



laetus in praesens

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En-joying the World through En-joying Oneself

Eliciting the potential of globalization through cognitive radicalization

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Introduction

This is an exploration of the possibility of radical existential coherence in engaging with the otherness of the wider world. It endeavours to distinguish cognitive radicalization from its current primary association with political radicalization -- and especially through its violent expressions in religious fundamentalism. This is now highlighted on the [tenth anniversary of the 9/11 events in the USA](#) and by their aftermath worldwide in the global "[war on terrorism](#)".

The primary association thereby justifies policies of counter-radicalization inhibiting potentially valuable challenges to conventional mindsets. Framing radicalization as unquestionably dangerous in this way then implies that [socialization](#), as widely favoured and promoted, constitutes a form of "[grooming](#)" in its most questionable sense.

Despite calls for "new thinking" and a "paradigm shift", the disastrous failure of global governance (currently widely acknowledged in response to more recent events) has been characterized by a pattern of conventional thinking ([Ungovernability of Sustainable Global Democracy? Towards engaging appropriately with time](#), 2011). The question here is whether there is scope for far more unconventional cognitive approaches to more effective engagement with the evident paradoxes and contradictions -- if only for the individual seeking to thrive in that context. What indeed are the "rules of engagement"?

A case is made for recognizing ways of engaging more radically with "externalities". This has notably been articulated by various schools of thought and previously discussed ([Existential Embodiment of Externalities](#), 2009). The suggestion is that individuals are freer, than is assumed by convention, to reframe their experience of the world (and their relationship to it) with a far greater degree of radical coherence ([In Quest of Radical Coherence: a group design initiative](#), 1994). The approach is also consistent, to a degree, with the arguments of [constructivist epistemology](#), notably as articulated in terms of [enactivism](#) by [Francisco Varela](#) ([Laying Down a Path in Walking](#), 1987). Hence the use of the form "en-joying" in the title.

The argument here takes special account of the extent to which cognition is increasingly constrained by information overload, attention deficiency, and the limited capacity to communicate knowledge and insight effectively -- especially between relatively incommensurable

worldviews. Of particular concern is the partial connectivity of elements of knowledge, thereby losing integrative insight dependent on a systemic perspective. In this sense it recognizes the extent to which individuals and collectivities are increasingly "cocooned", however this may be described (*Dynamically Gated Conceptual Communities*, 2004). Also recognized is the problematic risk of a radical form of memetic singularity (*Emerging Memetic Singularity in the Global Knowledge Society*, 2009).

It follows that where greater competence and expertise are only available "elsewhere", with a degree of investment that is considered impossible or unjustified, the individual (or group) is then forced to rely on immediately accessible resources. This is irrespective of however crude and inadequate they may be, as deprecated from "elsewhere". This "information situation" -- effectively "permanent" -- is appropriately illustrated metaphorically by individuals in "info-shacks" in slums and refugee camps, whatever the degree of external assistance.

It is within this context, to the extent that an individual experiences it as credible, that capacity to engage with more radical reframing of the relation to externalities constitutes an opportunity. Any sense of actively "enjoying oneself" may then be explored in terms of "enjoying the world" as an externality creatively reframed. Any quest for radical coherence, as an emergent integrative experience, may then be associated with the integrative potential of globalization -- itself then subject to radical reframing.

This exploration was partially inspired by the statement by James Lovelock "enjoy it while you can" (*The Vanishing Face of Gaia: a final warning: Enjoy It While You Can*, 2009). Here however the focus is on a more radical interpretation of "it" -- with "it" as a lens for a more radical and richer comprehension of "you". This then raises the question of the experiential nature of happiness under such circumstances, whether implying a noun or a verb. Is its cultivation then to be explored as an art or a science -- or a matter of being otherwise, however that might be understood (*Being Other Wise: dynamics of a meaningfully sustainable lifestyle*, 1998)?

Cognitive radicalism

Counter-radicalization: As a consequence of recent framings of concerns regarding terrorism, "cognitive radicalism" is now widely understood (at least in some circles) to be a precursor to political violence. As articulated by Lorenzo Vidino (*Countering Radicalization in America Lessons from Europe*, United States Institute of Peace, 2010), "non-violent radicalism" can lead to political violence or the promotion of violent radicalism. Vidino indicates:

- Radicalization is a highly individualized process determined by the complex interaction of various personal and structural factors. Because no one theory can exhaustively explain it, policymakers must understand the many paths to radicalization and adopt flexible approaches when trying to combat it.
- The role of religion in the radicalization process is debated, but theories that set aside ideology and religion as factors in the radicalization of Western jihadists are not convincing. Policymakers who choose to tackle religious aspects should do so cautiously, however, cognizant of the many implications of dealing with such a sensitive issue.
- Policymakers need to determine whether a counter-radicalization strategy aims to tackle violent radicalism alone or, more ambitiously, cognitive radicalism. The relation between the two forms is contested. Challenging cognitive radicalism, though possibly useful for both security and social cohesion purposes, is extremely difficult for any Western democracy.

David Cameron, as prime minister of the UK, has explicitly recognized the threat of "non-violent extremists" (*David Cameron: Speech on radicalisation and Islamic extremism*, *New Statesman*, 5 February 2011):

As evidence emerges about the backgrounds of those convicted of terrorist offences, it is clear that many of them were initially influenced by what some have called 'non-violent extremists' and then took those radical beliefs to the next level by embracing violence.

Challenges to status quo: As argued on a blog (*Silent Fault Lines*, December 2010), the question is how democracies deal with the ideas that suggest negating the existing structures:

Democracies need to solve problems constantly and need to enhance the capacities while adjusting to the dynamic structural changes. Radicals don't believe the potentials of the existing structures and try to replace those with something else. While enhancing the stretching capacity of democratic ideals, it is necessary to strengthen and empower the rule of law when radicalism is in rise with its many forms and manifestations.

"New thinking"? This whole framing of "cognitive radicalism" effectively subsumes an extensive spectrum of radical re-examination of assumptions. Such "new thinking", characteristic of paradigm shifts fundamental to science, might be said to be the meat of much philosophy, theology, mysticism and art -- if not of creativity in general.

The framing bears every resemblance to the preoccupation of dominant cultural systems with ensuring that the preferred worldview is in no way challenged or disrupted. This is defensively conflated with understandings of "our way of life". Examples have long been evident within religious systems and more recently in dictatorial applications of communist ideology. The preoccupation has been well-described by George Orwell as that of the secret police in his dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). As Orwell portrayed his *Thought Police*, it might be construed as an effort to legitimate thought control (Kathleen Taylor, *Brainwashing: the science of thought control*, 2006).

As an indication that little has been learnt in the community of global leaders, wide publicity was given to the statement in anticipation of the tenth anniversary of 9/11 by Tony Blair -- complicit with George Bush in the policy failures of the past decade -- to the effect that the West faces a "long and hard struggle to defeat terrorism.". As presented by Nicholas Watt (*Tony Blair calls for regime change in Iran*

and Syria, *The Guardian*, 9 September 2011).

Blair warns that the world still faces a lengthy battle to defeat groups that have distorted Islam. "We are a long way from getting out of this," he says. The former prime minister adds: "The threat is still from the same ideology and the same narrative which is based on a perverted view of religion and which regards cultures and faiths as in fundamental conflict with each other."

Blair says Britain and the US had initially failed to understand the popularity of the theory that the west is intent on conflict. "I think the thing that we came to learn later is that even though the number of actual extremists was very small, the number of people who bought a certain amount of the narrative that gave rise to that extremism was worryingly large."

One might well ask **why has so little attention been given to the potential inadequacies and limitations of the logic, ideology and "us and them" narrative** (*Us and Them: relating to challenging others*, 2009). Arguably it is this which has perverted any new understanding of cognitive radicalization -- thus inhibiting any new approach to conflict situations -- as indicated by Blair's very questionable subsequent "success" as the official Envoy of the [Quartet on the Middle East](#). Is this still the "old thinking" characteristic of western interventionism on a global scale (*Attacking the Shadow through Iraq: using the I-Rack to put Western civilization to the question*, 2002)?

Terrorism as a distractant? The questionable promotion of terrorism as the greatest threat to global civilization might be understood as consistent with this simplistic framing (*Promoting a Singular Global Threat -- Terrorism: Strategy of choice for world governance*, 2002). Curiously, with the recent emergence of other dramatic crises (financial, global warming, etc), as with "terror" itself, this framing might be understood as a dangerous distractant (*Terror as Distractant from More Deadly Global Threats*, 2009).

It is dangerous in that it inhibits consideration of the possibility that **civilization may be in some kind of cognitive trap preventing the emergence of more fruitful modes of thinking and organization** -- if only for individuals who perceive themselves to be trapped in some way (*Metaphoric entrapment in time: avoiding the trap of Project Logic*, 2000; *In Quest of Uncommon Ground: beyond impoverished metaphor and the impotence of words of power*, 1997).

Maintaining the status quo: It might then be said that the conventional efforts to frame cognitive radicalism are consistent with the systemic efforts of conventional dynamics to maintain the status quo -- irrespective of the challenges with which governance is so evidently faced and with respect to which authorities are so manifestly incapable of engendering sustainable solutions (*Ungovernability of Sustainable Global Democracy?* 2011; *Tomorrow, Who Will Govern the World?*, 2011).

