



laetus in praesens

Alternative view of segmented documents via Kairos

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Reframing the Imaginable Key to the Future?

Clues to the nature of a Global Reset

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Possibilities

Cosmologists continue to speculate about the "shape of the universe", The hope of physicists is to discover a [Theory of Everything](#) enabling the potential of the future to be explored and exploited more fruitfully. Is it to be assumed that the social sciences have already discovered the "shape of society" -- and concluded that it is unquestionably "global", if not "M-shaped"?

The [World Economic Forum](#) is proposing a Global Reset (or a [Great Reset](#)) as a form of panacea for the crises of global civilization ([Klaus Schwab, The Global Reset, 2020](#); World Economic Forum, [The Great Reset, 2020](#)). The complementary [World Social Forum](#) has not engendered any consensus on a panacea -- other than curtailing those motivated by the World Economic Forum.

Given the characteristically divided and divisive views on the possibility, how is the key to the future to be imagined -- or reimagined? If indeed it is to be understood metaphorically as a "key", how is the "lock" then to be understood? More challenging is the possibility that **multiple keys may be necessary** -- as dramatically exemplified by the multi-key provisions required to launch a missile, where the keys must be turned simultaneously by those distinctively authorised. Multi-key security systems are increasingly common in other domains.

How many distinct keys may be required to unlock the future? Is a minimum of eight required, as seemingly implied by the [Noble Eightfold Path](#), for example? Does promotion of the economic significance of [stakeholder](#) distract dangerously from the sense in which, in their requisite variety, **"stakeholders" must necessarily be understood as distinct "keyholders"** ([Stakeholder Capitalism: A Manifesto for a Cohesive and Sustainable World, World Economic Forum, 2020](#))? If the security of the future is indeed as fundamental as that of a nuclear missile system, the appropriately authorised keyholders would need to act simultaneously in order to unlock the future.

Understood as somehow having been "lost", any such set of keys offers a further insight. The well-known tale of the person searching for keys at night under a street light makes the point -- when the person admits that they were "lost" in an area not illuminated by that light. Is the quest for any key to the future similarly constrained? More problematic is the possibility that, when "found", the purpose of any key would not be recognized.

People and relationships:

- If it is a new world leader, how will resistance to such leadership be handled?
- If it is a new facility in dialogue of a higher order, how readily will people adapt to its use?
- If it is the uncontrollable multiplication of mutual antipathy, what creative response might be imagined?

Things and aesthetics:

- If it is a book, how have previous books of such significance been interpreted?
- If it is a meeting, how have previous meetings of equivalent significance engendered fruitful change?
- If it is a song or music, what kind of response will it engender across cultures?
- If it is an image or a symbol, what kind of response will it engender across sectors of society and across cultures?

Subtleties:

- If it is an idea or an insight, how will it be communicated, and by whom will it be understood or misunderstood?
- If it is a new kind of question -- even a "deadly question" -- what kinds of answers will it evoke?
- If it is an acknowledgement of what has previously been denied, what will this enable?
- If it is a "Big Lie", how will this be promulgated and recognized?
- If it is a universal hope, what will it enable beyond naive expectations?
- If it is a universal despair, what will it enable?
- If it is the recognition of a new value vital to quality of life, how well will this be acknowledged by different cultures?

Biology and environment:

- If it is a plague or global disaster, who will survive and how will they cope?
- If it is a human mutation, how will the new form of humanity engage with those of the present?
- If it is the extinction of a key species, what chain reaction or domino effect might this engender?
- If it is a dramatic increase in population sterility, how will people cope?
- If it is the unforeseen side-effect of a vaccine, who will be held to blame and what might be the consequences?
- If it is the emergence of high intelligence in a non-human species, how will humans adapt their institutions and regulations
- If it is the predictable impact of an asteroid, what action might be taken -- to ensure the survival of whom?

Governance:

- If it is a strategy -- like the Global Reset -- who will welcome it as beneficial, and who will resist its implementation?
- If it is the discovery of sustainable community organization of a new kind, how will its replicability be credibly demonstrated?
- If it is a new kind of legislation, who will suffer most from its implementation?
- If it is a revolution -- a new "Protestant Reformation" -- will this repeat the disastrous pattern of such revolutions in the past?
- If it is a radically new understanding of income and employment, how will the transition from the old be enabled?
- If it is the emergence of total anarchy, what might emerge from such chaos?
- If it is the dominance by organized crime, how will people adapt such as to safeguard their values?

Technology:

- If it is a bomb, will it effectively take humanity back to the Stone Age?
- If it is an irreparable failure of the internet, how will global society coordinate itself -- and entertain itself?
- If it is the takeover of human society by artificial intelligence -- a singularity -- how might humans adapt?
- If it is a new technology -- a new source of energy, for example -- what downsides might be expected?

