Liberation

Religion beyond Belief

Book manuscript draft by Dino Karabeg
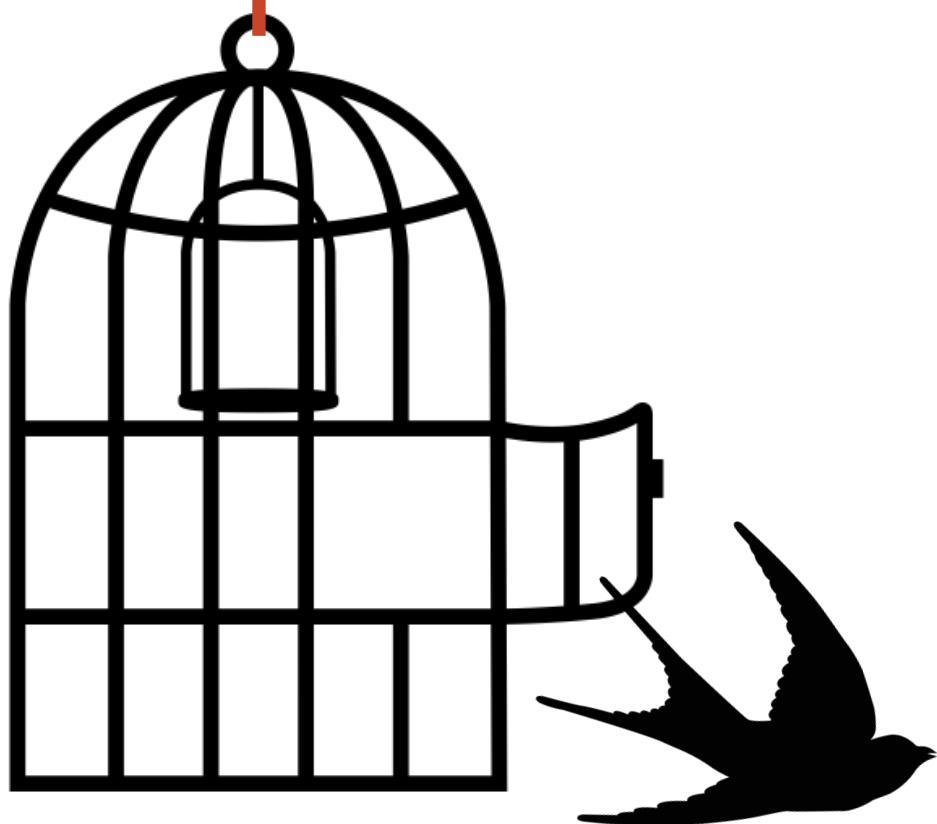
To Noah

Introduction

"Man is born free, and everywhere he's in chains",

Jean-Jacques Rousseau wrote in *The Social Contract*, in 1762, to make a case for democracy.

Did democracy set us free?

You might say that it did indeed—if you think of the times when the humans could be bought and owned and chained to the ores of a galley; or when Galilei was in house arrest for claiming that the Earth was moving. We can think and speak and travel and pursue happiness as we please—within the limits of the social contract, of course.

But here is why we should be cautious: Rousseau wasn't talking about *physical* chains. They are not everywhere but rare—compared to those internalized cultural and institutional ones; which bind us ever so strongly *because* they are invisible! Slavery was outlawed when we *conceived of it* differently; Galilei was arrested to keep a certain *way of thinking* from spreading—which, however, liberated itself; and changed not only the way we see the world, but also the world itself.

The Enlightenment, the Scientific and Industrial Revolution and the democracy followed. Could a similar change be in store for us again?

Could we *again* liberate ourselves—from the kind of 'chains' we don't even know we bear?

Could a different way to think *again* bring comprehensive improvement to human condition?

This humanity's age-old quest, for the right way to think—or for *logos* as the ancients called it and as I too will be calling it—has in our time acquired a sense of urgency; because of our civilization's condition. In *One Hundred Pages for the Future*, in 1981, based on a decade of The Club of Rome's research into the future prospects of mankind, Aurelio Peccei— this global think tank's leader and co-founder—concluded:

"It is absolutely necessary to find a way to change course."

Peccei's call to action was to shift focus from material production and consumption to humanistic and cultural pursuits:

"The future will either be an inspired product of a great cultural revival, or there will be no future."

He explained why in *The Human Quality*, in 1976:

"Let me recapitulate what seems to me the crucial question at this point of the human venture. Man has acquired such decisive power that his future depends essentially on how he will use it. However, the business of human life has become so complicated that he is culturally unprepared even to understand his new position clearly. As a consequence, his current predicament is not only worsening but, with the accelerated tempo of events, may become decidedly catastrophic in a not too distant future. The downward trend of human fortunes can be countered and reversed only by the advent of a new humanism essentially based on and aiming at man's cultural development, that is, a substantial improvement in human quality throughout the world."

In 1984, on the morning of his dying day, Peccei dictated to his secretary from a hospital bed, as part of the unfinished "Agenda for the End of the Century":

"Human development is the most important goal."

In the aftermath of Hiroshima, in 1946, Albert Einstein warned in an interview to The New York Times about the Atomic Age education:

> "A new type of thinking is essential if mankind is to survive and move toward higher levels."

> Could "a new type of thinking" be "a way to change course"?

We developed a different way to think.

I said "we" because I was fortunate to work with constellations of collaborators, who were often creative leaders in their fields. And because we built on insights of visionary thinkers or *giants*, as I'll be calling them. And because I benefited from a tenured position in an academic department that tolerated my *transdisciplinary* transgression for nearly thirty years. And to acknowledge other help I've received.

I'll call our proposal *knowledge federation*; and introduce it to you as follows:

> To justifiably say "I know", to step over that all-important threshold between *believing* and *knowing*, I *must* consider the evidence.

I might *believe* that the Earth is flat; but someone has traveled around it, and someone else saw it from the outer space. When I take account of evidence—I cannot but change my mind.

Notice also:

> I cannot justifiably say that something is "known", unless it is manifested in everyday awareness and action.

Knowledge federation stems from this obvious principle or axiom:

>   *Knowledge* must be *federated*.

To *federate knowledge* means to account for academic results, people's experiences, cultural artifacts and whatever else may be relevant to the theme or task at hand. Political federation unites smaller geopolitical units to give them visibility and power; *knowledge federation* does that to information.

You might wonder:

>   *How* are we to *federate knowledge*?

>   *Knowledge federation* too is *federated*!

Instead of looking at the world as we are accustomed to, instead of relying on the academic disciplines, the media news and other inherited or *traditional* ways—we *federate* the methods, the technology and the social processes as it may best suit our purpose, the *federation* of *knowledge*.

While I'll be introducing *knowledge federation* techniques gradually, as we go along, a couple of them you have seen already.

The first was the use of metaphors. We began with one—with Galilei in house arrest. The metaphor has been identified (by Jean Piaget in developmental psychology, George Lakoff in cognitive linguistics...) as *the* basic building block with which humans construct meaning.

Another technique you've seen is the creation of *keywords*. They are words or expressions that have custom-defined meaning. I distinguish them by writing them in a distinct font.

