19 June 2009 | Draft

Reframing the Game of Strategic Dilemmas

a 12-fold interplay of possibilities of otherwise

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to point to resources enabling challenging strategic dilemmas to be reframed. The concern is framed by two insights from Albert Einstein:

> The significant problems we face can not be solved at the same level of thinking
> we were at when we created them.

> To repeat the same thing over and over again,
> and yet to expect a different result, this is a form of insanity.

The exercise here in clustering options builds on *Governing Civilization through Civilizing Governance: global challenge for a turbulent future* (2008) and on *Enabling Strategies for Viable Futures* (2009). The sets of documents cited are in this case presented in a separate **Annex** (*Reframing Strategic Dilemmas through 12 Modes: commentary and checklist of documents*, 2009) to which specific links are provided below.

The emphasis explored here is on the possibility of a **dynamic** reframing rather than a **static**, structural reframing of dilemmas -- notably in the light of insights from the dynamics of complex systems appropriate to the expected turbulence of the future (*Human Values as Strange Attractors: coevolution of classes of governance principles*, 1993).

Although a common understanding of reframing derives from the pioneering formalization by John Grinder and Richard Bandler (*Reframing: Neurolinguistic programming and the transformation of meaning*, 1983), no specific appeal to the methods of neuro-linguistic programming is intended here. Of greater relevance are insights into framing emerging from the work of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (*Metaphors We Live By*, 1980; *Philosophy In The Flesh: the Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought*, 1999).

Strategic dilemmas

An array of such dilemmas was identified in various documents on the occasion of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), also known as the Earth Summit:

- *Inter-sectoral Strategic Dilemmas of Sustainable Development* (1992)
- *Systemic Mapping of Strategic Dilemmas* (1992)
- *Configuring Strategic Dilemmas in Intersectoral Dialogue* (1992)

Such intractable dilemmas are perhaps currently best illustrated by:

- the Middle East (Israeli-Palestinian) crisis
- the climate change (industry-environment) crisis
- the terrorism (security-human rights) crisis

They are also evident in the assumptions underlying the challenges to any resolution of the variety of "virtual wars" (*Review of the Range of Virtual Wars: a strategic comparison with the global war against terrorism*, 2005).

Typical of such dilemmas is the manner in which the constituency associated with each option promotes itself "positively" and the other "negatively" -- to the point of demonisation.

Avoiding dilemmas: focusing on a single option

A dilemma is necessarily a challenge to decision-making. The challenge lies in the manner in which it connects with a degree of complexity that implies a lack of appropriate response and thereby increases anxiety. It then becomes an existential challenge that is itself a threat to the sense of identity of those faced with it.

In such a situation the dilemma may be avoided by collapsing it -- collapsing the probability wave function. This may then be framed as decision-making. Typical of this approach is the application of binary logic, as deployed in framing American foreign policy following 9/11. There is no choice: "you are either with us or against us". No questions or doubt are then appropriate. To an unfortunate degree, this may be a characteristic of "resolutions" of international assemblies. These typically take little account of their problematic systemic impacts on other issues ignored during any focused debate. Each such "resolution" effectively "pulls the blanket" to cover one problem, thereby (inadvertently) exposing another.

The art of decision-making then becomes the art of decision avoidance (*The Art of Non-Decision-Making -- and the manipulation of categories*, 1997). The single option then becomes that in which it is necessary for all to believe. Strategy development then becomes feasible within conventional frameworks. The response to terrorism has been typical of this (*Promoting a Singular Global Threat -- Terrorism: strategy of choice for world governance,* 2002).

Curiously however, "climate change" is now being framed as a similar singular challenge -- the "most important challenge facing humanity". Although, in the same period, the consequences of the financial crisis of 2008 have displaced both terrorism and climate change as strategic challenges -- if only in the priorities and strategic attention devoted to them. This "fire-fighting" process makes evident the lack of need for effective global decision-making. A new crisis will emerge and be upheld as justifying resources to be devoted to it preferentially -- as the singular challenge then facing humanity.

The situation becomes more problematic when those who fail to subscribe to the singular framing are stigmatized as "unbelievers" or "deniers" -- readily to be demonised and treated accordingly. This approach is intimately related to that of religious belief systems. Essentially there is then no real choice. There is only one valid belief; believing otherwise is itself problematic -- characteristic of those who are part of the problem.

