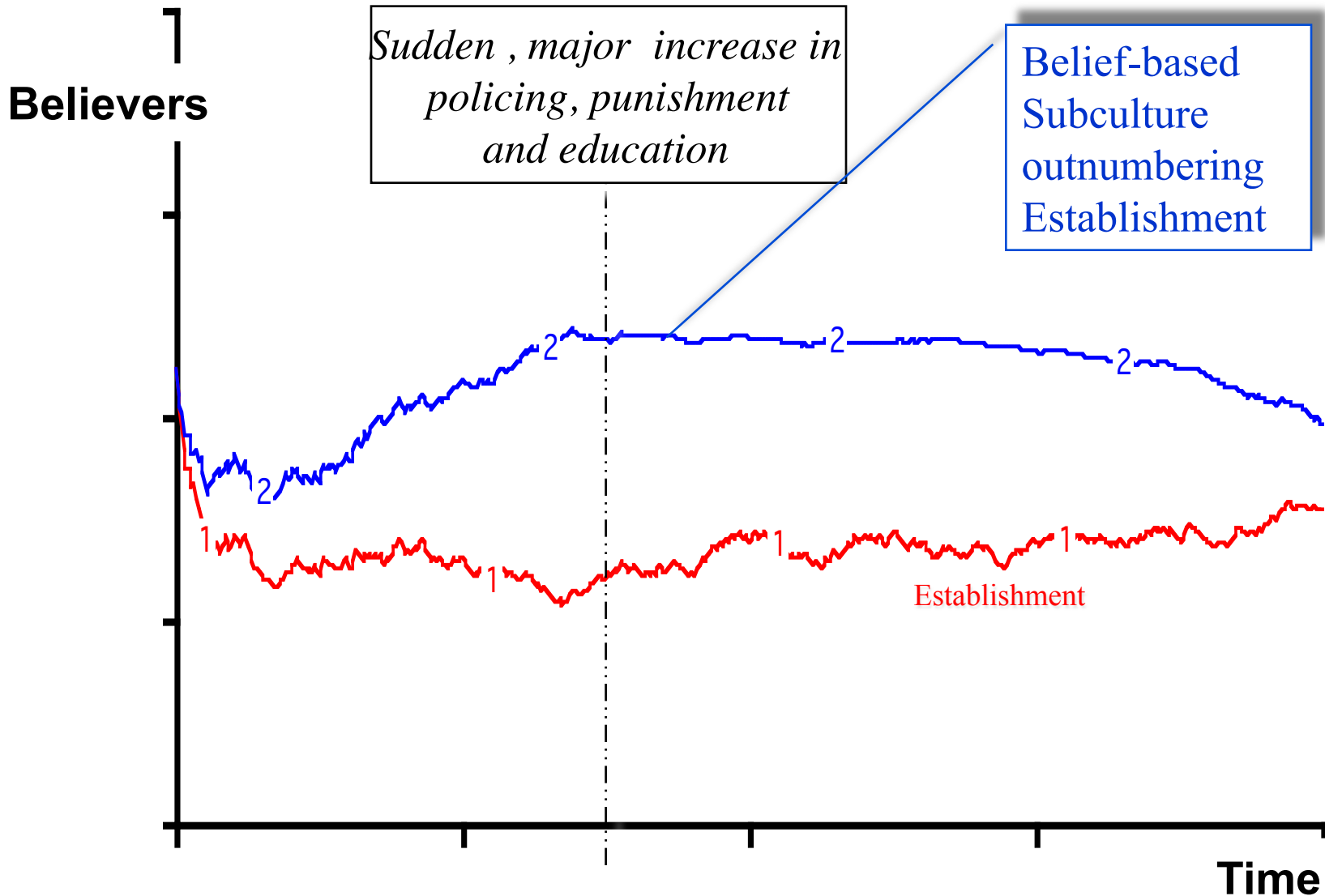
Battles between Belief Systems

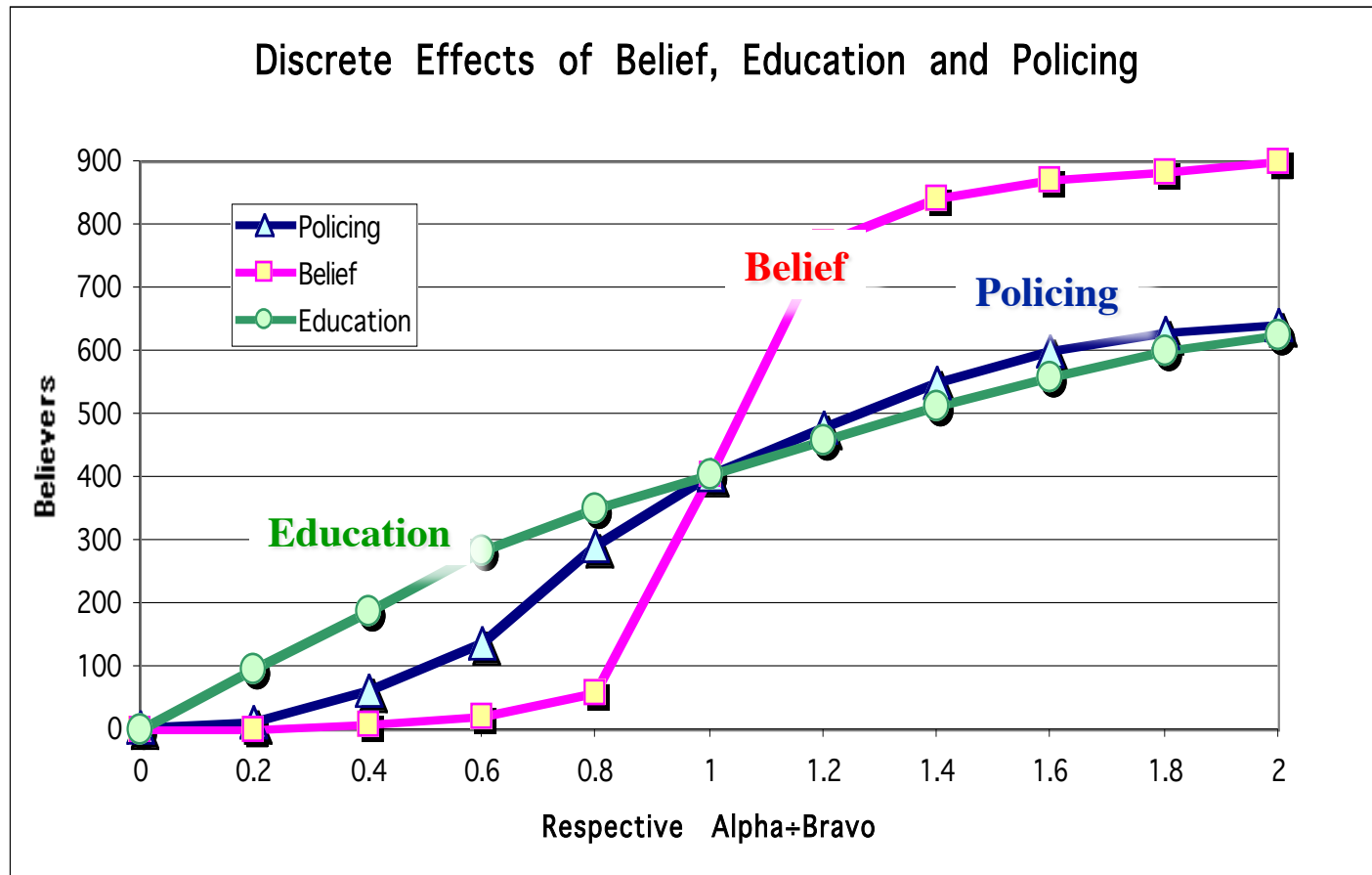
A Differential Model of Belief System Dynamics