Ulrich Beck warned in *The Risk Society and Beyond*, in 2000:

"I cannot understand how anyone can make use of the frame-
works of reference developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth
century in order to understand the transformation into the post-
traditional cosmopolitan world we live in today."

Imagine us in "the risk society"—a society impregnated with existential
risks; which we don't know how to handle, because our traditional lan-
guage prevents us from comprehending our post-traditional world. Imag-
ine us driving into the future while looking at the rearview mirror, as Mar-
shall McLuhan saw us—and you'll have no difficulty seeing why we *must*
create *keywords*.

Often but not always, *keywords* are adopted from the terminology of an
academic field, cultural tradition or leading thinker. They enable us to
account for what's been seen, experienced or comprehended; to 'stand on
the shoulders of *giants*' and see further; see where the roads are leading
to and *choose* the *course*; see things from the sides we would otherwise
ignore.

The metaphors invite us to *see* something *as* something else; the key-
words invite us to *see* something *as* someone else saw it.

I've just turned *see as* into a keyword.

Which I'll use as a reminder that seeing things in the specific way that's
been offered is axiomatic in *knowledge federation*; and invite you to ac-
commodate it by flexing your mind.

I'll call *knowledge federation* by its pseudonym *holoscope* when
I'll want to emphasize that it helps us see things whole.

Science too helped us to see in new ways: The telescope and the micro-
scope enabled us to see the things that were too distant or too small to
be seen by the naked eye, and our worldview expanded. But science had

the tendency to focus our attention on things that were too distant or too small to be relevant—compared to those large things nearby; which now *demand* attention.

The **holoscope** helps us see *any* subject as a whole—from all sides; and in proportion.

What difference will this make?

Neil Postman—who as a professor and chairman of the Department of Culture and Communication at the New York University founded "media ecology" (we *will* 'stand on his shoulders'; but I'll use Gregory Bateson's more general keyword **ecology of mind** instead) observed in a televised interview, in 1990:

"We've entered an age of information glut. And this is something no culture has really faced before. The typical situation is information scarcity. (…) Lack of information can be very dangerous. (…) But at the same time too much information can be dangerous, because it can lead to a situation of meaninglessness, of people not having any basis for knowing what is relevant, what is irrelevant, what is useful, what is not useful, where they live in a culture that is simply committed, through all of its media, to generate tons of information every hour, without categorizing it in any way for you."

Think of all the spectacles pouring at us through the media. When we look through the **holoscope**, we see a different *kind of* spectacle; we see that *the* vastest and most important event that is happening in our era remained hidden in information jungle.

We see a mega-event; which will give relevance and meaning to specific event.

Who today remembers what the celebrity inquisitors and scholastics were saying and doing in Galilei's time? *Unless* that had to do with the mega-event that Galilei here symbolizes!

I introduced this contemporary mega-event to Noah, my twelve-year-old, by calling it the **elephant**. What *is* the **elephant**? I sing that question to Noah on the tune of The Fox; you'll easily find it on YouTube:

What is the **elephant**?
Ring-ding-ding-ding-dingeringeding!
What is the **elephant**?
"Wa-pa-pa-pa-pa-pa-pow!

Noah "knows" the answer: The **elephant** is just a figurative synonym for **holotopia**; and also for the word **paradigm**. And that's what he answers. But that's the sort of "knowing" that Noah learned at school.

To *truly **know*** the **elephant**—to develop *the kind of* knowing we need to be able to *see* the **elephant**—is the next step in the evolution of knowledge!

The **elephant** was in the room when the 20th century's **giants** wrote or spoke. But we failed to see him because of the jungleness of our information; and because of disciplinary and cultural fragmentation; and because our thinking and communication are still as the events in the 19th century shaped them. We heard the **giants** talk about a 'thick snake', a 'fan', a 'tree-trunk' and a 'rope', often in Greek or Latin; they didn't make sense and we ignored them. How differently our knowledge fares when we understand that they were talking about the 'trunk', the 'ear', the 'leg' and the 'tail' of a vast exotic 'animal'; whose very *existence* we still ignore!

To manifest the **elephant** is the opportunity we have as generation.

To show him to our children is the duty we have as parents.

So *knowledge federation* did as Postman suggested; and as we shall see in Chapter Nine, also Plato, at the academic tradition's point of inception: We *categorized*.

We identified five *pivotal **categories***; "pivotal" because they determine the ***course***; and also complete a parallel with the *historical* great cultural revival:

- Innovation—which evokes the analogy with the Industrial Revolution; and suggests the question: Where will the *next* quantum leap in efficiency and effectiveness of human work come from?
- Communication—which evokes the analogy with the Gutenberg Revolution; and suggests the question: What will enable the *next* quantum leap in ***knowledge***?
- *Foundation*—by which I mean the assumptions on which our quest of ***knowledge*** is founded; which evokes the analogy with the Copernican Revolution; and suggests the question: What will incite the *next* Enlightenment-like change of the way we think?
- *Method*—by which truth and meaning are created; which evokes the analogy with the Scientific Revolution; and suggests the question: What new way of pursuing knowledge will have similarly sweeping effects?
- Values—which orient "the pursuit of happiness" and other pursuits; and evoke the analogy with the Renaissance; and make us wonder: What values will mark the *next **cultural revival***?

When we applied the ***holoscope*** to these five ***categories*** and related questions, when we ***federated*** what's been academically published or otherwise reported—*in each case* the result was an insight which toppled the "conventional wisdom"; and showed that the habitual comprehension and handling of that ***category*** must be *thoroughly* revised.

Five insights resulted.

Which point to a comprehensive revolutionary change, similar in scale and impact to the change that resulted from the historical academic revival, is ready to take place and *will* take place when we begin to **federate knowledge**.

And when we used the **five insights** as a frame of reference, to illuminate other core themes including politics, democracy, information, science, education, happiness, knowledge, creativity, peace and religion—similar game-changing insights followed. So we formulated **ten themes** to illustrate that.

Each of the **five insights** points to this single principle or rule of thumb— as the *way* in which the mentioned reversals of handling and breakthrough effects are to be achieved:

Make things **whole**.

Holotopia is the vision of a radically better cultural and societal order of things or **paradigm** that follows from the **five insights**; which can be actualized by applying this principle. It is also a carefully choreographed strategy and project to make this vision come true.

Holotopia is a practical way to change **course**.

I know: The unfolding of **holotopia** will take time.

But **holotopia** transforms the world also *instantly*!

Margaret Mead wrote in *Continuities in Cultural Evolution,* in 1964:

"We are living in a period of extraordinary danger, as we are faced with the possibility that our whole species will be eliminated from the evolutionary scene. One necessary condition of successfully continuing our existence is the creation of an atmosphere of hope that the huge problems now confronting us can, in fact, be solved—and can be solved in time."

Holotopia supplies that "one necessary condition of successfully continuing our existence"—a *realistically realizable* vision of a *radically better* future.

Holotopia changes the *ethos* of our engagement with "the huge problems now confronting us"; it turns them into *opportunities.*

I was just telling Noah about Alizée, the 22 year-old climate activist who tied herself to a tennis net and disrupted a French Open semi-finals game. "We have 1028 days left" was written on her T-shirt. Some spectators booed and whistled; they came to watch a tennis game, not for climate politics! Others remained silent. I imagined that some of them saw her point: *This is not the time* for games.

