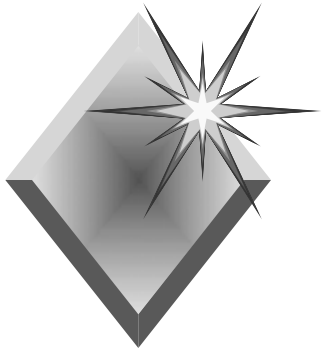

Understanding Social Dynamics, Crime & Conflict

Professor Derek K Hitchins

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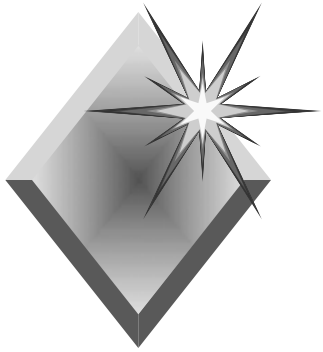

- **Belief, Behaviour and the Social Genotype**
- **Emergent Societal Conflict**
- **A Model of Social Tectonics**

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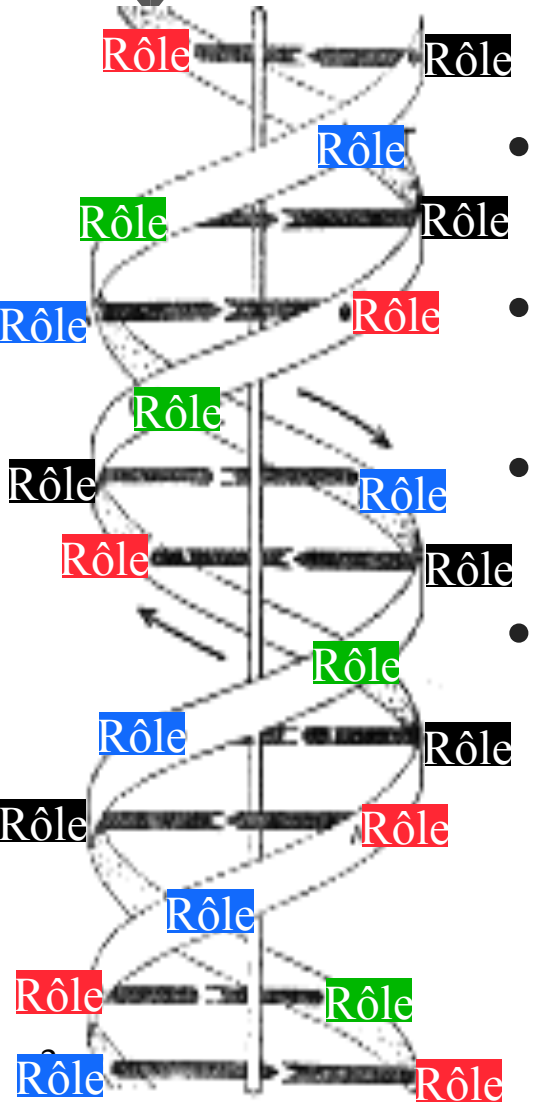
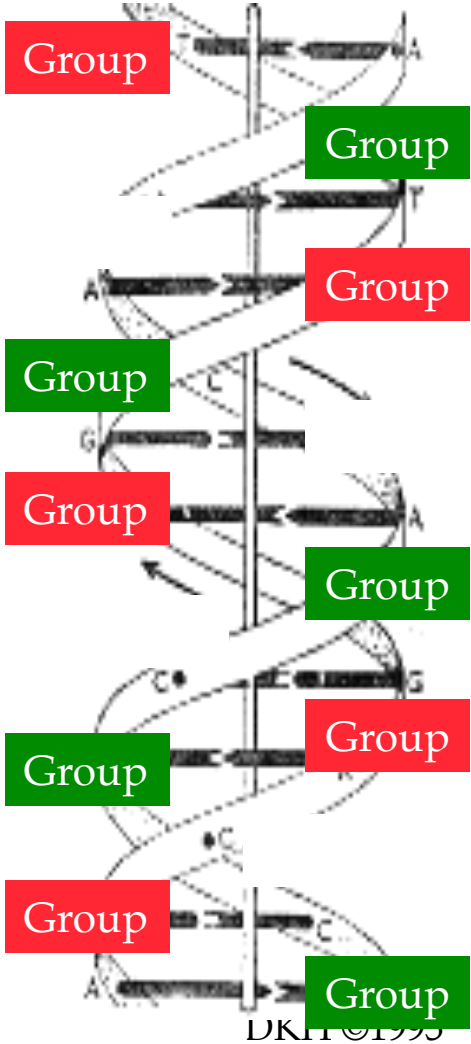
The Social Genotype© — Basis of Identity Culture and Adaptive Social Behaviour



- Analogue/extension of DNA which expresses identity of individual.
- Social Genotype expressed in identity/culture of social group
- Rôles/groups and relationships form stable, palpable structures
- Relationships mediated via infrastructure by common, shared belief system—shared attitudes, viewpoint, ethics



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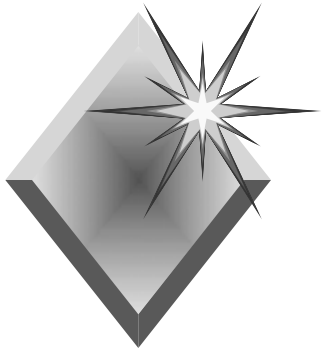

Social Genotype – Aspects

- 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 goes on (c.f. body cells replaced, identity of individual remains)

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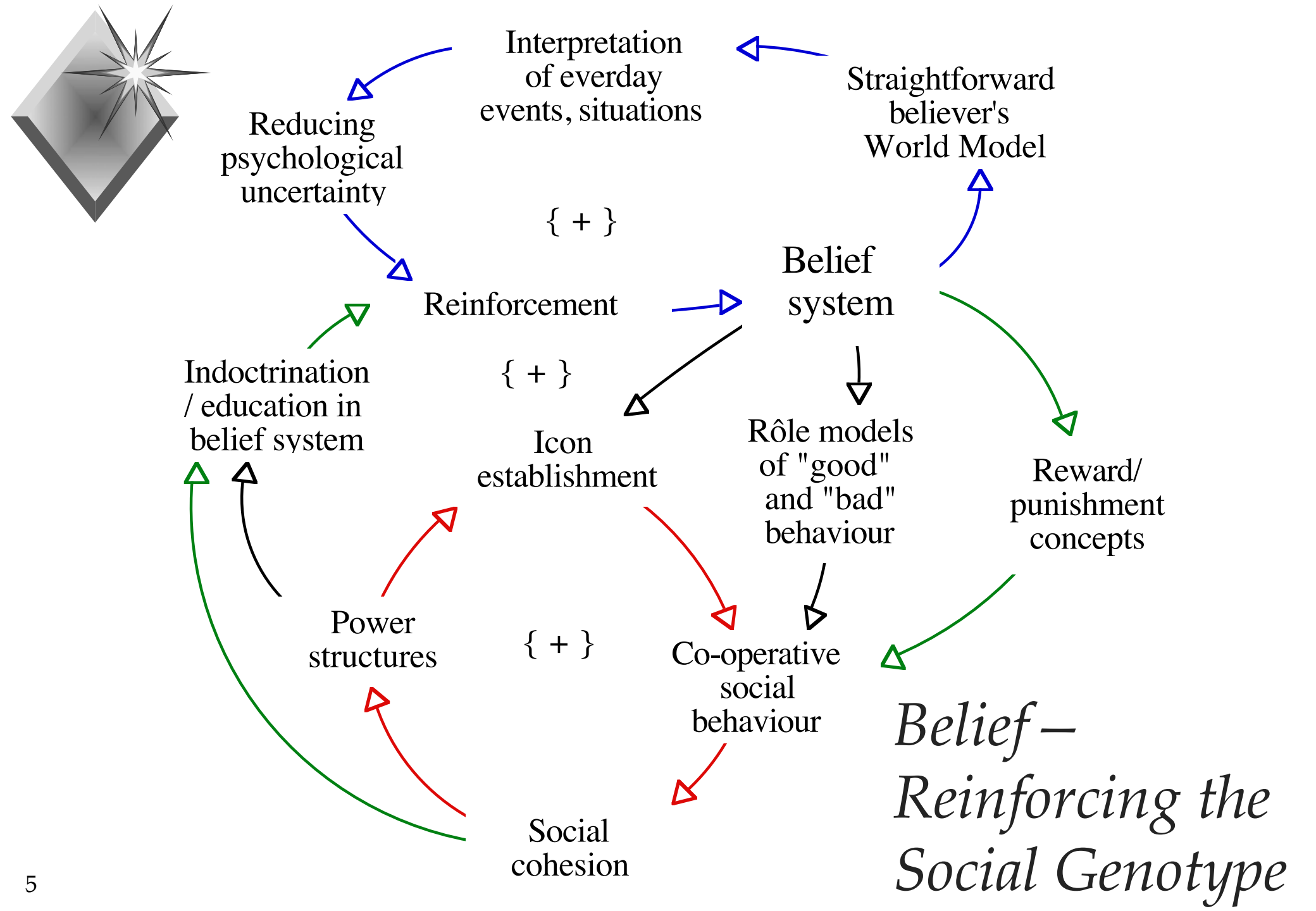
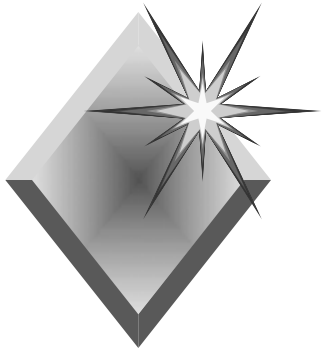


Belief – Reinforcing the Social Genotype



The Nature of Belief

- 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
- Beliefs permits rapid reaction in uncertain situations
  - homo sapiens evolved through swift fight or flight decisions
  - based on ability to categorize, like stereotypes
- Self-perpetuating through generations—in Social Genotype? (N. Ireland, Yugoslavia, Russian Religion…

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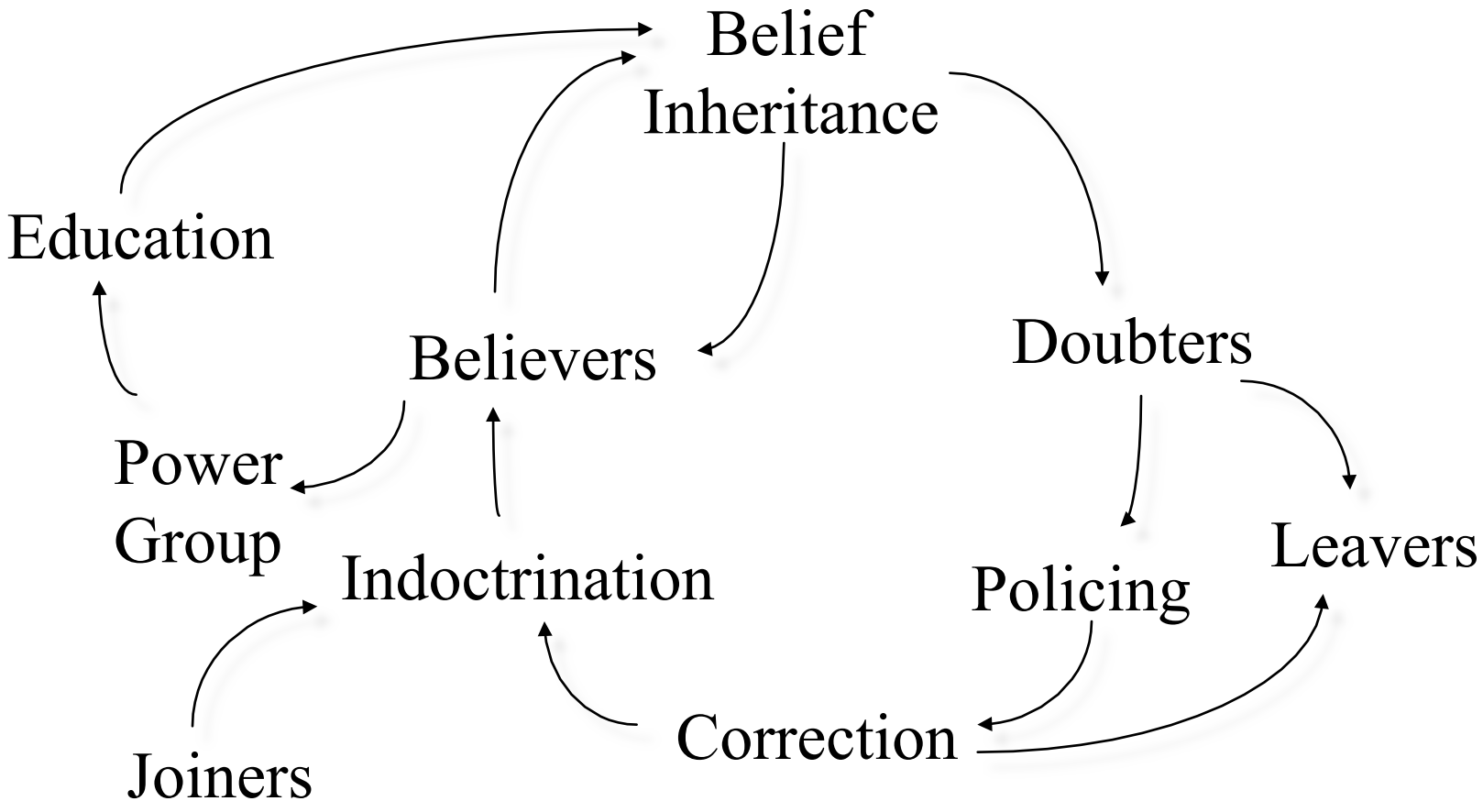
A Simple Model of Belief System Dynamics



