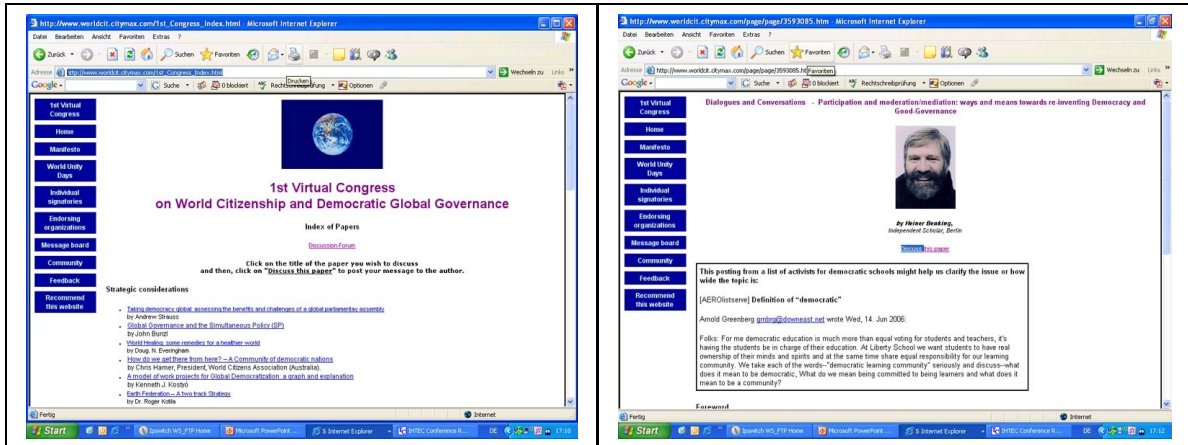


First Virtual Congress on World Citizenship and Democratic Global Governance

Discuss with leaders and members of world democracy movements



Dialogues and Conversations

Participation and Moderation/Mediation: Ways and Means towards Re-inventing Democracy and Good-Governance
 Heiner Benking, Independent Scholar, Berlin

(PLEASE NOTE: Below you find the full list of content. But only an extract which is omitting some figures, links, references could be made available at this time for the First Virtual Conference on World Citizenship and Democratic Global Governance. You will find more by following this link some time soon: <http://benking.de/dialog/dialogues-conversations2006>).

Unfortunately the Forum and the Site was discontinued. As I find many of the contributions of much interest I open the door here to the contributions and hope to get from the other authors their contributions soon and will link to them on this site.

Maybe also see these original start-pages of this webpage and forum from 2006 as PDF we have documented [here](#).

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 World Unity Days
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 on World Citizenship and Democratic Global Governance...
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Dialogues and Conversations - Participation and moderation/mediation: ways and means towards re-inventing Democracy and Good-Governance



by Heiner Benking,
 Independent Scholar, Berlin

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The Focus and Width/Depth of this paper

what we are trying to tackle here is how to follow our “whim” or “gut” or “belly” and “grope” and “grok” and at the same time ponder about **making complex societal multi scale dynamic questions and phenomena concrete**¹ Namely **What** is involved **when** we take into view at once commons and cultures, different identities,

¹ CONCRETENESS in INTEGRAL WORLDS, Heiner Benking and Sheryl Stalinski, XXVII Annual Jean Gebser Conference, Worldly Expressions of the Integral, October 18-20, 2001, Ohio University, Athens, OH

ways of learning and assumptions, understanding different scales and the **where, what and how**, or the "Zusammenhang" which makes "Zusammenhalt". - After writing I just realised how difficult it is to translate these two words – but as they condense somehow the essence I want to say here I will try with the help of my dictionary: Without **"Zusammenhang"**: **coherence, coherency, cohesion, combination, connection, connexion, connectivity, context, contiguity, correlation, interrelation, interrelationship** ... no: "Zusammenhalt": coherence, cohesion, strong company, ... see the ORIGINAL "way inside and out": from 1999² as these terms are as all too often circular, and worse sometimes the German means the opposite of the English term like with Culture and Civilizations, as the translators of Samuel Huntington's "CLASH OF CIVILISATIONS" had to learn the hard way³.

So we are dealing here with concepts and contexts and how they come to action and reflection. MAYBE see work in the field of terminology research, which urges us to include the **CONTEXT**⁴. I will not try to deal here with words like Gestalt, Kindergarten, and Weltanschauung – but as I have no words in English I have to ask you to look for the meaning "in-betweenen"⁵.

We are dealing here in this article about "participation" and "caring/sharing" in the broadest sense of the word - not just about communication in a verbal sense, but also about generative and intuitive "phantasy" communication phase. See FUTURE LAB Zukunftswerkstaetten (Robert Jungk⁶) see later GENERATIVE DIALOG but also about the pragmatic realisation phase (STRUCTURED, DISCIPLINED, STRATEGIC DIALOG (see again Robert Jungk and his FUTURE LAB participatory design, what is later called in the USA around the ISI called design conversations⁷. Maybe consider it overview and detail, panning and zooming, analysis and synthesis, generative and strategic. All such dichotomies do not match but provide an idea of the **in-between**, leaving the box, of pragmatic but un-orthodox thinking and acting.

This posting from a list of activists for democratic schools might help us clarify the issue or how wide the topic is:

[AEROListserve] **Definition of "democratic"**

Arnold Greenberg <grnrbg@downeast.net> wrote Wed, 14. Jun 2006:

Folks: For me democratic education is much more than equal voting for students and teachers, it's having the students be in charge of their education. At Liberty School we want students to have real

<http://benking.de/gebser2001.html> and Worldview Compositions in „anschaulichen“ cognitive spaces - a necessary evolutionary step - (* = visually appealing and obvious, close to grasping, groping and groking), Altenberg Workshops, Seminar 1996/97, 30. January 1997, Konrad Lorenz Institute for Evolution and Cognition Research, Altenberg, Austria, (German): EMERGENZ UND DIE PSYCHOLOGIE DES MENSCHEN Weltbildkpositionen in anschaulichen kognitiven Räumen - ein notwendiger phylogenetischer Schritt, <http://benking.de/worldview-compositions.html> <http://benking.de/culture/konrad-lorenz-emergenz-1997/sld001.htm>

² SAYING NO ! - Kultur der Verweigerung, Das konstruktive Nein, Bölaus Publishers, Vienna 1999

<http://benking.de/verweigerung.html>

³ See Kim Veltman: <http://www.inst.at/trans/0Nr/veltman2.htm#17> and Learning and Communication with Old and New Media http://www.inst.at/trans/15Nr/08_3/veltman15.htm

⁴ CONCEPT AND CONTEXT MAPPING - TOWARDS COMMON FRAMES OF REFERENCE, TKE '96 Terminology and Knowledge Engineering, INDEKS Verlag, p. 35-47, Vienna 26-28 August 1996, Section 1: Terminology and Philosophy of Science,

<http://www.ceptualinstitute.com/genre/benking/term/terminology.htm> and

TKE '99): Terminology and Knowledge Engineering; Galinski, Ch., Schmitz, K.-D. (eds), INDEKS VERLAG.