Have you seen the movie *The Matrix*? I showed Noah the whole trilogy a couple of years ago. *The Matrix* depicts a dystopian future where intelligent machines rule the world; and keep us humans in a computer-generated "reality"—which looks pretty much like the world we see around us. The world we see around us, just like *The Matrix,* offers Noah's generation only two options: To be engaged in a game-like "reality"—of computer games to begin with; and career games later on; *or* to live in a dystopian reality and try to *disrupt* the games.

Holtopia offers a third opotion: A way to *transform* 'games'.

And then it also has this *main* value proposition.

Dennis Meadows—who as a young MIT professor coordinated The Club of Rome's best known study *The Limits to Growth*; and then continued

researching our civilization's condition and future prospects until today—recently reported that "sustainable development" is no longer possible; because we've *already* surpassed the limits of what our planet can sustain. We are now headed toward the "collapse", Meadows explained; where "the systems in which we live and work" as Bela H. Banathy called them, which I will simply call **systems**, collapse under their weight; and topple one another like dominos.

> **Holotopia** transforms the *nature* of this dynamic—from collapse to renewal.

Experts urge us to focus on making **systems** "resilient", so they won't collapse under pressure. The **holotopia** strategy is to make them pliable, and be *transformed* under pressure; to suit the *functions* they need to serve, in *new* conditions.

> **Holotopia** is hard to believe?

Let me put your mind to rest: I don't expect you to *believe* what I say; or even to understand it completely. In the second book of the Holotopia series I'll begin to elaborate details.

> Here I only want to show you around; let you have a glimpse of **holotopia** as a whole.

It's simple matter; which, alas, turned out to be impossible. What I have in mind, and what I'd like to share, is a 3D-like image of a web of relationships; an X-ray-like picture of the **elephant**'s anatomy. It took shape gradually, while I thought and practiced and worked in a certain uncommon way, which I'll tell you about later. Try as I might—I've been unable to turn what I see into a linear sequence of words.

I depend on your help; on your *active* engagement.

So here is what I'll do. I'll continue to share these snippets, which I call *vignettes*; each of them is a snapshot of the **elephant**. And I'll ask you to reflect on them and try to connect the dots; see the whole big thing. This will turn this book into a puzzle.

The puzzle will have several solutions; there'll be multiple ways to connect the dots; several distinct lines of thought will together compose a complete image of the **elephant**. I'll call them **threads**.

As a warmup, I'll show you two **threads**.

To pick up and follow through the book's ten chapters.

The first, which I'll call **red thread**, will show *how* exactly our way of thinking or **logos** will change, when we update it evidence-based. The second, which I'll call **golden thread,** will show how our "pursuit of happiness" or **course** will change, when we illuminate it by **logos**.

Here's the **red thread**.

Richard Feynman wrote in *The Character of Physical Law*, in 1965:

"It is necessary for the very existence of science that minds exist which do not allow that nature must satisfy some preconceived conditions."

He explained:

"If science is to progress, what we need is the ability to experiment, honesty in reporting results – the results must be reported

without somebody saying what they would like the results to have been – and finally – an important thing – the intelligence to interpret the results. An important point about this intelligence is that it should not be sure ahead of time what must be."

I'll use *phenomenology* as *keyword* to point to the *character* of this new way to think, which emerged in physics.

Phenomenology means to apply *logos* to phenomena—as they are reflected in experience.

Phenomenology demands that we *don't* ignore experience when it contradicts the *belief*.

And here's the *golden thread*.

I want to show you that *phenomenology* allows us to "discover natural laws" of an unusual kind—which illuminate "the pursuit of happiness".

In fact Aldous Huxley already did that—in *Perennial Philosophy*, in 1945. What he called "perennial philosophy" was that sort of a "law".

The Huxley family gave several leading British scientists. Aldous had a different *kind of* science in mind; which he introduced as follows:

"But the nature of *perennial philosophy* is such that it cannot be directly and immediately apprehended except by those who have chosen to fulfil certain conditions, making themselves loving, pure in heart, and poor in spirit. Why should this be so? We do not know. It is just one of those facts which we have to accept, whether we like them or not and however implausible and unlikely they may seem. [...] It is by making physical experiments

that we can discover the intimate nature of matter and its poten-tialities. And it is only by making psychological and moral exper-iments that we can discover the intimate nature of mind and its potentialities."

When the *experiences* reported by those "who have chosen to fulfil cer-tain conditions, making themselves loving, pure in heart, and poor in spir-it" are considered together, Huxley showed in *Perennial Philosophy*—across geopolitical regions, historical periods and cultural traditions—we cannot but conclude that they saw the world similarly; and also *experi-enced* it similarly: They saw the world as an interconnected, living whole, and themselves as its integral parts; they experienced an abundance of love and joy, which was overflowing; they were *ethically* transformed—and only wished to *be there* for the world and its people.

In the causal relationship of this "natural law" that Huxley dis-covered, **human quality** is both the cause and the effect; both the road and the destination!

Isn't this "law" exactly the sort of thing that Peccei could have dreamed of?

And you don't even need to read *Perennial Philosophy* to see it; you'll find evidence for it in every tradition.

For instance in Buddhism. Every day at 5:30 AM, after the morning medi-tation, at the Suan Mokkh forest monastery in Southern Thailand (I'll say more about it in a moment) we chant this line from *Ovadapatimokha Gatha* (Verses from the Chief of Exhortations); first in Pali and then in English:

"*Nibbanam paramam vadanti buddha*" (all awakened ones say nibbana is supreme).

"Nibbana" (the Pali word for "nirvana") is what the "awkakened ones" (those who have "chosen to fulfil certain conditions") have experienced; they *all* , the sutta says, qualified it as "supreme".

And also in Christianity. Here is how C.F. Andrews portrayed the mood of the original Christian community, in *Sermon on the Mount*:

> "[The early disciples of Jesus found out] that the Way of Life, which Jesus had marked out for them in His teaching, was revolutionary in its moral principles. It turned the world upside down (Acts 17. 6). (...) They found in this new 'Way of Life' such a superabundance of joy, even in the midst of suffering, that they could hardly contain it. Their radiance was unmistakable. When the Jewish rulers saw their boldness, they 'marveled and took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus' (Acts 4. 13). (...) It was this exuberance of joy and love which was so novel and arresting. It was a 'Way of Life' about which men had no previous experience. Indeed, at first those who saw it could not in the least understand it; and some mocking said, 'These men are full of new wine' (Acts 2. 13)."

A similar message reaches us from the biography of Muhammad that Martin Lings wrote; also based on the earliest sources.

Let me show you something interesting.

Visit the The Britannica's online collection of articles about moral philosophy (topic: ethics-philosophy), and take a moment to explore them. You'll see a succession of historical authors, definitions and theories. What did Niccolò Machiavelli, for instance, have to tell us about morality? When you've examined those articles, you might easily conclude that

every *conceivable* view is represented. And yet something *essential* is still missing.