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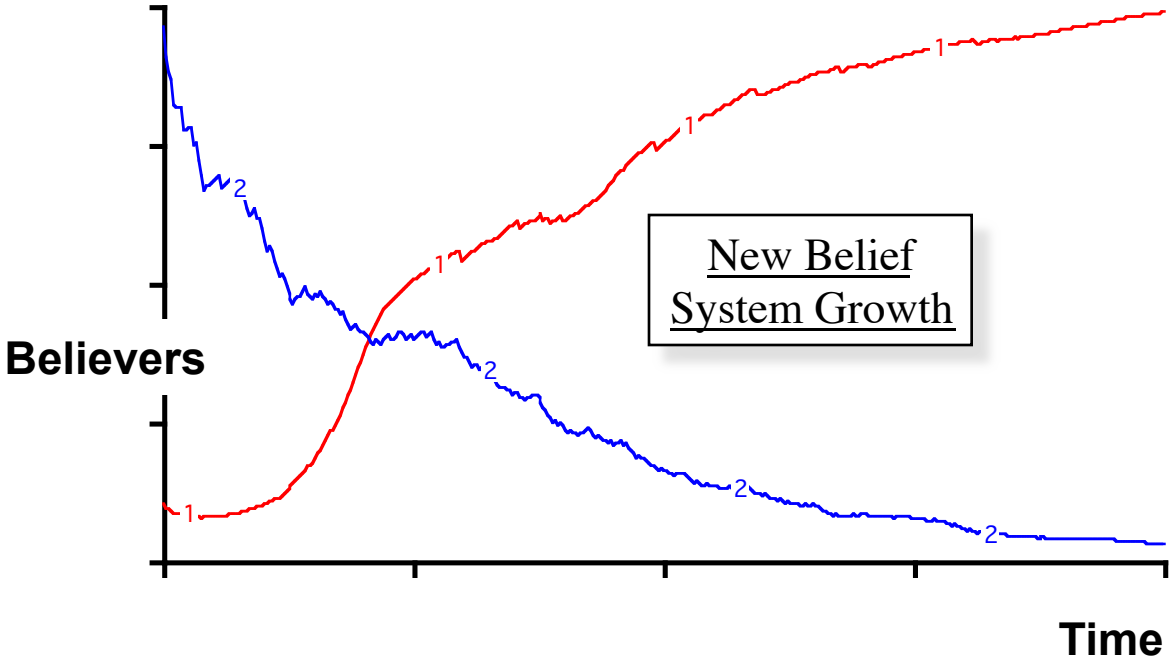
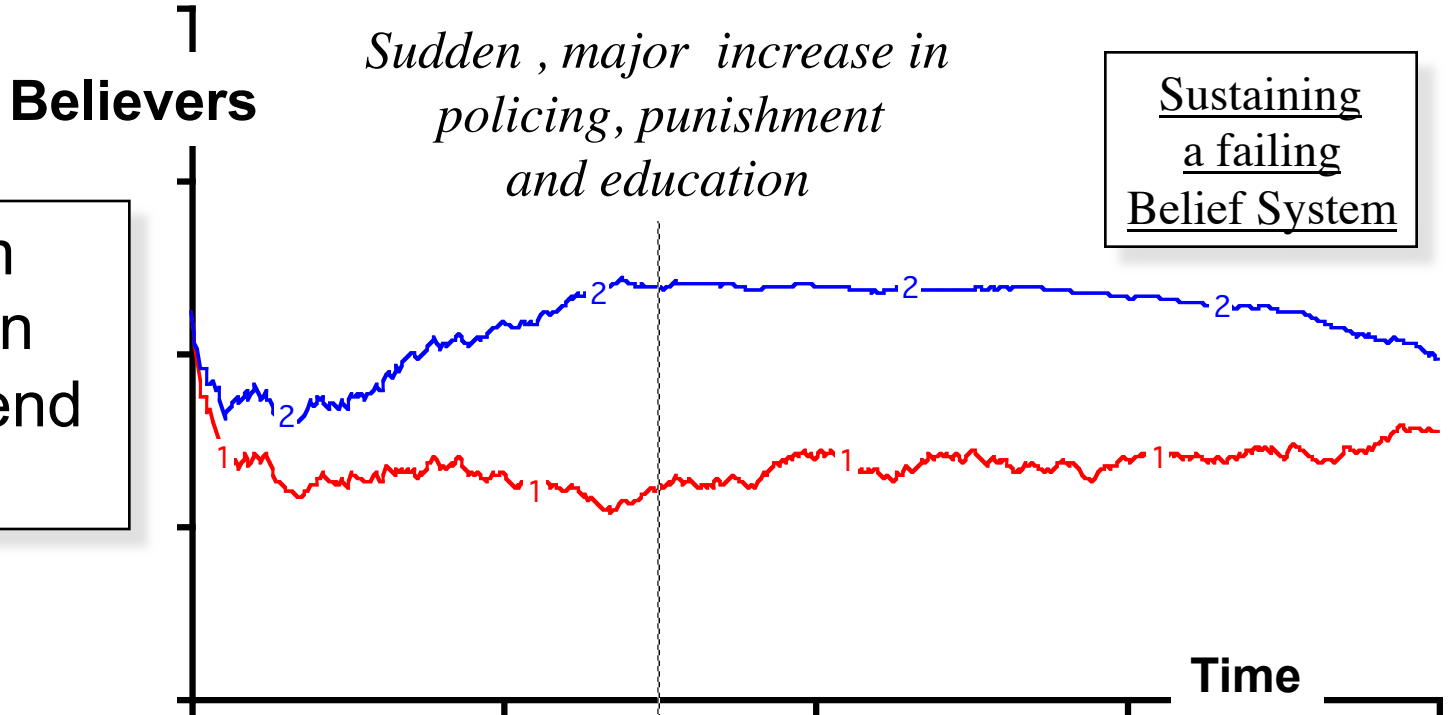
Competing Belief Systems

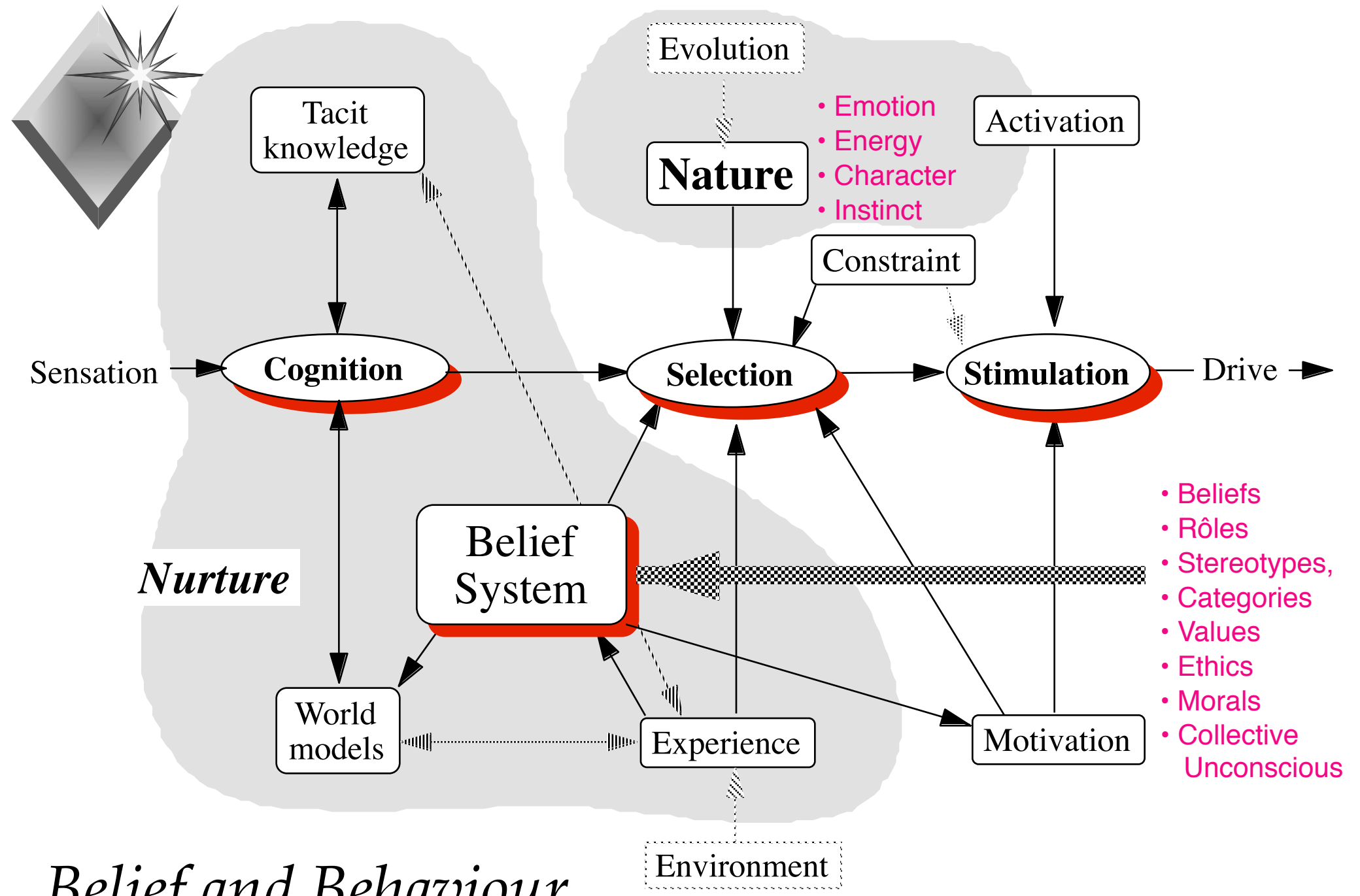


New Belief System attracts believers if :—

- self-re-inforcing
- supported by education and regulation

Failing Belief System is v. difficult to sustain once a downward trend is established





Belief and Behaviour

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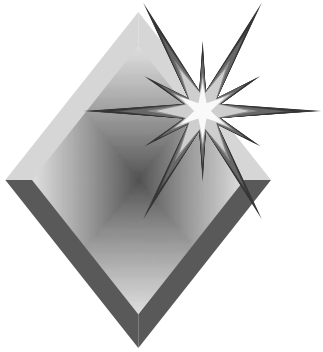

- Belief, Behaviour and the Social Genotype
- **Emergent Societal Conflict**
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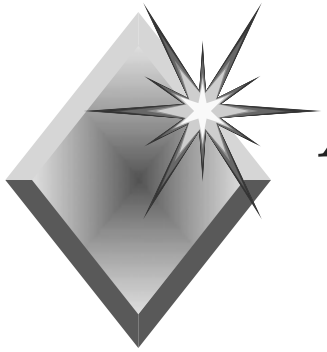

Avoiding Some Dangers of Social Analysis

- Societal behaviour stems from multitude of interactions between myriad of components in changing environment
  - essentially, impossible
  - like forecasting the weather, broad trends predictable only
- Analysis coloured by viewpoints of analyst—political, economic, cultural, ethnic—hence, prejudicial, pejorative
- Need method for handling complexity and subjectivity
- Based on analogies between emergence of societal conflict in comparable past societies and today's societies with their sources of conflict
- Ancient Egypt's 3 quite different Kingdoms offer surprisingly rich model

