



laetus in praesens

Alternative view of segmented documents via Kairos

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Dying to Live, Living to Die, Lying to Live, and Living a Lie

Should American li(v)es be saved at all costs?

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Introduction

The principal slogan of American foreign policy in this period appears to be articulated most frequently as "Saving American Lives". It is used to justify any action, in terms of an unquestionable need to ignore constraints which might otherwise be held to be of relevance. It notably frames the intervention in many countries around the world -- seemingly held to be engendering a threat to American [full-spectrum dominance](#). There is therefore a case for noting the contexts in which policy is articulated with this principled justification.

Whether or not the play on words is trivial, there is also a case for exploring the slogan by which American foreign policy might well be framed by critics, namely "Saving American Lies". This too appears to be interpreted with the qualifier "at all costs" -- irrespective of the deaths that might ensue, whatever form these might take. A notable preoccupation with preserving this illusion is acclaimed as vital to American national security. This has been called into question by recent revelations of the content of diplomatic communications and the extent of electronic surveillance.

The complementarity between lives and lies suggests further playful exploration of the tragedy that so many would now tend to frame their personal circumstances in terms of the aspiration "Dying to Live". This contrasts with any sense of experiencing life as a "Living Death", or one in which one is effectively already "dead" in some sense -- or held to be so by others.

The exploration can be extended to those who might see themselves as "Living to Die" -- most notably the jihadists accepting the need for their own death in commitment to their own higher cause. It is of course the case that jihadists, like many others, would choose to frame those who do not subscribe to their cause as "Living a Lie". This view would be shared by many critics of a consumption society indifferent to the consequences thereby engendered for others, for the future, or for the well-being of consumers themselves.

The approach can therefore be understood as framing a tripolar dynamic -- Living (life), Dying (death), in relation to Lying -- as essentially mysterious, despite misleading belief in the possibility of their simple definition. Whether or not the playfulness is misplaced, such an exploration can be suggestively extended to other permutations and combinations -- if only to clarify any irrelevance to the current condition of society. Dyeing, for example, is interesting given preferences for a particular coloration. notably evident in the identification of political parties with distinctive colours and a shared commitment to the eradication of others -- as with the black favoured by ISIS, pirates and anarchists.

Continuing credence is given to the famous recommendation of [Sun Tzu](#): *Mystify, mislead, and surprise the enemy (The Art of War)*. However it would seem that the "enemy" of authority has now been reframed ([Playing the Great Game with Intelligence: Authority](#))

versus the People, 2013). The argument therefore interweaves the Knight's-move lateral-thinking (valued by military intelligence), with the magic squares of mathematicians in which Benjamin Franklin was so remarkably skilled whilst a Founding Father of the USA.

The argument explores the probability that Franklin's insights may have subtly informed both the formulation of the US Constitution and the freemasonry in which the Founding Fathers are controversially held to have been significantly complicit (David Barton, *The Question of Freemasonry and the Founding Fathers*, 2005; *Masonic Myths of the Founding Fathers, Meta-Religion*). The pattern and controversy continue to be evident in the secrecy and mystification relating to current male-dominated leadership. However the salvatory concern here is whether an associated aesthetic quality continues to be missing from the understanding by leadership of the integrative challenges vital to the global governance of today.

This dimension is exemplified by the continuing existential appeal of the subtle poetic insights of the polymath Omar Khayyam upheld as a man of truth -- especially given his own unusual mathematical skills under the constraining religious circumstances of the Persia of his time. The missing dimension is potentially characterized by a dynamic complementary to that implied by the top-down "bent diagonal" symbol favoured by the freemasonry of Franklin and its particular preoccupation with the magic square. Shaped as a V, that diagonal is a valuable reminder of what separates "lives" from "lies".

In a period of widespread economic challenges, the austerity measures advocated are clearly being extended to "being economic with the truth". However with an increasingly evident degree of universal hypocrisy, and global governance in disarray, efforts to frame "Paris 11/13" as an "act of war" highlight the urgent need for new forms of insight -- subsequent to very active French military involvement in the Middle East (Michel Chossudovsky, *The Paris Terrorist Attacks, "9/11 French-Style"*, *Global Research*, 14 November 2015; Bill Humphrey, *France and the West: Inconvenient Questions -- action-reaction patterns in the November 13 terrorist attack in Paris*, *The Globalist*, November 17, 2015).

Having accepted the possibility of [thinking the unthinkable](#) during the Cold War, the present limitations of conventional thinking in engaging with otherness suggest that this is a time for the extraordinary. Is there therefore a case for revisiting Franklin's appreciation of his own discovery as *the most magically magical of any magic square ever made by a magician?*

Saving American Lives as unquestionable justification for violence and fatality

As noted by [John W. Dower](#) in a chapter on ending the war and saving American lives (*Cultures of War: Pearl Harbor / Hiroshima / 9-11 / Iraq Front*, 2010):

Denial and delusion went hand in hand with a clear, concrete concern that understandably dominates mainstream analysis of the decision to obliterate the two Japanese cities: to end the war quickly and save American lives. The analysis to this preoccupation after September 11 was equally compelling albeit ironic. In August 1945, the professed goal was to save American lives by unleashing the most terrible weapons of mass destruction in the history of the world. The goal after 9-11 was to save American lives by preventing the ghastly spawn of Hiroshima and Nagasaki from being unleashed by stateless or state-sponsored terrorists. (p. 212)

Use of the phrase by US President Harry Truman appears to have rendered the objective sacrosanct, marked by his progressive revision of the number of lives saved by such action, as noted by [J. Patout Burns](#) (*War and Its Discontents: pacifism and quietism in the Abrahamic Traditions*, 1996, p. 195):

- On August 9, 1945 Truman wrote to the men and women of the Manhattan Project: *A grateful nation, hopeful that this new weapon will result in the saving of thousands of American lives, feels a deep sense of appreciation for your accomplishment*
- By December 15, 1945, Truman stated: *It occurred to me that a quarter of a million of the flower of our young manhood was worth a couple of Japanese cities, and I still think they were and are*
- On April 28, 1959, he told students at Columbia University *that the dropping of the bombs stopped the war, saved millions of lives*

Burns comments further that:

Whatever the number of American lives that were saved by the swift end of World War II, the official explanation of the American policy to use nuclear weapons does not answer the objections of Eisenhower and Leahy that this decision was not necessary from a military point of view. (See also Robert Jay Lifton and Greg Mitchell, *Hiroshima in America: Fifty Years of Denial*, 1995)

This conclusion may come to characterize the views of future American leaders regarding the "gloves-off" policies of the Bush regime in response to 9-11, notably including the controversial use of "torture" ([Cheney: Enhanced Interrogations 'Essential' in Saving American Lives](#), *Fox News*, 30 August 2000; [Waterboarding of 9/11 Mastermind Saved American Lives, Bush Says](#), *CNS News*, 12 January 2009). The controversies surrounding the articulation of [just war theory](#) can be seen as evolving into those of an emergent "just torture theory" - prefigured by the practices of the Catholic Inquisition.

The controversial extension of surveillance has been similarly justified as "critical to saving American lives" (Barton Gellman and Dafna Linzer, [Pushing the Limits of Wartime Powers](#), *The Washington Post*, 18 December 2005; Peter Baker, [President Acknowledges Approving Secretive Eavesdropping](#), *The Washington Post*, 18 December 2005).

The slogan has been interpreted to justify recent individual acts of violence, as with the astonished protest by John L. Work regarding conviction for a war crime in the case of former U.S. Army Master Sergeant John Hatley -- now serving a forty year sentence for

allegedly killing terrorists in Iraq (*Imprisoned for Saving American Lives*, *FrontPage Magazine*, 21 February 2010). There are other examples of such astonishment (Allen West, *We punish our soldiers for saving American lives? It's war you idiots!* *NYC Talking*, 15 October 2013).

Citing the invasion of Grenada in 1983, Norman Solomon notes that ever since the invasion of the tiny Caribbean island began in October 1983, the motivation of saving American lives has been central to the official story (*War Made Easy: how presidents and pundits keep spinning us to death*, 2010). Other references include:

- Gail Reed. *U.S.-Cuba Relations: Saving American Lives and Limbs?* *The Huffington Post*, 25 June 2015
- Allen Clifton. *Jon Stewart Rips Into Republican Hypocrisy Over Saving American Lives (Video)*. *Forward Progressives*, 3 October 2014
- Evelyn Gordon. *Israel's Contribution to Saving American Lives*. *Commentary*, 21 June 2011
- *Saving American Lives in Afghanistan*. *The Intelligencer / Wheeling News-Register*, 16 March 2015

Use of the slogan has now been adapted to its implications for health care, as with the website with that focus ([Saving American Lives!](#)) and its assertion:

The Affordable Care Act ("ObamaCare") is about saving American lives. America, alone among developed countries, lacks universal health care and the consequences are literally deadly. Estimated 45,000 Americans die per year because of not having health insurance, according to a recent [Harvard University study](#). Incredibly, the world's richest country ranks worst among developed countries in terms of the [life expectancy and infant mortality rate](#), according to CIA Factbook.

There is a curious irony that some earlier targets of American foreign policy are now reframed in terms of their potential for saving American lives (Gail Reed, *Renewed U.S.-Cuba Relations: Saving American Lives and Limbs?* *The Huffington Post*, 25 January 2015; *'Iranian medicine saving American lives'*, *NewsAZ*, 3 December 2012).

Saving American Souls?

Given the aspirations to global dominance of American culture (primarily inspired by Christianity), a curious historical comparison can be made between its current focus on "saving lives" and that of the earlier preoccupation with "saving souls" over centuries of Christian dominance of Europe under the Catholic Church (Christine Caldwell Ames, *Righteous Persecution: Inquisition, Dominicans, and Christianity in the Middle Ages*, 2013; Toby Green, *Inquisition: The Reign of Fear*, 2007).

Threat of evil: The comparison is striking when framed by the currently perceived threat of terrorism and the need to root it out -- as a new manifestation of evil, held to epitomize soullessness (Karen Jaenke, *Soul and Soullessness*, *ReVision*, 2010, 3). This can be contrasted with the perceived threat of heresy in that earlier period and the need to root that out -- thereby saving the souls of those afflicted in this way.

Given current critical assessment of the efficacy of enhanced interrogation with respect to "saving American lives" (notably by the US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence), there is considerable irony to criticism of the past role of torture in "saving souls", as noted by Paul F. Grendler (*The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press, 1540-1605*, 2015):

Leading churchmen of pronounced humanist outlook judged the Index and the Inquisition to be of limited efficacy in saving souls (p. 70)

This is curiously echoed by the first two conclusions from the US *Senate Intelligence Committee report on CIA torture* (2014):

- The CIA's use of its enhanced interrogation techniques was not an effective means of acquiring intelligence or gaining cooperation from detainees.
- The CIA's justification for the use of its enhanced interrogation techniques rested on inaccurate claims of their effectiveness.

Half-life of "truth"? In relating the argument to religious censorship through reference to the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, it is especially relevant in the light of current moves towards forms of electronic censorship through presumptions of factual accuracy by Google's search engine based on its [Knowledge Vault](#) (*Google wants to rank websites based on facts not links*, *New Scientist*, 25 February 2015). This raises questions regarding its subsequent ability to deliver search results on unconfirmed hypotheses, perspectives beyond the mainstream, and contested political opinions, notably in the light of increasing recognition of the so-called [half-life of knowledge](#) (Samuel Arbesman, *The Half-Life of Facts: why everything we know has an expiration date*, 2013). Today's "facts" have a distinct probability of proving to be tomorrow's "lies".

Presumably facticity weightings will be subject to modification in support of business priorities (in contrast to constraints to be expected through the nonprofit service of [Semantic Scholar](#)). The matter is further complicated by the results of a [recent study](#) by Vincent Lariviere, as reported by John Vibes (*Corruption of Science: nearly all scientific papers controlled by same six corporations*, *Sott.net*, 5 July 2015). It is those corporations, controlling most of the publishers considered "reputable", which now effectively authorize the *imprimatur* previously issued by the Catholic Church

It is of course the case that the commitment to "rooting out" heresy resulted in the trial, torture and/or execution of numbers [variously estimated](#) to be of the order of 50,000. History will provide comparable figures for the cost in human lives in the efforts to "root out" and eradicate terrorism (*Eradication as the Strategic Final Solution of the 21st Century?* 2014).

Current estimates of deaths in the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns now range controversially from 150,000 to 1.5 million (*Casualties of the Iraq War*; *Civilian casualties in the war in Afghanistan*). The variously questioned accuracy of those figures -- upheld as "facts" -- renders questionable the future capacity of Google's Knowledge Vault to provide reliable search results on such matters. Ironically this capacity may become increasingly comparable to that of eliciting truths enshrined in the [Vatican Library](#).

Both in the present and in the past, the consequence of such violence has been the massive displacement of persons -- which had the strange consequence of engendering American society by those fleeing religious persecution.

Conflation of "lives" and "souls": In considering "saving lives", it is appropriate to recall that there is a long tradition of equating the process with "saving souls" -- to the point that the former can be recognized as a secular interpretation of the latter -- even conflated with it by some. Curiously the universal distress signal [SOS](#) has been held to mean "Save Our Souls".

The original preoccupation with "saving souls" as a motivation for the Catholic Inquisition, now finds strong echoes in the American evangelical movement in the light of interpretation of Biblical injunctions (*What does the Bible say about saving souls*; *Bible Verses About Saving Souls*). Other references include:

- James E. Sanderson III: *Saving Souls in the 21st Century*
- Heidi Rolland Unruh and Ronald J. Sider: *Saving Souls, Serving Society: understanding the faith factor in church-based social ministry*, Oxford University Press, 2005
- Debbie Andrews: *Saving Souls Is What It's All About*, Inspiring Voices, 2014
- Drew Christiansen: *Saving Souls, Not Dogma, is the Heart of Pastoral Church Life In All Things, America: the national Catholic review*, 11 March 2015
- Mark Woods: *Justin Welby slams 'false distinction' between saving souls and doing politics*, *Christianity Today*, 21 February 2015
- Tim Holland: *Serving Justice vs. Saving Souls*, *Relevant*, 4 December 2012

As with "saving lives" the process of "saving souls" has been extended to matters of health, as indicated by the following:

- F. Ginsburg: *Saving American Souls: Operation Rescue's Crusade against Abortion*, (in M. E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Eds), *Fundamentalism and the State*, 1993, pp. 557-588).
- Guenter B. Risse: *Mending Bodies, Saving Souls: a history of hospitals*, 1999
- David Hardiman: *Healing Bodies, Saving Souls: medical missions in Asia and Africa*, Rodopi, 2006

Saving souls by torture: There is a strange irony to the institutional role of what might be deemed the secular counterpart to the Dominicans in saving souls through the enhanced interrogation of suspected heretics by the Inquisition to determine their degree of liaison with the Devil -- using methods reminiscent of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486), otherwise known as the *The Hammer of the Witches*.

The counterpart is recognizable in the role of the American Psychological Association in its recently revealed complicity in developing methods of enhanced interrogation of suspected terrorists -- to determine their degree of liaison with the evil threat of Al-Qaida (*American Psychological Association Bolstered C.I.A. Torture Program, Report Says*, *The New York Times*, 1 May 2015; David Walsh, *American Psychological Association played critical role in CIA torture program*, 1 May 2015; Nick Barrickman, *Lawsuit Charges US Psychologists Involved in CIA Torture Program with War Crimes*, *Transcend Media Service*, 19 October 2015).

In this respect it is curious that the notorious Abu Ghraib prison facility in Iraq was named as "[Camp Redemption](#)" for military purposes. This could be understood as taking salvatory cynicism to a remarkable extreme.

Abrahamic confusion compromising divine injunctions: Underlying the continuing fundamental conflict between Christianity and Islam -- each readily framing the other as intrinsically evil -- are the conflicting interpretations of divine injunctions whereby souls may be saved. For Christians, the [Great Commission](#) is the instruction of the resurrected Jesus Christ to his disciples that they spread his teachings to all the nations of the world to that end (*Matthew 28:18-20*).

Islam has an analogous commitment strangely "embodied" in the deprecated actions of fanatical suicide bombers. It has become apparent that the Pentagon has taken to using charitable missions to sneak spy equipment into North Korea, with approval at the highest level (Philip Giraldi, *The Pentagon's Unholy Alliance with Missionaries*, *Information Clearing House*, 4 November 2015). As noted, this recklessness constitutes a danger to Christians across the world -- now to be suspected of acting as a cover for similar operations.

Given the meaningless of "soul" to many in a secular society, any reference to "saving American souls" lends itself to various associations. In the spirit of exploring potential misunderstanding arising from homophones, it might be understood to reinforce American exceptionalism -- through solely saving Americans. More intriguing, as explored below, is the sense of saving the American sole -- as another footprint in history.

American Lies?

As noted above, there are no corresponding references to "Saving American Lies" as such. It is however appropriate to this argument to note concerns expressed regarding the lies engendered and sustained by American culture -- especially those where the US has recently been "found out".

Lying as sinful: With respect to any concern with "Saving American Souls" in relation to American lies, it is appropriate to note the biblical understanding of lying as a sin (Jesse Toler, *Is Lying a Sin, or Just a Good Strategy? Answering Islam; What does the Bible say about lying? Is lying a sin?*), with the latter offering the clarification:

The Bible is clear that lying is a sin and is displeasing to God. The first sin in this world involved a lie told to Eve. The Ten

Commandments given to Moses includes *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor (Exodus 20:16)*.