> ***Science*** is not there!

The accounts of *experience* of "those who have chosen to fulfil certain conditions, making themselves loving, pure in heart, and poor in spirit". The reported views are results of speculation, not experience.

> "All professions are conspiracies against the laity",

George Bernard Shaw warned. Ironically, moral philosophy is no exception.

As academic disciplines tend to, moral philosophy conspires against the laity in two ways:

- by excluding the outliers—such as "those who have chosen to fulfil certain conditions"; and Aldous Huxley
- by confining its outreach to moral philosophers—instead of ***federating*** the insights that will help all of us live ethically.

How does one "develop" a different way to think? This might be a good moment to tell you what exactly we *did*.

> The result of our three decades of work is a *complete* ***prototype*** of the ***knowledge federation transdiscipline***.

I know this is a mouthful. So let me bring it down to earth by an anecdote.

The *Visions of Possible Worlds* conference, which was organized by the Faculty of Design of the Politecnico di Milano and the Triennale di Milano

in 2003, invited its participants to propose visions of a sustainable or better world, which are "possible" or realizable. With consistency that surprised me, the presenters pointed in the direction that Aurelio Peccei asked us to focus on.

My presentation had only one slide.

With a drawing of a bus with candle headlights on the left, a drawing of a bus with lightbulbs as headlights on the right, and an arrow from the former to the letter.

I introduced my proposal as follows:

"The vision I intended to share involved the change of focus from material production and consumption to humanistic and cultural pursuits and values – from which a change of design, and then of everything else, naturally follows. But being here these two days I have been feeling that my vision had already become reality! One after another you've been depicting various facets of my vision more eloquently and more artistically than I'll be able to (my background is not in art and design but in science and engineering). However I know—we all know—that the larger community does not yet share our vision. This here is an elect group; outside of these walls, the world has not yet changed. The people out there are still busy pursuing Industrial Age goals. So the question remains *How* can we make our visions possible or real? How can we spread it *beyond* these walls? As Chris Ryan said at the end of the session yesterday, we all agree what needs to happen; the question remains *How* to make it happen? It is this *how* that my lecture will be focused on. I want to propose to you a concrete strategy."

I explained that the bus in my slide represented our society or **culture**; that its headlights represented our **information**; and I proposed *this* strategy:

"What we've been talking about these two days is a revolutionary change – first of all of consciousness and of values; and then also of design. What is the strategic object that every revolution must secure *first*? Suppose we were talking about an armed revolution; what is the building, the strategic object that a revolution *must* have under control? (...) It's the TV station! (...) Please don't misunderstand me. I am not inviting you to an armed revolution. Our revolution is a revolution of awareness. But if even an armed revolution must make sure that it has the information under control—should that not be *even more* true about a revolution of awareness? Yet we seem to have ignored information. Given a bit more time, I could show to you that information is now in the hands of our enemy."

You may now comprehend *precisely* what we created and why; what's the meaning and purpose of creating a complete **prototype** of the **knowledge federation transdiscipline**.

It's those 'headlights'!

The **transdiscipline** is to the society as the lightbulb is to the bus.

In his 1969 MIT report and call to action, to institute a **transdisciplinary** university, Erich Jantsch quoted Norbert Wiener, the iconic progenitor of cybernetics:

"There is only one quality more important than 'know-how'......
This is 'know-what' by which we determine not only how to accomplish our purposes, but what our purposes are to be."

It should go without saying that a collection of disconnected academic disciplines cannot provide the 'know-what'; that we must *transcend* the disciplinary divisions if democracy is to have *functioning* 'headlights'.

If **knowledge** is to be possible.

 Holotopia is the ***transdiscipline prototype***'s proof-of-concept application; it points to the difference that 'lightbulb headlights' will make.

⸻

Technically or academically, ***transdisciplinarity***—as modeled by the ***knowledge federation prototype***—is a ***paradigm***.

I use the word ***paradigm*** in a similar way as Thomas Kuhn did—to point to
- a new way to conceive of a domain of interest
- which resolves the reported anomalies
- and opens a new creative frontier to research and development

Only here the domain of interest is ***information*** and ***knowledge*** at large; not a traditional academic field, where paradigm changes have been relatively common.

Kuhn left us another useful keyword, ***incommensurable***. Two ***paradigms*** are ***incommensurable*** when they don't replace one another; when each of them is better for its own distinct purposes.

Knowledge federation conceives of ***information*** as the lifeblood of human ***systems***; which *must* perform certain specific functions in those ***system***, if *they* should function and be ***whole***.

Anomalies in the functioning of the existing 'headlights' are diverse and numerous; some of them you have seen: The fact that a "club" had to be created to illuminate to our society's ***course*** is *already* an anomaly; the fact that the diagnoses of The Club of Rome remained ignored may turn out to be a *catastrophic* one.

The creative frontier that ***knowledge federation***'s opens to research and development extends to the horizon.

Having found ourselves on a creative frontier immensely larger than what *we* could explore and develop, we worked in the manner of prosectors. The **prototypes** we developed model distinct parts of the frontier. A **prototype** points to a range of questions and design challenges, *and* to the techniques by which they can be answered. This makes it possible for others to step in and contribute.

> By creating **systemic** prototypes, and **transdisciplines** around them to update them continuously, **knowledge federation** enables **systemic innovation**.

A **prototype** is a model functioning in reality, which serves as

- a template—exhibiting a collection of challenge–solution pairs, or **design patterns** as I am calling them; and showing how to combine those **design patterns** together in a coherently functioning whole
- an intervention—strategically designed to alter certain conventional practice or **system**
- an experiment—showing what in the proposed design solution works and what still needs to be improved

Knowledge federation develops the **transdiscipline** by developing itself.

While in order to model the creative frontier we created a range of *different kinds of* **prototypes**, I'll here illustrate them by zooming in on a single corner of this frontier—the **systemic prototypes**.

- One of them shows what journalism or public informing may need to be like if democracy should have the faculty of vision
- Another one shows what education may need to be like to empower our next generation to create a *different* world
- Several prototype show what academic communication may need to be like if our society should benefit from creative people

The most interesting and game-changing are, however, the **prototypes** that model the **foundation frontier**.

To show it to you, we need a new metaphor. So imagine our civilization as a large apartment building; which has cracks in the walls and is no longer safe to live in.

Imagine that architects descended to its basement and saw the *reason* for those cracks: This building's construction began centuries ago; by masons who knew nothing about architecture and foundations. While the building was small that didn't matter.

>   *Now* it does!

Noam Chomsky was one of those 'architects'. In 2011 he visited the University of Oslo, and told us what he saw.

Chomsky's title and abstract sounded rather like a riddle:

> **The machine, the ghost, and the limits of understanding: Newton's contributions to the study of mind**
>
> *A familiar view is that the early scientific revolution provided humans with limitless explanatory power and that the theory of evolution grounds this conclusion even more firmly.*
>
> *The great figures who carried out the revolution reached very different conclusions, for good reasons, which are supported still more strongly by Darwinian theory. The issues were understood at the time to bear directly on the study of mind and its place in nature, in ways that merit careful consideration.*

To see what all this means, think of Galilei in house arrest; and notice that the controversy was not whether the Earth was moving or not; that was only a technical detail. The real reason was Galilei's claim that when the

human reason contradicted the Scripture, it was legitimate to give it priority.