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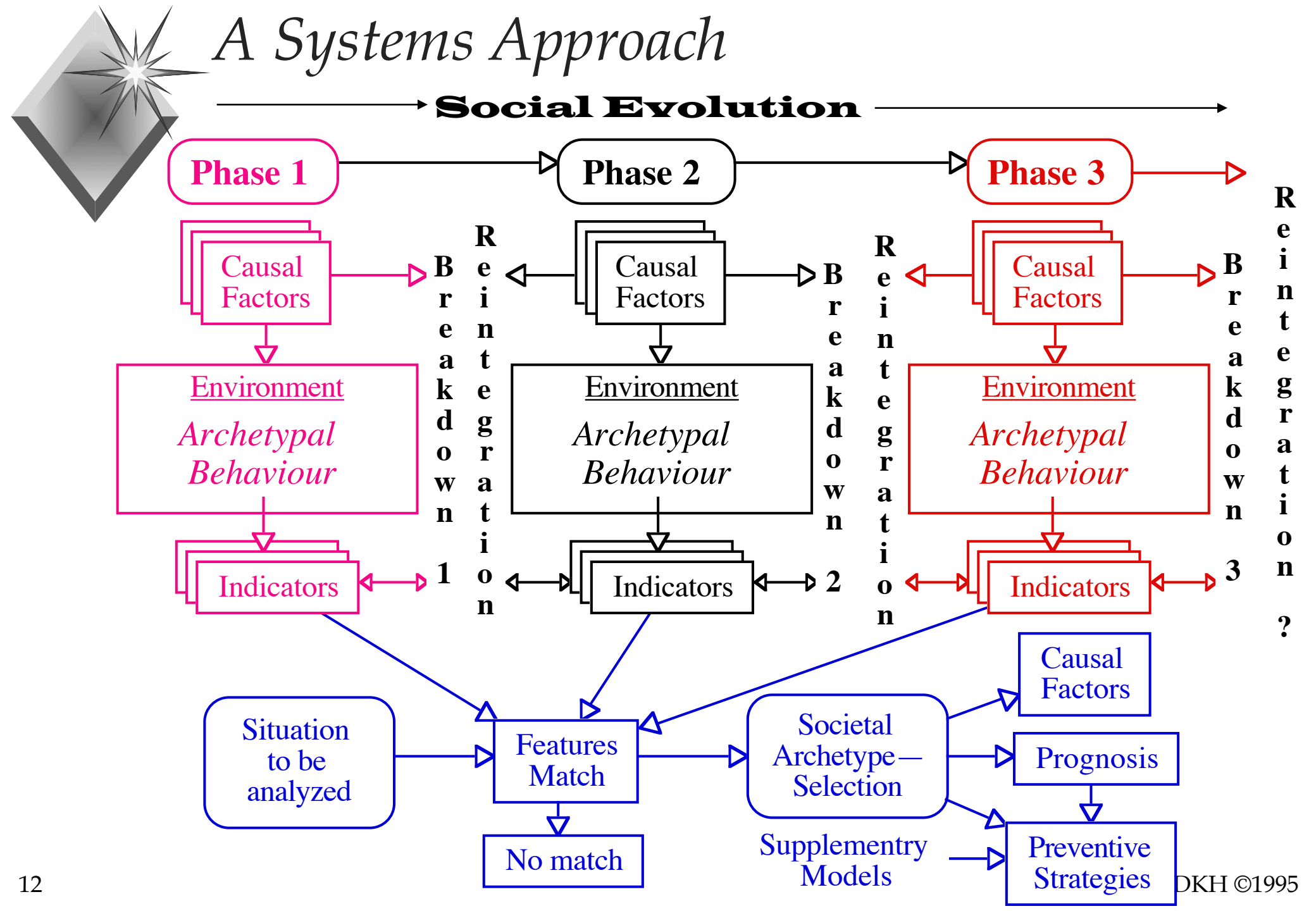
A Systems Approach



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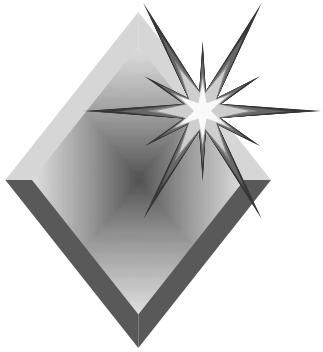

The Societal Archetypes

Each Archetype is referenced by a Letter, A —J respectively.

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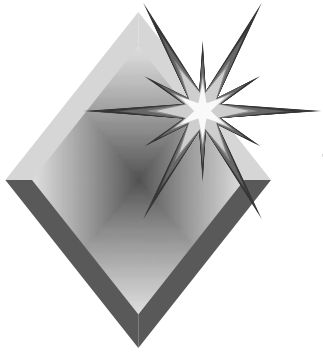

Psychology of Social Change – Jung

- Collective unconscious explains many less rational, otherwise inexplicable, apprehensions of human psyche at its most profound level
- Change, and resistance to change, relate to the psyche of the individual and the group.

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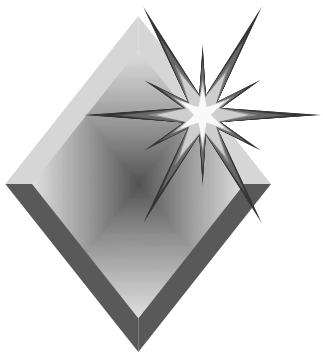

Collective Unconscious and Individuation – C G Jung

- Collective unconscious…
  - *common psychological inheritance of all men living from all men of the past*
- …and individuation
  - *progress towards maturity experienced by the self in which the self acquires awareness of its own individuality. Marks the transition from collective experience/ unconscious to identification by the individual of specific responses to his environment*

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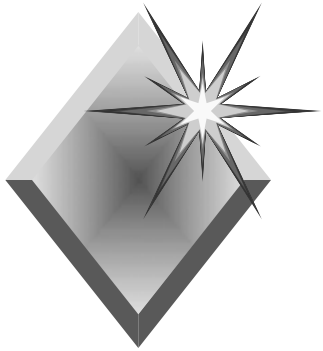

Societal Individuation

- Personal individuation may be usefully compared with individuation of a Society/Culture
- Need a Pristine Society, one with chthonic inheritance untainted by foreign intrusion, for valid analogy
- To understand cultural behaviour, essential to see it in context of degree of societal individuation—early in process, there is extended group behaviour, little individual personality

Michael Rice—Egypt's Making

- By extension, this Pristine Society presents archetypal models of societal behaviour at various stages which we may apply to today's societies, companies, businesses…

Derek Hitchins

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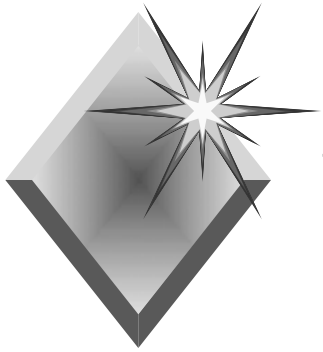

Pristine Society

- Ancient Egypt started as a Pristine Society, transitioning from Neolithic to Bronze Age without significant intrusion from any other culture, isolated by surrounding deserts—c.f. unconscious, controlled experiment
- Ancient Egyptians—highly intelligent, developed degree of artistic brilliance, *non pareil*
- Their civilization underwent three upheavals, each for quite different reasons…
- …despite which their beliefs endured for 5000 years…

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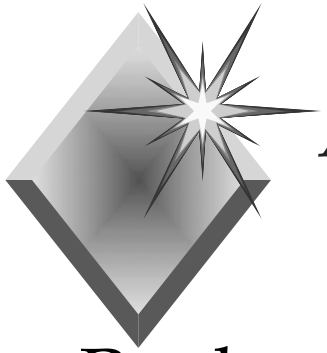


Ancient Egyptian Periods

- Predynastic, Archaic and Old Kingdom
  - c.5000 BC to 2250 BC—isolated society—creative brilliance
  - Breakdown:—internal power struggles over failing economy
- Middle Kingdom
  - 2035 BC to 1668 BC—ethics, morals and literature
  - Breakdown—failing economy, Hyksos intrusion, absorption
- New Kingdom
  - 1550 to 1070 BC—open society—military conquest
  - Breakdown—failing economy, military losses, expanding Mediterranean cultures
  - a loss of confidence in the Egyptian Psyche

The 'Ages' of Ancient Egypt

Architect of Zoser's Stepped Pyramid. Revered as a Healer

The Golden Age of innocence, of a wholly divine being as Pharaoh, of the certainty of his afterlife, and of the eternity of Egypt The Nile valley seen as Paradise. Isolated from the rest of the world

Khafre-Chefron-2558-2532. Builder of the 2nd largest pyramid at Giza. Note the look of certainty with which he faces his life in the Beyond

First Inter-mediate Period

Senusret III-12th Dynasty, 1878-1841

Development of codes of Conduct, literature, v. beautiful jewellery. Beginnings of disastrous contact with outer world– the Hyksos

Second Inter-mediate Period

Tuthmosis III 1504-1450. High point of New Kingdom

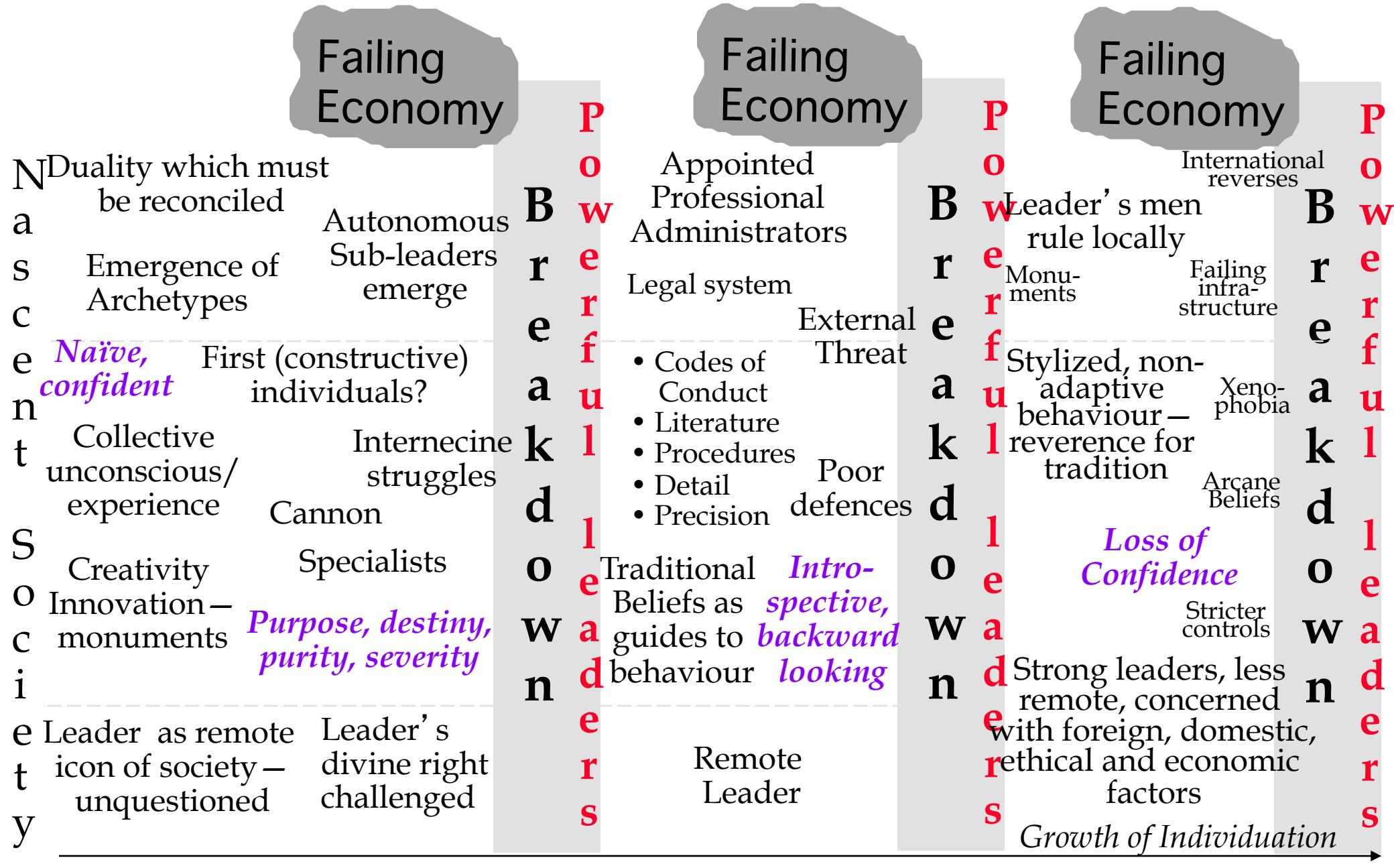
The military state, with conquests against Kush, Libya, Syria, etc. At its height, highly successful materially as well as spiritually, although Pharaoh was reduced to one god amongst many. Many major architectural achievements, noted more for size and number than purity of form.

