



# laetus in praesens

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## Metaphorical Geometry in Quest of Globality in response to global governance challenges

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Produced on the occasion of the G20 Summit (London, 2009)

Summary of *Engaging with Globality -- through cognitive lines, circlets, crowns or holes* (2009) and its detailed discussion of the cognitive implications of **Dimension 1: Cognitive Realignment: making points and aligning a target**; **Dimension 2: Cognitive Circlets: learning/action cycles**; **Dimension 3: Cognitive Crowns: all-encompassing, well-rounded experience**; **Dimension 4: Knowing Thyself: embodying engagement with otherness**

### Table of metaphors

There is a curious embodiment in common metaphorical phrases of seemingly fundamental intuitive understanding relating to globality -- expressed in terms of abstract geometrical forms. The current international focus of efforts to "fix" the global financial system is through an approach of dimensionality inadequate to the complexity it represents -- if only in terms of the metaphors used to communicate the challenge. The "initiatives", that are "targeted" on sectors, within a global "plan" are best described in terms of Dimension 1 and Dimension 2 in the table below. The "global" challenge is best understood in terms of Dimension 3. Unfortunately the kinds of initiatives currently conceived (whether of Dimension 1, Dimension 2 or Dimension 3) fail to take into account cumulative dynamic effects (typically vigorously denied). These can only be recognized in terms of Dimension 4.

"Higher" dimensions to the right are:

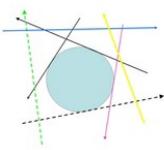
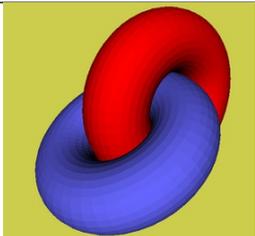
- associated with greater, longer-term value/worth, but more amorphous/intangible,
- less precisely measurable or communicable
- more challenging to understanding and associated with greater metaphorical impoverishment
- only potentially **implicit** in those to the left (as the "sparkle" or "glow" associated with the latter)

<b>Indicative array of geometrically-based metaphors</b>				
Presented as a tentative sketch, recognizing that distinctions made are not absolute.				
Content might overlap between cells of the array				
Each row could be split in two, indicative of functional and dysfunctional possibilities				
	<b>Dimension 1</b> point and line	<b>Dimension 2</b> area and circle	<b>Dimension 3</b> globe (and polyhedral approximations to a sphere)	<b>Dimension 4</b> torus, etc
geometry	shooting a line, lining up support, bottom line, deadline, in line with our thinking, stepping over the line, holding the line bullet points (aligned) wrong end of stick polarization pillarization, stakeholders	planning, in the plan, according to plan orbiting around an axis, innovation (R&D) cycle business cycles fashion cycles left-right politics circling the wagons	interlocking: -- feedback loops -- metabolic pathways -- ecosystemic cycles	complexity chaos dynamic systems uncertainty ambiance paradox
product	making a point scoring a goal, hitting the target making a profit lending/borrowing	balancing the budget	package/portfolio of spread risk dividend, share value, worth	?
strategy	target/goal (development, <b>or</b> environment, <b>or</b> growth) "you are with us or against us"	reconciliation of strategic dilemmas (sustainable development)	recognition of constraints (resource overshoot, climate change)	mirroring, self-reflexivity, "them is us"

bonding	relationships, links, contacts, well-connected	circle of contacts, peers, friends (trust, confidence) <a href="#">hemicycle plenary debating chamber</a>	community of peers (friends, etc) "our world", dynamically gated communities	self-community relationship (school shootings, scapegoating, etc)
outcome	globality as the light at the end of the tunnel (scoring, killing) action/initiative	globality encircled by the process work/exploitative cycles <a href="#">laurel leaf "clasp"</a>	"self-regulation"	unexpected consequences, surprises
action	initiative career path	work/family (im)balance experiential cycles (daily, weekly, annual, life), work/recreation (im)balance	health, maturity, well-rounded, gravitas	wisdom, psychological health, senility, "screwed-up", perverted needs
conformity	running around with sticks (batons, rockets, skyscrapers)	ensuring submission to the plan (singing from the same hymn "sheet") budget (spreadsheet), input-output analysis grid planning	wrap into a concept "package" image, label	?
communication	text(ing)	video(ing) image map, systems diagram	blogosphere, cyberspace, Facebook, YouTube	meaning?
discourse	comment aphorism, truism question	story/plot, narrative	sets of folk tales (Nasrudin, Aesop), 108 Upanishads	?
technology	message (LinkedIn, Plaxo) individual feedback in response to general message (asymmetric communication) propaganda, televised "fireside chats"	message plus feedback (symmetric communication)	resonance ("bell") knowledge cybernetics	?
innovation	idea, innovation	property, copyright territory	body of knowledge	?
emotion value	consume, excrete, greed, want, grasp, ambition, desire	give and take checks and balances	worth, respect, honour, dignity	self-esteem, self-worth, self-respect, sense of (in)dignity
maths	linear equation (providing for velocity and acceleration) along a line	curves approximating to a circle (and velocity and acceleration around it)	curves describing spherical volumes (and approximations to them)	complex equations such as those on which the development of financial derivatives were based
references	<a href="#">Getting to Yes</a> (1981)	Hannah B. Higgins ( <i>The Grid Book</i> , 2009), <a href="#">Thomas L. Friedman's The World Is Flat</a> (2005) disagreement?	book? <i>dymaxion map</i> unity in diversity?	wisdom literature?
brains	"Brain 1"	"Brain 2"	"Brain 3"	"Brain 4"

