



# laetus in praesens

Alternative view of segmented documents via Kairos

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## Cognitive Encryption enabling Collapse of Civilization

### Drowned by the undertow of pseudophilia

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## Introduction

The inspiration for this exploration is the possibility that the categories by which the global problematique is defined may effectively conceal a fundamental flaw -- one that is necessarily poorly recognized. With respect to climate change, there is considerable familiarity with temperature, pressure, rain, sea level, and the like. Many such terms are defined in detail in definitions readily accessible online and in libraries. Such definitions are conventionally held to exhaust the meaning to be attributed to them. The challenge of global governance is to embody such terms in the articulation of coherent remedial global strategies -- which the population is expected to find meaningful.

On the other hand there are articulations dating back thousands of years, in a diversity of cultures, configuring categories such as Earth Air, Fire and Water. These have evoked credibility over extensive periods and continue to do so for some. However the manner of their articulation, and the cognitive engagement with them, is considered totally outmoded and misleading by those who now define them unquestionably according to the insights of their respective disciplines.

The question here is whether, unknowingly, global civilization has in fact designed a trap for itself which inhibits any effective remedial strategy in response to issues such as climate change, inequality, disease, and the like. The nature of the trap could be understood as following from the insight of [Geoffrey Vickers](#): *A trap is a function of the nature of the trapped* (*Freedom in a rocking boat: changing values in an unstable society*, 1972). Is the very nature of the definitions currently embodied in remedial strategies subject to the challenge articulated by Albert Einstein: *Problems cannot be solved by the same level of thinking that created them*.

The argument can be framed otherwise through reference to the surprising recognition of the "disconnect" from nature, evidenced by anecdotal tales of children not knowing where milk or eggs come from -- given that these products are commonly taken from supermarket shelves. On the other hand it could be asked whether the promotion of "back to nature" holiday experiences, with exposure to sea, mountain, snow, forests, and wildlife, is an appropriately fundamental corrective -- especially when such experiences are understood as captured and shared by photo and video.

As explored here the question is whether the categories by which reality is defined are better understood as effectively [encrypted](#) to ensure [confidentiality](#) -- but for whom? **Is a definition to be recognized as a form of encryption?** So framed it is necessarily those articulating definitions who are designing the method of encryption in the light of the insights of their discipline.

As a useful metaphor encryption frames a further question. What level of encryption is used in the process of description? The art of encryption recognizes levels of encryption of ever greater complexity in order to ensure ever greater levels of secrecy and security -- but for whom? What degree of encryption is associated with reference to "forest" or to "whale" in conventional strategic discourse? The

question could be asked of problems such as "inequality" or of values such as "justice" or "peace".

Such a question is clearly of relevance to "human being", given the long-standing practice of recognizing some as "less than human" or even as "non-human". Expressed otherwise, what is the encryption -- if any -- associated with such slogans as: "all you need is love"?

A corresponding metaphor offers further insight in relation to this argument. What indeed is hacking and who are the hackers? By what process is the encryption of definitions "hacked"? Who engages in hacking definitions and how are they framed and treated by the encryptors?

The argument here is that there is a possibility that the current global civilization has entrapped itself in a dysfunctional form of cognitive encryption which undermines every remedial initiative.

## Surrogate encryptions of reality?

: Several devices may serve the purpose of rendering reality relatively "non-decodable", for some, if not for many. These include:

- **paywalls**, namely claiming the information is available, but pricing at a level to discourage most, if not all. If exceptionally meaningful information could only be accessed at a price of \$10,000, who would bother? What would be the case for lower prices: \$1,000, \$100, \$10? What does this say of books priced over \$100 which claim to offer vital strategic insights for humanity?
- **length**, namely articulation of vital information into lengthy documents (whether freely available or not) which few have the patience or motivation to read. Examples include complex thousand-page treaties and complex mathematical insights, as with the "proof" of the so-called "[enormous theorem](#)" requiring some 15,000 pages -- and far beyond the capacity of any single individual
- **segmentation**, namely embodying parts of the information in separate documents, variously located and requiring different access procedures. This inhibits acquisition of an integrated understanding which would render the insight meaningful.
- **copyright**, namely presenting the information as being the intellectual property of the supplier, inhibiting its exploration and use, notably by electronic searches. This form of "incarceration of knowledge" is especially curious in the case of documents which purportedly contain insights of vital significance to remedial strategies -- but cannot be used if copyright is infringed. As with the paywall surrogate, it can be recognized as claim for payment of a "ransom" (or other privileges), if humanity is to be saved. As a form of "encryption of the first order", various levels of copyright can be recognized, as highlighted by the provisions of the [Creative Commons Licenses](#). Copyright, combined with other devices, may limit access to "read only" with no capacity to "copy".
- **language**, namely presentation of the insight in a language comprehended by relatively few, whether a spoken language, a written language, jargon, or by equations -- potentially with copyright restrictions on its translation into other forms. Particular constraints are evident in the many examples of words and concepts which cannot be adequately translated into other languages. A notable example of the challenge is [urban jargon and slang](#) which may have no equivalent in the common language of the culture. This exemplifies what can be understood as the cultivation of cognitive encryption as a means of reinforcing identity..
- **secrecy classification**, namely the explicit restriction of access to some, typically in the intelligence agencies or government, but also when understood as "trade secrets" by corporations. Their implication have been dramatically highlighted by the [United States diplomatic cables leak](#) via Wikileaks in 2010. They can be understood as an extension of restrictive understandings of intellectual property. A number of levels of secrecy may be distinguished (\*\*\*) . These can be readily recognized as corresponding to levels of encryption.
- **judicial restriction**, namely a form of security classification imposed on a topic because it is under ongoing legal investigation. However this restriction may be rendered permanent through [injunctions](#), extended in some jurisdictions to so-called [super-injunctions](#) whereby discussion of the existence of the injunction cannot be publicised in any way.
- **disinformation**, rather than restricting access in any way, vital information may be surrounded or obscured by a variety of confusing alternatives, however speculative or unsubstantiated, as used in war time propaganda and now recognized as fake news (*Varieties of Fake News and Misrepresentation*, 2019). It is quite unclear to what extent the exaggerated claims of most advertising should be recognized in this light, despite the legal claim to acceptable [puffery](#).

## Technology-enabled authoritative encryption

Clearly in addition to the surrogates identified above, there are the technical forms of encryption by which valuable insights can be rendered inaccessible to varying degrees. This process converts the original representation of the information, known as [plaintext](#), into an alternative form known as [ciphertext](#). An encryption scheme usually uses a [pseudo-random encryption key](#) generated by an [algorithm](#). It is possible to decrypt the message without possessing the key but, for a well-designed encryption scheme, considerable computational resources and skills are required. An authorized recipient can easily decrypt the message with the key provided by the originator to recipients but not to unauthorized users.