<http://benking.de/TKE-99.html>, and - (1996) Embodying Synthetical Spatial Meanings

http://benking.de/ISSS/ISSS_COB-1996.html see also close to the topic papers on: signs, supersigns, databases, terminology, models and generalisation, [ICSU CODATA 2005](http://www.icsu-codata.org), concepts-and-models, On the other side, any systemic or cybernetic concept or model is generally ... Francois/Benking, Humboldt University, Introducing 2nd edition International Encyclopedia of Systems and Cybernetics,

<http://benking.de/systems/encyclopedia/concepts-and-models.htm>

⁵ <http://in-between.org>

⁶ Participatory methods collected for Robert Jungk's 80th birthday: Oeko-Stadt - Eco-Town Graz celebrations 1993 including Planungszelle, Opus, Zukunftswerkstaetten. Zukunftswerkstatt - Hilfsmittel und Werkzeuge für allgemeinverständliches Wissen und gemeinschaftlich getragene Umsetzung, Öko-Stadt Graz, Ende und Anfang - Perspektiven zum neuen Jahrtausend, Akademie Graz., WAS PLANNED FOR THE 80th of ROBERT JUNGK - Feiern zum 80. Geburtstag von Robert Jungk am 9. September 1993, <http://benking.de/jungk-1993-ende-und-anfang.htm>

⁷ Leadership coaching as design conversation. Sherryl Stalinski, MA, Aurora Now Foundation, [International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring](http://www.internationaljournalofevidencebasedcoachingandmentoring.com), www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/education/ijebcm/vol2-no1-a-stalinski.htm and **Conversations**, By **Bela H. Banathy** and Doug Walton. The **design** of the Alliance for Conscious Evolution. (ACE) continues the work that was begun in the. 2002 **conversation**. ...

www.isiconversations.org/newsletter/2003_05May_Newletter.pdf and NEW AGORA Fuschl

Conversations <http://open-forum.de/fuschl-conversations/>

ownership of their minds and spirits and at the same time share equal responsibility for our learning community. We take each of the words--"democratic learning community" seriously and discuss--what does it mean to be democratic, What do we mean being committed to being learners and what does it mean to be a community?

IN THIS PAPER we have to keep in mind that there are not just participants of one school or class, but people on Earth from many different cultures, scales and strands of life, we have to keep in mind to ask the same questions and include and not exclude and find ways to co-creatively co-exist and co-invent and jointly tackle issues with an extra view on the "others".

IN THIS PAPER we use terms in an embodied form, so not just labeling but using tangible conceptual models to make issues, relations, contexts and situation more easy to explore and negotiate. For this we also need to create Spaces, Physical and Ideal Spaces connected in time so we can concretely follow relations, views and arguments. Please see the texts on concept mapping above the citations below about space and time in science and in participation where we operate with metaphors, analogies, to models to share and negotiate not to dematerialize and disembody, as we find it with some "postmodern" thinkers, but to show in extra spaces and between times and spaces what connects and can help us share broader commons and explore and grope the broader not just material "given" by not denying the material fundament but building on it new shared constructions and communities.⁸

<p>Knowledge in Time and Space The ultimate aim of science is to obtain knowledge, description, and explanation of the whole, in all the complex interrelations, in all the differences from time to time and place to place. Hartshorne</p>	<p>Scale is more than size; it is size with proportions and consequences. When proportions are no longer in harmony, or consequences are unanticipated, we have problems of scale. J. A. Buzacott</p>
<p>The Circle is the fundamental geometry of open human communication. Who ever heard of a Square of friends? Harrison Owen</p>	<p>Words yes words make them solid so you can pick them up and throw them that is the problem: how to make the intangible real T.S. Eliot</p>

Please note that the meaning and use of terms and concepts is very central to the topic of our paper but has to wait for a more comprehensive publication which should bridge not just terms and concepts, but also models and sign systems⁹. Christakis realized that he has to check the terminologies and value-base before concerted action can "emerge". And these terms are not "out in the blue" but have a referent and are situational. And it must be possible to also point at, inspect and negotiate such "non-tangible" concepts and situations as they are specific and civilizational. The author in his projects around terminology research and mediation came to the conclusion that a very basic and fatal mis-conception of the concepts space, place, void, exist specially in the modern western civilisation. We have a problem with void and emptiness of space and neglect/avoid fullness of space. This has to do with a tragic translation error from the ¹⁰and our modern use of abstract terms

⁸ We refer here to Jean Gebser which showed in his theory of cultural and civilizational evolution then we build new artefact, forms and abilities on top of the old structures, means and ways. He also was an advocate of the concrete. See also the footnote above on Gebser.

⁹ **Using Maps and Models, SuperSigns and SuperStructures**, Multimedia in Sciences and Technologies, Multimedia. Where Do We Go From Here?, MIST 2005, Berlin, Sept 2005 <http://benking.de/systems/codata/CODATA-MIST2005.htm> and **Granularity, Topicality, and Generalization of Information - Reflections about maps and models, orienting generalizations and their possible pragmatic and ethical implications and challenges International Symposium on Generalization of Information, with: International Cartographic Association, ISGI 2005, Berlin, Sept 2005** http://benking.de/systems/codata/ISGI_general-benking.htm, see also: <http://benking.de/systems/codata/> see also the footnote below:

¹⁰ For the UN Year of the Mountains we looked into the terms we use – what they mean to us and how space and potential are close in some cultures, and space and void (emptiness=Leere are considered "close" in others. In that article we focus on the central term SPACE and MODEL and show that the western concept is "flat" and empty, and the author feels that this has repercussions on our reality and has lead somehow to post-modern disembodied abstractness. Looking how this might have emerged and arrived into the western cultures we traced that some scholars and translators see a tragic translation error of the **Shunyata** as one possible

as disembodied "labels". Pörksen speaks about Plastic-Words¹¹ which are progressively misused in politics and media to hide instead of putting issues onto the table or into the public (space)..

Please note that for readability reasons we can not provide all the helpful references and literature. We have therefore created a [\[mirror\]](#) of this page where you find more links and further material.

Foreword

Dialog, Democracy, and (good) Governance are very fashionable concepts, these days. They all revolve around communication and the commons in order to leave the individual or ego-perspective behind and search for co-existence instead: ways and means for conviviality even when we can not agree and there is no one-and-only single solution but a bigger "Unity" in a broad range of Diversity¹².

This paper aims to show that "good" means to foster these goals towards positive ends and inclusion versus exclusion, by bridging the concepts and finding ways to look deeper and celebrate the difference and diversity as one basic way of nature's resilience - not through survival of the fittest, but the celebration of communion of subjects in contrast to the collection of objects and knowledge (free after Thomas Berry).

In order to explore, combine and share elements needed for positive futures and co-existence this paper will see how we can bridge and combine workable concepts of Dialog, Democracy and Governance towards making the idea of democracy more appealing and tangible by involving the people and making the issues more real.

The author feels that the term "participation" is too fuzzy, as it is not enough to "be a part", but to "contribute and focus on the bigger picture and the commons in order to celebrate the differences", - and at the same time "consider the scales, proportions and consequences of individual acts onto the greater whole or bigger picture".

Instead of incessantly trying to define terms like "Democracy" or "Dialog", the author will shortly present these terms as we can find them in the **International Encyclopedia of Systems and Cybernetics (IESC)**¹³ to set the stage. Afterwards, he will exclusively focus on a limited set of "ingredients!" which he feels need further study and development. This approach does not claim or try to be complete and cover each and every domain. Elements or Concepts indicated below are only considered "spices" worth to be explored and applied wisely, as they seem to be not commonly known or applied nowadays!

Dialog (IESC 0911)

Bela Banathy (as well as other authors) has explored systemic ways to use dialog, specially in co-participative design processes. He distinguishes between Generative and Strategic Dialogue.

reason, as it could be also fullness and emptiness, like Goethe wrote Analysis and Synthesis, breathing in and Out, which makes science. But using space only as abstract and we loose ground and orientations. More about this can be found under 4. clarifying the terms, in the article: **Raum und Virtualität: Potential oder Leere? - Die Bergwelt als Beispiel und Ursprung für den Zugang und die Auseinandersetzung mit "neuen" Welten**, <http://www.inst.at/berge/virtualitaet/benking.htm> In personal communication with Uwe Pörksen a couple of years ago, see Pörksen below, he agreed that SPACE could be the „mother“ or root „plastikword“ he had somehow left out in his publications, He agreed that nothing is more loaded in our cultures like the terms space and reality or system – but how can they take place and find place if not in space???