> The mind's "place in nature" was the point of contention; or more accurately—the mind's place in culture's **foundation**.

The fundamental change Galilei stood for *did* of course take place. The world we live in resulted.

> Naturally, the *next **cultural revival*** too will need to begin with the ***culture***'s ***foundation***.

So let us hear what Chomsky had to say about this.

Chomsky pointed out that the successes of the early scientific revolution were made possible by looking at the world *in a certain way*. That its founding fathers insisted that the natural phenomena had to be explained in a way that is *completely* comprehensible to the human mind; without reference to hidden causes. Or metaphorically—that nature had to be understood and explained in the manner in which one would explain the functioning of a machine; without recourse to 'the ghost' acting in 'the machine'.

The successes of the early scientific revolution, combined with the clarity and the empowerment of the mind that resulted from this way of thinking and explaining things (and led to comprehensive change), convinced not only the scientists but also a growing part of the population that science was discovering how nature *really* works. And most importantly— that science had *the* answer to the humanity's quest for ***logos***; that the scientists had *discovered* the right way to think.

I found out that this was not the case by reading the *20th century* thinkers. In his talk Chomsky showed that *already Newton* needed to *put* "the ghost in the machine" to develop his theories; and that *already Darwin*'s theory showed that we cannot reasonably expect to have "limitless explanatory power" without doing that.

Chnomsky explained that when Newton's *Principia* was published, his idea of gravitation as "action at a distance" was criticized by his peers as an absurdity; against which the rational mind *had to* rebel. "It *is* an absurdity," Newton agreed. "And perhaps this 'action at a distance' will one day be explained in terms that are satisfactory to the mind. But for the time being we cannot do that. All we can do is observe that the gravitational force *is* there (it keeps us from dashing off from the rotating Earth and into cosmos); and develop a formalism that allows us to model what is observed and make predictions."

Darwin appeared in Chomsky's story line to remove the *possibility* of getting rid of 'the ghost'; by showing that both our minds and our concepts are *evolving*. Chomsky evoked the image of the rats who are manifestly unable to solve the prime-number maze, in contrast to other mazes—because they lack the *concept* of prime number. Similarly, Chomsky concluded, unless our minds and concepts are God given, they will always be at a certain stage of evolution; enabling us to solve certain 'puzzles' as problems—and compelling us to see others as mysteries.

For the lack of a better word, I'll use **materialism** *both* for the way of thinking that Chomsky was pointing to *and* for the cultural and societal order of things or **paradigm** that grew on it as **foundation**. The question that Chomsky proposed for "careful consideration, about "the limits of understanding", can then be interpreted as follows:

> Is **materialism** a **foundation** on which a **whole culture** can be built?

> Chomsky's point was that it *isn't*.

Core elements of culture—religion to begin with—*lost* their bearings when **materialism** became our **logos**. It remained to Nietzsche to diagnose:

> *"Got ist tot*!" (God is dead!)

Which of course didn't mean that God physically died—but that the *functions* that religion performed in human cultures no longer had a foundation and were about to be eroded.

Notably the maintenance of **human quality**.

A devious little book—*Wittgenstein's Poker*, by David Edmonds and John Eidinow—illustrates the situation on the **foundation frontier** that resulted. The book tells about "ten minutes in the history of philosophy". The "poker" in the title is not the card game that comes to mind; it's the fire poker, the thing that the people back used then to rearrange the pieces of wood in a fire place. During those ten minutes Ludwig Wittgenstein had an impassioned discussion with Karl Popper, who was visiting the University of Cambridge, where Wittgenstein was on the faculty. Wittgenstein held the fire poker in his hand while gesticulating passionately; and then threw it on the ground and stormed out of the room.

See Popper and Wittgenstein *as* representing two streams in the philosophy of science; which are not on speaking terms.

See Popper *as* representing the stream that aims to rescue the rigor of traditional, disciplinary science; and in that way also its privileged role as our society and culture's truth and vision provider—the role of "the Grand Revelator of modern Western culture", as Benjamin Lee Whorf branded it.

See Wittgenstein *as* representing the view that *any* fixed language and way of thinking will inevitably **gamify** our social existence in a way that facilitates certain kinds of thought and action and inhibits others (let's use this so contemporary keyword, **gamify**, to combine Pierre Bourdieu's insights about symbolic power, with Wittgenstein's insights about communication).

We'll have endless fun in our **dialog** unraveling just how much the **logos** of **materialism** permeated our culture. And there is simply no end to the

list of problems that resulted. The global problems are on the list, as the "side effects" of our "successes"... But I am not here to criticize.

Knowledge federation did as Buckminster Fuller advised:

> "You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete."

You'll easily understand our work on prototyping the foundation frontier with the analogy with the advent of architecture: We **believed** that the foundation for evaluating ideas and importantly memes was just obvious; it has turned out that it is *not* obvious. We showed how by federating logos, and applying it to federate what we know about knowledge, and using *that* to develop the praxis of foundation building—gives us what may in the most proper sense be called **epistemology**. And similarly, when we apply logos to federate methods—the result is in a proper sense **methodology**.

The fact that the issue of founding knowledge has everything to do with power—in particular with the kind of 'chains' we don't even know we bear, as I hinted in the opening **vignette**—brings us to another useful analogy; with the legal practice. In a democracy, even the most hated criminal has the right to a 'fair trial'; should we not apply the same standard to ideas and memes? What I've said about phenomenology, furthermore, gives us a possibility to democratize this procedure, by developing something akin to a jury trial.

> As we shall see, this is very much what the dialog that follows this book will be about.

The details of the epistemology and the methodology are planned to be provided in the third book of the Holotopia series. In Chapter Nine I'll highlight enough of the basics to give you an idea. So let me here conclude by only pointing to some of the consequences of this line of work.

Academic revival.

When we have ***epistemology*** as an *independent* foundation for developing ideas—the frontier that opens up is similar to the one that marked the early scientific revolution; we are empowered to, even obliged to rethink and develop new methods, ways of working, institutional structures...

"Philosophical" is no longer an antonym to "practical"; the interest in founding ideas and memes is seen as *the* most practically important one.

IT revival.

This is actually my favorite—because it is so unexpected! Why should IT innovation benefit from fundamental work in philosophy? The point here is that as long as we *do not* have an independent realm of ideas to theorize and evaluate our society's systems, and its information systems in particular—all we can do with information technology is to reproduce the systems we already have! And vice-versa...

Cultural revival.

It will naturally result when a general-purpose ***methodology*** replaces a collection of disciplinary procedures, and when academic researchers are empowered to focus on *any* question of contemporary or general interest.

