



# laetus in praesens

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## Systemic Function of Highly Unrepresentative Minorities

### Recognizing the role of the "Dark Riders" of social change

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Produced on the occasion of the unexpected riots of the *Gilets Jaunes* ("Yellow Vests") throughout France, with images of Paris in flames, symbolically paralleled by a UN Climate Change Summit to implement the [Paris Agreement](#)

## Introduction

The world, and especially France, has been witness to the spontaneous emergence of a popular movement in France -- the *Gilets Jaunes* ("Yellow Vests") -- in reaction to a pattern of multiple financial constraints on the living conditions and purchasing power of the population, especially the more impoverished. Their name derives from the yellow security vests which all motorists in France are obliged to carry in their vehicles. A planned increase in fuel taxation was the primary trigger for the uprising -- especially for those in rural areas without access to public transport.

The measures announced by the French Government were framed as enabling an ecological transition -- as envisaged by the UN Paris Agreement. Previous rebellions in France have been against the markets and globalization. The Yellow Vest rebellion can be understood as being against a change in way of life, as argued by Andrés Ortega ("*Yellow Vests*": *The First Rebellion Against the Ecological Transition*, *The Globalist*, 4 December 2018).

The *Gilets Jaunes*, in the absence of any central organization -- and "coordinated" only via the social media -- undertook a variety of peaceful initiatives to block or hinder movement of traffic throughout France. This was experienced as a considerable inconvenience by many -- and with considerable impact on the French economy and international image. Despite this, through opinion polls, a vast majority of the population indicated sympathy for the causes variously articulated by the movement -- even after demonstrations turned violent.

Calls for major demonstrations were made for successive weekends -- a well-known and accepted feature of French democracy. In addition to the variously unaffiliated, unexpectedly these demonstrations brought together people from every extreme of the political spectrum -- people who seldom espoused each others causes. The demonstration on 1st December, intended as peaceful by most, proved to be a security disaster of unprecedented proportions, most notably in the centre of Paris (John Lichfield, *Never before have I seen blind anger like this on the streets of Paris*, *The Guardian*, 3 December 2018). Media coverage, in France and elsewhere, portrayed Paris in flames, with vehicles torched, use of paving stones as missiles, and destructive tagging of cherished symbols of the French Republic.

The emergence of the movement, and its destructive accompaniment, was paralleled by extensive discussion of the issues articulated by the *Gilets Jaunes* and the lack of the slightest meaningful response by the elected authorities of France. This was most notably symbolized by the absence of its President at a meeting of the G20 in Buenos Aires. That absence could be readily framed in terms of "*Macron fiddling while Paris burns*" -- recalling the [corresponding phrase](#) long associated with the highly problematic Emperor Nero of Rome.

The destructive accompaniment of a peaceful movement proved to be the primary focus of the media and any commentary by representatives of the government and its supporters. The original message of the *Gilets Jaunes* regarding impoverishment of the population was effectively sidelined or lost -- to their regret, as repeatedly articulated. The focus of official commentary has been on security issues, law and order, and to the state held to be "unreasonable" and worthy of repressive measures. A state of emergency has been envisaged.

Attention has been primarily refocused by the government on the actions of those termed the "*casseurs*" ("*breakers*") -- a very loosely organized group of people who disguised themselves among the *Gilets Jaunes* in order to provoke aggressive interactions with the security forces and to destroy property and enable pillaging. The police have long admitted to being unable to identify such people among the many they arrested for otherwise disrupting the peace.

The *breakers* are deemed to be "professionally" skilled in evading arrest. It is however the actions of that group which enable the government to frame its response to the issues raised by the hundreds of thousands of *Gilets Jaunes*. From the perspective of "*cui bono*", cynics could readily argue that it is actually in the interests of some segments of government to encourage the actions of *breakers*, by whatever means, in order to discredit any movement for social change critical of government policies.

The proportion of such *breakers* in relation to the *Gilets Jaunes* can be explored more generally as typical of many other movements for social change, as previously argued (*The "Dark Riders" of Social Change: a challenge for any Fellowship of the Ring*, 1955). That title and subtitle derive from the theme extensively developed in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (2002) by J. R. R. Tolkien. As described in that iconic tale of an era, the *Dark Riders* (or Ring-wraiths) were nine men who succumbed to *Sauron*'s power and attained immortality as wraiths, servants bound to the power of the One Ring.

The question here is how, and where, to recognize such shadowy influence in undermining otherwise admirable social change. Is there a "Big Lie" to be variously recognized (*Existential Challenge of Detecting Today's Big Lie: mysterious black hole conditioning global civilization?* 2016).

## Systemic disruption by ten percent -- or by one percent?

To focus the argument, a variety of instances of widely appreciated social change merit recognition -- especially as they may be undermined by widely deprecated processes enabled or instigated by *breakers*. Their existence is frequently denied or described as "incidental" and "atypical", typically citing the "*bad apple*" metaphor. Examples might include:

- incidence of sexual abuse by priesthoods, most notably by Catholic clergy
- incidence of sexual harassment by men, as widely publicized by the MeToo movement
- excessive violence by the military, with tacit approval by that hierarchy providing a guarantee of immunity. This may extend to formal approval of forms of enhanced interrogation, possibly undeclared, otherwise deprecated as torture, and justified (if necessary) as being in the interests of national security
- dirty tricks, as employed by corporations -- most notably multinational corporations -- justified in their quest for competitive profitability
- corruption at the highest levels of governance, whether in the form of embezzlement of public funds, allocation of contracts, or nepotism -- a pattern extending to intergovernmental institutions
- manipulative intervention by the extremely wealthy -- the 1% -- as widely publicized by the 99% -- most notably in the form of influence peddling
- action by radical groups, readily defined as "terrorists" by the groups they oppose
- incidence of racketeering and criminality in communities, exemplified by the strategies of organized crime
- fraudulent research, as reported with respect to some scientists and some research laboratories
- corruption in sport, whether with respect to "fixing" competitions or doping by competitors
- production and sale of counterfeit products, notably with respect to luxury goods and works of art
- susceptibility of the police and judiciary to bribery and other pressures, whether from political parties, organized crime, or secret societies
- production of products potentially hazardous to health and safety, notably food products -- including those poisoning the food chain
- ensuring media bias, as widely noted and controversially debated

In each case the abusers of a healthy system -- the "*breakers*" -- are effectively disguised by others who become complicit in that abuse, if they are aware of it -- or who deny its existence or significance if they are not aware of the extent of the abuse. The lately acquired documentation of the sexual abuse by the Catholic clergy in many countries has provided examples of the manner in which the Catholic hierarchy covered up that abuse, variously denying its existence. The strategy is well-described by the manner in which [plausible deniability](#) is ensured.

The primary response of those actively involved in any such abuse is most obviously denial. This is however merely one step in a series of [cover-up measures](#), admirably documented by *Wikipedia*, as discussed separately (*Vital Collective Learning from Biased Media Coverage: acquiring vigilance to deceptive strategies used in mugging the world*, 2014).

From the perspective of any quest for social change, the actions of those complicit in protecting their problematic fellows are usefully and succinctly described in terms of management cybernetics, as a form of *Le Chatelier's Principle*, by [Stafford Beer](#) (*The Cybernetic Cytoblast: management itself*, 1969):

Reformers, critics of institutions, consultants in innovation, people in sort who "want to get something done", often fail to see this point. They cannot understand why their strictures, advice or demands do not result in effective change. They expect either to achieve a measure of success in their own terms or to be flung off the premises. But an ultrastable system (like a social institution)... has no need to react in either of these ways. It specialises in equilibrational readjustment which is to the observer a secret form of change requiring no actual alteration in the macro-systemic characteristics that he is trying to do something about (Chairman's Address to the International Cybernetics Congress, September 1969)

## Blaming others as a means of inhibiting social change

As noted above, the immediate official response of the French government to the demonstration of the *Gilets Jaunes* has been to focus on the *breakers* and their destruction of property in Paris -- with the implication that their destructive actions characterized the movement and the implications of its message. The message of the *Gilets Jaunes* was thereby totally transformed into an issue of security, especially in the light of any probable continuation of the uprising through other demonstrations -- as intimated by the *Gilets Jaunes* should their message not be "heard".

The Minister of the Interior has notably focused his blame on some, whilst endeavouring to frame others as complicit -- avoiding any implication of authorities in the matter. The term "monster" has been used (*Yellow vests: France protests 'created a monster', says minister*, *BBC*, 7 July 2018). There is no sense that the authorities have transformed themselves into a monster in the eyes of the *Gilets Jaunes*.

Although any comparison with the [Great Fire of Rome](#) (AD 64) is questionable, other than in terms of its symbolic significance, the role of Emperor Nero is of relevance in that he blamed the Christians -- as an obscure minority -- for being the cause. Whilst historians question the popular saying with regard to Nero having "fiddled" while Rome burned, the second meaning (in English) is proving appropriate in relation to President Macron (*Did Nero really fiddle while Rome burned? History*, 20 November 2012). Rather than Nero, the French have long framed Macron in other terms from that era (*From Jupiter to jeers: France's Macron battles popularity slump*, *Reuters*, 26 September 2018; *Orbiting Jupiter: my week with Emmanuel Macron*, *The Guardian*, 20 October 2017; *Macron's 'upiter' model unlikely to stand test of time*, *Politico*, 16 June 2017).

It is unclear what influence the government proceeded to exert on the main French media in support of this framing. It was remarkable to note that, late in the crisis on 1st December, the official Agence France Presse had nothing to report on the "burning of Paris" or the *Gilets Jaunes* -- despite the coverage by the media of other countries. This pattern recalled the extraordinary official reporting of the movement of the radioactive cloud from the [Chernobyl disaster](#) (1986) -- noted and depicted by French media weather reports as moving to the borders of France but failing to cross them.