The language and attitudes associated with such religious belief is then borrowed and applied to conventional secular challenges. Thus "denial", through association with "Holocaust denial", is now applied to "climate change deniers" (a *Wikipedia* entry) . The only appropriate belief, even for scientists, is then one of "consensus". "Climate change" is in this way transformed into a religion -- the only valid "strategic religion" for humanity. Global governance thereby effectively becomes faith-based governance (*Future Challenge of Faith-based Governance*, 2003). Unfortunately, given the track record, such faith is vulnerable to extreme abuse (*Abuse of Faith in Governance: mystery of the unasked question*, 2009).

It is curious that in such a faith-based context, one approach to "deniers" is also borrowed from religion, namely the practice of shunning. This is notably applied to strategic concerns which are not open for consideration. A prime example is the issue of overpopulation which, in terms of any systems analysis of the problematique, is a prime driver for phenomena like climate change or "shortages" of any kind (*Institutionalized Shunning of Overpopulation Challenge: incommunicability of fundamentally inconvenient truth*, 2008). As a consequence, irrespective of the scientific consensus on climate change, this consensus is completely unscientific from a systems perspective because it makes only passing reference, if any, to population issues.

As shown by Graham Turner (*A Comparison of the Limits to Growth with Thirty Years of Reality*, CSIRO 2007), the original study of *Limits to Growth*, as promoted by the Club of Rome from 1972, provoked many criticisms which falsely stated its conclusions in order to discredit it. Despite the repeated substantiation of its conclusions, including warnings of overshoot and collapse, recommendations of fundamental changes of policy and behaviour for sustainability have not been taken up. One of its principal areas of focus was population.

Inadequately explored options for reframing strategic dilemmas

The argument implicit in the options presented below is that -- following the Einstein quotes above -- there is a strong case for devoting some resources to reframing the way such dilemmas are habitually and conventionally perceived. It is the current framing which would seem to be serving to reinforce groupthink, silo thinking, and the perpetuation of constraints on new strategic thinking -- in the notable absence of imaginative thinking as recognized by the US Senate (*Learning from the 9/11 response: groupthink and failure of imagination*, 2005).

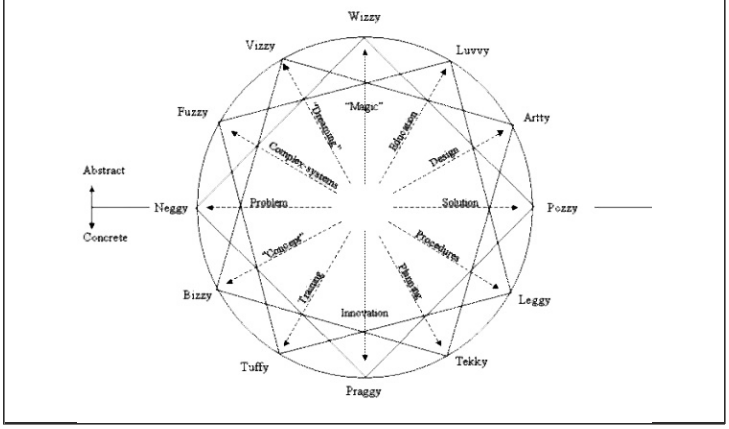
Together these factors inhibit the emergence of subtler and more appropriate forms of coherence. The constraints on increasing the scope of such thinking have been discussed separately in the light of the strategy in 2009 in Afghanistan and of voter apathy regarding

the European parliamentary elections (*Considering All the Strategic Options: whilst ignoring alternatives and disclaiming cognitive protectionism*, 2009).

A particular constraint is the challenge of comprehending complexity and the techniques for enabling such collective comprehension (*In Quest of Mnemonic Catalysts -- for comprehension of complex psychosocial dynamics*, 2007; *Imagining the Real Challenge and Realizing the Imaginal Pathway of Sustainable Transformation*, 2007). This is the case with an array of such techniques whose very variety may be essential to enabling a complex response, especially when the key to any viable pattern combining them dynamically is a matter of timing. For this reason, the set of techniques identified below is first clustered within the following diagram to provide a degree of overview and a sense of complementarity.