Systematic lying: For Margaret Kimberley (*Cuba, Iran and American Lies, Global Research, 20 April 2015*):

How does one know when American presidents aren't telling the truth about foreign policy? The answer is simple. We know they are lying whenever their lips are moving. There is a long history of claims made about America's relations with other nations that have been revealed as cynical, bald faced lies. When circumstances change for the political and ruling classes or if resistance is effective enough, a narrative repeated over many years can change very quickly.... It is good advice not to believe everything we read. But in American foreign policy that expression doesn't go far enough. We should not believe anything our government feeds to the corporate media. They lie when their lips are moving.

The study of Amechi Okolo:

... exposes some classic pervasive and unbelievable American lies that were invented, and have been historically perpetuated, maintained and reinforced by American orthodoxy and by various American gatekeepers that they now seem normal and are fully accepted by American and global audience as truism ((*The State of the American Mind: stupor and pathetic docility*, Xlibris, 2010, p. xxvii)

Other references include:

- James W. Loewen: *Lies My Teacher Told Me: everything your American history textbook got wrong* 2007
- Jake Zartman: *American History: A History of Lies*, 2015 [video]
- John Kaminski: *A Nation of Liars: the top 25 lies of all time*, *Darkmoon*, 29 September 2015
- Alexander Cockburn: *Obama on Bin Laden: a volcano of American lies*, *The Week*, 5 May 2011
- Fabrizio Saulini and Alessandro Spaventa: *American Lies: ascesa e caduta della Enron*, Fazi Editore, 2013
- Robert Fantina: *American Lies and Iraqi Nationalism*, *Counterpunch*, 28 July 2007
- Elyse Siegel and Craig Kanalley: *The Most Unforgettable Lies from Prominent Americans*, *The Huffington Post*, 3 September 2010
- *U.S. Bans Media That Exposes Lies To American Citizens*, *Veterans Today*, 1 July 2013
- *American Lies and the Treaty of Fort Laramie*, *Native American Netroots*, 16 September 2011
- G. Asgar Mitha: *How American Lies Have Destabilized Global Regions*, *Countercurrents*, 22 May, 2015
- Peter N. Kirstein: *Lest We Forget: American lies and hypocrisy about W.M.D.: Nuclear Weapons*, 16 August 2006

Systemic lying by (and for) Americans is recognized more generally, in a variety of forms, within other contexts:

- Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway: *Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming*, 2010
- Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman: *Manufacturing Consent: the political economy of the mass media*, 1988)

Most evident as American lies have been those recognized as a result of the [leaking of diplomatic cables](#) from 2010, followed by recognition from 2013 of [mass electronic surveillance](#) of both allies and American citizens, in addition to potential enemies. A significant factor has been the explicit articulation that "every nation does it" -- whether between allies or enemies.

Foreign policy lies: Those revelations supplement what are recognized as American foreign policy lies, as variously noted:

- Scott C. Johnson: *What Lies Beneath*, *Foreign Policy*, 23 March 2015
- David Rothkopf: *The 14 Biggest Lies of 2011*, *Foreign Policy*, 16 December 2011
- Mosharraf Zaidi: *The Lies They Tell Us: can the Pakistani government's web of deceit survive the death of Osama bin Laden?* *Foreign Policy*, 2 May 2011
- Patrick L. Smith: *America's Immoral Exceptionalism: the lie we keep telling ourselves about foreign policy and democracy*, *Salon*, 20 March 2015
- Paul Craig Roberts: *Lies about Putin: propaganda reigns in the West*, *Foreign Policy Journal*, 26 June 2015
- Robert J. Burrowes: *Exposing Lies, Telling the Truth*, *Foreign Policy News*, 10 June 2015
- Ron Paul: *U.S. Foreign Policy is Riddled With Lies*, *Ron Paul Liberty Report*, 28 September 2015
- Robert L. Ehrlich Jr.: *The Many Lies Paving the Way to Obama's Legacy*, *National Review*, 22 July 2015
- William Blum: *Barack Obama Indoctrinating a New Generation: lies and omissions on American foreign policy*, *Global Research*, 17 April 2014
- Jack Kelly: *Liberals Losing Moral Authority Over Foreign Policy Lies*, *Real Clear Politics*, 14 September 2014
- Patrick Smith: *Beyond Foreign Policy Lies: our compliant media and the truth about US exceptionalism*, *The 4th Media*, 2 January 2015
- Russian Foreign Ministry: *US more guided by blatant lies in its foreign policy*, *TAss*, 26 July 2014
- Laura Flanders: *Foreign Policy: Lies, lies, lies, Where Do They Lead Us? Shadow Proof*, 18 September 2008
- Bruce Thornton: *Lies, Democracy and Obama: the sickness of a political system that no longer values the truth*, *FrontPage Magazine*, 12 August 2013
- Binoy Kampmark: *US Foreign Policy Lies and Obama's Fake Solutions: "creating" and then "fighting" the Islamic State, supporting the Kurdish Peshmarga*, *Global Research*, 2 September, 2014
- Barbara Koepfel: *The Lies still Killing Gulf War Vets*, *International Policy Digest*, 2 April 2015

- David Duke: *Our Foreign Policy Has Been Mostly Based on Lies for over 100 Years*. 2 May 2011

Particular focus is given to the lie in terms of [post-truth politics](#) by *The Economist* (*Post-truth politics: art of the lie*, 10 September 2016), introduced by an editorial to the effect that:

Consider how far Donald Trump is estranged from fact. He inhabits a fantastical realm where Barack Obama's birth certificate was faked, the president founded Islamic State (IS), the Clintons are killers and the father of a rival was with Lee Harvey Oswald before he shot John F. Kennedy. Mr Trump is the leading exponent of "post-truth" politics -- a reliance on assertions that "feel true" but have no basis in fact. His brazenness is not punished, but taken as evidence of his willingness to stand up to elite power. And he is not alone....

But post-truth politics is more than just an invention of whingeing elites who have been outflanked. The term picks out the heart of what is new: that truth is not falsified, or contested, but of secondary importance. Once, the purpose of political lying was to create a false view of the world. The lies of men like Mr Trump do not work like that. They are not intended to convince the elites, whom their target voters neither trust nor like, but to reinforce prejudices.

One summary is offered by Brett S. Morris (*21 Lies They Tell You About American Foreign Policy*, Amazon Digital Services, 2014). These include:

- How the United States has overthrown numerous democratically elected governments
- Why the threat of nuclear war remains as high as ever
- How the United States supported a genocide in Guatemala
- How the United States has been waging a vicious terrorist war against Cuba
- Why "national security" is not a very important goal for decision makers
- The real goal of the "war on drugs"
- Why North Korea seems "crazy"
- The roots of Islamic terrorism
- How the United States blocks a solution of the Israel-Palestine conflict
- How the United States supported Saddam Hussein
- The history of American imperialism
- How the United States has tortured people
- The truth about the crisis in Ukraine

Curiously, in the light of the above-mentioned revelation of the complicity of the American Psychological Association in CIA torture, a study was featured at an annual convention of the association prior to those disclosures. Titled *Science of Honesty*, it indicated that Americans lie on average 11 times a week. and that telling the truth can significantly improve a person's mental and physical health (CBS, 6 August 2012).

Tridimensional dynamic framing: living, dyeing/lying, dying?

As might be expected, there are no explicit references to "Saving American Lies" in any critical commentary on what has become an unquestionable strategic priority. This recognized by some to take the form of an emergent American imperialism (Binoy Kampmark, *Twisted Narratives of Hiroshima: "Atomic Warfare Became Noble Even to the Victims"* *Global Research*, 7 August 2015; Michael S. Rozeff, *Saving Lives or Committing Evil?* *24hGold*, 30 October 2006).

The concern here is whether the intertwined themes evoked above can be woven together in a more insightful manner -- given the fundamental nature of living, lying and dying. The following schema offers a pattern which could be helpful in that respect.

Tridimensional dynamic framing: living, dyeing/lying, dying?			
	Living (life)	Lying (lie)	Dying (death)
Living (life)	Living for its own sake (life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness)	Lying to Live (lying for survival; lying for thrival; lying about life)	Dying to Live (killing oneself)
Lying (lie)	Living a Lie (living to lie)	Lying for its own sake (because one can)	Dying to Lie
Dying (death)	Living to Die (living death)	Lying to Die (lying about death)	Dying for Death (dying for its own sake)

The columns suggest the following comments:

Living:

- **Living:** There is little question regarding the fundamental value of life for its own sake. This is epitomized by a key phrase in the American Constitution, namely the [unalienable rights](#) to *life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness*.
- **Lying:** The process of lying stands in strange relationship to that of living. It is most evident in the lies people articulate regarding their beliefs, aspirations, motivations and initiatives -- whether for themselves or for others. The question of how early children learn to lie, and the purpose it serves is explore by Romeo Vitelli (*When Does Lying Begin?* *Psychology Today*, 11 November 2013)

From some philosophical or religious perspectives, limitations on human understanding on the nature of life can take the form of recognition that any cultivated understanding is essentially based on [illusion](#) -- a form of lie in which life itself is an illusion. This

may be evident in the manner in which the lives of others are reframed, whether as an inspiration or as an embodiment of the inhuman.

The process is obvious in the cultivation of problematic images of enemies and otherness, whether as a feature of propaganda or as a feature of the fascination with the alien. This is of some significance to current speculation on the capacity to detect alien "life" and the possibility of contact with extraterrestrial aliens, possibly with a radically different understanding of lying and authenticity.

There are various forms of recognition of "**living a lie**":

- Kate McGowan: *Living a Lie*, *Psychology Today*, 2 January 2013
- Joanna Borns: *23 Signs You're Living A Lie: you can't hide a massive, soul-crushing secret forever*, *BuzzFeed*, 17 September 2013
- Gail Saltz: *Anatomy of a Secret Life: the psychology of living a lie*, Broadway, 2006
- Andrew Lees: *Living a Lie: stripped of its financial make-up, the economy is not as it first appears*, 2012
- Into the Light Ministries: *Are You Living A Lie Too?*
- Michael Coren: *On sexuality, the Catholic Church is living a lie*, *Commentary*, 13 October 2013

Theses may take the form of fundamental condemnation of the lives of those living according to deprecated norms -- a typical perspective cultivated by fundamentalists. More challenging is its recognition in personal life and relationships -- a common trigger for the breakdown of relationships. It may be understood as a modality imposed by social obligation, irrespective of the existential agony with which it is associated. One example is the case of forced marriage. The process of **coming out** by homosexuals is significantly driven by the sense of otherwise living a lie.

"Living a lie" may be contrasted with the sense of "being a lie", and variously associated with "lies we tell ourselves", "lies we tell ourselves" and "believing in one's own lies" -- and being nourished by them.

A more perverse variant is to be recognized in the process of "**living to lie**" deriving meaning from exploiting that facility as a means of skillfully manipulating perceptions of the environment. This could be recognized as a caricature of the profession of public relations -- using skills to frame any disagreeable truths otherwise, notably through **cover-up processes**. This may be seen as a characteristic of **media bias** (*Vital Collective Learning from Biased Media Coverage: acquiring vigilance to deceptive strategies used in mugging the world*, 2014)

- **Dying**: As the antithesis of life, the existential threat to life is clearly that constituted by dying This is variously recognized in the deaths of those near and dear, embodied in the media violence of daily entertainment, as well as the appreciation of tragedy in cultural epics. It is of course evident in the framing of strategic threat and the investment in strategic response -- and its understanding of the strategic necessity of mega-deaths consequent on "thinking the unthinkable". Understanding of dying acquires other dimensions with the tragedy of the poor and underprivileged whose lives could be caricatured as a "**living death**". This characterization has been extended to those condemned to a life behind bars for trivial offences -- notably in the USA (American Council of Civil Liberties, *A Living Death*).

Curiously matching the concern with rooting out terrorism, as discussed separately (*Eradication as the Strategic Final Solution of the 21st Century?* 2014), there is a surprising degree of preoccupation with rooting out **zombies** -- as the embodiment of the "**living dead**" (*Preponderance of references to the eradication of zombies*). This is also indicative of the process of reframing death in terms acceptable to the online gaming cultures, through music and in song lyrics.

The meaning of death can be seen as transformed by those who radically reframe their existence in terms of "**living to die**" -- as with suicide bombers, kamikaze pilots, or the **gladiators** of Imperial Rome. The sense has of course been cultivated in past centuries by a corresponding commitment of others to causes otherwise framed -- for which they may be martyred. Life is then reframed in terms of some understanding of eternal life -- a fundamental inspiration cultivated via various religions. The sense of immortality is also variously cultivated and memorialized in the light of secular values, notably military heroism.

A further implication is offered through the manner in which "**dieing**" is understood as a manufacturing process involving use of a "**die**" -- as in **dieing machine** and **dieing press** (J. R. Paquin, *Die Design Fundamentals*, 1987; Jerry Arnold, *Die Makers Handbook*, 1980). As a metaphor (with its associated pattern forming terminology), there is then the sense of "living to die" associated with ensuring a style of life of a very particular pattern -- imposing a highly disciplined constraint on life and precluding exploration of its full potential. This is perhaps to be understood in terms of implanting memes as with making a mark and leaving a legacy. It is also appropriate to note that some aspects derive from common misspellings and associated misunderstandings (as in relation to "dying" and "dyeing")

Lying:

- **Living**: The process of lying is readily recognized as offering a basic means of survival in a competitive society (*Sissela Bok, Lying: moral choice in public and private life*, 1978; *Sam Harris, Lying*, 2013; *John Mearsheimer, Why Leaders Lie: the truth about lying in international politics*, 2011). For Nietzsche: *That lies should be necessary to life is part and parcel of the terrible and questionable character of life*. Several novels are explicitly titled to include the phrase "necessary lies".

Quora invites comments on the question: *What are some of the necessary lies that kids must be told?* (27 May 2013).

According to Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic:

Although every society condemns lying, it is still a common feature of everyday life. Research suggests that Americans average almost two lies per day, though there is huge variability between people. In fact, the distribution of lies follows Pareto's principle: 20% of people tell 80% of the lies, and 80% of people account for the remaining 20% of lies. (*How and Why We Lie at Work*, *The Harvard Business Review*, 2 January 2015).

Fundamentally it may be perceived to be necessary to lie in order to live and to thrive to a greater degree than others. As a survival strategy it is evident in the context of political or religious persecution of those holding alternative beliefs -- when the latter may feel obliged to pretend to uphold the required belief. Striking examples are provided by Jews obliged to live for generations under the pretence of being not of Jewish faith.

The process is most obvious in any "marketing" relationship, notably in advertising new products and in the exaggerated claims for their performance -- framed legally as **puffery**. It is evident in personal promotion, whether for a career or in cultivating personal relationships -- or an image. Use of cosmetics and other devices of personal enhancement could be understood as a form of lying -- contested by those who avoid them.

The point is dramatically made by recent revelations of the installation of fraudulent software by the most esteemed automobile manufacturers. Claims defensively made for the necessity of surreptitious electronic surveillance by national intelligence and security services are of this nature.

Potentially more intriguing is the process of lying about the nature of life itself -- as could be recognized in the arguments and assertions of religions and philosophies, if not of science.

- **Lying:** There is a case for recognizing lying as a normal modality to be contrasted with any effort to articulate truth or the presentation of "concrete proof" of veracity (*False Narratives and Corrupt "Backroom Deals" Sustain the New World Order*, *Global Research*, 26 October 2015). Truth is then framed as exceptional in circumstances in which lying is favoured -- whenever it is possible to "get away with it". Arguably this is a primary feature of both commercial marketing and politics. Any requirement for truth is recognized as a constraint around which navigation is sought and with skills that are admired -- whether enabled by investment in legal complexities or "dirty tricks".

Insightful distinctions are made by Cullen Murphy (*The Lie of the Land: equivocations, deceptions, fibs, and other forms of not telling the truth*, *The Slate*, April 1998). He offers as categories:

There is the *mendacium jocosum* -- the "lie told in jest." A second type of lie is the *mendacium officiosum*, or "officious lie," whose purpose is to achieve some useful end or to prevent some distinct harm. (Examples might include a doctor misleading a terminally ill patient or a prisoner lying to enemy interrogators). A third type of lie is the *mendacium perniciosum*, or "pernicious lie", a lie that is intended to do harm. A fourth type of lie might be called the *mendacium universalis*, the "universal or endemic lie". This is the type of lie -- if it is, indeed, a lie -- that we seem to be encountering most frequently these days.

In competitive situations, framed otherwise as "deception" (notably in the USA), lying can be understood as fundamental to strategic success, whether in sport, card games, or in **military deception** (Michael Dewar, *The Art of Deception in Warfare*, 1989; Roy Godson and James J. Wirtz (Eds.), *Strategic Denial and Deception: the Twenty-First Century Challenge*, 2002; John Gooch (Ed.), *Military Deception and Strategic Surprise!* 2007; Jon Latimer, *Deception in War: the art of the bluff, the value of deceit, and the most thrilling episodes of cunning in military history, from the Trojan Horse to the Gulf War*, 2003; Mark Lloyd, *Art of Military Deception*, 1999; Mark Johnson and Jessica Meyeraan, *Military Deception: hiding the real, showing the fake*, USAF Joint Forces Staff College, 2003; Hy Rothstein and Barton Whaley (Eds.), *The Art and Science of Military Deception*, 2013; Edward Waltz and Michael Bennett, *Counterdeception Principles and Applications for National Security*, 2007).