In the case of the *Gilets Jaunes*, the emphasis has been placed on the manner in which the central symbols of the French Republic had been "sullied" by the *breakers* through tagging and other destruction -- most notably with respect to the Arc de Triomphe. Most obvious was graffiti on the latter calling for the resignation of Emmanuel Macron. Reprehensible or not, over what is that structure to be understood as a symbol of triumph, rather than of oppression -- for citizens currently in a state of financial distress?

In emphasizing the role of its contested policies as being an effort to enable a necessary "ecological transition", the government chose to blame previous governments for an accumulation of policy errors. It was against these which the *Gilets Jaunes* were now mistakenly protesting -- having failed to recognize the merit of the remedial actions undertaken by the Macron regime.

More generally, in systemic terms, this pattern can be caricatured as argued separately (*Collective Mea Culpa? You Must be Joking ! Them is to blame, Not us !* 2015). The *Gilets Jaunes* have been exceptionally clear in recognizing the current role of Emmanuel Macron in exacerbating the issues they are endeavouring to articulate.

Curiously the French government, in the person of Prime Minister [Edouard Philippe](#), has stressed the failure of the *Gilets Jaunes* to respond to his invitation to dialogue with him. Media reports have focused on his purportedly conciliatory effort to "extend his hand" (*tendre la main*) to the *Gilets Jaunes*.

Whilst this framing is appropriately supportive of the government position, it completely misrepresents the *Gilets Jaunes* and deliberately frames them to their disadvantage. It also fails to address the conditions of such negotiations, including place and time -- typically of primary concern in any credible political negotiation. It is not difficult to see that the supposedly conciliatory gesture was designed as an effort to [off-foot](#) the *Gilets Jaunes* in order to place them at a strategic disadvantage, if not to humiliate them. This is a process in which government authorities are necessarily skilled -- and have difficulty in proving otherwise.

It has been a characteristic of the extensive media coverage that commentary from representatives of the centrist movement led by Emmanuel Macron were essentially defensive, as might be expected. They could be recognized as taking the form: *You are either with us or against us*. This was notably used by former US President George W. Bush, at the launch of his [anti-terrorism campaign](#): *Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists*. Is it useful to frame the uprising of the *Gilets Jaunes* as the 9/11 moment of France? Are those in any way critical of Macron's centrist program to be appropriately framed as subversive conspirators bent on undermining the French Republic -- with the purported support of foreign regimes?

Such a framing is far less than useful when directed against French citizens who have valid reasons to protest. Justifying that framing by

using every argument to conflate the *breakers* with the *Gilets Jaunes* further undermines the credibility of the Macron regime and the mode of dialogue it seeks to promote.

On the day following the successful management of the demonstration with the revised strategies of the security forces, the police chose to present to the media a range of items which *breakers* could have employed -- had they not been arrested before they reached that demonstration. It is extremely unfortunate that more care was not given to such a presentation. In a context in which people have lost confidence in the authorities, and notably in the police, any such display immediately raises the question as to whether it has been faked to convince the public of the dangerous intentions of the *breakers*. A precedent for such misrepresentation was evident in the case made by [Colin Powell](#) to the UN Security Council on 5 February 2003 to justify intervention in Iraq. How can those with the power to misrepresent prove that they have not done so -- and especially when their credibility has been severely eroded and their motivation for doing so is readily understood?

## Representation: who, when, where, how, why?

As various (self-appointed and much contested) spokespersons for the *Gilets Jaunes* have asserted, the movement did not exist 15 days previously, and had emerged spontaneously across France. They therefore have had no "representatives" in the sense required by the conventional thinking of French authorities -- and on which those authorities considered it appropriate to insist (Carne Ross, [How to create a leaderless revolution and win lasting political change](#), *The Guardian*, 12 December 2018).

In general the *Gilets Jaunes* have called into question that modality and the efforts by various individuals and groups to represent them. Weary of the incapacity of representative bodies to represent their interests, some *Gilets Jaunes* have exerted pressures -- even threats -- on those who sought to respond to the requirement of those claiming to be representative authorities.

Especially curious is the sense in which the authorities contest the legitimacy of the *Gilets Jaunes* through their failure to adopt such modalities -- in order to render their concerns legitimate in the eyes of the authorities. This is curious in that the authorities fail to recognize the extent to which it is they themselves who are considered less than representative by an obviously angry population acknowledging greater sympathy with the demonstrators than with the government.

In a period in which much is made of the capacity of the intelligence services to collect and process information on individuals, it could be considered extraordinary that the French authorities were incapable of determining and articulating the issues which had given rise to the popular uprising -- especially since they had been extensively explored via social media. This suggests that, despite the extensively invasive capacity to "listen", the French authorities have very little capacity to "hear" -- a point frequently made by the *Gilets Jaunes*.

There is a particular irony to the criticism by the authorities of the lack of coherence to the proposals of the *Gilets Jaunes* -- given the manner in which they have been variously and vigorously articulated. This apparent lack of coherence raises the unfortunate question as to whether the elements of current government policy are "coherent" -- given the level of popular protest. It could be argued that through its networking processes the movement exhibited a higher order of coherence than that of the outmoded hierarchical modes of organization of government -- increasingly recognized as "not fit for purpose", especially that of an ecological transition.

Commentators noted the extent to which the contested government policies were characterized by a constantly shifting multiplicity of taxes and entitlements which few could comprehend as a whole -- most notably those they targetted. One estimate was that there were some 250 taxes. A further irony is that any defence lawyer (however appointed) would be capable of articulating the position of an indicted client -- a skill seemingly lacking in a government composed of many with legal training who demonstrated an incapacity to recall the functions of an *amicus curiae*.

French authorities frame this failure of organization and representation as a failure to communicate the issues with which participants in the movement are concerned. There is little appreciation of how popular wisdom might have it, namely that if a lawyer "extends his hand", it is wise to count one's fingers thereafter. Philippe is a lawyer. Two *Gilets Jaunes* responded to that invitation with reservations. One left immediately, stressing a failure of transparency; the other wished to remain anonymous. Conclusion?

This so-called "failure" is despite the fact that the issues have been extensively articulated in the media over many days through many interviews. Again it is difficult to imagine that various services of the French government have been unable to summarize them appropriately on paper -- given the expertise they would claim to have in that regard, to comprehend the concerns of the public. This suggests that the underlying intention of the French authorities has been to oblige the *Gilets Jaunes* to do that articulation themselves -- necessarily placing them at a disadvantage and leaving the authorities free to claim inadequacy on their part.

The related message is to require -- immediately -- an adequate degree of organization and representation from the *Gilets Jaunes* as a popular movement, namely their transformation into a body with which conventional thinking would enable the authorities to "negotiate". What "negotiation" is it misleadingly assumed would be appropriate under the circumstances -- one vulnerable to manipulation by the authorities?

Clearly the authorities would consider themselves past masters at such negotiation -- in comparison with people totally ill-equipped in that regard and necessarily suspicious of the manner in which the authorities would undertake such negotiation. Given the many months or years required by government officials to achieve such organization, this is clearly totally unreasonable -- but presented as being totally appropriate.

Ironically, the request comes in a period when the [Paris Climate Agreement](#) (Paris, 2015) is under discussion to determine how it is to be implemented -- a delay of three years on a matter of the greatest urgency with regard to an "ecological transition" at the planetary level among government authorities world wide. The uprising of the *Gilets Jaunes* calls into question many assumptions regarding the socio-economic viability of any such transition. The world may see the uprising as a model of problematic policy-making on environmental issues ([France Protests: will the environment be the true victim of the fuel-tax riots?](#) *BBC*, 5 December 2018).

## Unexplored ambiguity of "radical" and "radicalisation"

In response to the frustration of authorities that the *Gilets Jaunes* had failed to organize themselves appropriately and appoint representatives empowered to dialogue, one sociologist commented that it was necessary to realize that the movement was "radically horizontal" in structure. That lack of structure was repeatedly indicated as being a severe inadequacy by the authorities -- preventing effective engagement for purposes of negotiation. As a social media movement, it is recognized as having morphed from a protest over fuel prices to a leaderless spectrum of interest groups and differing demands.

This raises the more general question as to whether conventionally organized authorities have any capacity to engage with those "organized" otherwise, whether it be movements of opinion, [collective intelligence](#), or -- potentially -- the "hive mind" hypothesized as characterizing extraterrestrials. The strategic weakness of this mindset is evident in engagement with the Taliban, with its focus on the elimination of leaders. After decades of fighting, this could be questioned as equivalent to eliminating the lead bird of a flight of migrating birds -- immediately replaced by another (*Transforming the Unsustainable Cost of General Education: strategic insights from Afghanistan*, 2009; *Afghanistan: Learning from a decade of progress and loss*, *Afghanistan Analysts Network*, 17 October 2018).

Media commentary on the action of the *breakers*, notably reinforced by government spokespersons, placed great emphasis on their characterisation as "radicals" -- especially from the extreme left or the extreme right of the French political spectrum. Further comment focused on the manner in which regular *Gilets Jaunes* -- normal citizens -- had become "radicalised" by their experience of the response of the police to the demonstrators. Very extensive use was made of water cannon and tear gas -- deemed unjustified by many *Gilets Jaunes*.

A particular difficulty in France has been the recognition by the *Gilets Jaunes* that a "radical" change of policy was required -- and many assertions to that effect. At the same time the French authorities have themselves had a tendency to claim that "radical" measures were required -- notably to achieve an "ecological transition". Emmanuel Macron had made electoral commitments in such terms -- as had done an alternative presidential candidate, [François Fillon](#), previously favoured over Macron (prior to being discredited for unethical practices). A provocative question, especially in the case of Fillon, is whether and how he is to be understood as having been radicalised.

The terms "radical" and "radicalisation" have of course featured very extensively in French debate regarding terrorism and terrorists -- to which France has been variously exposed. Radicalisation is seen as the process through which the radical action of terrorists is encouraged. Using "deradicalisation" programs, extensive efforts are deployed to counter tendencies to radicalisation.