¹¹ Pörksen, U.: <http://www.gegenworte.org/autoren/u-poerksen.html>, see: Plastikwörter - Die Sprache einer internationalen Diktatur, Klett-Cotta, 1992, more at: <http://benking.de/skizzen-2003.htm>

¹² Dialogue Toward Unity in Diversity, DIALOGUE AMONG CIVILIZATIONS, Volume II, Role of Culture in Dialogue among Civilizations - GLOBAL SCHOLARLY PUBLICATIONS, ISBN: 159267044X <http://www.open-forum.de/dialog-among-civilizations.htm>

¹³ **International Encyclopedia of Systems and Cybernetics (IESC)**. The bold terms are further entries in the Encyclopedia which need to be consulted to establish shared meaning as a prerequisite to study shared values and agree on common ends and actions. Pls. see here also the terms on conceptual superstructures, a cognitive panorama, and a meta-paradigm proposed, as this can not be included in this article format: <http://benking.de/systems/encyclopedia/newterms/>

*Dialogue (Generative) is a "mode of social discourse.... applied to generate a common **frame** of thinking, shared **meaning** and a collective world-view in a **group**".*

In generative dialog people may prefer a certain position, but they are willing to suspend it. They are willing to listen to others to understand the meaning of their position. They are able to face disagreement without confrontation and are willing to explore points of view that they do not subscribe to personally...

"Generative dialog is not a tool for addressing specific task-focussed issues".

*"Generative dialogue becomes the core process of transforming the **group** into a **"community"**.*

*Dialog (Strategic) "focuses on specific issues and tasks in organizational and social systems settings". Banathy advocates "Generative dialogue and Strategic dialogue as a combined methodology for **Design conversation**".*

I have collected a lot of other "unique" definitions and explanations but may this collection is good to get going on the matter towards reaching mount awareness and becoming more relevant: DEMOCRACY¹⁴.

Democracy / Demosophia (IESC 0849)

*"The Wisdom of the People" A. Christakis writes: "The name implies a **paradigm** shift from "the power of the people" which is the Greek meaning of the word democracy, to the "wisdom of the people". The underlying premise of the new paradigm is that discovering the wisdom of the people is necessary if the people are expected to exercise their power. However, because of the escalating **complexity** of the contemporary societal **situation**, it is much more difficult today to uncover the wisdom of the people...*

Old Greek experiences and present ones (for example in Switzerland the municipal participative debates open to all citizens) show that the "wisdom of the people" can be uncovered ...

*Moreover the present complexity of human affairs at any **level** adds the need for sufficient **information** and evaluating **learning** for all **stakeholders**.*

Governance

The entries on **Governance (IESC 1451)**, **World Governance (IESC 3787)**, **Governability (IESC 1450)** are worth reading, but we have to postpone this until we have explored what is needed for authentic participation and valuing [authenticity, diversity](#) and integrity of the participants / stakeholders.

But let us briefly state that Governance means "influencing the macro-setting and border conditions by inducing micro-effects" - so people can orient and challenge alternative courses of action. Governance has to be seen in the context of and responsibility "for the benefit of a greater whole¹⁵", and should synoptically include research into dilemmas in decision making.

Governance should be exercised as an inclusive way to involve and let participate, invite the above elements of dialog and democracy to help jointly manage a country or the worlds with the people and for the people. It should be a delegation of responsibilities for a clearly defined time and with the obligation of transparent reporting of the alternatives and decisions taken and involving stakeholders as much as possible during the whole process. Please visit the "Club of Rome Report : "The Capacity to Govern" and in

¹⁴ **DEFINITIONS OF DEMOCRACY**, <http://sunsite.utk.edu/FINS/DemocracyRightNow!/Fins-DRN-04.htm>
PLEASE see the next chapters. At this point we can only refer to the a good introduction in the WORLD FUTURES Journal editions on NEW AGORAS for the 21st Century (Editor Ken Bausch); more at: <http://www.globalagoras.org/>, the International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 2004 Page 68, Leadership Coaching as Design Conversation, by Sherryl Stalinski, and Dialog Game and the recent book "How People Harness..." all to be found at the site of LOVERS OF DEMOCRACY A Networked Community Development Enterprise - (Facilitated with SDP & WebScope Interactively, see: <http://sunsite.utk.edu/FINS/loversofdemocracy/>

¹⁵ ISSS Wholeness Seminar, What Does Whole Mean to Me? How can it be best Imparted. See Panorama of Understanding <http://benking.de/ISSS/ISSS-Primer-wholeness.html> and see: <http://www.ceptualinstitute.com/genre/benking/wholeness.htm>

particular the last of six points to remember towards pragmatic forms of governance, always keeping in mind the actual situations in a variety of countries and how to come to global policy colleges¹⁶.

Towards the focus of this paper we would like to repeat the last two of the six points summarizing the Club of Rome report THE CAPACITY TO GOVERN first public introduction in 1995 in Berlin: Which are: "Check the frames of references and terminologies used", and "Explore chains of vicious problems circles, checks and balances" (more and links in this footnote¹⁷).

Governance and the art of steering societies has to be seen as a participatory effort where all have to contribute and make sure that the values, visions and directions are known, if not shared! So the question is not to steer, lead or guide, but to do it transparently and invite participation and reviews.

Since Karl Deutsch and the "Nerves of Government" we know that with the modern media we have other ways and means to manage and govern but also that the moderns "nerves" are sensitive to external manipulation. The need and the possibility to make issues in their context real and concrete, see shared situation rooms¹⁸ and discuss and compare positions, perspectives levels, proportions and consequences is obvious, but let us first focus on some requisites, like how do we come together and share, how do we include minorities, and how to we tackle complex issues without closing our eyes, numbing our feelings in our post-modern perplexity.

Combining dialog and decision and policy making

Experience shows that the issues are not brought forward to the table or onto the floor where people meet in a concise and easily digestible format. Issues are intertwined, and complex, multi-level and inter-sectoral and so they often get only inspected from a distance or will be ignored as one of the tactics of avoidance or to hide hidden agendas..

It is not only that people can not listen, or people try to dominate "their" groups in order to support their interests, but also that stakeholders do not have or get the voice to speak up and are not encouraged to explore issues. We are trained to label and categorize issues and all-to-often use the most convenient grid or mould. We divide and categorise the living world into an over-simplified raster of either -or, plus or minus, black or white, east or west,...

But how can we leave and think "out of the box", do "paradigm mapping" and see issues from different perspectives¹⁹?

¹⁶ THE CAPACITY TO GOVERN - Seven Points to Remember. Y. Dror/ H. Benking: A summary of the new book at the first press conference introducing the report at the UN Climate Summit Berlin 1995. <http://benking.de/Global-Change/governance.html> See points 6. and 7 in the next footnote and the footnotes on Metaphors.

¹⁷ Citation of recommendations for future Governance: 6. Research into spatial metaphors supporting local and global governance by enabling understanding of inter-sectorial strategic dilemmas of action and results chains in a symbolic and trans-cultural form, for shared exploration of issues and evaluation of proportions and consequences with differentiation between data, conjectures and 'noise' in policy information. - 7. Further development of a conceptual superstructure as a reference paradigm to ease access to salient data while avoiding unnecessary redundancy and overloads. For more about common frames of references, vicious problem circles and checks and balances, problem collections like those from the UIA Union of International Organisations now also available in some languages online <http://uia.org>

¹⁸ Situation Rooms World Association for Case Methods: Situation Rooms - Situation Spaces Scales, Proportions, Patterns, and Consequences in Perspective. <http://www.newciv.org/cob/members/benking/sitspace.html> and Applying Panetics: <http://benking.de/applying-panetics1999.htm>

¹⁹ see: House of Eyes http://www.ceptualinstitute.com/uiu_plus/iss98/house-of-eyes.htm and World-House: <http://benking.de/skizzen-2003.htm> and our seminars based on the work of Hanks on Paradigm mapping and Out of the box thinking: <http://benking.de/hanks/>

Generative Dialogue

How to take a first step towards a generative dialog?

First of all, we must be willing to listen and suspend, we must be willing to re-consider and re-evaluate. Of course, this is something that can be best done without a fixed agenda that pressures us to achieve a certain goal, to deliver a specific idea or solution. We have to skip here the theory and application of Dialogue Processes, and refer to the names and works of Bohm, Sri Aurobindo, Buber, Gutierrez, Jungk, Christakis, Judge, Habermas, Manitonquat, Banathy, Meyersen, Owen, ... (see mindmap of more recent and relevant dialog and conversation thinkers and movers) and come to the central issues of openness and flow²⁰, how we can help facilitate an open process which allows us to listen and relearn, leave the personal perspective to allow something new, to allow surprise(!) to happen, and to empower people to speak up and include all participants and stakeholders, whether they be the young "not daring" new generation or in contrast the talkers and lobbyist who think they have to sell or be on missions.