The process has been admirably described in cybernetic terms by [Stafford Beer](#) in his adaption of *Le Chatelier's Principle*-- relevant to any discussion of **complex adaptive systems**:

Reformers, critics of institutions, consultants in innovation, people in short who "want to get something done", often fail to see this point. They cannot understand why their strictures, advice or demands do not result in effective change. They expect either to achieve a measure of success in their own terms or to be flung off the premises. But an ultra-stable system (like a social institution)... has no need to react in either of these ways. It specializes in equilibrational readjustment, which is to the observer a secret form of change requiring no actual alteration in the macro-systemic characteristics that he is trying to do something about. (Stafford Beer on *Le Chatelier's Principle* as applied to social systems: *The Cybernetic Cytoblast - management itself*. Chairman's Address to the International Cybernetic Congress, September 1969)

In Beer's case this was exemplified by his personal experience of US involvement in the [detabilization of the Allende regime in Chile](#) (1973).

It may therefore be argued that the current framing of cognitive radicalism is an unfortunately predictable conflation of concerns comparable to the attitude of dysfunctional monarchical systems to arguments advocating democracy.

The purported threat to a "way of life" is seemingly built on the pillars of (increasing) inequality, characterized by the unrelenting suffering of millions, and the ever-repeated promises of a better future, characteristically broken and postponed:

- as indicated by President George Bush (Sr.) at the Earth Summit on the environment (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), the "American Way of Life is non-negotiable". George Bush (Jr.), like his father, has declared the oil-dependent American "way of life" as non-negotiable (*AWOL -- American Way Of Life? Assumptions justifying worldwide imposition of democratic imperialism*, 2003)
- as indicated by the former Prime Minister of Australia, John Howard (*A Way of Life Attacked, The Age*, 5 September 2011)

Information and communication constraints

Ignorance-based civilization?: As noted above, cognition is increasingly constrained by information overload, attention deficiency, and limited capacity to communicate knowledge and insight effectively -- especially between relatively incommensurable worldviews. Despite the enthusiasm articulated by [James Gleick](#) (*The Information: a history, a theory, a flood*, 2011), all are therefore rendered increasingly ignorant relative to the amount of knowledge "available" to which meaningful access is inhibited, as separately argued (*Governance through ignorance in a knowledge-based society*, 2011).

The point was made that global civilization is necessarily "ignorance-based" to a significant degree, however much the emphasis is placed on the availability of knowledge and the investment in "[intelligence gathering](#)". Factors include:

- physical access facilities (geography, electronic connectivity, etc)

- cost (commercial constraints, most notably imposed through copyright), especially when increasingly subject to austerity measures
- restrictions (most notably commercial and governmental secrecy)
- unfamiliar, complex or alienating "language" and form of presentation

Again, as noted above, of particular concern is the partial connectivity of elements of knowledge, thereby losing integrative insight dependent on a systemic perspective. In this sense individuals and collectivities are increasingly "cocooned", however this may be described (*Dynamically Gated Conceptual Communities*, 2004). Consistent with the argument regarding "grooming" is the degree to which that cocoon is externally reinforced through the cultivation of individual "filter bubbles" (Eli Pariser, *The Filter Bubble: what the Internet is hiding from you*, 2011).

Ironically elicited **meaning is then a product of a much-deprecated process of "cherry picking" from the mass of information**, perhaps even restricted to "low-hanging fruit" -- in the light of preferential biases ("ripeness", "colour", etc), as separately argued (*Systems of Categories Distinguishing Cultural Biases*, 1993). This has long been illustrated in the arbitrary distinguishing and naming of constellations from a particular "worldview".

Questionable communication: This complex of conditions raises questions with regard to:

- why is communication undertaken and with what expectations? (*Communication with Whom, about What, Where and Why?* 2008; *Attitude Entrainment: Communicating thrival skills and insights*, 2004)
- with whom is it possible to consider viable communication and with what degree of "existence" and identity is to be attributed to them, as separately discussed (*Cultivating Global Strategic Fantasies of Choice*, 2010)
- whether it is possible to expect the emergence of viable consensus and coherence -- or the possibility of "delivering" it? This is separately discussed (*The Consensus Delusion: Mysterious attractor undermining global civilization as currently imagined*, 2011) and most notably by Erik J. Olsson (*The Impossibility of Coherence; Against Coherence: Truth, Probability, and Justification*, 2005).
- what can any such communication be expected to "mean" for either party and with what implications? (*Comprehension of Appropriateness*, 1986)
- what "language" is used in the effort to communicate and with what level of sophistication? (*In Quest of a Strategic Pattern Language: a new architecture of values*, 2008; *Governance through Pattern Language: creative cognitive engagement contrasted with abdication of responsibility*, 2006; *12 Complementary Languages for Sustainable Governance*, 2003; *Cultivating new conceptual languages*, 1995; *Developing a Metaphorical Language for the Future*, 1994)
- whether the effort to handle information overload through limited attention span is affecting the manner in which people are able to think, individually and collectively, in unforeseen ways yet to be fully determined (*Re-Emergence of the Language of the Birds through Twitter?* 2010). The problematic dimensions have notably been explored by Nicholas Carr (*The Shallows: how the internet is changing the way we think, read and remember*, 2010), Larry Rosen (*The Psychology of Technology*, 2010) and by William Powers (*Hamlet's BlackBerry: building a good life in the digital age*, 2011).
- what is the metaphoric surface on which "descriptive" information / knowledge can be appropriately "written" (enscribed), namely whether the emphasis on "points" and "lines" is adequate to articulation and comprehension of "global" complexity, notably in the light of the greater relevance of toroidal forms to mapping associations, as argued by Michael Schiltz and separately discussed (*Beyond the plane: form and medium in terms of the calculus of indications*, 2006). In contrast to the plane surface of a simple matrix, a torus holds an interesting position in the discussion of the relationship between form and medium as fundamental to advanced theories of communication. This notably featured in the work of Niklas Luhmann (*Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft*, 1997) and discussed by Michael Schiltz (*Form and Medium: a mathematical reconstruction, Image [&] Narrative*, 6, 2003) in relation to the calculus of indications of George Spencer-Brown (*Laws of Form*, 1969/1994). Schiltz notes that form/medium is "the image for systemic connectivity and concatenation", as described by Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela. Schiltz notes, that the notion of "space" is the key to reflexivity appropriate to any discussion of form and medium.
- how collective memory can be enabled and enhanced, especially with respect to the longer term (*Societal Learning and the Erosion of Collective Memory*, 1980; *Minding the Future: a thought experiment on presenting new information*, 1980; *Engaging Macrohistory through the Present Moment*, 2004)

The argument is usefully illustrated with respect to "language" by physicist Richard Feynman, asked to explain magnetism in a much-cited interview, [urged the BBC interviewer to take it on faith](#) (video). He finally stated:

I really can't do a good job, any job, of explaining magnetic force in terms of something else that you're more familiar with because I don't understand it in terms of anything else that you're more familiar with. (cited in *20 Things You Didn't Know About... Magnetism*, *Discover Magazine*, July-August 2011).

As mentioned above, all such factors suggest the problematic risk of a radical form of memetic singularity (*Emerging Memetic Singularity in the Global Knowledge Society*, 2009).

Info-shacks vs Info-silos: It follows that where greater competence and expertise are only available "elsewhere", with a degree of investment that is considered impossible or unjustified "here and now", the individual is then forced to rely on immediately accessible knowledge resources -- however crude and inadequate. As such, these may well be deprecated from "elsewhere".

This "information situation" -- effectively "permanent" -- is appropriately equivalent to individuals and their families in "information shacks" (or "**kno-shacks**") in slums and refugee camps with many others, whatever the degree of external assistance and promises for the future. There is a splendid irony to this necessity for many to "rediscover the wheel"-- much as it is deprecated by those better informed -- given the metaphoric use of the wheel as the most fundamental symbol of integration.

The information "habitat" as a metaphor may also be used to question assumptions relating to the "higher" education characteristic of greater knowledge -- when its acquisition can be enabled. This may be usefully compared with rising to higher floors in a building offering wider perspectives, as in the institutionalization in "skyscrapers" of education and its applications. Such elevated perspectives typically ignore the challenge for those on the ground and their need to navigate the dynamics of a more complex terrain in order to survive, most notably through acquisition of "streetwise" skills.

The role of authority with respect to information habitats can also be clarified using both the shack and skyscraper metaphors. In the former case, irrespective of prescribed "health and safety" building codes, the capacity to require and ensure their implementation in practice is highly limited. The requisite materials and skills are simply not available from "elsewhere". In the case of the skyscrapers, effectively constructed according to such prescriptions, the capacity to engage with those obliged to live "on the street" is very limited (exemplified by the expression "**information silos**"). The latter may well have greater ability to roam widely across the urban terrain through "no go" areas, as understood from a "higher perspective".

"Higher-education" vs "Meta-education": The point has been made in contrasting "higher education" with "meta-education" (*Higher Education ∞ Meta-education ?* 2011). It is also made with respect to "ascent" and "escape" metaphors associated with acquisition of spiritual insight (*Clues to 'Ascent' and 'Escape'* 2002; *TechGnosis: gnostic escape in a knowledge universe*, 2007). Such questionable understandings of "higher" can then be related to reaching "escape velocity" in the quest for the advancement of knowledge (*Entering Alternative Realities -- Astronautics vs Noonautics: isomorphism between launching aerospace vehicles and launching vehicles of awareness*, 2002). The challenge to comprehension can also be expressed in terms of quality and as to whether, like wine, it "travels well" or not (*Musings on Information of a Higher Quality*, 1996).

