A futures vision of sacredness as the formative base of democratic governing: source, model and transformation of spirituality into government.

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This thesis is submitted for the Doctor of Philosophy degree as the total fulfilment of the requirements for that degree.

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June 2006
I certify that this thesis entitled **A futures vision of sacredness as the formative base of democratic governing: source, model and transformation of spirituality into government**

submitted for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**

is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis in whole or part has not been submitted for an award including a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Signed:

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Date:
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Chapter one: introduction

Imagine if we governed ourselves from our interconnectedness within, with each other, the Earth, the cosmos and the divine …

This thesis is an act of widely researched, deeply grounded imagination exploring possibilities of democratic government that can include and recollect the sacred.

In this chapter I briefly outline the central phenomenon and frame of reference on which the research is based, namely the experience of sacredness. I am not suggesting the imposition of any religious affiliation. From the basis of sacredness arises a context of Life and interconnectedness which enfold the human journey including our ways of organising collectively, such as government. I indicate why the Westminster system of government calls for transformation, particularly in these times. I state my aim and approach to this exploration and make explicit my assumptions underpinning a view of reality informed by the sacred. I articulate delimitations of the research. Finally I share a personal experience to illustrate my values, positions, commitments and critical awareness of any attendant biases they may bring.
Chapter one: Introduction

Rationale for the research

Human experience and the sacred

One gift of being human is the capacity to experience many states of consciousness. Awareness of, and imburement in the sacred is one experience which, *in-the-experience*, transcends cultural codes of interpretation which may be assigned later from a differing state of consciousness. Another such experience is enacting the ability to love - both capacities bring the experiential state of interconnectedness. This state, I propose, can be a well-spring for positive ways to pattern the unfolding evolution of our planetary society whereby it is possible to translate the best of human experiences into our institutions. This possibility, I see, is a choice and arguably a necessity. Collective expressions of relationship and wholistic self-organisation, such as government, can be designed to echo the patterns of this fundamental experience of inherent connectedness and to have it stream with the phenomenon of Life. Experiential interconnectedness offers an actualised template for forms of governance appropriate for complexity, flexibility, inclusivity and the fullness of human potential.

It is the experience of sacredness as state of being that I suggest is a source of commonality and inclusive unity from which to form the processes, structures and energetic environments for democratic governance. As the experience of interconnectedness lies between the mundane and the inexpressible, it offers an accessible and tangible gateway to/with the sacred. Interconnectedness as a lived experience and actual nature of reality is the phenomenon through which I direct this (re)search for a mode of government genuinely responsive to Life and able to serve it.

Separateness: the metaphysical base of the western psyche

In contrast to an interconnective reality, the dominant western paradigm privileges a world characterised by separateness. The experience of separateness is encoded at a deep mythic level and culturally reinforced to thereby formatively filter perception and cognition of reality. Metaphysically, separateness underpins atomised and hierarchical organisation of social institutions. These dominant patterns of collective self-organisation in western cultures determine our forms of government.
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The Westminster system of government currently used in Australia (my country) and in many democracies around the world at its genesis is premised on separateness. While in its four hundred years evolution it has served well to transfer power mostly without bloodshed and to enfranchise the people of a democratic state, I argue later (chapter four) that this system is outmoded. Parliamentary symbolism and actuality operate as adversarial dualism between ‘the government’ and ‘the opposition’. This structure and practice is recognised by military strategists as a model of warfare (John Keegan 1993). The system selects for aggressive and egoic personal dispositions (Deborah Tannen 1998, 2001a), privileging a violent hegemonic masculinity (Martin Mills 2001; Robert Connell 2000).

Czech president, Vaclav Havel noted ‘there is a deep crisis in traditional democracy’ (1992:208). Representative government per se, entrenches passivity in most of the population and fortifies an elite enabled by selective, exclusionary practices (Peter Bachrach and Aryeh Botwonick 1992). As Lyn Carson summarises ‘…we do not have a democracy, we have representative government, we have an elective aristocracy, an elected oligarchy’ (2005). This structure of government consolidates disengagement of the populace, gives power to those addicted to its pursuit and strengthens disconnectedness as the formative state from which decisions are made. Disconnectedness, compounded by an excessively material and external focus, leads to decision-making which has accumulative, destructive consequences to the whole of planetary Life. While representative democracy is one stage in the evolution of democracy, this particular system of organisation falls far short of democratic principles of sharing power through equality of access to participation. I argue that the structure and culture is now out-dated and actually inhibits social progress responding to the complexity of modern living, the immediacy of inter-relatedness and the urgency of global crisis. The problem, I suggest, derives from metaphysical sources and I indicate potential for transformation arising from the experience of deeply felt interconnectedness which enables re-organisation which is congruently inclusive, upholds individual human dignity, models unity in diversity and aligns with the dynamics of Life.

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1 The first time I refer to an authority, where possible, I give their full name. This approach is consistent with the feminist tradition of scholarship which seeks to give a fuller sense of a person. In subsequent references I use their surname only.
Chapter one: Introduction

Time to evolve democracy

Democracy, like any living system, evolves in response to changing environments and circumstances. Diversity and complexity are a modern reality as we human beings both expand and shrink into a planetary society. Our cultural and individual differences are increasingly obvious and highlight a growing need to focus on modes of interaction which foster peace and exemplify harmony within this diversity. The predatory drive of neo-liberal corporatised globalism (Vandana Shiva 2000; John Ralston Saul 1997, 1999), together with the rise of religious fundamentalisms (Marion Maddox 1999, 2004; Karen Armstrong 2000; Joel Carpenter 1997), gives urgency to this task. In this confluence of trends there is an identified gap in evolution of institutional politics (Helen Trinca 1999). There is a need to articulate exemplars and ways of operating from harmony-in-diversity – alternatives which are peaceful, just and inclusive. Hence, I suggest, that it is timely to reinforce concrete alternative models which support an expansion in individual and collective consciousness to inclusive egalitarian wholism. I attempt to address this gap in the evolution of institutional democratic politics from an Australian perspective within a planetary context.

From the perspective of living systems (and seeing humanity as such a dynamic system), democracy is a form of collective or unitive self-organisation. Like all such complex wholistic systems, human-beings-as-a-group self-governs, self-transcends and so evolves (Fritjof Capra 1982; Ken Wilber 2000). Philosopher, Hendryk Skolimowski notes that social institutions are manifested expressions of the current state of collective consciousness (1996). Thus, as collective consciousness evolves, social institutions evolve. Hence, to embed inclusivity into our social institutions requires experiences of consciousness which are inherently inclusive and which thereby act as a metaphysical source from which to pattern our behaviours, foci and ways of being-together.

2 My use of the personal pronouns ‘our’ and ‘we’ is not to infer any sweeping generalisation or incorporation but to reinforce perspectives consistent with the underlying premise which informs this thesis namely that reality is profoundly interconnected and that this reality can be subjectively experienced and that in this reality subjectivity is inherently implicated. From a context of inherent interconnectedness it is implicitly impossible to stand outside phenomena and claim the status of a detached observer (Brian Swimme 2004; Thomas Berry n.d.). Hence I have deliberately used inclusive language to emphasise interconnectedness and the illusory nature of ‘objectivity’ from the perspective of this paradigm which I endeavour to write from as well as write-about.
Mathematical physicist and cosmologist Brain Swimme states that the present conditions of intensifying complexity are indicative of a macro-phase change in human evolution (1990:2; 1995:1). French palaeontologist and mystic, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin says such jumps in evolution to new whole states/beings/systems are preceded by the inner integration of intensified complexity. This ‘within of things’ is the domain of consciousness, and for humans, spiritual development which is personal and experiential (Teilhard 1969a:58). He deduces that individual and collective imagination, albeit vision, plays a preparatory and co-participatory role in progressing the evolution of human consciousness and consequent wholistic organisation, as expressed in the evolution of democracy in particular (Teilhard 1969a, d).

If these assessments of current social circumstances as indicative of evolutionary pre-conditions are correct, this is a time of a fundamental change in consciousness which is formative for the next stage of human development. From the western scientific canon alone, there are solidly substantiated key findings which form the basis of new forms of consciousness but have not yet been inculcated into the collective mind-stream and thence into our institutions. One of these, as previously stated, is interconnectedness at all levels of energy-matter, timespace, consciousness and phenomenal reality (as expanded in chapter two). Another understanding which is presently moulding consciousness in science, spirituality and even psychology but is barely yet disturbing anything in the public discourse of western political domain, is that Life evolves and has an identifiable direction which is inseparable from that of Earth (as discussed in chapter three).

Life can be seen to move. Not only does it move but it advances in a definite direction. (Teilhard 1969d:67)

Essentially the degree to which we, as humans, realise our deep interconnectedness with all of existence and stream with the dynamics of Life’s processes, is a measure of our sustainability as an expression of Life and as a species. In a context of interconnectedness and flowing with evolving humanity, unfolding inner life namely spirituality, is arguably a key determinant to future development which then purposefully reflects and iterates inherently inclusive interconnectedness at all levels of social organisation.
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**Aim of this research**

The intention of my thesis is to articulate how spiritualities, some in emergent secular expressions, as direct experiences of the sacred, may formatively shape and be actualised in new forms of democratic government as a self-organising phenomenon emerging in concert with evolutionary dynamics. I am attempting to apply experiential interconnectedness which is embodied in the best of human experience as a generative base and an organising dynamic to the evolution of democratic politics.

To illustrate the direction of my thesis is the example of Mohandas Ghandi whose personal spirituality catalysed and orchestrated the powerful desire of Indian people for independence through non-violent and effective action (1983). Another example is that of Vaclav Haval who served what he called the existential urge of the Czech people to self-rule (1992). In both of these examples deep experience caused not only a change of government but a transformation of the very system of government existing at that time – colonialism and communism to autonomous democracy. My exploration is in this stream and I am focussing on the deep and common experience of interconnectedness of any ordinary person as a source of transformation of themselves and of wholistic social organisation as well.

The contribution to knowledge and understanding that my thesis brings is the elucidation of experiences, inner processes and images which governing based on sacredness could incorporate. I expand the discussion of democracy to include the transformative and generative power of significant experiences. I contextualise evolution of collective self-government (democracy) within evolutionary dynamics of the universe, which is the ultimate context for all activities. From these deep inner sources and vastly expanded perspectives I indicate possible future options and identify potential means of social transformation. Consistent with democratic principles of inclusive equality, I devolve these insights from the lives, thoughts and activities of ordinary people which are then analysed within relevant theoretical perspectives and related to emergent social trends.

The specific objectives of the research are to:

- expand the usual frameworks for theorising forms of democracy to include experiences of the sacred contextualised within the processes interconnectedness and evolutionary dynamics (chapters two and three)
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- document the need to evolve new forms of democracy (chapter four)
- elucidate possibilities consistent with this framework by utilising, recording and analysing processes of imagination, vision and consciousness (chapters five and six)
- identify and examine experiences, inner processes, their characteristics and potentials, and ensuing insights of ordinary people which resonate with the interconnectivity and creativity of Life (chapter seven)
- identify, analyse and extrapolate processes of transformation consistent with experiential interconnectedness and the dynamic interconnectedness of natural phenomena (chapters eight and nine)
- apply the implications of these findings to democratic forms of governing (chapters ten, eleven and twelve).

Approach of the thesis

I explore definitive human experience of the sacred as an optimal and realistic base for ethical, progressive human expression appropriate for these times of change. The starting point is an appreciation and elucidation of the experience of sacredness and a dynamic, interconnected reality. I then follow the fruits of focused imagination which are empirically and theoretically substantiated to indicate designs of governmental organisation whose inter-active processes are patterned on those possibilities indicated in experiential interconnectedness.

The focus of this research is on possibilities, transformation and empowerment available within a sacred cosmos, an interconnected and interactive reality. My attention is particularly upon their manifestation in the ordinariness of any life, which paradoxically points to the extra-ordinary elements of being human, in the context of our co-operative potential in human evolution as orchestrated by awakened consciousness, deliberate choice and purposeful creativity. I weave the relationships between spirituality and evolving democratic government through these themes.

Empowerment refers to personal empowerment. My initial emphasis is less on the social dimensions of democratic principles such as freedom, justice, rights and responsibilities, but how the sources of these dynamics arise and empower within. I actively seek to elucidate what empowers ordinary people in the present milieu as
empowerment of ordinary people in daily life seems a basic foundation of democratic systems. I also endeavour to validate examples of the social power of small and large conscious steps and purposive actions which seed and reinforce positive social futures.

Transformation is fundamental change, change at the deepest roots, which reshapes individuals, societies and collective mind-fields. Transformation, like paradigm change, is total and re-organises the whole: it is not incremental adjustment to the status-quo (Thomas Kuhn 1970).

Possibilities are visions and subtle allurements of what can be, sensed when the mind is unshackled from prescribing assumptions and normative limitations. Entertainment of possibilities, sometimes appearing as paradox, expands consciousness readying it for change, and empowers through the recognition of personal choice (Darryl Reanney 1991, 1994).

Assumptions about reality

I make explicit my assumptions which devolve from experiential and phenomenal interconnectedness as this foundational position allows, orients, limits and prescribes what is congruently possible. Like all primary, yet often un-stated, assumptions they can be seen somewhat like acts of faith which often go unexamined and can be tautologically substantiated and applied. I make clear I am aware of the pitfalls of circular reasoning. For this reason I endeavour to consistently and coherently integrate arguments which are logically sequenced within this context with evidence from relevant fields and sometimes counter balanced with views from a distinctly different experiential and conceptual base to give contextual perspective. I am very aware that these assumptions are obviously dependently related to the primary premises I have outlined and which I reiterate throughout the thesis.³ Congruently,

³ While I do reiterate my primary premise of experiential and phenomenal interconnectedness throughout the thesis as a reminder for myself and the reader, I obviously cannot do this for every point of discussion and analysis. Hence at times further in the thesis I make statements which are logically derived and virtually self-evident within this context of inherent interconnectedness but could be seen as a generalisation if the reader has not been open to shifting the normative position of reference to be congruent with this conceptual framework. Additionally, my frequent use of such words as universal, cosmic and whole are not generalisations but are very deliberate use of these terms because I am taking the identifiable dynamics of the cosmos/universe as the theoretical base for contextual discussion within the systems approach of internally and interactively dynamic systems/whole entities - and that these can be personally experienced.
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from experiential sacredness as a foundational understanding of this thesis, I then
derive and articulate these assumptions.

All life is sacred.

Everything and non-thing is profoundly, intimately and dynamically interconnected.

The universe/cosmos/reality is inherently creative, constantly interacting and
supportive within an integrated whole.

All possibilities exist and can arise from Mystery and the Unknown.

Synchronicity meaningfully relates inner experience and outer phenomena.

Synergy occurs as co-operative and co-creative interconnection in dynamic,
symbiotic action which is sensible within the whole universal field.

Wholeness orchestrates interactions within its domain – experienced personally by
being present and authentic.

Human beings have the capacity to perceive and act in many
worlds/realities/dimensions.

Evolution is continuing and has its processual direction.

Knowledge arising from interconnectedness

While the sacred is obviously far more than the lived experience of
interconnectedness, such experience of the sacred is common, universal and
accessible – and so offers an entry point to interface with the sacred. And while
government based on sacredness would predictably reflect the patterns of experiential
and systemic interconnectedness, it would open to and be orchestrated by much
greater wholistic dynamics operating creatively and which are beyond human beings’
imagination and conceptualisation. As noted by Swimme and others, significant
evolutionary steps are always a surprise arising from ever-moving, directional,
relentless and powerful dynamics (1995). Thus by centring on sacredness, the
research project is expanded beyond usual research contexts, assumptions of
knowledge, its sources and ways of knowing and sits near the edge of the unknown
and unknowable (Rhea White 1998).

Consequently, and with a certain mix of humility and openness, I embrace uncertainty
and engage tools of inquiry and fields of action not usually associated with
government, political power or conventional scholarship, but which are nevertheless rigorous and valid even if under-recognised (William James 1902; William Braud 1998; White 1998). Knowledge arising from interconnectedness is accessible through attention to consciousness itself and is ultimately verifiable by the same means and the veracity of the implications and applications of the knowledge can be tested in the phenomenal domain (Wilber 1985; Amit Goswarmi 1993). Basically the foundational premise of interconnectedness which can be experienced directly, opens realms requiring the development of a new research paradigm, epistemology, ontology and axiology. That is beyond the limitations of this research project – work for another day. I hope however that this research can contribute in some way to that endeavour.

**Theoretical limitations and expansions**

Rational empiricism can never reveal the experience of consciousness (although it may identify corresponding neurological phenomena), it cannot disclose the nature of being human, of love, of empathy, of God or emptiness. (Tobin Hart et al 1990:1; brackets in the original)

Tobin’s statement recognises the need for alternative epistemes for ‘human’ research, and the limitations of linear rationality and reductive analysis, and one could add, particularly when further blinkered by predominating materialism. While rational empiricism has obvious legitimacy because the knowledge it produces answers many important questions (Kuhn 1970:23), it can only address questions which make sense within its ontological and epistemological base, and the knowledge generated is tautologically held within its assumptions about reality. These restrictions exclude equally valid inquiry into the very intricacies and wholistic scope of being human, the human journey, meaning and purpose as they are experienced.

In his seminal research on paradigm change, Thomas Kuhn observed worldviews of reality (paradigms) include the laws, theories, application and instrumentation coherent within that view whereby research from that perspective is highly directed and is restricted to the phenomenal field perceptually made accessible for investigation (1970:10, 24, 60). Thus to view another phenomenal field (namely experiential interconnectedness and inter-subjective dynamics), a different research paradigm with alternative metaphysical, ontological and epistemic assumptions is needed. This requires, according to Kuhn, a transformed imagination which reveals a transformed world in which other investigations are legitimate (1970:6).
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Because my research encompasses the interior landscape of experience of the sacred as per the experience of interconnectedness, I look to methodologies, such as transpersonal methodology, which are permitted by an inclusive and expanded ontology and epistemology recognising a dynamically interconnected, evolving personal, interpersonal and transpersonal reality. Transpersonal methodology developed out of transpersonal psychology to recognise, study, understand and support realisation of unitive spirituality and transcendent states of consciousness (D Lajoie and L Shapiro 1992). The transpersonal research field is human experience at its fullest and most transformative expressions such as unitive consciousness, peak experiences, bliss, wonder, group synergy and extra-ordinary and inter-species awareness. Such experiential phenomena are often highly personal and significant for that person and catalyse their lives, worldviews and identities (James 1902; White 1998:129; Cherie Sutherland 1992). Braud asserts that while unobservable from the outside, inner reality can be as real as external events and have profound effects on oneself and others and the planet and as such are highly significant and valid areas of study (1998).

Transpersonal research methods devolve from a pluralistic epistemology with possible contributors to knowledge via reason, body, emotions, aesthetic sense, intuition as direct knowing, presence of sympathetic resonance, pragmatic consideration and the coherence among these modalities. For investigation of deep experience, pluralistic methodologies which the transpersonal paradigm offers, are not only justifiable but are perhaps the only valid theoretical basis for wider and deeper investigation, and offer the methods and tools of inquiry which are appropriate – as a lesser base would filter input and so artificially exclude. Such expanded sources and methods of inquiry and engagement often indicate and open new possibilities for human knowledge from the dynamic interaction and connection with the unknown.4 Transpersonal methodology offers the pragmatic radical empiricism advocated by James to enable the capture of an inter-subjective reality (1902).5

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4 An example is the knowledge which may be gained from human experience at sacred site which is categorised as either illuminating personal issues (reflexive) or that of quite a different nature (revelatory), revealing that which is totally unknown and may have significance beyond the personal (Vine Deloria 1993).

5 Legitimate authority in Buddhist and Hindu scholarship, while certainly inclusive of demonstrated depth of knowledge, is only conferred when there is also demonstrated experiential realisation.
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The recesses of feeling … are the only places in the world in which we can catch real fact in the making, and directly perceive how even events happen, and how work is actually done. (James 1902:492)

While not usually acknowledged publicly or professionally these tools of knowing are often responsible for breakthroughs in all fields including ‘hard science’ (Kuhn 1970; White 1998). As Albert Einstein commented,

The supreme task of the physicist is to arrive at those universal elementary laws from which the cosmos can be built up by pure deduction. There is no logical path to these laws, only intuition, resting on sympathetic understanding of experience, can reach them. (1954: 221).

Transpersonal research and issues of validity

Braud describes validity in a scholarly sense as ‘to do with whether one’s finding or conclusions are faithful or true to what one is studying’ (1998:213). Both the means of inquiry and validation must be congruent within a research paradigm which recognises the same foundational premises and parameters, and is only verifiable within the same paradigm. Types of validity correlate to types of truth (Braud 1998; Kuhn 1970). For example, scientific truth is taken as absolute (yet paradoxically and implicitly temporary), while post modern truth is only ever relative and situated in local sets of truths or realities which are socially and linguistically constructed. The ‘truth’ transpersonal research attempts to articulate in that of exceptional human experiences.