The difference lies in the layout of a gathering, meeting, hearing or symposia.

"Open" like Open-Space is the fashionable method which is used to allow participants to speak up and contribute little without social or cultural restrictions. It is not "free" or "open" as participants have to agree on topics, times, spaces they want to offer or attend. Every game's procedure has rules, just like you may break the rules and leave, - but only through "sidelines" it becomes possible to bridge or jump over "fences" and thus allow ideas or new approaches to emerge, allow surprises to happen, and – also – allow action groups to form and address and achieve desired objectives.

The Bohm Dialogues and the “School of Ignorance?”

Ljubljana Bohm Dialogues <http://benking.de/dialog/LJUBLJANA-DIALOGUES.html>

School of Ignorance? www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs/ignorant.php

more to come... as we finally see the merits of these dialog experiments and initiatives and how they could come together one day – maybe for a 3-day „concert“ and later allow us to play another tune. More on metaphors can be found here²¹.

Magic Round-Tables / Open-Forum and time-credits

But what if people have to first learn and dare to speak up? What if still some talkers dominate and try to sell their view or solution? How can we include all stakeholders and empower them to see the "we" and learn to live without the urge to agree and accept? Please read these articles²² on Open Space, Open-Forum, Magic Roundtable, and other methods for Generative Dialog, as our synopsis has to include Strategic Dialog and Democracy-Making".

²⁰ Open Processes or Dialog Formats are en vogue, see <http://open-forum.de> or <http://benking.de/dialog/> they are good for generative dialog. Leaving all "open" and waiting for solutions by just letting go and following the flow and inner feelings is very tempting - and so the flow movement has received much attention. see: Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi: "Flow, The classic work on how to achieve happiness", Random House 1992. The down side of it is "swarm intelligence" where the swarm instinctively is not equipped to manage new or extraordinary challenges or survive in other environments, think of the lemmings which end up in collective suicide as a "solution". We as humanity have created new environments or circumstances, and can act on other scales with new forces and inflicting other consequences. Therefore, we have to decide if we want to just listen to the inner self or focus and share systematic and constructive approaches like negotiating alternatives on the basis of externally oriented work-spaces/places of the mind (Baars/Benking connections made thanks to communications and remarks by Stanley Krippner Saybrook Institute; San Francisco) - <http://benking.de/workplace-dialogue-ljubljana-1998.htm> see many workplaces of the mind AND <http://www.ceptualinstitute.com/genre/benking/extensions.htm> "Eliciting the inner voice" is one thing - sharing voices another. See re "eliciting" PEACE University large group open-format time credit exercises, where we "voted and used then tokens to "empower others": <http://open-forum.de/re-invent-democracy1995.html> Translating by subsuming and resonating, translating and transforming onto other scales is again another. All these approaches have to add up to a broader "flow" - which gives voice to the wisdom of the people and includes new ways and means of orientation and concertation. See: Christakis on "Harnessing the Wisdom of the People...." all at: <http://sunsite.utk.edu/FINS/loversofdemocracy/SiteMap.htm> and and "Embodied Covenant" <http://benking.de/covenant/>

















²¹ For more on Metaphors in our context see <http://www.ceptualinstitute.com/genre/benking/spatialm.htm> and <http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/themes/azmetap.php>

²² NEW AGORA, Fuschl Conversations WORLD FUTURES, Dialog and Decision Culture (WORLD FUTURES) all at: <http://benking.de/dialog/>

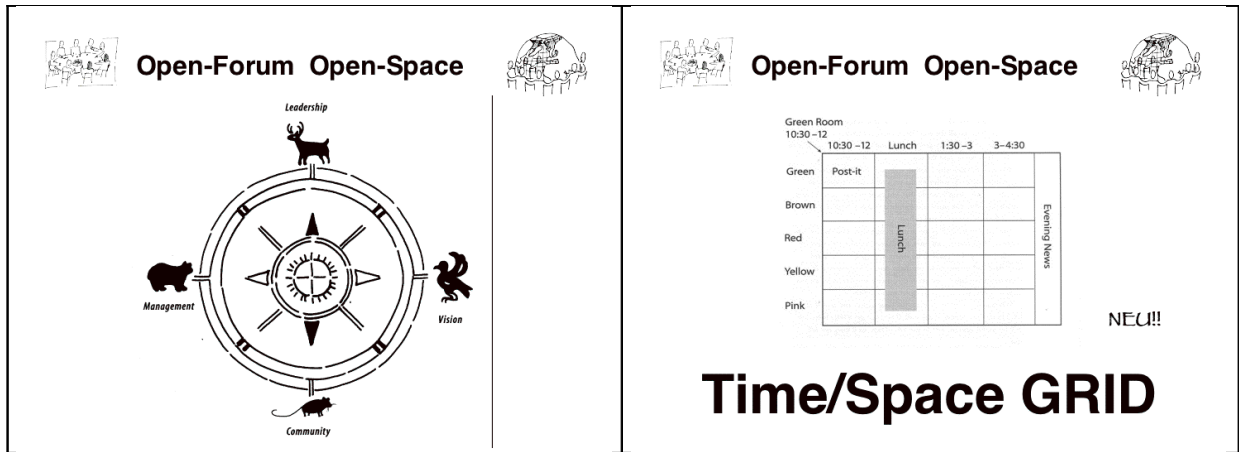
Here we might only need to add that time credit-tokens are a different form of voting and bartering as units or voices are given as presents to empower and give voice in an open, transparent, dynamic, embodied format of a culture of sharing, co-creation²³, and empowerment of others.

Open Space Technologies™, Open Space Online™, and other methodology collections for open processes or scenario development.

Open Space

 <p>Open-Forum Open-Space</p>  <h1 style="text-align: center;">BE PREPARED TO BE SURPRISED</h1> 	 <p>Open-Forum Open-Space</p>  <h1 style="text-align: center;">THE FOUR PRINCIPLES</h1> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whoever comes is the right people. ▪ Whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened. ▪ Whenever it starts is the time. ▪ When it is over, its over.
 <p>Open-Forum Open-Space</p>  <h1 style="text-align: center;">THE FOURFOLD WAY</h1> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Show up ▪ Be Present ▪ Tell the Truth ▪ Let it all Go. 	 <p>Open-Forum Open-Space</p>   <h1 style="text-align: center;">THE ONE LAW:</h1> <h2 style="text-align: center;">The law of the two feet</h2>
 <p>Open-Forum Open-Space</p>   <p style="text-align: center;">Dialogue Phenomena</p>	 <p>Open-Forum Open-Space</p>  <h1 style="text-align: center;">BUMBLEBEES and BUTTERFLIES</h1> 

²³ See the sister and brother of co-creation Barbara Marx-Hubbard and the author – More on joint endeavours to follow – please request from the author.



Please see above a collection of [Open-Space posters](#) and the OPEN FORUM - OPEN SPACE as I see the reinventing Democracy series of events: <http://open-forum.de/open-space-open-forum.html> as an example of what I called a method chain or a mix of methods adapting to the “situation” and the requirements, backgrounds, and expectations. The slides and impression give an idea of open format events. Credits for figures go to OPEN-SPACE Technology™ and are from Harrison Owen with kind permission.

Please see also this ICSU CODATA paper on organizing mixed format events and some posters prepared by the author for OPEN FORMAT events and gatherings: http://open-forum.de/ISGI_open-format.htm

Open Space Technologies™

The whole issue of open transparent participatory methods is covered elsewhere in the articles mentioned above. I recommend beside the Wikipedia link above, this [openspace world](#) site and WIKI, and an Interview of Harrison Owen²⁴ about the essence, learnings and systemic aspects. Important for our topic here is the possibility to use Open Space Technology also for distance or on-line group exercises Open-Space Online²⁵.