There is thus a confusion of usage between *creative policy-making by authorities* in power, the *radical policies advocated by the political extremes* (whether right or left), and the dangerous *initiatives undertaken by radicals* -- those deemed a threat to society. This necessarily includes the *breakers*, whether or not they are framed as terrorists, as they could well be. However, even more problematic for a society that prides itself on radical thinking, most notably in philosophy and the arts, legislation has been introduced to criminalize radicalism.

Little attention is accorded to the conflation of these associated meanings, as argued separately (*Radical Innovators Beware -- in the arts, sciences and philosophy Terrifying implications of radical new deradicalisation initiative in France*, 2016). As noted in that argument, it is remarkable how a society which prides itself on the sophisticated philosophical dimension of its educational process, is seemingly incapable of addressing this ambiguity. Worse still are the efforts to deprecate and criminalize any effort to do so. Curiously, whether they frame themselves as "radical" or not, French philosophers have proven to be as mute as Emmanuel Macron with regard to the challenge of the *Gilets Jaunes*. This is all the more curious in that, unusually, philosophy is a required part of the school curriculum and must therefore have contributed significantly to engagement with the issues raised by the *Gilets Jaunes*.

For a society with political extremes -- the "radical left" and the "radical right" -- the strong case made for "deradicalisation" by the mainstream centre is difficult to distinguish from undeclared, surreptitious efforts to "eradicate" those extremes (*Eradication as the Strategic Final Solution of the 21st Century?* 2014). Again it is ironic that the centre, in parallel, is in a desperate quest for "radical" strategic solutions to its dilemmas -- and will explicitly pride itself in presenting them as such (as Francois Fillon endeavoured to do).

In this light, it can be argued that "radicals" can indeed be associated with "*breakers*". However they can also be associated with "*makers*" -- understood be those whose creative insights, proposals and technology enable new approaches to the challenges of society. The difficulty is of course in that such *makers* are difficult to distinguish from *breakers* -- in that the process of making may involve a degree of breaking, possibly extolled by some as "breaking outmoded patterns" -- or a "strategic breakthrough". Furthermore, if *making* calls into question cherished "business-as-usual", it is readily deprecated as *breaking*.

Especially intriguing is whether it is the most conservative who would be least able to distinguish *breakers* from *makers* -- unless it is appropriately framed as is evident in the appreciation of innovation in the arts -- where value may then be extolled to the highest degree. For authorities with a commitment to business-as-usual, and unable to decode the distinction between makers and breakers in the light of the disruption to which they give rise, both are seen as a threat.

The situation for authorities lends itself to comparison with the classic metaphor of a workman equipped with only a "hammer". Every problem faced then tends to be treated like a "nail". This is the challenge of the current French Minister of the Interior faced with the *Gilets Jaunes* as *makers* -- only too readily conflated with *breakers* indistinguishably infiltrated among them.

The further implication of this metaphor is that, equipped with an administrative "hammer", the authorities see themselves as the primary *makers* of society -- in this case with respect to enabling an ecological transition. The population has then to be "broken" into conformity with that pattern. This unfortunately corresponds to the current condition in France (and elsewhere). The authorities take on a role experienced by people as threatening.

## Ignoring a heritage of violence?

There is a further irony to the fundamental position articulated by Emmanuel Macron that the violence associated with the demonstration was "unacceptable". This fails to take account of the fact that the significance of pacific demonstrations, whatever their size, can be readily ignored by authorities -- a pattern well-recognized by the French population, and especially by the *Gilets Jaunes*. Hence the process of blocking roads and inhibiting the circulation of traffic.

Some commentators have been specific in indicating that had it not been for the violence on 1st December, with "Paris in flames", the government would not have completely reversed its decision to introduce higher taxation. A pacific demonstration would have been inadequate, however preferable. Curiously it was therefore the violence of the *breakers* which had been a key to other to reframing the situation -- however "unacceptable".

Inexplicitly abhorring violence as the unjustified solution to any problem, Macron is seemingly unphased by the efforts of France to eradicate violently those in the Middle East that France singles out as a threat to its national security (*Eradication as the Strategic Final Solution of the 21st Century?* 2014). Nor is Macron seemingly aware of the processes of *structural violence* in which French political elites have long indulged as *breakers* -- as now articulated by the *Gilet Jaunes*. As analyzed by Johan Galtung: *Personal violence is for the amateur in dominance, structural violence is the tool of the professional*

However, whilst greater levels of violence may indeed be declared to be "unacceptable", it is difficult to forget the current role of the French government in exacerbating the violence in the Middle East -- if only through the sale of arms. Is this an indication of coherence in policy-making? It is understandable that a person of Christian faith, would consider it equally unacceptable to explore any comparisons with the violence of Jesus in response to the money changers in the much-cited tale of *Cleansing the Temple*. With which would Macron seek to identify, given his banking background?

Even more ironic is the fact that the French Republic -- of which Emmanuel Macron is the current President -- was founded through violence, and then instigated a *Reign of Terror* (known otherwise as *La Terreur*). It so happens that one of the symbolic zones in which the *Gilets Jaunes* have congregated is the so-called *Place de la Concorde*. Conveniently forgotten is that this was previously named *Place de la Révolution*, where those opposed to advocated social change were famously beheaded. These included the aristocrats of the previous regime -- most famously Marie Antoinette in 1793. Who are now deemed to be the aristocrats of the current regime, and what treatment are they held to deserve in these enlightened times? Under the circumstances might a more appropriate name have been *Place de la Discorde*?

That some *breakers* should now have sullied cherished symbols of the French Republic merits consideration in the light of the failure of the French Republic to care appropriately for its citizens. One of the symbols sullied included a statue of *Marianne*, a focal symbol of the French Republic. It was somewhat extraordinary to note the visit of Emmanuel Macron to inspect the damage at a time when the media had drawn repeated attention to one of the *Gilets Jaunes* -- *Ingrid Levavasseur* -- a French beauty in her own right, a single mother with children, who had powerfully articulated her impoverishment and monthly financial distress. The President had notably failed to meet any *Gilets Jaunes*, including a living icon emerging from an uprising. How are tears over a broken plaster replica of Marianne to be compared with failure to commiserate with a living icon -- a modern heroine for some?

For many *Gilets Jaunes*, as reported by the media, Emmanuel Macron is widely deemed to be arrogant and out of touch (Angelique Chrisafis, *'Macron's arrogance unites us' - on the barricades with France's gilets jaunes*, *The Guardian*, 7 December 2018; Emmanuel Macron, *Si tu veux faire la révolution, tu apprends d'abord à avoir un diplôme et à te nourrir toi-même*, 18 June 2018). Could this be instructively compared to that reflected in the most famous declaration of Marie Antoinette: *Let them eat cake*? In historical terms, is the potentially vindictive law-and-order response of the French authorities then to be construed as "Marie Antoinette's revenge"?

Events have taken a new symbolic turn with the decapitation of a simulacrum of Emmanuel Macron (*Gilets Jaunes : enquête ouverte après la décapitation d'un pantin À l'effigie de Macron*, *LCI*, 22 December 2018). This has led to pressure from his supporting elite for severe measures of repression -- presumably invoking the traditional legal argument against *lèse-majesté*, in this case with respect to "Jupiter", as Macron is widely nicknamed. This is curious in a society which has made the strongest of cases for the freedom to caricature Muhammad in strip cartoons -- a caricature which had engendered the *Charlie Hebdo* massacre.

## General systemic phenomenon -- beyond the French example?

Once defined, any system (or "new model") immediately attracts "*breakers*" -- highly creative efforts to undermine it. This is most obviously evident with respect to the emergence of *security hackers* in relation to computer systems. Who are then to be understood as the "hackers" of innovative social change? A related example of considerable relevance is their use in disrupting the results of democratic elections.

Given the examples cited above, how is the existence of this phenomenon to be recognized? How do participants in any system recognize the *breakers* and hackers operating within it? Why is it so naively assumed that some -- a small percentage -- will not seek to exploit it in various ways in order to further their particular agendas? For a *breaker*, once a system can be understandably described it necessarily renders itself vulnerable. To what extent is the pressure to render the mysterious magic of the *Gilets Jaunes* comprehensible to the authorities, driven by the quest for a means for the latter to break it?

The more interesting question is why the design of systems (or "new models") tends to assume the absence of such problematic processes. Why are systems not conceived to encompass tendencies to their being undermined -- taking account of how to engage with the *breakers*? This is somewhat strange in that although science prides itself on being open to challenges to its models, the reality is more appropriately articulated by the insight of the physicist *Max Planck*:

New scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it. (an insight discussed by [Samuel Arbesman](#), *Why Do Great Ideas Take So Long to Spread?* *Harvard Business Review*, 27 November 2012)

Technology is necessarily obliged to envisage the vulnerabilities of the systems it enables -- to a degree -- although its failure is striking with respect to the pollution it has engendered and the high level of insecurity currently associated with internet technology. Of interest from that perspective is the variety of modalities through which a system may be vulnerable (*Variety of System Failures Engendered by Negligent Distinctions*, 2016). Is consideration given to any such range in the design of new psychosocial models, notably from a policy perspective? Or is it too dangerously assumed that those involved will be of good will and lacking all desire to exploit the system in pursuit of other agendas? The history of intentional communities unfortunately offers numerous lessons in this regard.

The French case (cited above) raises the interesting question as to whether the French political system embodies those who might well be deprecated as "*breakers*" -- to match that systemic deprecation of the *breakers* disguised within the movement of *Gilets Jaunes*. Clearly each political party would be happy to frame the others as "*breakers*", and to seek their eradication as a threat to society. This is most obvious in the response to the *Front National* of *Marine Le Pen*, or to *La France Insoumise* of *Jean-Luc Mélenchon*. Analogous opprobrium is evident in the case of the highly undemocratic appreciation of the *Alternativ für Deutschland* within the German political system.