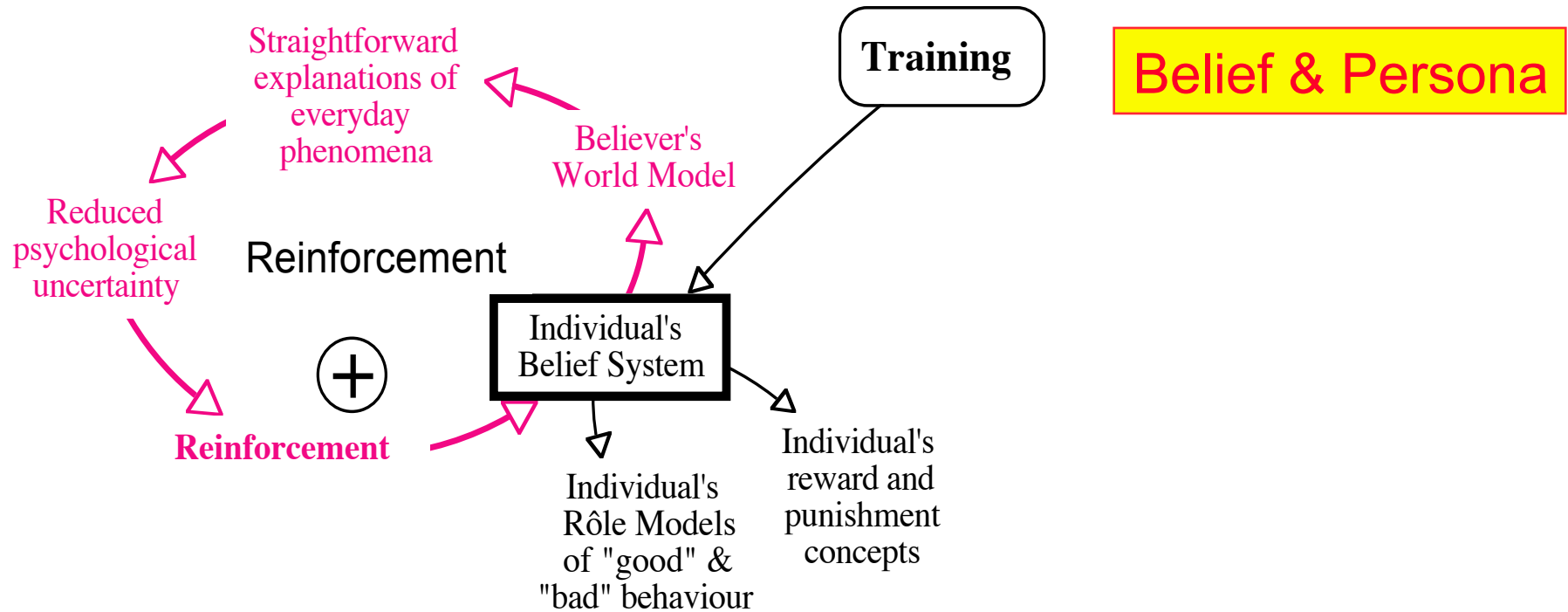
- Joining two or more such models enables *differential* interactions between belief systems to be explored