**This table is itself an example of a Dimension 2 grid -- posing the challenge of how to comprehend it as a whole (globally), to enfold it, and embody it**

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Engaging with globality -- geometrically illustrated (tentatively)			
<b>Dimension 1</b> point and line (linear initiatives shown as tangents, potentially encompassing a circle)	<b>Dimension 2</b> area and circle ("global plans" shown as variously related to an interlinking circular process, or potentially as tangential to a sphere)	<b>Dimension 3</b> globe (and polyhedral approximations to a sphere, requiring minimally three interlinking circles, illustrated by <i>Dymaxion Map</i> ; discussion in <i>Towards Polyhedral Global Governance</i> )	<b>Dimension 4</b> interlocking tori, etc (discussed in <i>Engaging with Globality through Dynamic Complexity</i> )
			

Notes:

**Laurel leaf "clasp"**: the logos of the UN and its UN Specialized Agencies, for example, have a partially encircling laurel wreath -- "clasping" a sphere (necessarily in two dimensions, with one "side" hidden)

**Plenary debating chamber**: these frequently take the form of [hemicycles](#), as in various parliaments. Geometrically, they lend themselves

to comparison with a [torc](#) (and, perhaps only as a mnemonic indicator, to "talk" as a [homophone](#)).

**Brains:** Antonio de Nicolas (*Neurobiology, Communities, Religion: A Bio-Cultural Study*, 1998) focuses on the biocultural implications of the five brains of humans: reptilian, limbic, right and left hemispheres, and the "interpreter module". These brains function either independently or in harmony, either as dictators or as balanced multiplicity, either as a democracy or as victims, and thus there is still room for further human development. They develop progressively and successively through childhood, although the development of any of them be inhibited and stunted. They also have their cultural counter-parts:

Thus we know of ancient cultures as being *maia* types, since the brain serving as the "pilot" was primarily the reptilian, as in the child after birth; or *mythos* types, since they primarily developed the limbic brain, as in children between the ages of one to eleven; or right brain mimetic, since they acted on the language of images of the right hemisphere of the neocortex, as in children between the age of four and fifteen (magicians, leaders, the demiurge); or left brain mimetic (theoreticians, ideologues, theologians, social scientists), since they acted primarily from the left hemisphere of the neocortex, as in children from the age of seven on; or *logos* types, those whose experiences are imageless, experts in the creation of substitution systems, not able to deal with any of the other forms of knowledge of the right brain hemisphere. These biocultural types are invariant in the sense that they represent individual and social possibilities of human realities and development, but unless these brains are exercised they do not develop in full, or if one is socially sanctioned over the others, then cultural imperialism and individual loss may follow.

The challenge for individuals and communities -- and notably faith-based communities interacting with one another -- is that they may find themselves to be using only one of the brains, or faced with others in that condition. In the case of the mimetic left-brain, this might give it the power of dictatorship or the arbitrariness of an emperor-king. As noted by de Nicolas: "Imperialism at its worst may be the result of arrested development in the culture of the individual".

**Metaphorical geometry:** Relevant to the approach taken here is the account of formal mathematics of [Edmund Husserl](#) as summarized by [Kenny Easwaran](#) (*Husserl's Conceptions of Formal Mathematics*, 2004) in relation to the thinking of Kurt Gödel:

Edmund Husserl's conception of mathematics was a unique blend of Platonist and formalist ideas. He believed that mathematics had reached a mixed state combining Platonic and formal elements and that both were important for the pursuit of the sciences, as well as for each other. However, he seemed to believe that only the Platonic aspects had significance for his science of phenomenology

Citing Husserl, he notes

"If analogy can be any guide to method, it will act most powerfully if we restrict ourselves to material mathematical disciplines like, for example, geometry and accordingly ask more specifically whether a phenomenology must be, or can be, constituted as a [material] "geometry" of mental processes." This usage of the word "geometry" implies that it is still being used to describe the science of physical space. The metaphorical 'geometry of mental processes' would similarly be a science of existing objects that we can access directly through intuition (*Wesensschau*), and not formally through reasoning and axioms.

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## References

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