In the process of taking direct experiences and first hand accounts seriously, transpersonal research inherently recognises that humans possess and are influenced by our body, emotion, spirit, community and creativity. In contrast to such forms of knowing which are mediated by mental and visceral responses enabled by connectivity, knowledge which is fragmented by belief in particulate separation are disengaged from the vitalism of living experience and so can ossify and become

6 Validity and value come from Latin valere, meaning to have worth or to be strong, and value also means the measure of something – the sense it conveys is a strong subjective impression of significance (Braud 1998:224)
7 Each form of truth appeals to different communities. Kuhn observed that differing paradigms are held by different communities which each have different shared values which can be mostly clearly distinguished at time of crisis. The most deeply and dearly held values concern predictions (1970:184).
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disconnected from concurrent social contexts with consequences destructive to living and well-being. American feminist, Susan Griffin (1982) warns “… when a theory is transformed into an ideology, it begins to destroy the self and self-knowledge… It organises experience according to itself without touching experience … it builds a prison for the mind’ (in Ursula King 1989a:280). The transpersonal processes occur inclusively within participants, researchers and readers of any research – where each source gives signals and suggestions about issues of validity (Braud 1998). Thus, in addition to intellect, the coherence between varied states and vehicles of consciousness reveal new levels of meaning and knowledge, and yield expanded tools of validation. The knowledge thus gained is later submitted to deductive logic and inductive inference which is coherent with its theoretical base.

In the genre of research which is an inter-disciplinary project of integration and synthesis, (rather than reductive analysis), I draw on complementary theoretical understandings and empirical findings in science, mysticism, mythology, politics, philosophy and creativity to provide a correlated foundation for knowledge and experiential knowing of interconnectedness. These inputs synergistically reinforce the understanding of the interconnectedness of all phenomena and act as resonant precursors in discussion and action. There is always an inherent tension in interdisciplinary work of covering sufficient breadth for a reader who is not familiar with a particular field whilst not frustrating the expert reader who wants more depth (and yet stay within the size limits of a thesis). I hope I have balanced these requirements. Endeavouring to write congruently from the position of inherent interconnectedness has been quite a personal stretch. It has been a daily process of oscillation between, and integration of, conventional cultural perceptions of reality encompassing the ‘real-politik’, and immersed interconnectedness and its extended possibilities.

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8 Braud describes additional sources of body, intellect, emotions, aesthetic feelings, intuition as direct knowing and their explicit or tacit coherence (congruent patterns) which are evaluated in the decision process about validity. The capacity to perceive tacit coherence is recognised by Kuhn as ‘acquired similarity relations’, a perceptual ability demonstrated by innovative, creative scientists (1970:189).

9 When describing the newness of evolutionary dynamics as an understanding which has directly acting social and personal consequences, Swimme says that people undergo an oscillating process of glimpsing this worldview and then rapidly losing it because it is outside the accepted ‘nature order’. He compared it to acceptance of a round Earth when all commonsense of the time deemed this proposition to be ridiculous (1995).
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I wish to stress that this research is not in the genre of problem solving, critique or comparison, and clearly I am not assuming a fundamentalist, literalist or positivist position. It is a work of exploration which expands logically from the underlying premise of interconnectedness as the base of subjective and intersubjective reality. The exploration is accurately located in the field of Social Ecology and within that field has a Futures Studies orientation, a feminist transpersonal research paradigm, Jungian acceptance of personal and collective consciousness, and depth analysis of inner dynamics of spiritual and experiential life. To some degree this study shares ground, scope and methods with ‘what if science’ (Jerry Ravetz 2000, 1997). This scientific field embraces domains of study which are often outside usual orthodoxy yet are entirely valid. What-if science is utilised for dangerous and unpredictable situations such as the present uncertainty in the contradictory global trends of fragmentation and interdependence.\(^\text{10}\)

**Futures studies and transpersonal approach**

Government based on sacredness does not appear to exist in an institutional form, yet it exists as a possibility first reached through imagination, vision and thence expectation acting through the malleability of timespace of the future.\(^\text{11}\) The research, therefore, draws on insights and methods developed in the academic discipline of Futures Studies, and in particular the stream which visions and articulates wholistic, positive futures.\(^\text{12}\) Italian futurist Eleanora Masini states that the theoretical base of Futures Studies lies in its context, methods and value because the perception of the future is so deeply shaped by assumptions and the emphasis they give and that in Futures Studies the framing of any issue and question is political (1999b).

Reciprocally, the values and contexts of governments are inherently related to future social visions as any decisions move society towards particular futures. Australian futurist, Richard Slaughter comments that unfortunately, with attention riveted to the

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\(^{10}\) The recent political and public recognition of the reality of global warming is powerfully propelling many people to take personal action and seek collective solutions adding pressure on political leaders to move out of their complicit paralysis (Judith Brett 2007:13).

\(^{11}\) While it can also be claimed that every form of horrific government is also possible I argue later in the thesis that there are sound reasons for optimism (such as the identifiable tend in evolution to the steady ascendance of consciousness and unitive coherence) and that a positive outcome is the most likely, if not ultimately inevitable.

\(^{12}\) The plural, futures, is used in this academic discipline because there is not one but many futures (Masini 1999b; Richard Slaughter 1999b)
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short time span of electoral cycles, those decisions are likely to be imbued with ‘the characteristic western outlook and its typical assumptions which include notions of cultural superiority, nature as resource, growth as an unquestioned good, the primacy of science and technology, the authority of the past, and the habitual misuse of the future’ (Slaughter 1999b).

Originally, western futures research was a military, industrial pursuit of prediction and control, and extrapolated from the present *modus operandi*. This lack of vision left assumptions, values and contexts unproblematised and the paucity of alternative perspectives enabled the perpetuation of a world order which has becoming increasingly and dangerously unsustainable (Slaughter 1998:519). In contrast, a more critical and humane stream of Futures Studies developed which questions the underlying assumptions in a transpersonal multi-layered and multi-dimensional approach context with the purpose, not of making predictions, but to gain on overview in order to illuminate alternative futures. Slaughter suggests that the realities of social futures are accessible in the deeper symbolic realms which can be *directly experienced* (1999b). The inclusive process broadens and deepens the field of attention thereby activating more future options which are framed within a long term view of interdependence and planetary awareness. The expanded field of attention shifts perception and thinking which in turn activates adaptive social transformation (Slaughter 1999c). Slaughter states that failure to give inclusive and deep attention to shared futures is denial of responsibility (Slaughter 1999c). Australian philosopher of science, Darryl Reanney indicated the expanded ethical responsibility in relation to the praxis of conscious vision and choice implicated in quantum revelations.

> Once we grasp the full quantum message we can never naively believe that the world we see is the world that is, instead we are confronted with a much more challenging assertion, that the world we see is the world we make. (Reanney 1994:55)

As Slaughter notes, ideas can act powerfully as drivers and inspiration in opening new perspectives (1993). Contextualising governing processes in a dynamic interconnected reality, I believe, can evoke alternative ideas and insights. Fred Polak documented the powerful influence of societal self images and imagined futures have

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13 The two major streams of Futures Studies are described and critiqued in chapter six.
in shaping decisions and actions of a populace in the present (1953). Peter Willis and Pam Carden explore the role of applied imagination to vision and ground democracy (2004). Presentation of options as well as alternative contexts, in this thesis a sacred and evolving cosmos, can create fertile ground for a future by loosening the rigidity of conditioned outlook and ingrained habit. A readiness for a particular future can be created by alignment with the experiential state of the specific possibilities. Such imaginative and essential thinking expands the focus thereby opening other possibilities and is itself a political act, and it can be argued, a responsibility. Philosopher, Robert Theobald advises in these times of rapid change within a complex global society when events and timing are unpredictable, to have alternative options modelled on peace developed and ready (1997). He emphasises that it is essential to be prepared. My research is a contribution within this field by articulating future possibilities based on deep experiential and phenomenological realities.

Overview of chapters

As stated, in this research I explore possibilities that deeply positive experiences which are in turn in coherence with an interconnected reality evolving within a sacred universe, may then in the conditions of macrophase transformation, infuse and re-pattern collective self-organisation, such as the structures and processes of democratic governing. I structure the thesis with the intention that the sequence of evidence and argument clarifies the relationships I am highlighting and their potentials. The chapters are correlated with my research objectives.

The first chapters of the thesis (two to five) provide the theoretical framework for the methodology and later analysis of results and their implications. In chapter two I substantiate interconnectedness as both an experiential and scientific reality. I explore the sacred as elucidated through experiential interconnectedness, the insider view. For interconnectedness as a phenomenon, I draw on perspectives of the physical, biological and Life sciences as well as consciousness studies.

In chapter three I utilise the work of Teilhard de Chardin to situate the human journey within the on-going and directional dynamics of evolution organising phenomena and

14 I do not however underestimate the demands, power and inertia of the status-quo. As the dramas and machinations of the present political players and system so strongly dominate attention it is almost a disciplined act to imagine ways government can be done very differently.
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consciousness towards more synergistic units of inter-relatedness. Expansion of the capacity for love and use of imagination are central in this process of evolving human consciousness. The marriage of subjective, scientific and evolutionary dynamics provides an expanded and deepened context underpinned by solid theory and evidence for later discussion of social transformation.

In chapter four I analyse modern democracy and specifically the praxis of the Westminster system and its metaphysical foundation of separateness. I argue that this system is anachronous, that these institutionalised structures are unsustainable and its frame of contextualisation is far too small, and in fact inhibits adequate, critical responses to current problems. I link the metaphysical underpinning to the present institutions and argue that this domain of consciousness holds potential for systemic transformation.

In chapter five I explore the relationship between the role of vision and societal futures. I document the gendered nature of visions as a phenomenological occurrence, the positive visions of women in terms of social coherence, together with women’s visioning capacities thereby setting a foundation for the visioning methodology I then employ.

The methodology which I discuss in chapter six follows directly on the theoretical underpinning of the previous four chapters so it is consistent with a reality of interconnectedness. The methodology is situated within a feminist research paradigm with a futures studies orientation utilising transpersonal methods. A triangulation of visioning techniques (utilising sacred space), phenomenology and heuristic in-dwelling contribute research data. I indicate the multi-layered analysis method of future studies and transpersonal methodology techniques applied to discern possibilities of empowerment, social organisation and transformation in the data.

In chapters seven to nine I present the results in three sections which deeply interrogate the inner praxis arising in experiences of interconnectedness. The dynamism of these experiences I relate to the themes of empowerment, possibilities and transformation. In chapter seven I elucidate inner processes for potential application to governing from the sacred space within – in particular the processes of centring in inner truth, love as an embodied energy and surrender as a self transforming action. In chapter eight I analyse inter-personal processes which cohere
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in unity and offer possibilities for further evolution of conscious democracy where the emphasis is on process and patterns rather than structure. In chapter nine I indicate sources and methods of wholistic transformation implied in the experience of sacredness.

I discuss the analysis and implications of the research findings in chapters ten, eleven and twelve. Chapter ten explores emergent trends in contemporary spirituality and implied social consequences and not dissimilar dynamics in the current political climate which feeds individuated centredness concurrently with omni-centricity. In chapter eleven I analyse new forms of democracy centred on Life (as a systemic and dynamic phenomenon) and love (as a subjective and energetic experience) as both pragmatic and realistic in present conditions. In chapter twelve I discuss ways forward such as evolving consciousness, expanding pedagogies, developing symbolism and the empowerment and responsibility of choice.

I draw conclusions about sacredness as a formative base for governing in an interconnected milieu of evolving Life in chapter thirteen.

Limitations of the research and clarification of terms

In this section I outline what this thesis is and is not.

Spirituality is different from religion

For this thesis the distinction between spirituality and religion is important. Spirituality is grounded in direct personal experience (King 1997:669). Spiritualities gain their personally defining significance because of their experiential nature – the experience of interconnectedness, oneness, living unity, the sacred, the divine which in turn gives meaning and personal direction within a context of overall wholeness (King 1997:668). Importantly, spirituality in this thesis does not refer to a system of faith, concepts, belief systems or ideology derived from any social institution, particularly religious institutions, traditions or denominations. While religion and religious practices may enable spiritual experience, the meanings assigned to the experiences are encoded from within the limits of culturally defined, conceptual systems, often fixed in a time past whereby institutionalised religion can become an end in itself rather than a means. Religion is a system of faith, beliefs and devotional behaviours intended to support mediated connection with and experience of the
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divine. Yet sadly religion – particularly when associated with government and political power – has often been a pretext to war and violence through group identification and limited agreement on ‘truth’, as seen clearly in the rise and clashes of fundamentalisms in this young century.

To reiterate: I am not proposing religion as the basis of government. I am examining the lived experience of interconnectedness as an organising dynamic for government of immensely beneficial and evolutionary efficacy.

Discussion of the sacred and spirituality

Sacredness and to some extent spirituality is intangible and inexpressible. To attempt to communicate such experiences creates a certain paradox. The coding of language has inherent inadequacy – at least in English. Words, however, can remind or resonate in a reader who has had a similar experience. An image or impression can be created which evokes a resonance of shared understanding though a readiness to hear (Reanney 1991).

In the thesis I will not justify or prove the validity of spiritual experience or the sacred. I will endeavour to be clear and accurate in articulation. I acknowledge that from some perspectives and paradigms, spiritual experience is not ‘real’. I will not draw analysis from these sources as there is no meeting point for dialogue in inherent tautologies. While an understanding of spirituality may be simplified, demystified and to some extent characterised, what is to be communicated about a whole realm of experience and Life essentially cannot be compromised by occlusion. I discuss sacredness, spirituality and consciousness extensively in chapter two; I do not however give prescriptive definitions.

No golden age replication

While I honour and incorporate wisdom from the past, I do not see the past as a golden age to be reproduced. Futurist Sohail Inayatullah cautions against

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15 The structure of a language can deeply condition thinking. David Peat notes that English and other Indo-European languages are noun based and pre-dispose perception of a world of objects, concepts and categorisation (1997). Other languages such as the Native American Algonquin are strongly verb based, are equally logical and base thinking on process, transformation and flux. With a mind shaped to apprehend the dynamism revealed by physics, David Bohm calls nouns, ‘slow verbs’ (William Keepin 1994:2). Some languages, such as Sanskrit, support the expression and understanding of experience of the sacred.
romanticising the past as a template for the future (1999c). The focus of this research is experiential interconnectedness, envisioned possibilities and contemporary epi-phenomena which exhibit wholistic, integrative processes potentially offering models and transition mechanisms. Hence my focus is not historic or contextual analysis of patterns of the past with a view to use an improved and adjusted replication to design the future. The research is definitely oriented to the future and thus utilises appropriate Futures Studies’ methods. I am aware that this approach is dissimilar to the common academic position that to move forward we must understand the past – in contrast a tenet of a transpersonal and Futures Studies approach is to intentionally create a disjunction with the past to unshackle the mind from presently limiting frameworks and patterns of interpretation and thus to deliberately enable expanded states of consciousness to be open and alert to an expanded range of potential possibilities.

**Frame-work for government and democracy**

The focus of the research is on democratic forms for government where the starting point is the explicit assumption that all Life is sacred. Hence from this base there is no hierarchy of value among human beings; all are inherently equal. Equally valued uniqueness is a fundamental democratic principle exhibited as respect for human dignity. Another pillar of democracy is recognition that individuals make up and participate in a greater whole entity which has a life of its own, be it the community, nation or species/humanity. For this thesis I take the classic definition of democracy, *government of the people, for the people and by the people*, as the foundation for exploration and analysis. Held in this definition are the principles of equality, inclusivity, participation and resulting justice (as articulated in detail in the UN Declaration of Human Rights). I believe this definition honours the two fundamental elements of individual dignity and integrated collective wholeness which I later argue are inseparable and synergistic in an interconnected reality and wherein the principles of which would become institutionalised in a culture which recognises this basis of reality.

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16 While similar language about the value of the individual is in the rhetoric of economic rationalism, this globally imposed model is in direct contradiction to the position I am extrapolating – as is, albeit less directly, representative democracy (Carson 2005). Economic rationalism, as fundamentalist capitalist economics coupled with the industrial military complex is known in Australia, is also called neo-liberalism, neo-conservatism and free market economics (Adam Jamrozik 2005; Chris Sheil 2000).
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I do acknowledge that there are examples of theocracies and Indigenous forms of government which are based on sacred or religious principles and processes. However, these are rarely non-patriarchal, fully inclusive or democratic in nature. In chapter four I critique the metaphysical underpinning of the Westminster system of democracy and its consequent exercise of power in terms of its future sustainability as it devolves from the tacit assumption of inherent separateness.

This research however is not located in the social paradigm devolving from the primary premise of separateness and hence cannot be limited by its concepts and assumptions. Interconnectedness is a totally different paradigm enabling cognisance and imagination of different domains of possibility. A paradigm is a closed self-reinforcing system which makes no sense from the perspective of another paradigm as the ways of seeing, knowing, theorising and predicting filter perception to different realities (Kuhn 1970). Hence I do not analyse possible forms of government based on sacredness from within the paradigm of present adversarial politics or its assumptions about what is possible. Social organisation arising from these different paradigms is at times placed side by side in contrast to clarify a distinction, to identify emergent trends, for creative dissonance and to indicate options. Additionally I concur with Kuhn who clearly indicates that the awakeners and supporters of a new paradigm never come from those invested in the status quo of the older and dominant paradigm (1970:77). So while I devote a chapter (four) to analytic critique of present systems for democracy, they are not the main focus of my research which is the processes (inner and inter-personal) and wholistic re-organisation of patterns of inter-relating which are enabled by the state of consciousness arising with experiential interconnectedness. This experience, I suggest and later substantiate, may be the elemental source of patterns, values and democratic impulses of organisation of relationships. As Albert Einstein succinctly said, ‘we cannot solve problems with the same consciousness which created them’ (Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson 2000:155). Thus it is a shift in consciousness which gives rise to new forms and I suggest that the shift in consciousness concurrent with experiential interconnectedness may be a source of new forms of democracy.

**Praxis but no manifesto**

Because the proposition of basing government on experience of the sacred may seem esoteric or ephemeral to some, I have continually throughout the thesis focussed on
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social and experiential domains and events where theory meets practice, namely the
praxis of experiential interconnectedness as it occurs in ordinary and extra-ordinary
events of daily life and its actualised and potential socio-political consequences. My
intention is to bring into visibility a range of actions and capacities which put the
theoretical insights into practice. However this research is not intending or pretending
to be a manifesto of stepwise strategies; it is one vision of possibilities which are
theoretically sound within the expanded context inclusive of the dynamics of
consciousness and cosmos, and developed from the primary premise of
interconnectedness which I make clear.

Healthy doubt

Because of the transpersonal nature of this research a good measure healthy doubt
must be ever present – not because this research paradigm, its methodology and
means of verification are not valid but because of the disciplined focus it requires
which is relatively unsupported in a self-limiting culture of scepticism still pervading
some areas of academia. To this end I discuss both the merits and the limitations of
what a transpersonal methodological approach allows. An examination of
transpersonal methodology, its language, ideas and processes are augmented by
critical awareness of my own orientations and hence potential biases as I discuss at
the end of this introduction and endeavour to integrate throughout the research
process.

A western cultural exploration

This research is predominantly from a modern western cultural perspective (my
culture) which at this stage has not inculcated interconnectedness as a real or valid
description of reality within the collective psyche much less the dominant narrative.
This is despite its explicit evidence of inherent interconnectedness in science and
implicit recognition in most religions. While increasing cross-fertilisation of cultures
is a modern actuality which can be positive, there is an ethical imperative not to
appropriate treasures of other cultures but only access what is freely and appropriately
offered. Social change activist, Fran Peavey believes that within a community, system
or culture lies the resolution to the problems it has created (1986, 2001) – like
evoking a recessive gene which awaits the synchronicity of time and selective
circumstances to express itself. The action she suggests is to attend with care and to trust the systemic wholism with its encompassing coherence.

**Metaphors from science**

Where appropriate, I use those metaphors, concepts, language and theories from science which recognise and qualify interconnectedness. This is to support this particular perception of reality as well as to draw on valuable information and to resonate recognition of similar phenomena. For example, drawing on field theory and non-locality may seed and support acceptance of the interconnectedness of thought, the dynamism pervading collective patterns and love as an energy (Sperry Andrews 1990, 1996; William Kraft 1988). Physics has developed new language for the domain of interconnectedness e.g. *tendencies* rest as probabilities within inherent uncertainty and creativity.

There are nevertheless obvious limits to the use of western science in this way. One limit is the predominant materialist framework of science which limits recognition of a spiritual worldview and phenomena which are inherently immeasurable, inexplicable and hence unrecognised within its framework. Another limitation is the privileged position of linear rationality whereby systems of rationality based in other states/ways of knowing are not validated or even acknowledged. The hegemony of this position is being expanded by the meticulous work of many scientists some of whom I draw on in chapter two to establish a theoretical base for my assumptions, ideas, processes and subsequent analysis.

**Language**

A paradigm is a worldview, a framework of cognition and perception, ways of being and seeing, which is backed up by its own metaphysical symbolism, language and rationality which does not make sense within the framework of another paradigm (Kuhn 1970; Mircea Eliade 1963). The ‘gestalt switch’ between paradigms is a jump which is total and instantaneous and which reveals a different worldview (Kuhn 1970:122, 150).

Interconnectedness as an experience gives rise to a different paradigm from separateness as the underlying nature of reality. Knowledge derived from the domains
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of deep, experiential interconnectedness needs new language and symbols. In regard to spirituality, academic and Zen Roshi Susan Murphy speaks of the project to describe what is actually ‘indescribable, and yet known to us all’ (2004).

Accordingly I experiment with language to relate particular realms-of-being and potential transition points in the current milieu. At times I reframe words or create composites of words to allude to a sense of meaning which expands the usual confines of individual words (e.g. rational-mind-in-dominance) and meanings (eg inform refers to the capacity of information to activate or visually bring-into-form a pattern, a nuance or design of energy (Bohm 1986:126)). Some words I adopt e.g. monocognism (Sutherland 1992). I also at times use personal plural pronouns eg we, us. This is not to speak for anyone else but to reinforce contextualisation as humans within the/our cosmic and energetic habitat in which we are active participants rather than lend tacit support to the illusion of the independent detached observer. My intention is a genuine attempt to glimpse and hold momentarily another range of possibilities.