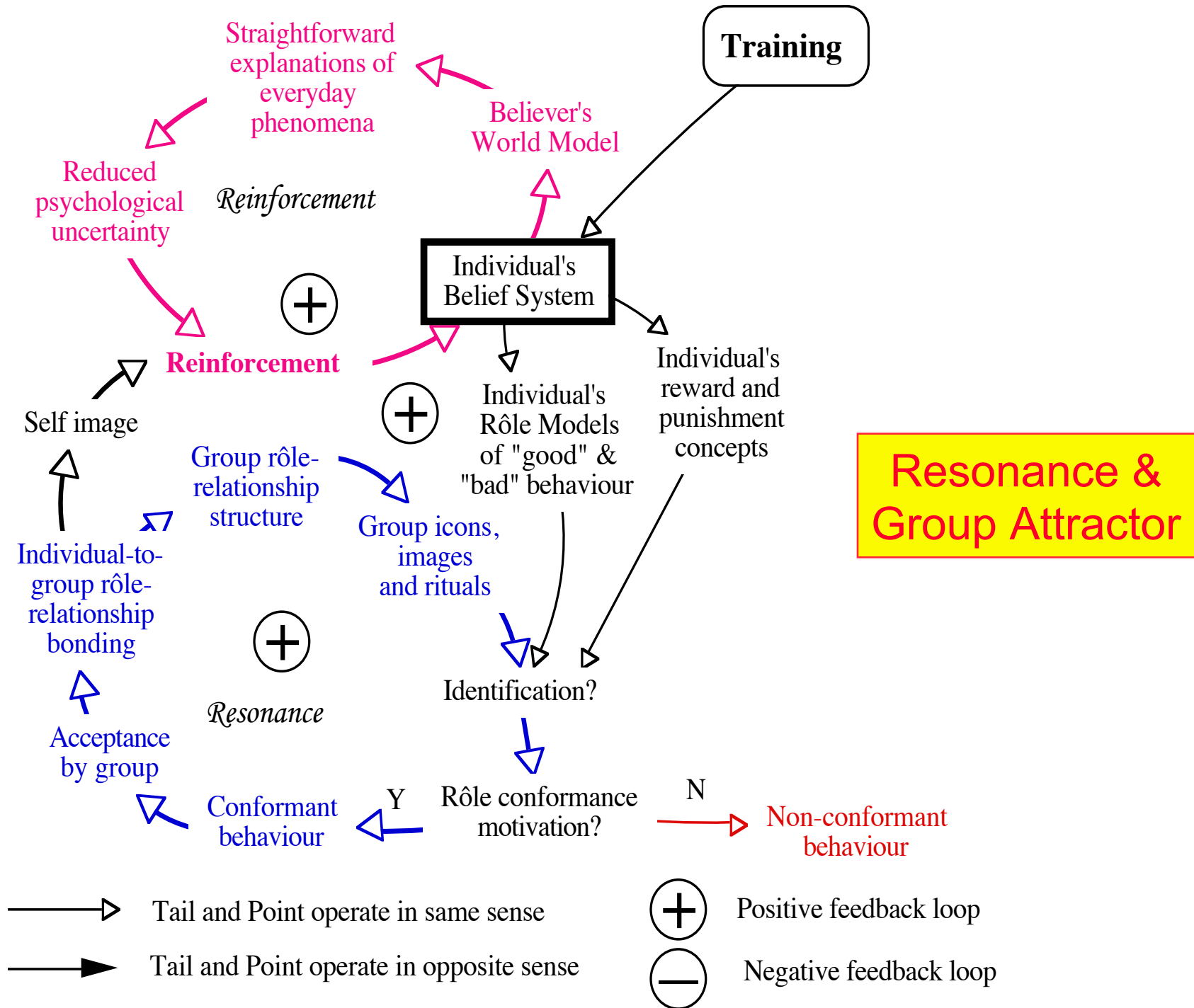
Belief Vs. Policing, Punishment and Education