For example, the US *Joint Doctrine for Military Deception (1996 / 2006)* provides *fundamental guidance and principles for the planning and execution of military deception at the combatant command and/or subordinate joint force level*.

Acquiring deceptive skills in games can be understood as rehearsal for their subsequent use in *politics as war by other means* (Michel Chossudovsky, *Political Deception: The Missing Link behind 9-11*, *Global Research*, 2002; Al Gore, *Broken Promises and Political Deception*, *New York Times*, 4 August, 2002; Stephen Wechsler, *The Pragmatics of Political Deception*, 2004). Of some relevance is the value increasingly attached to disguise and **stealth technology** -- extending into the possibility of **invisibility**. This is curiously matched by the controversial condemnation of facial covering as an affront to transparency (*Challenges to Facist Identity and Facial Identification*, 2009)

It has become increasingly difficult for those with the power to misrepresent to prove that they are not engaged in lying in some measure. Much is made of the strategic value of telling a [Big Lie](#) -- made especially significant as a Nazi propaganda technique. This was use of a lie so "colossal" that no one would believe that someone "could have the impudence to distort the truth so infamously". Some would see the Catholic church as having cultivated such "big lies" -- possibly offering an inspiration to the governance of the USA.

- **Dying:** The claims made regarding the nature of death and dying can be readily characterized as mendacious (Wesley J. Smith, [Lying About Dying](#), *Discovery Institute*, 14 December 1998; The Socialist Party of Great Britain, [Afghanistan - lying about dying](#), *World Socialism*, November 2009). Most simply these may include the lies told to comfort those with problematic health conditions -- possibly a terminal illness. The framings offered by the religious might be seen in this light. A particular difficulty is associated with efforts to normalize death when it might otherwise be considered as a fundamentally mysterious challenge to normality.

Potentially far more problematic is the manner in which soldiers may be encouraged to "die for their country" -- extended to forms of propaganda framing this as normal, necessary and honourable. Again the complicity of religion may be evident, as in the case of radical fundamentalism, most notably that of Islam.

Dying:

- **Living:** Given their problematic circumstances, many can be recognized as effectively "**dying to live**". Most obviously this may be experienced by the aging and those with a terminal illness, or with near death experiences (Susan J. Blackmore, [Dying to Live](#), 1993). Currently this is recognized in relation to the refugee crisis ([Dying to Live: a migrant's journey](#); Joseph Nevins, *Dying to Live: a story of U.S. Immigration in an Age of Global Apartheid*, 2008). The preoccupation with health at any cost may well take questionable forms, as with that associated with trade in organs (Samuel Kargbo, [Dying to Live](#), *Project Syndicate*, 17 September 2015; Tomas Philipson, [Dying to Live: why is health care so valuable in the face of death?](#) *Forbes*, 6 August 2015).

The sense of dying to live may of course involve a degree of sacrifice most evident in those who claim to be "killing themselves" through work -- in the anticipation of being able to live thereafter. More controversial is the sense in which individuals sacrifice themselves, either in order that others may live or in order to live more happily in a hereafter in which they believe. In some cultures, such as the Aztec, sacrifice may be framed as fundamental to the survival of society faced with challenging circumstances. Further insight is offered by plants (Jos H.M. Schippers, et al., [Living to Die and Dying to Live: the survival strategy behind leaf senescence](#), *Plant Physiology*, August 2015)

- **Lying:** The experience of "**dying to lie**" is well-recognized by the conscientious who understand that truth-telling may be experienced as harmful to others or may cause other forms of disruption. Again this may be the sense when faced with those in problematic conditions of health, where the truth regarding those conditions would only add to the suffering of those desperately dependent on a hopeful outcome.

At the collective level this is an evident issue for governance, namely how frank it is appropriate to be when transparency is valued, but under conditions in which the truth could engender panic with all its concomitant dangers.

- **Dying:** The experience of "**dying to die**" is one which has been widely publicized in relation to those suffering chronic pain, most notably the terminally ill (Rod Dreher, [Dying to Die](#), *The American Conservative*, 22 May 2012; Jeff Eamon, [Dying to Die Right: a look at death in Ancient Rome](#)).

Far more problematic and controversial is the officially sanctioned process of enhanced interrogation, through which individuals are deliberately brought to a condition in which death would be a relief -- one in which they may plead for a death which is withheld.

The difference between these is subtle, if not perverse. In the first case facilitated dying is withheld "for the good of the soul" of the person in pain. In the second it is for the good of society -- most notably "saving American lives". More curious is the attitude of those "dying to die" for a higher cause, as is presumably the case of jihadists and aspirant martyrs.

Of notable relevance is the agonising experience of many, articulated as "**dying inside**" -- irrespective of appearances. For a collective this could be understood as a process of collapsing from within -- a form of cultural implosion -- as is a historical characteristic of empires and civilizations which lose their inspiration, and their "soul". Whereas "soul" is a readily deprecated notion, the process can be usefully explored in terms of loss of [authenticity](#) (Bruce Prideaux, [Commodifying Heritage: loss of authenticity and meaning or an appropriate response to difficult circumstances?](#) *International Journal of Tourism Sciences*, 3, 2003, 1, pp. 1-17; Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity*, 1974; Jacob Golomb, *In Search of Authenticity: from Kierkegaard to Camus*, 1995; Geoffrey Hartman, *Scars of the Spirit: the struggle against inauthenticity*, 2004).

Such an implosion is possibly heralded and mirrored by the manner in which the CIA has formally sanctioned, with approval from the highest level of government, the process of deliberately reducing individuals to a condition of mindless helplessness and associated loss of integrity -- with the complicity of the American Psychological Association (Stephen Soldz, et al., [The APA's Secret Involvement in the CIA's "Enhanced" Interrogation Program](#), 2015). How long can a superpower survive its own increasing inauthenticity -- especially when its authenticity is variously defined and claimed by competing political, religious and

economic factions.

More complex is any process of "**dying to oneself**", as may well be advocated by spiritual disciplines as part of the salvation experience (Donald Ekstrand, *A Summary of the Doctrine of "Dying to Self, The Transformed Soul*; Jacob Boehme, *Dying to Self*, 2010)

Saving American Lies -- as "Saving the Colours" and "Defending the Flag"?

The references cited above can be readily interpreted to indicate that the USA is effectively drowning in a sea of li(v)es -- to the point of suggesting that current concern with climate change and rising sea levels may well be a case of **misplaced concreteness or reification**. It is strange that, as a logical source of insight to which the US might have turned, the American Psychological Association has become highly complicit in this dynamic.

How might a way forward be explored in psychosocial terms? The knee-jerk response would be to elaborate new lies, as detected by [Paul Craig Roberts](#) (*Washington Protects Its Lies with More Lies*, *Foreign Policy Journal*, 28 May 2015). There is even the suggestion that ever bigger threats may need to be fabricated to this end -- possession of biochemical weapons by terrorists, asteroid collision with Earth, invasion by extraterrestrials, etc -- following the pattern long-established by hell-fire preachers and witchdoctors (*Promoting a Singular Global Threat -- Terrorism: strategy of choice for world governance*, 2002).

Increasing credibility is curiously given in the realms of governance to the narratives used and to the possibility of switching narrative when circumstances frame the opportunity and necessity of doing so.

Ecosystem of new narratives? Consideration could however be given to elaboration of an extended pattern of new narratives of greater subtlety. One attempt to this end is exemplified by the efforts of [James Cameron](#) (*Avatar*, 2009). A recent [New Story Summit](#) at the Findhorn Foundation gathered [many speaking](#) to the possibility and nature of such a "new story".

With respect to any new narrative, it is useful to rethink the very nature of narrative and its function -- given the heavy investment in particular understandings and claims by those promoting such devices. More generally, the approach could usefully explore the subtle relationships and complementarities between the following:

- image building and cultivation
- deception, whether for military, competitive or romantic purposes
- lying, notably in the form of a "tall story"
- story-telling and narrative
- illusion
- delusion
- model building
- hypothesis
- metaphors
- claims (property)
- declaim, reclaim
- display
- reproduce oneself
- represent / misrepresent

These can be understood as a form of psychosocial ecosystem of varieties of what might otherwise be characterized as "lying", thereby **reframing lying within a larger context**, rather than engendering new lies claimed to be truths. The framing as an ecosystem is helpful in giving credence to an adaptation of "one man's meat is another man's poison". The narrative of one group may well constitute nourishment to another -- however much it is considered as poisonous by another. For example, the Christian story is so framed by such as [Richard Dawkins](#) (*The God Delusion*, 2006).

Subtler lies for subtler lives? Crudely stated, the argument suggests the need for "**better lies for better lives**". It could be said that the advertising and public relations industries are already especially sensitive to this possibility -- as being the essence of the creativity which they tend to cultivate. Expressed otherwise, the approach could be compared with that of physics in its quest to frame reality in models with extra dimensions (***) -- notably from 10 to 26 dimensions. Within how any dimensions should American living be reframed -- given the strange relation to dying and lying -- even to be understood as co-dependency?

How many dimensions adequately reflect the experience of a "way of life"? More intriguing is the question of how many distinct "ways of life" could be associated with such a multiplicity of dimensions -- effectively a multiverse? The question is highly pertinent to the experiential challenge to one way of life of any exposure to another -- currently exemplified by that associated with ISIS? Naturally the claims of the latter are held to be associated with a particular form of lying -- just as the American way of life is deprecated as a fundamental lie from the ISIS perspective. The pattern is characteristic of the historical relation between the [Abrahamic religions](#).

Seemingly unconstrained in its modelling of reality, physics continues to elaborate ever more subtle "models". Where are the ever more subtle "models" of living and dying -- given the role of "lying" in any such provisional articulation? Should the claims by opinion leaders and gurus for their uniquely insightful articulations be more clearly understood in terms such as the puffery by which claims for products are commonly marketed -- or new models are promoted?

Enabling metaphors: A valuable initiative in this respect has been the seminal framing offered by the cognitive psychology of [George Lakoff](#) and [Mark Johnson](#) (*Metaphors We Live By*, 1980). However this is conservative in avoiding what might be articulated in any study -- or Wiki -- on the possible "**metaphors to live by**", understood more generally and comprehensively.

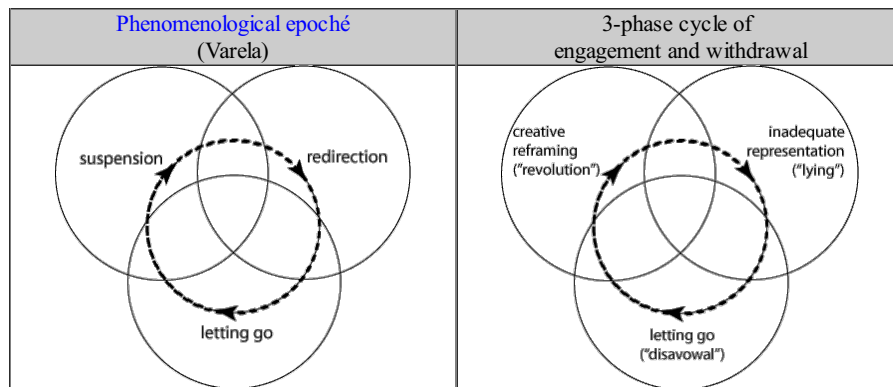
Lakoff has himself explored the manner in which metaphor is used to frame the justification for international and interreligious violence -- famously arguing that metaphor can kill (*Metaphor and War: the metaphor system used to justify war in the Gulf*, 1991; [Obama Reframes Syria: metaphor and war revisited](#), *The Huffington Post*, 6 September 2013). Clearly the intimate relation between living, dying and lying calls for creative articulation of resources on both "**metaphors to die by**" and "**metaphors to lie by**" -- of which the former has

been tentatively explored separately (*Metaphors To Die By: correspondences between a collapsing civilization, culture or group, and a dying person*, 2013). The latter features in the discussion of Scarlet Marquette (*Metaphors We Lie By: cognitive blending in the poetry of Elena Shvarts, The Slavic and East European Journal*, 51, 2007, 4, pp. 693-715)

Seemingly there is no means of avoiding living and dying -- any more than there is of "lying" about both. Centuries of reflection have not achieved closure on the existential truth of living or dying -- without some degree of misrepresentation, readily to be characterized as lying, especially when deliberate. The three together remain equally mysterious -- holding a valuable sense of mystery. The quest for static definitional closure on "life" and "death" may well constitute a form of illusion -- a "lie" in its own right.

3-fold cyclic patterns of engagement and disengagement: Given mention above of the half-life of facts in relation to the half-life of knowledge, how to fruitfully understand the half-life of any cognitive engagement? The claim to "know a fact" under such circumstances could indeed be variously understood as misrepresentation. Even to the point of being subsequently labelled a "lie"?

A pointer in this direction is offered by the **phenomenological epoché** articulated from a **neurophenomenological** perspective by **Francisco Varela** (*The Gesture of Awareness*, 1999) [see also Claus Otto Scharmer, *Three Gestures of Becoming Aware: conversation with Francisco Varela January 12, 2000*].



(*Engaging with Globality through Dynamic Complexity*, 2009; *Engendering Imagination and Gastrulation of Globalization: reconstructive insights from the sciences and the humanities*, 2010)

"Saving the Colours": The concern above has been with "lying" as a mediating phase between "living" and "dying". This emphasizes a necessarily pejorative connotation. What is framed as a lie by another, especially in the political arena, is more fruitfully understood as a coloration. Each political faction endeavours to defend its colours.

In the military arena, where "lies" are defended with force, the emphasis can then be recognized in terms of defending or protecting the colours -- embodied in a flag -- as has long been recognized. This is evident in the following:

- *Defending the Colors... Advancing the Colors*: compiled by the [Department of the Army of Northern Virginia](#) "for the use of all camps, divisions and armies in the Confederation".
- depictions or models of soldiers defending the colours (*Crimean War Scots Fusiliers Defending the Colours*; *Defending the Colours: Napoleonic Diorama*, Military Modelling; etc.)
- *Reenactment: Defending the Colors, Civil War Talk*
- Ben Stein: *Defending the Flag*, *The American Spectator*, 30 June 2006

The process continues to be recognized as a metaphor in any competitive environment (William Tuohy, *Defending the Colours: British regiments battle to survive deep budget cuts*, *Los Angeles Times*, 3 August 1990). The term is notably employed with respect to sporting teams defending their respective colours.

Significance is similarly associated with "saving the colours".

Dyeing the truth? In this light, and given the play on words, **it is therefore more appropriate to conflate the process of lying with that of dyeing**, as the attribution of a distinctive "coloration" with which identify is associated. It is then truth which is "coloured" (perhaps necessarily, through being elusive), as illustrated by the following:

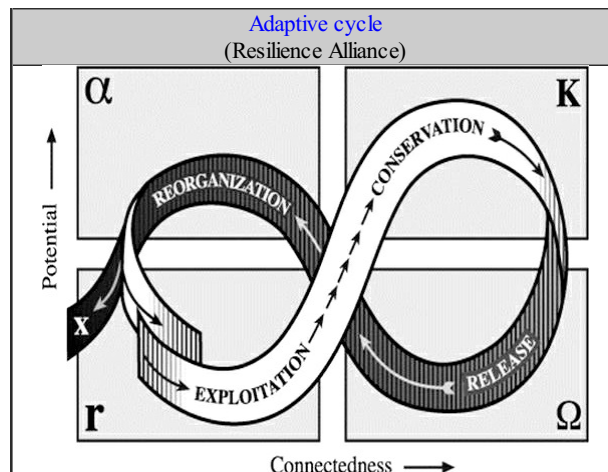
- Brendan Nyhan: *Coloring the Truth: the top Democrat plays the race card -- again*. *Salon*, 22 March 2002
- Kai Bird: *The Color of Truth: McGeorge Bundy and William Bundy: Brothers in Arms*, Simon and Schuster, 2000
- V.A. Musetto: *Coloring the Truth*, *New York Post*, 2 May 2007
- *Coloring the Truth, but Staying within the Lines*, *Democratic Underground*, 21 July 2014

So framed, the 3-fold process above could be explored in terms of the following schema:

Contrasting living and dying statically and dynamically	
dynamic	static
living	life
lying/dyeing	lie (dye)
dying	death (die)

Four-fold adaptive cycle engendering 8-fold and 12-fold patterns

Resilience: The challenge of **resilience**, upheld as an essential characteristic of sustainable governance, offers a fruitful "lie" in the form of the model of the **adaptive cycle**. What might be implied by an **adaptive life cycle of lying and dying**? This is a possibility that might be inferred from that intriguingly noted above with respect to plants (Jos H.M. Schippers, et al., *Living to Die and Dying to Live: the survival strategy behind leaf senescence*, *Plant Physiology*, August 2015).



Earning / Meriting / Deserving dynamically and statically framed		
dynamic	static	earning/meriting/deserving
living	life (creativity / initiative)	a living
dyeing	colour of a life initiative	one's colours
lying	lie	a lie (for the gullible)
dying/dieing	death	a death (for the targeted)

Lying in context: Whether or not such wordplay proves to be irrelevant, it is appropriate to consider the following mnemonic extensions to the pattern elaborated above with respect to how a lie may work through the magic of misdirection. The coherence of the result therefore depends on exploitation of poetic licence and implication of metaphorical associations.