Far more controversial is the sense in which Emmanuel Macron, widely accused of being the "President of the Rich", could himself then be recognized as **President of the Breakers** (*Président des Casseurs* or *Président de la Casse?*) -- to the extent that the very rich can be seen as "*breakers*" operating in a different mode. Curiously, whatever the systemic legacy of their function, both Emmanuel Macron and the *casseurs* have been variously transformed into *scapegoats* by the psychodynamics of the crisis triggered by the *Gilets Jaunes*.

These examples raise the question of the complicity of those indulging in deprecation of *breakers* in support of their own image and self-esteem -- as is far more insidious in the case of corruption within the professions. The case of the *American Psychological Association* offers one extremely unfortunate example with respect to *complicity in the use of torture* by the government of the USA.

Potentially far more controversial is the manner in which sexual harassment has been so successfully framed by the *MeToo movement*. Succinctly stated, this is commonly reduced to women right (as victims), men wrong (as perpetrators) -- men as *breakers*. There is no scope for exploring the sense in which only a percentage of men may be perpetrators, and only a percentage of women may be victims. Nor is there any scope for recognizing the extent to which a percentage of women may be perpetrators, or a percentage of men may be victims (*Golden Globes Confusing Cleavage, Hype and Hypocrisy*, 2018). Arguments for greater subtlety are condemned in a manner similar to any argument for greater subtlety in recognition of radicalization and terrorism -- of which *Nelson Mandela*, *Jomo Kenyatta* and *Menachem Begin* offer challenging examples, given subsequent appreciation of their presidential roles.

## A question of percentages?

It would appear that there is a case for recognizing that a percentage of the people within any system may indeed be "Dark Riders" -- *breakers*, seeking its exploitation in some way, whether consciously or unconsciously. Biology may offer valuable examples of parasitical organisms and predators -- and the response to them. There is even a delightful irony to the recognition that systemically the "smallest" are typically many (as with the *Gilets Jaunes*), whereas the "biggest" are typically very few (as in the case of "the 1%" so assiduously cultivated by the Macron regime).

**Business corruption:** Especially intriguing is the incidence of corruption in corporations and amongst business leaders -- again relatively well documented (*Carlos Ghosn: Former Nissan chair charged with financial misconduct*, *BBC*, 10 December 2018; *What Carlos Ghosn's Indictment Means for Renault*, *Bloomberg*, 10 December 2018). It might even prove to be the case that a degree of profitability by a corporation tends to necessitate a degree of "corruption", however this may be defined and reframed as innocently "ending the rules". The point frequently made is that *omelettes cannot be made without breaking eggs*.

The policy of dealing under the table, and maintaining two separate sets of books, merits reflection in this regard. There is some irony to the sense that any financial profit may necessarily be matched by a moral or ethical loss (Lesley Parker, *Moral Dilemma when Money's at Stake*, *Phys.org*, 15 September 2015; James Melik, *The Moral Dilemmas of the Financial Crisis*, *BBC*, 25 January 2009). This notably features in consideration of so-called *moral hazard* in economics. Given his banking background, it might be fruitfully asked to what extent this dimension is considered in the French policy-making instigated by Emmanuel Macron with respect to the ecological transition -- and in the light of the response of the *Gilets Jaunes*.

**Corruption in politics:** Potentially more problematic are the levels of corruption associated with politics, government and awarding of contracts to corporations. Again many such incidences have been widely reported. Less evident is whether every contract accorded by government is potentially subject to some form of "corruption", however this may be framed. It has been argued that every contract awarded by the European Commission is potentially subject to such constraints. Do the operations of lobbyists suggest that in systemic terms they may well function as *breakers* in disrupting some forms of social change?.

There is widespread reporting of problematic behaviour within political systems -- even at the very highest level. Recent scandals have included (*Jacques Chirac found guilty of corruption*, *The Guardian*, 15 December 2011; *Sarkozy faces trial over corruption and influence peddling*, *Financial Times*, 29 March 2018). *Imelda Marcos*, First Lady of the Philippines for 21 years, was nicknamed "Mrs. 10%" for the cut she allegedly took off the top of large government contracts, of which many were within her reach. A *breaker extraordinaire?*

Emmanuel Macron evoked support from voters through his unusually specific electoral promise not to tolerate what is presumably common elsewhere -- and has been the case in France. Again, the condemnation of **breakers** among the *Gilets Jaunes* by the political elite then needs to be compared with the probable existence of "**breakers**" among the political elite -- indulging in various forms of **structural violence** in society, to which the *Gilets Jaunes* have sought to respond. The system of governance could be readily seen as having "**broken**" a proportion of the population -- whether deliberately or inadvertently.

**Incidence of crime and incarceration:** Data is assiduously collected and reported by the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (*World crime trends and emerging issues and responses in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice*, May 2017). Less evident is the proportion of any population with a criminal record, or the proportion of unreported crime and the relation to civil offences. The percentages are usefully epitomized by homicide and incarceration rates (*List of countries by intentional homicide rate*, Wikipedia; *List of countries by incarceration rate*, Wikipedia). The offenders can be recognized as "**breakers**", namely those who break the rules of their societies. The question is nevertheless how they are best understood as part of the social system rather than in some unexplained way external to it. That issue is especially relevant in societies riddled with organized crime beyond the control of forces of law and order.

**Excessive wealth:** Extreme criticism has been developed with regard to the extremely rich -- "the 1%" -- most notably as articulated from 2011 by the **Occupy Movement** ("*We are the 99%*"). Ironically, given the challenge of the *Gilets Jaunes*, that worldwide movement notably drew inspiration from a widely translated tract by a former French diplomat, Stéphane Hessel (*Time for Outrage!* 2010; *Indignez-vous!* 2010). Following the financial crisis of 2008, it was the subject of extensive commentary (Simon Kuper, *Indignant? We should be* *The Financial Times*, 7 (January 2011; Elaine Sciolino, *A Resistance Hero Fires Up the French*, *The New York Times*, 9 March 2011).

The extremely rich see their function quite otherwise -- as discussed separately (*Arrogance of the "Masters of the Universe"*, 2009), and appropriately called into question (Nicholas Vardy, *Myth of Wall Street's 'Masters of the Universe' Exposed*, *Stock Investor*, 24 October 2017; Paul R. La Monica, *Wall Street's Masters of the Universe are back*, *CNN*, 17 October 2017). The questionable sexist framing has been complemented by recognition of the **Mistresses of the Universe**, as for example by **Women's Voices for Change** (*Why Mistresses of the Universe Can't Wait*, February 2009). **Breakers** are not limited to the male gender -- as with the "Dark Riders" of Tolkien's tale.

**Abuse by clergy:** In the case of **sexual abuse by Catholic clergy**, the percentage of abusers has been determined to be very high (*Church allowed sex abuse for years*, *The Boston Globe*, 6 January 2002; *Clergy abuse scandal widens and deepens*, *The Boston Globe*, 1 September 2018). Clearly the horrendous data and estimates world wide demand careful examination -- with the expectation that similar percentages may be found within other religions, sects and intentional communities. Many cases of abuse by key figures in such faith-based contexts have been documented. Is 1% of abusers acceptable, or to be expected -- or 10%?

**Sexist abuse:** Symptomatic of the times, that logic is of course a feature of the MeToo movement, despite being challenged by other women -- most notably in France (*Catherine Deneuve Joins nearly 100 French Actresses and More to Condemn 'Witch Hunt' against Men over Sexual Harassment*, *IndieWire*, 9 January 2018). There the challenge instigated by Catherine Deneuve was itself deprecated by feminists (*Catherine Deneuve's claim of #MeToo witch-hunt sparks backlash*. *The Guardian*, 10 January 2018).

**Abuse by science:** Irrespective of the complicity of some scientists in its misuse -- as **breakers**, most obviously in weapons development -- some measures exist of **scientific misconduct**, scientific fraud, namely of the level of falsification of research results (*Horace Freeland Judson*, *The Great Betrayal: fraud in science*, 2004; **scientific misconduct incidents**). A systematic analysis of survey data has found that about 2% of scientists admitted to falsifying, fabricating, or modifying data at least once (D. Fanelli, *How many scientists fabricate and falsify research?* *PLOS One*. 4, 2009, 5).

Potentially more striking is evidence that many peer-reviewed research results have been shown to be irreproducible. Half of basic science studies cannot be replicated (Jeff Leek, *A summary of the evidence that most published research is false*, 16 December 2013; Kerry Grens, *The Cost of Irreproducible Research*, *The Scientist*, 10 June 2015).

The role of scientists in deprecating psychosocial dimensions, with which social change might necessarily be associated, calls for recognition of their function as **breakers** inhibiting emergence of subtler understandings of coherence. Claiming expertise in ecology, can it be said that science has contributed to understandings of **making** and **breaking** as they may be of relevance to the challenge of responding to climate change?

**Quality control:** As with the marketing of apples, what percentage of "bad apples" is to be expected in any barrel? Is it appropriate or realistic to assume there will be none? Are there sociopolitical indicators which would enable the percentage of criminals in society to be assessed? Where is this assume to be zero? What percentage is it appropriate to tolerate?

Such a framing is useful in that it draws attention to the challenges of **quality control** in any system or process -- and those extreme requirements calling for the methodology of **Six Sigma**, with its potential relevance to sociopolitical systems (Kellen Giuda, *Six Sigma Politics? Why do politicians ignore it?*, *Forbes*, 9 September 2012; Michael Marx, *Six Sigma Politics*, *iSixSigma*; Holly Hawkins, *Six Sigma: The Laissez Faire of Politics*, *iSixSigma*)

Especially problematic is any argument that, because a percentage of bad apples is evident, all apples in the barrel are necessarily bad. It is this simplistic logic which is deployed with respect to the existence of **breakers** -- deliberately associating them with *Gilets Jaunes* in the French case. The problematic nature of the argument is evident in any corresponding accusation that because of the indictment of some politicians at the highest level (Nicolas Sarkozy, Marine Le Pen, Francois Fillon, etc), "all politicians" are necessarily worthy of condemnation as "**breakers**". Both parties in France need to be wary of using this logic.