Teilhard, in his original essays in French, capitalised words such as Life designating it as a proper noun (1969a, b, c, d). I will also capitalise certain concepts and processes to help give them a distinct status, relevance and reinforce the capacity of ‘the word’ to spell out a reality and entrain attention, focus and integration (Rupert Sheldrake 1994c:197). For example, capitals honour phenomena such as Life when referring to the enfolding, inter-conscious evolutionary phenomenon, not the personal life – a distinction not made in English. Earth refers to our physical planet as an integrated, living whole with which we, as humans and conscious beings in material bodies on this planet, are inextricably linked and mutually interactive and inseparable spiritually.

Personal Statement

Inayatullah encourages researchers to share their personal stories to strengthen authenticity and reveal their values (1999c). Feminist researchers usually disclose

17 Deep inculcation of concrete separateness is reinforced by languages with linear phonetic letter/word writing which is read in sequential fragments rather than wholistically (Reanney 1994). Additionally old terms evoke old concepts which fall into known relationships (Kuhn 1970:149).

18 Australian Indigenous languages make this distinction eg Yarralin people have the word yimaruk to designate this perception.
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their own positions as a matter of honesty and respect. In the light of ‘observer effect’, disclosure provides academic accuracy by revealing orienting filters and foci. Hence to make clear my own socio-political position and values I include a personal story.

Story of a sacred mountain

Gulaga called. Gulaga is a sacred mountain by the sea in the south eastern corner of Australia. She is the Mother of beings, landscape, sea and probably much more. The mountain is a creation site of life ‘where the fragile veil that hangs between the worlds is spun’ (Jennifer Brown 1989). The mountain has a strong energetic presence locally and in the cosmos. Her children live at her feet. She talks with the stars, the Dulugal\(^{19}\) and the others who meet at her special places. She is sacred and pregnant (Deborah Bird Rose 1990). And Gulaga called.

By good fortune I am privileged to live near Gulaga. In 1989 the mountain started calling her new children in. The western face of Gulaga was being logged – the ancient forests were falling. This time was a time of high forest activism with the focus of campaigns on the old growth forests of Coolangubra and Tantawangelo, which lay further to the south. My heart was aching. The destruction in the forests felt physical. Also I was having difficulty with the military-style, male dominated, hierarchical methods which were dominating events in the environment movement. The intentions and commitments were sincere and courageous yet the methods increased conflict, division and hatred. It didn’t feel right to me – and other women – it felt like war.

Around that time the mountain started calling us in – we local white women. A number of women commented that they felt pulled to the mountain. One woman driving past on the highway felt compelled to stop her car and started walking across the paddocks to the mountain. Consequently a group of women went up the mountain on New Year’s Day and listened. The sense we got was to follow our spirits and have a women’s camp over the weekend of January 19 -21. The loggers had stopped for break over the Christmas holidays and were due to resume logging after that weekend.

\(^{19}\) Dulugal is a yowie – an inter-dimensional being similar in form to the Yeti of the Himalayas and the Bigfoot of North America (Rose 1990: Brian Egloff 1979).
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I was designated as the one to ask for permission from the appropriate Koori Elder.20 The person I kept looking for was never at home when I called – I couldn’t track her. I was puzzled yet trusted. On the day before the camp I ran into a woman at the local shop and once I saw her I knew she was the one – the oldest Wallaga Lake woman. Outside on the footpath we chatted and I explained how things had come in to the women and what our intention was – to honour Gulaga, listen to her and ask for her direction. I asked for her permission for us to go. She beamed, ‘you have my permission and you have my blessing too’.

So we went, twenty women and children. The women climbed the mountain, sweating, laughing, talking. The local dairy farmer whose land adjoined the southern rainforest ferried up bundles of gear and kids piled up in a trailer pulled behind his tractor. We camped at Saunders, the hut site of a gold miner of the previous century. In the liquid green sauna of the magical forest we talked and sang and argued and listened and were silent and changed nappies and meditated and cooked and prayed and laughed and poured out passion. The huge mossy rocks held us in another time, outside time. We walked to special places. Everywhere there was presence – beings – aliveness – the forest was full and busy. On Sunday afternoon we came down.

Then the surprise came on the local ABC news on Monday morning. The saw-mill that had been taking the trees from Gulaga had burnt to the ground. The fire had started late Sunday, spontaneous combustion, no suspicious circumstances. Gulaga was safe.

Pure coincidence – yes – and no. In the world of separation where nothing is connected by love and thought and energy, it is coincidence. In the world of connectedness where there are no coincidences but synchronous interactivities within the flowing creativity of timespace, our prayers were answered. The logging has never resumed.

Personal commitments and positions

This type of experience greatly expanded my approach to political activism and spirituality, and later, research. Spirituality had always been a vital part of my political action as a refuge and a source of strength which nurtured and sustained me.

20 Koori is the term used by Indigenous people of this region to refer to themselves. The word has become part of the vernacular.
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Now my experiences hinted at possibilities for social and political transformation which were direct, dynamic and integrated within daily life, not through ideology, but through being, authenticity and expanded inter-relatedness. And it took place in the most beautiful, wild and sacred places with people I love. Just by entertaining the idea that through interconnectivity, spiritual action may resonate within time, energy, thought and events across dimensions, my sense of possibilities and efficacy expanded. A plethora of potential methods for gentle, rapid, social transformation beckoned for attention. An exploration of ‘what if’ began. What if our actions, particularly when aligned with the core of being, the specific location, the Earth, make an effect? What if sacred ceremony does have an impact across dimensions? What if our state of consciousness evokes patterns of inter-relatedness and alternative perceptions of reality? What if deep connection with the Earth evokes – in us, for us, as us – a patterned way of being together as one – a form democracy evoked by deep connectedness with Earth and each other?

Bias

Underlying my reasons for doing this research is a passion about democracy and how it could perhaps be shaped by more expanded and expansive experiences of consciousness. I also feel frustration that discussions about democracy are mostly held captive to current models and dominant ways of thinking (which are critiqued in chapter four). I make clear my values, position and assumptions to be honest with both myself and any reader. I have been very aware of the need to draw out any biases which I may project into the inquiry. The influence of personal bias is an obvious issue for any research and may to some extent, from a relativist understanding and also observer effect acknowledged in science, be unavoidable. Also, in relation to drawing sources of authority I am quite aware that the hardest bias to see is the one that agrees with your own. To address the potential influence of my own biases I built into the research process specific procedures to support vigilant awareness and methodological practices which counter the dominance of one’s own perspectives.

Arguably, qualitative research and particularly transpersonal research methodology, drawing as it does on subjective and experiential sources for data, may be especially vulnerable to the accusation of undue personal influence. Braud who works extensively with transpersonal research methodology, advises that the researcher
employ strategies which reduce perceptual rigidity and which deliberately compose an open state of mind – to enable both expansion and discrimination (1998:227). He emphasises the processes of reduction and matching. The former minimises the bias of perceptual and cognitive filters and so enhances validity by discernment, while matching is the process whereby the researcher intentionally aligns with the state of the experiences conveyed by the participant to hear deeply what is being offered and additionally to enhance discernment about the validity of the information. I oscillated between both processes.\footnote{At times I thought back with some envy to my days of scientific research where attention was virtually one hundred percent on the specific research question and experiment, and where ontological assumptions and domains of reality were a given and did not have to be explicitly acknowledged, articulated or justified.} I endeavoured to be aware where I may have a blind spot, an impedance or resistance and then I consciously sought to hold myself open to the dissonance of diametrically opposed perspectives and to the complexity of perspectives. Where there was agreement/resonance with my personal orientation I would wrestle with the findings and where appropriate confront their implications (eg analysis of the distinction between deeply aligned intuition and the certainty of the fundamentalist or suicide bomber in chapter seven). Also I analyse all the findings from the theoretical perspective of substantial authorities in appropriate fields. I say more about the ground for my choices of authorities at the beginning of the next chapter.

Throughout the research process I was also very aware of how my findings could be seen from other viewpoints. The voices of challenge (both actual and internalised) were never far away, which in conventional spheres of academia and politics were sometimes flavoured by scepticism, and cynicism. It was ever alluring to acquiesce to the gravitation pull of accepted ways of seeing democracy, the context of government and the naturalisation of adversarial politics, and so receive the blessings of approval and belonging which conformity offered. It was a discipline to resist the consensual beliefs of what is possible and to stay focussed on alternative social visions.\footnote{Kuhn notes that expressing another way of seeing, another paradigm, is frequently met by trivialisation (1970). Swimme notes that evolution happens initially in epi-phenomena of small, somewhat isolated groups which nurture and develop the new innovation, be it a new species or a new idea. If it is exposed too soon to the presiding forces it is quashed (1995).} However, this does not mean that I did not heed the intelligent signals brought by
murmuring doubt, the risks of ignoring doubt and the inadvisability of ‘speeding through the cracks of doubt’ (Edward Podvoll 2003:113).

My personal intention in undertaking this research is to contribute in some way to knowledge and exploration of positive social possibilities. I hope that by focusing on these integrated fields of spirituality and government, the possibility of harmony, love and peace as the predominant way of being, and as a way of operating in democracy, may be reinforced. When I speak of this many people focus immediately on the present system and dynamics of government and feel that deep change is impossible revealing some sort of latent despair. It is doubt arising from the perspective of one paradigm which collapses the ability to enter and engage with another realm of perceptions and reality (Serge King 1988). As a change of paradigm never comes from those heavily invested in the status quo (Kuhn 1970), attention needs to expand well beyond the present system. Holding open a clear space for entertaining alternative possibilities is vital. For these reasons while I bring critical analysis to the research I also respectfully ask the reader to be open and to suspend judgement and pre-mature closure to what is possible.
Chapter Two: Interconnectedness of Reality

If you are connected you are living reality … reality is feeling connected … if you are not connected, you aren’t in reality.

Aunty Beryl Carmichael of the Nyaanpia people shared this perspective at the gathering for spiritual unity of world Indigenous elders at Mutawintji, Australia (Seph Scorzazie 2000, pers. comm.).

Introduction: intention

The intention of this chapter is to acknowledge and substantiate the interconnectedness of reality. To this end, I draw together perspectives, experiences, evidence and concepts in a transdisciplinary synthesis to more fully elucidate this perception. A foundational understanding of interconnectedness is pivotal to framing government in ways that reflect sacredness and Life. From the combined perspectives, I explore processes of transformational change within this milieu, including tools and clues to the neoteny of macro-phase change. For example Houston says that resonance – the excitation of like by like – and the recognition and tracking of experiential resonance, will become significant in the future paradigm (1996:5-6). With this
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intention, I inquire into how the collective mind-field can make deep transformational changes and how these changes can be seeded, nurtured, impacted or sustained through experiential awareness, theoretical frameworks or the interpenetrating active environment of interconnectedness. Finally I draw together implications of the praxis of interconnectedness and consciousness in application to governing.

Living in reality

In any challenge to base research in ‘the real world’, is the response – whose world are you in.1 In the ‘real world’ investigated in this thesis, all reality is profoundly and intimately interconnected. Interconnectedness is the truth observed in the processes of Life and nature, interacting in a living flux which is inseparable from the Earth and the cosmos. In an interconnected cosmos and the rippling subtle minutiae of quantum physics, patterns of energy, thought and being-as-presence, act together across time-space and energy-matter. Space, in this context, is a medium which links and connects rather than separates – it bends, folds, unfurls and responds. Time is a non-linear fluidity, with accessibility of focus to the past, present and future, with no beginning or end, and is able to be experienced as linear, non-linear, mundane, mythic and creative – each experience dependent on the state of consciousness and interaction with the environment. Knowledge, as immediate insight and intuition, is accessible through the body/mind simultaneously at variant times and places (Laszlo 1997; Hunt 1996) – arising with the sudden totality ‘of a gestalt switch’ noted by Kuhn (1970:150) in relation to paradigm change.

Access to the perception and experience of an interconnected cosmos can be facilitated through a multitude of ways such as various states of consciousness, particular geo-energetic locations and sacred sites, beauty, love, ceremonies, attention through body/mind perception, activating resonance of symbols and sounds, movement and emotions. Life-world, as David Abram calls sensual reality, is experienced and named quite differently from the ways of linear, segmented rationality which dominates the western psyche (1996). While every human being has

1 Clearly I understand what Erik Wright calls the inevitable challenge projected onto utopian thinking of the ‘real world’ (1995). As Gianpaola Baiocchi argues in relation to the highly successful Porto Alegre experiment in deliberative democracy, utopian thinking places affirmative responsibility on the design of ‘real world’ institutions to come ever close to the normative utopian ideals (2001:44). I make clear I am working from the premise of interconnectedness and need the space to build logically from that normative position.
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the capacity to expand and access many states of consciousness, culturally this breadth and depth of awareness is not supported in the dominant western culture and its institutions. This way of seeing and knowing – being awake to an interconnected cosmos and living from that knowing – is however held in the western psyche in its Indigenous heritage. Traditional Celtic and Nordic apprehension of the interconnectedness of Life perhaps awaits conditions ripe for re-emergence. The same awareness echoes in the experiences of mystics and expressions of awake artists. Abram notes the inter-subjectivity of reality is revealed by phenomenology, the systematic documentation of direct experience (1996). Such experience incorporates an expansive field and positions the focus of attention inseparably within that enveloping field and attendant relationships where centrality is replaced by intersubjectivity and externally authorised categorisation is replaced by experiential interconnectedness. Similarly Bohm cautions that nothing, including theories and conceptualisation, can override direct experience (Weber 1985). He also advises keeping a place for the Mystery.

The possibilities of basing government on experiential interconnectedness, namely sacredness, seems beyond present apprehension of commonsense while mass attention is so addictively focused on the dramas of the adversarial players and system. However, one obvious and vital step to an open and expanded perspective is that of streaming any collective human self-organisation on the inherent interconnectedness and creativity of Life, Earth and the cosmos. This I believe is happening. Arising from both common experience and the authority of science is this reality of interconnectedness. The synergy of these sources is steadily orchestrating the potential and potency of our human consciousness which arguably must be harnessed for sustainable self-governing for the benefit of all and the Whole.

**Critical selection of authorities**

I wish to explain my use of authorities throughout this thesis. In her wide experience of interviewing people about religion and spirituality for the Australian Broadcasting Commission, Rachael Kohn notes in regard to the issue of authority, that some people

2 For example, the Celtic tradition which underlies much European heritage has a foundation of the interconnectedness of Life which is represented in rituals, symbolism, art, music and deep Earth connectedness (Nigel Pennick 1997) – and which has potential to re-infuse the psyche and its creations (Beaumont 2002a).
adopt a literal approach and follow a text, while others are ‘open-minded interpreters’ of the ideas put forward (2003:62). Without meaning to imply any derogatory judgement of the former approach, my use of authorities is certainly the later. I do not use authorities in a literal, positivist or fundamentalist manner. It is critical engagement with the ideas that interests me – and more so, where these ideas imply positive social potential, it is the praxis of their application which draws my attention and analysis.

As my research is a widely cross-disciplinary project in the search for correlation and relationships in a living milieu (rather than purely theoretical), resonance becomes a tool of deepened inquiry as attention moves between specific information and fields. Ideas, findings, empirical data and insights which resonate a sense of recognition of similarity indicate patterns, relationships and origination which cross and transcend the borders of isolating and excluding silo-thinking. Therefore, in common with many transdisciplinary studies, my reach for input is wide to consolidate the cross-correlations and interconnected bed of lived reality – and so the bibliography is large.

My initial filter for critical engagement with authorities cited is in their selection where I adopt a non-usual assessment from the perspective of the western academy and yet which is consistent with the integrity of my arguments. In my choice of authorities, where possible, I look for a least two degrees of qualification – firstly that of recognised conventional academic standards. The second standard, and possibly more important, is that of experiential authority – as Valerie Hunt, professor of neurophysiology and also investigator/participant into the energy of love and consciousness, says ‘I know because I have experienced’ (1996:102). Thus I draw on authorities who demonstrate direct, personal experience of interconnectedness which is the focalising lens of my explorations and analysis. This experiential authority can be in the form of life involvement, the praxis of psycho-spiritual capacities, their life’s work and/or activism in domains which are the focus of this thesis and which are not generally recognised in standard academic conventions of credibility, validation and

3 ‘Sympathetic resonance’ is elucidated in detail by Braud and Anderson in relation to transpersonal research methods (1998) which I examine in chapters one and six, and appendix one.
4 In the Indigenous knowledge systems, shamanic traditions and Eastern religions, experiential praxis is crucial to conferred authority.
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verification because they lie outside a predominantly materialist and modern western worldview.

However, change is happening in academic culture as seen in faculties such as Social Ecology, and there are now literally thousands of studies situated in expanded epistemologies within western academia, however, little kudos is yet publicly ascribed to areas such as the study of love as an energy and power, synchronicity, spirituality or psychic interconnectedness, nor serious attention to their social implications or application. These are important areas to my research as they provide a hinge between significant knowledge as the fruit of disciplined and imaginative inquiry, and praxis born of experiential reality which, I argue, is the domain enabling deep knowing and re-orienting transformation called for in critical times.5 Generally academics who research into these fields and who want to share their inspiration and excitation in a socially democratic sense publish the implicated potentials and applications in more mainstream arenas.

I have chosen as my central authorities those people who understand knowledge to be inseparable from experiential knowing - a special and yet very common experience in daily life (which I explore more fully in this chapter, and in chapters three, four and five in which I build a multi-layered conceptual framework) and who can bring this to critical reflection as an insider. Often these authors are motivated from experiences of expanded consciousness to act socially and politically for inclusive peace and justice. Others whom I refer to, have academic respect but not the additional authority of personal experience and expertise. I utilise them in a secondary manner to substantiate the conventional research findings of the former.6

I illustrate my double requirements with some examples. Ervin Laszlo is a quantum physicist and additionally a professional concert pianist – while the physics gives him empirical evidence of interconnectedness, he says that it is the music that gives him the experience of interconnectedness, oneness, in a physical, embodied and repeatable way. Laszlo was a member of The Club of Rome, a respected group of scientists who

5 This is not to imply that I accept these views uncritically as I do disagree or draw differing conclusions (eg with Teilhard de Chardin over inevitability of unitive outcome and Sheldrake over time directionality of morphic resonance).
6 If I did not include these subsidiary authorities I could be accused of biased and uncritical interpretation of the scientific findings and theoretical concepts of my main sources.
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gave warning of the state of the planet and the need for humanity to change focus and direction in the 1970s which however was not heeded. He maintains and acts on his social vision and passion and writes extensively about consciousness and the interconnected universe in academic publications and more populous books with the aim to raise awareness and more pragmatically influence urgent political action. In analysis of spirituality I utilise Teilhard de Chardin, Joseph Campbell, Don Cuppitt, Matthew Fox, Thomas Berry, Ursula King and Susan Murphy, who again each have expertise expanded by deepened experience. Jean Houston is an example of a more populous mainstream researcher who holds two doctoral degrees (in psychology and theology), is a prolific writer and social change activist. As a child she had extended daily dialogue with Teilhard de Chardin which to this day influences her work such as in strategy setting workshops for UN employees who work at the coalface of clashing societies or sitting in the desert with Australian Indigenous women to hear and integrate their cosmology.

In choice of sources I additionally utilise interviews, where possible of chosen authority themselves, so their insights come through directly with their personal emphasis as well as a sense of the person and their wholeness. This is both to draw on very current information and also to get a sense of what events and possibilities vitalise that particular person or someone who has studied them closely. As noted in studies and analysis of social transformation, emotional passion is an enlivening, catalysing and infectious ingredient (Teilhard 1969a, b, c and d; Goodwin et al 2001; Sorokin 2000).

7 The primary scientific authorities I draw on to substantiate an interconnected reality and universe are quantum physicists, David Bohm, Amit Goswami, Fritjof Capra and John Hagelin; biologists Barbara McClintock and Rupert Sheldrake, palaeontologist Teilhard de Chardin and cosmologist Brian Swimme, who are each known for their interpretations of physical reality related to consciousness and have personal experiences of interconnectedness which infuse their lives and academic work.

8 My doctoral supervisor, Susan Murphy, is an academic, a film-maker and a Zen roshi, namely a highly esteemed spiritual teacher who dedicates much of her life to enabling people to develop the skill of clear awareness of self in an interconnected and intimate reality.
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Interconnectedness through spirituality: experience of the sacred

Definition of the sacred

To define the sacred and sacredness is not possible; there is a fundamental clash of understandings between the world of objectivity and that which embraces Mystery. However, to ‘define’ the sacred and spirituality, I use the approach of theologian Matthew Fox in relation to mysticism. Because of its experiential nature, he applied a unitary, non-linear approach to communicate the many faceted meanings of mysticism. He offered this in lieu of a definition of mysticism, which he claimed is also inherently indefinable but the meaning can be communicated experientially via the metaphysical interplay of perspectives and cameos.

My approach is non-linear and best understood in a circle, each with definitions feeding into it. By exposure to each of these ‘definitions’ the reader will begin to feel and make connections with his or her own mysticism, for the purpose of defining mysticism here, is to elicit the mystic within each person. (Fox 1988:48 italics and parenthesis in the original)

Thus, in this chapter and further throughout the thesis, I offer many perspectives and contributions about sacredness and spirituality to build an inclusive and wholistic picture of deep and complex experiential phenomena, which may then excite the resonance of recognition in a way which may actually be more accurate than the confines of words.