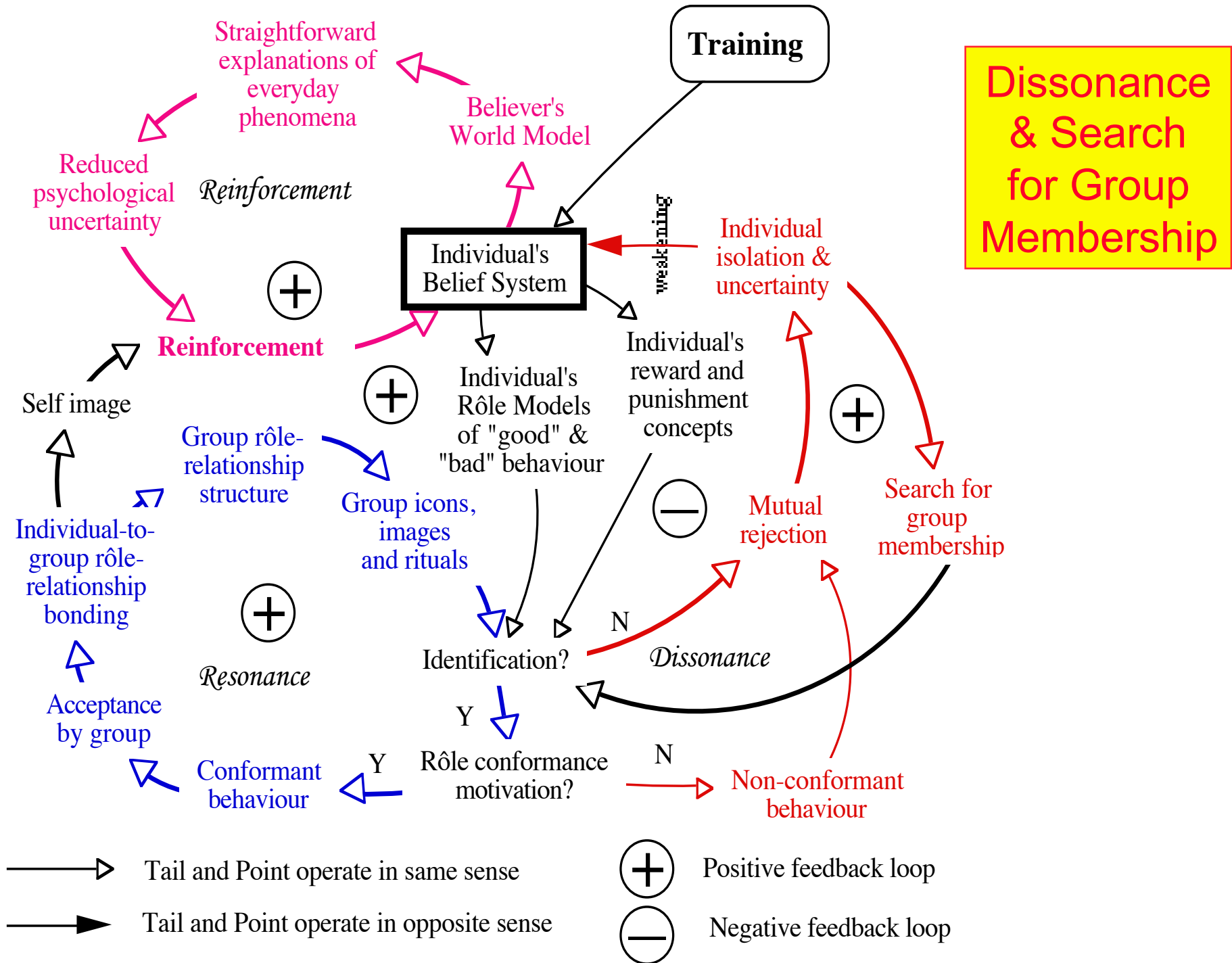


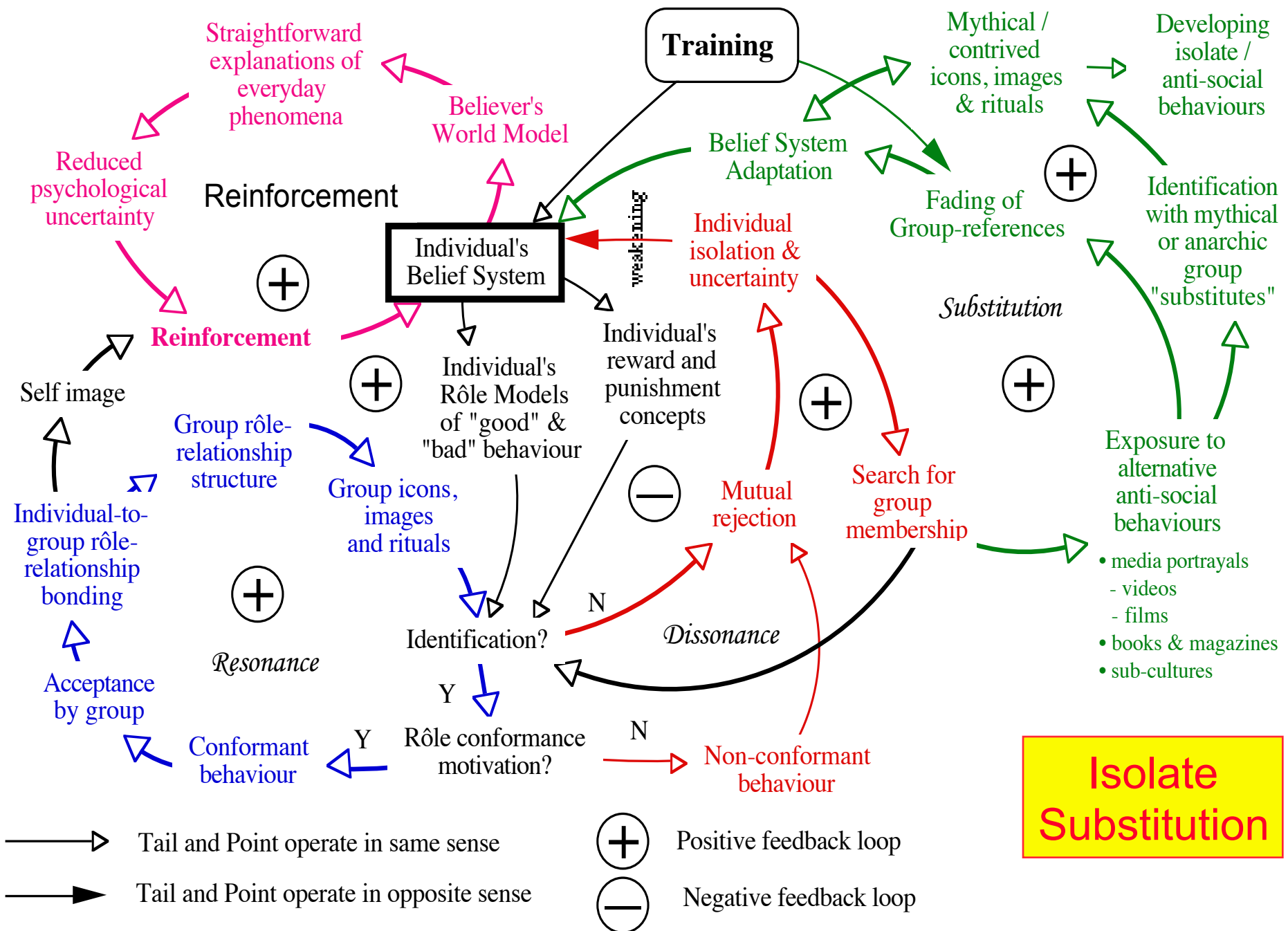


- Two identical belief systems, α and β , competing for believers.
- β Belief System is held at nominal—believers interchange according to differences in respective education/indoctrination, policing and strength of belief
- Policing—threshold effect; higher levels \rightarrow diminishing returns
- Education—even a little helps; higher levels \rightarrow diminishing returns
- Strength of Belief (“believability”) has major effect—sigmoid approximates 2-state system