Lying in context				
	<i>surviving</i>	<i>colouring</i>	<i>diminishing</i>	<i>outcome</i>
gerund	living	dyeing	lying	dying
verb	live	dye	lie	die
plurality	lives	dyes	lies	dies
modality	lease (leasing)	die ("forming")	lessening	die (dicing)
remainder	lice	lees	lie ("of the land")	lye

As a mnemonic the pattern can be considered as holding succinctly -- whether provocatively or evocatively -- much of the process of living-to-dying as systemically understood and experienced:

- Columns:
 - **surviving:** includes lease (especially in the sense of obtaining a "new lease on life"), and a probable finality of being consumed by "lice"
 - **colouring:** as indicated above) refers to the particular coloration adopted (perhaps permanently), but includes "die" as a material-shaping device (extending to **die casting**) and thus to the sense of the die is cast (and to the sense of "it is written"). This also offers the association of "straight as a die". Inclusion of "lees" refers to what remains through the process of **fining of wine** with its echoes of *in vino veritas*. -- choice through random *****
 - **diminishing:** extended beyond that associated with diminishing the truth -- whether through misrepresentation (deception) or embellishment (puffery) -- to include the "lie of the land" as what then remains as the most general sense of affairs under consideration. Concern with "homeland security" might well be considered as maintaining the lie of the land -- how the truth lies ***
 - lie as a provisional modelling of some circumstance
 - **outcome:** extended beyond that of dying to include both the understanding of "dicing with death" and the lye **** it is possible to extract from the ashes following death (and destruction), notably in the sense of "ashes to ashes", and of "rising from the ashes" (Phoenix-like)
 - One of a set of **dice**, small throwable objects with multiple resting positions, used for generating random numbers -- life as a matter of chance
 - conception -- inception -- reception -- deception
- Rows:
 - **verb and gerund** forms emphasize the systemic dynamic
 - **plurality** further emphasizes the diversity and ecosystemic nature of the process

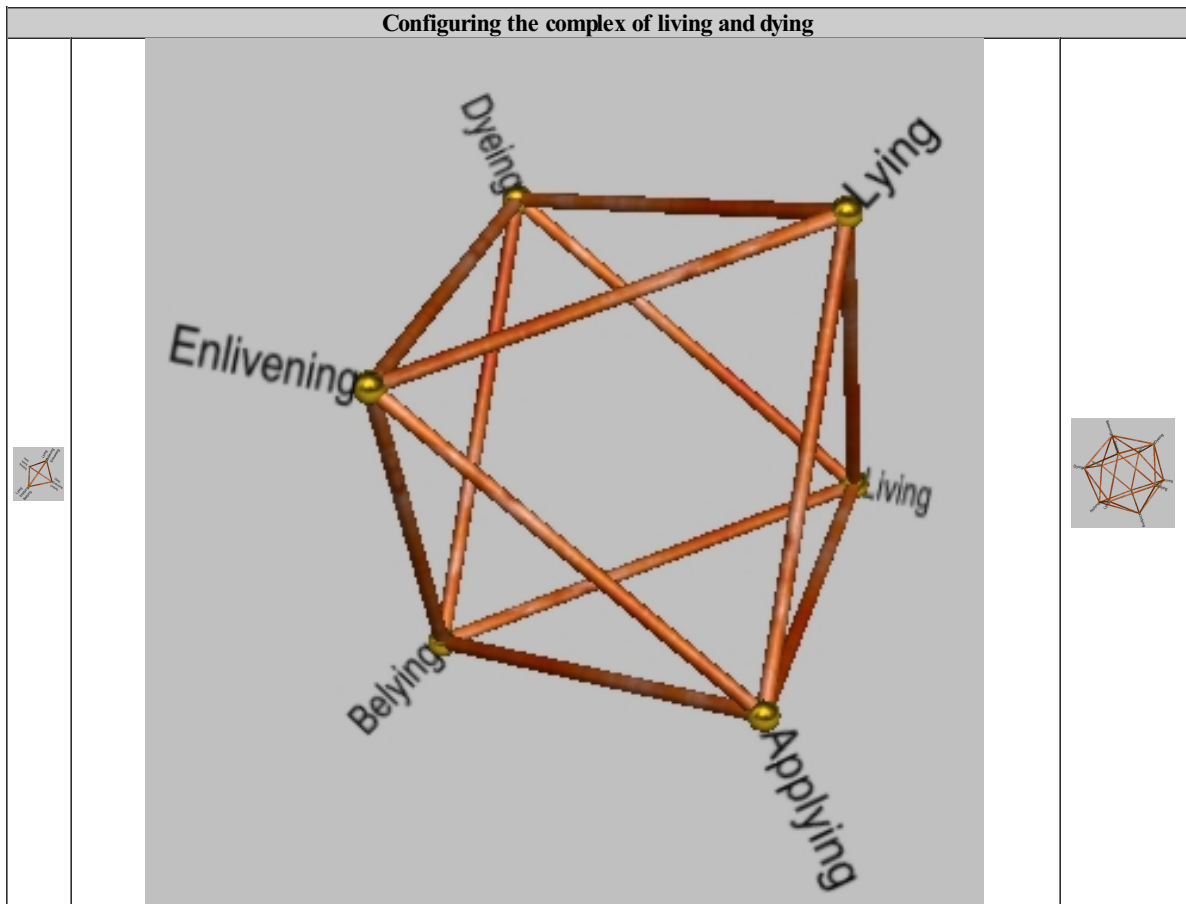
- **modality** offers a sense of the processes, possibly to be understood in terms of modelling
 - lie as a provisional modelling of some circumstance
- **remainder**: as with the outcome column, offers a sense of what remains thereafter

8-fold: -- trigrams

4-fold way	dynamic	living	dyeing	lying	dying

8-fold way	dynamic	living	dyeing	lying	dying
	facilitating	enlivening	applying (colouring)	believing	"ending" (whether desired or resisted)

12-fold way	dynamic	living	dyeing	lying	dying
	facilitating	enlivening	implying	enlightening (story telling / truth telling)	remedying
	enabling	saving	implying	belying (reframing)	undoing (embodying)



Existential interplay: Given the emphasis on the existential challenge of living and dying -- in saving lives and souls -- the pattern merits recognition in terms of the sentiments of the cultural icon of a country currently under threat of itself being reduced to ashes, namely the polymath [Omar Khayyam](#) (Gane Gordon, *Omar Khayyam, the Shakespeare of Iran, Figments*shadow, 2012). Quatrains such as the following are attributed to him (*Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*):

For in and out, above, about, below, 'Tis nothing but a Magic Shadow-show

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon Turns Ashes -- or it prospers; and anon,

*Play'd in a Box whose Candle is the Sun
Round which we Phantom Figures come and go.*

*Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face
Lighting a little Hour or two -- is gone.*

*And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in the Nothing all Things end in -- Yes --
Then fancy while Thou art, Thou art but what
Thou shalt be -- Nothing -- Thou shalt not be less.*

*The Moving Finger writes, and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.*

The issue is whether and how such existential insights can be related to current challenges, as discussed separately (*Living with Incomprehension and Uncertainty: re-cognizing the varieties of non-comprehension and misunderstanding*, 2012). The interplay between the 3-fold and 4-fold articulations above can, for example, be presented evocatively in the following tabular form -- reminiscent of the mathematical consideration of magic squares, to be discussed in the [annex](#) which follows.

Interplay between 3-fold and 4-fold configurations of living and dying			
	Living	Lying (Dyeing)	Dying (Dieing)
Life	Living life	Lying about life	Dying to live (dicing with life)
Lie(s)	Living a lie (living to lie)	Lying about lies	Dying to lie (dicing with lies)
Death	Living death (living to die)	Lying about death	Dying to die (dicing with death)

Metaphors and stories can be readily considered to be "lies". However, it becomes apparent that any aesthetic framing of "lying" -- notable in poetry -- calls for exploration in terms of creativity, as argued by [Douglas Hofstadter](#) and [Emmanuel Sander](#) (*Surfaces and Essences: analogy as the fuel and fire of thinking*, 2013), as a further development of Hofstadter's earlier work (*Fluid Concepts and Creative Analogies*, 1995). With respect to this theme, there is a charming irony to "liar" being a homophone of "lyre" -- given the role the latter played amongst the governors of the past, as an accompaniment to verbal recitation..

Salvation enabled by systemic comprehension via aesthetics of magic squares?

The sense of coherence especially associated with magic squares is explored in an [annex](#) -- in the light of the influential role of two iconic polymaths. Both cases highlight the possibility that "salvatory coherence", encompassing seemingly disparate preoccupations, may be reflected in cognitive modalities which merit renewed consideration in the current period of global crisis.

As one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, Benjamin Franklin's widely remarked skill in the elaboration of magic squares raises questions as to the extent to which the manner of their organization featured in the formulation of the American Constitution, in which he was so directly involved. The question is pertinent given their relevance to the Freemasonry of the time, in which he played a prominent role.

In the case of the Omar Khayyam, the question is whether his remarkable poetic skill in the articulation of existential preoccupations in quatrains was associated with his equally remarkable mathematical skill in the development of algebra. The latter are fundamental to an understanding of magic squares -- a particular focus of attention of mathematicians in Arabian cultures of his time.

The annex has the following sections:

- [Magic square integrity and implications for the US Constitution](#)
- [Magical salvation implied by the sense of coherence?](#)
- ["Magic" as aesthetic connectivity](#)
- [Chinese articulation of magic square insight](#)
- [Recognizing the existence of an aesthetic "missing link"](#)
- [Existential implication in magic squares](#)
- [Magical organization of patterns of words?](#)
- [Psychosocial dimension missing from discussion of magic squares](#)
- [Appreciating lying as dyeing](#)
- [Knight's move thinking in relation to magic squares](#)

"Magic" and "auspiciousness" framed by ambiguity of the swastika

As discussed in the [annex](#), the argument can be taken further through understanding of the [movement of a Knight over a chess board](#) (and its equivalent, *Keima*, in the game of *go*)

In contrast with other pieces in chess, the movement is non-linear, notably leaping over other pieces. It includes a bend, with the final move being at right angles to the previous three. The possible moves of a Knight across a magic square can be repositioned, as shown below, to form the traditional symbol of the [swastika](#) or gammadion cross. This is considered to be a sacred and auspicious symbol in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.

How is the popular appeal of "magic" to be understood as related to that of "auspiciousness" -- especially when both are deprecated as "superstition" in the strategic articulations of of institutional authorities and mainstream academic disciplines? One focus for their association is through the worldviews and practices of *feng shui* -- frequently valued in more authoritative contexts in the East and by

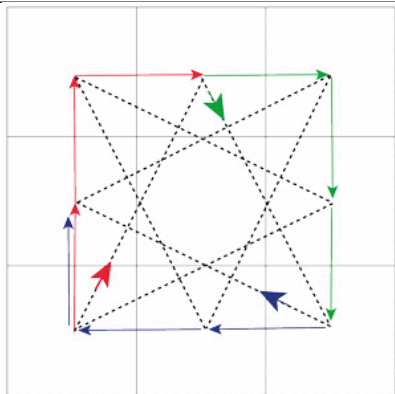
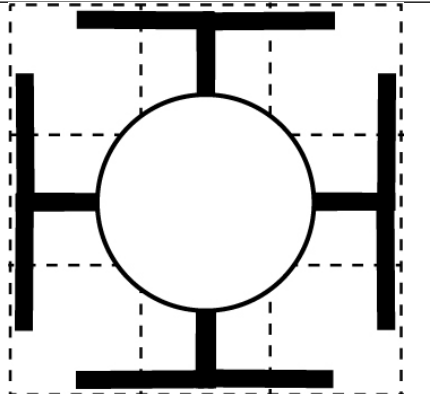
variously marginalized disciplines (landscape ecologists, environmental scientists, and landscape architects)? How is such [superstition](#) to be understood and condemned as a form of lying?

Clearly the swastika has been highly stigmatized as a consequence of its association with the Nazi regime in the form of the [Hakenkreuz](#) (namely when rotated 45 degrees), with various initiatives to prohibit its use (and others to [reclaim its original value](#)). As noted in the extensive [Wikipedia](#) entry, variants had however been widely used in European cultures prior to that period. Suggestions as to how the contrasting significance of the left-facing variant ([Sauwastika](#)) is to be distinguished from the right-facing variant are not as conclusive as some have asserted.

Transcending paradoxical ambiguity: However, with respect to this argument, **such ambiguity is highly relevant to any consideration of American lies and how these might be transcended in a salvatory mode**. More generally it could be argued that **failure to come to grips with such ambiguity on a global level is indicative of a fundamental cognitive trap in which global discourse is currently caught**. This can be described in terms of the constrained ability to handle "positive" and "negative" with the kinds of skill demonstrated by Nikola Tesla in developing the electromagnetic technology to empower civilization ([Reimagining Tesla's Creativity through Technomimicry: psychosocial empowerment by imagining charged conditions otherwise](#), 2014).

Blame-gaming, omission and cover-up: Without reference to the 3x3 magic square, the relevance of the controversial pattern has been discussed previously in terms of the Knight's move ([Swastika as Dynamic Pattern Underlying Psychosocial Power Processes](#), 2012). This focused (with many animations) on the implicate order of Knight's move game-playing in sustaining creativity, exploitation and impunity. It included sections on [Insights from Knight's move thinking](#) and [Alternative representations: Knight's move, Swastika and BaGua?](#)

Of specific relevance to this argument is the question of whether the pattern of Knight's moves offers insights into forms of game-playing typical of blame-gaming in strategic discourse, cover-up and assessment of consequences. The following animations from that discussion help to frame the manner in which some form of "lying" (especially through omission) is central to any such dynamic -- whether or not it is framed as legitimate deception in a competitive environment. Together they offer a dynamic framing of the locus of any so-called "Big Lie", namely what is effectively unsaid, as may be variously understood ([Global Strategic Implications of the "Unsaid"](#), 2003) .

Animations framed by 3x3 matrix of Knight's moves (reproduced from Swastika as Dynamic Pattern Underlying Psychosocial Power Processes , 2012)	
Pattern of 8 of the Knight's moves (potentially suggestive of dynamics within the blame game and amongst the Knights of any Round Table)	Cycle of emergence of "avoidance container" from merged Swastikas (left- and right-facing)
	

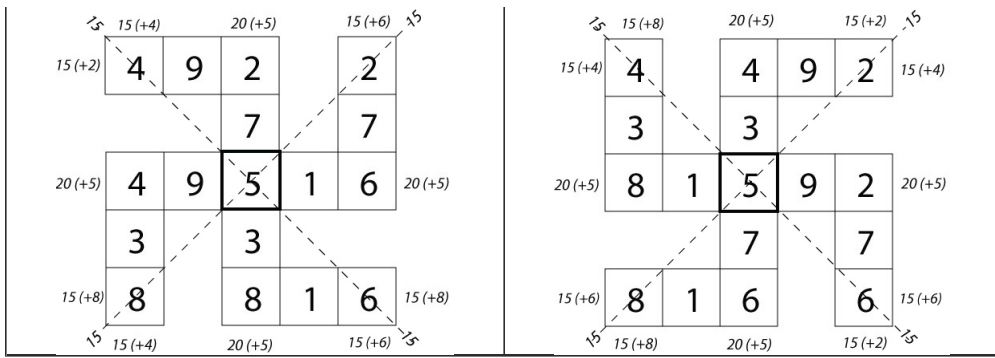
One journal of freemasonry suggests a direct relation between the magic square and the square and compasses as follows (William Steve Burkle, [Speculation on the Symbol of the Square and Compasses: the freemason's magic square](#), *Pietre-Stones: review of freemasonry*, 28 January 2008)

Magic square and compasses of Freemasonry

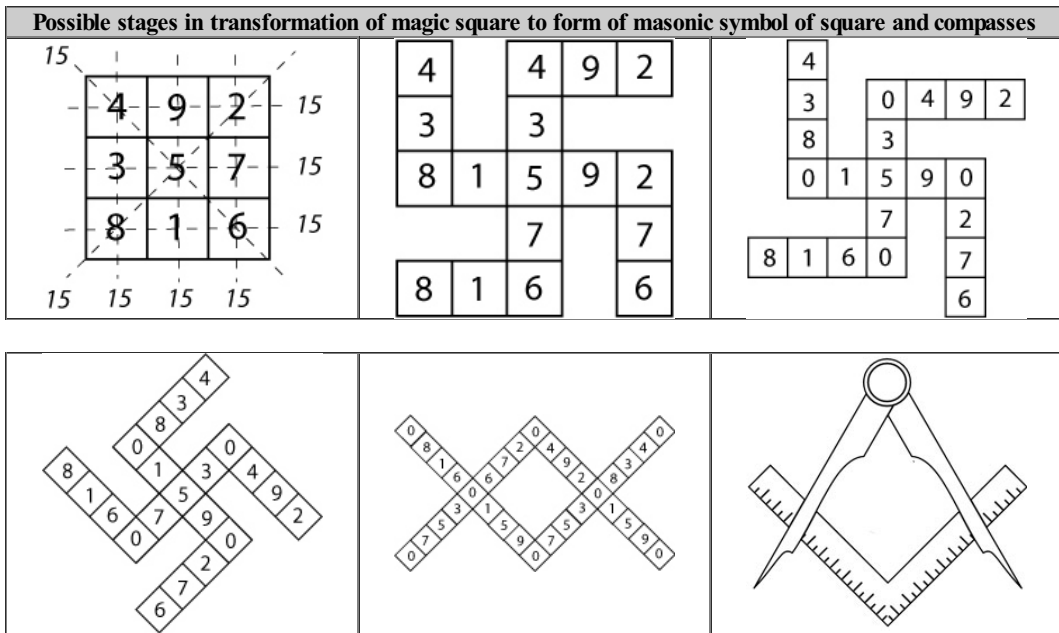
4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

However, in the spirit of speculative exploration, the animations suggest the repositioning of the Knight's move in terms of the magic square as shown below.