Naturally, to submit the cornerstones of this 'architecture' building to usual academic tests of authenticity and validity, and to 'put them on the map', I had to commit them to standard peer-reviewed publications. In the article titled "Design Epistemology", which was published in the special issue of the *Information Journal* titled *Information: Its Different Modes and Its Relation to Meaning* edited by Robert K. Logan), I introduced the ***foundation frontier*** as follows:

"A century ago, a profound change was under way in the arts: An explosion of styles and techniques, and of creativity, resulted when the artists challenged the assumption that the purpose of art was to mirror reality, by emulating the techniques of Old Masters. A similar change is now possible—and, we submit, also called for—in knowledge work, and in particular in the sciences. The "modern science" that, we envision, may result from this transformation, will however not be an academic equivalent of l'art pour l'art-ism but on the contrary, a way to make the positive difference that knowledge and knowledge work can and need to make, in this age."

Five years ago I realized that our *prototype* of the *knowledge federation transdiscipline* was sufficiently completed.

And decided to focus on documenting what's been done and preparing for the next phase—deployment and scaling; the institution of k*nowledge federation* as the first academic *transdiscipline*; and the update of our society's *systems*; and *collective minds*. This larger-than-life real-life adventure, I thought, was ready to begin.

But then I realized that the prototyping work was *not* yet finished; that *the* key *prototype* was missing.

The one with which the process of *systemic* change had to *begin*.

I saw, namely, that *knowledge federation* was struggling with the same problem that The Club of Rome and Aurelio Peccei struggled with; the problem that thwarted the climate change and other initiatives; the reason why Peccei concluded at the end of his journey that we *must* face the human development issue as *the* highest priority.

Introduction   HOLOTOPIA
                                                                                                PROTOTYPE
                                                                                                    29

In "the era of information glut", the power structure has a new strategic weapon—incomparably more effective than censorship and prison were in Galilei's time:

> Ignoring!

And this key issue, ignoring, has a most interesting power-related social psychology side, which I'll come back to in a moment.

David Bohm warned:

> "As long as a paradox is treated as a problem, it can never be dissolved".

In the society where insights and *memes* are habitually ignored instead of being **federated**—*nothing* that we can publish or propose, academically or otherwise, will have an effect!

The mother of all our problems is a paradox; and it turns our visible problems too into paradoxes!

> So what is to be done?

Knowledge federation offers a generic cure to both problems *and* paradoxes—the creation of **prototypes**.

> What you are witnessing is a *new* **prototype**—whose function is to break the spell of ignoring.

And I should emphasize—*not only* witnessing; by reading this far, you are already *part of* this new **prototype**!

The strategy it implements is modeled according to the usual procedure for updating the legal system in a democracy.

> We are creating a high-profile case.

That's one of the reasons why I chose religion as theme; because some people still care about religion, in one way or the other.

I am about to submit that **religion** has been *grossly* misunderstood and mistreated.

And use the resulting 'case' to both update the "social contract" or the 'legal system', by democratizing the handling of cultural heritage or memes—*and* to restore to function those parts of our culture that have human development in their custody.

It will serve use best to make our case concrete; to focus it on a specific person and situation—which will in a fractal-like way display the *structure* of the larger-than-life issues we've been talking about.

This book has a hero.

He is Buddhadasa, Thailand's holy man and Buddhism reformer. Who—having renounced secular life in 1926, and spent a couple of years in monasteries in Bangkok—thought This just cannot be it!

Armed with some old Pali scriptures and firm dedication, Buddhadasa withdrew to an abandoned forest monastery near his native village Chaya in Southern Thailand, to live and practice as Buddha did.

Having found out by experimenting, first on himself and then with a community of monks that grew around him, that the essence of Buddha's teaching is not at all as it is believed, but comprehensive liberation, which includes liberation from **belief**—in 1932 Buddhadasa founded a forest monastery called "Suan Mokkh" (The Garden of Liberation).

And having also found out, by reading the scriptures of other religions and dialoging with their adepts, that religions tend to have the same liberating essence as their point of origin; which tends to be similarly ignored; and that we modern people vitally need that essence to liberate ourselves from *materialism* and *change course*—Buddhadasa saw it as his duty to do whatever he could to share his insight with the world.

The Suan Mokkh forest monastery got a library, where monks and visitors could inform themselves about the way to liberation; and a workshop, where monks could express their insights as paintings and sculptures. Spiritual Theatre was built to exhibit this work; and explain the way to liberation in whatever media were available to monks in a Thai forest in the 1950s.

Not long before he would pass away in 1993, Buddhadasa established an international retreat center, where visitors from around the world could learn the Buddha's method for liberation; and an international monastery where they could practice it, by living as the Suan Mokkh monks did; and as Buddha and his disciples lived and practiced centuries ago.

I'll invite you to join me in *federating* Buddhadasa's insight.

To make points of evidence and abstract ideas comprehensible, palpable and memorable or "sticky", I use a technique that is common in journalism—and render them as brief, real-life people and situation stories.

Here is one.

We were transported by automobile from the Suan Mokkh international monastery to the Walailak University in a neighboring province; where about one hundred students were waiting to hear Ajahn Medhi's speech

("Ajahn" is the title given in Thailand to advanced and respected monks, who are qualified to teach others.) It was Sunday afternoon, and his speech was to conclude an intensive weekend course called "Know thyself".

My task was to put the ball in play.

Introducing myself briefly, I said I was a professor in Norway "where the soil is now frozen and my students wouldn't dream of walking barefoot as you do". And that I come to Suan Mokkh every year around Christmas, to study and practice under Venerable Ajahn Medhi as teacher and abbot. I explained that a discovery was made at Suan Mokkh that could make a difference in the world. And that I took it upon myself to learn and embody it, and help it reach out further.

Venerable Ajahn Buddhadasa, I elaborated, considered his discovery to be an antidote to the global onslaught of materialism. And I asked for a show of hands: "How many of you believe that materialism *can* be stopped?"

I looked at the students while I spoke. Aside from being barefoot and seated cross-legged on the floor, aligned in straight rows and columns, they looked just like the students in the USA or Norway or any other place where I had taught—with Western-branded T-shirts, cellular phones and all. A handful of them dutifully raised their arms; even here, in Buddhadasa's neighborhood, and only a generation later, young people don't believe that his mission *could* be possible.

Ajahn Medhi then told them about the essence of Buddhadasa's insight; by recounting Buddhadasa's original interpretation of *Paticcasamuppada* (dependent origination), while pointing to a large Wheel of Life panel behind him and interpreting its imagery. Medhi is a handsome man in his fifties and an animated speaker; he has an insider's knowledge of his theme.

But does his audience understand him?

I studied the students' expressions. Do they see the relevance of what is being offered to their own lives? Are they at all aware of the the civilizational drama we are part of?

When Ajahn Medhi concluded his speech, the professor who organized the Know thyself course bowed to him three times respectfully, the Buddhist way. In Thailand Buddhism still enjoys an enormous respect—among the older generation. Yet I was guessing that the profound, game-changing insight about ourselves that was being offered did not really reach its audience. That the science courses the students had taken, the movies they'd seen and the very *world* they lived in formed roughly the same ***ecology of the mind*** as the one you and I grew up in and live in.

And made communication impossible.

From the soil we extract minerals and turn them into material objects; and ultimately into waste and pollution. According to an expert, our "ecological footprint" is at least 60% larger than what our planet can sustain.

Materialism as ***course*** simply *cannot* continue!

What will replace it?