A previous exercise explored a 16-fold *Clustering of "Thinking" and "Doing" items* (2008), also presented in a circular array (*Circular configuration of Thinking/Doing categories*, 2008) organized in terms of problematique, resolutique, irresolutique and imaginatique in the light of the dynamics of complex systems. The focus here is however specifically on the reframing of dilemmas.

12-fold Array of clusters of complementary options (tentative)
Further development of a diagram used to interrelate
12 Complementary Languages for Sustainable Governance (2003)
[**Disabled**: clicking on the "language" name outside the circle provides an explanations of the option (in a separate Annex); clicking on the corresponding point on the circumference provides the original explanation of that "language"]



Details of each of the options in the above diagram are given in the separate Annex to this document. The concern in what immediately follows is the challenge of understanding such a set of options as a whole and the possibilities they offer singly or in combination.

Complementarity of approaches to dilemmas

Any comprehensive strategy is conceived in terms of a complementary set of mutually reinforcing approaches. The sole use of any one of the above approaches is then to be understood as lacking the requisite variety to encompass the challenge -- in the light of management cybernetics and control considerations, irrespective of any insights from military strategy.

In the earlier paper (*12 Complementary Languages for Sustainable Governance*, 2003) the possible complementarity between the various "languages" was discussed in relation to the original diagram. Such considerations could be applied to the adaptation of the diagram above. Since the clustering in the diagram above is merely tentative, other modes of knowing could be considered to distinguish the clusters, especially in the light of polysensorial rather than mono-sensorial understandings (*Strategic Challenge of Polysensorial Knowledge: bringing the "elephant" into "focus"*, 2008; *Cyclopean Vision vs Poly-sensual Engagement*, 2006; *Stepping into, or through, the Mirror: embodying alternative scenario patterns*, 2008).

Matrix representation

To facilitate exploration of complementarity, the array of the above approaches to reframing strategic dilemmas could also be presented in tabular form as follows.

Presentation enabling identification of complementarity of approaches to reframing strategic dilemmas												
.	Insight capture and integration technology	Symbolism, metaphor, myth and story-telling	Pattern language, poly-sensorial (visual, sound, etc)	Trans-formative dialogue, meetings and strategies	Creative agreements and business models	Design of complex structures	Appropriate technology	Simulation, role playing and gaming	Self-reflexive orgs. and initiatives	Paradoxical and negative strategies	Dynamics and emergent order	Rhythm, poetry, music, song and dance
Insight capture and integration technology	.	1/2	1/3	1/4	1/5	1/6	1/7	1/8	1/9	1/10	1/11	1/12
Symbolism, metaphor, myth and	2/1	.	2/3	2/4	2/5	2/6	2/7	2/8	2/9	1/10	2/11	2/12

story-telling												
Pattern language, polysensorial (visualization, etc)	3/1	3/2	.	3/4	3/5	3/6	3/7	3/8	3/9	3/10	3/11	3/12
Transformative dialogue, meetings and strategies	4/1	4/2	4/3	.	4/5	4/6	4/7	4/8	4/9	4/10	4/11	4/12
Creative agreements and business models	5/1	5/2	5/3	5/4	.	5/6	5/7	5/8	5/9	5/10	5/11	5/12
Design of complex structures	6/1	6/2	6/3	6/4	6/5	.	6/7	6/8	6/9	6/10	6/11	6/12
Appropriate technology	7/1	7/2	7/3	7/4	7/5	7/6	.	7/8	7/9	7/10	7/11	7/12
Simulation, role playing and gaming	8/1	8/2	8/3	8/4	8/5	8/6	8/7	.	8/9	8/10	8/11	8/12
Self-reflexive organizations and initiatives	9/1	9/2	9/3	9/4	9/5	9/6	9/7	9/8	.	9/10	9/11	9/12
Paradoxical and negative strategies	10/1	10/2	10/3	10/4	10/5	10/6	10/7	10/8	10/9	.	10/11	10/12
Dynamics and emergent order	11/1	11/2	11/3	11/4	11/5	11/6	11/7	11/8	11/9	11/10	.	11/12
Rhythm, poetry, music, song and dance	12/1	12/2	12/3	12/4	12/5	12/6	12/7	12/8	12/9	12/10	12/11	..

Each cell in the matrix evokes reflection on how the options might be fruitfully combined -- possibly using the corresponding cells across the diagonal to distinguish the dominance of one with respect to the other in any binary combination, or possibly by combining three or more such cells.