It is a curious feature of happiness and enjoyment, as discussed below, that it effectively defies the above information constraints. It is a necessarily a direct and unmediated experience.

Constrained "deliverance" capacity of governance

It is conventionally assumed that governance has the capacity to "deliver" solutions. Political parties and their leaderships are eloquent in their promises in this regard. The track record of failures to fulfil such commitments, and their diminishing credibility, has been widely noted (*Tomorrow, Who Will Govern the World? Review*, 2011; *Abuse of Faith in Governance*, 2009). As a consequence, there is now a somewhat extraordinary tendency in governance to use the "escalated" formulation of "pledges" and "vows" -- without any legally binding commitment however.

Understandings of "deliverance" of course have traditional religious connotations relating to the intervention of the divine in some form. This response to failure of "deliverance" by conventional governance is now matched by faith-based possibilities, as with the very recent declaration of [Rick Perry](#) -- the person who may well be elected as the next "most powerful man on the planet":

Right now, America is in crisis. We have been besieged by financial debt, terrorism, and a multitude of natural disasters. As a nation, we must come together and call upon Jesus to guide us through unprecedented struggles, and thank him for the blessings of freedom we so richly enjoy... Some problems are beyond our power to solve.... with praying people asking God's forgiveness, wisdom and provision for our state and nation. There is hope for America. It lies in heaven, and we will find it on our knees.
(*Rick Perry under fire for planning Christian prayer rally and fast*, *The Guardian*, 5 August 2011)

At this time of writing both Rick Perry and Sarah Palin are rated front runners for the Republican candidacy for the US Presidency in 2012. Critics have argued that Perry's tendency to use prayer as public policy demonstrates, in the midst of a truly painful, wide-ranging and potentially catastrophic crisis in the nation's second most-populous state, how he would govern if he became president. As cited by Timothy Egan (*Rick Perry's Unanswered Prayers*, *The New York Times*, 11 August 2011), Perry stated in a speech in May explaining how some of the nation's most serious problems could be solved:

I think it's time for us to just hand it over to God, and say, 'God: You're going to have to fix this'

This could readily be interpreted as a form of extremism -- deriving from a form of cognitive radicalization. Others raise the question whether "craziness" is indeed what is required for global governance at this time, as noted by Christopher Caldwell (*Leaders of today: do crises demand craziness?* *Financial Times*, 2 September 2011) in referring both to Perry and to a recent study by Nassir Ghaemi (*A First Rate Madness: : uncovering the links between leadership and mental illness*, 2011). The latter indicates that in certain moments we might be better served by leaders with psychiatric problems:

The best crisis leaders are either mentally ill or mentally abnormal...The worst crisis leaders are mentally healthy.

It is entirely questionable, especially given the track record of faith-based governance, whether governance of the future will be able to ensure "deliverance" of civilization from its challenges as currently foreseen (*Ungovernability of Sustainable Global Democracy? Towards engaging appropriately with time*, 2011; *Future Challenge of Faith-based Governance*, 2003).

The current level of systemic neglect might well be said to be consistent with religious "end times" scenarios (*Spontaneous Initiation of Armageddon -- a heartfelt response to systemic negligence*, 2004; *Disastrous Floods as Indicators of Systemic Risk Neglect*, 2011; *Unknown Undoing: challenge of incomprehensibility of systemic neglect*, 2008).

Varieties of enjoyment: enjoying the world and the other

This exploration, as noted above, was indeed partially inspired by the statement by James Lovelock (*The Vanishing Face of Gaia: a final warning: Enjoy It While You Can*, 2009). Here however the focus is on a more radical interpretation of "it" -- with "it" as a lens for a more radical and richer comprehension of "you".

Happiness: Preoccupations with happiness date back to to the [philosophers of happiness](#) of classical Greece. Historical overviews of understandings of happiness are provided by [Darrin M. McMahon](#) (Happiness: A History, *Atlantic Monthly*, November 2005; The History of Happiness: 400 BC-AD 1780, *Daedalus*, Spring 2004). A very insightful review of the changing understanding of happiness, and the emergence of its recent forms, is provided by [Pascal Bruckner](#) (*Condemned to Joy: the Western cult of happiness is a mirthless enterprise*, *City Journal*, Winter 2011, 21, 1), who concludes:

The Western cult of happiness is indeed a strange adventure, something like a collective intoxication. In the guise of emancipation, it transforms a high ideal into its opposite. Condemned to joy, we must be happy or lose all standing in society. It is not a question of knowing whether we are more or less happy than our ancestors; our conception of the thing itself has changed, and we are probably the first society in history to make people unhappy for not being happy.

The comprehensive entry on [happiness](#) in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* is introduced as follows:

The primary meaning of this term in all the leading European languages seems to involve the notion of good fortune, good chance, good happening; but from a very early date in the history of Greek philosophy the conception became the centre of keen speculation and dispute. What is happiness? What are its constituents? What are the causes and conditions of happiness? How, if at all, does it differ from pleasure? What are its relations to man's intellect, to his will, to his life as a whole? What is its position in a general theory of the universe? These are questions which have much occupied the various schools of philosophy and, indeed, have exercised men who would not be willingly accused of philosophizing.

Happiness, as noted there, has been variously understood as:

- a matter of chance, arbitrarily bestowed by capricious fortune
- a reward for goodness of life, whatever that might be held to be -- happiness being the highest good
- the fruit of virtuous intellectual action, with the highest happiness corresponding to the highest virtue of the highest faculty, notably in the contemplative or philosophic life of speculation, in which (according to Aristotle) the dianoetic virtues of understanding, science, and wisdom are exercised
- perfect happiness (*beatitudo*), as for [Thomas Aquinas](#), is the true supreme, subjective end of man, but is not attainable in this life but only in the hereafter (a belief shared by other Christian writers). It consists in the best exercise of the noblest human faculty, the intellect, on the one object of infinite worth. (Thomas Aquinas, *Question 3: What is Happiness*)

The *Catholic Encyclopedia* entry notes specifically with regard to Aristotle:

Theoria, or pure speculation, is the highest activity of man, and that by which he is most like unto the gods; for in this, too, the happiness of the gods consists. It is, in a sense, a Divine life... Happiness (*eudaimonia*), therefore with Aristotle, is not identical with pleasure (*hedone*), or even with the sum of pleasures. It has been described as the kind of well-being that consists in well-doing; and supreme happiness is thus the well-doing of the best faculty. Pleasure is a concomitant or efflorescence of such an activity.

Eudaimonia: Whether transliterated as [eudaimonia](#), *eudaemonia*, or *eudemonia*, this is the ancient Greek term commonly translated as [happiness](#) although it has been suggested that "human flourishing" is a more accurate translation. Etymologically, it consists of the word "eu" ("good") and "daimon" ("spirit").

As noted in the *Wikipedia* entry, the concept has variously featured in recent models of [eudaimonia in psychology](#) which emerged from studies of self-realization and the means of its accomplishment by researchers such as [Erik Erikson](#), [Gordon Allport](#), and [Abraham Maslow](#). The distinction between eudaimonia and [hedonic](#) well-being has been made by C. D. Ryff (*Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1989) using a six-factor structure based on the Aristotelian emphasis on the qualities of belonging and benefiting others, flourishing, thriving and exercising excellence (autonomy, personal growth, self-acceptance, purpose in life, environmental mastery, positive relations with others). Ryff also produced scales for assessing [mental health](#) which have resulted in research in well-being, health and successful aging (Dirk van Dierendonck, *The construct validity of Ryff's Scales of Psychological Well-being -- and its extension with spiritual well-being*, *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2004).

As also noted, [eudaimonia features in modern moral philosophy](#) as developed by [Elizabeth Anscombe](#) (*Modern Moral Philosophy*, 1958) who argues against morality dependent on an external authority rather than being grounded in the interests and well being of human moral agents, without appealing to any such lawgiver. Ethical systems that dispense with God as part of the theory are lacking the proper foundation for meaningful employment of concepts of what is morally right. Hence the subsequent interest in virtue ethics as an alternative to Utilitarianism, Kantian Ethics, and Social Contract theories (as noted by Julia Driver in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*).

Pursuit of happiness: These remarks follow from the study by [Y. S. Rajan](#) (*In Pursuit of Happiness*, 2007) presented as keynote speaker to a conference of the [World Academy of Art and Science](#) (Hyderabad, 2008) -- and comments made on it thereafter (*Happiness and Unhappiness through Naysign and Nescience: comprehending the essence of sustainability?* 2008). Rajan's study is divided into two parts: *Sustained Happiness: a real possibility in a knowledge society* and *Science, Technology and Economic Development: new tools of unity of matter and spirit*. The latter is understood as a yoga of a variety of forms. The study as a whole is an attempt to resolve the apparent contradiction between material and spiritual life.

The "pursuit of happiness" is not only the title of Rajan's study but also figures as one of the most famous phrases in the United States *Declaration of Independence: Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness*. It is recognized as one of the "inalienable rights" of man. In recognition of this, the web resources at [pursuit-of-happiness.org](#) stress "happiness is understandable, obtainable and teachable". Curiously the UN's *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which it inspired, contains no reference to "happiness". The references to "joy" are primarily according to the legal usage of "enjoyment" of rights. The closest equivalent acknowledged is Article 3: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person."