As variously explained, there are several main types of encryption (Josh Lake, [Common encryption types, protocols and algorithms explained](#), *Comparitech*, 24 September 2020; Linsey Knerl ([What Are the Different Types of Encryption? HP Takes](#), 3 August 2019; Michelle Allan, [6 Types Of Encryption That You Must Know About](#), *GoodCore*, 30 October 2019):

- **Data Encryption Standard (DES)**, which was accepted as a standard in the 1970s using a 56-bit key, but is no longer considered to be safe on its own. It now serves as the standard upon which more-secure encryption tools are based.
- **Triple Data Encryption Standard (3DES)**, works by using three separate 56-bit keys for triple protection, but necessarily takes longer to encrypt
- **Advanced Encryption Standard (AES)**, uses "[symmetric key](#)" encryption. The receiver then needs a key to decode it. Various levels of AES encryption are used.

- **Rivest-Shamir-Adleman (RSA)**, relies on a [public key](#) to encrypt the data, whilst those receiving the data require their own private key to decode it. Using [number theory](#), the RSA algorithm selects two [prime numbers](#), which help generate both the encryption and decryption keys

Other available encryption services and tools include: [Pretty Good Privacy \(PGP\)](#), [Twofish](#), [Blowfish](#), and [Threefish](#).

The length of the encryption key is an indicator of the strength of the encryption method. For example, the original DES encryption key of 56 bits, with  $2^{56}$  combination possibilities, is no longer secure, being vulnerable to hacking by [brute force attack](#). The current standard of modern encryption with RSA keys is up to 2048 bits. Decrypting a 2048-bit encryption key is nearly impossible in light of the number of possible combinations. However, quantum computing is now threatening to change this.

## Disciplines as encryptors through specialized jargon?

It is appropriate to ask to what extent the specialized jargon developed within any discipline constitutes a form of encryption -- as a relatively secret language through which the identity of the disciplines is cultivated. Factors in that respect include:

- the manner in which knowledge is effectively "incarcerated" or "entombed" through publication in journals (and by other means) to which only limited access is provided or possible (given the paywall constraint)
- the use of special languages (especially mathematical), comprehensible only to the few
- the time considered necessary (if not mandatory) to develop competence in the ability to comprehend and decode the insights of those disciplines
- the manner in which such requisite learning (and the associated qualifications) is used to reinforce professional hierarchies and ensure exclusion from certain insights which remain incomprehensible other than to the few -- thereby framed as "ignorant"
- the extent to which such encryptors trap themselves within a playbook systemically analogous to that of religious priesthods, most notably of the past -- especially given the very limited ability to communicate between [information silos](#) and to ensure [joined-up thinking](#)

Of some relevance, even within a discipline, is the relation between a "public key" and a "private key" -- metaphorically understood. It could be argued that the published insights of a discipline are effectively encrypted under a public key. Practitioners of the discipline are effectively given a private key as they qualify -- one that is upgraded through the successive stages of their qualification.

Of interest in this context is the argument of the physicist [Richard Feynman](#): *If you think you understand quantum mechanics, you don't understand quantum mechanics*. This suggests that the insight might be appropriately generalized to: *If you think you understand reality, you don't understand reality*.

From a strategic perspective, the insight might be provocatively extended to: *If you think you understand what is appropriate, you don't understand reality* ([Comprehension of Appropriateness](#), 1986).

## Encryption through "mystification" of secrets

Potentially distinct from the form of encryption cultivated by the disciplines of academia and the arts are those cultivated in other forms of organization. These include:

- **religions**, are necessarily committed to a representation of reality, possibly understood as a process of proselytism governed by divine mandate. The levels of subtlety of insight following from divine revelation, typically embodied in sacred scriptures, are held to require interpretation by intermediaries. Such subtlety is readily recognized as associated with a form of cognitive encryption, indeed considerable effort is devoted to decrypting the codes associated with sacred texts.
- **secret societies**, following to some degree the practices of religions in developing hierarchies of those "in the know", most notably as in the case of the Freemasons. Of interest in this mode of organization is the transition to ever higher degrees of insight, however encrypted and represented. Each such transition, as a "rebirth", may exemplify those in the academic world, but to a far higher degree ([Varieties of Rebirth: distinguishing ways of being "born again"](#), 2004)
- **organized crime**, in which the manner of communication may be highly encoded, and in which a [code of silence](#) may be the rule
- **terrorist organizations**, necessarily exposed to the most sophisticated tracking technology, must depend on verbal codes analogous to those used by the resistance in World War II. Rather than in conventional forms of encryption, these may rely on metaphors and code words and phrases.

There are learnings to be derived from the history of the past World Wars in which particular significance was attached to the role of so-called [code talkers](#) ([Code Talkers: use of the Native Indian tongue for secure communications](#)). Advantage was derived from the unusual terminology and construction of various languages. Are there "code talkers" to be recognized in the ongoing global "war on terror"?

The challenge has been recognized in the recent instigation by the US [Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity \(IARPA\)](#) of [The Metaphor Program](#), a two-phase project designed to first develop automated techniques for recognizing, defining, and categorizing linguistic metaphors and then use that information to characterize differing cultural perspectives (Alexis C. Madrigal, [Why Are Spy Researchers Building a 'Metaphor Program'?](#) *The Atlantic Monthly*, 25 May 2011; Tim Hornyak, [U.S. spies want computers to analyze metaphors](#), *CNET*, 30 May 2011). Clearly a secondary objective is to determine the existence of strategic threats embedded in electronic communications.

As mentioned above, consideration could be given to advertising as a form of cognitive encryption, perhaps rendered more obvious through [advertising jingles](#). One preoccupation with many forms of advertising is ensuring "[customer buy-in](#)". To that end every form of invasive advertising may be used to engage and hold attention through what is readily recognized as a form of indoctrination. Understood

otherwise, at what point does the dissemination of misinformation (effectively propaganda) constitute a form of cognitive encryption -- distorting the reality which might be otherwise appreciated?

Given its insidious relation to advertising, of relevance to this theme is the summary of the argument of [Robert Jensen](#) by [Chris Hedges](#) (*Pornography Is What the End of the World Looks Like*, *Information Clearing House*, 20 February 2021). As worded by Hedges:

We are blinded by self-destructive fantasy. An array of amusements and spectacles, including TV "reality" shows, huge sporting events, social media, porn (which earns at least twice what Hollywood movies generate), alluring luxury products, drugs, alcohol and magic Jesus, offers enticing exit doors from reality. We yearn to be rich, powerful and celebrities. And those we must trample to build our pathetic little empires are seen as deserving their fate.... Porn seeks to eroticize this sadism.... Porn is not about sex, if one defines sex as a mutual act between two partners, but about masturbation, a solitary auto-arousal devoid of intimacy and love. The cult of the self -- that is the essence of porn -- lies at the core of corporate culture. Porn, like global capitalism, is where human beings are sent to die.

## Encryption of insights of vital significance?

Of relevance to the argument here are questions of:

- what level of encryption is being employed with respect to issues which are of most radical strategic importance for humanity?
- what justifies encryption at the highest level in the face of global crises and much-challenged global governance?
- who has access to insights subject to the highest level of encryption -- and why?
- according to the level of encryption:
  - who has the skills and/or technology to decrypt or decode insights?
  - how long does it take to decrypt or decode insights?
- with respect to the distribution of "keys":
  - to whom is a "public key" made available?
  - to whom is a "private key" made available?