Reframing through "tuning" a matrix representation

As a metaphor, "reframing" derives much of its significance from concrete instances in which this is required. Examples include:

- **pictures**: reframed in order to enhance the visual image, possibly by using a frame design more consistent with the theme and patterns of the picture. Reframing may of course be used to provide better support and protection for the picture.
- **musical instruments**: stringed instruments (guitars, violins, etc) may be "restrung" to improve the sound, especially when the strings have been weakened by use and no longer permit the tension required for sound quality
- **sports rackets**: these may need to be restrung when they have lost their tension and can no longer be used to strike a ball with force.
- **furniture:** certain forms of seating may need to be restrung when they no longer provide adequate support
- **weaving**: tapestries and carpets are typically created on rectangular frames between which warp and weft threads are strung.

Together these are suggestive of ways of reframing any combination of approaches to strategic dilemmas. Potentially most interesting is the discipline of "tuning", as in a musical instrument. To some degree, a matrix style presentation recalls the fretboard or fingerboard (subdivided by frets) typical of many stringed instruments. The frets divide the fingerboard into fixed segments at intervals related to a musical framework. On instruments such as guitars, each fret represents one semitone in the standard western system where one octave is divided into twelve semitones.

It is with respect to the strings along the fingerboard that the instrument may be tuned. This process of tuning, notably by "plucking" strings", offers insights into the possibility of "tuning" a cognitive analogue (*Polarities as Pluckable Tensed Strings: hypercomprehension through harmonics of value-based choice-making*, 2006; *Tuning a Periodic Table of Religions, Epistemologies and Spirituality: including the sciences and other belief systems*, 2007). The polarization associated with strategic dilemmas then lends itself to exploration through musical insights into the forms of harmony within which concord and discord are variously integrated.

Within the metaphor of a stringed instrument, the above array corresponds to a 12-stringed instrument, such as a 12-string guitar. Exploiting this metaphor, other arrays might be considered -- corresponding to instruments with a different number of strings, calling for different styles of play. The range of such chordophones is quite extensive -- again **pointing to many possibilities for considering how strategic dilemmas might be "played", given that such instruments are effectively used to articulate and "play out" many cognitive dilemmas in the cultures to which they appeal.** Of particular interest are playing styles that may elicit much variety from a smaller number of strings -- and what this may imply for any cognitive analogue with regard to expression through a more limited number of categories.

Indication of number of "strings" for a selection of stringed instruments (NB: Some instruments may have strings doubled (or tripled) into "courses" of similarly tuned strings; some may have non-playable, sympathetic strings for resonance. The numbers in this table do not necessarily reflect such variations)	
Number of strings (courses)	**Stringed instruments**
1	*cimboa* (Cape Verde); *gusle* (Balkans)
2	*banhu* / *gaohu* / *erhu* / *erxian* / *huluhu* (China); *dombura* (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan); *dangubica* (Croatia); *dotara* (Bangladesh); *dutar* (Iran); *igil* (Mongolia); *kobyz* (Kazakhstan)
3	*balalaika* (Russia); *bouzouki* (Greece); *pandura* (Greece); *domra* (Russia); *gadulka* (Bulgaria); *kamancheh* (Iran); *komuz* (Kyrgyzstan); Byzantine lyra
4	violin; mando-bass; mandocello; mandola; *biwa* (Japan); *bouzouki* (Greece); *chitarra Italiana*; *liuqin* (China); lyre
6	sitar (India)
7	7-string guitar; *baglama* (Turkey); Russian guitar; dramyin / dranyen (Bhutan); lyre
8	8-string classical guitar; octave mandola; mandolin (Italy)
9	*çeng* (Turkey)
10	10-string classical guitar; decacorde; *charango* (Bolivia); mandolute (North Africa); lyre
11	11-string alto guitar
12	12-string guitar; *bandurria* (Spain); *esraj* (India); *qanbus / gambus* (Arabian pensinsula); *laúd* (Spain)
13	13-string guitars
14	*bandurria* (Philippines)
15	*angélique* (France)
34	folk harp
46	concert harp

Listing stringed instruments in this way raises the **possibility of a relationship between a cultural preference for music from instruments with a particular number of strings and the preferred array of categories in terms of which strategic dilemmas are framed**. This might be consistent with the arguments of Jacques Attali (*Noise: the political economy of music*. 1977) concerning the social organization prefigured by preferred (or dominant) musical organization. Such a framework provides a context for reflection on the implications of different tuning systems and the implications of transposition of key (*Paradigm-shifting through Transposition of Key: a metaphoric illustration of unexplored possibilities for the future*, 1999).