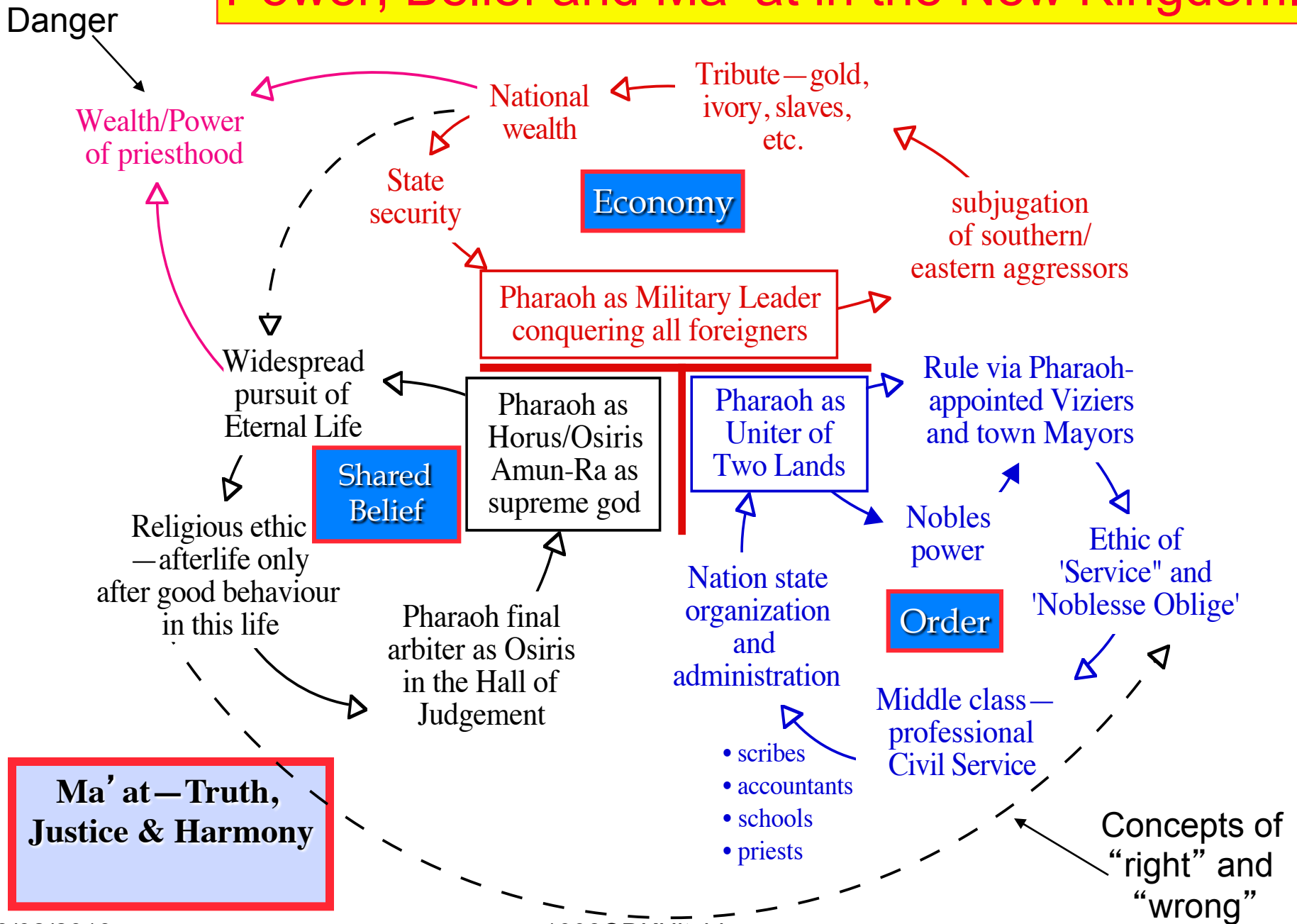




Maintaining Power

Lessons from History

Power, Belief and Ma'at in the New Kingdom.



Generalized Rise and Fall of “Epochs”

- Epochs (periods of relative stability) initiated by powerful leaders
 - “Style” of epoch set by initial leader
- Epoch stability depends on:
 - iconic, synergistic leadership
 - sound economy and infrastructure
 - shared collective unconscious / experience
 - group social ethics, morals and widely held beliefs
- Epoch breakdown caused by:
 - fluctuating economy—degradation of spirit, loss of ethical, altruistic spirit...leading to...