Subjective well-being: Any focus on happiness should of course be seen in relation to the creative initiative of Bhutan in developing [Gross National Happiness](#) (GNH) since 1972 as an attempt to define quality of life in more holistic and psychological terms than Gross National Product. While conventional development models stress economic growth as the ultimate objective, the concept of GNH is based on the premise that true development of human society takes place when material and spiritual development occur side by side to complement and reinforce each other. In 2007, Bhutan ranked 8th out of 178 countries in Subjective Well-Being, a metric that has been used by many psychologists ([Adrian G. White](#), *A Global Projection of Subjective Well-being: a challenge to positive psychology?* 2007).

The challenge for any individual is how to relate meaningfully a condition of "subjective well-being", as globally defined by authority through a "metric", to a personal situation in the here and now. Then the question is how to consider ways of enhancing that condition, especially in the light of the variety of possible understandings of happiness and enjoyment.

Happiness as art or science? The current interest in happiness by the social sciences would suggest that there is an emerging "science of happiness" which would include the "economics of happiness" and "[happiness economics](#)". Is there indeed an "applied science" of happiness -- even one capable of alleviating the worldview of the so-called "[dismal science](#)"?

The much-cited recent work by the [Dalai Lama](#) and Howard Cutler explore training of the human outlook such as to alter perception (*The Art of Happiness: a handbook for livings*, 1998; *The Art of Happiness at Work*, 2003). Happiness is presented as the purpose of life, but determined more by the state of the individual's mind than by external conditions, circumstances, or events. In that tradition, [Mirko Fryba](#) offers strategies for self-transformation, including some thirty detailed exercises (*The Art of Happiness: teachings of Buddhist psychology*, 1989) Other traditions have also framed happiness as an art ([Chris Prentiss](#), *Zen And the Art of Happiness*, 2006), including Christianity ([Ellen T. Charry](#), *God and the Art of Happiness*, 2010). This suggests that it may be better understood as an art than a science, perhaps as implied by the study by [Mary Catherine Bateson](#) (*Composing a Life*, 2001).

Reinforced by the initiative of Bhutan, psychology is now framing the challenge of happiness in scientific terms as summarized by [Craig Lambert](#) (*The Science of Happiness: psychology explores humans at their best*, *Harvard Magazine*, January-February 2007) and variously reported ([Claudia Wallis](#), *The New Science of Happiness*, *Time Magazine*, 9 January 2005; [Claudia Wallis](#), *The Science of Happiness Turns 10. What Has It Taught?* *Time Magazine*, 8 July 2009; [Mike Rudin](#), *The Science of Happiness*, *BBC*, 30 April 2006). The focus is a feature of the popular self-help literature featuring "positive thinking", notably promoted by [positive psychology](#). The questionable consequences of this bias suggest that the approach is potentially dangerous, even unscientific, as argued by [Barbara Ehrenreich](#) (*Smile Or Die: How Positive Thinking Fooled America and the World*, 2009).

As might be expected, others focus variously on "joy":

- as an art: [William B. Irvine](#) (*A Guide to the Good Life: the Ancient Art of Stoic Joy*, 2008); [Philip Okrend](#) (*The Art Of Joy*)
- as a science: [Steven Winspur](#) (*Introduction: A Science of Joy*, *L'Esprit Créateur*, 49, 4, Winter 2009, pp. 1-6). Reference to the "Science of Joy" of Friedrich Nietzsche is reviewed by [Lesley Chamberlain](#) (*The Kantianism of Hegel and Nietzsche by Robert Zimmerman*, *Philosophy Now*, July/August 2011)
- as a philosophy: [Ashwin Chandrasekhar](#) (*The Philosophy of Joy By Sri Sri Ravi Shankar*; [Francis Powys Stopford](#) (*The Toil of Life: Being a Collection of Essays on the Philosophy of Joy and Pain*, 1907). The result of Deleuze's encounter with Nietzsche has been described as a philosophy of joy as philosophy of practice ([Hardt, Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy](#), 25 January 2010).

Rajan's above-mentioned presentation to the World Academy of Art and Science might however suggest that it is usefully understood as being both art and science. The commentary on it opened the possibility that further insight might be obtained from considering it as neither art nor science (*Happiness and Unhappiness through Naysign and Nescience: comprehending the essence of sustainability?* 2008).

The question here is how happiness is "informed" by both art and science.

Contrasting understandings of happiness: There is a very extensive literature on happiness and its cultivation according to a variety of

traditions and schools of thought down the centuries. **The quantity and quality of such material implies a need to respond in the light of the information constraints noted above, namely selectively and inadequately** in the light of expertise and insight extensively available "elsewhere". As emphasized below, it is then for each to elucidate and comprehend the meaning of happiness -- avoiding entrapment in the variety of definitional processes authoritatively offered.

Notable differences are to be found in the literature with respect to:

- timing: whether perfect happiness is achievable in this life rather than in the life hereafter
- material vs spiritual focus: the degree of association or transcendence of the pleasure of mundanities (and indulgence therein)
- static (passive) vs dynamic (active) condition: whether inactive quiescence or an intensity of peaceful activity of the soul.
- transcendental implication: typically formulated in relation to engagement with the divine
- respective for external authoritative injunctions: typically moral and ethical rules
- duration: in the sense of being transitory or permanent
- objectivity vs subjectivity

These different preferences suggest a remarkable consistency with the arguments for seven "axes of bias" identified by W. T. Jones (*The Romantic Syndrome; toward a new methodology in cultural anthropology and the history of ideas*, 1961) as previously summarized (*Axes of Bias in Inter-Cultural Dialogue*, 1993) and discussed more generally (*Systems of Categories Distinguishing Cultural Biases*, 1993). Whereas Jones tested his methodology on the predictable inadequacy of academic dispute regarding definitions of the "romantic period", the sterility of dispute regarding the nature of "happiness" might be usefully reframed by it.

Hedonism: Just as with questionable framing of cognitive radicalism (discussed above), enjoyment and happiness are readily framed restrictively in terms of indulgence in sensual delights. This may be extolled or deprecated as **hedonism**. . The deprecation of hedonism might itself be understood as coming in a variety of flavours:

- from the religious perspective strongly deprecated by fundamentalism, whether of a Christian or Islamic variety.
- as essentially misguided in terms of spiritual development, according to a variety of mystical and other traditions
- as questionable in relation to cultivation of the "life of the mind"

En-joying oneself otherwise

How then to distinguish between enjoying the "pleasures of the world", the "mundanities", or the fulfilment of desires, from other modes of enjoying oneself? With respect to "globalization", is there more to the fortuitous allusion by Shakespeare's Hamlet to clearing the "distracted globe" (Andrew Gurr, *Hamlet and the Distracted Globe*, 1979), notably as cited by William Powers in making a case for cognitive "depth" (*Hamlet's BlackBerry: building a good life in the digital age*, 2011):

*Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there. (1.5.96)*

How does one enjoy "oneself"? Again, as with the discussion of cognitive radicalism and hedonism, the question calls for a focus beyond any auto-erotic suggestion of physical masturbation, or its metaphorical use in the description of questionable emotional, mental or spiritual stimulation.

Fruitful consideration of enjoying oneself also calls for a careful distinction from any more limited understandings of **self-love** exemplified by **narcissism**, **arrogance**, **conceit**, **egocentrism** or complacent self-contentment. Various questionable possibilities are offered by such as **Erich Fromm** (*The Art of Loving*, 1956) and **Robert H. Schuller** (*Self-Love: the dynamic force of success*, 1980).

In his discussion of Plato's dialogue on the nature of knowledge *Theaetetus*, Yahei Kanayama (*Perceiving Considering and Attaining Being: Theaetatus 184-186*, 1987) notes that in the *Philebus* (21a-c):

... it is said that, if one lacked reason, memory, knowledge, and true judgement, one couldn't know whether one was *enjoying oneself* or not, nor remember that one had been enjoying oneself, nor judge that one was enjoying oneself when one was, nor calculate that one would enjoy oneself later on, and that such a life would not be a human life at all, but the life of a jelly-fish or some other creatures that live in shells (In: Julia Annas (ed), *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*: Volume V: 1987, 1988, p. 46)

Ernest J. McCullough provides a relevant summary of the views of Edith Stein prior to her incarceration in Auschwitz (*Edith Stein and Inter-Subjectivity*, 2003):

The Greek word *eupatheia*... has a primary meaning of enjoying oneself, of making merry, and of enjoyment of luxuries... The sense of empathy in Edith Stein embraces some of the sense of joy in attention and identifying with another as a "person detector." Reviewing the dictionary options, it appears that both the identification with another and the imaginative and reflective projection on another could qualify as empathy, but the first sense avoids the subjective and idealist and appears to be the primary sense of the term as it is used by Edith Stein. The other person is experienced directly and judged to be another presence, but not "participated in" in content, by the empathizing person. Projection, in its more reflective quality, is a secondary sense of the term

in Stein. The marriage of direct access to persons through empathetic judgment and the phenomenological approach to reflection and to the content of empathy brings two rich traditions in harmony. Husserl's contribution to a deeper grasp of the other through the phenomenological method is essential to Stein's final position.