Of particular interest is the nature of the hidden agendas which encryption is presumably used to conceal -- through levels of secrecy classification -- as in the case of:

- religions and secret societies, and their partially revealed ambitions for global dominance, most notably in the case of fundamentalists (Michael Maiden, *Turn the World Upside Down: discipling the nations with the Seven Mountain Strategy*, 2011)
- intelligence services, especially military intelligence, notably given the US aspiration to so-called [full-spectrum dominance](#)
- governments and their agencies, notably in the light of the US diplomatic cables leak
- international agencies, notably in the case of the United Nations
- corporations, and especially multinational corporations, notably in the light of the [Diesel emissions scandal](#). In the case of UK super-injunctions, due to their very nature it is not possible to say exactly how many super-injunctions exist or have been issued, although the *Wikipedia* entry provides a [list](#) of those which have become public.

## Hacking conventional descriptions however encrypted

It is widely recognized that all levels of security are vulnerable, however encrypted. There are numerous examples of successful hacking of highly secure systems -- paralleled by the incidence of problematic leaks. The race between encryption and hacking is commonly described as an "arms race".

In this argument the focus is **not** on the conventional skills in [security hacking](#) which are now widely recognized and employed, whether legally or illegally (as [cyber spying](#) or [cybercrime](#)), between competing groups with vested interests and agendas to conceal and promote. Just as the sections above emphasize a more generic understanding of encryption and encoding, so too it is appropriate to recognize a more generic understanding of hacking and decryption.

Obvious examples include:

- **journalists and critics**, in their the effort to decrypt the encoded declarations and "[doublespeak](#)" of:
  - politicians and world leaders
  - corporate spokespersons
  - religious leaders
- **dissidents and whistleblowers**, in their efforts to report on misleading information and malfeasance, following the pattern of religious heretics of the past to some degree
- **specialized academics and discourse analysts**, in their efforts to "[deconstruct](#)" public discourse to expose the underlying arguments -- and most notably any inconsistencies and contradictions

These examples are variously recognized with respect to fake news and disinformation, most obviously with respect to claims to be able to remove such information from social media -- whether or not such claims are themselves suspect.

More provocatively fundamental are the efforts to reframe forms of encryption through art, poetry or humour (Jeanne Willette, *Michel Foucault: "This is not a Pipe"*, *Art History Unstuffed*, 17 January 2014; Chris Pash, *An Ig Nobel Prize has been awarded for bullshit*, *Business Insider*, 23 September 2016).

A more philosophical approach is a reframing of the extent and nature of "[bullshit](#)" ([Harry G. Frankfurt](#), *On Bullshit*, Princeton University

Press, 2005; Gordon Pennycook, et al. *On the Reception and Detection of Pseudo-profound Bullshit*, *Judgment and Decision Making*, 2015).

However, whilst technology-enabled encryption now offers a very high order of security -- a challenge to hackers of that ilk -- the problem for bullshit hackers is clearly dependent on other skills in order to have any chance of success.

## Misplaced concreteness as a form of encryption

As implied with respect to the languages of the disciplines and their natural inclination to define unquestionably, this renders them vulnerable to the trap of [misplaced concreteness](#), as discussed separately (*Misplaced concreteness and mirroring*, 2021). This is especially evident in the problematic response of science to the nature of human values, culture and aesthetics, as argued by C. P. Snow (*The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*, 1959).

**Pseudophilia?** The restrictive materialist focus of the "natural sciences" reinforces cognitive inability to engage with subtlety, however questionably explored by the so-called [pseudosciences](#). From that perspective, the superficial nature of reality explored by science invites its characterization as susceptible to [pseudophilia](#) -- extending use of that term from attraction to fake matters.

A striking example is offered by the reference of astronomers to "sunrise" and "sunset". The terms are a convenience from a geocentric perspective, but their use is a form of disinformation reinforcing an illusion -- against which Galileo struggled so valiantly centuries ago. By contrast feminists are scathing in their critique of sloppy use of terminology -- for convenience -- given the implications of such usage, as with reference to "chairman" and "mankind" for example. Concerns with [political correctness](#), however excessive, are reflective of degrees of rigour to which science has proven to be averse -- and is currently facing controversial consequences in academia and in the [policization of science](#).

There is an ironic complementarity to the institutions of Catholicism and Science, with the first having condemned Galileo's scientific insights -- now readily recognized as bedevilled by pseudophilia (of which paedophilia is but an instance). Whereas the second is unable to comprehend fruitfully the fundamental role of belief -- only to find itself bedevilled by pseudophilia unrelated to the existential concerns of human beings. Both have a desperate institutional need to defend their methodologies at all costs, especially when the purity of their methodology is threatened by the implication of icons of their faith in some form of pseudoscience or pseudophilia.

**Engaging with subtlety through language?** Less superficial perspectives are offered by Alexander Wendt (*Quantum Mind and Social Science: unifying physical and social ontology*, 2015) and in a report for the [Scientific and Medical Network](#) by Harald Walach (*Galileo Commission Report: Beyond a Materialist Worldview – Towards an Expanded Science*, 2020).

The use of words with conventional meanings in such arguments helps to frame the question as to whether the capacity to use such words is matched by the capacity to engage cognitively with the meaning to which the words refer. The use of "sunrise" and the increasing reliance of science on a quantum perspective, frame a question of interest in relation to "objectivity": **To what degree is objective reification a matter of "convenience" -- irrespective of the degree to which this reinforces misunderstanding?**

It is only some theological preoccupations which appear to have taken account of this challenge through [apophatic theology](#) or "negative theology". This is a form of theological thinking and religious practice which attempts to approach the Divine, by negation -- in effect to speak only in terms of what may not be said about the perfection that is God (Michael Sells, *Mystical Languages of Unsaying*, 1994).

Curiously [apophasis](#) is primarily recognized as a rhetorical device whereby the speaker or writer brings up a subject by either denying it, or denying that it should be brought up. As such it is understood as related to irony.

From a perspective of apophasis, the contrast which tends to prevail is kataphasis. In the case of [cataphatic theology](#) (or kataphatic theology), this uses explicit ("positive") terminology to describe or refer to the Divine, rather than the implicit ("negative") references of apophatic theology. Arguably there is a case for analogous usage in the case of any efforts to refer to the subtlety of unity in its many forms (transdisciplinarity, identity, and the like). This is especially the case when there is explanatory indulgence in "multidimensionality" of a higher order than can be meaningfully comprehended Ron Atkin, *Multi-Dimensional Man: can man live in 3 dimensional space?* Penguin, 1981; Antonio T. de Nicolás, *Meditations through the Rg Veda: four-dimensional man*, 1978)

Unfortunately the deprecation most commonly implied by "negative" biases consideration of such possibilities in favour of the "positive" approach.

**Cognitively encrypted identity?** Of particular relevance are assumptions and discussions about personal identity in a bureaucratic context in which this is held to be adequately defined by "photo ID" and other administrative documents. Understandably this is a challenge for those who sense that this mode of encryption totally fails to encompass the sense of identity they experience, if only intuitively. More problematic is any sense of the chaotic lack of identity they may experience in moments of depression or otherwise -- despite possession of "photo ID" and the like.

It can be argued that society has developed a curious device to entrap individual identity (and that of many collectives) in explicit, objective language -- deemed "positive". Reference to any subtlety can then only be made through use of terms like "spirit" -- "collective spirit", "high spirited", and the like. At the same time it may be admitted that one cannot "fully know" a person -- despite extensive profiling.