**Function of breakers:** More intriguing is whether **breakers** have a function to be valued in society -- however painful this may be. From an ecological perspective, France offers a valuable example of this. Deliberate efforts have been made by authorities to re-introduce

wolves and bears into some rural areas (*France to let wolf population grow by 40% despite anger from farmers, The Guardian*, 20 February 2018; *France to release bears in Pyrenees for first time in a decade to mate with lonesome males, The Telegraph*, 27 March 2018). Systemically such species are necessarily to be recognized as **breakers**, somehow valuable to the healthy functioning of certain ecosystems -- despite the vigorous objections to the damage they cause. It has been alleged that in a viable intentional community it is useful to have one person who is a considerable irritation to all other members.

Given that a pacific demonstration would not have evoked the degree of collective self-examination in France, cynically (as noted above) it could be argued that it was in the interest of either the French government or the *Gilets Jaunes* to enable a degree of destructive violence. This "perverted" logic may be applied to a higher degree by some in the case of demonstrations planned for the future.

With regard to the imaginative ambiguity of creativity of both **making** and **breaking**, this has been succinctly embodied in the insight of **Theodore Sturgeon**: with regard to science fiction: *Sure, ninety percent of science fiction is crud. That's because ninety percent of everything is crud*. Otherwise known as **Sturgeon's Law**, as frequently cited, it takes the form: *Ninety percent of everything is crap*. This has been compared to the insight of **Rudyard Kipling**: *Four-fifths of everybody's work must be bad. But the remnant is worth the trouble for its own sake* (*The Light that Failed*, 1890).

<b>Breakers of Paris Agreement on Climate Change (Paris, 2015, Katowice, 2018)?</b>
It is variously noted that with regard to global warming, that there is a "97% consensus", notably among climate scientists namely that 3% are <b>breakers</b> ( <i>Climate Consensus - the 97%</i> , <i>The Guardian</i> , 2018). The <b>formal withdrawal of the USA</b> has been widely remarked. Other countries are recognized as variously dissenting in practice, as evident at COP24, the <b>United Nations Climate Change Conference</b> (Katowice, December 2018). However the outcome was framed as though some 200 countries had agreed (on a "rule book") with no indication of what percentage disagreed in some manner or had not intention of sticking to those rules.

<b>Breakers of Global Compact on Migration (Marrakech, 2018)?</b>
The countries dissenting from the <b>Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration</b> (Marrakech, December 2018) may be understood to <b>include</b> : Austria, Australia, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, Israel, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia, Switzerland, and the USA. 152 voted in favour, 5 against, 12 abstentions, 24 did not vote. How are those not in agreement to be understood in systemic terms? This is 8% of some 193 countries.

<b>Breakers of Global Compact on Corporate Social Responsibility (New York, 2000)?</b>
The <b>United Nations Global Compact</b> to encourage businesses worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies was launched in 2000 and groups 13000 corporate participants and other stakeholders over 170 countries. Early participants have included major corporations recently implicated (or under investigation) in the so-called <b>Dieselgate emissions scandal</b> .

## Systemic requirement for the role of **Advocatus Diaboli**?

Systems naturally have a tendency to define themselves as "angelic", inherently "good", and without taint -- if not as a "Force of Light" beyond question, possibly framed in terms of their quest "to be great again". Any criticism is then perceived as articulated by those necessarily of demonic inspiration -- as **breakers** unquestionably representative of the "Dark Force". Political parties have a remarkable tendency to frame each other in the latter terms.

This paradoxical situation suggests that there is a need to recognize that "**makers**" are necessarily complemented by "**breakers**" -- embodied in parliamentary assemblies as an ecosystem. The evaluation of claims to be one or the other call for levels of subtlety which have yet to be elaborated. How is it possible to understand the potentially deadly dance between **makers** and **breakers** -- however fruitful it may be in terms of social change?

There is no capacity within parliamentary systems to take a more general view and to value criticism for the insights it may offer. Arguably any "ecological transition" should require this sensitivity. That role is effectively left to external third parties, most notably the media -- which may itself be subject to censorship, bribery and other forms of bias. In the case of the USA, the media have indeed been framed as the problem -- if not demonically so.

To forestall premature beatification and sanctification, through image management via the media, there is therefore a role analogous to that of the **Advocatus Diaboli** to be envisaged. This has been justified in the past by procedures of the Catholic Church -- procedures abolished when Pope John Paul II revised the canonization process in 1979.

However, arguably, there is a similar case for a corresponding role -- an "Advocatus Angeli" -- to forestall the automatic, knee-jerk demonisation of those movements of opinion outside the self-satisfied comfort zone of the mainstream (or of any "party") -- and potentially lacking the funding for image management (*Radicalisation versus Demonisation? Enabling radical initiatives under conditions of strategic stalemate*, 2015). No such role existed in the canonisation process, although the widespread use of awards could be seen in that light. Parties are notorious for awarding those who exemplify their particular values.

Most intriguing is why a case is not made for either role -- to counterbalance the marked preference for trial by media.

## A matter of perspective -- illustrated by the case of Ukraine?

The examples cited serve to highlight the degree to which the concerns of the "smallest" (however many) and the "biggest" (however

few) may be variously interpreted, misinterpreted, or treated as negligible. The abuse by a significant proportion of the Catholic clergy is a real challenge for the faithful -- as is the corruption of authority figures in other domains.

There is a poorly explored skill to the process of discounting the implications for the domain in question, whether religion, politics, science, business, or competitive sport. How do people adjust to recognition of unsuspected corruption of the system with which they have long identified as embodying their values?

Russian media, predictably or not, have chosen to compare the revolt by the *Gilets Jaunes* to that of the [Euromaidan revolution](#) in Ukraine in 2014 ([Timeline of the Euromaidan](#), *Wikipedia*). However the focus of the comparison is on the framing of that revolt offered by Western media and authorities. The comparison is developed for Russian media by Danielle Ryan ([Revolution in Ukraine? Yes, please! Revolution in France? Rule of law!](#) *RT*, 3 December 2018). That argument is introduced as follows:

When violent protests shook Kiev in 2013, Western analysts and leaders quickly threw their support behind the anti-government "revolution" -- but after weeks of Yellow Vest protests in France, the reaction has been very different. While Western governments and commentators denounced the Ukrainian government of Viktor Yanukovich and urged that he give in to protesters' demands five years ago, this time around, they are denouncing the French protesters and urging President Emmanuel Macron, whose popularity stands at about 25 percent, to stand firm against dissatisfied citizens.

Western media coverage has also differed drastically with reports describing French protesters as rioters, while Ukrainian protesters were described as revolutionaries. The contrasting reaction has prompted many to ask the question: If a so-called revolution is allowed to happen (and even applauded) in Ukraine, why not in France?

It is to be expected that any uprising or expression of discontent would lend itself to such reversal of perspective, just as those within their comfort zones would challenge any criticism of the coherence of their position. The divided and fractured conditions of leading societies can readily be seen as engendering such contrasting narratives. Obvious examples at this time are the USA (Democrats vs. Republicans) and the UK (pro- and anti-Brexit).

Appropriate to such ambiguous appreciation is the defence of Emmanuel Macron against the Dark Forces seeking to overwhelm Europe via the turbulence in France (Natalie Nougayrède, [Macron's crisis in France is a danger to all of Europe](#), *The Guardian*, 4 December 2018).

As might be expected *RT* provided a platform for another view of the matter by [Slavoj Žižek](#) ([How Mao would have evaluated the Yellow Vests](#), *RT*, 21 December 2018):

The French Yellow Vest movement exposes a problem at the heart of today's politics. Too much adherence to popular "opinion" and not enough innovation and fresh ideas. Already a quick glance at the imbroglio makes it clear that we are caught in multiple social struggles. The tension between the liberal establishment and the new populism, the ecological struggle, efforts in support of feminism and sexual liberation, plus ethnic and religious battles and the desire for universal human rights. Not to mention, trying to resist digital control of our lives. So, how to bring all these struggles together without simply privileging one of them as the "true" priority? Because this balance provides the key to all other struggles.

Renowned as it is for its freedom from bias, the BBC has now ensured that the *RT* should be censored for its coverage for the [novichok poisoning scandal](#) in the UK ([RT guilty of breaching broadcasting code in Salisbury aftermath](#), *The Guardian*, 20 December 2018). Constrained as is the BBC by [D-notices](#) and [super-injunctions](#), one can only speculate as to how the BBC would strive to maintain its image in covering an equivalent "Yellow Vest" movement in the UK -- one as highly critical of governmental authority.

The challenge for the BBC has been evident in the coverage of the protest by a splinter feminist group in France ([Catherine Deneuve Joins nearly 100 French Actresses and More to Condemn 'Witch Hunt' against Men over Sexual Harassment](#), *IndieWire*, 9 January 2018). The BBC mistranslated a key phrase from a declaration in French as being a justification for men to "hit on" women -- presumably in conformity with its uncritical politically correct identification with the MeToo movement ([Catherine Deneuve defends men's 'right to hit on' women](#), *BBC*, 10 January 2018).

## Law and order focus in response to disruption

An unprecedented deployment of security forces was made across France, but especially in Paris, for the demonstrations of 8th December. These attracted many *Gilets Jaunes*, despite advice from many to be "reasonable" and not to participate. As a preventive measure, many were arrested on public transport heading for the demonstrations. The tone of media coverage switched from eliciting the concerns of the *Gilets Jaunes* to commentary in support of law and order, most obviously with declarations by those associated with the authorities. These necessarily focused on the extent to which it was the *breakers* who had chosen to demonstrate -- thereby ensuring that the message of the *Gilets Jaunes* was effectively lost.

At the end of the day, the Minister of the Interior and the Prime Minister declared with satisfaction that the situation was under control. Their manner implied that the processes of law and order were unquestionably right under the circumstances. Seemingly the only insights to be gained were how to repress any future disruption more effectively. Authoritarian language was to be recognized as appropriately signalling a return to normality. Something vital was lost in the declaration that the situation had been "mastered".