McCullough continues by summarizing Stein's understanding of a Transcendent Other:

Empathy as an act and disposition has enormous importance in a world in which... we appear to be atomic individuals, determined by events and only of value as useful. Stein's replacement of the atomic individual with a more relational sense of the person puts her philosophy of the person outside the model of the windowless monads presented by Husserl.... Ultimately, the full realization of otherness comes only with the relation to the Transcendent Other.... In this [later] work, she presents the alternative to the philosopher's eyes which "are lined with eyes within... to catch the unconscious heart in the very act." The senses provide the images from which symbolic theology leads to the Transcendent Other since there is an "objective commonness" between the world of sense and the spiritual world, the world of beauty. Ultimately "all harmony and all commonness of beings subsists through it, (the Transcendent beauty) for it guides everything to itself through love and unifies everything in this striving." 65

Enabling greater enjoyment through cognitive radicalization

The possibility emphasized here is that greater "happiness" and "enjoyment" may well be associated with poorly explored -- or even marginalized -- forms of "cognitive radicalization", whatever that might be held to mean. Some examples of radicalization, and associated processes, have been clarified by Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko (*Friction: How Radicalization Happens to Them and Us*, 2011). Radicalization may include:

- unconventional skills enjoyed as a consequence of processes of personal development, possibly promoted (even controversially) by consultants and sects
- poorly understood skills "enjoyed" by the "gifted"
- traditional processes of spiritual development as promoted in a variety of cultures, and variously deprecated
- "extreme" skills proudly developed by the military, including controversial boot camp disciplining
- "extreme sports" as widely enjoyed and admired
- sacrificial mindsets developed (and "enjoyed") within certain cultural processes (kamikaze pilots, martyrdom, suicide bombing, self-immolation, etc)
- seemingly inexplicable mass murderers, such as Anders Breivik, as remarked by Kathleen Puckett (*Beware the lone wolf radicals*, *New Scientist*, 4 September 2011), they are typically highly intelligent and well educated, with no previous history of criminal violence but sharing a profound inability to forge meaningful relationships -- in contrast with typical members of extremist groups who never commit serious acts of violence.
- radical lifestyles variously enjoyed (monastic simplicity, etc)
- cultivated as creativity in a wide variety of forms, including those recognized as "cultural creatives" (Paul H. Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson, *The Cultural Creatives: How 50 Million People Are Changing the World*, 2000).
- cognitive skills and attitudes characteristic of those on the Asperger's spectrum, exemplified by mathematician [Grigori Perelman](#) -- or dramatized worldwide by the "theoretical physicist" [Sheldon Cooper](#) (*The Big Bang Theory*).

The above-mentioned concerns with developing the "art" or "science" of happiness might, in some cases, be understood as requiring a form of cognitive radicalization -- where they imply a shift beyond conventional mindsets and comfort zones.

Again the point should be emphasized that there is a marked tendency to conflate any extreme modes of thinking with those deprecated as being conducive to violent behaviour. In a global society fearful of terrorism, the sitcom title of *The Big Bang Theory* is ironically well chosen, especially since its lead comedian received the [Golden Globe Award](#) (January 2011). The argument might even be caricatured as "normal = good", "extremism = bad" (*Norms in the Global Struggle against Extremism: rooting for normalization vs. rooting out extremism?* 2005). The irony is that the most radically extreme forms of thinking are those cultivated by fundamental physicists and cosmologists, typically challenging conventional understandings of space, time, matter and causality.

A useful exemplar of cognitive radicalization for this argument is the work of [Friedrich Nietzsche](#) (*The Gay Science: with a prelude in rhymes and an appendix of songs*, 1974), originally published in German in 1882. This controversial work describes the technical skill required for poetry writing, employing for its title a usage known at that time. The title was first translated inappropriately into English as *The Joyous Wisdom* but references are made to his "science of joy" since it describes a propensity toward any rigorous practice of a poised, controlled, and disciplined quest for knowledge, otherwise typically translated as "science". The spirit of such engagement with the world is well captured by a later philosopher [Paul Feyerabend](#) (*Conquest of Abundance: a tale of abstraction versus the richness of being*, 1999).

A simple example of the radical reframing of enjoyment is to consider that it may well be best understood **not** as a condition to be "grasped", as suggested by use of the noun and the emphasis on its "pursuit" (as noted above), as one of the "inalienable rights" of man. Although the web resources at [pursuit-of-happiness.org](#) stress "happiness is understandable, obtainable and teachable", the dynamic may be of greater subtlety (*Beyond Harassment of Reality and Grasping Future Possibilities: learnings from sexual harassment as a metaphor*, 1996).

Any challenge to this "constitutional" understanding, by any alternative approach to happiness, might well now be framed as an "un-American activity" and subject to the strictures of Homeland Security. As a form of cognitive radicalization, it might well be asked

whether, in addition to prayer itself, other meditational practices could be so construed by any "Thought Police", as has been the case in the past.

Embodying the paradoxes and contradictions of the pursuit of happiness

Presented in an [Annex](#) under the following sections:

- [Happiness as a verb -- en-joying as a dynamic?](#)
- [Imagining through cognitive radicalization](#)
- [Mirroring of self and other: enjoyment "through" the world](#)
- [Dynamics of en-joying oneself](#)
- [Veloping: dynamic transcendence of developing & enveloping](#)
- [Radical unknowing: engaging with otherness through ignorance and emptiness](#)
- [Special theory of cognitive relativity?](#)

The annex explores the implications of happiness as a dynamic capable -- through "en-joying" -- of encompassing the paradoxes and contradictions characteristic of governance in all its forms, especially the self-governance required by an individual for thrival. It recognizes a degree of complexity with which it is necessary to engage, as summarized separately (*Imagining the Real Challenge and Realizing the Imaginal Pathway of Sustainable Transformation*, 2007).

Socio-political implications

This argument challenges current efforts to reframe cognitive radicalization as unquestionably associated, through conflation, with threats to a conventional "way of life" -- notably described as "non-negotiable". The increasingly evident inadequacies of global governance are associated with dependence on ever-increasing and unsustainable growth (Bob Lloyd, *The Growth Delusion, Sustainability*, 2009, 1, pp. 516-536). Enabling radical "new thinking", in the quest for new understandings of "sustainability", is usefully recognized as socially responsible -- in contrast with the social irresponsibility of inhibiting and criminalizing such tendencies.

Grooming vs Socialization: The argument raises the question as to whether efforts at normalization, and the elimination of "extremism", are to be usefully compared to "grooming" in its questionable sense (*Norms in the Global Struggle against Extremism: rooting for normalization vs. rooting out extremism?* 2005). This suggests that global civilization is being progressively forced to revert to a condition somewhat analogous to that in the [People's Republic of China](#) prior to 1957 -- when the [Hundred Flowers Campaign](#) was briefly promoted:

Letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend is the policy for promoting progress in the arts and the sciences and a flourishing socialist culture in our land.

Following this brief liberalization, authorities engaged in repressive measures, forcing confessions, and sending the outspoken students to labour camps. An earlier variant is the requirement of an [imprimatur](#) by Catholic Church authorities, a declaration that a book or other printed work may be published -- confirming what is **not** contained therein, namely that it is free of doctrinal or moral error. [Digital imprimatur](#) has been hypothesized as a system of [internet censorship](#), about which there is increasing debate following leaks and invasions of privacy considered to be disruptive of conventional public order.

Will global "harmonization" and "normalization" come to be understood in such terms?

Authority: How are radically innovative approaches to psycho-social organization to be "authorized" in a period in which global governance authorities have proven to be highly constrained in their response to the conditions of the individual?

Does cognitive radicalization offer a poorly explored degree of freedom for the individual to "en-joy" the world otherwise?

Should conceptual "models" be recognized as "vehicles" which each is free to develop? Is it a case of "build your own" in a "do-it-yourself" mode -- where those claiming greaser competence are unable to deliver? (*Metaphors as Transdisciplinary Vehicles of the Future*, 1991)

Radicalization and the experience of terror: An earlier concern was with the identification of the nature of terror and who is exposed to it in the light of the range of its forms in the light of 9/11 (*Varieties of Terrorism: extended to the experience of the terrorized*, 2005). The purpose there was to demonstrate that "terror" is not just what lends itself to extensive representation according to media and legal criteria. The media cannot show the terror experienced daily by inarticulate "unimportant" people subject to every form of deprivation and suffering -- or even the bullying, intimidation and violence to which many are exposed in schools, housing estates or on the street -- whether or not these result in obviously violent death.

In a subsequent commentary, endeavouring to transcend the traps of simplistic moral relativism or moral equivalence, the concern was how to envisage the need for some other way of articulating the challenge (*Thinking in Terror: refocusing the interreligious challenge from thinking after terror*, 2005). As argued, there may well be a need to recognize new dimensions to the understanding and position of those righteously perceiving themselves as representing the innocent or "good" that are as questionable as the refusal to accept a degree of "good" in those framed as inherently "evil". This radical polarization, the "dualist thesis", excludes any possibility of dialogue. No doubt; no dialogue? It even suggests that attempts at such dialogue would be tantamount to "supping with the devil".

How is it that physics is empowered to explore even subtler "dimensions"?