Such methods should be further developed made more “open” and to include not just voting, but also weighting and empowering elements – a broad topic – we discussed it under “Liquid or Fluid Democracy” at a meeting around the World Democracy Movement some time ago – but the issue is not to have “polls” only but to come to shared terminologies and value bases before, or as part of the process. Such as Web-Scope. See the work of Warfield and Christakis as covered below and in the [“essential steps”](#). As Open-Space is already widely used so I want to the coverage here to be short in order to allow more space on potentially interesting future developments and methodologies. See also the Millennium Projects²⁶ toolbox which also includes Syncons, Charette, Fishbowl, Future Wheels and Future Conferences,... .. and many more old and new valuable elements and learnings in the field of large and distributed group exercises.

The dangers of Groupthink and Spreadthink

It is often not enough to listen and empower, to follow your feelings, because this can make you a candidate for manipulation, for media and demagogic ways to influence your assumptions, positions and feelings. All too often it is very tempting to look for the easy way out, the most appealing and simple solution, the “yes or no” solution without space

²⁴ <http://www.open-forum.de/interview-Owen-Peace.html> Interview by [Farah Lenser](#). See there also about:

²⁵ OPEN SPACE ONLINE <http://www.openspace-online.com/> and a [documentation](#) and results of such an event: <http://coforum.de/index.php4?WeNeedTo>

²⁶ American Council for the United Nations Millennium Project <http://millennium-project.org> if you speak German please see also [this](#) and its Future Research methodology - <http://www.acunu.org/millennium/FRM-v2.html> *The author has co-operated with the Founder of the AC&UNU Millennium Project Jerome Glenn since 1993 and helped not only to establish nodes in various countries but looked also for the Millennium Project into group-ware and distance collaboration and learning tools. (more on G7 studies and telematics to follow here [a.s.a.p.](#))

for any other views or a break. Call it overclaims and oversimplifications²⁷ or Group-think or Clan- and Spread- Think²⁸.

Design Conversations - Structured and Disciplined Dialogues

NEW AGORAS, The Dialog Game, Boundary Spanning Dialog, and the SDDP Cogniscope system.

Rather than summarizing the work on Structured and Disciplined Dialogues by [Ozbekhan and Christakis](#), later also Warfield and the new book "HOW PEOPLE HARNESS THIER COLLECTIVE WISDOM AND POWER TO CONSTRUCT THE FUTURE IN CO-LABORATORIES OF DEMOCRACY"²⁹ we want to just point out that this is what the Robet Jungk Zukunftswerkstatt (Future Lab) is about. Jungk just called it **Phantasy Phase and Realization Phase**. [more] and proceed by providing some orientation and lists of issues or content.

The author will not rewrite and re-invent or try to make another such a summary but presents instead with the permission of the author Enrique G. Herrschers his lists from his Forward to the book "... Harness the Collective Wisdom ..." as mentioned above. There Herrscher sets out to list the 10 major contributions or assumptions of the science presented here, as they present the building blocks of the proposed methodology – without ever forgetting that we are dealing here not just with "building blocks" but and architectural design in contrast to engineering blueprints³⁰:

- That the self-organizing model is spreading in all kinds of organizations in the post-industrial world.
- That in a world where influence increasingly replaces control, dialogue and teamwork will be more and more

²⁷ "Overclaims and Oversimplifications or Overview and Orientation" Contribution as a hand-out during the keynote presented at the InterSymp'97 – Culture of Peace, 9th International Conference on Systems Research, Informatics and Cybernetics, Aug.18-23, 1997, Baden-Baden with the title "Understanding and Sharing in a Cognitive Panorama" at the UNESCO Culture of Peace Symposium 1997, <http://www.ceptualinstitute.com/genre/benking/overview.htm> and <http://newciv.org/cob/members/benking/benking.html>

²⁸ **Groupthink** is a mode of thought whereby individuals intentionally [conform](#) to what they perceive to be the consensus of the group. Groupthink may cause the group (typically a [committee](#) or large organization) to make bad or [irrational](#) decisions which each member might [individually consider to be unwise](#). <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groupthink> The term was created in 1952 by [William H. Whyte](#) The word is intended to be a reminiscent of [Newspeak](#) words such as "[doublethink](#)" and "[duckspeak](#)", from [George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four](#).

Groupthink being a coinage — and, admittedly, a loaded one — a working definition is in order. We are not talking about mere instinctive conformity — it is, after all, a perennial failing of mankind. What we are talking about is a rationalized conformity — an open, articulate philosophy which holds that group values are not only expedient but right and good as well. See also [Irving Janis](#), who did extensive work on the subject, defined it as:

A mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action.

John Warfield and Alexander Christakis worked much on translating this phenomena into the systems community, please see IESC 1473 where Warfield and Teigen (1993) define **Clanthink** as: "The deterioration of mental efficiency, quality of reality testing, and quality of moral judgement that results from in-group pressures". The whole effort is therefore to include views from outside and secure the needed variety and quality for sound shared decision making outside the box of certain dominating groups. See also Spreadthink (IESC 3138) Warfield 1995 "A kind of conceptual pathology of groups unable to reach any genuine consensus or even majority view towards component aspects of a complex issue" and Underconceptualization (IESC 3678, 3679) whis is defined as: "The insufficient understanding of complex issues by any single individual or group. There are three different aspects: Structural underconceptualization means that the organization of the information about a given issue is insufficient to enable the important patterns to be inspected... We can say ... that ordinary processes omit recognition and interpretation of the cycles that are involved in a given issue. 2. The second aspect ... stems from the normal absence of any sense of length of logic (note: i.e. interconnected logical sequence), 3. The third aspect arises by ignoring in ordinary approaches to issues the human limitations on working mentally with information which are well known from the work of Miller, Simon and others, but which seem systematically to be ignored in systems analysis and design activities" and Warfield in <http://paneticsworldwide.org/DisplayOneEvent.cfm?i=148>, which is similar to what is meant by Overclaims and Oversimplifications for Culture of Peace 1997 in the Footnote above.

²⁹ Alexander N. Christakis, HOW PEOPLE HARNESS THIER COLELCTIVE WISDOM AND POWER TO CONSTRUCT THE FDUTURE IN CO-LABORATORIES OF DEMOCRACY A volume in Research in Public Management, Information Age Publishing, ISBN 1-59311-482-6

³⁰ See the difference between Architectual Design and Engineering Blueprint. See Christakis and the first Club of Rome reports in the literature and at PDF: <http://www.cwaltd.com/pdf/clubrome.pdf>

the preferred methods .

- That commitment, shared responsibility and real change can only be achieved by democratic participation .
- That mutual purpose and a collective leadership are necessary to link the group's work with the organization and its external environment.
- That practices based on the hierarchical model have only limited effectiveness because they generate negative feedback.
- That without a proper process, individuals do not learn from each other (they often use the debate to persuade others, stick to a zero sum mode or simply voice their beliefs) .
- That while the generation of ideas is comparatively easy, relating them to each other is complex.
- That stakeholders possess the requisite knowledge for defining and resolving systemic problems . That stakeholders are however generally programmed to see situations in terms of the mechanistic paradigm.
- That computers lessen the cognitive demands on designing participants, and therefore are an essential aid for easing consensus.

Enrique Herrscher summarizes not just the proposed action plan but puts him into perspective in the following „bullets“:

- To achieve, through a preliminary "White Paper," a common understanding of the problem situation.
- To generate, by disciplined discussion, a common language.
- To open the door, thanks to such common ground, to true teamwork.
- To bring together key stakeholders who identify barriers, provide a hierarchy of issues and develop a plan of action.
- To give a voice to those ,who are rarely heard, by "patient honoring of stakeholder autonomy".
- To empower "those who do the job".
- To equalize power relations among the stakeholders.
- To integrate, through interaction, diverse viewpoints.
- To elicit ideas and points of view from all stakeholders.
- To have stakeholders "to think clearly and outside their preconceived mental boxes".
- To avoid "premature closing", jumping too early at conclusions.
- To severely restrict "power-grabbing activities" by stakeholders trying to monopolize attention by exercising the role of experts .
- To view problems/solutions without a winner - loser perspective.
- To heighten the "appreciation for the scope of responsibilities that each person has".
- To establish "salient priorities for design".
- To uncover unexpected solutions.
- To lessen, by use of interactive software, the cognitive demands on designing stakeholders.
- To reverse, by participation and dialogue, "the dismal trends of decline and discontent prevalent in most societies and organizations today".
- To create "an atmosphere of serenity, equity, authenticity and empathy".
- To "learn to have fun together as a community".