Knight's moves on magic square (above) repositioned into "swastika" forms (totals for columns, rows and diagonals indicated in italics)	
Left-facing "swastika"	Right-facing "swastika"

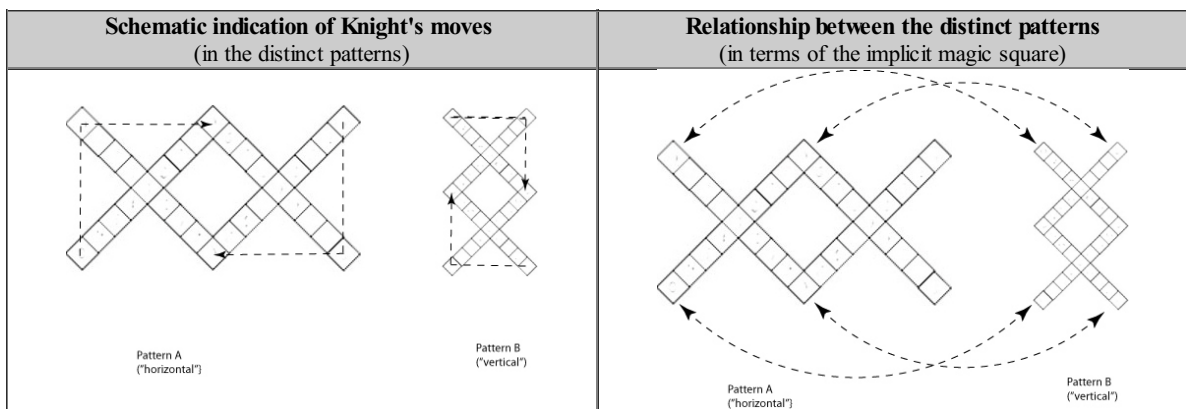


Various characteristics of the above patterns are of interest in terms of the degree of integration they represent so succinctly (in addition to those indicated in italics). The 3 cells of the 4 *external* branches (totalling 12 cells) sum individually to 15 (as indicated), but it is also the case that the 2 *internal* branches of 3 cells crossing through the centre each sum to 15. This then recalls the form of the bent diagonals of Benjamin Franklin in that each *external* branch of 3 cells is at right angles to a set of 3 *internal* cells passing through the centre. Each of the resulting 4 bent diagonals then totals to 30.



Integrative relevance of magical globality in 3D and 4D

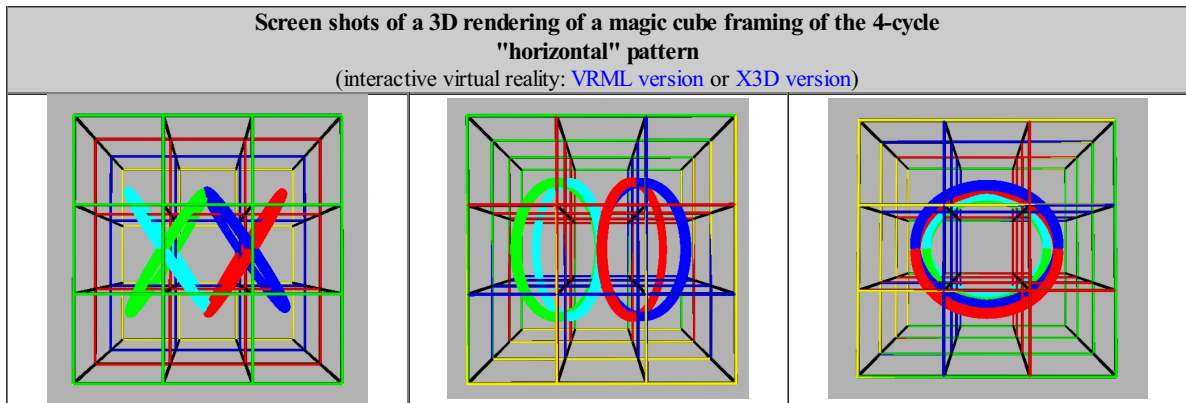
Interrelating patterns at "right-angles" to each other in 3D: The argument can be taken further by using the central ("horizontal") image above and relating it to the complementary ("vertical") representation on Franklin's magic square in the following schematics (not to scale) -- as discussed in the annex.



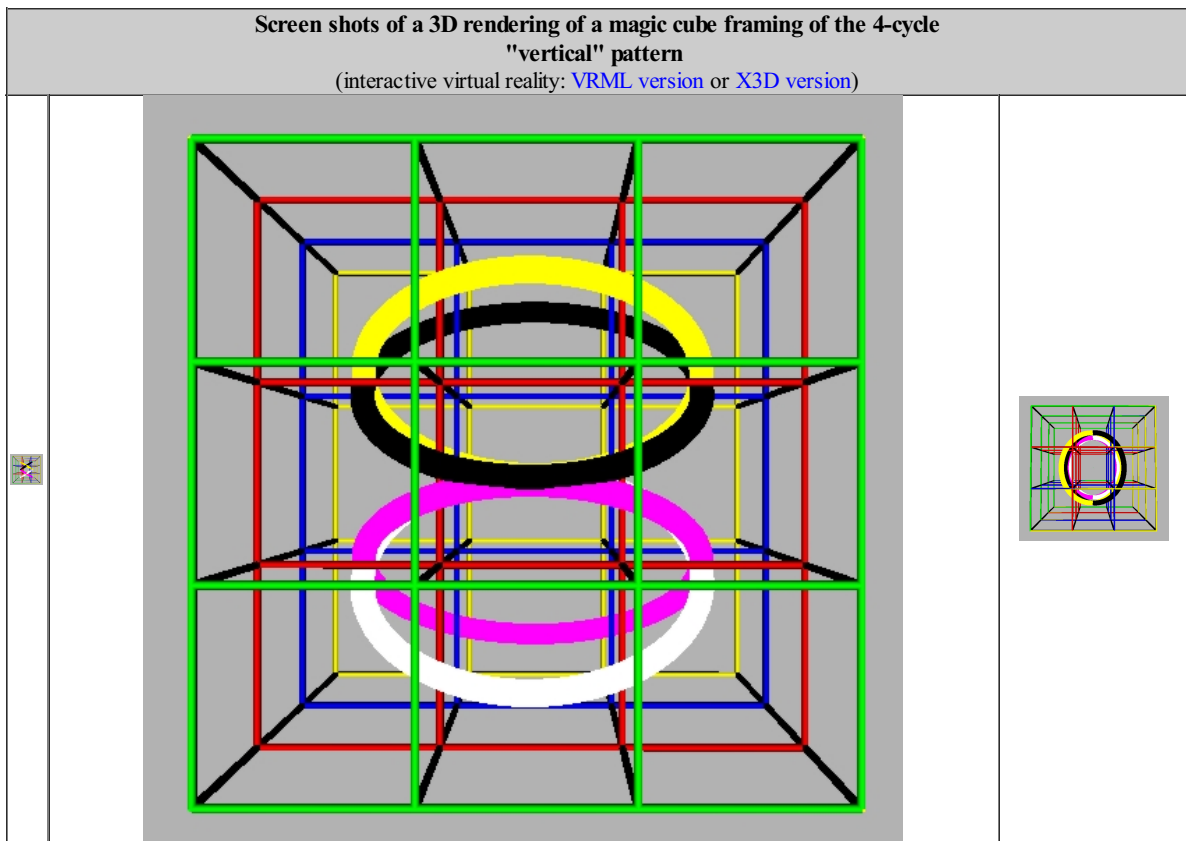
In the left-hand schematic, elements of Pattern A are only "connected" via the lateral thinking of a Knight's move -- a disconnection emphasized by the distinctiveness of the "squares and compasses" symbol and circumvented by their combination in the practice of the art (as in the creative cunning of "business as usual"). The situation is similar in the complementary Pattern B. The right-hand schematic indicates the implied connectivity of the two patterns. In this case, however, this connectivity is not indicated by a common symbol.

Arguably the 4 links indicated on the right could be understood as "missing" systemic links -- perhaps to be understood as meta-systemic links. This systemic disconnection most notably plays out in the problematic relations between male and female -- with Pattern A readily associated with the former (as in the exclusivity of freemasonry, and other male-dominated cultures).

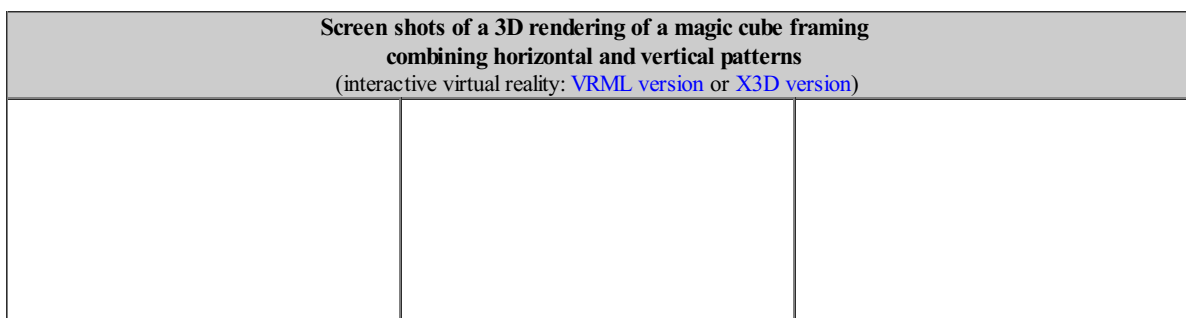
Magic cube? Of potentially greater interest is a shift from the 2-dimensional representation above to a 3-dimensional representation -- effectively from an argument framed by a magic square to one framed by a **magic cube**. Each linear link noted between square-cells in the square is then to be understood as a projection into 2D of a (hidden) circle linking the cube-cells within the magic cube -- a circle which is effectively invisible from the conventional 2D perspective. This is best clarified using 3D imagery in interactive virtual reality -- or screen shot images of such renderings, as below.

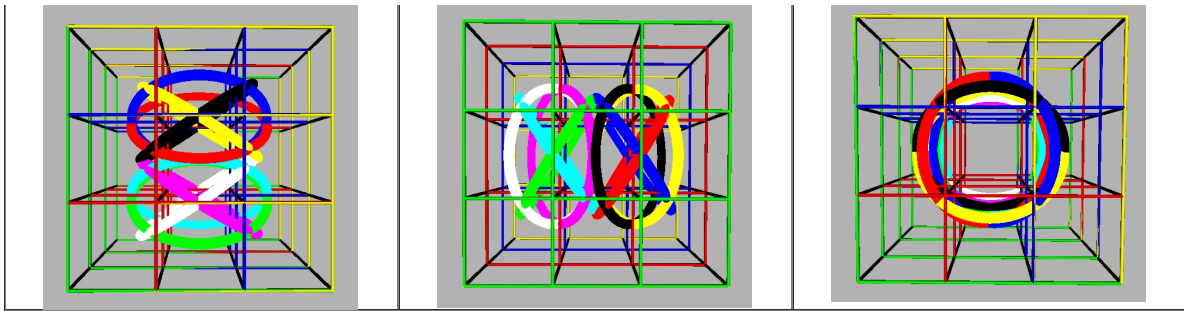


The image on the left above corresponds to the conventional 2D projection, notably of the masonic configuration of "squares and compasses". That on the left below corresponds to the complementary pattern typically ignored in male-dominated cultures.



The horizontal and vertical patterns are each associated with 4 circles, making a total of 8 -- recalling the emphasis above on some form of "8-fold way". Combined within the common framework they take the following form.





Suggestive implications of the 8-fold pattern in 3D and 4D: Of particular interest is the manner in which the 8 circular pathways together constitute an integrative articulation of the 8-fold way. It is the manner in which they variously interlink, permitting transitions from one pathway to another, which merits consideration. Clearly (as noted above) this enables systemic dynamics precluded by the horizontal or vertical patterns individually. Their combination is necessary in systemic terms -- and the failure consciously to ensure it could be considered highly prejudicial to effective "global" governance, whether for the collective or for the individual.

The 8-fold pattern elicited in the experimental exercise above raises the question as to whether the exercise should be extended beyond the two mutually orthogonal patterns to three -- and indeed whether the orthogonality of the eight is well represented as depicted. In terms of any extension to 3D, a case could be made for 3 mutually orthogonal patterns corresponding to the 3 conventional axes.

Comprehension of process reality via hypercube? The processes around the circular pathways in 3D imply an understanding of a time dimension -- possibly to be understood in terms of a [magic hypercube](#), for which so-called [KnightJump](#) construction methods have been generalized (Marian Trenkler, *Magic Cubes and Hypercubes: References*, 2006). Is there already an implicit cognitive migration to hyperreality, as separately explored (*Imagining Order as Hypercomputing: operating an information engine through meta-analogy*, 2014)?

In terms of cognitive skills and strategic nimbleness, the conventional Knight's tour across the 2D chess board can be contrasted with analogous tours in higher dimensions implying higher degrees of self-reflexivity, perhaps as follows:

- 2D: conventional strategic "cunning" and use of bluff (astuteness in business, deceptive poker playing, etc) ?
- 3D: skills appreciated in terms of "well-rounded" experience and expertise (perhaps as in a "jack of all trades") ?
- 4D: subtlety appreciated as in a "man for all seasons" (with its temporal emphasis) ?

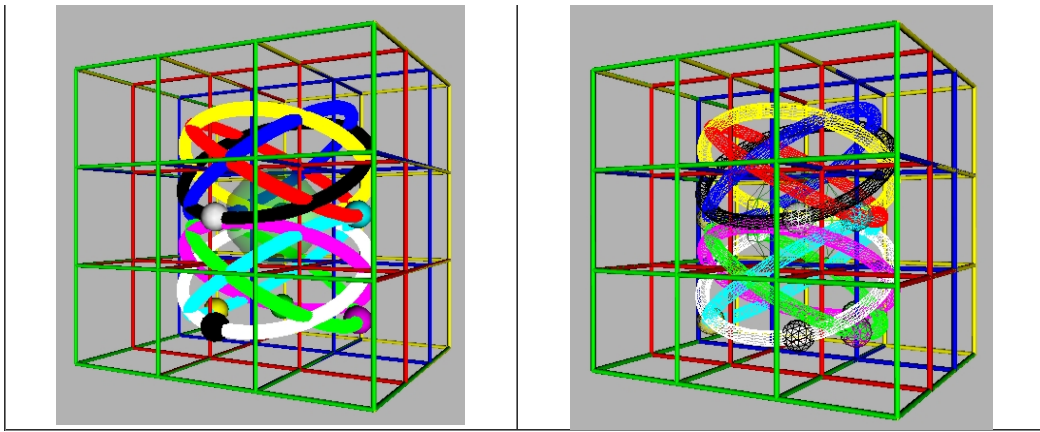
It is in this sense that the argument above with respect to the mathematical skills of Omar Khayyam regarding his [original solution of cubic functions](#) merits consideration. As argued, the question is whether his use of poetic "quatrains" implies an understanding of the four-dimensionality of the insights of the set of complementary pathways. Poetic sensibility can readily be considered consistent with wave functions by which experiential n-fold patterns might be characterized -- especially those embodying time (*Being Neither a-Waving Nor a-Parting: cognitive implications of wave-particle duality in the light of science and spirituality*, 2013; *Being a Poem in the Making: engendering a multiverse through musing*, 2012).

Despite the seemingly abstruse nature of hypercubes, they are now valued by the military as a means of simulating the operation of weapons systems (Joshua Ang Keng-Em, *Extending Orthogonal and Nearly Orthogonal Latin Hypercube Designs for Computer Simulation and Experimentation*, 2012).

Comprehension of "globality"? The conventional masonic symbol (equivalent to the horizontal pattern above) is typically supplemented by a "G" at its centre -- variously interpreted as symbolizing "God". In geometric terms, that pattern could include a centered circle, tangential to the four branches of the symbol. In 3D that central circle could take the form of a centered sphere to which the 8 circular pathways would all be tangential. That sphere could be usefully indicative of "globality" -- understood to encompass both the extensive and intensive, and qualitative and quantitative dimensions, as can be discussed (*Future Generation through Global Conversation: in quest of collective well-being through conversation in the present moment*, 1997).

A degree of process comprehension can be speculatively offered by enhancing the 3D framing above with the movement around its circles of small spheres (as indicated in the screen shot below). Those movements could be variously phased and interrelated -- possibly with any sphere transiting between circles at their points of tangential intersection, thereby travelling a continuous pathway.