Experiential interconnectedness

The experience of sacredness is a gift of being human. In the experience of the sacred is a sense of mind-silencing awe. Awe, reverence, wonder, stillness, aliveness, oneness, being, isness, profound connectedness and belonging are some words used to edge towards a resonance of the experience. Expression of the lived experience of sacredness is essentially beyond the confines of language. Silence is a common response. Some music, poetry and art can allude to and re-kindle a sense of the experience. Physicists refer to mystics when awed by the wonder of the universe revealed to them in their work, of a sacred cosmos (Bohm in Weber 1985:201; Capra et. al 1992). The experience of sacredness can include awareness of Presence, the Divine, Spirit, Creative Principle, Mystery and spirits. Sacredness pervades inner and
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outer reality. Sacredness is accessible to human experience from the three dimensional timespace realm of the mundane through to the sublime. Experience of sacredness intersects with domains beyond the human phenomenon altogether. Anthropologist Mircea Eliade described the sacred as that which is transhuman and transmundane yet accessible to human experience (1960).

One common characteristic of sacred experience which is often articulated is the sense of the interconnectedness of everything, and non-thing – *inter-being* is the term used by Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh (1993). The experience of the sacred encompasses a sense of mutuality and deep belonging in an expanded/ing, interconnected/ing, active, alive, limitless reality. Capra comments that a sense of belonging is the essence of the sacred, and furthermore, that in the experience of belonging is a mutual relationship (1992). The expanding reality goes inward and outward. Gary Zukav says that in some human experience, these inner and outer realities transect in a state of presence where time stops (1990). Joseph Campbell quotes 17th century poet Novalis saying that ‘the seat of the soul is there, where the outer and the inner worlds meet’ (1986:31). Australian philosopher of science, Darryl Reanney sees the intersection of inner and outer realities as the locus for the realisation of the quantum possibility of conscious creative engagement with reality (1994).

In-the-experience of interconnectedness, awareness expands beyond the ego, the known and the cultural norm, to the state of being a unique part of an encompassing whole (Beaumont 1998). Interconnectedness, as an embodied experience, is the actual state sought in all spiritualities, traditional and secular, wherein, phenomenologically, energetically and experientially, reality is profoundly and inter-dependently interconnected. Spirituality, in its myriad of forms, is the direct experience of this inter-connectedness; it is direct experience of reality. Murphy says that,

At the core of being is the realisation of connectedness, is the realisation of the interpenetration of all life, all things with each other. You could call that oneness. (2004:2).

9 Thich Nhat Hanh uses the term *inter-being* to refer to interconnectedness as an embodied state which is mutually interactive with its physical and psycho-spiritual environment.
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Experience of interconnectedness gives direct alignment with reality and Life – which is always a good basis for action. The experience of sacredness is thus grounded in the real which is the domain with which government must deal and in which it must operate.

**Commonality of the experience of interconnectedness**

The experience of interconnectedness is recognised as the domain of mystics, creative scientists and artists. However, this capacity is shared by all people and the experience is surprisingly commonplace (William West 2004; David Hay and Kate Hunt 2000; Hay 1987). Seventy six percent of English people say they have had a spiritual experience such as awareness of a sacred presence (Hay and Hunt 2000).

Interconnectedness is also an ordinary and daily occurrence. The experience happens in moments of creative flow, compassion, concentration, physical activities, love, response to beauty, nature, the mysteries of birth, death and sexual intimacy, and many other times. The overwhelm of love when holding a newborn child, the explosion of a delicious taste, the exhilaration surfing a wave, the beauty of a sunset, surrender to rhythm of a dance, the scent of a flower, the synchronisation of a team, harmonisation of a choir, intellectual delight, transforming insight, a smile, a loving gaze – in all of these events a touch of the sacred is felt suspending the talking-mind in a timespace of connection. As Thomas Berry says of this paradoxically wordless but common spiritual dimension of life – ‘it is that simple but that ineffable’ (Michael Colebrook 2001:3). All of these experiences open/shift the embodied state of consciousness and hence the reality, experienced.

The goal of most spiritual practices is to create/orchestrate this state of being. Spiritual practices intentionally reinforce the pathways to, and actual experience of, interconnectedness. Repeated practise of achieving this state in the body/mind and imagination canalises attention to this state of being which then can more readily infuse living and inform conscious choices. Shared practices and rituals resonate the experience further through a shared field of energy and community support. While systems of belief and cultural interpretation differ, the actual experience of interconnectedness is a common meeting point of religions. The distinct experience is known, recognised and valued. The experience of sacredness as a state of consciousness is a source of commonality which holds the promise of communion and
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inclusive unity of human beings while cherishing the exquisite uniqueness of each; these dynamics are the essence of evolved democracy.

**In-the-experience – embodied inclusivity**

*In-the-experience* of interconnectedness there is a change in the habituated state of consciousness, at least for the western mind. *In-the-experience* inclusivity and interconnectedness are embodied and experientially known within – simply known as what-is – arising in the moment. Inclusivity, interconnectedness and equality do not have to be prescribed by a code of ethics, imposed morality or discipline – no striving is required as the state experientially just is, as it is (Arne Naess 1988a) – and thereby giving experiential origination to primary principles of democracy.

Interconnectedness as an experience is distinctly different from the perception and experience of sameness wherein uniqueness, diversity and fine discernment become homogenised, and moreover, these qualities are strengthen and orchestrated. Acute distinction of difference sits coherently as it is held within a synchronised, unified whole in an experienced state of total inclusivity. The experience of interconnectedness resembles that of love as Eric Fromm describes it as union with the condition of preserving one’s integrity, one’s individuality (1975:24). He also claims that love is primarily an attitude or orientation that determines the relatedness of a person to the world as a whole.

A common example illustrating the phenomenon of interconnectedness is being in nature – with the emphasis on simply being. Engaging with an attitude of respect and an open/empty, receptive mind entrains this experience – then the talking-mind quiets, and presences and energies are sensed – gently, a soft dissolving ushers-in a sense of organic relatedness wherein you are interconnectedly enfolded within the whole of the environment.

Attention both softens and crystallises. The sensing of reality expands – the sense of self re-contextualises within an interconnected, wholistic oneness. In that moment there is no inner or outer; there is no separation – both inner-ness and the external world intricately and intimately co-exist. Experience of time and space subtly change. Time perception as a linear phenomenon stops as time dissolves and opens so all time is present and accessible. In this state space connects rather than separates. Timespace is wholistically in connection.
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The usual boundaries of self and lived experience effortlessly open, yet self is present and enlivened. Awareness is focused in the present revealing richness, aliveness, diversity and exquisite uniqueness. A deepening of trust accompanies letting go into a vast, interactive whole which is supportive and creative. Equality and inclusivity simply exist – these qualities flowing with this experience heighten perception of an interconnected world. A sense of security arises in the balance of quiet humility and profound belonging.

Dwelling in experience

Jose Arguelles advises that for any deep and significant experience – that during the experience – to hold off conceptualisation to allow the full event to reverberate with one’s whole being. Resisting the pre-mature closure of mind-talk and sub-summed meanings enables the resonance of the interaction to transfuse.

If we try to conceptualise experience before we have actually resonated with the experience, the field is off or even broken. (Arguelles 1987:54)

Shulamit Reinharz advocates that in feminist scholastic methodology, to sit with total receptivity within the discomfort of the unfamiliar and dissonant to stretch the imagination thereby enabling a reconfiguration of meanings (1992). Shamanic teachers of Florinda Donner counselled her that on hearing something that she did not understand to suspend judgment so as to not interrupt the flow even in her mind (1991). Arguelles advocates honouring experience with sufficient time and space to facilitate the experience to dance you. Sacred timespace offers this potent, clear space – which awaits serious social application.

Being-in-the-experience is quite a different phenomenon from conceptualisation and language about it. At a personal level, talking about a significant spiritual experience can dull the preciousness and dilute the influence it has within (William James 1902). The essence of the experience can become muted and difficult to access and to authentically recall, as it may become boxed in by the limits of inadequate language and then be differently configured in the inner space of being, rather than be a vitalising spark shaping one from within subtly suffusing being, form and actions.

10 Aestheticist John Briggs and physicist David Peat state that humility is the quality which facilitates creative human engagement with the interconnectivity of chaos (1999).
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Talking – a mind shaping experience

Being aware and present in experience can be pre-conceptual and pre-linguistic. The ability to conceptualise and make meaning is a human mental capacity which is enacted through symbolic systems and mythic stories (Wilber 1985, 1991). Language is a symbolic system of representation shaped by the sub-summed metaphysical mythology of a culture and landscape concretised through linguistic codification and rhythm. Moving deep experience through verbalisation shapes it into cultural codings, associations and interpretations. The configuring power of active, structuring symbols encoded in language prunes the experience, shrinking it into shaped confinement. Some languages (eg Sanskrit, Tibetan) support expression of subtle experiences, and others (eg English) do not – without the signifiers subtleties are hard to acknowledge. The variety of cultural interpretations put on and/or arising from sacred experience are a source of enriching diversity, which in the moments of the experience, co-exist in ease and harmony. However, response to the differences in religious interpretation at its worst level can lead to bigotry, violence and war. Yet paradoxically, at the level of experience before conceptualisation – being-in-the-experience – there is deep peace in mutuality, being and profound belonging in the one whole reality which offers a unitive meeting ground for religions and politics.

Spiritual experience and culture

The universal human capacity to experience the sacred thrives in a culture which recognises and supports these experiences. Over two and a half thousand years ago the Indian sage, Patanjali, coded human capacities into an ordered arrangement outlined in the Yoga Sutras (Alice Bailey 1927; 1994). All humans have extended capacities and it is simply a matter of recognition, usage and training that brings them into common behavioural practice (Paramahansa Yogananda 1993). Cultural acknowledgement of the spiritual nature of human beings creates a social climate which supports and readies the person for fullness of human experience. For many Indigenous cultures, initiation ceremonies and recognition as an adult centre/d on achieving these experiences (Campbell 1988; Eliade 1960, 1963; Joan Halifax 1988; Coombs and Holland 1996). These societies recognise that shamans and clever people serve the whole community when they bring knowledge and wisdom from other
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Tibet is another example of a culture oriented to support individuals’ pursuit and actualisation of profound experience of being and reality (Robert Thurman 1998). Such cultures value individual spiritual advancement seeing as obvious the advantage to the whole society. Reciprocally, a culture can make the circumstances more difficult for spiritual experience and certainly for its acknowledgement and acceptance. However, no culture can inhibit the human spirit from directly experiencing its own essence and the expanded range of perceptions and abilities available to it.

**Gateways to the sacred**

There are many gateways and vehicles to the sacred. Sacredness can be experienced through the body/mind, Earth, movement, ceremony, creative flow and intentionally created by spiritual, mental and physical practices, opening to interconnectedness through the self as body/mind/emotions/spirit, the land, nature, each other, through the journey of ceremony and activation through beauty (Beaumont 1998). The experience can also occur spontaneously, quite unrelated to predisposition, preparedness or stimulus.

**Direct experience**

Direct and personal experience is the essence of spirituality. Spirituality is a process, actually many possible processes and practices, of deepening intimacy with one’s self, Life and realities. Spirituality includes the connection into the sacred which is direct and deeply experiential. These experiences, which are essentially inexpressible yet can be quite ordinary, are often definitive, leaving a clear impression which rings in the spirit and orients one’s life in a dynamic flow of movement and transformation (King 1997). The essence of spirituality is experiential which is distinctly different from faith and the mental activities of conceptualisation and beliefs. Matthew Fox says that exploration of Life and self through direct experience follows the paths of the mystics who open themselves to experience the mysteries directly (1988). From the perspective of being human as a spiritual being, Life is experienced as profoundly interconnected, and as sacred in all of its manifestations.

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11 A *clever person* is an Indigenous Australian knowledge-holder.
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The interconnectivity apparent in spiritual experience occurs in inner and outer worlds which are inherently inter-related within the one whole. The interconnectedness of Life and all-that-is reciprocally reveals its sacred nature. In the experience of the sacred there is an expansion of consciousness which can be associated with revelatory experience. Tangible experience of sacredness is related to some extent to the preparedness of a person to perceive/receive this expanded reality. The experience often occurs in, and is mediated by, states of consciousness regarded as non-rational. Native American academic, Vine Deloria Jr. believes that access to the experience of the sacred is in fact inhibited by the rational-mind-in-dominance (1993). Stephen Larsens says that the faculty to experience the sacred is not an aspect of cognitive development but an a-priori instinctive impulse towards a different mode of comprehension (1988).

Acknowledgment of sacredness

Conscious acknowledgment of sacredness, as both an inner personal or outer/social action of attention, supports its direct experience and draws forth awareness to the sacred. Sacredness pervades reality anyway but actually acknowledging sacredness creates a readiness within. The words and actions of acknowledgement act as precursors at a conscious and unconscious level; they create a state awake to the presence of the sacred. The stimulus opens and fine tunes states of consciousness mediated by the body/mind. Acknowledgement of the sacred consecrates a space/place by strengthening attunement of sensitivities to the ambience of sacredness by resonance and entrainment.

Personal journey within

One conscious access point to the sacred is going within – a process of involution within the body/mind to the centred presence of a dynamic balance of stillness, focused attention and enlivenment. Attention can be directed to the state of being – a state open to receive and to give, to interact and to be still. Attention from this home/place within, can focus in/out through the body, mind, senses, emotions and spirit to a unity beyond the appearance of separateness. Expansion occurs and reality re-configures. The perspective of I becomes i, as a paradigm centred around a separate self expands into the experience of being an integral part within an inter-related whole. From the perception and state of non-separateness is opened a world of
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connection, inter-being and inter-knowing. A doorway opens from within, to a vast, energetic/spiritual milieu, a sacred cosmos in which we exist. Preparedness to be present in experience is enhanced by an open mind, an empty, clear-space mind, a mind which receives and which magnetises, a calm alive mind. States of body/mind can be readied by the training of regular practices such as meditation and acts of devotion, acknowledgement and an orientation of seeking. Spiritual practices literally practice enacting the state of awareness and by regularly going into sacred time and space. Spirituality is an inner experience of consciousness, of being, space, awareness through thought, feelings, embodied sensating and awareness of how these abilities of being human interact with the perceived and unperceived cosmos.

The experiential path is that of a personal journey. One’s own personal experience is the source and the self becomes the moderating authority through which beingness is sensed in deep interaction with the perceived and unperceived cosmos of the inner and outer worlds. Arguelles called the ability to sensate deeply, to fully open the senses and be willing to experience directly, a spiritual technology – a tool to enter varied states of consciousness and realities (1987). Arguelles studied the Mayan culture who saw consciousness as the underlying interconnective matrix of reality expressed through wave harmonics and resonant fields. Consciousness is aware, awake attention which can reflect on itself. This open, aware, expanded state of being, accesses gateways to move through conventional timespace.

The body – dwelling in embodiment

The body is experienced as sacred through sensual attention, which brings attentive focus of consciousness to locations, sensations and states within the body. As a person comes fully to their senses (as suggested by Arguelles) then no-mind, or at least no talking-mind, dominates perception and awareness – yet paradoxically the body and mind are not sensed as separate. Dance, movement, yoga, stillness, body painting, body healing, singing and sounding are among practices which enable embodiment of consciousness. Embodied consciousness generates a state of being present – a moment by moment enlivened stillness – and presence which emanates a pattern of being. The body/mind becomes an instrument of consciousness as sensating moves outward to intersect with finer and finer ripples of inter-being. By intention or spontaneously, this state can sometimes expand inward through the body to a remembering across timespace of ancestral his/herstory and through cellular and
molecular memory of the consciousness-in-matter which is held in the body-field yet permeates the cosmos (Beaumont 1998). Expansion can go into deep physicality and intrinsic commonality shared with all material form. The journey of consciousness can go through the atomic vibrational events to their source from the Earth and before her to the stars and cosmos unfolding with time and space.

**Nature**

A powerful source of experiential inter-relatedness is in connection with nature, the land and Earth. As James observes ‘certain aspects of nature seem to have a peculiar power of awakening such mystical states’ (1902:385). Nature offers a reflecting, living expression of the interconnectedness of the sacred and of Life. The dynamic web of synergistic relationships, inseparable from the environment within which they arise, is patterned directly by the relentless and formative dynamics of Life which play through existence as an unfolding and directional phenomenon. The pervading cosmic winds dance the energetic patterns of nature into form. This sea of subtle and powerful energies, physical and spirit forms, entrains the human body/mind into this same state of interconnectedness. When met with an open state of being, a dynamic interaction with the physical, energetic and spiritual environment ensues in a meeting of inter-being. From such a respectful and essentially sacred base, the experience of interconnectedness effortlessly arises in times of deep relatedness with the natural world – whether through the senses, intimacy with a particular location, the mind-shaping interiorisation of landscape, the visceral impact of a sacred site or a realisation of the preciousness of our Earth in the vast universe.

Abram evocatively describes the depths of sensual connectedness available to all and known well by Indigenous peoples (1996). Immersion through the senses opens the universe in the grain of sand – it is present to the flower whose beauty calls us to fall back into love with Life (Pat Flemming and Joanna Macy 1988a:89). Familiarity with the locale can expand to a sense of cosmic belonging (Starhawk 2002). Berry said his sense of the sacred in the environment and universe came from a defining experience in a particular meadow in his childhood (Colebrook 2001). He later referenced his insights and ethics about existence back to this experience – what would be good for the meadow? He expanded his understandings into a set of twelve principles for ‘Understanding the Universe and the Human role in the Universe process’ (Berry n.d.).
Inter-relatedness with the natural world can be experienced as a state of mutual magnetism and identification. Swimme speaks of the yearning of the environmental elements to meet us and urges people to train our sensibilities to hear and respond to the ‘mating call’ emitted by all such presence (1995:7). Being present to the energetic being of the environment, unfolds as a relationship of loving intimacy for both the mystic and the activist. Houston recalls her walks as a child with Pierre Teilhard de Chardin where he saw all as interconnected and his excited presence was ‘so full of vital sap and juice that he seemed to flow with everything’ (Colebrook 2001:1). He related with every thing and every being ‘as personal, as sentient, as “thou” ’. Environmental activist and educator, John Seed comments that for some people an expanded identity follows action taken for love of the environment. The activist moves perspective from ‘I am protecting the rainforest’ to ‘I am part of the rainforest protecting myself. I am part of the rainforest recently emerged into thinking’ (1988:36).

**Alignment with Earth, the land and landscape**

Interconnectedness as a state of consciousness has the potential to improve our relationship with the environment as the experience resonates with interconnectedness of all on Earth, both living and those regarded as non-living. Earth, land and landscape are experienced as sacred. Our planet is mostly liquid in the form of molten, hot fluid just under the thin crust and the oceans’ waters on the surface. To align with Earth is to learn how to be fluid. Social change agent Fran Peavy emphasises our need to be able to flow and to ‘think like water’ (1986; 2001). To be fluid is to be form and formless both – like the words of the Buddhist Heart Sutra – and like the dual nature of the particle/wave which is pulsed from one state to the other by its environment which includes the focussed, attending presence of a conscious being. Reanney wrote of both the creative potential and responsibility of the impact of human consciousness at the threshold of form and formlessness (1994). He said that by the power of choice we can consciously respond to formative, creative forces. The understanding of our inter-dependence and shared identification evokes a sense of ethical responsibility for our actions on the whole Earth community and awareness that our destiny is inextricably tied with the well-being of Earth.

When consciousness is embodied, namely present here and now, it meets the environment in synchronised interconnectedness. Attending from the body/mind to a
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localised focus, the Earth is known as immanent, as matter/mater/mother – mother of matter, mother of Life. All the matter of our bodies comes through the Earth and originates from the first moments of the universe cycled through untold forms of existence. We share the very physicality of our beings with the Earth. The ambience of Earth-energy is ever present, resonating the very atoms of our bodies in an inseparability of being, whether it is acknowledged (by a materialist culture) or not. Through the matter of our bodies, human consciousness is coaxed to come into a pattern of interconnection, immanent in Earth’s energetic rhythm – trembling like the patterns made by sand grains on a taut vibrating drum skin. This resonating rhythm entrains consciousness, aligning and interconnecting a person with the planet and the cosmos. Naess describes the deepened realism which flows from being-with-the-Earth, as natural and beautiful (1988). Such ‘ecological ontology’, as Naess names this alignment, offers authentic realism for a new ‘real politik’.

In experiential interconnectedness, the inner state is at one with the natural environment and Earth. The patterns of being resonate each other in a shared frequency. Human brain waves when in deep meditation (inner coherence), the intense flow of creativity, alpha dreaming phase of sleep and compassion vibrate at approximately 7.5 hertz (Atila Grandpierre 1997; Peat 1997; Hunt 1996:63-4). The standing electromagnetic waves surrounding the planet, Schumann waves, also have a frequency of 7.5 hertz (Grandpierre 1997; G. Satori 1996; Charles Polk 1982). The energetic ambiance which emanates through the environment in which we go about our daily lives is in resonance with some of our most positive states.12 All of these states are characterised by an embodied experience of interconnectedness. The inner state aligns the person in coherent synchronisation with Earth. Earth’s song is felt and we are sung. Nature echoes back the connections with perfectly timed spontaneous synchronous appearances, evidencing the harmonious flow of the non-separate nature of existence in the rhythms of connection, continuity and flow of comm-unity. In an interconnected cosmos, patterns of energy, thought and being-as-presence, act across time-space and energy-matter.