There is a case therefore for distinguishing between [kataphatic identity](#) -- the "positive" approach and [apophatic identity](#) -- the "negative" approach, as discussed separately (*Being What You Want: problematic kataphatic identity vs. potential of apophatic identity?* 2008). This is especially relevant to arguments in which individual identity is understood to be multidimensional -- unrelated to any meaning that may have in statistical terms.

**Love as science or pseudoscience?** Figurative language makes extensive reference to aesthetics and love in a manner which may or

may not be orderly in any scientific sense. Disciplined efforts may be made to order the terms, however that may seem appropriate (*Questionable Classification of Figures of Speech -- as fundamental to the need for powerful rhetoric in governance*, 2016).

The irony for science is whether and how scientists may recognize love (or similar values). **Is it possible for a scientist to fall in love**, without being deemed to have succumbed to a dubious pseudoscience -- scientific apostasy (Sian Townson, *Why people fall for pseudoscience (and how academics can fight back)*, *The Guardian*, 26 January 2016; Aidan Reill, *The Pseudoscience of Love*, 2012)?

Or is love then simply reframed for a true scientist in terms of plumbing and pheromones? (*Why We Fall in Love: the science of love, Examined Existence*; *The Science of Love*, BBC; 17 September 2014; Bonnie Christian, *What is love? Science kinda has the answer*, *Wired*, 7 August 2017; Gayle Brewer, *What is love? Here's the science...*, *The Conversation*, 17 May 2016; Theo Harrison, *The Science of Love: lust, attraction, attachment and brain chemistry*, *The Minds Journal*). Provocatively it might be asked whether technocrats can reproduce without betraying their belief system?

More curious, as a "pseudoscientific disposition", is the capacity to "love science" -- especially in the case of a scientist (Michael Shermer, *For the Love of Science: combating science denial with science pleasure*, 2018; *Teaching a love of science*, *Australian Academy of Science*; *Women love science – what a surprise!* *The Independent*, 31 March 2013; Ted Widmer, *Love of science, not Trump's ignorance, will make America great again*, *The Guardian*, 3 July 2020; Carlo Rovelli, *Winston Churchill's remarkable love of science*, *The Spectator*, 24 October 2020).

There is of course an extensive literature on the arts of courtship and lovemaking -- whether or not the strategic use of the associated set of skills is to be understood as a discipline and recognized as a science.

**Objectivity versus Subjectivity:** The fundamental controversy regarding the relationship between science and not-science could be understood as framed by that between objectivity and subjectivity (Max Deutscher, *Subjecting and Objecting: an essay in objectivity*. 1983; *A Subjective Objection: Objecting to Subjection -- interplay of questions enabling transcendence of fundamental dilemmas?* 2018).

As polar extremes, it might be asked how the suffix "-ject" suggests a fundamental (or transcendent) perspective on their relationship. Similarly it can be asked what prefixes in addition to "ob-" and "sub-" are of relevance to that question, in the light of earlier considerations (*Exploration of Prefixes of Global Discourse: implications for sustainable confidelity*, 2011; *New Paradigms via a Renewed Set of Prefixes? Dependence of international policy-making on an array of operational terms*, 2003; *Prefix "Re-cognition" as Prelude to Fixing Sustainability -- "Pro" vs "Con" ? Speculative review of missing emphases potentially vital for psychosocial balance*, 2017). Such questions are of particular relevance in relation to controversial social processes of objecting to conditions -- and of subjecting selected groups to particular constraints.

It is especially curious that strategic discourse in English places considerable emphasis on "having an objective", pursuing one, and investing in it. By contrast little credence is given to "having a subjective" and investing in it. Science in particular would deprecate any such consideration, despite anecdotal evidence regarding the creativity of its icons (Douglas Hofstadter and Emmanuel Sander, *Surfaces and Essences: analogy as the fuel and fire of thinking*, 2013). Also curious is that the study of a particular set of objects may be described as a subject -- or the disciplined practice of an art? Can the practice of science also be considered an art?

There is however the possibility of *explanation as interplay of projection and "conjection"?* (2017). Whilst conjecture may indeed be valued in contrast to projection (and the framing it offers for strategic projects), of interest are the possible *surrogates of "conjection" as an unrecognized cognitive process?* (2017).

Especially intriguing in that regard is the recognition of the variety of geographical [map projections](#) and the distinctive distortion with which each is associated (Robert Lloyd and Theodore Steinke, *Recognition of Disoriented Maps: the Cognitive Process*, *The Cartographic Journal: The World of Mapping*, 1984; see [List of map projections](#)). Now known as [cognitive geography](#), the cognitive challenges of cartography have been pointedly highlighted in an early paper of Barbara Petchenik (*Cognition in Cartography*. *Cartographica*, 19, 1977).

## Dysfunctional encryption of climate and social issues?

**Overdefinition:** There is no lack of reference to social issues and their definition (inequality, injustice, violence, etc) and to environmental issues (climate change, extinction of species, etc.). At the same time there is considerable reference to human values (peace, compassion, love, harmony, etc). Arguably no problem is susceptible to recognition unless contrasted with such a value, as is a theme of the online [Encyclopedia of world Problems and Human Potential](#).

In this period it is however clear that, despite brandishing problems and values in global discourse, there is little prospect of any fruitful shift to a more fruitful strategic mode. Again, as cited above, there is merit to considering the implications of the insight of Albert Einstein: *Problems cannot be solved by the same level of thinking that created them*.

The argument here is that there is a strong possibility that the current global civilization has entrapped itself in a dysfunctional form of cognitive encryption. **This might be otherwise understood as a form of overdefinition which has denatured what is described in conventional language.**

**Engaging with the unknown:** The subtlety required for any "multidimensional" remedial action is totally undermined by a form of "positive", objective language which detracts from such subtlety -- perhaps to be caricatured as "project logic" (*Metaphoric Entrapment in Time: avoiding the trap of Project Logic*, 2000). One expression of this is the case made by [Barbara Ehrenreich](#) (*Smile Or Die: How Positive Thinking Fooled America and the World*, 2010). Another is the exploration by Gregory Bateson (*Angels Fear: an investigation into the nature and meaning of the sacred*, 1988).

Expressed otherwise, there is too great a pretence of "knowing" and too little engagement with "not knowing". In that respect there is considerable irony to the fact that, however limited, a degree of perspective on such processes has been widely publicized through the "poem" notoriously presented by [Donald Rumsfeld](#) in his role as US Secretary of Defense in the midst of the so-called "humanitarian intervention" in Iraq. His focus 4-fold focus, including "known unknowns" and "unknown knowns", can be taken further with respect to "undoing" (*Unknown Undoing: challenge of incomprehensibility of systemic neglect*, 2008; *Strategic Patterns in terms of Knowing, Feeling and Action*, 2008).

It might even be asked how the "N-foldness" of any articulation of concepts relates to its degree of cognitive encryption (*Challenging cognitive nature of a fourfold strategic framework*, 2021; *Recognizing a 9-fold information ecosystem of questions and answers*, 2021).