Screen shots of a 3D rendering of magic cube framing of 8-fold pathways for circulating spheres (central sphere added) (interactive virtual reality: VRML version or X3D version)	
Solid rendering	Wireframe rendering



Of some interest is the degree of formal resemblance of the above animation to representations of the [nucleic acid double helix of DNA](#) -- with that above then suggestive of the simplest template for such a pattern. This could be consistent with further speculation ([Memetic Analogue to the 20 Amino Acids as vital to Psychosocial Life?](#) 2015).

Lyre-enabled comprehension? With respect to the above-mentioned irony of "liar" and "lyre" as homophones, and the use of the instrument to enable discourse (whether factual or otherwise), there is further irony to the [number of strings](#) used in such instruments in different cultures -- with respect to the globality of discourse ([Representation of Interlocking Elements for a Sustainable Global System: configuring strategic dilemmas in intersectoral dialogue](#), 1992).

In a section on the [Comprehension of magic through music](#), the annex indicates experiments in the [sonification](#) of magic squares. The question is how such ordering might enable comprehension of otherwise elusive insights and patterns of relationship. How might patterns of bent diagonals be comprehended by this means, notably in the light of the work of [Dmitri Tymoczko](#) ([The Geometry of Musical Chords](#), *Science*, 7 July 2006)?

Especially intriguing is how a "telling" argument might be recognized. By contrast, how might a "lie" become apparent -- as suggested by "ringing true" and the controversy in sacred music surrounding the [diabolus in musica](#)? The notion of "lying skills" is playfully explored with respect to the [lyre](#) in its description in the [Uncyclopedia](#).

Given the "lyrical" enthusiasm with which the initiatives of government are now presented, could the appreciation of any such "new story" be more fruitfully enabled by musical accompaniment? This would contrast with the problematic conventional media focus on it as a "news story", as communicated by press officers and in press releases. Further possibilities could even be envisaged ([A Singable Earth Charter, EU Constitution or Global Ethic?](#) 2006). Does this suggest a means for rendering palatable to the public the emerging global frameworks such as the [Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement](#) and the [Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership](#)?

Implicitly preferred patterns of global governance

Number-constrained sets: The patterns presented offer a way of thinking about the emergence of sets of particular sizes in global discourse. The proclivity for 12-foldness is evident from the pattern ([Checklist of 12-fold Principles, Plans, Symbols and Concepts: web resources](#), 2011). The latter was produced in support of a related discussion ([Eliciting a 12-fold Pattern of Generic Operational Insights: recognition of memory constraints on collective strategic comprehension](#), 2011).

Clearly the 8-foldness of the set of 8 [UN Millenium Development Goals](#) can be distinctively associated with the 8 sets of 3 cells constituting the right-angled branches of the bent diagonals, as can the [Group of Eight](#) (G8) of leading industrial countries.

The 15-foldness of the [Millenium Project's 15 Global Challenges for Humanity](#) is especially evident. More intriguing is how the new set of 17 [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) ("for Transforming our world") might only be recognized as the singular pattern of 15 (+2) set of cells. More evident are the 20-fold patterns passing through the centre (as indicated), recalling the role of the [G20 Group of Major Economies](#) and the [G20 Group of Developing Nations](#). The 30-fold totals of the bent diagonals also recalls the role of the [Group of Thirty](#) international financiers and academics (G30).

As noted above, it would appear that there is a collective global cognitive struggle -- only partly conscious -- to order the processes and strategies of global governance coherently -- with particular patterns emerging occasionally as significantly coherent (if only in the light of a subliminal, intuitive understanding). The 20-fold (and its relation to the 30-fold) is discussed separately ([Memetic Analogue to the 20 Amino Acids as vital to Psychosocial Life?](#) 2015).

Comprehension of 15-fold patterns in 3D: With respect to the 15-fold in relation to the magic square, of particular interest is the articulation by [Christopher Alexander](#) of a set of transformation properties ([Harmony-Seeking Computations: a science of non-classical dynamics based on the progressive evolution of the larger whole](#). *International Journal for Unconventional Computing (IJUC)*, 5, 2009) as discussed separately ([Comprehending Alexander's transformation principles within the psychosocial realm](#), 2010).

Central to Alexander's current synthesis, on the basis of past decades of research on patterns, is the recognition of 15 transformations or properties:

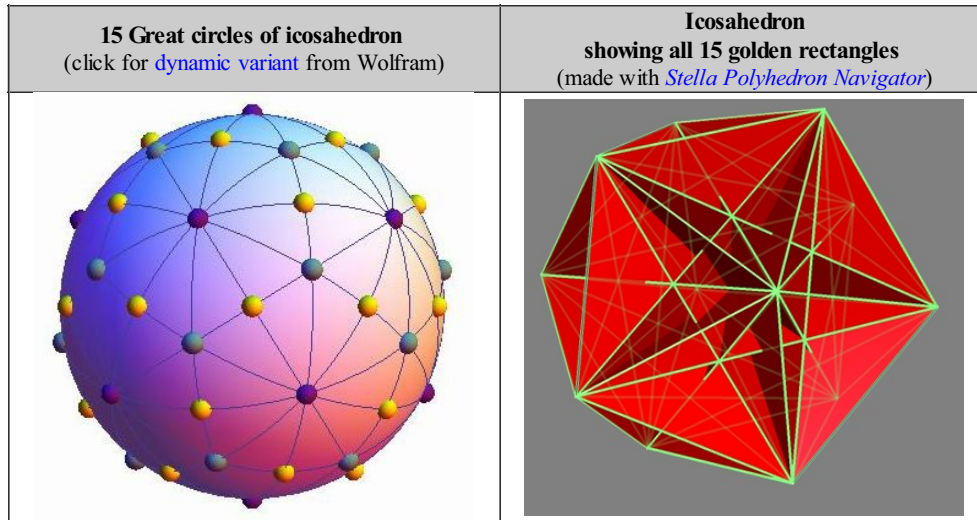
Levels of Scale	Good Shape	Roughness
Strong Centers	Local Symmetries	Echoes

Thick Boundaries	Deep Interlock	The Void
Alternating Repetition	Contrast	Simplicity
Positive Space	Gradient	Not-Separateness

Given the potential implications of his work, the key question is how to interpret these for the psychosocial realm. Clearly the language developed by him, especially for the built and 'natural' environments, is challenging in relation to its psychosocial significance. The possibility of their adaptation is discussed separately (*Tentative adaptation of Alexander's 15 transformations to the psychosocial realm*, 2010; *Relevance to global governance in the psychosocial realm*, 2010).

With respect to the cognitive struggle to articulate an integrative global configuration, of particular interest is the [geometrical configuration of Alexander's 15 transformations](#), most notably with respect to the icosahedron stellation and its stellation.

The is notable for its 15 great circles and its relation to 15 golden rectangles.



Furthermore the icosahedron has 18 [fully supported stellations](#), of which 16 are reflexible and 2 of them chiral -- including the original icosahedron in those counts, thereby encompassing the 17-fold pattern.

The 15-fold transformation criteria have been used by [Nikos A. Salingaros](#) in the evaluation of iconic buildings (*Life and Complexity in Architecture From a Thermodynamic Analogy*, Physics Essays, vol. 10, 1997, pp. 165-173) -- as discussed separately (*Application of 15 transformational criteria to a rendering of the Mandelbrot set*, 2010).

Given how Alexander had elicited such principles of 'life' partially from carpet design, Salingaros also tested them on carpets (*The Life of a Carpet: an application of the Alexander Rules*, paper presented at the 8th International Conference on Oriental Carpets. *Oriental Carpet and Textile Studies V*, 1999). Given the recognized relevance of fractal organization in *The Nature of Order* (cf Nikos A. Salingaros, *Fractals in the New Architecture*, Katarxis, 3, September 2004), it is appropriate to explore how the 15 transformations might be recognized in a rendering of the [Mandelbrot set](#) -- as an exercise in 'geometric adaptation'. Its recognized beauty suggests that a magnificent carpet could use such a design -- the larger the carpet, the more explicit the fractal design.

The interplay of such patterns is further discussed separately (*Sustainability through Magically Dancing Patterns: 8x8, 9x9, 19x19 -- I Ching, Tao Te Ching / T'ai Hsüan Ching, Wéiq? (Go)*, 2008). It is appropriate to note the significant proportions of the world population with [contrasting directionality](#) preferences for script written left-to-right ("Western"), right-to-left ("Islamic/Hebrew"), top-to-bottom ("Chinese/Japanese").

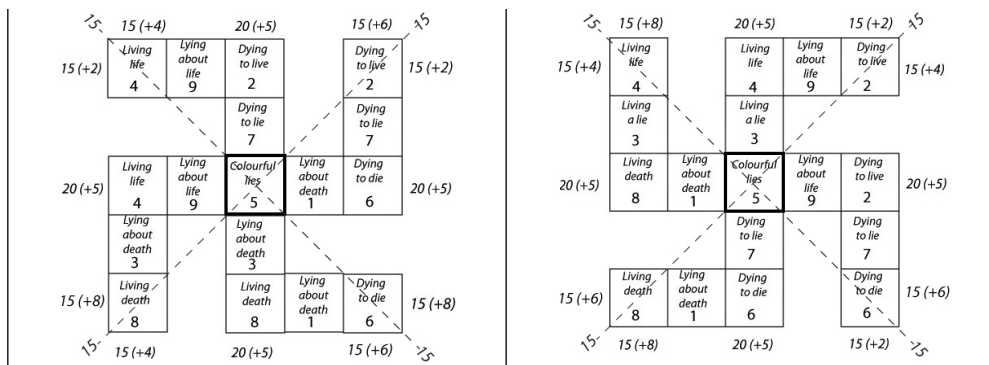
Originating central locus of any "Big Lie", colourful tales, or fluid creativity

Whether in terms of the pattern of Knight's moves within the constraints of a 3x3 magic square, or reframed in terms of the swastika, the central locus emerges as of particular significance as a nexus of cognitive transition. It is essentially a locus of fluidity enabling the dynamics of which it is the central reference point. Cognitively it would appear to be associated in process terms with reframing, metaphor and story-making to "enable the wheel to turn", as variously argued by Douglas Hofstadter (*Fluid Concepts and Creative Analogies: computer models of the fundamental mechanisms of thought*, 1995; *Surfaces and Essences: analogy as the fuel and fire of thinking*, 2013).

However, understood otherwise, it is also the locus of what is left unsaid and any "Big Lie" of which fabricated threats are the most evident, as with the skills of any witchdoctor (*Promoting a Singular Global Threat -- Terrorism Strategy of choice for world governance*, 2002).

This suggests the following provocative articulation of the earlier matrix

Adapting the pattern of living, lying/dyeing and dying to the swastika pattern (tentative)	
Left-facing "swastika"	Right-facing "swastika"



With the bent diagonals each totalling to 30 (as noted above), the much quoted phrase of Lao Tzu from the *Tao Te Ching* is relevant:

*Thirty spokes share the wheel's hub.
It is the centre hole that makes it useful...
Therefore profit comes from what is there;
usefulness from what is not there.*

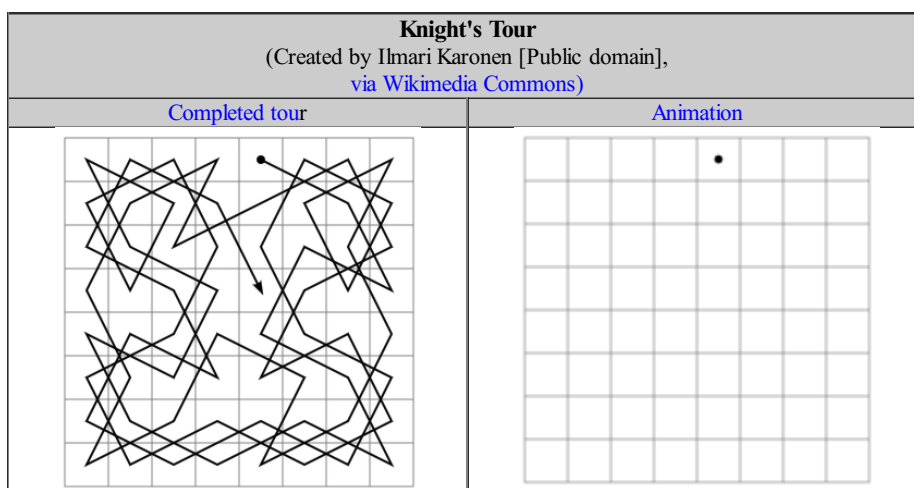
Curiously, as a central locus, it is the cognitive condition in which identity can be imagined otherwise, be reinvented, change its image, or enable a "makeover".

As such this is closely related to the manner in which democracy enables governments to "reinvent" themselves at anytime, denying responsibility for newly deprecated initiatives of the past. Consistently, it is the centre of "spin" enabling "refreshment", and possibly even "recreation" (*Secret sharing, Shapeshifting and Embodiment Reintegration of a Remaindered World*, 2011; *En-minding the Extended Body: enactive engagement in conceptual shapeshifting and deep ecology*, 2003; *Engaging with Globality through Playful Re-categorizing*, 2009; *Enacting Transformative Integral Thinking through Playful Elegance*, 2010).

With respect to the salvatory preoccupation of this argument, there is appropriate irony to the role of the Pentagon and its obvious association with the central nexus -- if not the Central Intelligence Agency. This highlights the inappropriateness of deprecation of its "lying" as "two-faced" when the central cell of the 3x3 magic square is 5. Rather the need is to explore it as "five-faced". This might be fruitfully explored further in terms of the Chinese 5-fold processes of the *Wu Xing*, as discussed separately in relation to the Pythagorean understanding of *Hygieia* (*Cycles of enstoning forming mnemonic pentagrams: Hygieia and Wu Xing*, 2012).

Transformation pathways and "snakes and ladders"

Knight's tour: The mathematical study of chess games has long paid particular attention to the movement of the Knight within larger frame works than the 3x3 pattern above. The movement across the 8x8 chess board into every position (once only) is known as the **Knight's Tour** -- as shown below.



For Harvey Heinz (*Knight Tours*, 2009):

In much of the knight tour literature, a tour is called MKT (Magic Knight Tour) if only the rows and columns, but not diagonals, sum correctly. I (and some others) define a MKT as requiring that rows, columns and diagonals must sum correctly. This is the same definitions as used for a Magic Square (MS). This is the definition used when making the above claim that no MKT exists for an 8x8 board.

Interrelating swastikas: There are numerous images interrelating swastikas in a wide variety of tiling patterns -- and occasionally in classical woven carpet designs from the Middle East. Less evident are those which demonstrate the possibility of "interlocking" them as shown in the left-most images below. However it is seemingly impossible to ensure that right and left-facing variants interlock within the same pattern -- therefore reinforcing the sense of their possibly problematic distinctiveness.

Of potentially greater interest is therefore the "chaining" together of right and left-facing variants as shown below, especially in that **the patterns effectively form a cycle characterized by degrees of symmetry** -- a cycle contrasting with those that individually interlock.

Interlocking swastika tiling patterns		Integrative swastika chaining patterns	
Right-facing only	Left-facing only	Right and left-facing	Right and left-facing

By combining the apparently antithetical left-facing and right-facing forms of the swastika, of particular relevance is the manner in which **the cyclic form frames a central space -- without occupying it**. This could be considered an expansion of the ambiguous central role of the cross-over cell of a single swastika. The patterns notably recall the sacred iconography of some Eastern religions, even the architectural layout of their temples.

Also of interest in the circular chaining of the swastikas above is the manner in which pathways are created requiring **each** of the four branches of **both** left and right-facing variants. Understood as distinctive, together these recall various articulations of fundamental 8-fold patterns, whether the [Noble Eightfold Path of Buddhism](#), the [Eightfold Path of policy analysis](#), or the [Eightfold Way of particle physics](#).

Snakes and ladders: In transcending the superficial distinction between the "negative" and "positive" connotations, variously associated with the chirality of the swastika, the argument can be expressed otherwise through the traditional board game of "[snakes](#)" and "[ladders](#)".

Combining the two forms of swastika into a cycle recalls the requirements for resilience of an adaptive cycle. With respect to any 8-fold way, there is then a need for strategic nimbleness in being able to switch from one bent diagonal to another through the circle of alternative swastikas, as otherwise discussed ([Policy Alternation for Development](#), 1984). Understood as a pathway around the cycle, the viable path could be distinctively coloured -- to contrast with the "dead ends" of branches that did not form part of the cycle **at that stage**.

The extensive [Wikipedia](#) description of this board game, originating in India but now familiar worldwide, ends by noting that the game is a central metaphor of [Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*](#) (1981), which refers to it in the following terms:

All games have morals; and the game of Snakes and Ladders captures, as no other activity can hope to do, the eternal truth that for every ladder you hope to climb, a snake is waiting just around the corner, and for every snake a ladder will compensate. But it's more than that; no mere carrot-and-stick affair; because implicit in the game is unchanging twoness of things, the duality of up against down, good against evil; the solid rationality of ladders balances the occult sinuosities of the serpent; in the opposition of staircase and cobra we can see, metaphorically, all conceivable oppositions, Alpha against Omega, father against mother.

Saving an American -- a sole footprint in the sands of global dominance?

Lying as "natural": This argument has focused on the strange quest of "Saving American Lies". However, by setting the process of lying in context, it becomes apparent that the use of various forms of deception is essential to survival but is also a feature fundamental to identity through the distinctive coloration they provide -- even amongst plants and animals. Lying could therefore be said to be "natural" -- a systemic process, rather than "extrasystemic" in some extraordinary manner. The preoccupation with lying as a distortion of the truth is therefore oversimplistic and misplaced.