12 Similarly Walleczek notes the pineal body mentioned in much mystical literature is sensitive to electro-magnetic fields matching that of Earth (1993).
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Patterns of nature

Interconnectedness, as states of consciousness, open whole-systems, cosmologies and Life, is characterised by processes and patterns which arise. Patterns within the interconnectedness of nature have recurrent structures. The expressions of nature are peculiarly restricted to certain favourite patterns repeated across vast scales within space (Peter Stevens 1974). Common physical forms of circles, spheres, spirals and meanders frequently organised in the Fibonacci series are seen in the snail to the galaxy (Gyorgy Doczi 1994). The melodies sung through nature by the curvature of timespace interpenetrate fields of phenomena drawing existence into preferred harmonic relationships recognised as beauty (Stevens 1974) – another mind-stopping experience. These privileged configurations maximise inter-communication, on-going fluidity and motion, wholistic choreography and suffusion of timespace.13 Space is not a passive participant in the process of creating materialisation – its curving ‘structure’ is a dynamic force dictating the possibilities of patterned manifestation (John Wheeler 1968).14 Stevens says that nature’s patterns are best understood through the processes of transformation, extension and curvature. Our brains are made by this type of space (namely transformative, extending and bending space), and are quintessentially adapted to its patterned proportions and formations. We humans are formed by the same harmonics of beauty, with the sensitivities of the body/mind exquisitely attuned to respond to its evocation, drawing us into harmony with its proportions and harmonics in patterns within unified interconnectedness. These are the forms/patterns to be expected in structures freely arising within the dynamic creativity of evolution – such as collective self-organisation and wholistic self-governing – the circle, spiral, meandering labyrinth are then to be expected in the symbolism, enactment and organisation of evolved democracy.

13 Swimme illustrates the on-going processes wherein humans are a geological feature by discussing the music held in rocks which goes through a journey of breakdown to become fulfilled in reconstitution as the violin and musician (1990:4).
14 John Wheeler believes that our universe is only one of an infinite number of spaces – each with different spatial characteristics and hence having different expressions of forms. This view is consistent with that of Paul Davies who conjectures that multiple universes were created in the Big Bang but we are able to only perceive the one we exist in (2003) – perhaps expansion of consciousness offers all sorts of tourism.
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Wildness

The patterns arising in nature are particularly evident in wild places. Here nature is in direct, unobstructed communion with the dance of cosmic energy powerfully enacting its patterns in matter, living beings and their inter-related processes. The creative differentiation expressed in nature is apparent in the abundant diversity of wilderness. The potent presence of uninhibited nature acts directly on us and all Life. The geospiritual energy of wild places is felt in tangible and visceral ways. Berry stressed the vital significance of wildness to feed our visions and creative insights (1999). He advocated learning how to participate creatively with wildness. The powerful presence in wild places draws forth states of consciousness at one with this resonance. Swimme says the human ground of being is wildness (2004:2). In this state of communion, the stones and trees speak in the languages of their energetic patterns and are heard (Brian Bates 1996). With reciprocal empathy, places of environmental destruction are felt viscerally. Intimate connection with nature generates a home-feeling experienced as belonging and deep love. The sense imbued is one of a nurturing and supportive cosmos loving its own. Fortunately, there are still many wild places in Australia. Australian Greens Senator, Bob Brown’s connection with the wilderness of the Franklin River and his experiences there, which can be called transcendental, substantiates the power of nature and wilderness to transform open human beings.

Except for the occasional call of a bird of the forest, there was absolute quiet. For a time the grandeur of this monumental place flooded my mind. I lost awareness of all else – my raft, my friend, my obligations, myself. The process of thirty years which had made me a mystified and detached observer of the universe was reversed and I fused into the inexplicable mystery of nature. (Peter Thompson 1984:51)

15 Aboriginal dot paintings capture this energetic emanance and vitalisation of landscape in a way which has a powerful and visceral effect on the viewer.
16 Tanmaya, the maker/facilitator of the Himalayan Flower Enhancers, says that the essences of flowers in wild places are particularly pure and potent (pers. comm. 2005)
17 The Franklin river in Tasmania had only been travelled by a handful of non-Indigenous people before Bob Brown and Paul Smith rafted the wild river. Later the campaign to save the Franklin from being damned initiated the modern Australian environmental movement.
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Sacred sites

Australia, the ancient island continent, is powerful and the energetic patterns emanating from the land and landscape are strong. Jungian psychologist, David Tacey says that the power in the landscape of this continent is able to crack open the psyche beyond the ego to the mythic realms and psychic field of nature (1995). The effect, he says, is both revelatory and transformative. The experiential state of sacredness and interconnectivity can be induced by sacred sites.

Australia is laced with sacred sites. Sacred sites, or thin places as they are called in the Celtic tradition, are locations where interaction across dimensions and forms of being is more accessible. They are often associated with spirit presence (Gubu Ted Thomas in Grossinger 1986). The individual potency of sacred places is tangible and distinguishable (Bobby (Medicine Grizzlybear) Lake 1993). Keith Dowman notes that the power of Tibetan sacred sites is particularly evidenced where the places are wild and the animals free (1988). Deborah Bird Rose says that a sacred site is an enduring connection between foundational creation and current life (2000). To stand in that place, says Rose, is to be known by that power (2000:40). She notes the effects of living within the strong and tangible range of a sacred place on ‘how human life is lived when it is open to the call of the sacred’ (2000:46). This, she observes, for both Indigenous and settler women and men around Gulaga, a sacred mountain which is a creation site in south eastern Australia (1990, 2000, 2004) – ‘where the veils between the worlds are spun’ (Brown 1988). Rose uses the responses to the sacredness of Gulaga to illustrate the potential for reconciliation of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples through the sacredness of the land and the power of nature to ‘knock us into shape’ (2000, 2004:203).

Vine Deloria Jr. says that human experience at sacred sites seems to fall into the two categories of reflection and revelation (1993). The reflective experience is one of interfacing dialogue with the Earth, often personal. The revelatory experience is of another realm, making the unknown known. Dowman says that in Tibetan spiritual belief of both Buddhism and Bonpo, these power places were/are used by mystics in the past and recent times, to enhance spiritual practices and to achieve heightened

18 This is the same mountain in the story in Chapter One. In the words of a local dairy farmer, Mal Dibden, the presence of the mountain penetrates and ‘nature knocks you into shape’ (Rose 2004:203).
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states of consciousness. Practitioners experience visions and strengthened intuitive knowing at these places.

Australia is additionally fortunate because of over 60,000 years continuous history of inter-relating with the land and sacred sites through the sacred ceremony of Australia’s Indigenous peoples. The repetition of the ceremonies in which cosmic patterns are embodied, worn, danced and imprinted in the Earth (Lambert 1993) strengthens the morphogenic fields perpetuating creation and Life’s patterns amplify (Sheldrake 1987, 1990, 1994c). Conscious interaction through the ceremonies enhances respectful and sacred relatedness with the land and cosmos.19

Sacred ceremony

Sacred ceremony is an intentional act of sacredness, of connection, of love. Ceremony enables the experience of sacredness and interconnectedness to be shared. The power of ceremony to change consciousness is well documented in anthropology, mythology and mysticism (Campbell 1973, 1974, 1988, 1990; Eliade 1960, 1963; Starhawk 1982, 1989; Beaumont 1998). In sacred ceremony sacred space and time is intentionally aligned; there is attunement into the greater context of the cosmos and consciousness (Arguelles 1987). This often is enacted by orienting with the cardinal directions, so that beings are present and in physical alignment and harmony with the Earth’s magnetic field (North-South) and the roll of Earth in the plane of planetary movement within the solar system (East-West) and thence with the great spirally disc of our galaxy and greater cosmos.20 The alignment with the outer cosmos parallels the inner cosmos and states of consciousness which can be accessed (Campbell 1986) – so the spirit, body, mind and heart are at one with the cosmos (Lambert 1993). In sacred ceremony, the conjunction of energy-matter and time-space is engaged at their interactive point of creativity and union as mirrored in the experiential integration. Sacred ceremony often follows a symbolic energetic map or wheel. By intentionally creating specific states sequentially in the body, spirit, emotions and mind, focused experiences of balance, clarity, presence, receptivity and interconnectedness arise,

19 Sheldrake says these imprints are also at sites of repeated devotion such as cathedrals (1990).
20 Alignment with the cardinal directions is a common tool of sacred ceremony for many cultures – Aboriginal, Oceanic, Native American, Nordic, Celtic, Tibetan. Most major cathedrals (and Australia’s Parliament House) are aligned to the cardinal directions. The powers of the directions and their associated elements can be felt within, particularly in the focused/expanded space of sacred ceremony.
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shifting and expanding consciousness and perception.21 Ceremony generates a tangible experience of connectedness with the inner-sense, other beings, and the phenomenal and unseen worlds. Ceremony has the power to interact and impact across perceived time and space.22

The experiences can be tangible as sensating intensifies and energy is embodied, and they can also be exquisitely subtle and intangible, yet just as pervasive. Sacred ceremony jumps awareness from fixed habituated perspectives as the assembly of consciousness shifts with resultant changes in perception and embodied states. Consciousness expands beyond the mundane egoic reality without losing connection with it. Ordinary perceptions change to other modes of being, seeing, feeling, thinking. Expanded states of consciousness are found to have qualities of magnetism and receptivity, together with dynamic and generative interaction. There is a certain resonance, mediated by the body/mind wherein sensed energy and presence can be recognised, read and tracked. The resonance evokes an inherent sense of recognition. The act of attending and finely tuning consciousness without premature conceptualisation, sometimes leads to intuitive knowing and unitive comprehension.

Interconnectedness as scientific reality

Intention

Moving from the deeply experiential, I now anchor and substantiate these understandings within physical reality through scientific findings which elucidate processes, possibilities and implications concerning interconnectedness and consciousness. Interconnectedness gives a framework wherein time, space and sacredness have overlapping and coherent logic. This perspective brings a fundamental change in the understanding and identity of being human, and the nature of the universe which is new to the western cannon. Culturally the implications are yet to be inculcated and applied. At present the dominant view is that we are separate, alone. With the authority of scientific, empirical evidence, integration of an interconnected reality offers an expanded context. A resultant expansion of

21 The specific rhythm of ordered experiential states is like a chosen song, which reverberates within and outward in a creative synthesis of interactive symphonic orchestration.
22 Ceremony can be seen somewhat like events of folded spacetime-binding (Swimme 2004:8) with the additional dynamics of conscious intention and patterned enactment.
consciousness has consequences for collective self-organisation as a species. These insights are later applied to evolution of democratic government.

**Science: yoga of the west**

The intensely rationalist scientific study of matter, which Thomas Berry calls the ‘yoga of the west’ (Swimme 1990:10), reveals a profoundly interconnected reality. Interconnectedness is acknowledged, theorised, characterised and worked from as a basic premise. In the early twentieth century Albert Einstein’s field equations implied that the universe is expanding. Scientific understanding of matter and the universe also changed with the recognition that energy and matter are interchangeable. Gradually the study of the most vast and most minute aspects of the material world in the quantum realm and cosmology converged in a completely new conception of time and space. The redefinition of these dimensions made no sense from the perspectives of the Newtonian paradigm as space becomes multi-dimensional and connective (Bohm 1986) and time is non-directional and ever present, and that time and space are somehow the same phenomenon (Reanney 1991). Timespace is an active connective medium unfurling with the universe itself.

Science also indicates the multi-dimensional capacity of human consciousness to interact directly with the phenomenal world. The process entails a certain immersing into the greater mystery of interconnectedness. This is a secular, spiritual act, and surprisingly a research method. Microbiologist, Barbara McClintock exemplified a form of scholarship which conscious interconnection offers (Evelyn Fox Kellar 1983). In addition to her meticulous scientific method, her ground-breaking discoveries were possible because of her ability to deeply extend her consciousness and immerse across species from human to plants and even deeper to their chromosomes. This ‘mystic in science’ said of her participatory methodology,

I found that the more I worked with them, the bigger and bigger the chromosomes got and when I was really working with them I wasn’t outside … I actually felt as if I was right down there and these were my friends … As you look at these things they become part of you. (McClintock in Kellar 1985:165)

**Quantum physics: non-locality and holographic wholism**

Two of the key realisations arising from the sub-atomic quantum world are those of non-locality and (w)holism (Bohm 1980). Allan Aspect verified that under certain
conditions electrons from the same source communicate across distance instantaneously – their relatedness sustains and is independent of both distance and time (1982). Non-locality means that parts of the quantum system that have been connected in the past, remain in connection, coordination, inter-relatedness and inter-knowing. Communication and knowing between electrons or any manner of quanta implies the phenomenon of wholism; that the deep nature of the universe is that of a totality and nested totalities, which are intimately interconnected. Each totality has coherence and integrity across its being.

In response to empirical quantum evidence, Bohm proposed an underlying and communicating unity implicate throughout creation, an interconnected wholism (1980). A key point was that the universe is a whole which is somehow enfolded internally and explicated into everything, and that in every part is enfolded the whole universe. This reciprocal holographic relationship is essential and active (Bohm 1990). Bohm felt it is meaningless to view the cosmos as composed of separate parts because when something is organised holographically, all semblance of location breaks down. All parts, beings, wholes are interactive systems open to all others. As Goswarmi notes, all objects are quantum objects so empirically separateness is not even a possibility (2000:4). The appearance of separateness is an illusion built on incomplete perception and understanding where the concept of alone dissolves into all-is-one (Reanney 1994). Holographic relatedness offers an intuitive metaphor for social transformation in that a change in the pattern within the part, interacts within the whole.

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23 Neurosurgeon, Karl Pribram showed that the brain functions holographically (1977). Physiologically the interconnectivity of the neurons is a non-linear matrix which allows for an infinite array of patterns of connection. Pribram found however that the brain processes information in a way which is energetically independent of the alignment of the cells. He observed that external reality, as processed by the brain, is ‘a vast resonating symphony of waveforms’. Pribram demonstrated that the mind was not contained by the brain but used the brain to process incoming information in a holographic manner. The mind contains the brain and exists beyond it. The human brain operates as a receiver and interactive interface with the cosmos and its potential in openness to knowing and inter-knowing is still being revealed.

24 Sub-atomic phenomena/propensities can occur as particle/quanta or wave-form. Bohm describes all action in the form of definite, measurable units of energy, momentum and other properties called quanta, which cannot be divided further. For example an atom ‘jumps’ from one state to another without passing through intermediate states and in doing this emits an indivisible quantum of light energy. When quanta interact it is as if they are connected within a single indivisible whole. Quantised particles are context aware of themselves and their environment in all dimensions (1990:4).
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**Interpenetrating fields**

Michael Faraday first used the term ‘field’ in the 1890’s in relation to electricity and magnetism. While the natures of fields are not yet explained in recognised concepts of physics and chemistry their effects can be monitored and tested. Sheldrake notes that his pivotal insight was that attention should be focused on the space around a source of energy rather than the source of energy itself (1994a:75). All field phenomena are associated with regions of influence with special patterns and are primarily wholistic. Fields form totalities, wholes. Fields have wave-forms which are vibratory patterns. A wave pattern within the field acts as active information (Peat 1997). The wholeness of a field choreographs interaction and communication within its sphere of influence wherein the pattern or intelligent plan, albeit purpose, is an integral aspect of the field.

All fields are some sort of ‘energy’ which Bohm says are all the one energy (1986:129). Teilhard believes there is a unified whole field (1969a:49). Sheldrake concurs and believes this is one of many fields (1994c: 262, 130). Ervin Laszlo (1993; 1995) and John Hagelin (1992) theorise the universe as one whole unified field – probably a quantum field. Sheldrake calls a quantum field a ‘multi-dimensional space of possibilities’ (2000:130). The quantum field is of another order to electro-magnetic fields and reveals ‘influence’ beyond the speed of light limit and material limit (Goswarmi 1993, 2000). Significantly, because quantum fields are probabilistic not deterministic, all potentiality and creativity exists waiting prior to actualisation.

A picture of reality from the atom to the galaxy is thus one of a complex interactive matrix of vibrating and oscillating fields where fluctuation in one influences interlocked fields immediately. There is a primal presence and multi-dimensional transfer of energy and information which is in the language of frequencies (Bohm 1986; Peat 1997). Individual presence is embedded in the field as a signature pattern which appears to happen in the wave shape rather than being the field itself. The unique wave-shape, due to their wholeness, can interact in a lock-and-key manner like the chemical structure of catalysts.25 As a metaphor this conceptualisation implies a finiteness which is inaccurate – rather each totality/whole is more like a radiant

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25 It is more accurate to say that catalysts hold energetic patterns in particular interfaces of relatedness to each other, enabling the rapid synthesis of a new set of patterns/forms/structures.
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presence emanating a unique pattern which interacts with all-that-is and all that is coming-into-being.

**Morphogenic fields: coming-into-being of form**

Sheldrake explored the morphogenesis or coming-into-being of forms and structures (1981). He theorised causal fields to explain the spontaneous generation and replication of forms as diverse as crystals, organisms, learning strategies and social behaviours. The initiation or change of both internal and external forms/structures, he claims, is orchestrated by causal morphic fields which have wholistic, self-organising properties (1981; 2000). Morphic fields act causally as ‘regions of influence in space-time, located within and around the systems they organise’ and impose patterned designs on energetically possible outcomes of processes and forms (Sheldrake 2000:259).

Morphic fields strengthen (spatio-temporal) patterns through repetition – this effectively means that morphic fields can evolve. An inherent memory acts within a morphic field of influence through resonance. Morphic resonance acts across time and space without loss organising vibratory activity.26 A morphic field self-resonates with its past and present – and arguably future.27 Rene Thom developed mathematical models which describe dynamic systems being drawn to their end-points which he called ‘attractors’ (1983). In a teleological fashion the ‘goal or purpose’ of the field attracts and drives the organisation of the phenomena towards itself. Thus morphic fields and morphic resonance are not of the nature of energy-matter and time-space yet have a purposive, non-local, wholistic, causal influence in these dimensions. Interaction between fields acts through resonance, harmonics and interference patterns. In the influence of one field on another Sheldrake says that there is a hierarchy dependent on the fineness of vibration (1981).

Amit Goswami develops Sheldrake’s theory by recognizing consciousness and addressing the source of morphogenic fields (2000). He contextualises morphogenesis in ‘science within consciousness where he uses quantum mechanics and non-locality

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26 Unlike phenomena within the parameters of classical physics which are subject the Inverse Square Law of diminishing effects over time and distance.

27 Sheldrake acknowledged that he chose to entertain that time, and hence morphic resonance, worked from the past to the present (1981). This decision was in spite of his stated recognition that for the future to work backwards was valid and ‘logically conceivable’ with the evidence of the non-directionality of time and the immediacy of action of attractors inherent within the pattern.
in particular to strengthen non-dualistic explanations, possibilities and sources. The purpose of any morphic field and its sphere of resonance, Goswami says, is activated by ‘consciousness choosing actuality from possible forms of both the vital and the physical body of an organism’ (2000:3). He says that consciousness is the active, organising source enabling Life. Relevant morphic fields, their patterns, unique wave-shapes and interaction are perceived and received by the body/mind where the brain and DNA have receiving functions working via quantum processes which are imprinted by consciousness (2000:4).

**Consciousness: medium, activator and creator**

At the quantum level, consciousness collapses the possibility wave by recognition and choice, through attention and intention (Bohm 1986; Goswami 2000). Classically this occurs in science by measurement. By the action of choosing the focus, mode and actualised timespace for the observation/measurement from the domain of possibilities, consciousness brings actuality into manifestation (John von Neumann 1955). In this sense incorporation of consciousness should be at the heart of all fields of science (Goswami 2000). Bohm says that consciousness is one unitive whole where meaning is an inherent part of the whole (1986:129). Consciousness then is the ground of all being, the stuff of the universe, which acts causally and creatively (Reanney 1991). Reanney writes that consciousness can in fact control and direct the patterns of interaction, namely reality.

Consciousness literally and factually created reality by summoning forth material particles, definable certainties, from the elusive quantum wave. Objective reality, in this perspective ceases to exist. Subject and object, mind and matter, are not separate. (Reanney 1994:55)

That thoughts, expectations and dispositions direct and influence across matter and mind is shown in the *observer effect* illustrating that there is no separate inner and outer. Fundamentally we cannot stand outside reality to observe (Cranny-Francis

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28 Mathematician John von Neumann says the reduction of possibilities is via consciousness (1955). In the absence of consciousness, the electron exists as a possibility/probability-distribution/wave; in the presence of consciousness the electron exists as a particle/location/matter (Michael Talbot 1991). Consciousness can thus be said to determine the perceived nature of the reality of the electron. A dynamic and causative relationship between consciousness and matter is said to exist. This relationship extends to matter, energy, space and time. Thus consciousness is an awareness of being, and also dynamic creative action.
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2003; Sheldrake 2000; Swimme 1990:1). In the freedom to attend and choose, is
primal creativity and hence responsibility.29 Reanney summarises the profound
concept that consciousness acts as a bridge between the worlds drawing forth form.30
What is mind if it has this awesome power to create a world? Mind is
the bridge between formless and form. (Reanney 1994:55)

Chaos, creativity and conscious change

Chaos science looks at hidden patterns, nuance, the sensitivity of things and the
‘rules’ for how the unpredictable leads to the new (Briggs and Peat 1999). In a
scientific sense chaos refers to ‘an underlying interconnectedness that exists in
apparently random events’ (1999:2). Change within this dynamic interconnectedness
comes from small subtle fluctuations in rhythm which may amplify to a total change
throughout – the amplification of initial sources. The changes however are beyond
any control or prediction.

According to Briggs and Peat, the implication from chaos systems is to embrace Life
with skills of living with uncertainty, death and impermanence. To this end, they
suggest cultivating an aesthetic sense of what fits, what harmonises, what will grow
and what will die. This sense requires the qualities of authenticity and humility to
attend to subtle nuance and irregularity in the present which they say is about ‘letting
go, accepting limits, and celebrating magic and mystery’ (1999:7).