Akhenaton forbade worship of all gods, including Amun-Re, in favour of Aton, the Solar Disk. He neglected defence and economy, and shook the confidence of Egypt. Akhenaton marked the downturn of the Egyptian psyche which never recovered from the worship of Aton

Akhenaton 1350-1334. Heretic monotheist. Note v. peculiar shape

Third Inter-mediate Period

Social Evolution – Societal Archetype 'A'



Pristine Societal Development

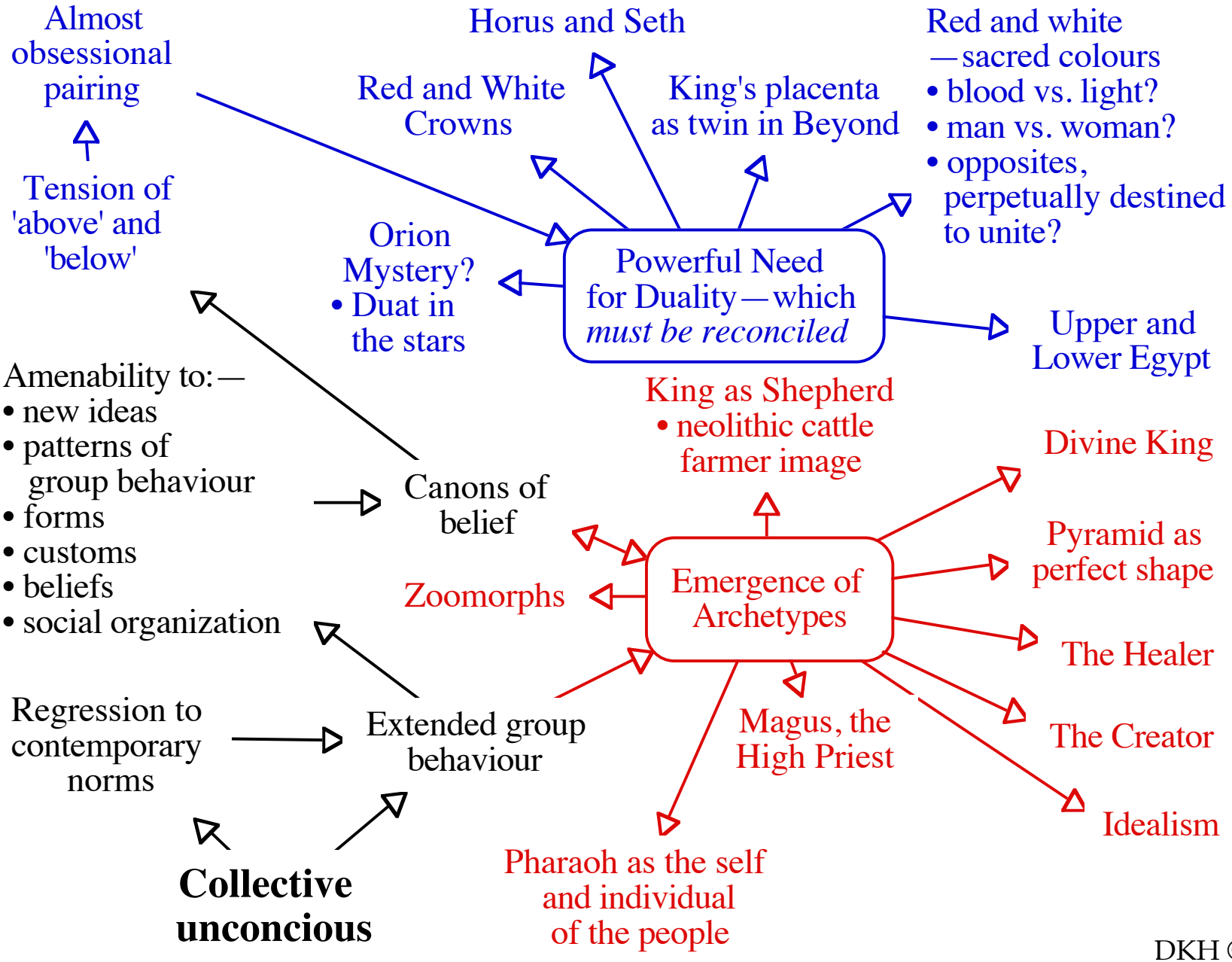
Time and Growth in Collective Unconscious

Tribes Tribal Groupings	Chthonic beliefs/totems	Family beliefs/gods	Naïve, confident, certain	Infrastructure	
Extended Society	Unique Divine Being	Establishment Belief	***Purpose, destiny, purity, severity***		Cannon Monumental Projects
Provincial Structure Feudal Dynasties	Competing Gods, priests	Competing Pantheons of Provincial beliefs/gods	Ideals and Ideologies		Icons of Beliefs
Faltering Economy, Civil Conflict, fragmentation, partial breakdown					
Tribal Groupings	Chthonic beliefs/totems	Family beliefs/gods	Loss of Confidence		Insubstantial Monuments and Substitutes

Society at the breakdown **need** not revert to its former condition. Four factors have changed. 1. Their shared, collective experience/unconscious. 2. A shared belief, with visible icons, rituals and cannon to maintain that belief (SG) 3. A memory of *A Golden Age* which all can aspire to regain. 4. An Infrastructure which maintains their ability to share and interchange across boundaries

Parallels to all of these factors are visible in forming and reforming groups today.

B. Collective Phase – Duality & Archetypes



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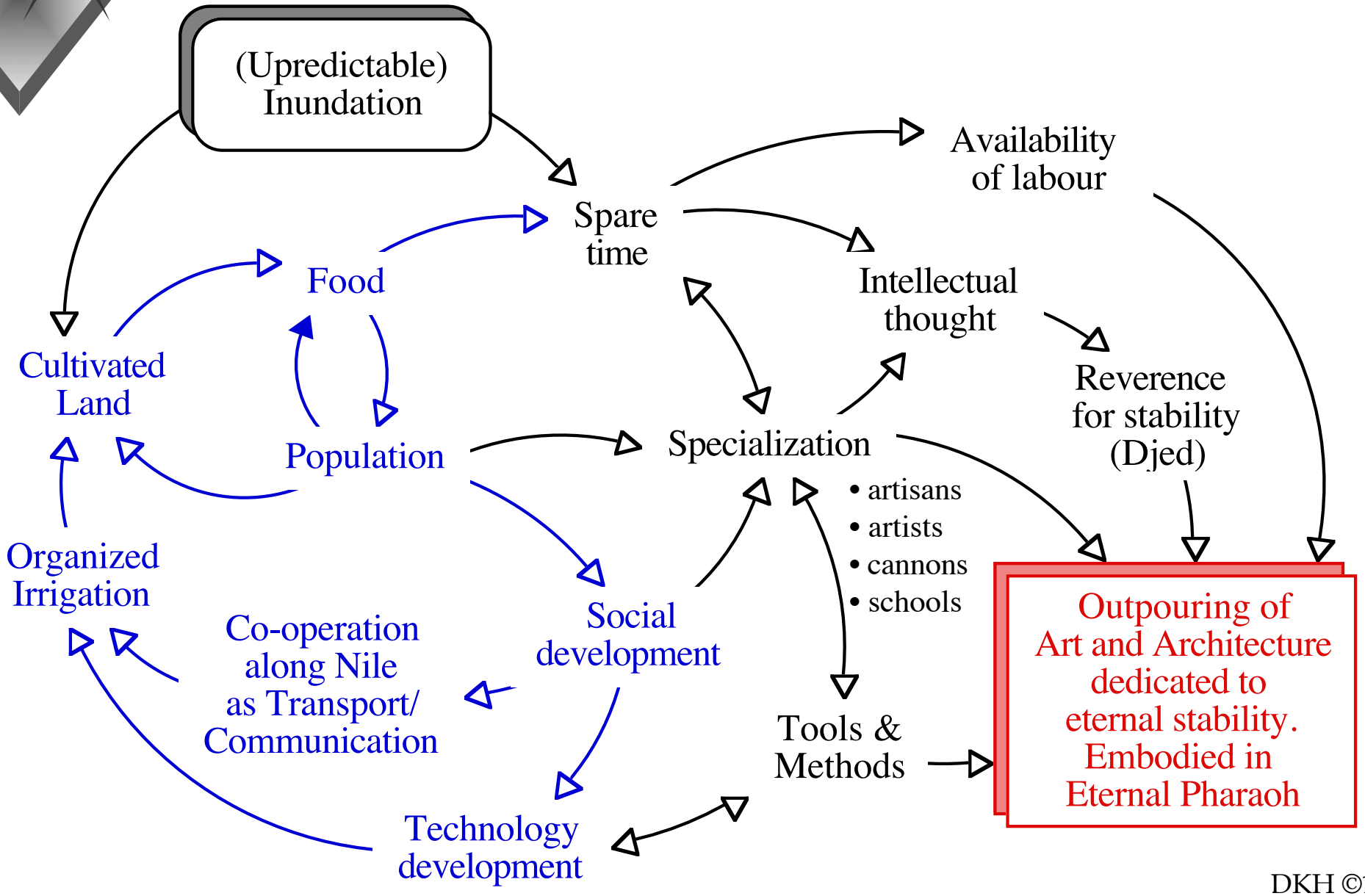
Archaic and Old Egypt – C. *Collective Social Power, Creativity ,Innovation & Belief*



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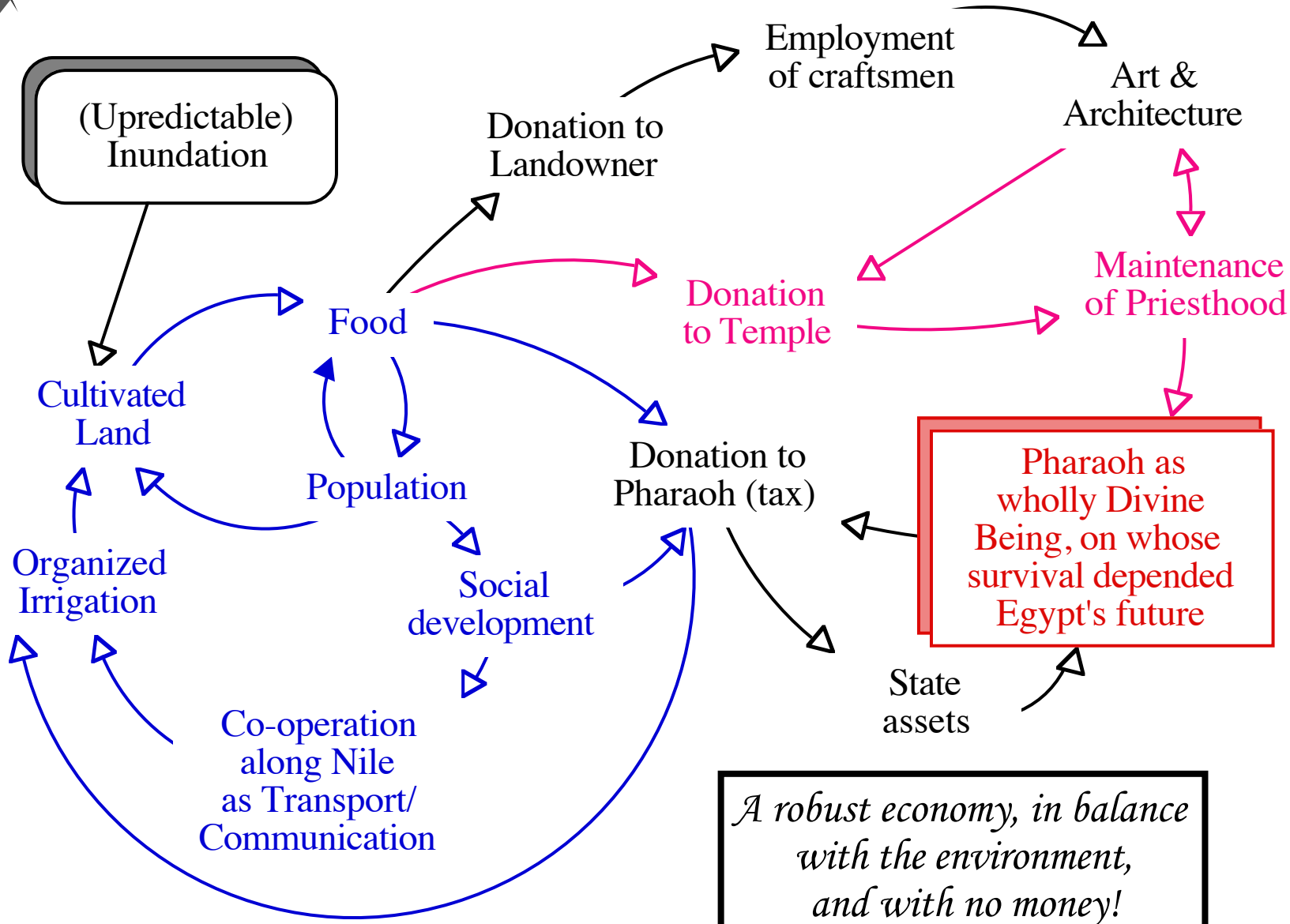
Old Kingdom —*D. Robust, Widget-making Economy in Balance with Environment,*



A robust economy, in balance with the environment, and with no money!