Beyond tokenism, the apathy of the electorate for global institutions and strategies is only too evident -- despite huge expenditure of resources to elicit such engagement, as by the European Commission with respect to the parliamentary elections of 2009. If many now effectively take refuge in the articultion of their shared values through music and song, some imaginative strategic rethinking is appropriate. Is it not possible to construct a "cognitive bridge" between the "two worlds" -- between the "two cultures"? The case has been argued elsewhere (*A Singable Earth Charter, EU Constitution or Global Ethic?* 2006). In the absence of such a connection, is it appropriate to see global governance as condemned to a form of neuro-muscular disorder severely restricting its coordination to what amounts to a spastic condition? (cf *Memetic and Information Diseases in a Knowledge Society: speculations towards the development of cures and preventive measures*, 2008).

Self-reflexive reframing

Whilst the options above have been identified with reference to the strategic dilemmas of global governance, considerations of how the set as a whole is to be comprehended as a means of engaging with globality call into question any conventional tendency to cognitive instrumentalism. This has been explored elsewhere, notably with respect to self-reflexive cognitive engagement (*Engaging with Globality -- through cognitive lines, circlets, crowns or holes*, 2009; *Engaging with Globality through Knowing Thyself: embodying engagement with otherness*, 2009).

The question is then how each of the options, as a cognitive modality, can contribute to an understanding and "activation" of the set as a whole -- enactivating the "pattern that connects" (*Walking Elven Pathways Enactivating the Pattern that Connects*, 2006; *Hyperspace Clues to the Psychology of the Pattern that Connects*, 2003). Examples of the application of one option, from within the array, to the array as a whole, include:

- the argument above regarding "tuning" effectively reframing the array as a musical instrument.
- transformation of the matrix itself into a torus in order to ensure greater connectivity between the options that it represents (*Comprehension of Requisite Variety for Sustainable Psychosocial Dynamics: transforming a matrix classification onto intertwined tori*, 2006).
- the use of polyhedra to associate the set of strategic options as a configuration (as indicated in images below)

These considerations are of relevance to psychoactive engagement with the set of values that highlight the set of problems evoking a set of strategic initiatives (*Topology of Valuing: psychodynamics of collective engagement with polyhedral value configurations*, 2008; *Stepping into, or through, the Mirror: embodying alternative scenario patterns*, 2008).

Strategic dilemmas of governance can then be understood as just one instance of a generic challenge of dealing with difference and avoiding inappropriate, premature closure (*Future methodological capacity to handle differences*, 2008). It is the challenge of dancing with otherness and the unknown in the moment -- determining how to collapse a probabity wave function through decision.

In the light of the options in the above diagram, in how many ways might otherness then be (re)framed?

- architecture and design: topology, configuration, polyhedra, etc
- psychoactive engagement and embodiment: dance (styles), sex (kama sutra, tantra), games, mountain climbing, gambling (lady luck)
- aesthetic evocation of pattern in the moment: music, song, polyphony, overtones, counterpoint, poetry
- analysis: binary logic (us and them), trilemma (eternal triangle), quadrilemma, genetics (meiosis, mitosis), complexity sciences

In applying the options self-reflexively to the process of reframing dilemmas, consideration can then be given to:

- conditions under which **dynamic** outcomes offer more degrees of freedom than **static** reframing (*From Statics to Dynamics in Sustainable Community: navigating through chaos by playing on polarities as attitude correctors*, 1998; *Navigating Alternative Conceptual Realities: clues to the dynamics of enacting new paradigms through movement*, 2002)
- the possibility of **"unfreezing" categories** (*Framing the Global Future by Ignoring Alternatives: unfreezing categories as a vital necessity*, 2009)

Eliciting new thinking

Self-reflexivity would seem to be vital to the emergence of the new thinking for which appeals are variously made. The need for such a renewal of approach would seem to follow from two major failures of collective intelligence and governance in the past decade:

- the consequences of the strategic framing of intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan, notably in response to intelligence regarding weapons of mass destruction and the resources expended as a result
- the financial crisis of 2008 and its economic consequences, and the previous uncritical promotion of globalization which had increased vulnerability to those consequences

Some efforts have been made to learn from the former, as at the Lessons Learned Center of the Office of the US Director of National Intelligence (Josh Kerbel, *Lost for Words: the Intelligence Community's struggle to find its voice*, US Army War College Quarterly, *Parameters*, Summer 2008).. It is unclear that the quality of learning with regard to the second is adequate to the challenge, especially given its focus on "fixing" the problem in order to return to "business as usual". Both examples would appear to offer every justification for asking whether global governance as it is currently conceived is not fundamentally flawed (*Emergence of a Global Misleadership Council: misleading as vital to governance of the future?* 2007). Such a question is especially pertinent given the range of increasingly acute global challenges effectively ignored as a consequence of focus on these disasters.

Given the many decades of policy reflection in think tanks -- framing the policies giving rise to these historic mega-disasters and the associated systemic neglect -- it is then appropriate to develop a framework (such as that above) to **facilitate identification of the questions that are not being asked in a policy context** (*Abuse of Faith in Governance: mystery of the unasked question*, 2009). The question is whether policy reflection is in some way trapped, as warned by Geoffrey Vickers (*Freedom in a Rocking Boat*: *changing values in an unstable society*, 1972). He noted that: "*a trap is a function of the nature of the trapped*".

In claiming to be considering "every option" in relation to strategic dilemmas, what is the framework within which "every" is selected? (cf *Cui Bono: Groupthink vs Thinking the Unthinkable? Reframing the suffocating consensus in response to 7/7*, 2005). As noted above, in the light of the strategy in 2009 in Afghanistan, and voter apathy regarding the European parliamentary elections (*Considering All the Strategic Options: whilst ignoring alternatives and disclaiming cognitive protectionism*, 2009), **are policy think tanks identifying an appropriate range of strategic options for the turbulent world of the 21st century?** (*"Tank-thoughts" from "Think-tanks": metaphors constraining development of global governance*, 2003; *Meta-challenges of the Future for Networking through Think-tanks*, 2005).

Where are the checklists of "new thinking"? Are they produced by international institutions such as those of the UN system or the European Community? How "new" is what is labelled "new"? Or is what is so labelled merely what they already "knew"?

Indicators that nothing new is currently emerging, despite the expectations projected onto Barack Obama, are:

- lack of new thinking to completely reframe:
  - the Middle East challenge (eg *And When the Bombing Stops? Territorial conflict as a challenge to mathematicians*, 2000)
  - the Afghanistan / Caucasus situation (eg *Poetic Engagement with Afghanistan, Caucasus and Iran an unexplored strategic opportunity?* 2009)
  - popular global engagement (eg *A Singable Earth Charter, EU Constitution or Global Ethic?* 2006)
- typical narrow, single-threat framing of challenges of the day (eg *Promoting a Singular Global Threat -- Terrorism: strategy of choice for world governance*, 2002; *Climate Change and the Elephant in the Living Room*, 2008)
- failure to recognize how a single obvious challenge may disguise a pattern of systemic threats (*Credibility Crunch engendered by Hope-mongering: "credit crunch" focus as symptom of a dangerous mindset*, 2008; *Systemic Crises as Keys to Systemic Remedies: a metaphorical Rosetta Stone for future strategy?* 2008; *Terror as Distractant from More Deadly Global Threats: bewitching world of definitional game-playing*, 2009)
- systematic neglect of underlying problems driving the emergence of those that are recognized (*Institutionalized Shunning of Overpopulation Challenge: incommunicability of fundamentally inconvenient truth*, 2008).

As in any creative thinking exercise, proposed strategies could fruitfully be "tested" against a challenging framework (as suggested above) to determine what possibilities had been designed out by "trapped" mindset and pattern of thinking. **Curiously, whilst huge investments are devoted to increasing the sophistication and destructive power of weaponry and surveillance technology, very little is devoted to increasing the sophistication and creativity of the mindset that controls and directs its use.**

Comprehension of comprehensible patterns

As is implied by the reference above to the variety of stringed instruments, the intention here is not to restrict attention to a 12-fold array of options for the reframing of strategic dilemmas. This is merely one such pattern which has a degree of resonance in various cultures. Because of its factors (2, 3, 4 and 6), it has great advantage in facilitating comprehension and offering coherence to a pattern of somewhat greater complexity than those factors. Not to be forgotten is the remarkable degree of preference for binary logic in strategic thinking -- when there may well be a strong case for more complex modalities, if only through understanding of the trilemma and the quadrilemma.