As the water in a lake was drying out, some water animals developed a new gene—which enabled them to breathe on dry land.

This was, science taught us, how *natural* evolution progressed. And as Richard Dawkins pointed out, it is also a good way to understand cultural evolution. Only there we must talk about "memes" instead of genes.

'Our cultural lake is drying out'.

What *memes* will enable us to 'breathe on dry land'?

It is in *this* context that our *federation* of Buddhadasa's insight must be understood. By *federating* the Buddhadasa *meme*, we will pave the way to other culture-transformative *memes* to acquire citizenship rights.

And ignite the *cultural revival*.

Our case now has a plaintiff; it's the Buddhadasa *meme*; which represents other *memes* that are stranded on the margins of culture, waiting to be given citizenship rights. Who's the accused?

This book has a villain.

Who is not a dictator or a clique of conspirators or any of the entities we are accustomed to see as potential enemies and threats to freedom.

I'll call him *power structure*.

And introduce him to you by this excerpt from Wikipedia:

"In sociology, the iron cage is a concept introduced by Max Weber to describe the increased rationalization inherent in social life, particularly in Western capitalist societies. The 'iron cage' thus traps individuals in systems based purely on teleological efficiency, rational calculation and control."

The *power structure* comprises *systems*, *information* and *human quality*; as Max Weber—a founding fathers of sociology—suggested a century ago.

Introduction

HOLOTOPIA
PROTOTYPE
35

It is easy to see why *systems* (in which we live and work) have power:
They determine how we live; and by organizing us in work, determine
also what the effects of our work will be; whether they will be problems,
or solutions.

But *systems* alone are powerless!

Since they are human creations, we would easily *recreate* them—were it
not for the fact that they educate us and inform us; and in that way mold
how we see things and think; and that they define what it takes to be suc-
cessful; and in that way mold how we do things, and how we *are*.

We'll come to comprehend the **power structure** and its consequences by
following the **iron thread**; which too is composed of insights of **giants**.
One of them is Pierre Bourdieu; who wrote in an essay, which was trans-
lated and published in *Language and Symbolic Power* in 1991:

> "Symbolic power is that invisible power which can be exercised
> only with the complicity of those who do not want to know that
> they are subject to it or even that they themselves exercise it."

Bourdieu explained:

> "Symbolic power – as a power of constituting the given through
> utterances, of making people see and believe, of conforming or
> transforming the vision of the world and, thereby, action of the
> world and thus the world itself, and almost magical power which
> enables one to obtain the equivalent of what is obtained through
> force (whether physical or economic), by virtue of the specific
> effect of mobilization – is a power that can be exercised only if it
> is *recognized*, that is misrecognized as arbitrary. This means that
> symbolic power (...) is defined in and through a given relation
> between those who exercise power and those who submit to it,
> i.e. in the very structure of the field in which belief is produced
> and reproduced."

Power has morphed in modernity; prisons, chains and torture chambers have been rendered obsolete. By wielding *symbolic power*, by *being* "the field in which belief is produced and reproduced"—the *power structure* can make us act contrary to our interests; contrary even to the values we consciously uphold.

By fostering *belief*, the *power structure* circumvents the checks and balances that the founders of modern democracy were able to conceive of—who, in the spirit of Enlightenment, saw as rational decision makers; and designed the social contract and the *systems* that implement democracy accordingly.

By looking at freedom and democracy in this new way, through the *power structure* lens, we'll be able to see why the revolutionary changes we've been through since Galilei's time didn't *really* liberate us.

> That only one *power structure* replaced another.

We now have the plaintiff *and* the accused; our *dialog* will be the courtroom, and you will be the juror.

> It remains to plead the case.

This word of wisdom has been attributed to Harriet Tubman, the icon of Negro slave liberation:

> "If I could have convinced more slaves that they were slaves, I could have freed thousands more."

We don't have to discard the popular myths of this kind only because they are not historical. The reason why this one "went viral" is that, peo-

ple feel, it expresses something that an iconic slave liberator *could* have said or perhaps *should* have said.

I mention it as a metaphor to explain what I'm about to submit to your consideration.

Which is that the order of things of **materialism**—in education, research, legislature, business, entertainment, advertising…—is *not* the "reality" that we the people simply have to live with.

That we need to **see** it **as** the disempowerment of **culture**;

and a product of **power structure**.

I am about to ask of you, as a juror, something that is not a single bit easy. I know it's not because I've just been going through it; and I am not done yet. What help me is that I've realized Galilei too had to do that; and other founding fathers of scientific revolution.

I will ask you to **see** "science" too **as** a product of **power structure**.

I wrote "science" in quotation marks because I am not talking about science as Galilei and Einstein conceived of it; I am not talking about science as the furthest evolved part of academic tradition; I am talking about the way in which the majority of people today conceive of science—including surprisingly many scientists.

I am talking about "science" as materialism.

I am talking about the way of thinking that our general culture still has, having imbued it from the 19th century science; at the point when **materialism** became our *official* **logos**.

I am not making a case in favor of "religion" as "orthodoxy". I submit it to you in the name of the people who have *experienced* a better way to be;

and want to pass it on to their children and students. People like Ajahn Medhi and that unnamed professor of the Walailak University. And as a case for *all* the memes whose potential is to improve *human quality*; and help us revive culture. Including the appreciation for good literature, and art, and music.

My case will be laid out in terms of the *three threads* I've been telling you about. The *iron thread* will show that the way we handle memes is a power issue; the *red thread* will debunk the myth that *materialism* is just the "the objective reality" we have to live with; the *golden thread* will show the *course* that will become possible once we overthrow *materialism*.

> This will *not* be a case *against* religion as belief.

> It will be a case for reviving and restoring *religion*.

Conceived as a social function—as cultivation of human quality.

I will, however, also submit to our *dialog* that the *religion* that is conceived as *belief* and founded on ancient traditions may no longer be the best way to implement that function; *or* to pass on to our children and students the heritage that the religious and other human development traditions developed. That some translation work or federation work may still need to be done. That *religion* will need to evolve further.

> As that Walailak University situation I was telling you about may illustrate.

Aurelio Peccei concluded in *One Hundred Pages for the Future*:

"The arguments posed in the preceding pages [...] point out several things, of which one of the most important is that our generations seem to have lost the sense of the whole. From all points of view, this loss represents a backward step, an unfortunate involution—especially since it has occurred at the very moment when many systems, old and new, are expanding and intertwining, thus deepening the complexity of the great meta-system of the world which gives humanity, willy-nilly, a substantial unity. A sense of the global and universal harmony, which is characteristic to philosophical and religious thought and is the eternal quest of science, has also become an indispensable basis for informed political action. That sense must be restored to present-day society."

In the ten chapters that follow, I'll attempt to contribute to a restoration of this sense of interdependence and harmony; by outlining a cultural and societal order of things or paradigm that can be achieved by accounting for it and pursuing it; or metaphorically—by showing you and exploring together the **elephant**.

I've been talking about **wholeness**; it is time to tell you what it means.

I define **wholeness** as the condition shared by a well-functioning mechanism and a healthy organism.