While inherent universal creativity draws forth patterns of beauty and advancing
consciousness from chaos, we/humans too are active participants. Because ‘each of us
as an individual is inter-connected to the systems of nature, society and thought that
surround us and flow through us’, we/humans are inextricably part of all ecological
and energetic systems through timespace (Briggs and Peat 1994:4). The physical
heritage from the first moments of the birth of the cosmos is ‘still contained within
our bodies in ordered forms’ (Briggs and Peat 1999:3). Thus together with reflexive
consciousness, humans are well equipped to be creative participators with nature
rather than obsessed but failing controllers. Standing consciously in the individual
stream of embodied aliveness, inner knowing connects with all creation through

29 Another way of saying this is that in choice is profound freedom of reality – explained as the
creative principle of karma (Robena Courten 2002, 2005).
30 Reanney uses the word mind in this sense synonymously with personal consciousness.
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intuition, sensitivity, subtle listening and inner voice – all held in a space of respectful, humble uncertainty. Joanna Macy encourages social activists to draw on this vast lineage of wisdom and knowing (1988). I suggest the same heritage can be accessed for creative governing.

While the processes of ‘living systems’ are increasingly understood (Capra 1982, 1992), Life-force, as the creative, unitive dynamic perpetually infusing all living beings and the Life process, is little understood in the west. Goswami believes this creativity acts through a ‘vital body’ recognised in Eastern mysticism and medicine. The vital body is the wholistic field, the blueprint of information, for a particular form of Life (M. Balfour 1991; S. Veeten 1991; Swami Dayananda Saraswati 1996). Life-force as prana (India), chi (China) and ki (Japan) is experienced directly without mediation. Goswami claims these quantum modes are subject to the uncertainty principle – any observation disturbs the ‘object’ and so essentially is not observable by a second other. Therefore the experience is subtle, internal and private. Walleczek notes that highly organised complex patterns are decoded only by living beings (1993). Thus the deep interconnectedness of Life, self and society are known deeply only through direct experience, and consciousness capable of accessing the creativity of the whole.

At a sub-atomic level all matter is overwhelmingly empty space (Swimme 1990). Our primary physical reality is thus emptiness. In Buddhism this primal space of emptiness is experienced inseparably with compassion. Space, however, is not empty but seethes with dynamic creativity (Reanney 1991, 1994). Thus experiential empathetic connectedness is at one with the resonance of Earth, is the direction of evolutionary development (Swimme 1995:7, 8) and is congruent with universal creativity.

31 Joanna Macy developed despair and empowerment work which releases deeply held grief at the world situation and energises action for a peaceful future. Some universities in Australia have set up chaplaincies just to deal with the grief of students as they learn more about the world situation.

32 Goswami cites ample evidence for this traditional empirical knowledge in eastern sciences, as does Yogananda (1993). American psychic, Edgar Cayce alludes to Lifeforce as the magnetic process of ‘life-giving flow’ which accompanies psychic healing/reading (1968:176). He also says we as humans are capable of communicating with these Creative Forces/Urges. [capitalisation in the original]

33 Bohm says that calculations of the ‘zero-point energy’ indicate that one cubic centimetre of ‘empty space’ contains more energy than all the matter in the known universe’ (Keepin 1994).
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Sheldrake believes that the source of new morphogenic patterns is some inherent creativity of mind and nature (1981:93).34 Goswami posits that this ‘creative intelligent’ source is consciousness which acts within all matter and living forms as an organizing dynamic attuning via harmonics and interacting via resonance (2000). He believes that the power of intention navigates and coordinates non-locality, whereby people mysteriously align with each other and any phenomena within fields of consciousness – ‘I and the other person are non-locally correlated through intention’ (2000:9). His comments emphasise awareness of one’s intentionality and that by implication one person’s learning, attention and interests should affect others within the greater cosmic field of the whole.35

Thus awake consciousness and specifically intention, can draw forth new morphogenic fields and hence new forms/structures. Experiential interconnectedness is one state congruent with universal creativity and the Earth herself which can orchestrate new patterns of unitive self-organising, self-governing behaviours, collectively inter-penetrating.

Summary of key understandings

The universe is not made of things so much as sets/events of relatedness enmeshed inseparably in a web of vibrating patterns in constant flow with movement in and out of form. The universe is unitive and in continuous communication and synergistic inter-action. The phenomenon is a constellation of subjective and inter-subjective occasions of experience. Personal apprehension of the universe (as an inter-subjective being within the alive whole) is best through non-rational states – separation to an outsider position is not an option. Timespace is curving and folded, not linear and stretched out, and so is a mystery from our present collective paradigm. Synchronicity links physical timespace-energymatter to consciousness and meaning. All timespace is accessible via being awake in the present.

34 Sheldrake did not explore the processes of creation of new patterns, and thus new behaviour patterns. Bohm extends Sheldrake’s understanding of morphogenesis by engaging with the creation of new patterns which he expresses as an energetic dance. He says that new forms arise out of crisis at which times the existing dance breaks into several dances in the rise in physical and psychic temperature (1986:123).
35 Pets appear to respond at a distance to the intentions of their human companions; they display an attuned sentience to their human’s fields of thought and action (Sheldrake 1994a:16, 152).
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Quantum fields and morphic fields are wholistic systems which act independently of (perceived) time and space – so can act between present, future and past. Each field has unique wave-shape and embedded active information. These fields are not energymatter yet organise and imprint energymatter and cause the coming-into-being of specific patterns, structures and forms at all complexity levels of energy, matter, biology, behaviour and social organisation. Morphic fields interact through resonance recognizing and activating like; they have memory and evolve. In the quantum reality communication of meaning occurs instantaneously. The origin of morphic fields lies in metaphysical creativity and so can be created by humans. Transcendental (that which transcends that which has gone before) awareness or consciousness gives independence and choice in relation to morphic fields.

Consciousness (as personal mind) is focalised within the body and brain and exists and acts beyond. The brain, body and DNA can receive and read interference patterns, morphogenic and quantum. Patterns are imprinted, resonated and strengthened by repetition. Intention navigates and correlates quantum possibilities. Conscious and intentional interaction with the pattern as contained within, can holographically re-pattern the whole of which they are a part. Patterns are amplified by consciousness and inter-dimensionally directed conscious activities. Consciousness is unitive. Consciousness intersects with and apprehends unity and consciousness expands with orders of unity. Consciousness orchestrates universal creativity.

There is an underlying unity throughout the universe/creation wherein every part contains the whole with which it inter-relates in an active and reciprocal relationship. A fractal-like change in the part affects the whole through re-iteration/repetition/multiplication of a very minor change in the patterned processes. Interactions of waveforms produce (the appearance of) form including structuring of forms of self-government of whole-systems – which logically includes human systems of self-government.

**Limits and potentials of science**

Interconnectedness as revealed by science indicates tools for living and governing in interconnectedness. Science offers metaphors, elucidated dynamics and new language. Additionally, because science is readily digested as a source of authority, it readies the mind for social acceptance of new ways of thinking.
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Yet science is only flirting with embracing the full dimensional capacities of being human, and still mostly clings to parameters from classical physics of the material, measurable and provable. Berry encourages resistance to the dictates of science born of a psyche which believes it is discontinuous with the rest of Life and non-life (1999). Wilber (1985) cautions against confusing reality with theoretical analysis which Capra (1992:144) reminds us are only ever based on approximations. While the systems approach to Life recognises inter-relatedness and edges up to the spiritual and sacred mostly it stays safely within the accepted bounds of normal science (Capra 1982). However, science at its best is not static and each position awaits its demise in the discovery of the new often in a pattern where thought, conjecture and tentative theory precede the evidence (Sheldrake 1994a). Bohm cautions that nothing can override direct experience and advises keeping a place for the Mystery (Weber 1985).

Richard Shoup explores the implications of actual acceptance of Relativity which he says requires abandoning common-sense notions of space and time and calls for a deeper and more fundamental re-appraisal (2001). Psychic phenomena inform this pursuit (Bohm 1985:196, 1986:131-4). Shoup uses the example of remote viewing can occur before, during or after an event, nearby or over a great distance. He relates the properties of scientific findings to experiences of consciousness:

* space/time independence (remote viewing)
* time/order independence (clairvoyance and precognition)
* complexity independence (intention, choice/goal orientation)
* experimenter/observer effect (belief, audience, ordering dynamic)
* selectivity (focus and field affecting sensing and cognition)
* small effects (principle of amplification of initial conditions)

These phenomena, he says, are mediated by ‘highly entangled, multiply constrained states’ similar to the unusual states of matter being employed in ‘quantum-mechanically based computers’ suggesting a deeper reality ‘much like the interconnectedness often associated with eastern “non-scientific” thought and

36 Kuhn uses the term *normal science* to denote science which is in the established paradigm and may contribute to cumulative sequential knowledge but does not challenge the paradigm itself (1970).
37 Reanney believes the essence of the human quest is to break free of time. To this end he suggests that what is missing is a sense of the sacred (1991:248).
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traditions’ (Shoup 2000:3). Patanjali outlined these universal abilities of human consciousness which strengthen with practice (Bailey 1927; 1994).

Stoup states that application of linear cause and effect impedes deeper understanding of omni-directional relationality including order-independent or retro-causal effects. He says concept of omni-directional causality needs the relational approach and language of influence, dependence, correlation and joint constraint whose most important ingredient is timeless, relational thinking. These understandings and ways of thinking ‘concern not just the fundamentals of physics, but also the larger phenomena of consciousness and ultimately of the reality of nature itself’ with implications for social futures (Stoup 2000).

This paradigm change from separateness and linearity to interconnectedness is the same transformation and foundation that I am suggesting for organisation of government. Even if taken simply as powerful social metaphors the insights expand previously dominant beliefs and concepts of what is possible (Inayatullah 1995). However as Goswami (2000:4) states ‘all objects are quantum objects’ so we humans are also quantum fields/events, and in addition to being context aware, we are self-aware. Thus I argue that embracing and applying the quantum implications as commonsense.

Living within the unity of consciousness

We live in a soup of consciousness continually, always, every moment in interaction. So there is an interconnectedness of psycho-spiritual energy and for humans, thought, among humans and other species (Kellar 1983; Sheldrake 2000). The interfacing of inter-mingling patterns is a constant communion experience. Consciousness transcends the sense of inner and outer relatedness. Many worlds mediate within our consciousness in reciprocal mutuality of consciousness and external experience.

Fields of shared psycho-spiritual energy flow in matter, body, cellular memory and mind-fields. Collective consciousness of humans, validated and informed from different disciplines (Peat 1997; Grandpierre 1997; Mark Germine 1997; Mario Valvoglis 1997; Coombs 1997; Marilyn Schiltz 1997; Nitamo Montecucco 1997; Seaby and Levien (1987) document the wholistic nature of the beehive mind acting across space. Rausher et al (1979) and Ullman (1990) research the intentional connection between humans and microbes and Pleass and Dey (1990) indicate the conditions favourable to these interactions.
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Maria Sagi 1997; Laszlo 1996; Grof 1993), acts within as constellations of energy (Berry 1999) or archetypes (Jung 1969). Externally collective consciousness appears as the patterns of relatedness which concretise in social institutions (Hendryk Skolimowski 1994, 1996).

We as individual human beings are field phenomena in an ocean of interacting fields; where wave interaction is one determinant within our environment. Neurophysiologist, Valerie Hunt measured the human energy field (aura) and correlated the vibrational frequency with colour and the state of consciousness (1996; Wakelam n.d.). She also found each person had a unique signature emanation which remained identifiable in all situations.39 Radiance is a source of outward energetic patterning. Everything radiates and so feeds itself into the interconnected milieu of living reality (Swimme 1990, 2004:10). Each human being, as a field-constellation, radiates their unique pattern. Thus our inner state of being, in addition to our actions, has socially energetic consequences and hence entails serious responsibility for co-creating reality, as indicated by Reanney. We humans emanate our own uniqueness making our own vibrational contribution to each other and the whole of human behaviour and consciousness. In a spirituality of authentic being, being-our-selves is our exquisitely unique and democratic gift to each other, Life and the universe.

Experiential consciousness can be receptive, transformative, directive, magnetic, creative, destructive, organising and co-existing in shared fields across timespace and energymatter. Energetically humans interact through embodied states of being and powers of involuting, emanating and attuning consciousness. Coherence of consciousness amplifies the energetic power. Through attention, intention and choice, laser-like single-stream focused consciousness can interact with and energise/activate fields evoking forms-within-fields. Such enactment, imaging and projection can be intentionally conscious. We have the power of consciousness exercised discerningly by deliberate choice to actualise from the array of quantum and morphogenic possibilities; we are active participants in reality.

39 DNA radiates bio-photons in its distinct pattern (Grandpierre 1997; Rattemeyer et al 1981).
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**Transformative political potentials of consciousness**

The exploration of the microcosm-macrocosm, inner and outer realities, is increasingly the same inquiry in an interconnected unity. Conscious purposeful interaction has consequences for the self and the whole be it humanity, the cosmos or the system of organisation of government and exercise of different kinds of power.

**Conscious holographic interaction**

Holographically interconnected wholism implies inter-being, inter-knowing, inter-thinking. Goswarmi (2000), and Besant and Leadbeater (1971) conclude that once any state, knowing or thought is accessed/created by any person it is available to all, and as Teilhard says, cannot be stopped from spreading around the planet (1969d:297). Macrocosm-in-the-microcosm offers the power to potentially influence the collective pattern through changing the pattern within, and concretise it by enacting it outwardly. The locus of initial conscious transformation is within, wherein direct experience is the source of meaning changeable through intention, consciousness and repeated actualised practice. Every experience, thought and action influences the patterns of all and the whole through the interconnectedness of thinking and being. Inner transformation becomes a political act which is available to every person whereby individuals and groups can empower the actualisation of unitive governing.

**Conscious morphogenic interaction**

Awareness gives discernment and choice in all domains (Serge King 1998). Sheldrake comments that saints are aware of, and independent from, the collective fields of human habits (1981:93, 195). Conscious choice can reinforce patterns of conditioned habits or alternatively, emergent epi-phenomena. Political systems are habits of interaction brought-into-being by morphogenic fields; they can and will evolve. By embodiment, enactment, repetition and finely tuned responses of patterns of being, thought and behavioural interaction, people are able to bring-into-being new morphogenic behavioural fields including forms of governing derived the experiences of interconnectedness. Alternative fields/patterns/systems can be created through metaphysical sources/actions and then strengthened by resonance. The initiating actions can be at an enormous distance, unseen and never known. Creation of new patterns of inner self-organisation and group interaction are political transformative actions.
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**Ancestral and future voices**

New understandings of time and space validate many possibilities for government. The inclusion of causal morphic fields pervasive with yet independent of time and space gives a vastly expanded perspective with implications for wholistic self-organisation of human behaviours (Sheldrake 1994c). For example in the openness of time and space there are no barriers (except in fossilised or imposed beliefs) to inclusion of the voices of the ancestors – as upheld by many Indigenous cultures. Similarly, the distinct energy fields of animals, bio-regions, events and perspectives are ever present (Sheldrake 1994c). Openness and acuity are simple keys. Logically consistent with an interconnected reality, the patterns of being and consciousness of saints and mystics are ever with us resonating, activating and supporting positive transformation of inter-being and expanded consciousness. The morphogenic fields of these wisdoms and behaviours are all with us now. We can make ourselves open to hear by generating cohering, experiential states of interconnectedness and reap the heritage of ages. These possibilities when taken seriously beckon with enormous potential.

**Contestation of social realities**

Equally one can say that the morphic resonance of all acts of barbarity and disconnectedness inter-penetrate us now. If consciousness actualises forms and behaviours such as political systems, then whose choices prevail?

According to Sheldrake where differing patterned fields interface the resultant pattern is determined by the higher level of unified integration (1981:73, 1994c:195) – in the human situation ultimately this is decided in consciousness (as embodied emanating states of being). The energetic patterns of brutal behaviours are distinct and different from those of humanity’s greatest capacities. Such acts do not arise from

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40 Processes and structures must be open, as closed systems become increasingly rigid, less adaptable and dead-ends (Peat 1997; Capra 1982). Bohm says past-sourced thinking, as opposed to being present, is fossilised (Keepin 1994:2).

41 Hunt states that all thoughts and all spiritual happenings are available to us in vibratory form (1996:102, 134).

42 Sheldrake says that creativity involves higher levels of unity that includes the poles. This form of inclusive wholeness is supported by the underlying unitive principle in nature (1994c:195). Bohm says that patterns change from one quantum state to another at crisis points or catastrophes when parts which are in a greater single dance and are significantly connected, may move independently but will still be correlated. There is then a mutual transformation of both (or more) systems in the ‘whole score’ (1986:123-4).
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deeply integrated interconnectedness but separateness. Our degree of inner coherence and integration affects our possible effects on the harmony of the whole, particularly through the resonance and emanation of peak experiences (James 1902; Sperry Andrews 1993; Matus in Capra 1992; Braud and Anderson 1998; Swimme 2004:10). Such experiences are events of open interconnected alignment with Earth, embodied compassion and creativity.

Peak experiences such as experiential interconnectedness are suffused by a form of power arising from interconnectedness. Present forms of government derive power from disconnectedness which readily decays into fragmentation, conflict, state sanctioned violence and induced fear (see chapter four). In contrast experiential interconnectedness brings an inherent sense of connection with others and an expanded re-contextualisation which sets the foundation for unitive fields of activity including creative wholistic forms of government which express the essence of democracy – collective self-organised government of the people, by the people and for the people, directly.

**Ability to see the whole**

Goswarmi says that differing fields of consciousness exist in a ‘tangled hierarchy’ where causal efficacy fluctuates unendingly (2000:5). This co-existence and oscillation is the reality of our present day situation. However we can act creatively within the tangle rather than default to dominant habits of perception and action or collapse into cynicism, both of which abnegate personal and shared responsibility. The ability to hold the whole-reality-in-acceptance enacts unitive consciousness and draws forth creativity (Robert Fritz 1984). Acceptance in this sense is not apathy, agreement nor condoning the dominant interpretation but wholistic perceptual realism. If one can see/hold the entangled whole concurrently, as it is, they can then access creative energy and respond with conscious choice directing the possibilities towards the chosen/preferred outcome as a directional act of consciousness.43 This orientation is distinctly different from reactivity which comes from separation and reinforces the existence of the object of repulsion and the status-quo (Fritz 1984).

43 According to the Native American Wheel of All Beings, the role, power and purpose of humans beings is to direct energy (Harley Swiftdeer Reagan 1980).
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Creative choice comes from the ability to see the whole and then deliberate choice in the dissonant tension of alternatives.

**Creative government**

Swimme suggests living in the highest state of tension from which creative action can occur (2004:7). Fritz describes the state of creator artists who hold many worlds simultaneously but clearly direct their energy to their chosen result (1984). The same potentials exist for governing. Embodying the state of interconnectedness (as a disciplined and deliberate action) in the process of governing holds many fields in connectedness drawing them into aligned arrangement within the greater whole patterns of humanity, Earth and cosmos. Embodied interconnectedness aligns with and engages the inherent interpenetrating creativity for the purposes of unitive integration. The processes are known. I suggest that it is such unitive and creative embodied consciousness which offer future potentials. These processes are an option for governing and for social paradigm transformation utilising the sources of power available within experiential interconnectedness.

Capra states that conventional science works against natural creativity (1992). The same can be said for the present form of democratic government particularly with the domination by neo-capitalism and arguably capitalism per se which sees nature as an exploitable resource. A system of government which can work with and not against natural creativity is an incredibly pragmatic and practical option. Government aligned with the creativity of nature and the universe must be open, a ‘system’, open to its local and cosmic environment/habitat. To achieve this, the persons and processes need to be aligned within the expanded and interconnected context of Life, nature and the universe, and utilise processes of experiential interconnectedness.

In an interconnected milieu the methods and dispositions are different from current conventions. To expand methods of unitive self-organisation and social transformation I reiterate Shoup’s suggestion that the concept of linear causality needs to be replaced by *timeless, relational thinking* (2000:13-4). This position is consistent

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44 Animals display the ability to attune to the whole as well as specific fields of energy through an automatic embodied sentience eg without mediated connection termites orient to their whole community and attune to their particular purpose and that of the whole within the communal energy field; pigeons attune to the whole Earth knowing their location and that of their home base/relationships even if this has moved, and orient accordingly (Sheldrake 1994a, 2000).
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with an active and interconnected reality permeating consciousness and materiality. Government thus based is based on reality.

Such an approach means increasing/expanding consciousness and utilising the intimacy and modalities it offers. It means finding purpose and knowing within the whole, with the concurrent potentials of inter-knowing, inter-being, inter-thinking. The potentials of institutionalisation of these propensities are glimpsed in transformative breakthroughs in all fields. Kuhn writes about scientists initiating revolutions in perception from totally new insights arising in dreams (1970:123). These occasions are known to most people as common experiences. Bohm comments that while the mystic can attune deeper than the implicate order, that this is not very different from a heightening, deepening or intensification of ordinary experience (Weber 1985:187-213).

**Timely application of interconnectedness**

Two basic themes emerge again and again from the study of living and nonliving matter, and are also repeatedly emphasised in the teachings of mystics. They are universal interconnectedness and interdependence of all phenomena, and the intrinsically dynamic nature of reality which is purposeful and creative.