With respect to current American "lies", with which global society is held to be awash, the point was usefully made in Benjamin Franklin's [Final Speech to the Constitutional Convention](#) (from the notes of James Madison, 28 June 1787):

Mr. President: I confess that I do not entirely approve of this Constitution at present, but Sir, I am not sure I shall never approve it: For having lived long, I have experienced many Instances of being oblig'd, by better Information or fuller Consideration, to change Opinions even on important Subjects, which I once thought right, but found to be otherwise. It is therefore that the older I grow the more apt I am to doubt my own Judgment, and to pay more Respect to the Judgment of others. Most Men indeed as well as most Sects in Religion, think themselves in Possession of all Truth, and that wherever others differ from them it is so far Error.... But tho' many private Persons think almost as highly of their own Infallibility, as of that of their Sect, few express it so naturally as a certain French Lady, who in a little Dispute with her Sister, said, *I don't know how it happens, Sister, but I meet with no body but myself that's always in the right. Il n'y a que moi qui a toujours raison.*

With respect to "saving American lies", and as a Founding Father, might those be the words of a "saviour" from beyond the grave?

Clearly American politics is especially characterized by those who variously believe themselves to be absolutely right -- and their competitors to be absolutely in error (if not "lying through their teeth"). The mindset extends to those who are a challenge to American foreign policy -- a mindset duly reciprocated by those constituting that challenge. There is little capacity or motivation to analyze this

pattern.

Permanent lie: There is a need to recognize the distinction between lying as a strategic move in life's struggle and a permanent lie -- perhaps a "Big Lie".

The systemically dysfunctional feature of lying lies in the belief in one's own bluff in the course of the deception -- namely remaining attached to it, ensuring its promulgation, and endeavouring to ensure that others also believe in it. At a personal level, this is evident in the adoption of particular clothing and make-up -- with the lack of any ability to switch adaptively to others as circumstances suggest, or to abandon them when appropriate. Identity transcends any particular disguise and is especially associated with the ability to adopt different guises -- a process which could be caricatured as strategic nimbleness and shapeshifting (*Secret sharing, Shapeshifting and Embodiment: reintegration of a remaindered world*, 2011; *En-minding the Extended Body: enactive engagement in conceptual shapeshifting and deep ecology*, 2003). The process is now exemplified by "transformer toys" in which an individual toy's parts can be shifted about to change it from a vehicle, a device, or an animal, to a robot action figure and back again.

The use of wordplay and strategic homophones in the argument is therefore curiously appropriate when the USA has made the extraordinary choice to base its key coordination centre for strategic intelligence in the town of [Bluffdale](#) in Utah (James Bamford, *The NSA Is Building the Country's Biggest Spy Center*, *Wired Magazine*, 15 March 2012). Known as the [Intelligence Community Comprehensive National Cybersecurity Initiative Data Center](#), it is home to the world's largest complex of supercomputers -- effectively the coordinating locus for the US National Security Agency. In the terms of this argument, and given the investment, the question is whether it is a permanent "bluff" -- in whose credibility for security purposes all are expected to believe -- rendering impossible the switch to any other guise.

This attachment to permanence recalls the iconic strategic confrontation in the [American War of Independence](#) (1775-1783) between the British grenadiers in unchanging traditional formation and the American forces adopting the guerilla tactics which gave them the competitive advantage. This helps to make the point that it is not so much a question of "saving American lies" but rather saving Americans from unchanging belief in them. It would however appear that the manner of current American engagement with the otherness of Islamic fundamentalism -- and their exploitation of guerilla tactics -- follows the pattern of the British grenadiers. Such constraints on collective adaptive learning can be variously discussed (

Counterdeception: The effort to correct error and ensure appreciation of what is right is evident in many sectors, most notably religion and science. The continuing disagreements within these sectors and between them is an indication of a pattern which has not been understood. Since each considers it is by definition "right", there is no perceived need to do so. The violence following from this systemic negligence is consequently framed as being solely (and unquestionably) a consequence of the error of the other.

As with the strategic investment in deception, a global civilization awash in lies, necessarily evokes the need for strategies of counterdeception. The [Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith](#) (known previously as the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition) undertook this with the aid of the notorious processes of the Inquisition. As noted above, these have recently been echoed by those of the CIA. Mainstream science is otherwise concerned with error, especially through the marginalization and deprecation of contrary views.

Of interest is the articulation of Edward Waltz and Michael Bennett (*Counterdeception Principles and Applications for National Security*, 2007) which recognizes that, more than ever, [denial and deception](#) ("D and D") is being used to compensate for an opponent's military superiority, to obtain or develop weapons of mass destruction, and to violate international agreements and sanctions. The study is the first to offer accessible "technical coverage" of a subject scattered in hard-to-find and out-of-print sources. This offers a comprehensive and systematic overview of the concepts and methods that underlie strategic deception and provides an in-depth understanding of counterdeception.

There is a delightful irony to such use of "D and D" given its far more widespread recognition as the acronym for [Dungeons and Dragons](#) -- a [fantasy tabletop role-playing game](#). Of some relevance to this argument is its unusual use of [polyhedral dice](#), notably taking the form of Platonic solids, but including a remarkable variety of other forms enabling various decision-making processes. Curiously choice is effectively then related to a particular "side", resulting from the manner in which the dice falls, thereby evoking recognition of the multiplicity of "sides" with which political advocacy may be associated.

Ambiguity in use of "lies", notably in relation to "truth": There are numerous references to *Where the Truth Lies* (2008), both film and the book on which it is based. Other novels exploit the ambiguity of the phrase "the truth lies". The ambiguity is also evident in the following, whether intended or inadvertent:

- David Manning: *Where the Truth Lies: a Symposium on Propaganda Today*, *CUNY Newswire*, 6 February 2008
- Carol Kinsey Goman: *Where The Truth Lies Across Cultures*, *Forbes*, 6 August 2013
- *The Truth Lies Somewhere in Between*, *Notes From A Retired Preacher*, 22 January 2012
- *Who Knows Where the Truth Lies?* *Fox News*, 23 June 2005
- Thomas Boswell: *The Truth Lies in the Numbers*, *The Washington Post*, 4 December 2004
- Julia Hobsbawm (Ed.): *Where the Truth Lies: trust and morality in PR and journalism*, Atlantic Books, 2006

Especially challenging are the interpretations of the variously quoted assertion that *the truth lies within*, originally argued by Socrates. For example:

Robert Browning: Truth lies within ourselves: it takes no rise from outward things, whatever you may believe. There is an inmost center in us all, where truth abides in fullness and to Know rather consists in opening out a way whence the imprisoned splendor may escape than in effecting entry for light supposed to be without.

More problematic with respect to "lying" is the usage indicated by the following:

- Harrison Barnes: *The Solution to Problems Lies Within Each Problem*, 23 April 2015
- Stuart Rayner: *The Solution Lies in Being Less Negative*, *Questia*
- Daniel Lee Reinholz: *Becoming a Mathematical Authority: the solution lies in the solution*, *Mathematical Processes*
- Manish Singh: *How do we engage the engaged: the solution lies in the problem, engage them to engage others*, *Pulse*, 8 September 2015
- Joe Quinn: *Ten years on, Iraq Lies in Ruins as New Evidence confirms U.S. used Death Squads to Manufacture 'Civil War'* *Global Research*, 11 November 2015

Similar issues are potentially associated with common use of "the problem lies...", or "the strategy lies..."

Bee Kilpatrick <i>The Truth Lies</i>	
<i>The truth lies Somewhere between halve truths And white lies The truth lies Between excuses And alibis</i>	<i>The truth lies Somewhere between you and I The truth just lies</i>
See also the poem by Michael P. McParland The Truth Lies	

Appreciating the "lie of the land": There is little ambiguity to the use of the phrase in cases such as the following (especially when this is contrasted with American usage of "lay of the land"):

- Don Mitchell (*The Lie of the Land: migrant workers and the California landscape*, University of Minnesota Press, 1996)
- Fintan O'Toole (*The Lie of the Land: Irish identities*, Verso, 1998)

Curiously assessment of the "lie of the land", and the opportunities it represents, is fundamental to any new undertaking, whether military, political, corporate or otherwise. It is a question of perspective -- a challenge for any homeland security in engaging with otherness. Any future encounter with hypothetical extraterrestrials merits anticipation in such terms. In its exemplification of opportunism, a notorious example is offered by disclosure of the memo of [Jo Moore](#), press officer to the UK government, on the occasion of 9/11 (*Sept 11: 'a good day to bury bad news'*, *The Telegraph*, 10 October 2001).

Any process of "saving" is then intimately associated with the cognitive psychology of identification and detachment. The difficulty is that **describing it is one thing, but comprehending and enabling the process is quite another.**

Detailed instructions on how to play chess, ride a bicycle or pilot a helicopter are existentially unrelated to the skill in doing so -- only to be acquired through experience, possibly enhanced by the mysteries of intuition. In the process of learning mathematics, the point is illustrated using a stanza of Omar Khayyam, by John Mason and Mary Spence (*Beyond Mere Knowledge of Mathematics: the importance of knowing-to act in the moment*, 2013):

*Myself when young did eagerly frequent,
Doctor and Saint and heard great argument,
About it and about: but ever more,
Came out by the same door as in I went*

It is in this sense that the depictions of magic squares (in the [annex](#)), especially those of Benjamin Franklin (with their masonic associations), offer another insight. Curiously the distinctive lines of his "bent diagonals" recall the distinctive positions of fencing, quarterstaff and kendo -- variously enabling parry and thrust. It is however not sufficient to be able to adopt those static positions, it is the skill in shifting dynamically between them in response to circumstances which ensures survival.

Varieties of skill: Understanding and acquiring this skill are not as evident as may be assumed -- as with recognition of what may be involved or implied. Hence the various levels of skill which may be formally recognized -- although often exploited dubiously to reinforce elitism and exceptionalism, as argued with respect to [masonic degrees](#) by [Tom McKenney](#) (*33 Degrees Of Deception: an expose of Freemasonry*, 2011). Necessarily a "lie" from other perspectives -- as with the framing of Kenny's above-mentioned argument as "nonsense"?

What forms of action do higher degrees of insight -- including the questionable -- enable in a world much challenged by a variety of issues? Given the current chaotic state of governance, this calls for exploration in its own right (*Engaging with Insight of a Higher Order: reconciling complexity and simplicity through memorable metaphor*, 2014)? Again, is the misleading advocated by [Sun Tzu](#) now to be understood as a key to global governance: *Mystify, mislead, and surprise the enemy* (*The Art of War*) -- as could be variously argued (*Emergence of a Global Misleadership Council: misleading as vital to governance of the future?* 2007)?

Of potential relevance is one understanding of the essence of "magic", as practiced by any magician, namely the process of [misdirection](#) characteristic of [sleight of hand](#). It is a form of deception in which the attention of an audience is focused on one thing in order to distract its attention from another. Related techniques are common in other domains, whether in interpersonal or international relations. To what extent are such techniques considered appropriate to the protection of secrets and insights of a higher order?

Far more intriguing however are the cognitive skills corresponding to Franklin's unusual ability to elaborate magic squares -- a level of skill which remains a mystery, even to modern mathematicians assisted by computers. It is the nature of this skill which can be inferred in other iconic figures, whether mathematicians ([Alan Turing](#)), technologists ([Nikola Tesla](#)), musicians (Bach, Mozart), polymaths (Omar

Khayyam), or philosophers (Plato). They highlight a key question from the perspective of cognitive psychology, as implied in the title of the work by [George Lakoff](#) and [Rafael E. Nunez](#) (*Where Mathematics Comes From: how the embodied mind brings mathematics into being*, 2000).

Being "right" and "human rights": An understanding of "right" is obviously central to this argument. It is evident in "[right livelihood](#)", "[right to life](#)", and any sense of "dying right" -- namely with dignity or honour. The term is associated with "truth" and therefore stands in contrast to lying, widely considered the epitome of "error" and "wrong". It is also used in relation to being morally "upright" -- or to time (Becky Ferreira, *Every Forest Biome on Earth Is Actively Dying Right Now*, *Earth First*, 20 August 2015). The former stands in strange contrast to the strategy of "lying low".

The term is of course used in the context of articulations of "[human rights](#)" -- as in the US [Bill of Rights](#) and subsequent declarations. It is indicative of that to which the individual has a right -- most notably the "right to life". Curiously these include the [right to freedom of opinion](#) within a collectivity, although it does not include the right to truth from that collectivity. Related controversies apply to "[right to privacy](#)".

Implications of the term become more complex when associated with geometrical metaphors. Although closely associated with "straight", in the case of "[right angle](#)" this has two "straights" positioned orthogonally in relation to one another. Together these form a tool termed a [carpenter's square](#). Naively it could be asked with which "straight" right is then primarily understood to be associated.

The right angle configuration closely resembles Franklin's magical "bent diagonals" discussed and depicted (in the [annex](#)). Given the relation of that configuration to the [square and compasses](#) as the primary masonic symbol, it might be asked how "right" is thereby understood -- given its importance to the integrity of the masonic brotherhood and being "on the square" (Stevan V. Nikolic, *On the Square: decoding freemasonry*, 2013; Craig Gavin, *Euclid on the Square, The Square Magazine: independent magazine for freemasonry*, 30, 2004). There is considerable irony to any potential association between "right" and "bent" in matters of truth .

In its appreciation as a form of [lateral thinking](#), the more fundamental cognitive significance of the Knight's move has been reviewed by W. Jim Neidhardt and [James Loder](#) (*The Knight's Move: the relational logic of the spirit in theology and science*, 1992). They see it as a means of offering a unifying connection in a generic concept of spirit -- graphically represented by the "strange loop" relationality of the [Möbius strip](#). Reference to the latter characterizes the self-reflexivity characteristic of the work of Douglas Hofstadter (*I Am a Strange Loop*, 2007). It is also characteristic of the work of [Steven Rosen](#) (*Science, Paradox, and the Moebius Principle: the evolution of a "transcultural" approach to wholeness*, 1994) -- who extends it in terms of the [Klein bottle](#).

For Neidhardt and Loder:

This relational logic is disclosed in surprisingly analogous ways in the "knight's move" of discovery in both science and theology, whether in the leap of insight or in the leap of faith. At the irreducible core of the knight's move is the self-involvement of the knower, pointing to the proximate relationality of the human spirit, to the contingent relationality of physical reality, and ultimately to the trinitarian relationality of God's Spirit. In the pivotal knight's moves of Niels Bohr's complementarity in the exploration of quantum physics and Soren Kierkegaard's qualitative dialectic in the exploration of human nature and the relational logic of the incarnation, the authors establish a model of spirit that illuminates remarkable interdisciplinary convergences in human development (Piaget), scientific discovery (Einstein), and theological knowledge (T.F. Torrance). This relational model also describes the fundamental pattern governing the transformational dynamics of human experience, from the individual journey of intensification to the corporate life of communal interaction.

Fascism and the American soul: By contrast to such potential subtlety, and in conclusion with respect to "Saving American Souls", it is relevant here to note the concerns expressed by [Naomi Wolf](#) (*Fascist America, in 10 easy steps*, *The Guardian*, 25 April 2007; *The End of America: letter of warning to a young patriot*, Chelsea Green, 2007). In a stunning indictment of the Bush administration and Congress, Wolf lays out a case for saving American democracy, explains how recent events in the USA parallel steps taken in the early years of the 20th century's worst dictatorships such as Germany, Russia, China, and Chile. The steps identified are:

1. Invoke a terrifying internal and external enemy.
2. Create [secret prisons](#) where torture takes place.
3. Develop a thug [caste](#) or [paramilitary force](#) not answerable to citizens.
4. Set up an internal surveillance system.
5. Harass [citizens' groups](#).
6. Engage in [arbitrary detention](#) and release.
7. Target key individuals.
8. [Control the press](#).
9. Cast criticism as espionage and dissent as treason.
10. Subvert the [rule of law](#).

Others have endeavoured to clarify the issue, for example:

- Jeffrey Lord: *The New American Fascism: it's time to name the perpetrators*, *The American Spectator*, 22 April 2014
- William Astore: *'American Fascism': Accurate or Misleading?* *The Huffington Post*, 15 September 2013
- Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr, *American Fascism*, 20 January 2014
- Henry A. Wallace: *The Danger of American Fascism*, 1944
- Danny Haiphong: *Is the U.S. a Fascist Society? Fascism is a Political Economic Structure Which Serves Corporate Interests*, *Global Research*, 14 March 2015
- Richard Winchester: *Fascism In America*, *American Thinker*, 4 June 2013

As might be expected, Klein's argument, including that on her related book (*The Shock Doctrine: the rise of disaster capitalism*, 2007), has evoked a wide variety of commentary:

- John Gray: *The End of the World as We Know It*, *The Guardian*, 15 September 2007
- Tom Clonan: *Making Capital out of Fear*, *The Irish Times*, 9 September 2007
- John Willman: *The Profits of Doom*, *Financial Times*, 20 October 2007
- Tom Redburn: *It's All a Grand Capitalist Conspiracy*, *New York Times*, 29 September 2007

To the critics, Klein subsequently responded (*One Year After the Publication of The Shock Doctrine: a response to the attacks*, 2 September 2008).

Observance vs Implication: "dropping a bomb" vs "being a bomb"?