These issues have been discussed in much more detail elsewhere (*Representation, Comprehension and Communication of Sets: the role of number*, 1978). A range of comprehensible patterns, favoured in very different contexts, has been similarly reviewed (*Patterns of Conceptual Integration*, 1984; *Examples of Integrated, Multi-set Concept Schemes*, 1984). Potentially more challenging is the comprehension of the "appropriateness" of any associated strategy (*Comprehension of Appropriateness*, 1986).

Irrespective of any academic or rational justification for particular patterns as exemplifying requisite systemic variety, it is appropriate to recognize the importance attached within different cultures to a 12-fold pattern, as in the case of:

- the 12 gods of the Olympian Dodekatheon
- the archetypal 12-seated Arthurian roundtable of western culture -- supposedly modelled on that of the biblical Last Supper and of Joseph of Arimathea's Holy Grail table
- the members of any jury, typically numbering 12 in criminal cases, and considered essential to the dispensation of some models of justice
- the 12 Tribes of Israel (as discussed in *Generic Reframing of the 12 Tribes of "Israel"*, 2009), especially to the extent that each is indicative of a preferred mode of knowing, as with a preferred prioritisation of 12 "wicked" problems, such as unemployment, climate change, hunger, disease, energy, pollution, etc.
- the analysis of Arthur Young (*Geometry of Meaning*, 1978), notably as adapted with respect to:
    - learning cycles (*Characteristics of phases in 12-phase learning / action cycles*, 1998)
    - strategies (*Typology of 12 complementary strategies essential to sustainable development*; 1998)
    - modes of dialogue (*Typology of 12 complementary dialogue modes essential to sustainable dialogue*, 1998)
- the mystical belief of the Twelvers in the twelve divinely ordained leaders in Islam, known as the Twelve Imams.
- the continuing popular attachment to the astrological implications of the zodiac -- significant to the circulation of many mass-market newspapers (as well as to the strategic decision-making of leaders of major countries on occasion)

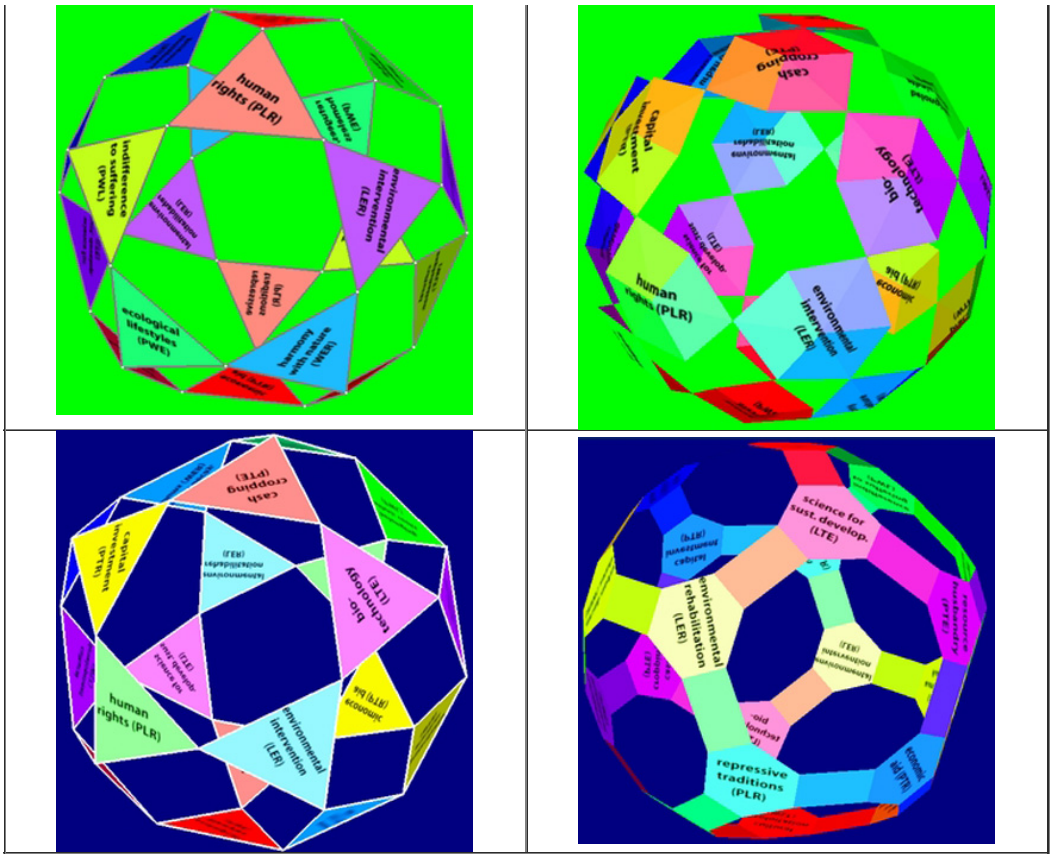
Arguably a 12-fold pattern offers a minimum richness through which to encompass -- to some degree -- the necessary systemic relationships of a viable global strategy (*Through Metaphor to a Sustainable Ecology of Development Policies*, 1989; *Comprehensible Policy-making: guiding metaphors and configuring choices*, 1991). A case has been made for this by John G. Bennett (*General systematics*, *Systematics*, 1, 1, June 1963). In terms of self-reflexivity, a corresponding case can be made for a "dodecameral mind" (*Union of Intelligible Associations: remembering dynamic identity through a dodecameral mind*, 2005).