Essentially reality is multi-dimensional and the different dimensional realities are interconnected. This is mirrored in the expanse of human experiences, capacities for experience and the inter-relatedness of Life is a vast and living cosmos. These real and metaphoric understandings of science and sacredness indicate mechanisms of operation, origination and transformation of whole systems. This knowledge is highly relevant to this particular moment of evolutionary macrophase change at the demise of the Cenezoic Era (Swimme 1990, 1995, 2004).45

While morphic resonance continues to reinforce present political patterns and structures, the chaotic complexity of these times pushes humanity to a threshold of

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45 The current 65 million years old Cenozoic Era which has seen the rise of mammals including very recently humans is in demise. An accelerated extinction rate of species (20,000 per year against a base rate of 1 per 5 years) and human induced climate change (Antarctic ice core data show greenhouse gases at levels not seen for 650,000 years) indicates at time of fundamental transition to a new geological era (Swimme 2004; 1995:5). Swimme compares the present macrophase change with that when the atmosphere of the 2 billion years old Earth changed from methane to oxygen which was toxic to all lifeforms present at that time. The dominant form of Life, the prokaryote was eliminated except for absorption into the newly emergent eukaryote cell or anaerobic existence at the bottom of swamps.
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inevitable transformation. Despite minds and imaginations so deeply permeated by the present model where it may seem a far reach from one system to another, yet step by step through intention, vision and action, things can be done differently. This profound change is practical, achievable and arguably vital.

Just as science is throwing off the shackles of old foundations of reality, possibilities also exist for politics and governing. In the next chapter I set this possibility in the context of the universe as creative, purposive and growing in conscious self-awareness – and driving collective self-organisation to unitive self-government.
Chapter 3: The vortex of Life

Introduction

The vortex of Life and the journey of cosmological evolution, I explore through the works of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin to contextualise this research and the human habitat. While there are certainly other theories and empirical studies of evolution most are bound by the limits of the positivist paradigm and materialist focus. Brain Swimme and Thomas Berry are notable exceptions who share Teilhard’s breadth of perception, cognition and disciplined imagination with application for daily life and multi-dimensional social development.1 Teilhard’s elucidation of the evolution to wholeness of humanity offers multiple insights and breakthroughs for human future and criteria for evolving

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1 I acknowledge the contribution of the Darwinian/Wallace interpretation on evolution shaped by natural selection and chance, however this is outdated and does not fit the evolution of complexity (Montecucco 1997:145). Additionally while Darwin clearly stated that the species which survived were characterised by cooperation, flexibility and diversity, he has been much misquoted (1958). As Briggs and Peat note ‘the social metaphor of survival of the fittest has been used to justify predatory, commercial competition, class structure, sexism and racism … so ingrained that it is assumed that what goes under must have been in some way flawed and what survives must be better’ (1999:6). Capra comments that such a view has no scientific justification and fails to perceive the integrative and cooperative principles essential to the organisation of living systems (1982:302). Further studies recognised the development of the noosphere (Samson and Pitt 1999). While I utilise an evolutionary interpretation inclusive of consciousness and directionality, my analysis has no ground in common with the so called ‘intelligent design’ interpretation of Life espoused by fundamentalist Christians.
Chapter 3: The vortex of Life

democracy. I apply this domain of noospheric studies to democracy including the development of noosphere and indicators and processes of macro-phase change.

**Evolutionary phenomenon of humans in a journey to wholeness**

**Intention**

The data and insights of Teilhard offer a map of the journey of evolutionary progression whereby our species integrates into a self-reflective entity which is effectively and actually, a new organism (1969a, b, c, d). By drawing on his work I intend to borrow a sign-posted framework for the evolution and emergence of a wholistic, self-organising living entity. Democratic governing is a form of collective self-organisation and intentional group integration. In the progression which Teilhard indicates for humankind, the manner and ambience in which human beings organise to undertake collective decisions and actions, is arguably part of this evolutionary process. Teilhard himself associated evolution of democracy with evolution of the human species (1969d:248-54). To the degree that collective decision-making functions for the human entity as a whole and concurrently for each human being, rather than a conglomerate of competing fragments, humanity then moves into Life as a unitary wholism like a living being. As such, the progression of democratic governing is an expression, an active dynamic and an indicator of this integrative process. Consequently, I explore Teilhard’s work in some detail and later apply it to the evolving development of collective decision-making viz. government. In later chapters (7, 8 and 9) I focus exploration into the micro and experiential levels to present how this modality (of an alive self-organising wholistic interacting entity) can operate in actuality and how it is experienced by the individual human during this oscillating transition stage.

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2 While Teilhard’s expose is soundly and empirically based, many of his salient insights are commonly overlooked. In his palaeontological study he identified processes of evolutionary macrophase change, interpreting their expression in the present context and extrapolated their implications into the future. He was Catholic priest, mystic and renowned scientist. His extension and cross-pollination of these spheres of his being and his life, at times crossed the boundaries of authority and orthodoxy of establishments and communities.
Chapter 3: The vortex of Life

Overview of the phenomenon of humanity

Teilhard investigated humanity-as-a-totality, and as one aspect, albeit a pivotal aspect, of the whole evolutionary phenomenon – evolution being a process of differentiation and progression to a more highly organised condition or entity. He saw human evolution as the zenith in the evolutionary process and potentially an indicator of its direction. As evolutionary phenomena are processes, they are mainly and rightly defined and evaluated in terms of their direction, their inherent possibilities and limitations, and their deductible future trends (Huxley in Teilhard 1969a:13). Teilhard saw the whole of reality, including evolution and humanity, as a process, ever changing, moving, directional and conscious – a system of inter-relationships which are in a process of creatively synthesising. This process he called a genesis and cosmogenesis wherein the whole cosmos is Becoming in which humans play a significant role.

Teilhard’s work is significant because he deepened, expanded and contextualised the understanding of the evolutionary process in the western paradigm by including consciousness, albeit spirituality. He also included an expanded perspective of human evolution, psychic energy and love. Together with detailed scientific analysis of physical evolution, Teilhard recognised a parallel dynamic operating in the ‘within of things’, that of consciousness immanent in material and non-material existence. He traced a complementary and directly interconnected trajectory of increasing orders of consciousness evolving within – as complexity increased, the orders of consciousness increased, just as the orders of material and physiological organisation increased. His inclusion of consciousness in the evolutionary framework and its vitalising intimacy in the total phenomenon, are a major contribution to western perceptions of cosmogenesis, so strongly constrained by materialist myopia.

Through his palaeontologist’s perception, the scales of timespace and energymatter entertained are vast to infinity, and yet finitely identifiable. He articulated the repeating patterns of unfoldment and infoldment, discernable within the fractal microcosms of creation’s expressions. He empirically identified and extrapolated these patterns of increasing complexification and integrative unification re-occurring from the nano to the cosmic dimensional scales - through sub-atomic propensities, molecular aggregates,
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geology, organic chemistry, to Life as cellular organisms and thence to more complex organisms, animals, proto-humans and the present form of human beings – still a work-in-progress of be-ing human and be-coming. He outlined the evolutionary process as a continuing and intertwining confluence of cosmogenesis, geo-genesis, bio-genesis and consciousness-genesis. This clearly discernable arrow of evolution sits paradoxically alongside entropy, the movement to fragmentation and disorder diluting all to uniformity.\(^3\) Evolution is advancing and directional, with critical change-points in a milieu of physical and psycho-spiritual energy.

The phenomenon of humanity is itself a process within the more vast and inter-connective dynamic of cosmogenesis. The human evolutionary process is not a matter of mere chance, but according to Teilhard, has direction, or implied intention, and is entrained by a pre- and co-existent fulfilment which he called the Omega Point. Omega is a final and beginning point which acts magnetically like a Strange Attractor in Chaos Theory, drawing and organising fields of complexity into integrated, organised patterns ultimately like/as itself. In addition Omega is a unification of consciousness and centred in a radiance of active love which is co-existent with the whole universe. To propose universal love as the organising dynamic of materiality, Life and consciousness, was another bold step taken by Teilhard in the secular world of western science. In this schema, human consciousness is pending a transition to become an aware reflective whole. To take this process to completion, he advocated the application of imagination as an action of co-creation to develop the human capacity for love beyond the familiar and tribal field, to the inclusivity of a universal embrace. However, Teilhard acknowledged that this outcome is a matter of choice with the future ultimately being uncertain and that the phenomenon of humans can become another evolutionary dead-end.

Part of the breakthrough of Teilhard’s work is that while he had expertise in scientific methodology and rational logic,\(^4\) he extended his own actual modes of thought outside these boundaries to include curved-matrix field-thinking and mystical quantum knowing, consistent with the vast, inter-dimensional and interconnected world revealed. He

\(^3\) Second law of thermodynamics
\(^4\) Teilhard’s empirical data is still used as primary sources, particularly that held in museums in China where there are scientific conferences centred on his work (King 2004b).
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inculcated the awesome implications of cosmogenesis with the groundedness of a geologist and applied the inner synthesis not only to the derivations from physical evidence, but by also expanding his modes of thought and breadth of perception mirroring the magnitude of spatio-temporal scales with those of psycho-spiritual evolution. He incorporated consciousness-in-matter, and additionally, love as the cosmogenic pull to union immanent throughout evolution – as seen in atoms’ propensity to unite as molecules through to the human capacity to embody and enact universal love in a milieu of psycho-spiritual energy. To introduce love into the analysis of the process is to include the spiritual capacity in being human. His work includes the potentialities of the materialisation of spirit and spiritualisation of matter.

**Processes of evolution**

To communicate his understanding of the glacial and often sub-visible rhythm of unfolding creative evolution, Teilhard articulated new concepts and processes. He also emphasised specific key points, or changes of state or direction. To the pivotal emergence of Life and self-aware consciousness, he gave the status and value of thresholds. The stepped phase change to a new order of being in the evolution of matter and mind/consciousness were contingent on sufficient available physical and psychic energy. Teilhard discussed two forms/fields of energy operating in evolution - physical and psychic or psycho-spiritual energy. These energies are inter-relating and inter-penetrating in action and complementarity. Psycho-spiritual energy is the energy of the realm of consciousness (1969a, c, d). Importantly, Teilhard recognised consciousness and thought as energy forms, and that thought acts on thought and on matter and has the same propensities as are existent in physical energy and form, such as tendency to unite and repel. In this postulation he recognised the field nature of thought and its ability to act on matter through a subtle inter-existent unity between them.

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5 The terms Teilhard used have their own unique meanings so some less familiar terms denoting these process, (as translated into English), are italicised to identify them.

6 The relationship between thought and matter is well established in Hindu science (Paramahansa Yogananda 1993; Mary Scott 1989; John White 1990; Goswarmi 1993, 2000). It is also the field of study of pataphysics. As the Buddha said ‘our thoughts create the world’ (Murphy pers. comm. 2006).
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The process of evolution is one of increasing complexification and subsequent creative synthesis integrating organisation into a new form, organism or being. Divergence of form is achieved by multiplication, ensuring vast numbers to increase the chances of survival, and ramification, as lifeforms divide and spread out into branches of differing species. Environmental conditions filter the multitude of trial and error expressions/experiments within closed bounded systems such as the atom, the cell, the phylum and the planet. Later with the advent of reflective consciousness the selective process of chance is augmented by freedom through aware choice.

As forms aggregate, divergence is complemented by the process of involution. Involution is a turning-in or in-folding back on itself, of both matter and consciousness. ‘The universe, along its axis of complexity, is both as a whole and at each of its points, in a continual state of organically doubling-back upon itself, and thus of interiorisation’ (1969a:330). The involution process is an essential preceding step enabling evolutionary advancement. In-foldment increases tension leading to corpuscular, organised complexity, creating the physical and psychic energetic pre-conditions for new patterns of combination and integration which manifest as a new entity or lifeform. At each step the synthesis of complexification in the process of involution establishes a new unit or order. New orders of organisation are different and distinct in capacities and possibilities from the total of those before – there is significant and advanced difference in the creation of the new yet it holds the earlier order within its organization. 

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7 Teilhard described these units of wholeness created by involution like quanta, each with their own radiant field (1969a:50). These units/beings then influence and interpenetrate each other by their ‘within’ so as to combine their radiant energies in ‘bundles’ (1969a:263).
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Vortex of involution: infolding interiorisation of consciousness unto radiant wholeness

Life

In the expansion of the physiochemical world, the appearance of Life is a major threshold. Life then follows the path of complexification and expansion in a myriad of lifeforms, becoming more vitalised with more complexity. Advantageous gains from progressive development are genetically held and hoarded. With Life, evolution accelerates via increasing complexity by organic involution upon itself, linked with a correlative interiorisation of parallel inner processes of consciousness (1969a:328). Teilhard recognised a structural relationship between complexity and consciousness whereby consciousness itself is evolving. Increasing complexity increases the pressure to develop and integrate consciousness, causing the emergence of new orders of consciousness - eventuating in reflectivity within the human individual. Teilhard interpreted Life as a universal quality, as an action, a process, and moreover as a function and purpose of the cosmos (1969a:331).

Reflective Consciousness

Teilhard nominated emergence of reflective consciousness as a delineating threshold and as coming to a particular focus through the humanline. A forward directionality physiologically fostered by cephalisation, eyes to the front and upright stance enhanced the be-coming of psycho-spiritual evolution. *Hominisation* denotes the process by which proto-humans developed present human capacities and whereby present human beings
realise more and more possibilities on the way to a future being who may be so different as to need new nomenclature.

Reflective consciousness arises in human beings by the involution of awareness and thought. When consciousness in-folds to be self-aware, a new form of unity or centre is produced (centrification). The individual human centre is personalised through interiorisation. Personalisation is the integration of separate elements of self with each other and the integration of self with the outer world of humans and nature. Teilhard described personalisation as an active participatory process of cooperation and inter-relation, which transcends the extremes of individualism and existentialism – ‘persons are individuals who transcend their merely organic individuality in conscious participation’ (Huxley in Teilhard 1969a:20). With the threshold of reflective consciousness Teilhard said that we are at a new form of biological existence which is so distinctly different that it warrants a ‘special biology of the infinitely complex’ (1969a:331) - just as physics changes its terms, concepts and parameters for the domains of the infinitely small (sub-atomic) and large (cosmic). Teilhard emphasised personalisation as an essential element in human evolutionary success and for humanity’s further advancement in the future.

**Convergence to wholeness**

The arrival of reflective consciousness marked a shift in primary direction of evolutionary action from divergence to convergence; this re-direction is of fundamental significance. Convergence is the tendency of humankind in evolution, to superimpose the forces of compression (inward directed/centripetal) over fragmentation (outward directed/centrifugal). Convergence has led to an acceleration of hominisation, socialisation and wholisation of human beings.

Convergence through increased complexity and field intensification generates a high level of psychic energy within the noetic system. The unrelenting forces of compression, organisation and interiorisation set the conditions of sufficient complexity and sufficient tension of psychic energy, which open the causes for phase change which proceeds in step-wise progression (Teilhard 1969a:335). Convergent integration enables the creative synthesis of complexity to a new order of beingness - reflectivity within humanity-as-a-
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whole. According to Teilhard, the major advance from this point is the evolution of embodied consciousness, with thought acting as a transformative agent.

Noosphere

Huxley articulated Teilhard’s understanding of the process of noogenesis as ‘the total pattern of thinking organisms and their activity, including their pattern of inter-relations’ (Teilhard 1969a:14). Importantly noogenesis is about psycho-energetic patterns of thinking and the actions which result from these patterns, and how the patterns inter-relate, are held and actively developed. Noogenesis generates a noosphere. Teilhard saw the noosphere as literally a sphere of mental activity and patterns emanating from embodied consciousness, in a real layer of psychic energy surrounding the Earth which acts as a bounding structure of evolving humankind. The existence of the noosphere is exogenous on Life emerging on Earth. Furthermore, with the emergence of self-aware life-forms on this planet, the nature and development of the noosphere accelerates measurably. Teilhard’s discussion of noosphere is inclusive of all sentient beings, so adds multiple forms of sentience and intelligence.

The curvature of the Earth (together with the curvatures of timespace and consciousness), further enables the converging direction of evolving consciousness, particularly as regards reflectivity. The sphericity causes intensification of the noosphere by increasing interconnection, complexification and interaction of psycho-spiritual energies and beings. The inter-mingling fostered by spherical migration predisposes humanity to operate as a single reproducing group. The curvature of the Earth and noosphere results in compressing thought (and states of consciousness) by the action of thought on thought, idea on idea, thought-field on thought-field, thought-field on matter-field. The noosphere in turn, dynamically interacts on/within thinking beings, as individuals and humanity as a

8 Thought patterns are reinforced by repeated intention and activities enacting these patterns, and strengthened by the degree of coherence of consciousness (White 1990).
9 The development of the noosphere is now literally measurable and this research is being undertaken in the Global Consciousness Project (2005) which is discussed in Appendix 1.
10 Futurist Eleanora Masini regards migration as a major world trend shaping humanity as people have increasing contact and interconnection at a daily level (1999a). Peter Russell theorises the relevance of numbers of the human population with 6-10 billion being critical to the emergence of the global mind ‘in which each of us are the individual nerve cells’; numbers in the range of the number of cells in the human brain which is capable of reflective consciousness (1983:31).
single phenomenon, and thereby acts as a transforming agency promoting the intensification and ascendance of consciousness. The jump to wholism as an integrated singularity for humanity-as-a-whole is enabled by the pressure, temperature and state of agitation of the psychic energy in the noosphere. Due to inward spiritual concentration, technological advances and an explosion of global communication, this process is now progressing rapidly.

In Pere Teilhard’s view, the increase in human numbers combined with the improvement of human communications has fused all the parts of the noosphere together, has increased the tension within it, and has caused it to become ‘infolded’ upon itself, and therefore more highly organised. In the process of convergence and coalescence, what we may metaphorically describe as the psychosocial temperature rises. Mankind as a whole will accordingly achieve more intense, more complex, and more integrated mental activity, which can guide the human species up the path of progress to higher levels of hominisation. (Huxley in Teilhard 1969a:18).

The problem of evil

While Teilhard is markedly optimistic about the convergence of humanity to wholeness, he warns of the problem of evil, exacerbated in unheard of intensity. Teilhard suggests that in the process of unification the orienting tendencies to both good and to evil will not be able to co-exist after the jump to a new entity of that level of unified, global consciousness (1969a:316-7). There will finally be either complete good or evil, ultimately resting on human choice. I believe positive unification is inevitable because of the relentlessness of evolutionary dynamics privileging unitive interconnectedness which at the personal level is the experiential state of compassion and Earth connectedness.11

11 Teilhard does not shirk the problem of evil and analyses it extensively in terms of disorder and failure finally overcome by great numbers of experiments; solitude and anxiety of ignorance; growth as structural pain; and malice whereby he concludes that evolution resembles ‘a way of the Cross’ (1969a:339-42). He acknowledges that as in the past the enormous energy released by inner cohesion can be directed to any end – benevolent or malicious. He suggests if evil systemically grows alongside good, then after unification the noosphere will split into two poles of attraction. However, after this bifurcation point he believed that universal love will only vivify that part which will ‘cross the threshold, to get outside itself into the other’
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**Wholeness of humanity**

Teilhard saw the collective evolution of humanity as convergent spiritual synthesis of physical inter-mingling and cooperative thinking – ‘external forces of compression obliging humanity to totalise itself organically in itself, and internal forces (ascendant and propulsive) of spiritualisation’ (1969a:307). As the psychic tension increases, coupled with consciousness within time and space, the capacity for attraction and repulsion rise. Teilhard predicted that ideological and emotional factors will greatly outweigh economics as a cohering glue. He noted additional factors contributing to the intensification of the noosphere pre-disposing it to unifying synthesis. These were increasing knowledge which is incorporated into the noosphere and acts as a mirror and directive agency, and the increasing intensity and integration of the human thought system. Technical discovery, communication and inward spiritual concentration operate as the work of the same great force of Life – ‘a vortex drive acting on each on us individually and together as a whole – driving us together in a contact which tends to perfect each of us by linking him organically to each and all of his neighbours’ (1969a:334). Through *unification* within the individual and within the whole, an *inter-thinking humanity* emerges as the union of the whole human species into a single inter-thinking entity based on a single, self-developing framework of thought creating the *personalisation* of humanity as a whole being. The implication for inter-thinking and inter-knowing were obviously understood by Teilhard.\(^{12}\)

> Truth has to appear but once, in single mind, for it to be impossible for anything ever to prevent it from spreading universally and setting everything ablaze. (Teilhard in King 1996:231)

\(^{12}\) The phenomenon of thought as a field is shown by the experiences of Paramahansa Yogananda in the ability to tune to any aspect of the human thought-field, including access to an individual’s thoughts (1993:176-8). The recognition of thought as a field has enormous implications and possibilities for knowledge and research. The inter-penetrative energy of thought implies that once any person develops an original thought, then it is available to all humankind via the fields of inter-thinking (Teilhard 1969a:297; White 1990:43-45; Goswarmi 2000).
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The total process is directed towards an organised unifying pattern in the evolution to wholeness – global unification of human awareness as planetisation. Inter-thinking humanity will thereby actualise as a new organism and a new order of consciousness, a new phenomenon of be-ing and a new personalisation or reflective centre.

Omega

In the greater picture of cosmogenesis, Teilhard envisaged evolution moving forward to a final state, the Omega Point – the union which differentiates and is centred in creativity (1969a:288). This state, he saw, as the ultimate unification of consciousness, which emerges from the persistent march of evolution to greater consciousness (1969a:297). The directionality of the process unto unification and wholism implies the orchestrated entrainment of active love of Omega Point. Omega is a conscious and magnetic pole or centre, which in the interconnectedness of timespace, already exists. Omega thus presently radiates interpenetrative, universal love which is co-existent with the universe, and which choreographs each unifying step in the dance of Life towards the actualisation of universal love in (human) consciousness. This actualisation, I suggest, is glimpsed in the spiritual experience of interconnectedness. Teilhard equated Omega with the divine focus of mind – the Soul of souls. He saw Omega as the ultimate personalisation, an actual person.13 The cosmic function of Omega, he stated, is ‘initiating and maintaining within its radius the unanimity of the world’s “reflective particles” ’ (1969:295).