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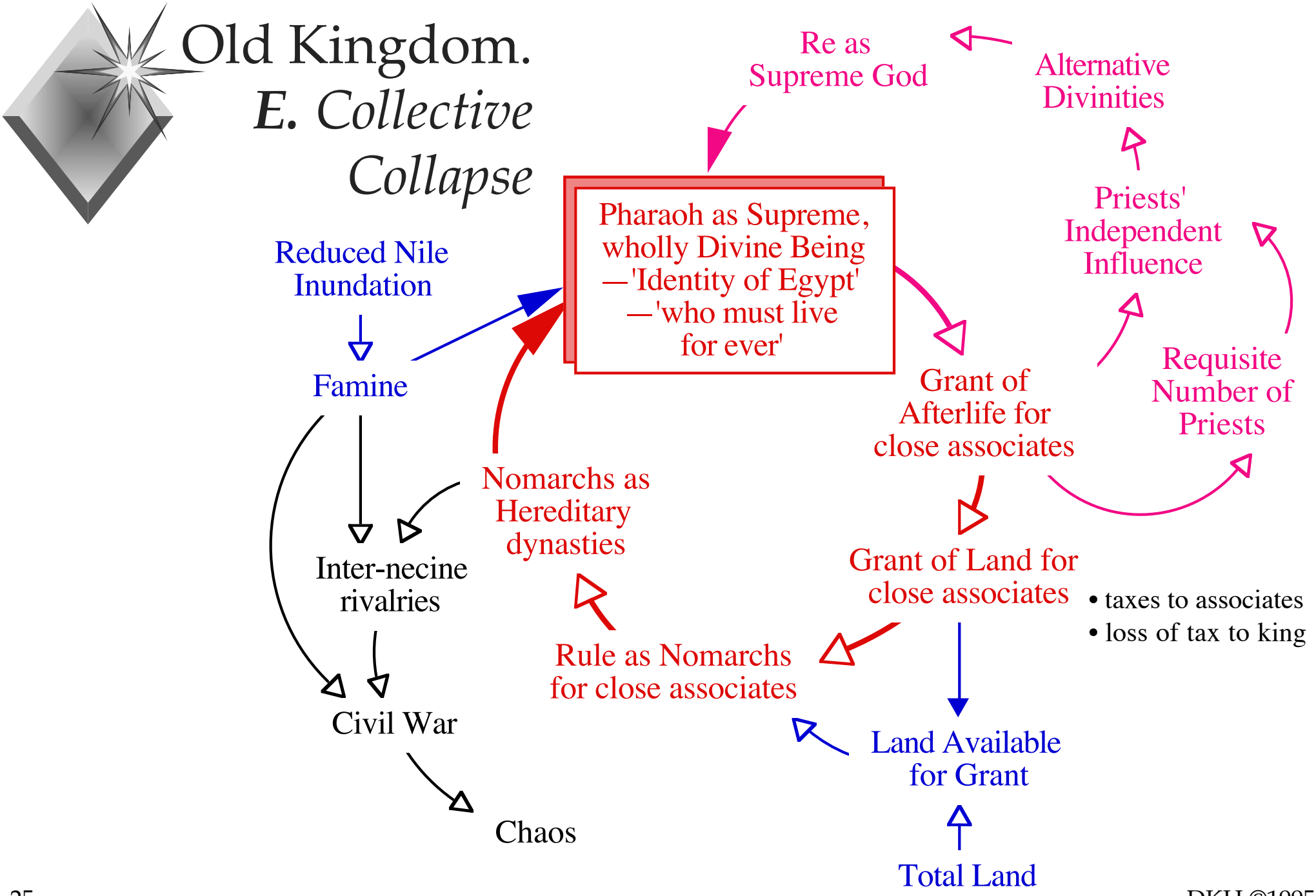
Old Kingdom.
E. Collective Collapse



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Middle Kingdom *F* *Code of Conduct*

- Determined by abstract moral factors:—
  - "Do right as long as you are on Earth. Calm the afflicted, oppress no widow, expel no man from his father's possessions…Do not kill; but punish with beatings and imprisonment. Then shall this land be well established. Leave vengeance to God…More acceptable to Him is the virtue of one who is upright of heart than the ox of the wrong-doer."

The Egyptians, Cyril Aldred, p124

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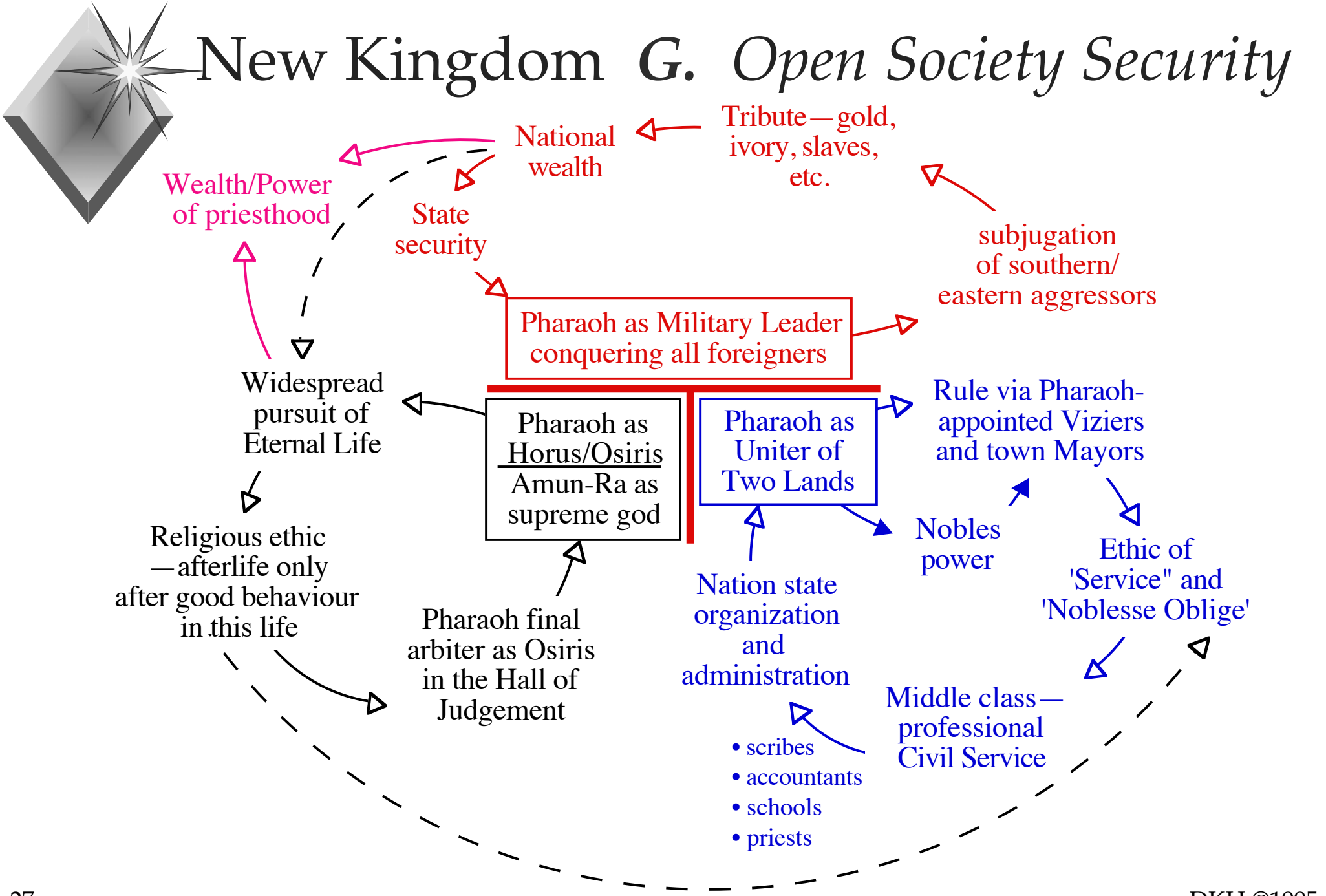
New Kingdom *G. Open Society Security*



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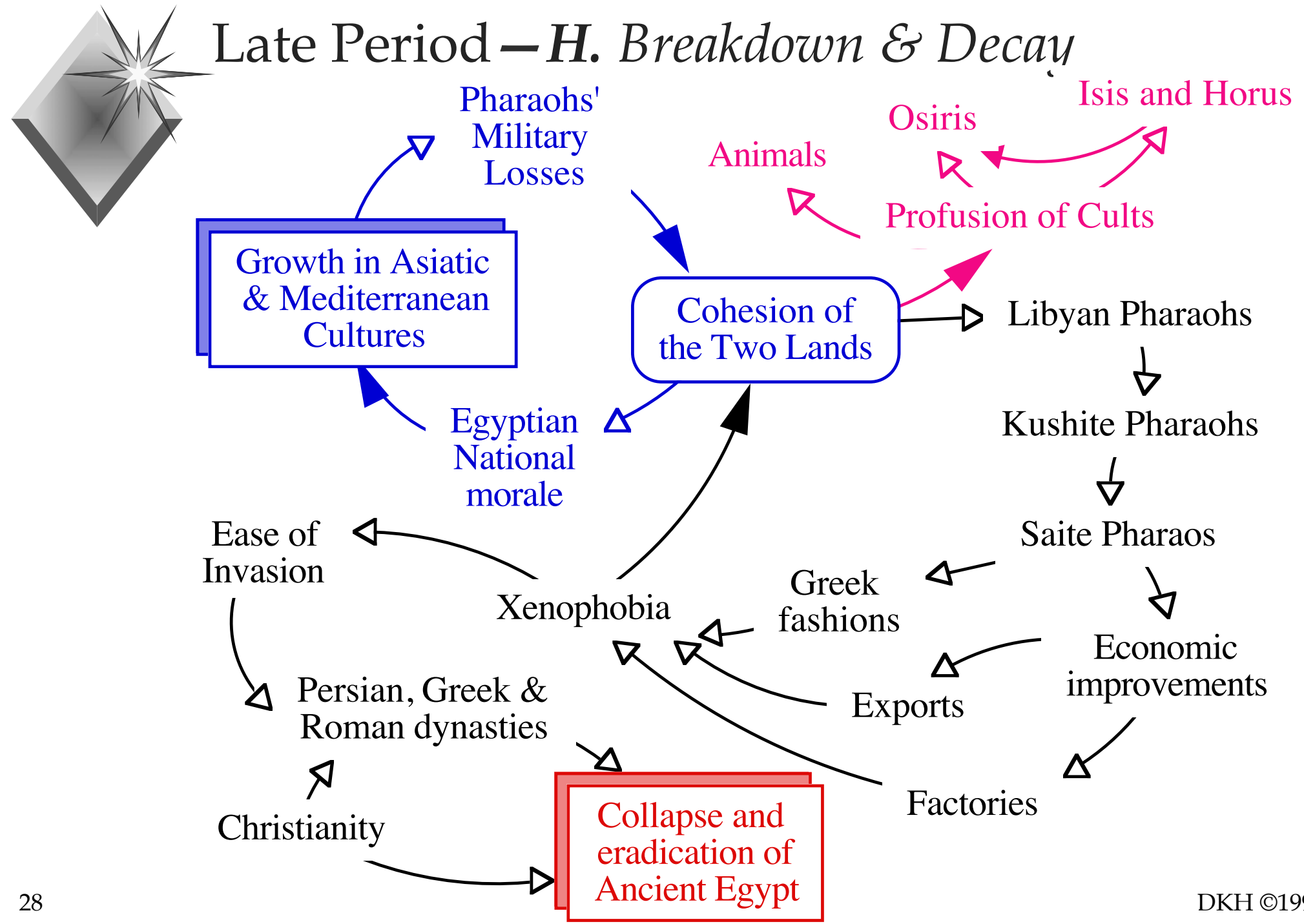
Late Period—*H. Breakdown & Decay*



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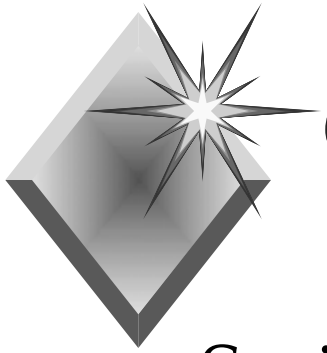

Generalized Societal Behaviour

- Societal behavioural response changes with time and individuation—maturation process
- Early on, group cohesion high—group change rate high (c.f. shoaling fish?)
- Young societies exhibit great energy, co-directed toward the extended-group-shared aim
  - plastic and mouldable as an extended group
  - need time for intellectual development to chart new waters, see new horizons—little time spent on bureaucracy
  - time of great creativity and innovation
  - early development of cannon, schools of thought
  - reverence for stability and tradition

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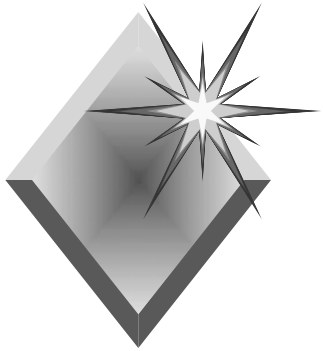

During Societal Maturation

- Schools lead to specializations, to artisans and artists, to adherence to cannon and tradition
- 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

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Generalized Rise and Fall of "Epochs" – Lessons from Archetypes

- Epochs 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
  - internecine struggle, often leading to group weakness and invasion /takeover

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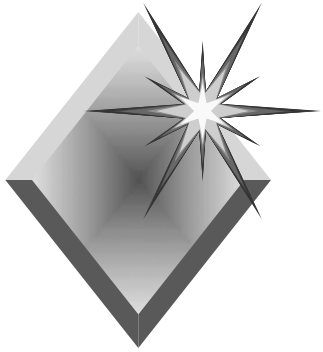

Using the Societal Archetypes

- Individual groups, organizations, nations characterized by social behaviour—
  - locate in Societal Archetype 'A', using Societal Archetypes, B to H
- Typical indicators—to which Nation do they refer?
  - Former isolation; past glories of Empire; loss of faith in faith; international economic reverses; xenophobia; re-emergence of primitive, arcane beliefs; increasing crime; stricter controls of education, police; admiration for former times of supposed glory or peace; lack of confidence in the future; low investment in infrastructure; driven by ideology; emergence of autonomous groups…
- Basis for global model, nations represented by respective Societal Archetypes and their behaviours?