Observance: The space framed by the 4-fold symbol of "squares and compasses" of freemasonry (often marked by "G") is indicative of a highly complex cognitive nexus. This argument has elaborated the frame in terms of processes of living / dyeing / lying / dying. Engagement with the complexity of that nexus can take the form of the "observance" typical of people of faith who remain unchallenged by existential "implication" and readily inclined to deny its significance. As has been said of mathematicians subscribing to [fuzzy logic](#), they do not exhibit cognitive styles consistent with their preoccupation.

The nature of this "observance" is exemplified by recent reports of the framing by drone operators of those targeted, as variously reported (Ed Pilkington (*Life as a Drone Operator: 'Ever Step on Ants and Never Give It Another Thought?'* *AlterNet*, 19 November 2015; *Obama's drone war: a 'recruitment tool' for Isis, say US air force whistleblowers*, *The Guardian*, 18 November 2015; Nadia Prupis, *Watch: Drone Pilot Whistleblowers Describe Devastating Impacts of Targeted Kill Program*, *Common Dreams*, 20 November 2015).

The pattern of detachment is evident in the practice of much religious observance -- even by those holding fundamental beliefs. It readily permits styles of reification and dissociation which enable a bomb to be dropped causing multiple fatalities amongst others -- duly framed as an honourable initiative consistent with the highest values. Few are now prepared to "die for their beliefs" or to consider that in any way appropriate.

Implication: The challenge of ISIS lies in the radical "implication" of its members in "being a bomb" (Steven Rosenfeld, *6 Keys to Understanding ISIS' Barbarism, Apocalyptic Vision and Desire for an End-Times Battle in Syria*, *AlterNet*, 16 November 2015). Ironically this recalls the widely promoted slogan -- *Be the Change* -- allegedly articulated by Gandhi as *We must be the change we want to see in the world*.

Jihadists engage existentially with this nexus as a form of "death ground" -- as described by Brent Parrish (*On Death Ground, The Right Planet*, 7 August 2012) following the original articulation by Sun Tzu (*The Art of War*). As widely noted, this engagement differs fundamentally from the unpreparedness for death of those who face them, despite appropriation of that same term (Daniel P. Bolger, *Death Ground: today's American infantry in battle*, 2003; David Weber and Steve White, *In Death Ground*, 1997; Ty Cunningham, *On Death Ground: the way of strategy forged by nature*, 2015).

According to John Carroll (*Retreating From 'The Death Ground'*, *Boston Globe*, 22 May 2001):

Military theorists define the point of no return in war as the "Death Ground," the place from which the only way out is to kill. After soldiers experience that, the ruthlessness of combat moves to a new level, and fighting to the death becomes natural. The Death Ground is the most fearsome place in the world, yet, of course, it is not a place at all, but a state of mind. Where a military initiative may have first been organized to assure the well-being of one's group, on the Death Ground the very meaning of such well-being shifts, and now even survival can seem a lesser value. Honor or revenge or the feeling of mastery over one's destiny can matter more than life.

The challenge framed by jihadist implication is whether it is now a case of retreating from the death ground or rather one of understanding its nature otherwise.

Deprecation and denial: Much is made of the misleading guidance ensuring the implication of jihadists with that experiential nexus. Although that is highly deprecated as dogma and propaganda, little is however said of the extent of propaganda in engendering preparedness for current processes of "dropping a bomb" on others (*Selected Articles: "Steering The Masses Towards Total War"*, *Global Research*, 18 November 2015). The framing of this nexus by simplistic understandings of "living", "dyeing", "lying" and "dying" ensures that its radical nature (as experienced by many, in addition to jihadists) is in no respect appreciated by commentators.

Exploring the nature of this black hole of cognitive meaninglessness and nothingness is avoided by every means and at all costs (*Radicalisation of Existence and Identity: recognizing the global emergence and influence of daimonic dynamics*, 2015). This is echoed by the inability to confront the possibility of civilizational collapse -- other than as represented for purposes of entertainment (*Mind Map of Global Civilizational Collapse: why nothing is happening in response to global challenges*, 2011).

Increasing importance of "nothing": Observers of terrorism righteously consider that they themselves have "nothing" to do with those who engage in it or with their reality. The difficulty in this period is that many have "nothing", and can expect "nothing" meaningful from the future. Jihadist argument renders "nothing" meaningful to some (Marty Kaplan, *Jihadism Is Not Nihilism*, *The Huffington Post*, 20 November 2015). As an example, it has been noted that in the Belgian area, with which the Paris attackers were associated, 40 percent of youth are unemployed.

Ironically it can therefore be argued that "nothing" is acquiring increasing importance, as discussed separately (*Emerging Significance of Nothing*, 2012). This is especially ironic given the importance now attributed to it by physics ([Lawrence M. Krauss, A Universe from Nothing: why there is something rather than nothing](#), 2012). This is however distinct from the cognitive significance with which it has

long been associated in some religious practice (Keiji Nishitani, *Religion and Nothingness*, 1961). Western cultures have traditionally attributed significance to the *Via Negativa*.

There is even further irony to the strategic efforts by observers to ensure that terrorists are completely "eradicated" (*Eradication as the Strategic Final Solution of the 21st Century?* 2014). In effect terrorists are to be reduced to "nothing" by whatever violence is necessary (Sarah Lazare, *France Asks UN to Back "Merciless" Military Response to Paris Attacks*, *Common Dreams*, 20 November 2015). Is the focus on lack of mercy to be recognized as strangely mirroring that of the jihadists and their appreciation of the necessary response to their grievances? Are both parties subscribing to the same language?

Paradoxical recourse to binary thinking: Presented with an immediate threat, whether evident or unsubstantiated by "concrete proof", the clarity of reversion to binary thinking is widely acclaimed -- and thus seen as the epitome of the art of governance. Formal UN approval of the French request was unanimous (*Security Council "Unequivocally" Condemns ISIL Terrorist Attacks*, 20 November 2015). Curiously others argue that this binary response directly serves the agenda of ISIS as a mirror reflection of the binary thinking of ISIS and its abhorrence of "grey zones" (Jonathan Freedland, *Let's deny Isis its binary struggle -- and celebrate the grey zone*, *The Guardian*, 20 November 2015)

Robert Fisk argues:

I was beginning to think that our emotions were becoming as insane as the perpetrators of these crimes. An "act of war", a response "without mercy" -- the French response was straight out of the Isis vocabulary.... "Without mercy" is now our dogma as well as that of Isis. Which is why Isis is winning. (*"We remain blindfolded about Isis" says the man who should know: Brian Keenan*, *The Independent*, 15 November 2015)

He quotes Keenan:

What do we need to do about this? In a global dimension, we all have to take some responsibility for this. My own thought... is that the dispossession and the anger has to be acknowledged. These people have to be offered something more than revenge or Holy War or even this perverse Islamic apocalypse.... I wore a blindfold for four and a half years, and "Western democracy" tells me that justice is blind. I'm not sure about this -- because until we can un-blindly question how power is dispensed, then we're all wearing blindfolds.

The processes of global governance and the UN are typically characterized by "grey zones". Consensus regarding any issue, other than of a token nature, is rare. What resources are devoted to the paradoxical relation between consensual conclusions (following conflict resolution), any implied binary condemnation, and the characteristic variety of perspectives? The complex relation between these contrasting modalities is significantly evident in physics, for example.

As one of the few countries which attaches great value to philosophy in secondary education, it is extraordinary that France has proved to be unable to place its current binary strategy within a more complex context enriched by critical discourse. The irony is all the greater in that the French republic is renowned for its emergence from the **Reign of Terror** following the **French Revolution**. The term "**terrorism**" originally referred specifically to state terrorism as practiced by the French government during that period.

Seemingly inspired by his mentor, like Tony Blair, the goal of bombing ISIS back to the Stone Age does Francois Hollande no credit (Nick Cullather, *Bomb them Back to the Stone Age: an etymology*, *History News Network*, 10 June 2006). Regrettably, in addition to the fatalities, through its reactive response France has now lost all claim to philosophical sophistication. Long acclaimed as the nexus of philosophical deconstruction in a Facebook-Twitter world, does the emergent methodology in response to ISIS merit deconstruction in its own right -- "analysis" as anal isis?

Martial arts: The military response to ISIS, now actively enabled in order to reduce it to nothing, seemingly takes no account whatsoever of subtler insights of the martial arts, as notably cultivated in the East -- and potentially more appropriate to fruitful transcendence of paradox, rather than its denial (*Transforming the Encounter with Terrorism*, 2002).

Is framing "dropping a bomb" in contrast to "being a bomb" an indication of the best that governance can engender in the 21st Century -- enabled by the acclaimed conceptual insights of a global civilization? By contrast, a study by Kinhide Mushakoji highlights the value of a **quadrilemma** notably appreciated in the East (*Global Issues and Interparadigmatic Dialogue*, 1988). Applied to the current strategic dilemma, this would draw attention to a condition characterized by neither bombing nor being a bomb. There is no indication of where and how such an option might be explored, nor why this is not considered in the enthusiasm for a binary response -- with a remarkably poor track record over recent decades in the Middle East that has engendered so little military learning (*Transforming the Unsustainable Cost of General Education*, 2009).

One understanding of this fourth condition might be recognized in terms of a **Pyrrhic victory** to which the current binary response might well lead. This could be said to characterize many of the recent military interventions over the past decades, namely winning the immediate battle but overlooking the losses in relation to the intended objective (Paul W. Kahn, *Beware a Pyrrhic victory over ISIL*, *Aljazeera America*, 17 November 2015; Cian O Driscoll, *A Pyrrhic Victory? The "War on Terror" and "The Triumph of Just War"*, *E-International Relations*, 10 March 2012; Bernhard Blumenau, *The European Communities' Pyrrhic Victory: European Integration, Terrorism, and the Dublin Agreement of 1979*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2014).

Given the significance attached to **haiku** by a former Secretary-General of the UN (Dag Hammarskjöld) and by a former president of the European Council (Herman Van Rompuy), there is a case for informing strategic discussion in the light of the insights traditionally associated with it in relation to the martial arts, as separately discussed (*Ensuring Strategic Resilience through Haiku Patterns: reframing*

the scope of the "martial arts" in response to strategic threats, 2006). As noted there:

The relationship with the "other" in a life-and-death situation provides one of the most powerful, and potentially traumatic, experiences in any mortal combat. In the more conventional sense of the "haiku moment", as noted by R.H. Blyth (*History of Haiku*, 1963): 'Haiku is the apprehension of a thing by a realization of our own original and essential unity with it.' But beyond this experience, in a combat situation -- or in the interaction of a combatant with a "civilian" about to be killed -- is the sense of identity intuited between the two parties....

This "interpenetration" may well apply to the relation between torturer and prisoner in an interrogation process -- a particular example of a widely practiced military "art" (cf Mark Bowden, *The Dark Art of Interrogation*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 2003; S. Brian Willson, *Torture Is an American Value: Reality vs. the Rhetoric*, *Vietnam Veterans against the War*, Fall 2005; Darius Rejali, *A long-standing trick of the torturer's art*, *Seattle Times*, 14 May 2004). This interpenetration may result in a form of traumatic bonding as noted by Sam Vaknin (*The Psychology of Torture*)...

Acts of suicide bombers may themselves be understood as meriting reflection as **kairotic moments**. Gene Brooks (*The Last American Awakening: the revivals in the Confederate Armies as part of the Great Prayer Meeting Revival 1858-1865*, 1997) highlights the relevance of such moments. Characteristic of such moments is the manner in which they call into question formulaic responses and understandings, including those of martial arts practitioners (Corky Quakenbush, *An Aikido Solution to Hamas Rocket Attacks*, *Aikido no Sekai*, 21 July 2014).

Observers as terrorists? Should people have the right to be "terrified" at this time by the mindset of observers and the governments which fund them? Is there a sense in which observers are themselves rightly to be considered "terrorists" -- in the light of their systemic negligence, the denial thereof, and its fatal consequences?

Observers enabling uncritically both mega-deaths and mega-births, purportedly in service to their highest truths, could well be charged with misrepresenting their minimal implication in those processes. This is now highlighted, however inappropriately, by those embodying such elusive truths in ways necessarily experienced by observers as threatening. However "right" or "wrong" is to be understood by the future, this suggests that global governance at this time is essentially defined by a form of cognitive cowardice -- and the knee-jerk courage of the vindictive in quest of self-justification.

A case has been made for American involvement in **state terrorism** (Noam Chomsky, *America, the World's Leading #1 Terrorist State*, *AlterNet*, 3 November 2014; **Noam Chomsky calls US 'world's leading terrorist state'**, *RT Question More*, 4 November, 2014). On the occasion of the G20 summit in 2015, Vladimir Putin indicated that ISIS was receiving funds from 40 countries, including G20 members -- but not a single Western media outlet treated this as newsworthy (Rudy Panko, *Putin Outed ISIS's G20 Financiers*, *Global Research*, 19 November 2015; Tim Anderson, *Who Supports The Islamic State (ISIS)? Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Qatar, Israel, UK, France, USA*, *Global Research*, 20 November 2015).

Implicatories vs Observatories? In this context **there is a strong case for the establishment of a self-reflexive "implicatory" to complement the methodology of any "observatory"** with regard to terrorism. The latter is exemplified by the **NATO Observatory on Counter Terrorism**, the **Observatoire international du terrorisme**, or the **International Observatory for Terrorism Studies**?

The hysterical dimension of many current responses by conventional observers has been noted (Deirdre Fulton, *Hysterical Corporate Media Fueling War Fervor, Xenophobia in 24/7 Cycle*, *Common Dreams*, 18 November 2015). As a valuable complement, "implicatories" would provide a context for sober consideration of new ways of thinking about radicalisation -- by whomever it is experienced. Given current American-led efforts to engender a defensive "caliphate of normality", there is a case for reflection on the Western implication in engendering the present crisis, as remarkably clarified by **Meghnad Desai** (*After Paris: Long Cycles in Politics and History*, *The Globalist*, 16 November 2015).

The learning offered by jihadis would appear to be that strategic reliance on simplistic "observation" will necessarily engender insights into the complex nature of "implication" -- if only through direct exposure to violence of those who deny that reality. Suggestive in this respect is the worldwide response to the earlier **Charlie Hebdo shooting** in Paris with the adoption of the **Je suis Charlie** slogan. This is indicative of a form of identification meriting consideration in terms of implication -- in radical contrast to conventional ceremonies of observance.

The pattern has been continued with the slogan **Je suis Chien** in reference to the police dog who lost his life assisting a recent counterterrorism raid outside of Paris. Efforts are made, notably by charities, to evoke an unusual sense of implication in the condition of refugees fleeing the conflicts in the Middle East -- to a significant degree engendered and sustained by "observers" of terrorism. At what stage, however, might the "je suis" slogan be applied to those gainfully employed in manufacturing the weaponry then used by those countries to engender such migration?

At what stage might this identification be extended -- with compassion -- to those who choose the abhorrent strategy of "being a bomb"? As argued by **Arundhati Roy** in response to the **terrorist attack in Mumbai**: *The only way to contain (it would be naïve to say end) terrorism is to look at the monster in the mirror (Mumbai was not our 9/11)*, *The Guardian*, 12 December 2008). This approach to understanding implication could be usefully extended to perpetration of other abhorrent acts with which civilization is faced (*Looking in the Mirror -- at Josef Fritzl? Global conditions on reflection*, 2008). As argued there, some such **mirror test** may be fundamental to the assessment of humanity by hypothetical extraterrestrials (*Self-reflective Embodiment of Transdisciplinary Integration (SETI): the universal criterion of species maturity?* 2008).

Sacrificing permanence: Ironically a clue would seem to lie in the capacity to "sacrifice" one modality for another -- as in the metaphor of dance highlighted with respect to the skill of Bach by Wilfrid Mellers (*Bach and the Dance of God*, 2009). The issue is how to

approach any understanding of this "lost language" of pattern-shifting in a process reality. Its elusive nature is reflected in Buddhist understanding of [impermanence](#) (Joan Stambaugh, *Impermanence is Buddha-Nature: Dogen's understanding of temporality*, University of Hawaii Press, 1990).

One approach is suggested by insights into the 4,000 year-old chanted hymns of the *Rg Veda* of the Indian tradition. A very powerful exploration of this work by a philosopher, [Antonio de Nicolas](#), using the non-Boolean logic of quantum mechanics, opens up valuable approaches to integration. With respect to the aesthetic "missing link" (discussed above), the unique feature of the approach is that it is grounded in tone and the shifting relationships between tone. It is through the pattern of musical tones that the significance of the *Rg Veda* is to be found:

Therefore, from a linguistic and cultural perspective, we have to be aware that we are dealing with a language where tonal and arithmetical relations establish the epistemological invariances... Language grounded in music is grounded thereby on context dependency; any tone can have any possible relation to other tones, and the shift from one tone to another, which alone makes melody possible, is a shift in perspective which the singer himself embodies. Any perspective (tone) must be "sacrificed" for a new one to come into being; the song is a radical activity which requires innovation while maintaining continuity, and the "world" is the creation of the singer, who shares its dimensions with the song. (*Meditations through the Rg Veda: four-dimensional man*, 1976/2003)

Transcendent perspective?

*The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit,*

*Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.*

(Omar Khayyam)

Descendent perspective?

*The Moving Foot imprints; and, having quashed,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit,*

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