That commentary concluded that there is a challenge offered by terrorism from both a spiritual perspective and from the scientific

innovations offering ever more horrific means of causing terror. The challenge lies in whether the theoretical advances in the fundamental sciences regarding the nature of reality offer cognitive guidelines and templates through which dialogue can transcend the dualism separating religions. Pointers are, for example, offered by physicist David Bohm (*Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, 1980) and his subsequent deep involvement in dialogue processes, or by mathematician Ron Atkin (*Multidimensional Man; can man live in 3-dimensional space?*, 1981). People might thereby be carried into the "fabric of reality" through a process that may hold a key to the "invisible" character of the ubiquitous "unspeakable, inexplicable, unlocateable terror" (*Engaging with the Inexplicable, the Incomprehensible and the Unexpected*, 2010).

What exactly is the nature of the terror of the new -- and of change -- by which an aging population is likely to be ever more terrified? How will people be enabled to engage cognitively with such radical transformation? The challenge is already evident in the manner in which many are terrified by new technology and especially by information technology.

Identity: Fundamental to terror is the sense of threat to identity, whether of the individual, the community or the culture -- possibly framed as a "way of life". Any implication of change to identity is inherently terrifying -- a terror typically minimized by those who wish to change or transform others. The change is then framed as being for the greater good of the individual or the community.

Identity is less threatened when it is understood in static unchanging terms -- perhaps associated with a gradual process of growth or development. The current rate of change, and the need to adapt nimbly to turbulent conditions, suggests the need to define more explicitly the nature of identity in dynamic terms. Templates for identity are offered by metaphor, most notably through the resources of geometry and topology (*Geometry, Topology and Dynamics of Identity: cognitive implication in fundamental strategic questions and dilemmas*, 2009; *Topology of Valuing: dynamics of collective engagement with polyhedral value configurations*, 2008).

Designer Genis Carreras, through his *Philographics* project, uses a series of posters, with each capturing a single western philosophical ideology through a simple geometric shape. As reported by Maria Popova (*Major Movements in Philosophy as Minimalist Geometric Graphics, Brain Pickings*, 30 August 2011), this explores from an artistic perspective what the geometry of knowledge has to do with negative space -- from relativism to absolutism.

There is a sense in which the coherence of identity is associated with a sense of globality -- and the geometry through which it is envisaged (*Engaging with Globality through cognitive lines, circlets, crowns or holes*, 2009). It could even be said that the "pursuit of happiness" then has geometrical implications: live for the moment, die in the moment; live on a line, die at the end; live in a circle, return again and again; live on a Möbius strip (a strange loop), return otherwise; etc. Of great interest is the potential of identity understood in cyclic terms -- appropriate to cognitive engagement with the cyclic processes associated with change (*Emergence of Cyclical Psycho-social Identity Sustainability as "psychically" defined*, 2007).

Given the degree of "illusion" associated with images of change, and the promises made regarding it by those promoting some form of transformation, this engagement calls for a form of embodiment of the process by which it is engendered and by which confidence is elicited (*Embodiment of Identity in Conscious Creativity: challenge of encompassing "con"*, 2011).

These possibilities call into question the nature of the "order" in terms of which collective measures are repeatedly legitimated. That order, with which authority is typically identified, is characteristically rigid and resistant to change. It might well be said to be terrified by it -- as a threat to the status quo which it is assumed must be maintained at all costs. Missing are the templates for change, and reflection on its possibilities, most notably as indicated by the resources of geometry and topology (*Geometry of Thinking for Sustainable Global Governance*, 2009).

Implicit in "change", and the experiential threat it evokes, is the framing and experience of time. With respect to "order", this is framed by authority in terms of the "due process" of conventional "project logic" (*Metaphoric Entrapment in Time: avoiding the trap of Project Logic*, 2000). The radical question is whether thrival in a rapidly changing turbulent environment calls for new forms of engagement with time -- as is partially implied by emergent forms of music and its "new sounds" with which people may readily identify. As yet to be explored are the collective implications for the elaboration of new strategic approaches (*Strategic Embodiment of Time: configuring questions fundamental to change*, 2010; *Embodying a Timeship vs. Empowering a Spaceship*, 2003). There is the possibility that that may be where collective wisdom lies (*The Isdom of the Wisdom Society Embodying: time as the heartland of humanity*, 2003).

More radically challenging is the nature of any form of "transcendent order" with which people and communities may identify or aspire to identify -- as suggested by some poets, mystics and philosophers -- and fundamental to many religions. Again, given the role of geometry in giving symbolic and aesthetic expression to such subtleties and their complexity, it is tantalizing to consider how that order may be implicit in the discoveries of mathematics (*Potential Psychosocial Significance of Monstrous Moonshine: an exceptional form of symmetry as a Rosetta stone for cognitive frameworks*, 2007; *Psycho-social Significance of the Mandelbrot Set: a sustainable boundary between chaos and order*, 2005; *Sustainability through the Dynamics of Strategic Dilemmas: in the light of the coherence and visual form of the Mandelbrot set*, 2005).

More provocatively, for those who aspire to "upload" their sense of identity with the aid of advances in information technology, there is the question of the nature of the "transcendent order" which such "mind uploading" may imply in their quest for "immortality". It is curious that this preoccupation with immortality should be shared (to a degree) between the transhumanists of today and the Taoists of yore -- the former focused on anticipated developments in neurotechnology and the latter on so-termed internal alchemy. Such "internal alchemy" is presumably intimately related to the current Muslim Sufi practice originally advocated by Al-Ghazali (*The Alchemy of Happiness*). Intimations of immortality are then to be seen "through" the world, as "through a glass darkly". The preoccupation is curiously related to current collective preoccupation with sustainability (*Identity in time: sustainability and immortality*, 2010). Alchemy has been used to relate preoccupations of physics with those of Jungian therapy by F. David Peat (*Alchemical Transformation: Consciousness and Matter, Form and Information*, Club of Budapest, 1995 [text]).

Identification with externalities: Despite the extremely radical reconceptualization of space and time, so intensively explored by

physicists, the implications for the traditional identification of individuals and communities with "their" land (and property) remain to be explored. And yet it is precisely this ancient cognitive modality which is at the very root of widespread territorial violence disruptive of global civilization.

There are many clues to other possibilities, especially for cultural traditions heavily imbued with speculation in mathematics and geometry -- as is the case of Judaism and Islam (*And When the Bombing Stops? Territorial conflict as a challenge to mathematicians*, 2000). Provocatively, this failure might be attributed to the contrasting significance they respectively attach to number theory and to geometry -- sub-disciplines subtly and insightfully integrated within more fundamental forms of mathematics.

Given the many extant references to "mathematical joy", it might be asked whether "space" (in the form of "land") could be "en-joyed" in ways which remain to be explored. This could naturally be associated with "en-joying" time in new ways, as noted above (*Timeship: Conception, Technology, Design, Embodiment and Operation*, 2003). How might such approaches to "spacetime" offer scope for "en-joying" the world -- and oneself?

Of particular interest in a time of massive migration, with its controversial consequences, is the possibility that such consideration might offer new insight into the sense of place and homeland, with which people identify so deeply -- as a desirable place "to be" -- as explored by a variety of authors (Christopher Day, *Spirit and Place: healing our environment, healing environment*, 2002; Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: the perspective of experience*, 1977; Christopher Alexander, *The Timeless Way of Building*, 1979; Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: toward a renewed understanding of the place-world*, 1991; James A. Swan, *The Power of Place: sacred ground in natural and human environments*, 1991). Understood as the **spirit of place**, this has been recognized internationally by the *Québec Declaration on the Preservation of the Spirit of Place* (2008).

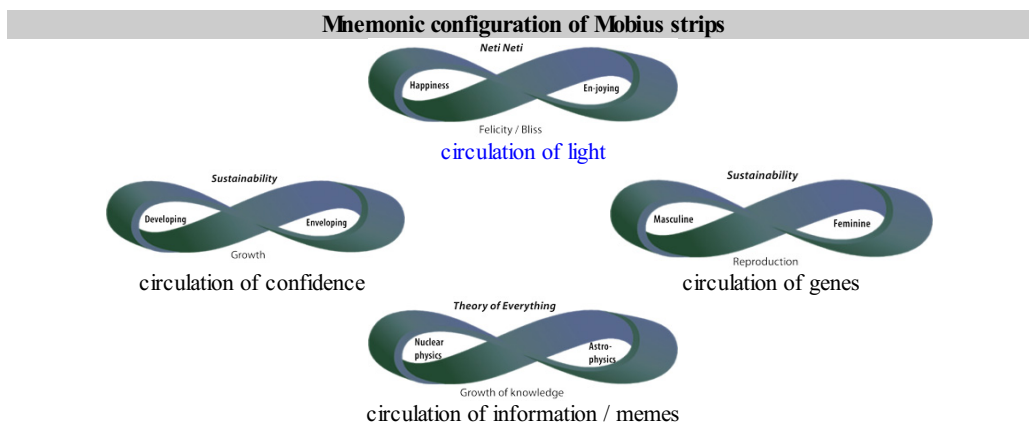
Approaches to the experience are explored by the disciplines of **psycho geography** and mythogeography (Merlin Coverley, *Psycho geography*, 2006; Phil Smith, *Mythogeography: a guide to walking sideways*, 2010). With respect to the "pursuit of happiness", this fruitfully reframes the experience of being "here" in contrast with the desire to be "elsewhere" -- potentially within a "spacetime" context which radically reframes their relationship through "en-joyment".