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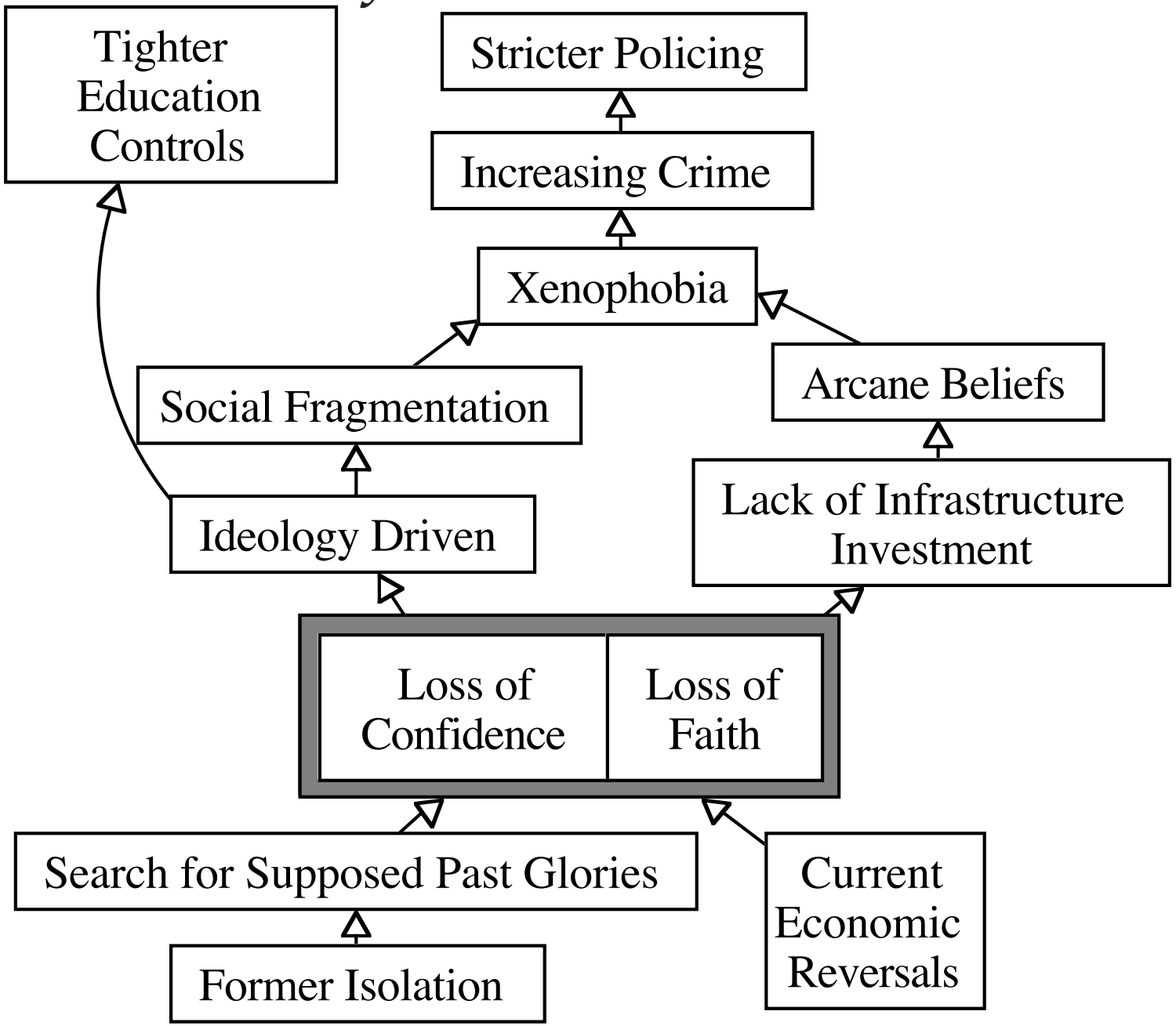
Indicators of social disorder



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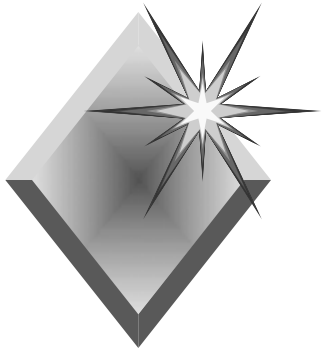

Cultural Effects

- Oriental cultures promote:—
  - belonging to the family, the team, the enterprise
  - sublimation of the individual in the extended group
- Islam ("submission to God's will") promotes humility, non- arrogance
- Western culture exhorts individuation via commerce, media, political dogma, PC, "management-speak", etc.
  - "**Cult of the Individual**—"do your thing", "stand up for what you believe in", "when the going gets tough", etc.,—likely to promote arrogance and conflict
  - contemporary views of delegation, empowerment, competition, performance-related pay, etc., promote individuality

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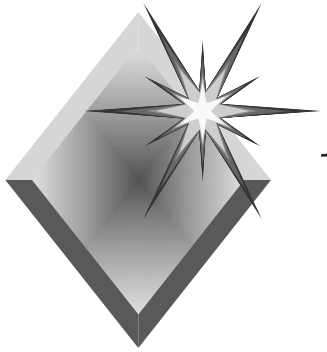

Individuation in the West

- Proliferation of mutually-antagonistic groups for / against almost anything
- Western societal pressure to individuate:—
  - youthful psyches burdened with absorbing extended collective unconscious/experience
  - need ***longer*** to individuate, but social pressure to individuate ***earlier***
  - result—stratified youth culture—vis-à-vis 40-50 years ago
- Origin of stratified, factionalized culture?

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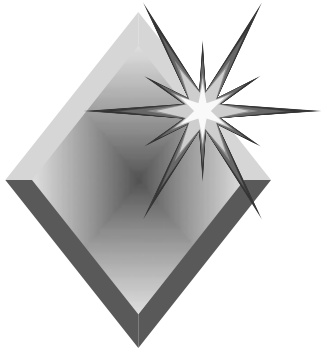

Competitive Pressure to Individuate

- 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—Breakdown Archetype
  - 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

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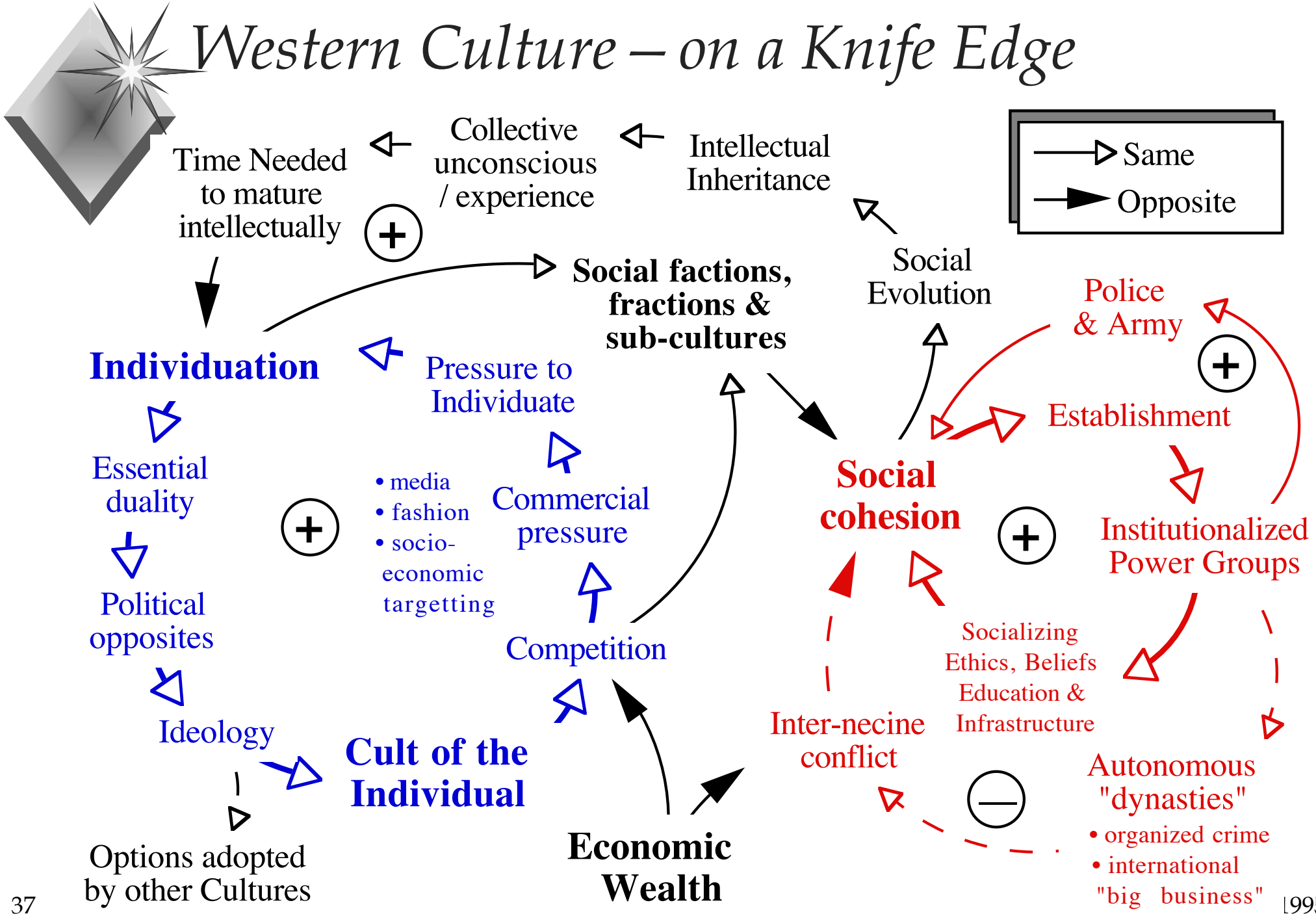
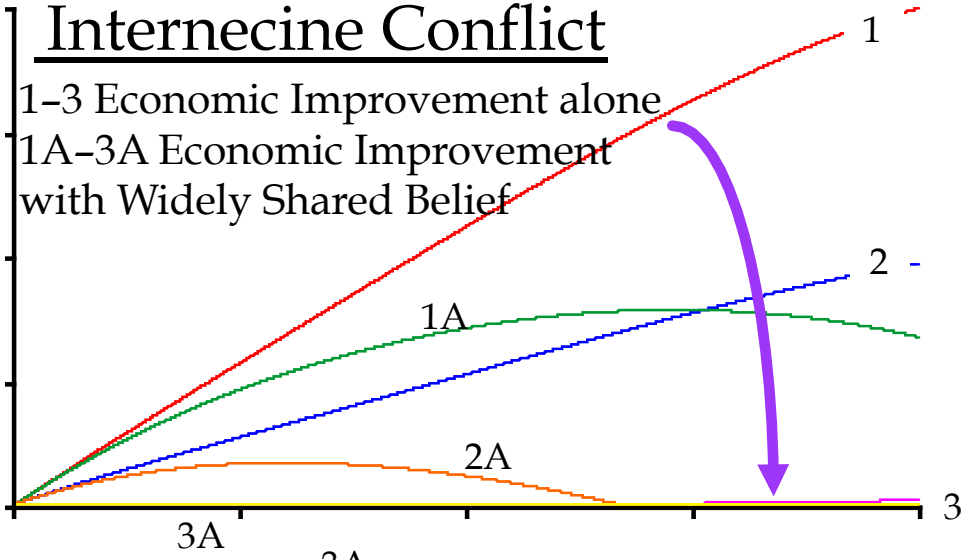
Western Culture – on a Knife Edge