An earlier approach to the challenge built deliberately on the methodology used for *Limits to Growth* in 1972 (*World Dynamics and Psychodynamics: a step towards making abstract "world system" dynamic limitations meaningful to the individual*, 1971). A richer and more complex approach is offered in the light of a Chinese cultural framework (*Towards Another Order of Sustainable Policy Cycles: Insights from the Chinese Book of Changes*, 1990). The argument for exploring such patterns is consistent with that made by Susantha Goonatilake (*Toward a Global Science: mining civilizational knowledge*, 1999).

Reframing through structural configuration of strategic options

The potential indicated by the images below is discussed at length elsewhere (*Polyhedral Pattern Language: software facilitation of emergence, representation and transformation of psycho-social organization*, 2008; *Towards Polyhedral Global Governance: complexifying oversimplistic strategic metaphors*, 2008; *Polyhedral Empowerment of Networks through Symmetry: psycho-social implications for organization and global governance*, 2008). This is discussed as one of the options (*Design of complex structures*) in the Annex.

Indicative use of polyhedra to associate the identified set of strategic options as a configuration [Displays made with the application Stella: Polyhedron Navigator in which such configurations can be variously manipulated]	



Relevance to major dilemma-prone issues

Indicative framework for confronting issues with potential options for strategic reframing												
.	Insight capture and integration technology	Symbolism, metaphor, myth and story-telling	Pattern language, poly-sensorial (visual, sound, etc)	Trans-formative dialogue, meetings and strategies	Creative agreements and business models	Design of complex structures	Appropriate technology	Simulation, role playing and gaming	Self-reflexive orgs. and initiatives	Paradoxical and negative strategies	Dynamics and emergent order	Rhythm, poetry, music, song and dance
Health & disease												
Employment, joblessness												
Food & hunger												
Education & ignorance												
Security & violence												
Environment, degradation												
Crime & corruption												
Injustice & inequality												
Resources & overconsumption												
Overpopulation												
** etc												
**												

Conclusion

The argument here might be most succinctly stated (as articulated in the relevant section of the Annex) in terms of the need for a system of insight capture, encompassing current creativity, emergent insight in the future, and that embedded in the "wisdom literature" of the past. The case made is for a global *WikiStrategies*, *WikiSolutions* -- or perhaps a *WikiInsight* -- building on the learnings from the Global Strategies Project (32,695 profiles linked by 262,941 relationships).

On the basis of such a system of insight capture many experimental applications could be developed to cluster included options into arrays evoking different styles of engagement consistent with different modes of knowing.

This highlights the merit of distinguishing between requesting voters to decide between issues (represented by people) -- as at present -- and also deciding with regard to the options through which the coherence of any set of issues is rendered comprehensible.