

**New Dialogue:
The Hasan Ozbekhan Planetary Dialogue
Design and Development Frame.**

By

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Current Situation

In our 21st century revolution of the so-called “Information Age” toward global virtual reality millions of citizens who are resident of places located physically all over the planet are forming mutual interest groups that bypass traditional style of social interaction, substituting an electronically wired but spiritually disconnected e-culture that is marked by superficiality, atomized and splintered. These conditions have contributed to the phenomenon described as the “Lonely Nation” in a report by the AP last August 6, 2006. <http://sunsite.utk.edu/FINS/loversofdemocracy/LonelyNation-2.htm>.

The political implications of this global trend are evident and dire. Even before the advent of universal Internet, University of Chicago Professor Allan Bloom depicted the appalling situation in which Americans exist, in his seminal book *The Closing of the American Mind* 117-118 (1987: "This continual shifting of the sands in our desert--separation from places, persons, beliefs--produces the psychic state of nature where reserve and timidity are the prevailing dispositions." "We are social solitaires," Bloom observed. Two decades later, in 2007, we can plainly see that we are, as such, increasingly vulnerable to savage political demagoguery.

New Structured Design Dialogue (SDD)

Two enlightened individuals with special knowledge about these matters will lead the list of leadership participants with LoD in a new **SDD** addressing those chronic problems.

First is, LoD colleague, Jackie Howell Wasilewski, in Tokyo, JAPAN, International Christian University, Professor of intercultural communication and conflict resolution in the Department of Communication and Linguistics in the Division of International Studies and in the Graduate School of Public Administration. Jackie proposes the development of integrating structures as a strategy, which may remedy these terrible trends of fragmentation and demagoguery: **dynamic, multi-centered and interlinked system, not isolated circles but overlapping circles, based on dialogue, the creation of mutual meaning through words.** See Yoneji Masuda, *The Information Society as Post-Industrial Society* (World Futures Society 1982); New Agora of Philanthropolis, *Integrating Structures*, in FINS: <http://sunsite.utk.edu/FINS/loversofdemocracy/NewAgora.htm#ISD>

Among the participant stakeholders in the dialogue will be a class of graduate students taught by Jackie, in Tokyo, JAPAN, International Christian University.

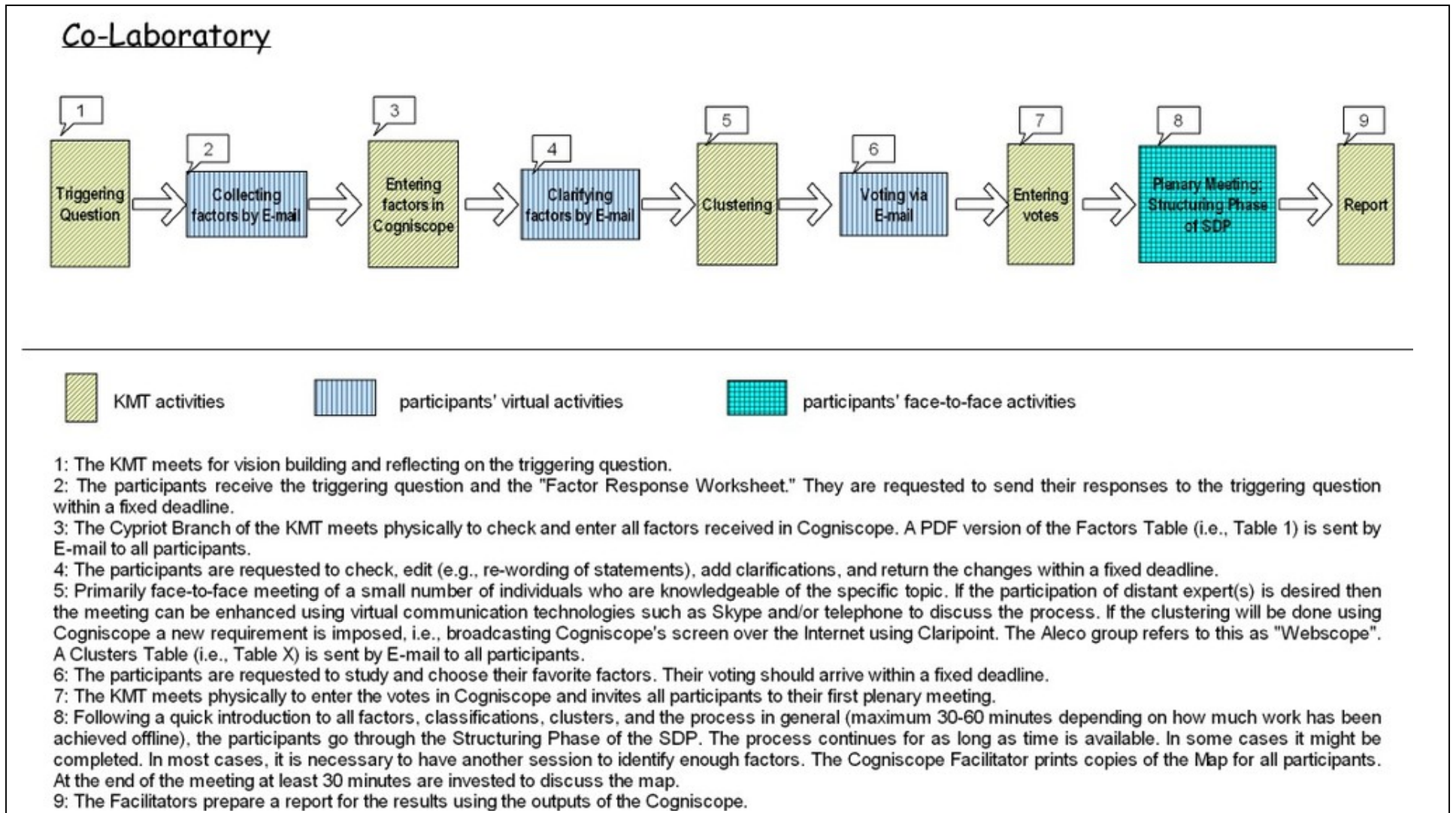
Second is Hernán López-Garay, in Merida, VENEZUELA, University of Los Andes, School of Sistemas, Professor of Systems Sciences, and author of *DIALOGUE AMONG CIVILIZATIONS: WHAT FOR?* (2001).
<http://sunsite.utk.edu/FINS/loversofdemocracy/lopez-garay.pdf>