It is intriguing that such speculation is intrinsic to imaginative media products -- books, games, movies, virtual worlds -- which are widely appreciated by the young. And yet there is a paucity of speculation of immediate relevance to world views in conflict (Islam-Judaism, science-religion, etc). This suggests a fundamental need for imaginal education informed by the subtleties of mathematical insight such as to enable greater "en-joyment" (*Imaginal Education: game playing, science fiction, language, art and world-making*, 2003). Remedial global strategies call for simulation of the dynamics of requisite "en-joying".

In a universe which astrophysicists now claim to be characterized by a very high proportion of "dark matter" and "dark energy", it is appropriate to consider that the universe of knowledge could well be similarly characterized -- especially to the extent that it is to a high degree "ignorance-based". The possibility of "en-joying the universe", projected into the possibility of travel through spacetime, can however be imaginatively redirected into travelling the knowledge universe (*Towards an Astrophysics of the Knowledge Universe: from astronautics to noonautics?* 2006; *Noonautics: Four modes of travelling and navigating the knowledge "universe"?* 2006; *Entering Alternative Realities -- Astronautics vs Noonautics: isomorphism between launching aerospace vehicles and launching vehicles of awareness*, 2002; *Navigating Alternative Conceptual Realities: clues to the dynamics of enacting new paradigms through movement*, 2002).

Transcending strategic paradoxes

The following mnemonic configuration is presented to highlight several fruitfully provocative complementarities arising from the above argument (and notably from discussion of cognitive paradox in the [Annex](#)).



The configuration highlights the following complementarities arising from the above argument:

- those pairs interrelated through their positioning within the four individual Möbius strips -- suggestive of the challenging dynamic of that relationship in each case

Through use of nouns, and in the absence of verbs, the conventional terms used in each case obscure the dynamics with which each is associated. This is especially true of the term:

-- immediately above each strip, indicative of a transcendent dynamic order -- potentially to be described as a complex system or a cognitive attractor of some kind.

-- immediately beneath each strip, indicative of typical conflation and oversimplification of meaning with reference to the term above

- that between the developing/enveloping figure relating to a collective dynamic, and the masculine/feminine figure relating to an individual dynamic.

Whilst that on the left is of fundamental consequence to the individual, and that on the right is of fundamental consequence to the collective, the challenge of relating them appropriately remains unresolved -- and is effectively denied and ignored. This is exemplified by the current strategic dependence of the collective on population growth and the longer-term problematic consequences for the quality of life of the individual preoccupied with biological reproduction in a resource-constrained society.

The two figures might be understood together in terms of sustainable "confidelity", as separately explored (*Primary Global Reserve Currency: the Con? Cognitive implications of a prefix for sustainable confidelity*, 2011)

- that between the lower figure relating to the external, physical reality and the upper figure relating to the internal, subjective reality of enjoyment.

Whilst the lower may indeed engender a "Theory of Everything", the physics of "everything" is currently conceived to be of no relevance to the subjective process of enjoying it, however that might be more fruitfully understood. Indeed, although there may be every enjoyment in "doing physics", the insights do not enable the happiness of others -- or of physicists in their relationship with their peers and their partners.

- that between the various forms of "circulation" associated with the figures, understood as representing a dynamic -- even as a **standing wave**. These forms of circulation of meaning might be variously described in terms of:
 - **circulation of light** (*Circulation of the Light: essential metaphor of global sustainability?* 2010)
 - circulation of confidence and trust, exemplified by the **gift economy** (*Enabling Moral Currency Circulation: reframing a stimulus package to avert moral bankruptcy*, 2010)
 - circulation of people and genes, ensuring requisite variety in a population
 - circulation of information, knowledge, insight

It is appropriate to note that the above configuration necessarily has a degree of relationship to the dimensions of the **AQAL quadrant system of integral theory** inspired by the work of **Ken Wilber** (Daryl S. Paulson, *Wilber's Integral Philosophy: A Summary and Critique*, *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 2008; Steve McIntosh, *Integral Consciousness and the Future of Evolution*, 2007).

As a further mnemonic exercise, the separate figures above may be considered as subsumed within a larger dynamic as indicated below - in accordance with the argument for playful elegance (*Enacting Transformative Integral Thinking through Playful Elegance*, 2010).

Interrelationship of 2 Mobius strips



Use of interrelation of 2 Mobius strips

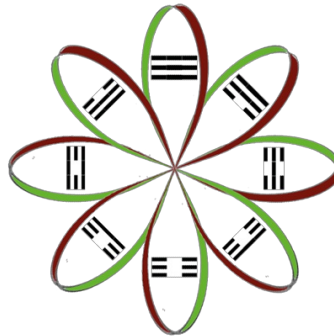
The above figure offers the possibility of interrelating several fundamental cognitive dynamics, typically held to be incommensurable:

- wonder ∞ drama: interrelating the cognitive engagement with integrative appreciation and explanation of externalities
 - **wonder**, as the cognitive dynamic characteristic of transcendent "bliss" and "felicity" variously reported by poets and mystics. The term offers a potentially valuable association between "won", for those preoccupied with the goal of "winning", and a phonetic allusion "to one", as a fundamental integrative dynamic
 - **drama**, as the cognitive recognition of the dynamics of "external" reality with which engagement is elicited (*Existential Embodiment of Externalities: radical cognitive engagement with environmental categories and disciplines*, 2009; *Participative Democracy vs. Participative Drama: Lessons on social transformation for international organizations from Gorbachev*, 1991)
- hope ∞ despair:
 - **hope**, as the cognitive dynamic response to sensed potential, despite recognition of risk and possibly tragedy (*Credibility Crunch engendered by Hope-mongering*, 2008)

- **despair**, as the cognitive dynamic in response to the encounter with the world and its tragedies (*Implication of Personal Despair in Planetary Despair: avoiding entrapment in hopeful anticipation*, 2010)

The figure above may of course be further articulated, as suggested by the following adaptation to the classical Chinese pattern of the **BaGua** (reproduced from *ji Defining the objective ∞ Refining the subjective ?! Explaining reality ∞ Embodying realization*, 2011). This offers an encoding of cognitive inversion.

Representation of BaGua Earlier Heaven arrangement
embodied within four interwoven Möbius strips



Conclusion

Quest for mnemonic "reminders": This exploration has explored various approaches to cognitive radicalization, notably in relation to engagement with context, as articulated by **J. Stan Rowe** (*What on Earth is Environment? The Trumpeter*, 6, 1989, 4. pp. 123-126):

To see the world inside-out is to see it wrongly. Yet that is precisely the perspective that people have brought to the interpretation of their role on Earth. The new vision, from outside-in, more accurately portrays the ecological reality. It reveals people, society, human institutions, as dependent within the encompassing context of the planet. How to express this dawning comprehension?
New verbal symbols are needed. Old words, carriers of old concepts and thoughts, are unequal to the task.

How is the quest to be recognized and promoted (*In Quest of Mnemonic Catalysts -- for comprehension of complex psychosocial dynamics*, 2007)?

From statics to dynamics: The argument has challenged the conventional "static" understanding of "happiness" as the goal of a "pursuit". The cognitive "pursuit of happiness" is then effectively constrained to a "hunter/gatherer", "predator/prey" geometry evoking use of inappropriate military metaphors and static "targets" (*Enhancing Sustainable Development Strategies through Avoidance of Military Metaphors*, 1998). This understanding is exemplified in a review by Damian Carrington, Head of Environment for *The Guardian* (*The Green Campaigners' Midlife Move*, *The Guardian*, 13 September 2011), arguing that the environmental campaigners who changed the world must now adapt their guerilla tactics for battles ahead. He concludes however:

The challenge for the next phase of the green movement's life then is tough but essential. It is convincing the world that happiness is having just enough.

Containing "enough": The fundamental issue is the meaningful transformation of "happiness is having just enough" into a dynamic attractor -- hence the focus on "en-joying" in the above argument (*From Statics to Dynamics in Sustainable Community: Navigating through chaos by playing on polarities as attitude correctors*, 1998). Carrington's use of "tough but essential" is however consistent with the argument here for cognitive radicalization.

Lacking any consistent distinction between "left" and "right" and having no boundary between "inside" and "outside", the **Klein bottle** effectively contains itself -- paradoxically (as discussed in the **Annex**). Does this suggest the nature of an appropriately challenging process container for the "having" of "enough"? Is it such a four-dimensional container which would allow for "joy-fullness", given its dynamic implication? (*Intercourse with Globality through Enacting a Klein bottle*, 2009).

Especially relevant are the cognitive and existential implications of the ambiguity at the interface between "insiderness" and "outsiderness", as discussed in relation to living in the "twilight zone" of **liminality**, itself variously associated with joy (*Living as an Imaginal Bridge between Worlds: Global implications of "betwixt and between" and liminality*, 2011).

Lifestyle disease: Illness, ultimately resulting in death, can be understood as a "natural" consequence of the conventional "pursuit of happiness" -- most notably in the case of lifestyle diseases. This highlights the extent to which global "business as usual" is characterized by a life-threatening failure of cognitive radicalization -- a failure to "en-joy oneself". In that sense such radicalization could potentially enable healthier engagement with the environment -- through "en-joying the world" -- both by the individual and by the collective (*Cognitive Implications of Lifestyle Diseases of Rich and Poor: Transforming personal entanglement with the natural environment*, 2010). This merits reflection with respect to the quest for healthy resilience -- if not "immortality" -- in a global civilization currently threatened by collapse, according to various authors. The deadly violence of terrorists can then be understood as a poorly articulated indication of the need for cognitive radicalization -- whose urgency is poorly understood.