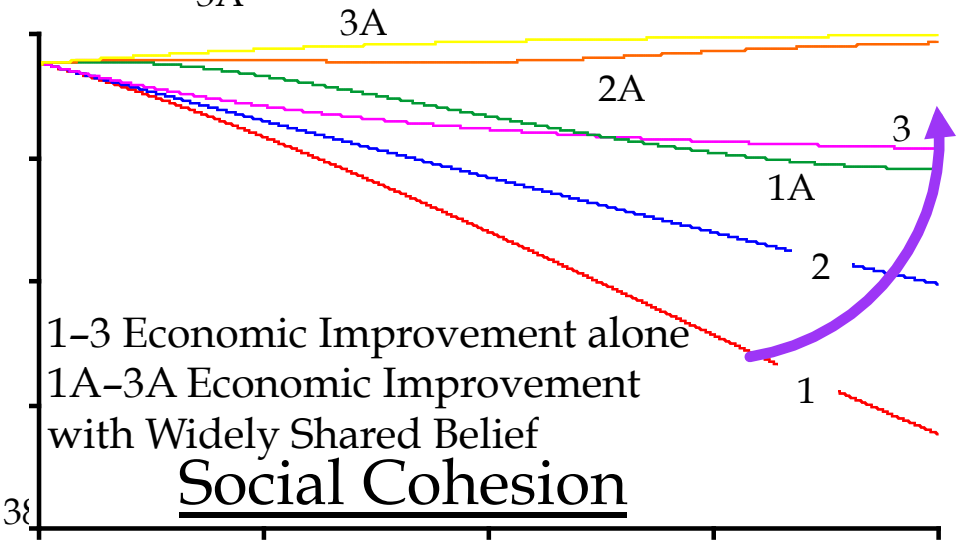


Western Culture – Simulation

Internecine Conflict

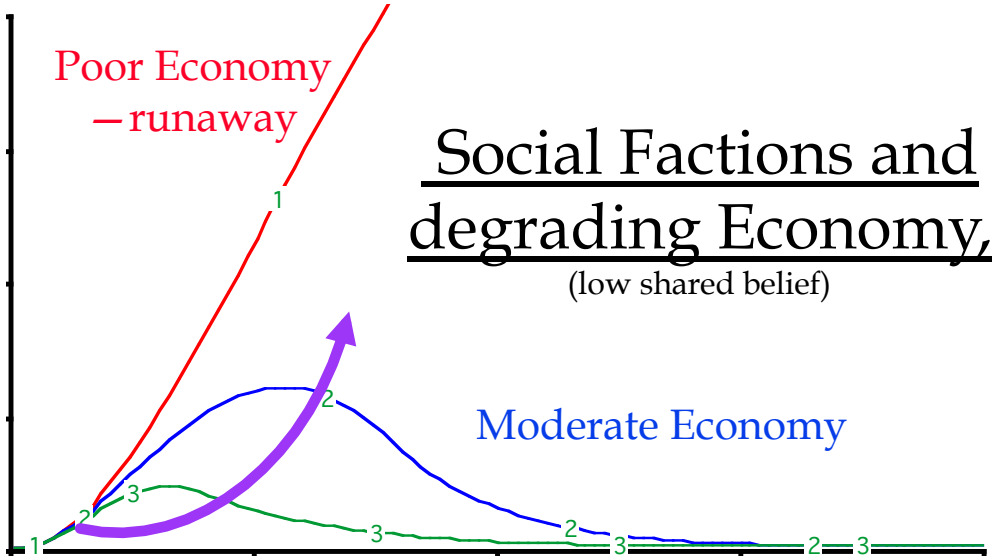
1–3 Economic Improvement alone
1A–3A Economic Improvement
with Widely Shared Belief





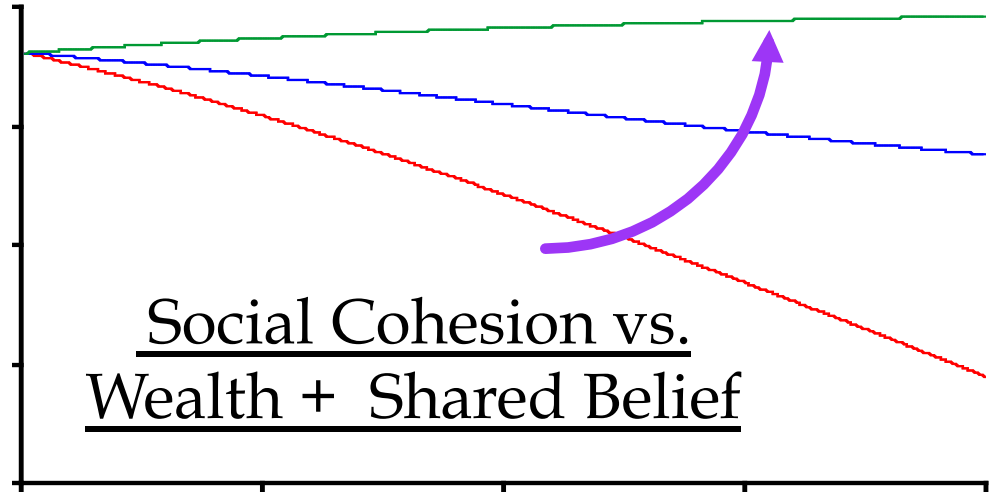
1–3 Economic Improvement alone
1A–3A Economic Improvement
with Widely Shared Belief

Social Cohesion

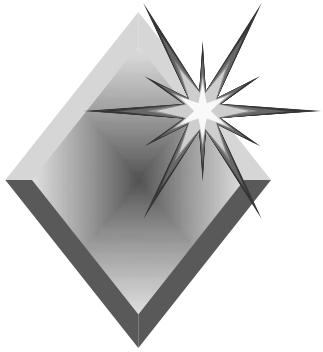


Social Factions and degrading Economy,

(low shared belief)



Social Cohesion vs. Wealth + Shared Belief



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—some common, shared belief/ethic/behaviour pattern needed too

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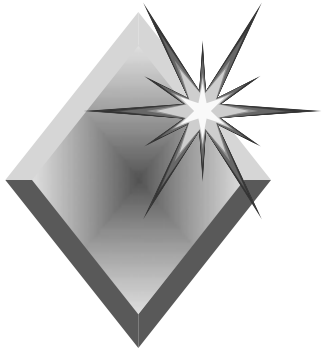

- Belief, Behaviour and the Social Genotype
- Emergent Societal Conflict
- **A Model of Social Tectonics**

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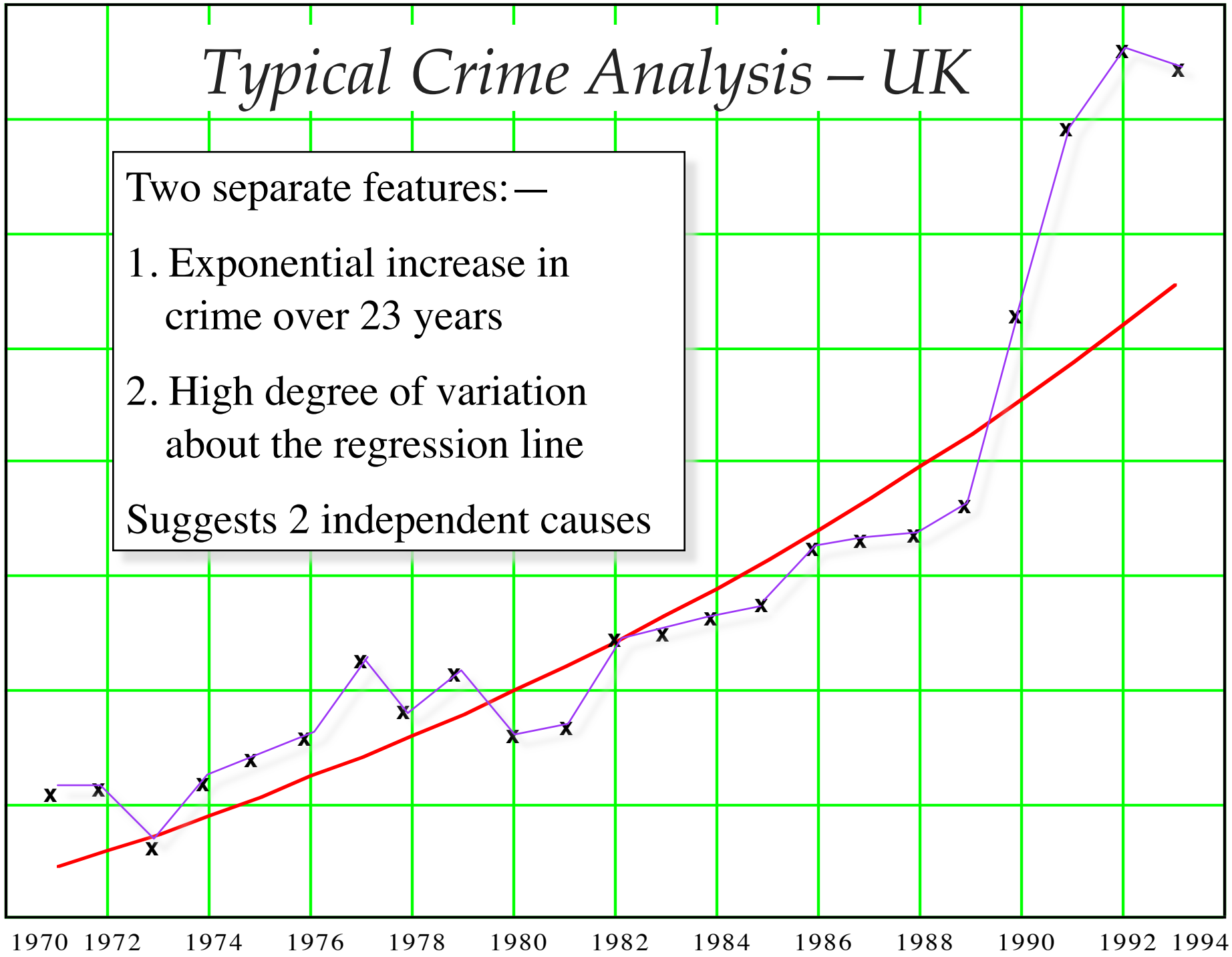
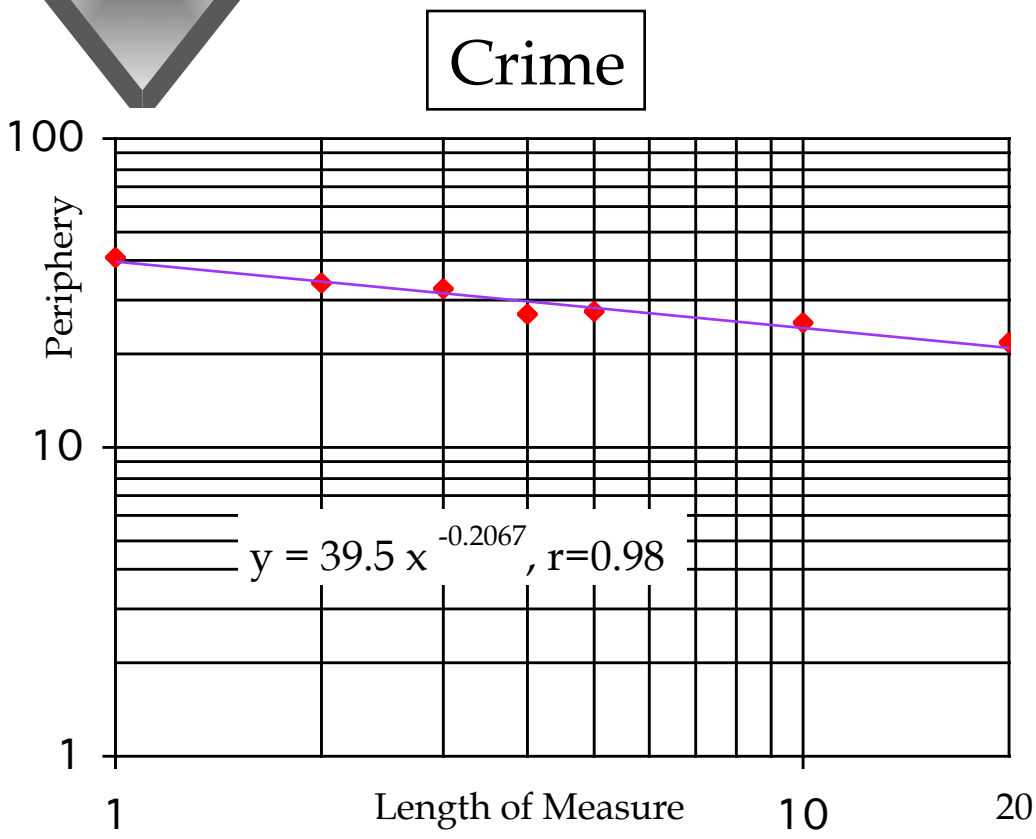
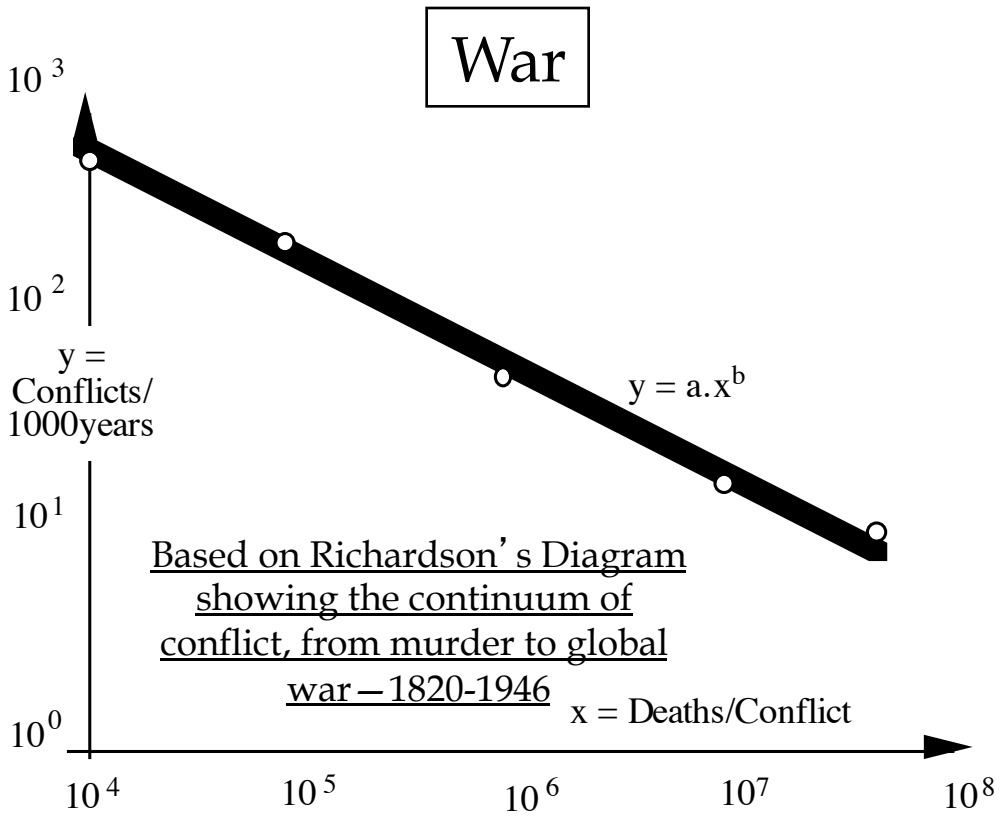
Typical Crime Analysis – UK



