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1st Virtual Congress on World Citizenship and Democratic Global Governance

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



















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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

Discuss this paper

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

[AEROlistserv] Definition of "democratic"

Arnold Greenberg gmbg@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 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?

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 cannot agree and there is no one-and-only single solution but a bigger "Unity" in a broad range of Diversity.

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)** 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!

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Dialogues and conversations and 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**. Namely **What** is involved **when** we take into view at once commons and cultures, different identities, 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 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 1999 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 way.

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**. 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".

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 Jungk) 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 conversations. 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.

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