Again however, despite such perspectives, **how indeed to engage appropriately with the nature of what is unknown -- if not unknowable?** The question has been partially addressed by [Nassim Nicholas Taleb](#) (*The Black Swan: the impact of the highly improbable*, 2007; *Skin in the Game: hidden asymmetries in daily life*, 2018). Many of his conclusions have been only too well confirmed by the COVID pandemic and the chaotic response to it.

The prevailing approach can be usefully caricatured by an adaptation of the adage: *If all you have is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail*. Perhaps to be appropriately adapted to: *If all you have is overdefinition, every challenge seems to require a conventional bureaucratic response*. This is exemplified by framing challenges as security threats requiring military response. These then evoke the standard operating procedures of the "forces of law and order" -- in contrast with other possibilities (*Law and Order vs. Lore and Orders? Imagining otherwise the forceful engagement of singularity with plurality*, 2013).

**Engaging with the underdefined:** This frames the question as to the nature of strategies required to deal with the underdefined -- somewhat ironically implied by the presentation of Donald Rumsfeld (above). The challenge is more obvious in the light of the chaotic response to the current pandemic, climate change, and the ongoing "war on terror" -- as well as other "virtual wars" seemingly without prospect of resolution (*Review of the Range of Virtual Wars: strategic comparison with the global war against terrorism*, 2005).

Strangely the perpetual war of religion against "evil" frames the question as to whether "God" and "Satan" are habitually overdefined as a matter of convenience, precluding any more subtle understanding of that dynamic.

Indications of forms of engagement with the underdefined can be readily recognized as including:

- cultivation in the arts, and notably poetry, as variously argued:
  - *Aesthetics of Governance in the Year 2490* (1990)
  - *Ensuring Strategic Resilience through Haiku Patterns: reframing the scope of the "martial arts" in response to strategic threats* (2006)
- understandings of **deep ecology**, as variously argued
  - [Darrell Posey](#): *Cultural and Spiritual Values of Biodiversity: a complementary contribution to Global Biodiversity Assessment*. (1999)
  - Eric Katz, et al.: *Beneath the Surface: critical essays in the philosophy of deep ecology* (2000)
  - [Henryk Skolimowski](#): *The Participatory Mind* (1994)
  - James Cowan: *Mysteries of the Dreaming: the spiritual life of Australian Aborigines* (2001)
- engagement with nature:
  - [David Abram](#): *The Spell of the Sensuous: perception and language in a more-than-human world* (1997)
  - [Gregory Bateson](#): *Mind and Nature; a necessary unity* (1979)
  - *Cognitive Embodiment of Nature "Re-cognized" Systemically: radical engagement with an increasingly surreal reality* (2018)
  - "Human Intercourse": "Intercourse with Nature" and "Intercourse with the Other" (2007)
- appreciation and celebration of "collective spirit", perhaps most obviously in sports

**Aesthetic indications?** Clearly there is no lack of indications of other cognitive modalities -- which conventional disciplines effectively treat as irrelevant to the framing of appropriate remedial strategies in conventional terms, and despite a track record of their inadequacy. The difficulty is partially framed by the two-culture argument regarding the mutual dissociation of the arts and the sciences. Although numerous efforts are made to address this, they are effectively irrelevant to conventional strategic thinking.

A major difficulty is that the value of alternative modalities is undermined by dysfunctionalities perhaps most succinctly indicated as "indulgent mystification". Ironically it is this of which the conventional disciplines have been most usefully critical. There is little effort or motivation to address this dysfunctional complementarity which could be poetically compared to an archetypal challenge (*Poetry-making and Policy-making: arranging a Marriage between Beauty and the Beast*, 1993).

Strategic implications can however be envisaged (*Poetic Engagement with Afghanistan, Caucasus and Iran: an unexplored strategic opportunity?* 2009; *A Singable Earth Charter, EU Constitution or Global Ethic?* 2006).

The point to be stressed is that the primary features of the environment -- labelled Earth, Air, Fire, and Water -- are cognitively very distant from their cognitively encrypted surrogates, and from human experience.

## Transcending encryption in the light of traditional "categories"?

As emphasized above, **the disciplines have effectively encrypted comprehension of what is indicated -- to a degree which renders development and implementation of remedial strategies ineffectual by bureaucracies, if not impossible**. The experience associated with traditional indications is more appropriately understood as a form of engagement with what is effectively and necessarily underdefined.

In the case of the environment, the argument can be developed by consideration of the fundamental "categories" supposedly outmoded by many advances of science. Reflection over centuries has used a [4-fold cluster of elements](#) in the West (later including Aether) and a [5-fold cluster of elements](#) in the East, namely "Earth", "Air", "Fire", and "Water" (plus "Metal"). The disciplines of science have developed detailed definitions of what is purportedly indicated by these. These are not necessarily consistent with each other nor with the variety of experiences of many with what is indicated or implied by those categories.

It could then be asked what the underdefinition of traditional configurations could bring to environmental challenges or to their social analogues. Traditional represented as 5-fold stars, exemplified by the *Hygeia* of the Pythagoreans as basic to health, and the corresponding *Wu Xing* of Chinese culture, the possibility invites exploration (*Memorable dynamics of living and dying: Hygeia and Wu Xing*, 2014; *Cycles of enstoning forming mnemonic pentagrams: Hygeia and Wu Xing*, 2012). From a scientific perspective, it can also be usefully explored in terms of the [hypercycle model](#), proposed as a hypothetical stage of macromolecular evolution by Manfred Eigen and P. Schuster (1979) and discussed separately (*System Dynamics, Hypercycles and Psychosocial Self-organization: exploration of Chinese correlative understanding*, 2010).

Given the state of governance and interdisciplinary disarray, it could be asked whether there are insights which are implied (rather than defined) by modes of thinking deprecated as outmoded by styles of thinking desperately endeavouring to demonstrate their adequacy. The psychological engagement and familiarity with weather and climate phenomena, and their use as metaphors to describe social dynamics, suggests the possibility of fruitful insights (*Climate of Change Misrepresented as Climate Change: insights from metaphorical confusion*, 2008).

The question is whether the systemic integrity of the phenomena is suggestive of insights which could be adapted to strategic discourse. A cognitive revolution could be anticipated (*Weather Metaphors as Whether Metaphors: transcending solar illusion via a Galilean-style cognitive revolution?* 2015).

In the latter it was noted that the "Book of Changes", the *I Ching* (an articulation of the 8-fold *BaGua* pattern) is known to have been influential in Chinese politics over several thousand years (Tze-ki Hon, *The Yijing and Chinese Politics*, 2004). It offers an explicit interplay between weather and decision-making through the metaphors on which it based.

Ironically, whether it is to be recognized as the earliest *Global Weather Model*, it could also be recognized as the earliest *Global Whether Model* -- to be compared with modern exploratory simulations of relevance to forecasting, decision-making and governance. As implied by that play on words, and given the challenge of authoritative directives, and their seeming ineffectiveness globally, the case for using metaphor more systematically might also be made more fruitfully as an exercise in playfulness -- even game-playing (*Playfully Changing the Prevailing Climate of Opinion: climate change as focal metaphor of effective global governance*, 2005).