Something is **whole** when all its vital parts are in place, and work harmoniously together. If a machine lacks a screw, if a vital organ is ailing, if a nutrient is lacking—the condition and the function of *the whole thing* will be impaired.

Wholeness is inclusive.

It subsumes both health and holiness, its linguistic relatives. *We* cannot be **whole** unless our environments are **whole**, and vice versa.

And here's the best part!

While a machine is **whole** when its parts are in place—the *living* systems, including our culture and ourselves, can always be *more* **whole**!

And it is in that realm between what we've grown accustomed to and consider normal, and what (I will show) is possible, it in the range 'between one and infinity'—that the benefits of pursuing **wholeness** can be truly beyond belief.

It is *there*, that the great ***cultural revival*** will naturally unfold.

In the first five chapters I will give a glimpse of the inner or personal **wholeness**; what it might mean to be a **whole** human. The remaining five chapters will be about the outer or ***systemic wholeness***. A key insight will be that those two sides of **wholeness** are inextricably related: *We* must be **whole** if our **systems** are to be **whole** and vice-versa: we *cannot* be **whole** unless the systems in which we live and work support us in being **whole**.

Each of the ten chapters will present *a certain kind of* liberation. The first three chapters will show how our movement, or motility, can be inhibited from within—the movement of the body, of the mind (manifested as the ability to comprehend and think outside the box; and as creativity) and of emotions. And how our freedom to move can be expanded through ***human development***.

In Chapter Four I'll introduce a general idea of personal **wholeness**; propose a simple ***phenomenological*** model that will allow us to comprehend the effects of ***human development*** techniques and traditions across the board.

In Chapter Five I'll introduce the essence of Buddhadasa's discovery or of **Buddhism** (Buddha's teaching as Buddhadasa interpreted it). Its title, "Liberation from Intention", points to a paradox and a surprise—the key to *inner* liberation, as **Buddhism** conceives it, is to liberate ourselves from that very instrumental thinking that is in our culture conceived of as ra-

tional behavior and *expected* of us; which is, interstingly—according to Max Weber—also what keeps us in "the iron cage" of rigid and dysfunctional institutions or ***systems***. This will then also explain the ***praxis*** taught by Christ in The Sermon on the Mount; which few Christians would consider practicing.

Chapter Six will show why the liberation from ***egotism*** (the *value* that our culture takes for granted) is a necessary part of personal liberation. Naturally, the liberation from egotism is also what makes the outer, societal liberation, by making ***systems*** or institutions ***whole***, possible or easy.

Chapter Seven will show how ***egotism*** made us create ***power structures*** (oppressive and dysfunctional ***systems***); throughout history *and* to date. We'll comprehend the first of holotopia's five insights—why ***systemic innovation*** can deliver the liberation from stress and toil that the Industrial Revolution promises.

Chapter Eight will then answer the perplexing question that remains— Why don't we *change* our systems? Under "Liberation of Culture" as title, we'll see how the ***power structure*** holds us in check by creating ***culture***, and ***beliefs***.

Chapter Nine will show to liberate science; and how liberated science can liberate us from belief; and empower our most creative minds to give their due to the large and urgent challenges at hand.

Chapter Ten, "Liberation of Religion" will offer a conclusion to the "science vs. religion" controversy; by pointing out that ***science*** and ***religion*** need to liberate one another; and that *both* must be in place if *we* should be free.

Instead of a conclusion, the final chapter will prepare us for the ***dialog*** , by providing the necessary background; by providing background and tools for developing a 'legal system' for ***memes***.

The *dialog* will decide, as a jury does, whether my case for Buddhadasa *meme*, and more generally for restoring basic rights to *culture*-transformative *memes*, has been demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt. Here, however, nobody will be sent to the gallows, on the contrary.

We will be *rescuing memes* from extinction.

And why not—I will also share some of my own experiences.

I've had, namely, the unusual fortune to study under five extraordinary masters of *human development* arts; to be an insider in five distinct *human development* traditions, observe how they work, and what effects they have.

Through practice I became a *cultural mutant*.

Which is a bit like an extraterrestrial or as a time traveller. So I thought it might amuse you to hear what any such themes as the future of the political left, what to do about the climate change, or how to put an end to war might look like from such an unusual perspective.

But entertainment is not what this is about; we have work to do. I will be putting in front of you these "controversial" views to prime our *dialog*.

Twenty-five centuries ago, at the academic tradition's point of inception, Socrates challenged his fellow citizens' beliefs by asking them questions; and engaging them in dialogs.

The purpose behind this book is similar.

If you forget everything I've said—here is something I *don't* want you to forget.

> The purpose that joins you and me together is not to find out how the things are but to *create* something—the **dialog**.

Whose function—just as the function of the original dialogs of Socrates and Plato—is to liberate ourselves from a certain way of thinking, and develop a different one.

> The **dialog** is *not* conversation.

I attribute to this **keyword** its original meaning—which is *dia logos* or *through* **logos**.

We engage in the **dialog** to rediscover and refine **logos**; so that *through* **logos** we may see things whole; and use that vision to create a world that is **whole**.

The **dialog** will, of course, also be **federated**; in the concluding chapter I'll offer snapshots from twenty-five centuries of developments—ranging from philosophy to information technology and the arts. And I'll here only highlight a single one.

> David Bohm made contributions to both modern physics and creativity.

He organized **dialogs**, and experimented with **dialogs** for many years. It's his **keyword** "proprioception" (self-observation) I want to tell you about. Bohm used it to point to the distinguishing characteristics of (what he conceived of as) the dialog.

Which is based on an insight that Bohm shared with the Buddhists; which is an interesting twist on the theme of "mind and its place in nature".

I'll invite you to *see* us humans *as* having two distinct minds.

One of which is the practical, street-smart mind; and the other is the philosopher's mind. The former is quick; it helps us navigate the everyday reality; the latter is slow; it helps us *rise above* the everyday reality; and see see things in *new* ways.

I see no reason to doubt this:

Both minds are necessary; *both* must be polished up and used if **logos** is to be **whole**.

The trouble is that the practical mind can take over and wrestle down the philosopher's mind. So here's what I'll do.

I'll call the practical mind by its Buddhist nickname—the **monkey mind**.

To highlight its restlessness; and that—being too restless to create its own meaning, too quick to 'connect the dots'—its appetite for external input is *enormous*!

And so to balance the mind, to make **logos** whole and have a **dialog**—we must be able to turn off the **monkey mind**.

That's what the **proprioception** is about.

We observe ourselves inwardly without judging; in order to *listen* without judging. We practice proprioception to turn off the **monkey mind**. There is no simple switch; this requires practice.

When we succeed—*magic* will happen; which is both personal and collective.

Bohm, and the Buddhists, discovered that when the mind is free to simply observe things—it begins to connect the dots and create meaning. Holistic vision, harmony and coherence result.

That's what I invite you to discover together!

The *dialog* begins as you read these pages. Observe yourself without judging: Are you experiencing anger? Is your mind wondering off to something familiar and safe?

And when you finish reading, observe yourself again: Will you ignore what I said because it's none of your business? Will you attack me because I questioned "what we all know"?

If you do, I'll do my best to turn the other cheek.

But then we won't have a *dialog*!