It is of course the pattern of laws, especially those of the Macron regime (but including those of its predecessors), which had created the conditions of impoverishment against which the *Gilets Jaunes* had protested. What does "law" and "order" then mean? Clearly the French

Republic had been created by overthrowing the law and order understood by that of the royalists who had preceded them. Nazi Germany placed great emphasis on law and order -- partially extended to France under the Vichy regime.

Aside from the call by the *Gilets Jaunes* for new "law" -- through new legislative measures -- to what forms of "order" do they aspire. One frequent expression was greater "justice" -- clearly a significant interface between law and order. The organization of the *Gilets Jaunes* can be seen as a remarkable exemplification of spontaneous "order" -- whose "law" was of a far subtler kind than that deployed by the Macron regime with insights from the past.

It would seem that the success of the uprising -- and the diversity of perspectives that became evident -- should reinforce continuing reflection on the meaning of law and order, whether for France alone, for Europe, or for the global governance. An earlier approach to this took the form of an exploration of *Law and Order vs. Lore and Orders? Imagining otherwise the forceful engagement of singularity with plurality* (2013). This included the following sections:

- Varieties of order as a mutually challenging array
- Varieties of law as a mutually challenging array
- Psychosocial implications: "disorder" or "different drummer"
- Lore vs. Law: a homophonic challenge in a homophobic society?
- Rule of Law vs. Rule of Lore
- Contrasting fantasies of singularity and plurality
- Embodying the law: taking the law into one's own hands
- Embodying the lore: taking the lore into one's own hands
- Dynamic relationship between domains of order in global civilization
- Systemic oversimplifications in practice
- Possible psycho-geometro-dynamics implied by order, law, force and lore?

In highlighting the notion of "lore", the argument is consistent with many references to symbols of French culture, in contrast with legislative measures detracting from a valued way of life. What variety of "orders" is appropriate to the viability of a culture?

The Macron regime has started a process of bringing the full force of law and order to bear on Eric Drouet -- a primary instigator of the *Gilets Jaunes* movement (*Qui est Eric Drouet, ce "gilet jaune" qui appelle à "entrer" dans l'Elysée?* *Europe 1*, 6 December 2018). Given the pattern of habitual procedures into which law and order is locked in France, the regime has no choice. From a wider perspective, social change needs sacrifice and martyrs, as was evident in the case of Nelson Mandela. Vindictive justice is part of that pattern, as is currently evident in the case of Julian Assange.

## Coherence through dialogue -- as currently practiced?

The uprising in France has been remarkably tracked by portions of the French media, most notably *La Chaîne Info* (LCI), an all-news channel. In addition to reporting of the demonstration, the dramatic destruction, and interviews with the *Gilets Jaunes*, the channel has featured extensive discussion by commentators of every persuasion. This could be seen as a remarkable process of collective dialogue. In one exercise of many hours, a skilled moderator -- *David Pujadas* -- brought together "spokespersons" for the *Gilets Jaunes*, critics "violently" opposed to their demonstration and the associated violence, and a minister responsible for the ecological transition from the French government (*Les Gilets Jaunes face au gouvernement - La Grande Explication*, 27 November 2018). The coverage in France contrasts to a high degree by that elsewhere as noted by Paul Street (*Blacking Out the Yellow Vests on Cable News: corporate media doing its job*, *CounterPunch*, 12 December 2018).

A notable feature of that continuing process has been the call for greater dialogue between those variously preoccupied by the issues raised by the demonstration -- and the disconnect between the people and their authorities. The implication of the appeal for greater dialogue is that greater coherence would then emerge -- a healthy response to the divisive nature of the issues.

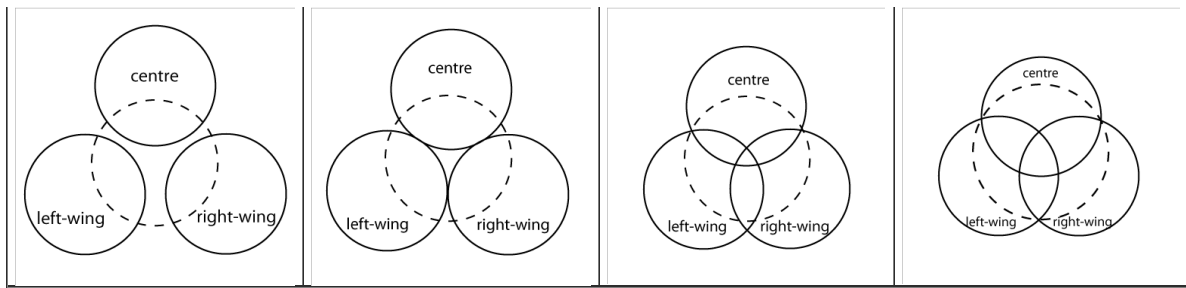
Will any equivalent process be evident on the occasion of COP24, given the practice at previous UN Summits? Is the United Nations capable to enabling such processes at a time when their claim to speak for *We the Peoples?* is increasingly in doubt?

The extensive commentary by panelists in French media coverage offers further insight, however -- as does the video of *La Grande Explication*. As might be expected many issues were repeatedly articulated at length in different ways. Many commentators necessarily had to associate themselves with the issues, from whatever perspective, by repeating arguments made at other times. Many had a need to speak at far greater length than was seemingly warranted under the circumstances. Speakers needed to present themselves at far greater length than is seemingly necessary in a process from which coherence is expected to emerge.

There is an obvious sense in which the longer a person is able to speak, the greater the probability of ensuring buy-in to any collective endeavour -- as may be the challenge of COP24, given the expectation of a productive outcome.

In exemplifying dialogue of a form, this process in France also exemplified its inadequacies as currently conceived. There is a dangerously naive assumption that simply by "bringing people to the same table" the resulting discourse will naturally engender coherence. As *La Grande Explication* demonstrated, this is far from being the case. Any efforts by the authorities to "bring people to the table" need to be similarly called into question.

Contrasting images of conventional "coordination" in political systems			



It is appropriate to note various efforts to imagine 3-fold coordination through symbols as shown below. The three on the right are understood in terms of [Borromean rings and knots](#). Of particular interest is that on the left, design by John M. Sullivan (*New IMU Logo based on the tight Borromean rings*, 2006). Their relevance to the coordination of socio-political systems is typically ignored, whatever role they may have in dialogue informed by symbolic dimensions.

Examples of symbolic 3-fold articulations of relevance to coordination of political systems			
<p><a href="#">Triskele</a> (Celtic knot pattern)</p>	<p>Early depiction of Christian Trinity</p>	<p><a href="#">Borromean rings</a></p>	<p>International Mathematical Union Logo</p>

## Coherence through dialogue of another kind?

There is huge irony to the fact that French authorities have deployed more resources to "dialoguing" with those demonstrators whom they arrested (the *breakers*?) than with those demonstrating peacefully with constructive intentions (the *makers*?). There is similar irony to the lamentation of security services (wearing gas masks) over the destruction, when it was the demonstrators who were forced to weep as a result of the extensive use of tear gas.

In that spirit, imagining future dialogue could usefully adapt the Biblical distinction (*What is the meaning of the phrase "old wine in new bottles"?* Quora, 2017):

- motivation of authorities in ensuring business-as-usual?
  - pouring old wine into old bottles
  - pouring new wine into old bottles
- motivation of protestors in ensuring genuine social change?
  - pouring old wine into new bottles
  - pouring new wine into new bottles

In this light, the challenge of authorities faced with new protest is how to "bottle it up" whether the protest is new or not. Will old approaches to bottling be adequate, or are new bottle designs to be found?

**Truce for dialogue?** Under extreme pressure, as a consequence of the demonstrations and destruction associated with the *Gilets Jaunes*, the French Government was forced into a radical shift of policy -- reversing its announced intention of implementing an increase of tax on fuel. The reversal initially took the form of a "moratorium", **postponing** any final decision on the matter for six months. This was criticized as "too little, too late" by both the *Gilets Jaunes* and commentators, and has seemingly been converted into a **cancelation** -- in the hope of calming the population, especially given anticipation of an even greater degree of chaos on the occasion of the next planned demonstration.

For the government, the pause for reflection was explicitly framed as a space for dialogue and consultation -- from 15th January to 15th March. Missing from this reframing has been any sense whatsoever as to how such dialogue might be organized in order to elicit the coherence so desperately sought.

A key question for France is the understanding of the national dialogue process as announced by Emmanuel Macron on 10 December 2018. As summarized by Le Figaro:

Dans ce "débat sans précédent" d'envergure "nationale", "vous aurez votre part", a promis le chef de l'Etat, qui veut "en assurer (lui-même) la coordination" (*Ce qu'a annoncé Macron pour sortir de la crise des "gilets jaunes"*, *Le Figaro*, 11 December 2018).

Necessarily unclear at this early stage is the meaning to be attached to "debate", "your part" and "coordination", as envisaged by the President. Further clarity is offered by the announcement by Macron of the 5 themes on which he declares that dialogue will focus (*Gilets jaunes: cinq thèmes retenus pour le débat local*, *L'Express*, 13 December 2018). However, he may well be faced by a "6th theme", namely why he believes he has the right to imagine and impose 5 themes on the *Gilets Jaunes*, given his previous inability to "hear" their concerns.

**Learnings for the response to climate change?** The challenge is more general, as the UN's Climate Change Conference (COP24) is demonstrating in the same period. However, even though it is an event from which strategic coherence is purportedly desperately required in response to a planetary crisis of unprecedented proportions, it is far from clear that the quality of dialogue will be appropriate to the challenge.

There is considerable irony to comparison of that event with the preoccupations of the *Gilets Jaunes*, faced with government policies for the ecological transition foreseen as essential by the Climate Change event. As frequently articulated by the *Gilets Jaunes*, any policies which may bear fruit in the foreseeable future totally lack credibility for the impoverished confronted in the immediate present by constrained resources in their daily lives -- with funds running out long before payday at the end of the month.