Fractal Nature of Crime Statistics

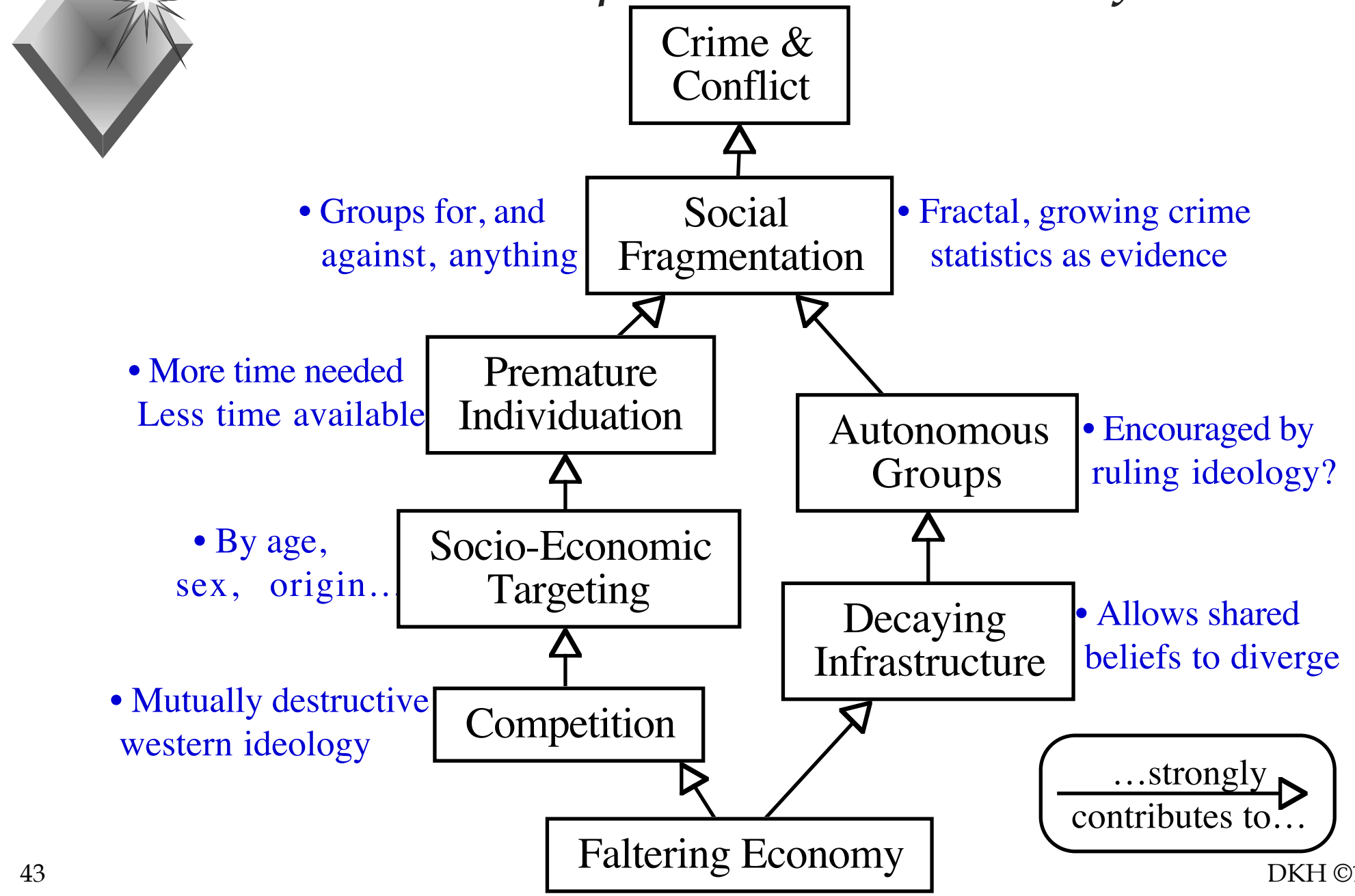
N.B. Crime Graph addresses variability about exponential regression line





Fractal = self-similar, i.e. general "bumpiness" of crime graph same at any scale. Similar fractal patterns emerge from studies of: men killed in wars; earthquakes; stock market prices; distances between cars on Motorway… "weak chaos". Not random. Suggests crime and war build-up, to then release, as social groups "rub together"

The Route-Map to Crime and Conflict



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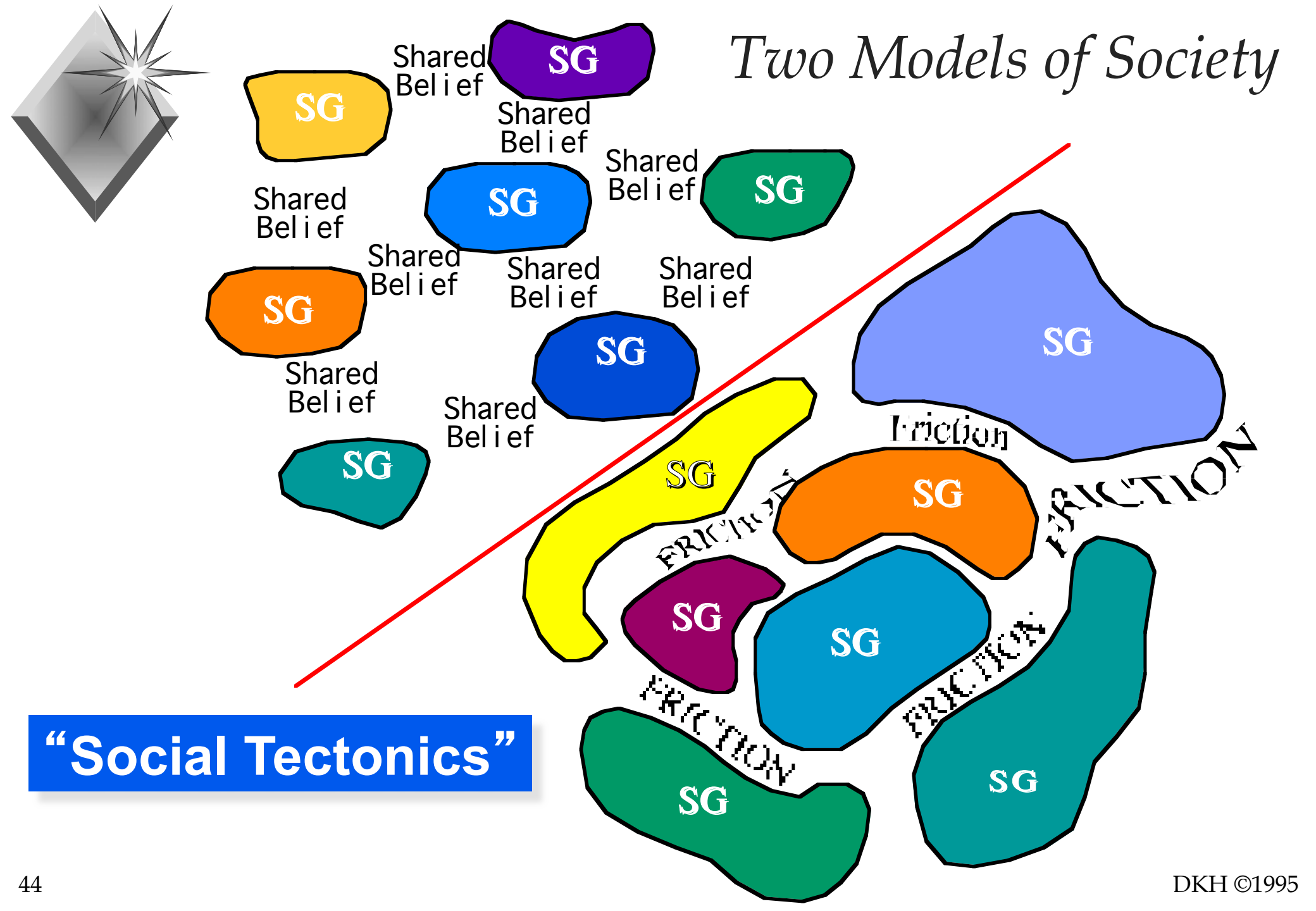
Two Models of Society



"Social Tectonics"

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Increasing Low-Level Conflict (LLC)

- **Models** suggest LLC could be in spectrum of conflict from personal violence to global war
- **Statistics** suggest crime…
  - ***variability*** within spectrum of conflict, but…
  - added ***exponential increase*** over last 23 years
- **Societal Archetypes** indicate onset of Intermediate Period, with long, slow, slide into disorder
- **Social Tectonics** offers mental model of patterns and palliatives for LLC

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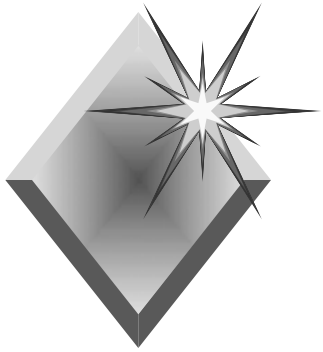

Conclusion

- Two new complementary models
  - social genotype
  - social tectonics
- Together promote understanding of social dynamics from the individual, through the group to society
  - crime, resistance to change,
- Provide simple, accessible views of current societal change
- Political dynamite—relates crime and conflict to poverty plus lack of shared beliefs and goals

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