Herrscher continues by stating: „The reader will find (and enjoy) the practical ways to achieve these goals though the diverse examples furnished in the book he wrote the Foreword for. We have to skip this „joy“ for the moment and try to stay on the synthesis and pragmatic level. He can do so thanks to his experience, knowing best not only the Latin American Case which was documented also in the "Harnessing" Book and is documented in the ISSS 2004 from Crete³¹.

- The self organizing model is still a minority
- Hierarchy and priviledges are prevalent
- There is little disposition to learn from each other
- Then suspicious about management really want it typical both at the corporate and public level
- Valuable proposals often trigger concerted opposition from entrenched power structures.

The Need for a Structured Design Process (SDDP)

³¹ see CHRISTASKIS with BAUSCH in the ISSS New AGORA proceedings aptly brought together in WORLD FUTURES Laszlo, NEW AGORAS for 21st . Ken Bausch (Eds). See here also the contribution Dialog and Decision Culture: http://benking.de/Dialogue_and_DecisionCulture.html which tries to summarize the issues mentioned above about different group and participation methods in a more extended form.

But how to structure when everybody thinks he is right, „sells his skin on the market“, when the issues are deeper than we think and the world is not flat, but deep³² and few scouts, pilots, or (in German Lotsen) are not trained in our societies, when their training should be a common practice of not just being in the crows-nest, but responsible for captain and ship. See more about Global Learn Day and LEARNING in this Congress and elsewhere by Eric Scheider <http://pnyv.org/idec2006/> or when we are confronted with more and more loss of fidelity and trthing with the advent of the misuse of modern media and visual data processing?

Here a short synopsis of the systemic AXIOMS and LAW which were discovered „on the way&fly“ during the lasty 35 years and more³³ and in the Agoras for the 21st Century community:

Boundary – Spanning Dialogue for the 21st Century Agoras (AXIOMS)

<p>Boundary - Spanning Dialogue for the 21st Century Agoras 3 Axioms of BDA <small>Chreibald / Böhms: 2000/2004</small> <small>See King, Paul 11/2003, 2004</small></p> <p>Axiom 1: Complex Situations are multidimensional. They require that observational variety should be respected in the dialogue among the observers, in an effort to strive for completeness. Completeness however, is an objective not easily attainable by mortals through dialogue.</p> <p>Axiom 2: Observers are subjected to cognitive limitations during dialogue. Violation of these limitations leads to underconceptualization of the multidimensional complex situation, which results in lower productivity and inferior design.</p> <p>Axiom 3: Relative saliency, or importance of one observation relative to others, can only be understood and brought into play as a useful concept when observers are dealing with sets of observations.</p>	<p>Evaluation of the six principles of the BDA for Managing Complexity <small>Chreibald / Böhms: 2000/2004</small> <small>See King, Paul 11/2003, 2004</small></p> <p>Ashbey's Law of Requisite Variety Appreciation of the diversity of the perspectives of observers is essential in managing complex situations.</p> <p>Miller' Law of Requisite Parsimony Structured dialogue is required to avoid the cognitive overload of observers.</p> <p>Bouldings's Law of Requisite Saliency The relative importance of observations can only be understood through comparisons within a set.</p> <p>Peirce's Law of Requisite Meaning Meaning and Wisdom are produced in a dialogue only when the observers search for relationships of similarity, priority, influence, etc. within a set of observations.</p> <p>Tsivacou's Law of Requisite Autonomy in Distinctions Making During Dialogue it is necessary to protect the autonomy and authenticity of each observer in drawing distinctions.</p> <p>Dye's Law of Requisite Evolution of Observation Learning occurs in a dialogue as the observers search for relationships among the members of a set of observations.</p>
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Axiom 1:
Complex Situations are multidimensional. They require that observational variety should be respected in the dialogue among the observers, in an effort to strive for completeness. Completeness however, is an objective not easily attainable by mortals through dialogue.

Axiom 2:
Observers are subjected to cognitive limitations during dialogue. Violation of these limitations leads to underconceptualization of the multidimensional complex situation, which results in lower productivity and inferior design.

Axiom 3:
Relative saliency, or importance of one observation relative to others, can only be understood and brought into play as a useful concept when observers are dealing with sets of observations.

Evaluation of the six principles of the BDA for Managing Complexity

see also [100 years Bertalanffy symposium](#) and Wittgenstein and [Cybernetics \(ACS\)](#) , both in Vienna and the [IFSR Encyclopedia](#)

Ashbey's Law of Requisite Variety

Appreciation of the diversity of the perspectives of observers is essential in managing complex situations.

Miller' Law of Requisite Parsimony

Structured dialogue is required to avoid the cognitive overload of observers.

³² <http://in-between.org> and <http://deepworlds.org> or <http://9-d.org>

³³ This summaries were presented at the FUSCHL CONVERSATIONS 2005 NEW AGORA Task Group by the author, see again: <http://benking.de/dialog/fuschl-conversations/> or <http://open-forum.de>

Bouldings's Law of Requisite Saliency

The relative importance of observations can only be understood through comparisons within a set.

Peirce's Law of Requisite Meaning

Meaning and Wisdom are produced in a dialogue only when the observers search for relationships of similarity, priority, influence, etc. within a set of observations.

Tsivacou's Law of Requisite Autonomy in Distinctions Making

During Dialogue it is necessary to protect the autonomy and authenticity of each observer in drawing distinctions.

Dye's Law of Requisite Evolution of Observation


Learning occurs in a dialogue as the observers search for relationships among the members of a set of observations.

The idea here is to show that the work started with the immensely complex in rapidly changing worlds or environments which did cross allthought about the references boundaries: Please see work of Jantsch, Ozbekhan, Christakis,... (and many unmentioned others) which is very deep, authentic, and scientific, but also open and participatory in all aspects of futures studies and global forecasts.

The Asilomar and Fuschl Conversations and other events search for new forms of Dialogue and Co-existence

But as we need to make sure to not loose anyone in a lot of theory and axioms, here a few slides from the NEW AGORA synthesis presentation of the FUSCHL 2004 Conversations: (they are all for better readability available on-line and "down-loadable"³⁴).

The quest to get hold of the Problem space or the Problematique.

<h3>Gaps and Canyons</h3> <p>Chroust/Benking Team1 Fuschl Conversations 2004</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* spatial gaps (dislocated members)* temporal gaps (asynchronous collaboration)* different level of information and background (limited channel capacity, inability to receive/read certain information)* mental understanding (professional, educational differences, different domain knowledge)* level of physical ability (impaired vision, hearing,...)* expressive input/output abilities (audio, visual, haptic human types)	<h3>Die Neuen Medien - Eine Kommunikative Gesellschaft ?</h3> <p>Studium generale, Humboldt - Universität zu Berlin 17.1. 2000</p> <h3>Crisis of Order, Orientation, Meaning,...</h3>  <p>Watch your Symbols, Icons, Words, & Metaphors, Worlds,...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* a prison* a variété* a show* a labyrinth* a bomb* a sweet pie* the final flood of post-modern Cyber Culture ?
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³⁴ NEW AGORAS IFSR FUSCHL CONVERSATIONS 2000-2004, <http://open-forum.de/fuschl-conversations/> <http://www.open-forum.de/AGORA-Fuschl2002-lenser-benking.htm> und Discussion Paper and Contribution for the Fuschl Conversations 2004 Team 1: **New Agoras need to be additionally rooted in New Spaces (Arenas) and require new & old ways of Thinking & Embodiment) and Sharing & Modelling**, New Agoras for the 21st Century: Building a knowledge-based society Requirements for Shared Orientations, Understanding, and Actions in New Agoras for the 21st Century, see also see: IFSR - Fuschl Conversations - <http://go.just.to/fuschl> and the Synopsis Page of the Fuschl Conversations at <http://benking.de/dialog/Fuschl-Agora/>

Slides from the NEW AGORA Fuschl 2004 conversations which will be presented below: Summaries of the presentations are covered in the [IFSR Fuschl Conversations](#) proceedings - the slides of the authors presentation are available [here](#), earlier [ASILOMAR CONVERSATION](#) and [DAVID BOHM DIALOGUES](#) events might be of interest.