Cognitive twist: The challenge of seeing it "wrongly", in Rowe's terms, is usefully embodied in the cognitive challenge of a mirror and

the [mirror image](#) reflected in it. A vital clue lies in the inversion of the image. In the quest for more appropriate symbols, the apparent circular simplicity of the Möbius strip offers an indication of the nature of the enactive "cognitive twist" through which "oneself" can more appropriately engage with the "world" (*Psychosocial Work Cycle: beyond the plane of Möbius*, 2007; *Engaging with Questions of Higher Order: cognitive vigilance required for higher degrees of twistedness*, 2004).

The self-reflexivity can be developed further in the light of the Klein bottle or the "strange loop" of Douglas Hofstadter (*I Am a Strange Loop*, 2007) and its collective implications (*Sustaining a Community of Strange Loops: Comprehension and engagement through aesthetic ring transformation*, 2010).

Weaving credible associations: In engaging with the emerging knowledge context to survive and thrive, people and groups necessarily weave particular networks of associations they consider credible, with which they can variously identify, and through which they configure a worldview -- somewhat as constellations of stars were (arbitrarily) recognized in the past. These may be understood metaphorically as cocoons, vehicles or magic carpets (*Interweaving Thematic Threads and Learning Pathways*, 2010; *Magic Carpets as Psychoactive Systems Diagrams*, 2010).

As a "technology", these frameworks can be variously understood as empowered, or empowering, in the "traction" which they enable (*Massive Elicitation of Psychosocial Energy: Requisite technology for collective enlightenment*, 2011; *Embodiment of Change: Comprehension, Traction and Impact? Discovering enabling questions for the future*, 2011).

"Aerials", "songlines" and flow: The tracery of associations is most evidently embodied in hyperlinks, but is echoed otherwise in the aesthetic resonances of poetry and music. It serves as a cognitive interface between the interiority and identity of "oneself" and the externalities of the "world". However, in systemic terms, this tracery is most appropriately understood as a dynamic network of pathways for the flow of insight. It could be fruitfully understood as a form of "aerial" whose (polyhedral?) configuration enables insights to be received, emitted and given coherence.

The pathways might be understood metaphorically as "songlines" (*From Information Highways to Songlines of the Noosphere: Global configuration of hypertext pathways as a prerequisite for meaningful collective transformation*, 1996). It is in relation to such songlines that the experience of "joy" may be understood as the dynamics of [flow in its psychological sense](#). "En-joying" -- whether "oneself" or the "world" -- might then be understood in terms of the invisible operation of this tracery as an "aerial". Switching metaphors, en-joying might be understood in terms of the movement of [sap](#) in a plant -- especially in the light of its cyclic rising and falling.

"En-joying" in this context is then a process of enabling cognitive cycles as suggested by various metaphors articulated by the natural sciences.

Universal insight into happiness: It is extremely significant that understandings of "happiness" are immediately accessible to the individual, however they may be framed.

Pronouncements by distant authorities on their experiential nature are therefore to be appreciated with considerable reservation. Everyone can claim a degree of expertise in the matter, however inadequate their "info-shacks". As in any refugee camp or slum, the issue for each is how to reconcile their own understanding with that of others, where one view has implications for the other.

Interlocking flows: The interface network of cognitive associations merits exploration as a pattern of interlocking flows. It is the circulation *within* that pattern of flows which offers a better understanding of the "pursuit of happiness" -- namely "through the geometry", in the terms of Ron Atkin (1981). This contrasts with any "pursuit" *across* that interface into the imagined "world" of otherness.

Complementarity and its transcendence: The approach taken here is to focus both on the activity of "enjoying", as a verbal form indicative of a dynamic, and on the enactive possibilities for the individual indicated by "en-joying" and its associated engagement. The paradoxical relationships between such essentially complementary views are suggestively reconciled using the geometry of the Möbius strip and the Klein bottle. These are indicative of the cognitive complexity of "transcendent order" open to exploration.

As highlighted in the [Annex](#), the experiential engagement with any integrative understandings of such a "transcendent order" is rendered accessible to many through aesthetics, especially poetry. It has proven appropriate to cite [there](#) the Bengali polymath [Rabindranath Tagore](#), recipient of the 1913 Prize for Literature, on the occasion of his [150th Birth Anniversary](#) in 2011. His work is one effort to articulate the possibilities for such cognitive engagement in terms of enveloping joy.

Faith-based radicalization: Whilst the dramatic global challenges are only too evident, the role of faith-based governance in response to them (or in exacerbating them) is equally evident. Both the cognitive and the strategic implications of understandings of a "transcendent order" are evident in the degree of credibility currently attached to the cited declaration by Rick Perry, as the possible future President of the USA: *I think it's time for us to just hand it over to God, and say, 'God: You're going to have to fix this'*. As a form of incitement to "cognitive radicalization", as with the "extremist" views of Sarah Palin (another probable candidate), how is this to be distinguished from incitement to much-deprecated political radicalization? How are the transcendental references, for which both are widely appreciated, to be reconciled with global governance -- in contrast to those of Al-Qaida (*Cultivating Global Strategic Fantasies of Choice: learnings from Islamic Al-Qaida and the Republican Tea Party movement*, 2010)?

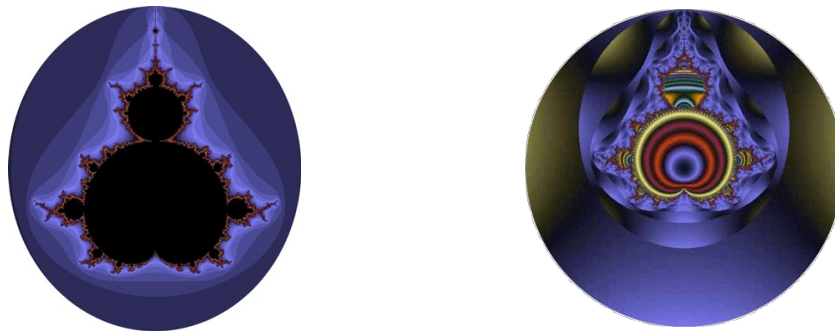
Subsumption: The specificity with which various conventional views regarding "happiness" is associated is reframed here such as to subsume any more restrictive (strategic) alternatives (as indicated in the configuration of figures above). The question is whether there is some kind of analogue to the manner in which a Newtonian framework in physics is subsumed by an Einsteinian framework (with the latter subsumed in turn by string theory as an emergent Theory of Everything). Subsumption then refers to embodiment within a more general category -- associated here with experiential significance. Given the examples from physics, indicative of increasing cognitive complexity, it may well be asked whether such subsumption operates in relation to "happiness", as argued here.

Entrainment and entanglement: The argument indicates forms through which conventional binary dilemmas may be transcended -- whatever that can be understood to mean as a new frontier for human evolution. In this sense the title can also be inverted to suggest *En-joying Oneself through En-joying the World*. Similarly the traditional case for *Transforming Oneself through Transforming the World* calls for a transcendent context in which *Transforming the World through Transforming Oneself* is equally meaningful. It is the cognitive elucidation of the requisite transcendent order -- to which poets and mystics allude -- which is the concluding focus of the argument. The cognitive engagement with that "transcendent order", indicated here as a process of "en-joying", implies a dynamic of entrainment between necessarily entangled understandings of "oneself" and "world".

"Pursuit of happiness": Recognition of a process of subsumption is then potentially relevant with respect to the conventional "pursuit of happiness" as a linear dynamic, possibly of cyclic form. Each is free to discover how that dynamic may be embedded in a more complex cognitive dynamic enabling a more fruitful engagement with the world and its transformation. Notably through use of geometrical templates of higher dimensionality, such cognitive radicalization might come to be recognized as the integrative essence of "globalization".

Interactive visualization of mutual implication: In the quest for mnemonic catalysts to enable imaginative implication between "oneself" and the "world", it is the interactive renderings of the [Mandelbrot set](#) which merit considerable attention. As an indication of the complex fractal boundary between "self" and "other" -- the limited order (of "oneself") and the infinite chaos (of the "world") -- the visualizations offer the additional advantage of their aesthetic richness and interest, open to extensive exploration (*Sustainability through the Dynamics of Strategic Dilemmas -- in the light of the coherence and visual form of the Mandelbrot set*, 2005; *Psycho-social Significance of the Mandelbrot Set: a sustainable boundary between chaos and order*, 2005).

There is a sense in which the locus of the dynamics of the "pursuit of happiness" -- "en-joying" -- is then exemplified by the emergent boundary of the set. The relational mathematics by which the configuration emerges as a complex nexus "within infinity" offers further reflection. The renderings below were generated through readily available software (*Xaos*) offering extensive interactive exploration of the detail of the fractal images. Contrary to convention, the images are oriented vertically here (a software option) to be consistent with the widely-known [Buddhabrot rendering](#) initiated by [Melinda Green](#) in 1993.



Many other visual variants are presented separately in *Imagination, Resolution, Emergence, Realization and Embodiment: iterative comprehension ordered via the dynamics of the Mandelbrot set* (2005)

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