**Unfruitful patterns of dialogue?** The Climate Change Conference will of course be witness to forms of dialogue involving extensive repetition -- as with commentary regarding the demonstrations in France. There is little scope for criticizing that process, or any motivation to do so. Moderators and consultants in communication tend to be part of the problem -- each overly identified with their preferred proprietary process. Such events are disappointingly familiar to those who have experienced them over many decades. Despite the proliferation of communication devices, curiously little use is made of technology to enable alternative modalities supportive of the emergence of coherence, as argued separately (*Visualization Enabling Integrative Conference Comprehension: global articulation of future-oriented 3D technology*, 2018).

Given the resource devoted by authorities to other priorities, despite the fractured condition of their societies, what proportion might be fruitfully allocated to understanding dialogue processes -- and to improving them?

**Insight capture?** It is extraordinary to note the extensive articulation of issues and proposals in the French debate, matched by the total incapacity to process that information by authorities -- satisfied in their posture of making no effort whatsoever to do so. Even **minute writing** and the function of **rapporteurs** would seem to have become lost arts.

An exclusive emphasis is curiously placed on **verbal articulation** -- with no concern whatsoever as to how these insights are to be **registered or recorded** for subsequent consideration. It is almost as though the process cultivated rapid forgettability, with the consequent need for different speakers to repeat the same argument.

As a crisis, a comparison may be usefully made with the response to the *Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico* that began in 2010 (*A 14-year-long oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico verges on becoming one of the worst in U.S. history*, *The Washington Post*, 21 October 2018). As argued at the time, it can be asked why a collection process for remedial responses was not immediately set up using internet technology -- as can be done in a matter of hours (*Enabling Collective Intelligence in Response to Emergencies: illustrated by the case of deep oil spill containment*, 2010).

**Eliciting strategic possibilities or avoiding them?** One curious example is offered by a central issue for the *Gilets Jaunes* in rural areas, namely the mobility required for access to public services in the absence of public transportation -- currently necessitating use of private vehicles vulnerable to fuel prices increases. As framed naively from the perspective of authorities, the issue is how to "urbanise" such areas such as to enable (and justify) investment in transportation infrastructure sometime in the future. No consideration is given to the extensive and immediate use of mobile facilities for postal, health, food, and administrative services, including voting booths -- long developed for various purposes in various countries, most obviously in the case of mobile libraries.

What is it that inhibits the translation of verbally articulated issues into a facility enabling both their further articulation and dialogue of higher quality -- and of an even more effective nature? Since 2010, the role of social media in enabling communication, and dialogue of a sort, has advanced considerably. It has been fundamental to the emergence of the *Gilets Jaunes* uprising. Somehow this does not translate into a form with which authorities could engage -- if that was their real desire.

**"Dialogue"**: How is dialogue to be envisaged -- appropriate to governance of challenges to way of life (as previously appreciated) and to its exigencies (as are becoming ever more evident)?

The remarkable debate in French society, as evoked by the *Gilets Jaunes*, raises the question as to whether that style of dialogue is adequate to the challenge. Most of the panel sessions made it only too clear that that mode (however skillfully moderated) could be only too readily compared to a "circus" -- from which "performers" emerged with extremely different degrees of satisfaction, frustration and deception. This was not assisted by the least skilled moderators who officiously berated spokespersons for the *Gilets Jaunes* for their failure to organize and articulate proposals -- to the point of requiring an immediate commitment to such articulation in the days to come (in a manner readily understood as insulting).

What dialogue scenarios can be imagined for any period of reflection -- and duly critiqued? How might it be imagined that any coherence would emerge? How could the insights be rendered succinct and communicable -- rather than alienatingly verbose (as with this text)?

**Illusion of reconciliatory dialogue?** A particular concern is the manner in which "dialogue" is imaginatively framed by all concerned as some kind of magical process or panacea with which all are familiar -- one which, appropriately undertaken, would result in fruitful coherence. Who knows how to "dialogue"? Where is dialogue of higher quality demonstrated from which all might learn?

Any review of the debate in anticipation of this kind of ideal dialogue suggests that this hope has every possibility of being an illusion or mirage. Consensus as similarly imagined may be more than elusive, as separately argued (*The Consensus Delusion: mysterious attractor undermining global civilization as currently imagined*, 2011).


The difficulty can be framed in terms of the disconnect between the "headless hearts" and the "heartless heads", as evident with respect to the challenge of migration (*Challenge of the "headless heart" to the "heartless heads"?* 2018). That noted the argument of the economist **Paul Collier** with respect to the migration controversy: *the debate on migration is polarised into two strident positions, a heartless and the headless* (*On Immigration, Head to Head: Al Jazeera*, 7 August 2015; rerun on *Head to Head*, 18 August 2018).

Subsequently he clarifies:



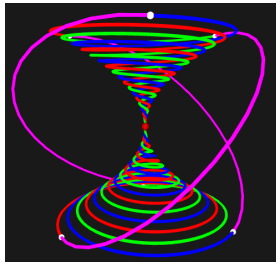
To rise to the challenge, we need to combine the instinctive compassion that mass suffering arouses with the dispassionate analysis necessary to craft an effective response. We need the heart supported by the head. The growing humanitarian crisis has come about because we've deployed one without the other. Our response has veered between the heartless head and the headless heart, and the results have been calamitous. (*Why camps are the wrong way to help today's refugees*, *The Spectator*, March 2017)

Technology in support of one, as distinct from the other, can be seen as exemplifying the problem -- Facebook linking "people of the heart", in contrast with structured email linking "people of the head". How might technology be used otherwise in response to democratic crisis, as explored separately (*Time for Provocative Mnemonic Aids to Systemic Connectivity? Possibilities of reconciling the "headless hearts" to the "heartless heads"*, 2018)?

**Visual indications of trialogue?** There are some references to trialogue in contrast to dialogue (*Triologue Meetings, EUabc; The Sheldrake - McKenna - Abraham Trialogues*). The challenge is how best to suggest its nature through visualization. Of particular interest is the widespread interest in the [Triple Helix model of innovation](#).

Triple helix representation of threefold socio-political coordination	
Conventional triple helix model	Adaptation of triple helix model to political systems
	

Related visualizations are presented below. The two on the left variously blur the 3-fold distinction, emphasizing continuity. That on the right suggests the possibility of higher orders of coordination according to the triple helix approach.

Suggestive indications in 3D of 3-fold coordination in political systems		
Torus knot	Trefoil knot (from Wikipedia)	Combining upper and lower helices of different chirality
		

Missing from any 3-fold articulation is the incorporation of a fourth or fifth function as might feature in any convocation of an [Estates General](#). This is particular relevant to more comprehensive understanding of the role of the media and popular movements such as the *Gilets Jaunes*. Suggestions for Quadruple and Quintuple variants of the Triple Helix model have been made, especially with respect to the challenge of the environment. The more complex variants necessarily address strategic issues of greater complexity ([Elias Carayannis](#) and David F. J. Campbell, *Triple Helix, Quadruple Helix and Quintuple Helix and How Do Knowledge, Innovation and the Environment Relate To Each Other?* *International Journal of Social Ecology and Sustainable Development*, 1, 2012).

Arguments for the development of these possibilities are discussed in the following:

- *Cognitive Implications in 3D of Triadic Symbols Valued in 2D: Representations of the triskelion in virtual reality and implications for quantum consciousness* (2017)
- *Eliciting Memorable Spheres and Polyhedra from Hyperspace: integrative connectivity of problems, strategies, themes, groups or people* (2015)
- *Psychosocial Learnings from the Spiral Form of Hurricanes: contrasting the implications of "triple helix" -- cognitive and otherwise* (2017)
- *Visualization in 3D of Dynamics of Toroidal Helical Coils: in quest of optimum designs for a Concordian Mandala* (2016)
- *Cognitive Osmosis in a Knowledge-based Civilization: interface challenge of inside-outside, insight-outsight, information-outformation* (2018)

## Dialogue misunderstood as wingless flight?

Under the following headings, the argument is developed separately in an annex (*Coordination of Wing Deployment and Folding in Politics: bird flight and landing as complementary metaphors of global strategic coherence*, 2018)

Flying in the winds of change?  
Calm required for balloon flight?  
Birds as national symbols of identity

Bird flight and wing clipping  
Winglessness?

## Wing-folding and sustainable "flight capacity" of social systems

Under the following headings, the argument is developed separately in an annex (*Coordination of Wing Deployment and Folding in Politics: bird flight and landing as complementary metaphors of global strategic coherence*, 2018)

Extremism and flight capacity?	Flying capacity implied by "wings" of a 6-pointed star?
Wing-folding and sustainable "flight capacity" of social systems	Star rotation: achieving and sustaining controlled flight?
Coherent visualization of social diversity	Symbolism of the Flag of Europe -- imagined in the light of bird flocking
Enfolding complexity comprehensibly	Interrelating "star-birds" of different "wing-configuration"?
Star symbols as schematic birds?	
Flying capacity implied by "wings" of a 5-pointed star?	

## Ecosystemic inspiration: makers "dancing" with breakers?

**Inspiration from the "wolves"?** The theme of ecological transition in France was an inspiration reinforced by an iconic Minister of the Environment, [Nicolas Hulot](#), who resigned in frustration from the Macron government. It was he who had enabled the controversial re-implantation of wolves and bears in rural France, as noted above. Curiously the justification for doing so, and the style of debate evoked by the *Gilets Jaunes*, together offer a potential clue to a more appropriate style of dialogue. As predators, the wolves and the bears are **breakers** of the highest order in the natural food chain -- whose function can be appreciated, however painful.

Dialogue, "French style", is characterized by a succession of people developing arguments -- as **makers** -- systematically interrupted by others on the panel -- as **breakers**. Arguments are "made" and "broken", with interruption characterizing the process, whether with a degree of respect or with insult variously implied. It can be recognized as a form of violence applied by panelists against each other.