We have used the lists above for the preparations of the “SCHOOL OF IGNORANCE ?” gatherings and have recently introduced them to the New Agora Fuschl Conversations 2004. As they are universally applicable to find the stakeholders and let them themselves get involved and passionate active, instead of assembling observers who, as we experienced with the Polish and German RUNDE TISCHE “Round Tables”, often are hidden lobbyist who try to control block the group from reaching results and coming to joint action.

Experience with the German [Planungszelle](#) and [Consultative](#) and its [broader & deeper pragmatic concepts](#) and other methods and tools which have been collected [here](#) (1993) and might be still of some interest for complex and multilingual Settings (see e.g. OPUS). See Footnote: Robert Jungk 80th birthday below and [here](#).

The „SCHOOL OF IGNORANCE?“ and The FUSCHL “Conversations”

Before we go into ways and means to cultivate participation we need to check who are the stakeholders and how we can clarify and motivate people to decide about their feeling part and concerned – and personally motivated to attend – or not.

Why attend?

- * If you feel an often desperate sense of urgency in endeavouring to discover new frameworks of response to the many tragic world issues
- * If you believe that meetings can be a useful learning laboratory in which risks need to be taken if they are to produce anything of wider relevance to social transformation
- * If you are interested in the exploration of co-created meetings
- * If you are weary of conventional pre-structured events and presentations and the low level of expectations that they encourage
- * If you want to test your ability to respond spontaneously to new meeting possibilities
- * If you recognize the need to hold dilemmas and paradoxes without resolving or by-passing them
- * If you question the wider social impact of the resolutions, declarations, pledges and plans that are laboriously negotiated as the main product of conventional international gatherings
- * If you are intrigued by the possibilities of collective self-transcendence
- * If you are prepared to accept that all participants, including yourself, are as much a part of the problem as a key contributor to the solution
- * If you believe that you are prepared to question your most fundamental assumptions
- * If you believe that you learn and grow through being challenged by radically different views
- * If you consider that much of value remains to be discovered from larger group experiments in self-organization
- * If you are weary of intellectual frameworks and fashionable models and are intrigued by the possibility that new metaphors are required to navigate the strategic challenges of the future
- * If you are intrigued by possible breakthroughs from collective concentration of attention in the moment
- * If you believe that participants should be collectively responsible for the fruitfulness of an evolving meeting process
- * If you enjoy surprises and the unexpected

Why avoid attending?

- * If you feel that the prevailing style of meeting is adequate to the challenges of the times
- * If you consider a pre-defined agenda essential to any meeting
- * If you consider a well-defined purpose essential for any effective gathering
- * If you believe that clearly defined leaders and presenters are essential to successful meetings
- * If you are sceptical of the possibility of relying on the skills of other mature meeting participants to take responsibility for correcting any unproductive imbalance in the meeting process
- * If you prefer well-defined and appropriately facilitated meeting processes
- * If your principal need is to present your own project or to convince others of the overriding merits of your perspective, paradigm or process

- * If you need an audience for your views and are impatient with time spent on integrating the views of others
- * If you are convinced that the remedy for present challenges lies in responding concretely in a specific area such as: employment, pollution, alienation, conflict, discrimination
- * If you are convinced that a particular belief system, or set of values, holds the key to a more appropriate response to the dilemmas of the times
- * If you are especially status conscious and have difficulty in recognizing the contributions of others with different qualifications or cultural backgrounds
- * If you are unwilling to restrain yourself from presenting proven insights and skills that seem a vital contribution to the evolution of the meeting process
- * If you are unwilling to be constrained by the reluctance of others to accept any imposition of your insights or processes (that they may perceive as a subtle play for power by you)
- * If you expect the meeting to produce a well-defined product
- * If you consider that the tension between polarities can, and should, be resolved or avoided
- * If you consider acknowledgement of individual or collective "shadows" to be unfruitful
- * If you believe that deeply felt differences should be de-emphasized in favour of whatever participants hold in common
- * If you are not prepared to waste time on experiments that may fail
- * If you regularly indulge in group process experiments as a pleasurable hobby

A Dialogue Game and [The Tree of Meaning](#)

For the Dialogue Game as a way to establish, negotiate and share differences, meaning, values, ... see this handbook³⁷ (PDF). Below the **Principles of Dialogue** were established in **A Tree of Meaning** with the help of an exercise called the **Dialogue Game**.

In the reader *A Technique of Democracy*, six principles of dialogue are applied utilizing systems methodologies derived from the research of various scholars and practitioners. These principles were articulated by Dr. Alexander N. Christakis in **A Tree of Meaning** produced with his **Dialogue Game**. These principles aid in resolving the constraints and difficulties described as Spreadthink, while also promoting the pursuit of meaning and wisdom in dialogue. The six principles of dialogue include the following:

- **Appreciation of the diversity of perspectives of observers is essential to embrace the many dimensions of a complex situation.**
- **Disciplined dialogue is required so that observers are not subjected to information overloaded.**
- **The relative importance of an observer's ideas can be understood only when they are compared with others in the group.**
- **Meaning and wisdom of an observer's ideas are produced in a dialogue only when they begin to understand the relationships such as similarity, priority, influence, etc., of different people's ideas.**
- **Every person matters, so it is necessary to protect the autonomy and authenticity of each observer in drawing distinctions.**
- **Evolutionary learning occurs in a dialogue as the observers learn how their ideas relate to one another.**

For more see the book and works of Warfield and Christakis.

BUT NOW LET US RETURN NOW TO CORE OF THE MATTER: Sharing words and values and coming co-creatively to insights and actions:

The Dialogue Inquiry of the "Lovers of Democracy"

So how did this work on deep, structural, and disciplined Dialog come about? and What can we do when the issues or problems are too complex and multi-faceted, when very large groups are involved, with many people and when they not only use different national languages but also communicate with a terminology specific to their field or culture, when they use the same words but mean different things? (this a very dangerous hidden cause of many disputes as people think they know and are right, when they maybe are not !! - but start fighting over right or wrong instead of stepping out of this vicious circle).

³⁷ <http://sunsite.utk.edu/FINS/DemocracyRightNow!/Fins-DRN-03.pdf>

So how can we strategically tackle and clarify the issues in a structured and repeatable form? Some researchers like Erich Jantsch, Hassan Ozbekhan, Alexander Christakis, later John Warfield (see: IESC), have worked already in the late 60ies to address global, highly complex issues of immense problems, and called it for the Club of Rome the "Global Problematique"³⁸. For them it was very obvious and clear that not "expertocracies" but the people have to address and settle the issues, have to be empowered to structure and differentiate, compare, evaluate, dismiss relative assumptions and statements by putting them into perspective and evaluate alternatives and explore differences ! - give voice to the minority view and statement ! Their work led to shared vocabularies and value bases because often people share the same opinions but disagree because the meaning, perspectives, proportions, and consequences are not shared and "people think they know and can decide when - truly - they should or can not.

In order to successfully address cognitive burdens, complexities and opaqueness of situations or terminologies, the authors listed above have worked on methods to tackle issues in an elaborate clarification, comparison and voting evaluation process; see CogniScope, Dialog Game and a recent book by Alexander Christakis and Ken Bausch "How People Harness their collective Wisdom and Power to Construct The Future in Co-Laboratories of Democracy"³⁹. It is important that we cover ways and means of Strategic Dialog in contrast to conventional "democratic" voting or "modern" electronic voting methods - which avoid addressing the complex issues and situations.