The classical Chinese system of the *I Ching* is noted and valued for interrelating patterns of change specifically with regard to their relevance to decision-making (*Cognitive implication in a Chinese system articulated through weather-related metaphors*, 2015). Such thinking regarding climate change may well hold a vital key to rethinking remedial response. Weather metaphors may prove a vital means of clarifying the "whether metaphors" of relevant strategic decision-making (*Enhancing Strategic Discourse Systematically using Climate Metaphors: widespread comprehension of system dynamics in weather patterns as a resource*, 2015)

Paradoxically the Chinese system makes use of a system of trigrams and hexagrams -- readily challenged as an instance of cognitive encryption. However, in contrast to Western practice in the use of such notations, the Chinese system is extensively associated with metaphor expressed in allusive poetic form -- exemplifying the aesthetics potentially essential to underdefinition and "unsaying". These help to reframe the polarizing tendency in debate, emphasizing assertion or denial in its various manifestations -- where a richer framework may be appropriate, favouring recognition of both or neither.

## Reframing unholy trinities as a resonance hybrid

**"Throwing" as a fundamental cognitive operation:** The following exercise focuses on terms of major interest which share the suffix "-ject". It could be argued that its etymological derivation from *jacere*, meaning "to throw" in Latin, is indicative of a fundamental cognitive function suggested by its common synonyms: pitch, push, shove, thrust.

Of relevance is the use of throw both in the case of projectiles and in forming the most basic container (throwing clay in pottery). Other indications of interest include:

- throw away or throw out (as in discard)
- throw down the gauntlet (as in making a challenge)
- throw in the towel (as in give up)
- throw into the mix (as contributing additional elements)
- throw oneself into an initiative
- throw up a possibility
- throw up (as an expression of disgust)
- throw back a fact (as a retort in an argument)
- throw-back (as a reference to a superceded past)
- throw oneself around

**Objectivity versus Subjectivity:** This argument highlights the challenge of the **objectivity** with which science and governance have endeavoured to respond to global challenges -- in relation to the **subjectivity** of the experience of those challenges in the light of the inadequacy of remedial strategies promised. Separately it is variously argued that the problematic relation between objectivity and subjectivity is necessarily a focus of continuing reflection:

- *A Subjective Objection: Objecting to Subjection -- Interplay of questions enabling transcendence of fundamental dilemmas?* (2016)
- *¿ Defining the objective ∞ Refining the subjective ?! Explaining reality ∞ Embodying realization* (2011)

**"Pro-" versus "Con-":** Although seemingly unrelated, there is arguably a similarly problematic relation between the remedial **projects** proposed (and the **projections** they imply) and both the **consensus** they require and the **controversy** they evoke. This challenge of "pro-" versus "con-" has also been separately explored, especially in the light of the ambiguities in the use of "con-".

- *Prefix "Re-cognition" as Prelude to Fixing Sustainability -- "Pro" vs "Con" ? Speculative review of missing emphases potentially vital for psychosocial balance* (2017)
- *Primary Global Reserve Currency: the Con? Cognitive implications of a prefix for sustainable confidelity* (2011).

**Injection and indoctrination of insight:** The process of injection is fundamental to new initiatives and to recovery of failing initiatives - both requiring injection of resources, especially funding, labour and expertise (Aki Harima, et al, *The injection of resources by transnational entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, March 2020)

Global indoctrination of insight can be recognized as an historical aspiration and commitment of religions, as with the **Great Commission** of the Christian tradition, or its equivalent in Islam and Judaism. This is also the case with respect to ideologies more generally understood, and is appropriately recognized as a concern of science -- if not a fundamental commitment. This preoccupation of science takes physical form in the irresponsible injection of new technology into environments with little concern for the consequences (pesticides, robots, etc.).

Curiously this period of pandemic is witness to a confluence of forces whereby "injection" (namely inoculation) is entangled with the project for a Global Reset -- a strategic injection in its own right framed by a process of indoctrination with respect to a particular insight (*Pandemic Created Opportunity for Global ReSet, Says Secretary-General in Closing Remarks to High-Level Dialogue, Stressing 'We Must Seize It', United Nations Press release, 23 November 2020*).

In the light of the thrust of the articulation above by Chris Hedges (*Pornography Is What the End of the World Looks Like*, 2021), there is a strong case for exploring the relation between injection and intercourse -- as framed by the widespread preoccupation with porn, whether explicit or implicit, and the process of insemination. So framed the associations extend to rape and violence, whether in physical or metaphorical terms.

**Rejection and Dejection:** Similarly there is a case for recognizing the systemic role of processes of rejection, as experienced by many -- evoking both a sense of dejection and a contemptuous perception of abjection, notably as "losers" (*Read Hillary Clinton's 'Basket of Deplorables' Remarks About Donald Trump Supporters, Time*, 10 September 2016). As a form of neglect, the challenge is however more general (*Reintegration of a Remaindered World: cognitive recycling of objects of systemic neglect*, 2011; *Social Reminders from Psychosocial Remaindering: review of current usage and implications*, 2011). Of particular significance is the rejection of the insights and practices of the past as outmoded -- appropriately caricatured as "throwing the baby out with the bathwater".

With respect to the environment, this can be recognized in the massive ejection of **waste** and the challenge of waste recycling, notably in countries notoriously framed by Donald Trump (*Unrecycled waste disposal as evidence for Planet Earth as a "shithole"*, 2018).

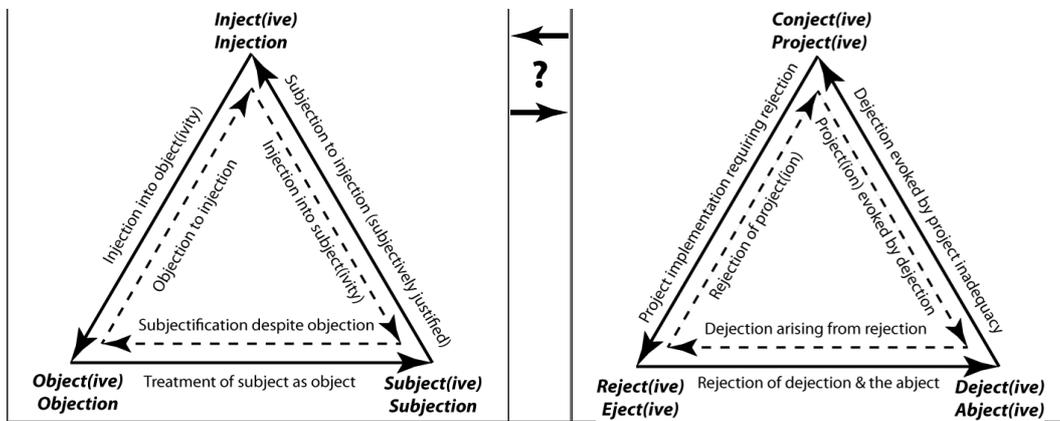
**Systemic interrelations?** There is a case for endeavouring to interrelate these struggles with meaning in relation to action and its current inadequacy, as argued separately (*New Paradigms via a Renewed Set of Prefixes? Dependence of international policy-making on an array of operational terms*, 2003; *Exploration of Prefixes of Global Discourse: Implications for sustainable confidelity*, 2011)

Arguably there is a somewhat extraordinary interplay between the often ambiguous connotations of the array of these terms as presented in tabular form below -- highlighting aspects of systems for which vocabulary maybe lacking or inadequate (in English).