Whilst the violent verbal dynamics are appreciated as "**infotainment**", it is as yet less evident how this might enable a viable form of coherence which could be collectively appreciated -- even though the style is equally evident in parliamentary debate in France. The sobering conclusion might be that until potential dialoguers and communicants understand and acknowledge how they themselves are part of the problem, they will be unable to recognize the nature of the solution required.

**Making and breaking in music?** The dynamics lend themselves to reframing in musical terms in that typically the **makers** in a dialogue each constitute a "voice" -- whether understood in democratic terms, those of song, or as an orchestral "instrument". The difficulty is that in dialogue the music of the collectivity (and any instrumentalization), is a real challenge to discern and appreciate, especially since no choreographic skills help to reframe the process.

Irrespective of the arguments made, the "poetry" (and "style") of the discourse may be appreciated -- dissociated from the content -- as in the case of orators such as the highly controversial Jean-Luc Mélenchon. In poetic terms the challenge in practice can be framed in metaphorical terms (*Poetry-making and Policy-making: arranging a marriage between Beauty and the Beast*, 1993).

Could appreciable coherence be embodied in song, more appropriate to evoking coherence than a national anthem like *La Marseillaise*? The argument can be made with respect to the response to the challenge of climate change as articulated by the United Nations (*A Singable Earth Charter, EU Constitution or Global Ethic?* 2006). Given the global crisis, surely this is now a time for global ethics? Why not? Something more evocative than: *Stop the World - I Want to Get Off* or *I Am the World*?

**"Orchestration" of "voices" in dialogue?** The orchestration of song, in which voices can be both **makers** and **breakers**, merits consideration -- given the sense of harmony and discord with which musical appreciation is associated. Of particular relevance is the manner in which preferred styles of music may anticipate more appropriate forms of social organization, as has been argued by [Jacques Attali](#) (*Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, 1985).

Given current proposals to use the period for a meeting of the [Estates General](#) in France, his insights are especially valuable in that he was instrumental in launching the *Estates General of the World*, as discussed by Jean-Christophe Nothias (*Tomorrow Who Will Govern the World, Jacques Attali*, 3 May 2011) -- as critiqued separately (*Tomorrow, Who Will Govern the World?* 2011). The value of the framework had been evoked in an earlier initiative (*Pour des états généraux de la planète, Le Monde Diplomatique*, October 1988).

A musical metaphor is especially valuable through the appreciation it offers of how "voices" challenge and interrupt each other, most obviously in jazz, and as articulated by [Vinko Globokar](#) (*Reacting: role of a performer*, 1970) -- as discussed with respect to improvisation in musical "discourse" (*Using the Lauburu to frame the challenges of multivocal improvisation*, 2016). Such insights call into question the role of any "composer" or "conductor" -- roles for which leaders and moderators assume they are especially destined and qualified.

**Understanding "chambers" otherwise:** Missing is presumably some understanding how the characteristic styles of different voices need to be "separated", "constrained" and "contained", as are the different species of **makers** and **breakers** in nature. The architecture of such separation, as in the notion of Estates General, could be understood in terms of "chambers" -- currently a feature of the spaces of parliamentary dialogue in governance.

In the light of the vigorous styles of dialogue evoked by the *Gilets Jaunes*, there is a case for considering how distinctive styles could be more appropriately organized into separate chambers -- whether physically or electronically. As with the distinctions made in track and field sports, there is little point in mixing 100-metre and marathon runners in the same space.

This distinction applies to those who favour lengthy verbal intervention over those who prefer brevity. The process of making and

breaking can fruitfully occur in such distinctive contexts -- with one issue being how many such contexts are required to satisfy the need for performance and ecological viability.

**Rewilding dialogue?** Citing the process of [rewilding](#) France, enabled by a former Minister of the Environment through re-insertion of wolves, the shift in attitude required of *makers* and *breakers* is usefully suggested by the iconic movie *Dances with Wolves* (1990).

Aside from the argument in terms of conservation of the environment, it is striking to recognize the sensitivity to national symbols in France -- both by the demonstrating *Gilets Jaunes* and the government forces endeavouring desperately to protect those symbols. The earlier argument highlighted the extent to which animals were valued as vital national symbols, as with the French rooster or the eagle. There is symbolism yet to be explored in the failure to comprehend how such symbolic animals might coexist -- especially in dialogue between those who identify with one or the other, or between countries with a similarly contrasting focus. As one ultimate embodiment of *breaking* and *making*, how is the modality of an eagle expected to engage with that of a rooster, for example? Given the case of the wolf, the question can be extended to that of reconciling the wild with domesticity -- symbolized in Biblical terms as the relation between the [Lion and the Lamb](#) -- more closely quoted as the "wolf and lamb".

The existing motivation to "eradicate the other" (as being a threat to the viability of the socio-economic ecosystem) calls for transformation into one in which the eradication is embodied in the interplay between dominance and subservience -- exemplified in music, dance and love-making. It would seem that the challenge is to envisage how *makers* and *breakers* might "dance" together -- given the existential threat that that implies. Such a dance, with the challenge of the threat, is however far beyond the "niceness" by which many characterize the forms of dialogue to which they aspire -- as exemplified in romantic dramas and tragedies by which people are otherwise enthralled..

**Confidence and confidence trickery:** Curiously the challenge is more fundamental than the economics on which the focus has currently been placed. This is highlighted by the emphasis on trust between voices of various styles -- and the dramatic loss of confidence widely acknowledged between populations and their elected representatives, most currently notable in France, and with the emergence of populism elsewhere (*Collapse of confidence, value, meaning, honour, options and patience*, 2014).

As argued by the *Gilets Jaunes*, the taxation purportedly designed to encourage a shift from diesel fuel to electric cars, is effectively a confidence following an earlier move to shift from regular fuel to diesel. Curiously unmentioned is the probable complicity of the Macron regime with automobile manufacturers, who naturally benefit from periodic pressures to shift to new technology under the guise of an "ecological transition" -- readily perceived as ["greenwashing"](#).

It is confidence which renders viable the monetisation of the economy -- breach of trust being especially evident in times of financial crisis. This is evident otherwise in the depreciation of [confidence tricks](#) of authorities (as *breakers*), deployed against the population (as *makers*), with their own skills as *breakers* ("black economy", etc). Both *makers* and *breakers* engage in a relatively high degree of [bluff](#) - - whether in business, romance or nature (camouflage, etc). Especially ironic in French is the manner in which opponents are depreciated with the term "[con](#)" as a form of insult -- readily deployed in dialogue.

Arguably the essence of *breaking* is to be seen in the breach of confidence which has become dramatically evident through invasive surveillance -- even on the part of leaders of democracies, or with respect to international organizations (*Alleged Breach of UN Treaty Obligations by US*, 2010). From the perspective of such *breakers*, this is vital to protect the national interest, excuse by the phrase: *Everybody does it*.

This complex of notions raises the question as to what "circulates" in a system characterized by the viable interplay between *makers* and *breakers*. The point is framed by one of the Founding Fathers of the USA, James Madison (*The circulation of confidence is better than the circulation of money*). The point can be developed otherwise (*Primary Global Reserve Currency: the Con? Cognitive implications of a prefix for sustainable confidality*, 2011; *Circulation of the Light: essential metaphor of global sustainability?* 2010).

**Concertation vs. Orchestration?** At the time of writing, Paris is in lock-down mode in anticipation of a security disaster -- given the probability of a repeat of the previous weekend (*Gilets jaunes protests: armoured vehicles to be deployed in Paris*, *The Guardian*, 7 December 2018). In parallel there is discussion of the process of "concertation" being "launched" by the French Government, a process anticipated as characterizing the forthcoming period of truce, seen as framing negotiation towards a fruitful outcome.

The term concertation, more frequently employed in French, can clearly be associated both with "concert" and the associations of "con". It also has some implications of certainty or certitude. How these are to be understood in relation to the musical subtleties implied by "orchestration" is clearly not under consideration since there is no effort to consider the implications of "concert" as a musical metaphor. The latter would render concertation vulnerable to being understood as an occasion at which the many would be obliged to come to listen passively and appreciatively to the few presenting what had been composed previously -- elsewhere and without consultation, and irrespective of preferences for style of music.

Of some relevance, it is curious to note that "concert" has been fundamental to a wider challenge of global governance, as might be of significance to the outcome of the UN Climate Change Summit. Various proposals have been made and articulated for a [Concert of Democracies](#). (Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay, *Democracies of the World, Unite, The American Interest*, January 2007). This followed from one of the first speeches during World War I of President Woodrow Wilson -- calling for "a concert of free countries". That echoed early articulations of a [Concert of Nations](#) and a [Concert of Europe](#).

As discussed separately:

However, in exploiting the connotations of such a potentially fruitful musical metaphor (if that is the intention), it would be most regrettable if the USA were only to develop its implications within a particular classical understanding of musical harmony -- and the social organization associated with it from past centuries. This would avoid any exploration of the other powerful potentials

of musical harmony reflective of the modern complexity that the new strategy purports to address. (*Policy implications: a "Concert of Democracies"?* 2006)

In metaphorical terms the challenge would be how to interweave the "trumpet" with the "triangle", or the "drum" with the "flute" -- given that these are indicative of styles of dialogue which engagement the *Gilets Jaunes* has made evident. How many such styles of dialogue merit representation for sustainable democracy? Where does the "still small voice" fit in -- given the number of "trumpets"?

Curiously the emphasis on both concertation and concert omits a dimension shared by both -- if anagrams and word ply are of relevance, as argued separately (*Global Governance as a Riddle*, 2018). Rather than with respect to the subtleties they may imply, both may be explored in terms of the "concrete" on which some may be primarily focused in each case. A "concert" can be valued as "concrete", as may "concertation". However part of the challenge lies in resisting the tendency to the excessive concretization of the subtle -- as is proving to be the case with quality of life and the cpncretization of the Earth's surface.

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