Please study the 6 systemic laws identified by above authors which help to structure the process and inquiry by following these steps: **1. Disciplined Dialog, 2. Autonomy in Distinction Making, 3. Evolutionary Learning of Observations, 4. Appreciation of Diversity, 5. Understanding Relative Saliency, 6. Meaning and Wisdom.** (see Tree of Meaning)

New Agora and Asilomar and Fuschl Conversations

At this point we can only refer to the a good introduction in the [WORLD FUTURES Journal editions on NEW AGORAS](#) for the the 21st Century (Editor Ken Bausch); more at: <http://www.globalagoras.org/>, the International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 2004 Page 68, Leadership Coaching as Design Conversation, by Sherryl Stalinski, and Dialog Game and the recent book "How People Harness..." all to be found at the site of LOVERS OF DEMOCRACY A Networked Community Development Enterprise - (Facilitated with SDP & WebScope Interactively, see: <http://sunsite.utk.edu/FINS/loversofdemocracy/>

To get started and to get a good overview pls. see the DEFINITIONS OF DEMOCRACY⁴⁰ and the [SELECTED WESITES ON DIALOG](#) collected by Anthony Judge, UIA, Brussels.

Some more personal experiences and realizations

Only to give you here another idea that voting is not a tool to find out who has the majority and so is winning and can "rule", but to find out differences and where minority views are. And not to have the majority "win" over the "others" but to "Question the Why" in specific situations. By participating in such Dialog Exercises in Crete some years ago I was surprised how especially traditional people (in this case Maori and American Indian elders or chiefs used voting or "seeing differences" to check the variety and validity of views. In one case for example, only one person had an opinion that differed form all the others. Focusing on this minority vote and giving it time to speak and explain experiences and the specific situation resulted in all the others changing their mind and voting for the earlier "minority opinion".

We do so also with the time-credit method in whatever settings. See re-inventing democracy and Multi-Lingual Issues and Learnings ... for example in Barcelona in the early 80ies. Collection of Participatory Methods for Robert Junks 80th birthday celebrations "[ENDE UND ANFANG – End and Beginning](#)", Graz 1993.

See also Future Labs – Zukunftswerkstaetten (Robert Jungk with Rüdiger Lutz)⁴¹ Maybe one word of concern: On the list to organize this "World Event" we stumbeled much on the need for new wording – or let me call it labeling. Is the new much needed democray "living", alive, fluid, liquid, dynamic or just adapting as all natural things. We had discussed the embodied time floating with a time token or talking stick which is

³⁸ See Alexander Christakis' publication list and the Club of Rome Report The Predicament of Mankind

³⁹ Information Age Publishing, A Volume in Research in Public Management, ISBN 1-59311-481-8, <http://www.inforagepub.com>

⁴⁰ <http://sunsite.utk.edu/FINS/DemocracyRightNow!/Fins-DRN-04.htm>

⁴¹ Foundation of Future Labs Basel – Freiburg, Lutz, Benking, Lenser, ...

embodied so when considered out of ice, melting to embody time “running-out” not only in a conversation, or the process of majority opinions changing, floatin, learning taking place in a group when people check meanings and situations and – like in an SDDP process – having the whole group change its mind – see term magic roundtable reflects this only in one setting – but having seen this is group mediation processess is really miraculous. I need to emphasis here the need for “rule-set” revisits, not rule-set resets !!! (LINK) se need for “ordered” schemas we worked on in the early 90ies called the [CONSULTATIVE as a mediation cook-book](#). Now in retrospect all is right is the authenticity in a disciplined endeavour as Christakis always points out, is maintained....

Design Conversations and Situation Rooms

see links and more a.s.a.p. *****

Poetry Making and Policy Making - Arranging the Marriage of the Beauty and the Beast⁴²

some more on going beyond the need to agree and different fomat and modes to live with complexity and opposites will be added heren a.s.a.p.

[Panetics \(Ralph G. H. Siu\) and Transcend \(Johan Galtung \)](#)

See the Johan Galtung at the [memorial lecture](#) by Johan Galtung for Ralph.G. H. Siu, founder of Panetics, an „art of governance – are science to study the infliction of suffering and help decisionmakers find alternatives keeping different time-scales and „qualities“ or „depth“ of suffering in consideration by comparing alternatives and weighting different approaches in mind. More about Panetics can be found [here](#) or on Siu and the [TAO of SCIENCE](#) in a session we did on [Applying Panetics](#).

The word or the language, written or spoken,
do not seem to have any impact (role)
in the mechanism of my line of thought.

The mental building blocks of thinking
are certain signs/symbols and more or less clear pictures,
which can be reproduced and combined at will.
Albert Einstein

Summary

This summary will deal with informed decisions, sharing, co-creation and empowerment, but also with reasoning (sinnvolle praktische Vernunft) the work on Education, Planning, Pragmatics and Ethics⁴³ And has to focus on our ways nof communicating and sharing. Then represenations and references we use and the sign systems because we have to understand the commons and the ways of seeing and reasoning to avoid labeling, and categorizing, overcalims in hierarchical or flat orders, our mental boxes and our sweet mental isolation. More to follow, maybe before enjoy the EARTH CHARTER Open-Space and TAGORE EINSTEIN COUNCIL presentations at: <http://benking.de/covenant/tagore/> or these [cultures](#), [systems](#), [maps and models](#) link collections.

Literature

This needs to be done carefully a.s.a.p. see the dialogues-conversations living document where new content can be added mor easily than in the forthcoming First Virtual Conference. This page will be maintained and updated continuously. at <http://benking.de/dialog/dialogues-conversations2006>

Please excuse

that his paper evolved from old materials and collections of materials for a forthcoming publication and was done in times of high pressure and exposure. But as a living input for a discussionit might serve its purpose even when not perfect in stile and editing.

⁴² Presentation and hand-out of Anthony J.N. Judge at the COB Members Meeting Budapest 1997. Later presented at the SCHOOL OF POETRY (German Dichtung) and in the context of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences (WAAS) more at: <http://uia.org> and <http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs/poetpol0.php>

⁴³ see Stachowiak and Benking, General Model Theory and and <http://quergeist.net/Stachowiak/> or these slides from a global LEARN DAY – all covered in the contribution of [Eric Scheider](#) in this Virtual Conference.

PS: (late note October 2011)

A lot has been on the last 5 or 20 years about democracy and participation. It is not only collecting methods on participation for Robert Jungk 20 years ago, or even looking back at origins of participatory, normative, and prognostic endeavour. Pls. see the Interviews 2009 and 2011 in Europe'sWorld. <http://benking.de/EUROPEsWORLD/> titles:

9 / 2011 [The Predicament of the Individual, Communities, and Humankind in the 21st Century Deliberations about Structured Dialogic Design, Systems Thinking, Policy-Making, Multi-track Diplomacy, Empowerment and the Wisdom of the People](#)

2009 – 2010 [Learnings and Vistas based on revisiting 40 years "Global Problematique" summing up 40 years "Predicament of Mankind" \(Club of Rome early report\), look-outs, and new forms of structured dialog and deliberation / decision cultures in an Interview with Alexander Christakis.](#)

This gets relevant now as we revisited after 2009 Government 2.0 now 1st week Open Government in Germany and interestingly a very old question came up: Fluid, Dynamic, Liquid, Moving, Floating,.... Democracy. What is the right term? A question we pondered about around this website and lists for some time. See more on Liquid as mentioned above. So this week in October 2011 it came to me again that new terms are created every day, but when do they "stick"? I feel only when they match a reality and a situation and [have a referent](#), like when we experience how opinions get "learned" and get "seasoned" – when we learn from questioning and change our mind, and include the minority view, maybe seeing it as the common view at a later state This, ONLY THIS is real democracy, including and cherishing the differences beyond the need to agree but coming to shared realizations. At this point I can only recommend 2 papers dear to me: [Dialogue towards Unity in Diversity – Dialogue of Civilizations](#) and [Show or Schau?](#) An answer I tried when the question was:: Is Humanity Destined to Self-Destruct?

We have meanwhile established the [21stCenturyAgora.org](#) site and a strong [GLOBAL AGORAs](#) team is in place. So please check out these sites and maybe also these [BACKGROUND PAPERS](#) we try to update.