 - ...internecine struggle, often leading to group weakness and invasion /take-over

During Societal Maturation—Overview

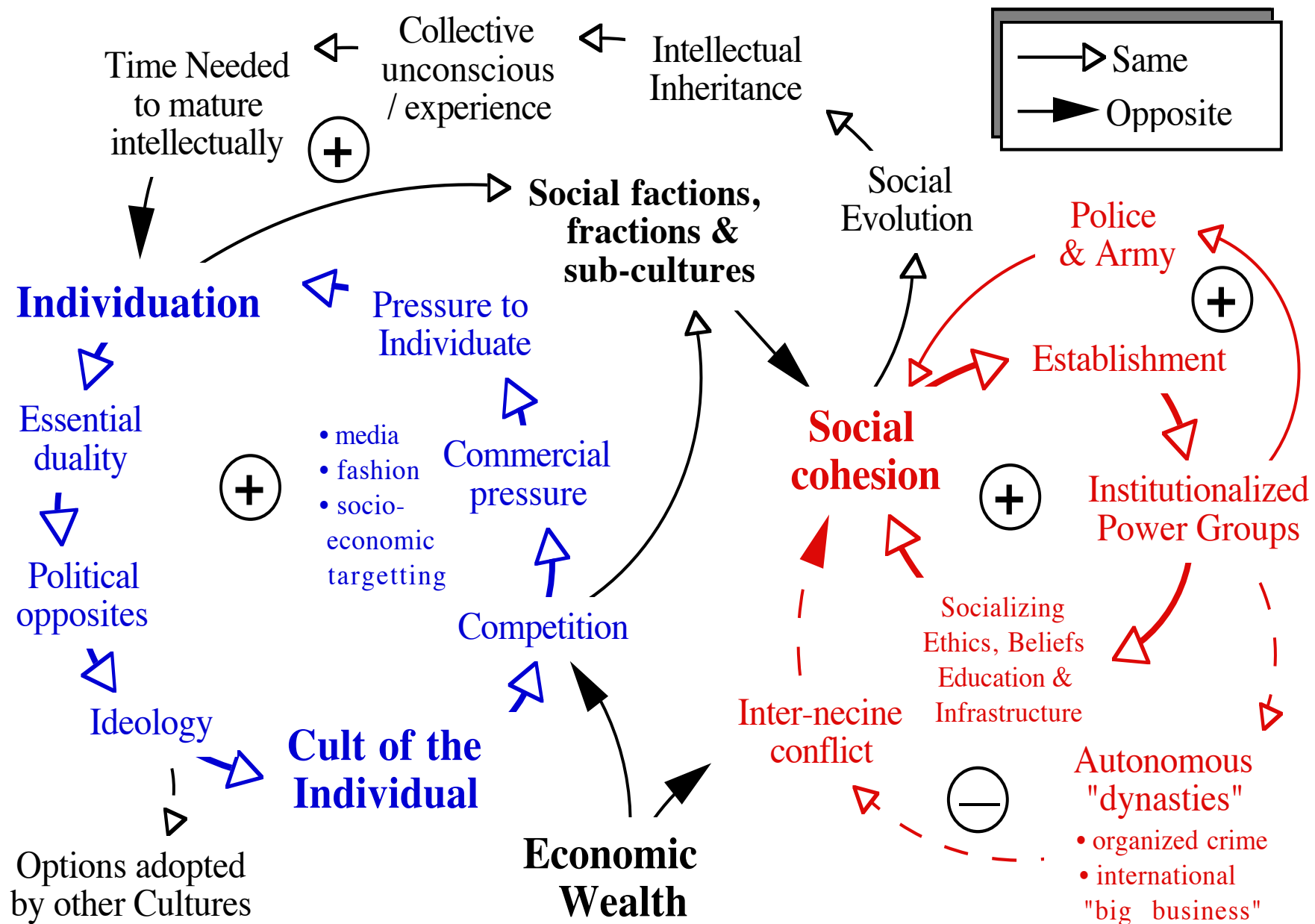
- Social groups individuate, I.e. go through stages of development just like individuals
- Gradually, maturation leads to interests in power, to individuation, to challenge of cannons and traditions
- With individuation come factions, energy absorption in internecine struggle, resistance to change, uncontrolled change, breakdown
- Avoiding loss of control—leader's guide:—
 - avoid promotion of subordinate, self-ruling groups
 - create and manage infrastructure
 - appoint/replace bureaucrats on merit, not inheritance