Related terms of fundamental systemic significance with disparate connotations				
object	objectify -- render objective	object(ion)	objective	objectable
subject	subjectify -- render subject(ive)	subject(ion)	subjective	subjectable
inject	injectify? -- render injectable?	inject(ion)	injective	injectable
reject/eject	?	reject(ion)	rejective / ejective	(r)jectable
deject/abject	?	deject(ion)	dejective / abjective	dejectable ?
project/conject	?	project(ion)	projective / conjective	projectable

The question these evoke is the dynamic nature of the systems in which these processes and interpretations are entangled in global discourse. One approach is suggested by the interrelated schematic diagrams below. Each vertex is effectively a **memplex** -- exemplifying the challenge of cognitive encryption. Thus in the case of the schematic on the right, the "pro/con" vertex (for example) invites further reflection (*Explanation as interplay of projection and "conjection"?; Surrogates of "conjection" as an unrecognized cognitive process?* 2017). The "injective" vertex in the schematic on the left is especially relevant to indoctrination of insight now effectively taking the form of inoculation, as suggested above.

Complementary systemic trinitities -- associated with "-ject"		
Interaction of In-, Ob-, and Sub-		Interaction of Pro-, Re-, and De-



Given the interplay between such cognitive functions, and the confusion about them, it is appropriate to explore ways of thinking about their configuration as in the following visualization exercises. As memplexes, the labels of the vertices have been variously amended, since they may indicate both nouns and verbs. The less used term "disject" (as in dispersal and dissemination) has been included in the reject/eject cluster of functions.

Indicative animations of experimental configurations of a tetrahedron of basic cognitive functions using augmentations of basic tetrahedron to indicate possible articulations (potentially confusing in practice)		
Single	Exploded augmentation	Imploded augmentation
Animations made with <i>Stella Polyhedron Navigator</i>		

Arguably the triangular dynamic in each case can be more readily understood worldwide through equivalents of the hand-game [Rock–Paper–Scissors](#) (as shown below left) whether with different "weapons" or more of them. With respect to the latter, one popular 5-weapon game is "[rock-paper-scissors-Spock-lizard](#)", invented by Sam Kass and Karen Bryla. Mathematically it is recognized that as long as the number of moves is an odd number and each move defeats exactly half of the other moves, while being defeated by the other half, any combination of moves will function as such a game.

As discussed separately (*Systemic configuration of highly disparate cognitive modalities -- in the light of 5-ring strategy?* 2019), these considerations suggest visual comparison of the following, bearing in mind that it is the 3-fold Rock-Scissors-Paper which is most immediately comprehensible, with the 5-fold variants (of relevance to this argument) as a greater challenge. In the case of the *Wu Xing* cycle, as illustrated below, the interaction arrows can be understood as black=generating; white= overcoming.

Suggestive comparison of cycles of interaction				
Rock-Scissors-Paper	Rock-Scissors-Paper-Lizard-Spock	Chinese 5-phase Wu Xing cycle	5-fold Borromean rings	Discordian mandala
Reproduced from <i>Wikipedia</i>		Adapted from <i>Wikipedia</i>	From Chamberland and Herma (2013)	Reproduced from <i>Wikipedia</i>

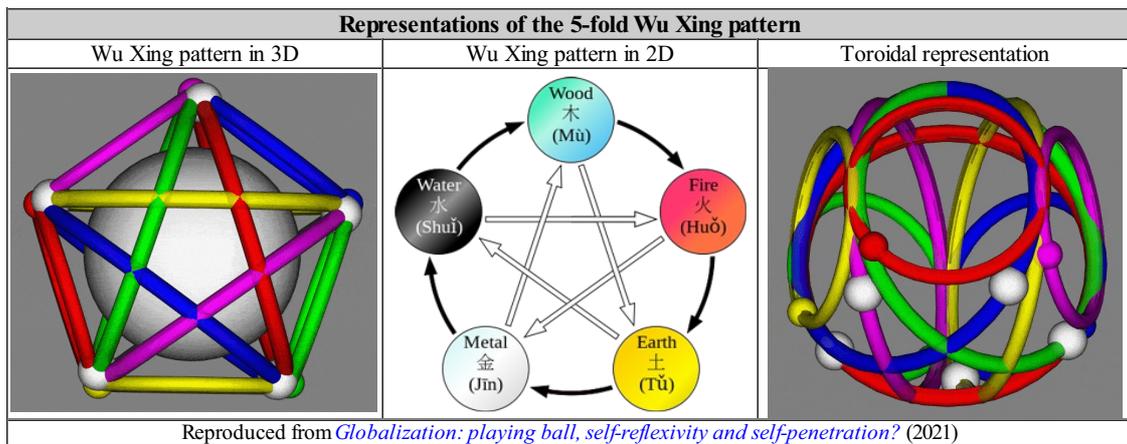
The 5-fold images above invite various explorations of strategic relevance (*Engaging with Elusive Connectivity and Coherence: global comprehension as a mistaken quest for closure*, 2018; *Correlating a Requisite Diversity of Metaphorical Patterns*, 2015):

- **Scissors-Paper-Stone:** This metaphor has been extended to 5-ring and 7-ring Borromean configurations (Marc Chamberland and Eugene A Herma, *Rock-Paper-Scissors meets Borromean Rings*, Grinnell College, 2014). As with the 3-ring game, the authors argue the case for 5-part and 7-part games with contrasting "weapons", noting that the number of such "games" has been extended to 13. Of relevance to this argument is whether the "weapons" are nations, as with the Group of 5 **Permanent Members of the UN Security Council**, the **Five Eyes** intelligence alliance, the **Group of 7**, or sets of mutually overriding strategic priorities of

governance. Do 3-fold groups invite similar insight (Trilateral Commission, Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat)? What then of the viability of any cartel or [crime ring](#), most notably [triads](#)?

- **Wu Xing:** *Cycles of enstoring forming mnemonic pentagrams: Hygiea and Wu Xing* (2012); *Transformation pathways in multivocal discourse* (2015)
- **Borromean rings:** *Requisite curvature: reconciling the Triple Helix, the Triskelion and the Borromean condition* (2018); *Borromean challenge to comprehension of any trinity?* (2018)
- **Discordian mandala:** *Con-quest Aesthetically Reframed via the Concordian Mandala: inspired by implications of the systematics of the Discordian Mandala* (2016); *Visualization in 3D of Dynamics of Toroidal Helical Coils: in quest of optimum designs for a Concordian Mandala* (2016)

With the focus of discussion of the last three on insights from 3D images and animations, the question is: **how can a 5-fold configurations of circles, rings or cycles be rendered more comprehensible if these imply quite distinct cognitive and strategic modalities?** The animation below is highly suggestive of the implication that the 5-fold pattern can only be comprehended to a limited degree, requiring instead another mode of cognitive engagement -- namely it must be "played competitively" in some way. This is consistent with efforts to understand strategy in terms of game theory, as investigated by some think tanks.