Hernán has accepted an invitation from LoD to pursue a Boundary-spanning dialogue via E-mail Web Scope, based on the “**circles of interlinked dialogue**” strategy envisioned by Jackie.

I propose that this new **SDD** should now begin to build the “circles of interlinked dialogue” strategy with the stakeholder participation of selected individuals who are already familiar with and engaged in other **SDD** activities: *e.g.*, in Cyprus and South Australia. This would initiate and further validate the proposed process of interlinking between established and emerging interest groups on a Planetary Level

In order to design this planetary strategy for “circles of interlinked dialogue” as envisioned by Jackie, I suggest, we follow The Hasan Ozbekhan Planetary Dialogue, Design and Development Frame.
The Cyprus Civil Society Dialogue Team successfully used a similar frame for training purposes April 2007. See FINS, Online at URL: <http://sunsite.utk.edu/FINS/loversofdemocracy/CCSdialogueframe.pdf>

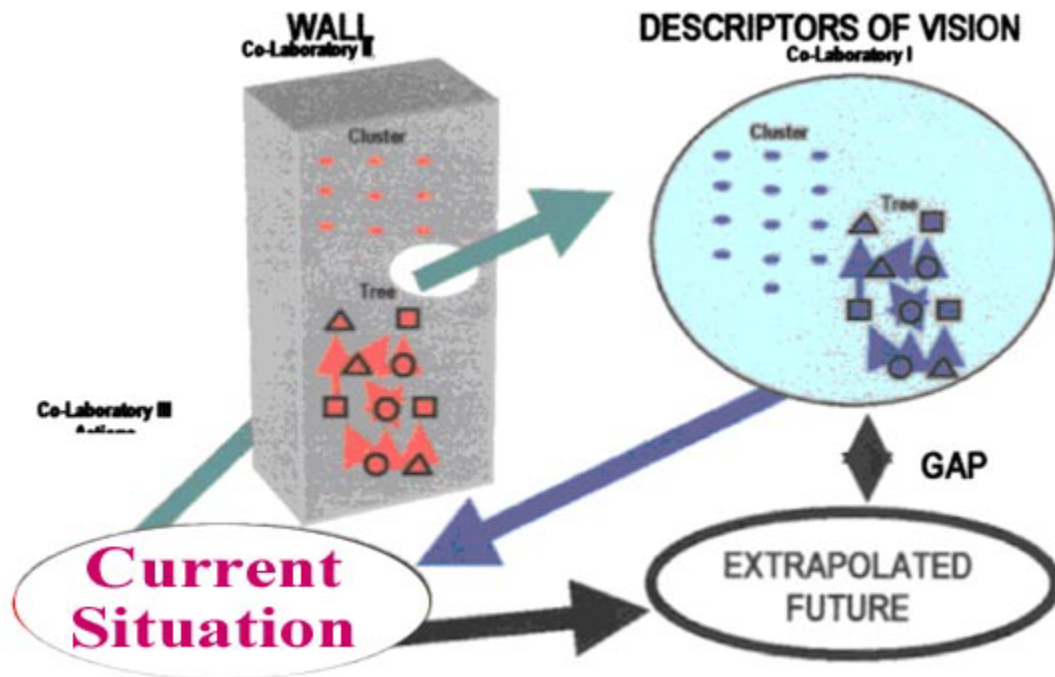
Figure 1: Co-Laboratory Process



A modified version of the CCS Dialogue Frame is needed, I believe, which can embrace the requirement for a viable platform to support the proposed “circles of interlinked dialogue” strategy. Four co-laboratories are required for these purposes, described as follows:

- **Co-Laboratory I** will be dedicated to painting a picture of the goals, on a Planetary Scale, of the New Agora Philanthropolis. For example, **to advance a shift in the global paradigm of the Setting for decisions of the Information-age toward democratic sustainability**. The participants in the proposed “circles of interlinked dialogue” will generate a set of descriptors of the ideal images, clarify the meaning and their contributions, and follow the steps and roles of the co-laboratory process as shown graphically in Figure 1 above.
- **Co-Laboratory II** will focus on painting a picture of the wall of inhibitors that must be torn down or penetrated in order to achieve the transformation to the ideal image from the current situation and its extrapolated future, as graphically shown in Figure 2 below.
- **Co-Laboratory III** will focus on design of an action plan for tearing down the wall of inhibitors, similar to the wall of the infamous Green zone that Greek Cypriots recently tore down.
<http://sunsite.utk.edu/FINS/loversofdemocracy/CyprusCivilSociety.htm>
- **Co-Laboratory IV** will focus on defining the electronic platform that can best support the envisioned “circles of interlinked dialogue” (*e.g.*, IndyMediaCenters).

Fig. 2: The Hasan Ozbekhan Planetary Dialogue, Design and Development Frame



**Co-Laboratory IV.
Platform for Circles of Interlinked Dialogue**

The systemic principle of “requisite variety” demands that the Design and Development Frame shown above must engage the stakeholders in constructing methodically, collaboratively, and systemically all the relational patterns of clusters and trees of the ideas, as shown schematically in Figure 2.

Special Ethical Concerns

Advancement of the group mode of association by SDDP would grant special powers and responsibilities, based on high ethical standards, to the function of knowledge management. There can be no doubt about the inordinate influence that a lead facilitator in the SDDP can wield. These special powers could risk an unhealthy situation when the

requisite ethical standards are not strictly enforced but exploited by the dynamics of demagoguery, mesmerism, and hypnosis.

It is important to assure the “circles of interlinked dialogue” will be well integrated with the larger planetary biospheric structures – local and global. History teaches that one must take great care in this situation involving groups that are subject to group pressures and group leadership pressures, to avoid “the result either of despotism of the more powerful parts or anarchy of all the parts.” Mary Parker Follett, *The New State* 268-270 (Penn State University Press 1998).

The first of these knowledge management standards should make it essential, I strongly believe, that all knowledge management personnel be committed to the goal of The Transformative Paradigm. Certainly no person should be engaged in this function who is either ambiguous about this core goal or manifestly in opposition to the same. For example, a person who does not support this basic purpose but advocates the ideology of “market fundamentalism” will likely frustrate the purpose of the undertaking to defeat its purpose whether explicitly or implicitly. Such a person may certainly be included as a stakeholder in the dialogue but he/she may not be included in the leadership structure, in my view. People have a right to choose their leaders who are strong advocates for the purpose of the groups formed for particular purposes.

I know there is idle talk that opponents of the basic purposes of LoD also have a right to be knowledge management leaders of that group. This is preposterous in my view, and should not be supported. I will not accept such a confused leadership structure. In organizing the present undertaking related to “circles of interlinked dialogue” that leadership issue must be resolved at the outset.

Moreover, concrete steps must be taken to assure that stakeholders who are needy have affordable access to the SDDP technology. The New York Times story, Apr 19, 2007, about Microsoft’s offer of “Nearly Free Software for the Needy,” (See Bloglogue, News and Activities), is one possible solution. Affordable distance learning opportunities to build up the public capacity to facilitate SDDP might be another possible solution. I think it is especially counterproductive to promote the use of SDDP by needy groups who are frozen out of the use of the technology while at the same time supporting expansion of the digital divide by offering SDDP services to the more affluent citizens. This scheme can only perpetuate the horrible cycle of failure of human civilizations. The alternative plan offered by Microsoft reveals that this lopsided scheme is unnecessary. LoD should seek a proper resolution of this unnecessary distortion in the dissemination of SDDP.

Developing market demand for SDDP together with viable programs to guarantee ethical knowledge management, insure affordable access, and construct a platform to support integrated planetary structures for the “circles of interlinked dialogue” should be seen as the *sine qua non* of the LoD enterprise. The failure of any one of these requirements could cause the collapse of market potential for the SDDP, adversely impacting society, especially at the early stages of development.

Preparing for the Co-Laboratories

In preparation for the structured dialogue it is strongly recommended that the members of the team allocate some time to visit and study the following three Internet sites:

- A) A site with passages from the seminal paper by Hasan Ozbekhan on the General Theory of Planning and the *futures-creative paradigm*:

<http://www.panarchy.org/ozbekhan/planning.1968.html>

- B) A site which provides a description of the Structured Dialogic Design process and its relevance to the ideal city of humanly love called Philanthropolis, by engaging people in democratic dialogue:

<http://loversofdemocracy.org/NewAgora.htm>

- C) A “wiki” site called the *Blogora* for learning and applying SDD, and engaging in dialogic conversation with a global community of practice:

<http://blogora.net> and <http://blogora.net/page/Cyprus+Civil+Society+Dialogue>

The allocation of some time by all participants to the co-laboratories will make the group work and informal discussions among the team members during the days of the training much more productive and enjoyable.