Seeking Contemporary Roots of Conflict

Competitive Pressure to Individuate

- Commercial pressure promotes societal factions by age, persuasion, sex:—
 - sells more fashion, music, stationery, drugs...
 - Competition seen as ideal:—
 - Icon—lone individual against all odds
 - Significantly, emergence of arcane beliefs—
 - LGM, UFOs, Corn Circles, Astrology, Pyramids, Black Magic, Ghosts, Crystals, Reflexology, Alternative Everything, Palmistry, Economics, Spiritualism, Management Science, TQM, BPR...
 - people need *some* Belief System, and it need not be rational
- Fragmenting belief system = fragmenting society

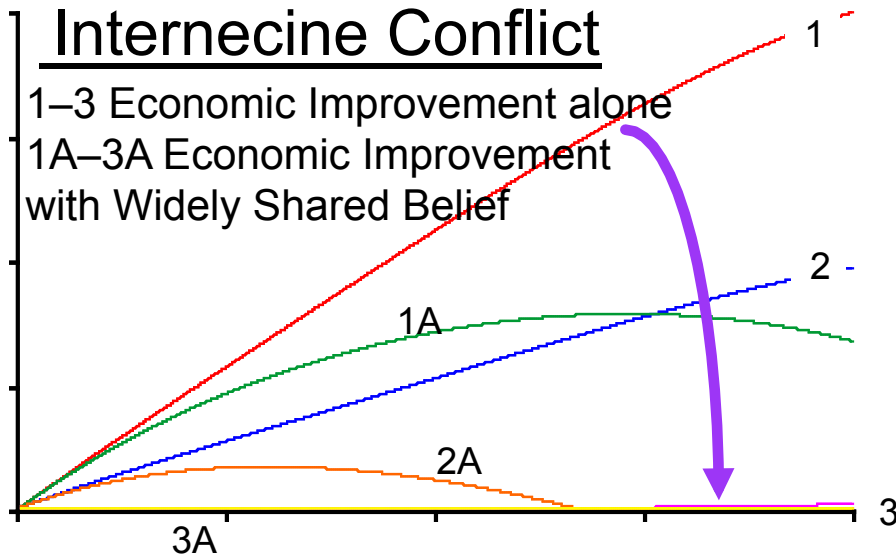
Western Culture—on a Knife Edge



Western Culture—Simulation

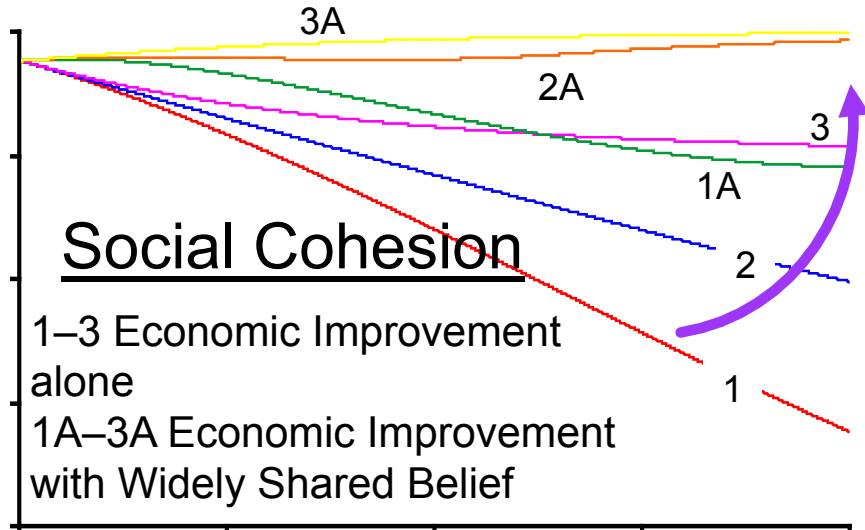
Internecline Conflict

1–3 Economic Improvement alone
1A–3A Economic Improvement
with Widely Shared Belief



Social Cohesion

1–3 Economic Improvement
alone
1A–3A Economic Improvement
with Widely Shared Belief



Social Cohesion vs. Wealth + Shared Belief

This graph shows the relationship between social cohesion, wealth, and shared belief. The y-axis is unspecified, and the x-axis is marked with '1', '2', and '3'. A red line labeled '1' declines. A blue line labeled '2' declines at a moderate slope. A green line labeled '1A' rises slightly and then declines. A purple arrow points from the peak of the red line '1' up towards the right, indicating a trend or transition.