Conventionally unimaginable surprise:

- If it is the emergence of an unforeseen threat, how effectively will humanity adapt -- given the experience with COVID-19?
- If it is meaningful communication with the afterlife, what learning will that offer with regard to new possibilities?
- If it is the arrival of extraterrestrials, how will their intentions be determined and a response organized?
 - Aside from the many positive and negative speculations, one possibility is that the ETs might be legiferous and litigious beyond human imaginings in their assessment of failure to adhere to universal principles of intelligent life (*Anticipation of Judicial Inquisition of Humans by Extraterrestrials*, 2020).
- If it is a Messiah, how will such a being be recognized and received by different religions -- given that a Satanic framing is to be expected by those whose prophecies and expectations are not met?
 - An exploration of some such possibility could be informed by professional insights from preemptive news and image management (*Strategic Briefing for the Messiah*, 1999; *Strategic Briefing for Satan*, 1999).
- If it is a doubt, what kinds of new questions will it engender -- if any?
 - Could this be fruitfully informed by the insight of the poet John Keats in his much-cited plea for [negative capability](#):

... it struck me what quality went to form a Man of Achievement, especially in Literature, and which Shakespeare possessed so enormously -- I mean Negative Capability, that is, when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason -- Coleridge, for instance, would let go by a fine isolated verisimilitude caught from the Penetratum of mystery, from being incapable of remaining content with half-knowledge. This pursued through volumes would perhaps take us no further than this, that with a great poet the sense of Beauty overcomes every other consideration, or rather obliterates all consideration

Meta-possibilities?

- If it is all of the above -- a crisis of crises -- how will humanity encompass that complexity?
- If it is none of the above, what might otherwise be imagined and foreseen?

Related considerations:

- *Identifying Meta-challenges: checklists and documents* (2011)
- *Embodiment of Change: Comprehension, Traction and Impact? Discovering enabling questions for the future* (2011)
- *Checklist of Peak Experiences Challenging Humanity* (2008)
- *Way Round Cognitive Ground Zero and Pointlessness?* (2012)
- *In quest of the most deadly question* (2013)
- *30 Questions for the Counter-terrorism Experts of the World -- raising the question as to why they are not effectively addressed* (2017)
- *64 Questions for the Environmental Conservationists of the World -- raising the question as to why they are not effectively addressed* (2017)
- *Engaging with Questions of Higher Order: cognitive vigilance required for higher degrees of twistedness* (2004)
- *Superquestions for Supercomputers: avoiding terra flops from misguided dependence on teraflops?* (2010)
- *Challenging Questions of Global Significance from the Young* (2016)

Checklists such as the above can be deprecated as "laundry lists" that fail to engage with the configuration of such possibilities. This might be recognized as a "key" to the future in its own right, as can be variously explored, notably in the light of critical reviews of

exercises for the Club of Rome:

- *Exhortation to We the Peoples from the Club of Rome* (2018). Review of *Come On! Capitalism, Short-termism, Population and the Destruction of the Planet* (2018)
- *Engendering 2052 through Re-imagining the Present* (2012). Review of *2052: a Global Forecast for the Next Forty Years* (2012)
- *Scientific Gerrymandering of Boundaries of Overpopulation Debate* (2012). Review of The Royal Society report *People and the Planet*, (2012)
- *Mind Map of Global Civilizational Collapse: why nothing is happening in response to global challenges* (2011)
- *Recognizing the Psychosocial Boundaries of Remedial Action: constraints on ensuring a safe operating space for humanity* (2009)

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Barbara Ehrenreich:

- *Bright-sided: how the relentless promotion of positive thinking has undermined America*. Metropolitan Books, 2009
- *Smile Or Die: how positive thinking fooled America and the world*. Granta Books, 2010 [[summary](#)]

Thomas Homer-Dixon:

- *The Upside of Down: catastrophe, creativity, and the renewal of civilization*. Island Press, 2006
- *Commanding Hope: the power we have to renew a world in peril*. Knopf, 2020

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Joshua Cooper Ramo. *The Age of the Unthinkable: Why the New World Disorder Constantly Surprises Us And What We Can Do About It*. Little, Brown and Company, 2009

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Joseph A. Tainter. *Collapse of Complex Societies*. Cambridge University Press, 1990

Nassim Nicholas Taleb:

- *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable*. Random House, 2010
- *Antifragile: Things That Gain From Disorder*. Random House, 2013

Ernst von Weizsaecker and Anders Wijkman. *Come On! Capitalism, Short-termism, Population and the Destruction of the Planet*. Springer, 2018



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