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Topology of Valuing
Dynamics of Collective Engagement with Polyhedral Value Configurations

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Summary

The presentation itself focuses on two animations, using special software, exploring possibilities of a new pattern language dynamically relating human values and strategic preoccupations – one traditional, the other contemporary. The unusual images are also distributed in poster form. The arguments in support of these experiments are presented in a set of background papers (accessible on the web as noted below, but not intended as part of the presentation, given the time constraints).

The justification for this exploration derives from the quasi-total confusion regarding articulation of values and their strategic implication. Many groups and institutions base their sets of strategic "pillars" on sets of values – which may also be metaphorically associated with "stakes" and "poles". Unfortunately there is little clarity on what constitutes "universal values", "European values", "Brussels values", "American values"., "Republican values" or "Democratic values" – despite frequent appeal to them in political discourse, and their relevance to the current financial crisis. The first of the background papers summarizes the past work of the Human Values Project that addressed such confusion – whether or not values are better understood as "strange attractors:.

In contrast with "checklists" of values where such exist, and are not simply negative injunctions defining values by implication, a second paper argues the merit of configuring "pillars" and "poles" in three dimensions – if not four. Taking advantage of multimedia technology and its intense interest for the young, this is seen as a means of providing a degree of interrelationship and structural coherence to any set of values or their corresponding strategies. Dynamically it is consistent with the exploration of institutional "variable geometry" and emergent forms of social organization. The current approach is compared to the structural inadequacies of the Stonehenge pillars of megalithic science -- at a time when global governance calls for a polyhedral pattern language to handle the many-sided nature of truth.

It is however no longer adequate to assume that people can or will engage with sets of values or strategies, however they are configured. A third background paper therefore addresses the need for psychoactive engagement, if only as a mnemonic aid to complexity through *topoi* and a sense of place – hence "topology of valuing" in the general title. Such engagement is also seen as a key to reframing individual cognitive relationship to an otherwise overly reified external environment therefore susceptible to unethical exploitation. It is a direct response to widespread public apathy in the face of "values" and "strategies". To the extent that psychoactive implies a degree of cognitive embodiment, this is presented as enabling a self-reflexive approach considered fundamental to more appropriate human-environment relationships, notably epitomized by recycling.

A fourth paper presents an extended version of the general summary above.

Background papers (drafts):
1. In Quest of Engaging Values: context of the Human Values and Wisdom Project (http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs00s/polysub1.php)
2. Coherent Value Frameworks: pillar-ization, polarization and polyhedral frames of reference (http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs00s/polysub2.php)
3. Topology of Valuing: psychodynamics of collective engagement with polyhedral value configurations (http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs00s/polysub3.php)
4. Embodying Values Dynamically through Alternation: integrating sets of polarized static values through indicative metaphor (http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs00s/polysub4.php)

Animations (access):
- Dynamic Exploration of Value Configurations:
    - interrelating traditional cultural symbols through animation [SVG/SWF] (http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs00s/starchi.php)
    - polyhedral animation of conventional value frameworks [*Stella Navigator*](http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs00s/stellav.php)

Preceding governance-focused papers:
- Towards Polyhedral Global Governance: complexifying oversimplistic strategic metaphors (http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs00s/hellenic.php)
- Polyhedral Pattern Language: software facilitation of emergence, representation and transformation of psycho-social organization (http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs00s/stella.php)
- Polyhedral Empowerment of Networks through Symmetry: psycho-social implications for organization and global governance (http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs00s/polynet.php)