Deduction From Analysis of Western Culture

- Factions generate spontaneously, esp. in weaker economies
 - economic pressure for competition
 - individuation
 - degraded infrastructure
- Small changes in shared belief cause big changes in social behaviour, esp. with weak economy
- Stronger economies may still generate internecine strife, but need not lose social cohesion
- Robust Economy not enough—order, shared belief/ethic/behaviour pattern needed too

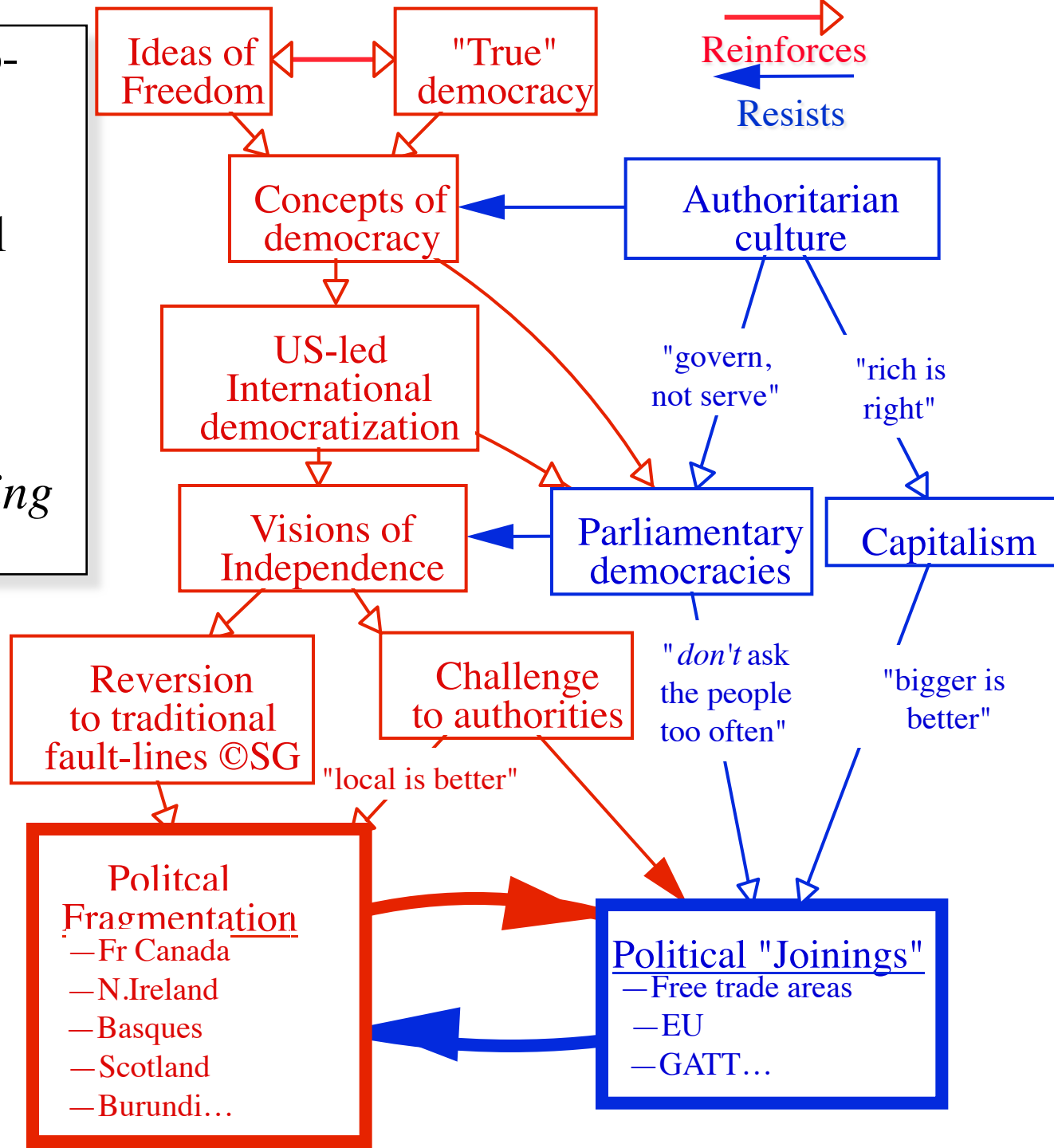
Dissolution of Power

Causes of Power Breakdown

1. Where *belief* provides social power focus (e.g. theocracy, ethnic/tribal enclave, *jihad*, gang):—
 - *invalidation of the belief, or...*
 - *overpowering by a demonstrably stronger belief*
2. Where a power-system forms from complementary, interacting parts (e.g. army, economy, ecology, political ideology)
 - *rise of dominance leading to...*
 - *suppression of interacting variety, leading to...*
 - *inflexible system, unable to adapt to environmental change*

- Represents macro-view of today's world...but...
- What is driving all this beneath the surface...?
- How will it end?

Exit stage left wringing hands in despair!



**The Nation State
Vs.
Civil Liberties
“a fight to
mutual
destruction?”**