## Imminent "cognitive collapse" of global civilization?

There is no lack of reference to the probability of the collapse of global civilization, whether the emphasis is on the environment, the economy, social inequality, violence, or other evident trends. It has been suggested that these herald "singularities", as variously understood. By contrast the cognitive argument emphasizes what might be more usefully indicated as a "memetic singularity" -- a crisis of meaning and the ability to communicate it globally (*Emerging Memetic Singularity in the Global Knowledge Society*, 2009).

One feature of this collapse relates to collective memory, as separately discussed (*Societal Learning and the Erosion of Collective Memory*, 1980). Related to that are the cognitive constraints of individual memory faced with information overload (*Comprehension of Numbers Challenging Global Civilization*, 2014). Understood as a fatal loss of connectivity, the collapse can be recognized in terms of the "pattern that connects" as implied by the images above, and originally described by Gregory Bateson (Merlyn Driver, *The Pattern that Connects: Gregory Bateson and the Ecology of Mind, Wild Culture*, 27 October 2019; Søren Brier, *Bateson and Peirce on the Pattern that Connects and the Sacred*, February 2008). For Bateson:

The pattern which connects is a meta-pattern. It is a pattern of patterns. It is that meta-pattern which defines the vast generalization that, indeed, it is patterns which connect. (*Mind and Nature: a necessary unity*, 1979)

And it is from this perspective that he warns in a much-cited phrase: "Break the pattern which connects the items of learning and you necessarily destroy all quality."

Ironically, given the increasing recourse to [biomimetics](#) in the development of technology, the effective implosion may be usefully recognized by comparison with the destruction operation of termites -- so-called [white-anting](#). This is an Australian term for the process of internal erosion of a foundation -- erosion from within. It is often used in reference to groups such as political parties or organizations where information is used to undermine the goals of the group. It is understood as eating away at credibility or reputation in a subtle attack, often without the knowledge of those involved, as variously discussed (Christine Judith Nicholls, *The Red Professor and the White anting that continues to this day, The Conversation*, 17 November 2016; Ron Ferguson, *White-anting: Secretive, Nasty and Vindictive, Rapture Ready*, 15 November 2020).

Given the levels of techno-optimism associated with envisaged developments of artificial intelligence, the nature of the collapse can be understood otherwise in the light of the [Borg](#). These are an alien group, widely known as a theme of science fiction, framed as antagonists in the *Star Trek* fictional universe. As described by *Wikipedia*:

The Borg are [cybernetic organisms](#) linked in a [hive mind](#) called "the Collective". The Borg co-opt the technology and knowledge

of other alien species to the Collective through the process of "assimilation": forcibly transforming individual beings into "drones" by injecting [nanoprobes](#) into their bodies and surgically augmenting them with cybernetic components. The Borg's ultimate goal is "achieving perfection".

Existing trends in society can be interpreted as its progressive "borgification" clarified in one definition as:

Borgification is the assimilation of established external resources and organisational aspects into the network's holistic system of organisation. It extends the unified network into other foreign "legacy" informational environments such as operating systems, language environments, document repositories, applications and organisations. (*Borgification, Organic Design*)

In the light of the argument with regard to cognitive encryption, and a century after the transition beyond "Newtonian mechanics", the process can be understood as a form of "cognitive mechanization":

- Ronnie D. Lipschutz and Rebecca J. Hester: *We Are the Borg! Human Assimilation into Cellular Society* (2016)
- John Danaher: *Are we creating a Borg-like Society? (Algoocracy and the Transhumanist Project, 5 April 2016)*
- Joe Petrie: *The New Luddites vs the Borg (Fabian Society, 6 March 2017)*.
- Jelor Gallego: *Becoming Borg: What Is a Hive Mind in Science and Could Humanity Get There? (Futurism, 266 December 2016)*

This is in total contrast with envisaged alternative "cognitive mutations" of humanity framed in terms of a "New Renaissance" or otherwise (*Authentic Grokking: emergence of Homo conjugens, 2003; Emergence of Homo undulans -- through a "grokking" dynamic? 2013*). The latter is discussed in the light of wave theory (*Encountering Otherness as a Waveform -- in the light of a wave theory of being, 2013*).

The techno-optimism with which the [Global Reset](#) is now vigorously promoted can be recognized in terms of "borgification" -- confirming the suspicions of conspiracy theorists with regard to the current global initiative for mandatory vaccination as the primary pandemic response. The quest for "herd immunity" is curiously echoed by Borg assimilation into the "hive mind".

## Extraterrestrials as encryptors of high degree -- or hackers par excellence?

Increasing publicity is now authoritatively given to the possibility of alien life and contact with extraterrestrials. Relatively little attention is given to the possibility that ETs may pose a problem for humanity analogous to that experienced by indigenous peoples exposed to the colonialism of European empires. This is of course speculatively explored in science fiction movies.

Of some relevance to this argument are more radical cognitive speculations and their legal implications (*Writing Guidelines for Future Occupation of Earth by Extraterrestrials: Be done by as you did? 2010; Anticipation of Judicial Inquisition of Humans by Extraterrestrials, 2020*).

Specifically it might be asked whether ETs may prove to be encryptors of a skill not imagined by humanity -- potentially commensurate with the so-called [simulation hypothesis](#), as discussed separately (*Reframing the simulation hypothesis for greater human relevance, 2021*). As demonstrated by the marketing skills of colonialists and their missionaries, ETs may prove to be able to ensure "buy-in" to a degree which invites speculation (*Galactic Memo on Rapture Readiness, 2005*).

Similarly it might be asked whether ETs may necessarily complement their encryption skills with hacking skills of a very high order. Ironically, given the cognitive emphasis in this argument, these might best be understood as an ability to decode "bullshit" of the highest order, whether characteristic of strategic promises, of logical fallacies, or those [hindrances of the mind](#) to which Buddhism and Hinduism are especially sensitive.

As with the problematic role of hackers in civilization at this point, it may be entirely unclear whether ET skills in hacking will undermine human civilization or enable it to reimagine itself. Given the current use of hacking skills in relation to [cybercrime](#) and manipulation of public opinion, the more fundamental challenge in the case of ETs may be the possibility of some form of "psybercrime" and the ability of humanity to detect and respond to it.

The challenge is all the greater in that ETs may value and cultivate aesthetics to a far higher degree than prevails in the current global civilization. This they may experience as more offensive than the early experience of indigenous peoples by European colonialists. The aesthetic skills of ETs may be embodied in non-verbal communication of a far higher order -- facial expression, gesture, bodily movement, pigmentation, and potentially enhanced by control of pheromones. Rather than the horrific depictions of monstrous aliens by science fiction, these dynamics may ensure a form of cognitive encryption and hacking intimately related to far higher degrees of attraction to which humanity may have little resistance.

Unusual degrees of attraction -- "[strange attractors](#)"? -- are frequently labelled as "magical". In this context it is appropriate to recall the insight of [Arthur Clarke](#): *Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic*. The skill may lie in implication, unsaying and nescience -- in framing "cognitive holes" (*Fearful attraction of a hole, 2016*). In that light, ironically, there is every reason to suspect that the "magic" cultivated in [traditional knowledge systems](#) (as deprecated by science and religion) may offer unsuspected ways of engaging directly with cognitive encryption in relation to the environment.

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