Consistent with his observations and analysis, Teilhard deduced the characteristics of Omega’s personalisation to be autonomy, actuality, irreversibility and transcendence (1969a:297) – these qualities can therefore be used as indicators of the process of unification to wholeness.

Love

Teilhard considered love as the active force of cosmogenesis. Throughout the total process of evolution he identified a propensity, tendency, desire, impelling to unite,
present in all manifestations of physical and non-physical existence. ‘For Teilhard, the roots of love were cosmic, and the energy of love, the power of coming together, of unification and greater synthesis, runs through the entire epic of evolution’ (King 2004). In the inherent attraction of being with being was ‘the confluent ascent of consciousness’, a power of cosmic affinity coalescing itself. Teilhard saw the natural dynamism and structuring action of love directing the arrow of evolution whereby the way forward is through love.

Love in all its subtleties is nothing more, and nothing less, than the more or less direct trace marked on the heart of the element by the psychical convergence of the universe upon itself. (Teilhard 1969a:291).

Thus the creating and synthesising agency of Love drives the evolutionary process to the unity of wholeness. Teilhard also noted that for Love to exist, co-existence is required. So the personal, universal love of Omega Point is already existent and acting throughout the whole universe in every unique aspect through to the phenomenon-as-a-whole (1969a:319). Consciousness is then co-extensive with the whole universe and Omega is already present and active in each of us. Through conscious self-awareness universal love is emerging as a new form of consciousness and new morphic field. Love, Teilhard stated, will stabilise the noosphere through the emergence of attractions far greater than national repulsions, and which will catch us from within (1969d:299).

Co-creation and imagination

Teilhard recognised the potential, capacity and option for human beings to consciously choose to actively participate in the creation process. He advocated the use of imagination to resonate and expand human ability to love to extend to love-for-all, and thereby install

14 Consistent with his spiritual life as a Christian priest, Teilhard regarded the vitalising force of universal love in the universe as the cosmic Christ (1969a, 1969d).
15 People can and are actively generating universal love as an embodied state, and can specifically and purposefully direct this powerful energy. These actions are independent of time and distance. Tensin Palmo, a western Buddhist nun who spent twelve years in retreat in a cave, listened to the BBC so she could direct the energy of her practices to places of conflict and suffering (pers. comm. 2000). Similarly, Sr. Marie Ostini became a cloistered Carmelite nun so she has sufficient silence to ‘free her heart-space’ so her ‘heart could reach around the globe’ (2003). These people and their actions are strengthening the resonance of universal love as an energy, state of embodied consciousness and as action in specific situations and also in the noosphere surround the planet.
universal love, a new form of consciousness, as a zone of thought layering and including the Earth.

Mankind, the spirit of the earth, the synthesis of individuals and peoples, the paradoxical conciliation of the element with the whole, and of the unity of the multitude … for them to be incarnated in the world all we need is to imagine our power of loving developing until it embraces the total of man and of the earth. (Teilhard, 1969a:292) [emphasis added]

Earth

Earth is an essential and intimate collaborator and co-creator in the evolution of consciousness through human beings. ‘In their advent and development, life and thought are … structurally bound up with the contours and destiny of the terrestrial mass’ (Teilhard 1969a:300). Earth has provided the matter and her contours shape the human phenomenon. She has acted, and still does, as the motherground of human physical and consciousness evolution. Involution of matter, of Life and of human consciousness, has occurred within the closed system of Earth. The contours of the Earth enfold and delimit the development of human consciousness in a ‘selective web of living thought as the bounding structure of evolving man’ (Huxley in Teilhard 1969a:20). The sphericity of Earth has acted as a concentrating and cohering mechanism facilitating contact, feedback and enmeshment of human contact, communication, thought and energy. The resultant intensification, increasing complexification and psychic energy fields, compounds and accelerates the forces for *hominisation/planetisation* through interiorisation and integration of the individual, and of the collective. The sphericity of the inter-penetrative thought layer, as an inter-thinking milieu and inculcated as a mode of thinking, draws forth states of experiential interconnectedness. Teilhard saw the fulfilment of human evolution as the expression of the spirit of the Earth.

When sufficient elements have sufficiently agglomerated, this convergent movement will gain such intensity and quality that mankind, as a whole will reflect upon itself as a single point and shift its organo-planetary foothold to a transcendent centre of increasing concentration ... the fulfilment and completion of the spirit of the earth. (Teilhard 1969a:315)
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Thus, the evolution of human beings, according to Teilhard, is inextricably joined to our cosmic location – this planet, Earth, which is in turn intimately unfolding an evolution of consciousness in which human beings are central. Teilhard encloses Earth in the (noo)sphere of love of human and other beings. James Lovelock sees Earth as a living organism (1988, 1991). His Gaia Theory describes the evolution of terrestrial species with their environment, as so tightly coupled as to be a single, living organism, Gaia.\(^\text{16}\) Lovelock draws from Erich Jantsch’s work (1980) on unsteady state dissipative structures to uphold the omnipresence of a self-organising tendency. From this perspective Lovelock sees the emergence of Life and Gaia as no chance event, but ‘an inevitable consequence … of a living universe’ (1988:213). Gaia is thus a coherent system of Life which is a self-regulating, self-transforming, whole entity centred within an evolving and alive cosmos. Lovelock thus concurs that Earth and the phenomenon of Life are then inseparable (1988:3). In fact he connotes to Gaia purposeful intention of enabling, giving and mothering Life - ‘her unconscious goal is a planet fit for life’ (1988:212).

Lovelock also acknowledges the spiritual dimension implied by a living Earth and indeed as personal experience within Life whereby ‘living itself is a religious experience’ (1988:205). In this integrated spirituality of Life on Earth – where, as he says, there is no separation of Life into sacred and secular parts but the living phenomenon of a continuous inter-relating whole – living itself becomes a devotional practice. In this ongoing sacred process, ‘thinking of the Earth as alive makes it seem … as if the whole planet were celebrating a sacred ceremony’ (1988:205). His personal response to a living cosmos brings him a sense of intimate belonging and co-existence – ‘To me, Gaia is alive and part of the ineffable Universe and I am a part of her’ (1988:218).

**Resonance of centres**

While the evolutionary process is infinitely greater in scale than the individual human, the threshold of personalised reflectivity is nevertheless huge. When consciousness is reflective, folding in upon itself, a centre is created which Teilhard noted, is a new form of unity – an irreversible centre. The centricity of personalisation is an expression of both

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16 Teilhard was the first modern person to use the name Gaia for Earth-as-person (King 2004).
uniqueness and wholeness. Once formed, a reflective centre can only change by further involution upon itself and self-transcendence. Reflective consciousness introduces an entirely new field of evolutionary activity.

Further progression for humanity-as-a-whole is development into a personalised centre, where the collective mind or consciousness of humanity in-folds, creating a *centre*. This *person* or personalised centre is co-existent with the Earth. The focus and medium of this evolutionary step is primarily psycho-spiritual in nature and initially in the realm of consciousness-in-matter, yet once formed, this centre is independent of linear time and space. Teilhard noted that under increasing tension of mind on the surface of the globe, it is feasible to come into psychical touch with other focal points of consciousness (1969a:314). Consciousness can coalesce as ‘a synthesis of planetary units’ and potentially galaxies. The potential for the Earth-humanity-centre is the development of extra-planetary psychic connection with other similar reflective centres anywhere in the cosmos. The same cosmogenic potential exists for the individual personalised centre by infolding more deeply in the process/pursuit of psycho-spiritual development. Involution of consciousness offers a gateway to inter-dimensional and cosmic connection. Similarly the personalised centre can access a psychic opening to the greater consciousness fields of inter-thinking, inter-knowing and inter-being, as the whole re-iterates in all parts in a holographic fractal relationship.

Centres radiate. Centres or unities of alive, aware consciousness can provide mutual support through the reverberation of like units. As centres resonate with other integrating/ed centres, creative synthesis is stimulated by amplification of that state-of-being. The state-of-being of centres/persons also respond to the resonant reverberation or pulse of the ultimate Centre, Omega. Omega is magnetic, magnetising in the *processual* sense of entraining patterns of being and inter-relatedness. Omega, thereby, draws-into-being other centres unto self-similar organisation, as a step towards unification of centres

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17 Australian archeo-mythologist, Dorothy Cameron told a story of walking down a long corridor at the UN in Geneva. Further down the passageway were two men standing together and deeply engaged in a conversation. From some way off she felt tangibly aware of an energy, a presence, which increased markedly as she drew near and passed the men. When she met her friend at the end of the passage, gesturing to the men, the friend said to Dorothy – ‘did you notice who you passed down there – it is Teilhard de Chardin’ (Glenda Choughley, pers. comm. 2004).
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and ultimately the unified consciousness of the All. Teilhard said that individual humans experience the ‘resonance to the All’ in every great emotion which ‘… reveals a deep accord between two realities which seek each other; the severed particle which trembles at the approach of the rest’ (1969a:293). Thus strongly felt empathy is a key to human unification. 18 The resonance of centres reverberates within in essentially a non-dual relationship across the depths of time and spatial immensity. Love acts as a force and organising dynamic of cohering, uniting attraction and entrainment, which enables the magnetic resonance of centres with centres, in an inter-connected milieu of inter-relatedness and cooperative, cohering synergy.

Summary of the evolutionary phenomenon of humans

To include consciousness and thought as a fundamental to evolution, Teilhard postulated an interiorisation of matter, an energetic field of the mind, a noosphere around the Earth and a processual direction of evolution with an advancing stream, critical thresholds and the whole process in-folding on someone (1969:318). Noogenesis arises in human beings and increasingly through us/human beings in the evolution of autonomous and reflective individual unity. Through the uniting of personalised centres, human entities may bind together to form a new unity, humanity-as-a-whole, without individual de-formation (1969:315). All this results from two curvatures: the roundness of the Earth and cosmic convergence of mind acting in conformity with the relationship of complexity and consciousness, in a unitive field of universal love. Evolution proceeds through the processes of intensification, complexification, involution, communication, integration, and creative synthesis as both internal and external worlds compress the individual and humanity to centrification as a whole. In the making of the humanity-entity these processes are primarily at the level of consciousness. Human future lies in an integration of the complexity and psychic energy of diversity which can result in the appearance of humanity-as-a-whole, as a single inter-thinking entity while retaining diverse uniqueness of individual integrity. Teilhard gives one presentation of reality and of possible futures – one which is optimistic, generates hope, is empowering, presents positive choices for

human futures and points to the evolution of collective human self-organisation, namely new forms and meanings of democracy.

**Phase change**

**Jumps in evolution**

In a step-wise manner, the evolutionary process of a species can continue unchanged for millions of years and then jump to a new and adapted form in a blink of a hundred years. Goswami notes that according to neo-Darwinist dogma evolution is gradual but empirical evidence shows leaps and gaps (2000).

In physical terms, a phase-change occurs through the influence of temperature or pressure on the state of agitation causing changes of state, such as a solid to a liquid, liquid to gas. In evolutionary terms phase-change is the appearance of new orders of organisation when previously there was a conglomerate of units of simpler order. Macrophase change is when a whole system changes including the actual dynamics of self-organising and self-sustaining. The process is a jump which is total and immediate (Teilhard 1969a; Swimme 1990; Kuhn 1970). Such major changes of evolutionary transformation have occurred from the first moments of the universe, when from the dynamics of light defining events, matter appeared and re-oriented processes and possibilities; later awakened consciousness-in-matter arose - and now the dynamics are shifting again.

**Indicators of transformation**

As previously stated, evolutionary phenomena are processes, and as such are mainly defined and evaluated in terms of their direction, their inherent possibilities and limitations, and their deductible future trends. Teilhard noted the characteristics of Omega which effectively indicate the criteria for wholistic conscious evolution. They are **autonomy** (self-responsibility/self-love/self-unification), **actuality** (groundedness, realised enactment), **irreversibility** (formation of a self-reflective, infolded centre/unity, wholism) and **transcendence** (encompassing and going beyond all that went before) (1969a:297). Berry and Swimme articulate three fundamental characteristics of cosmogenesis; these are differentiation (to be is to be different), communion (to be is to be related) and autopoiesis (to be is to be the centre of creativity) (1992; Swimme
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1990:2). From a distillation of Teilhard’s thought, Huxley identified some conditions for advance for humanity (in Teilhard1969a:13). They are:

* global unity of humankind’s noetic organisation or systems of awareness, with a high degree of variety within that unity
* love, with goodwill and full cooperation
* personal integration and harmony
* increasing knowledge.

These phenomena and processes can herald evolutionary development in dynamics of wholistic self-organisation where the characteristics of cosmogenesis are a basis for ethics, education, social organisation and democratic governing.

Houston regards the present as ripe for an evolutionary phase change because humans now deal with so much information, complexity, and rapid change (2001a, 2001b). This, she believes, primes us as a species for a jump in consciousness to the ‘world mind’. By drawing on the myriad of cultures, spiritual traditions and experiences available, she says that it is possible to feel, sense, think, act and dream in new ways, which opens more parts of ourselves and we move into a much larger awareness. From an inner fusion of the immense complexity comes deeper connection and communication leading to a fuller individuation and experience of human-ness. In such whole-system transition, greater collective creativity releases in the immense exchange as Life always supports the coming evolutionary step with abundant free energy (Swimme 1995).

The universe itself is awash with pervading creativity which unfurls through forms specific for certain timespace. The consequent fruits are always a complete surprise and which never repeat. Swimme points out that the nature of the new organisation/organism cannot be predicted from the consciousness of the preceding order (1995). Thus new forms cannot be developed from linear, sequential progression of the status-quo which will merely perpetuate the old pattern. Nor can the new form be created from that same consciousness of the previous order – deeper transformation of consciousness is required. Preparatory to the jump is the repetition of the individual and collective consciousness of humans reflecting upon itself as a unit thereby creating an enfolded centre/unity. Bohm says the deep intention of nature is to create new ‘wholes’ (1982:39). In the flux of
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vitalising, intentional processes, is a spiritualisation/internalisation of the individual human (part) and the humanity entity (whole).

Perceptions of the new creative dynamics powering evolution can be glimpsed and sustained. Swimme sees humans participating in the leading creative edge of evolution. He concurs with Teilhard that human advancement is inseparable from that of Earth and that now imagination is central to this process (1990, 1995). He believes we can, and possibly must, consciously participate via deliberate personal choices (1990, 2004). To this end he encourages re-kindling the sense of the sacred and for each person to listen deeply to what allures, what beckons as mine-to-do, and also what repels, disgusts and bores indicating clearly what one is clearly finished with (1990:10). In this way each person makes a unique contribution to the happening macrophase change.

Teilhard’s Law of Complexity-Consciousness states that evolution proceeds in the direction of increasing complexity, which is accompanied by a corresponding rise in consciousness, culminating in human spirituality (1969a). In the moment, experiences of interconnectedness and love create/shift the embodied state of consciousness. A consequentiality of experiential interconnectedness is an expansion of consciousness more appropriately attuned to present and future times. I argue that experiential interconnectedness imprints a formative pattern of consciousness significant to the evolution of human-beings-as-a-group. Predictable this phase jump will show in the capacity of consciousness for whole-system pattern-thinking and inter-being applied to new forms of collective self-organisation and self-government on a scalar model at the local, national, global levels, enabling a timely evolution of democracy.

Evolution and democracy

Democracy as the sense of the species

Teilhard relates the universe’s evolutionary forces to the urge to democracy (1969d:248-54). Importantly he looks at democracy, not from a political, legal or social perspective but biological and zoological, with an eye to contextual systemic limits. He says the most fundamental structuring forces are planetary compression and psychic inter-penetration which orchestrate an ‘irresistible process of unification and organisation upon itself’
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(1969d:249). Thus ‘true Democracy’ lies in a balanced combination of these two complementary forces, where to be viable the unified system must not quash ‘the incommunicable uniqueness of each separate element’ (1969d:249). In contrast, in their un-attenuated extremes, these forces appear as gross individualism (as espoused in neo-capitalist doctrine) and the totalitarian state. However these forces are complementary not opposites and they integrate within, through the processes of personalisation, planetisation and socialization.¹⁹ These forces, he says, penetrate our consciousness arousing aspiration for democracy.

Teilhard regards this democratic desire to participate co-extensively with the human phenomenon as deeper than materialism. He ascribes an organic empathy between people to the shared sense that ‘we represent, all of us together, the front line, the crest of the evolutionary wave still in full flood’ (1969d:251). He suggests that the emotional feeling and zoological imperative to move towards super-personalisation and super-reflection of the whole-of-humanity is the spirit of democracy which he identifies with the evolutionary sense of the species. Basically Teilhard equates the will towards democracy with evolutionary advancement. This however is to in no way confuse his meaning with present forms of democracy. He saw existing political systems as insufficient as they relied on external coercion rather than love and attraction to enable unity (Ursula King 1989b:55).

Teilhard also identifies factors vital for democratic institutions. Firstly, the individual must be afforded maximum choice to develop their personal qualities. However, he adds the caveat that this freedom, to be significant and relevant, must serve the heightening of consciousness and reflection. Secondly that convergence must be fostered for only there in the progression of consciousness and organization, can the fulfilment of individual action be realised in super-humanisation. Personalization of individuals enables the

¹⁹ Personalisation here is not individualism but a deepened, integrated consciousness and its outer expression of radiance. Socialisation does not refer to psychological conditioning but the process of creatively integrated and expressed unity (King 1989b:55-56). Planetisation is the mega-synthesis of humanity as a whole (Teilhard 1969a:267-9). In application to democracy it is important not to equate sameness with interconnectedness. Teilhard criticised the blended sameness of socialist collectivity which quashed individual expression and diversity (1969:248-54). More recently, and from a very different philosophical base, some neo-liberalists accuse democracy of inhibiting human potential (Jamrozik 2005).
convergence and unification ‘of this plurality in a single coherent planetary system’ to occur (1969d:253). Importantly, it is in the maintenance and growth of human consciousness that the realization of true democracy depends. This requires creative effort, positivity and spiritual orientation on the part of individual persons (King 1989b:57-8).

**Gaian politics**

Teilhard’s association of human evolution with expression of the spirit of Earth contextualised in an evolving spiritual cosmos, has rich implications and possibilities for governing through the state of consciousness of participants. Ken Wilber seriously suggests that bodhisattvas should become politicians (1995c). While he would be somewhat aghast to be compared with a bodhisattva, Australian Greens Senator Bob Brown provides an example of a politician who is aware of the greater evolutionary context and articulates deep connectedness with the Earth into the political domain. Brown penned this ode to the human place in cosmogenesis as a young doctor in 1976.

We are tellurians.
and each of us is unique

Our uniqueness is registered by our experience:
it transcends its components:
and it is invaluable.

We exist on the crest of the universal creation
and know the universe through the flowering of our uniqueness and sharing of its experience.

Each of us is made whole through our society:
and through each of us our society becomes whole:
and in our individual and societal pursuit of knowledge
is the promise of societal and individual fulfilment.
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Our universe evolves in time and space.
The first order of its evolution is physical:
and it has matter.
And from its potential realised our planet earth.

Out of this first order emanates the second
which is the organic order of evolution:
and it has life.
And from its potential realised our kind – Man.

Moreover, out of this second order emanates the third
which is the mental order of evolution:
and it has awareness – Self.
And we are its potential.

So proceeds the universal creation:
and through all of it there is the appearance of
a prodigious quest for self-knowledge by the universe.

And so we know the universe so it knows itself –
Through our minds which are its mind.
We are a mind to the universe.

… And so we have come to be.

So, because of our mind, we proceed
beyond other orders of the universal progress.

While we remain integral in the universe,
we transcend it by knowing it.
(Brown in Thompson 1984:58–9)
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Bob Brown is grounded in a creative cosmogenesis which echoes the elucidation of Teilhard. Brown and his life illustrate the effects of a person shaped by these awarenesses and connected with, and belonging to, the Earth. His writing sums up the implied potentials of intentional evolution in a creative cosmos and his actions model this awareness in democracy.

By applying what-if science, what are the possibilities if we have/are political participants who are awake to the cosmos, its creative unfoldment and the power of love? What if we respond to Teilhard’s suggestion that we ‘imagine our power of loving developing until it embraces the total of man and of the earth’ (1969a:292)? These questions shape the research exploration of this thesis.

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20 Senator Brown has been described as the most culturally significant person in Australia in the Australian Financial Review which is by no means a radical publication (Julie Macken 2003:25-32).
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Introduction

In this chapter initially I define democracy, politics and power with a view to hone the definition of democracy most open to metaphysical analysis and transpersonal extrapolation. I critique the Westminster model of democracy as unsustainable in contemporary ferment and indicate its systemic and cultural limitations which lag behind current levels of education and personal authorisation compared with these factors over four hundred years ago at the inception of this system of democracy. The critical analysis is theoretically underpinned by the central democratic tenets of equality, inclusivity, participation and resultant justice which are increasingly distorted by powerful and dysfunctional trends and interferences. I go on to argue that the conditions are ripe for further evolution of democracy closer to its beckoning ideals and that this evolution could be derived from a deep, wholistic and universally assessable source of experiential interconnectedness and that this is pragmatically realistic.
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Definition of democracy

Classically democracy is *government of the people, by the people for the people.* Within this definition is the implication that democracy, as a system of community organisation for the purpose of government, recognises the inherent value of each person and aims to uphold human dignity through maximisation of the ideals of equality, inclusivity, participation and justice, via individual empowerment and power sharing. A common pragmatic interpretation of democracy is a system where the majority rules and the rights of the minorities are upheld. In this interpretation, matters are decided by voting rather than consensus, and debate rather than dialogue. The citizens vote to elect representatives and then power is conferred to a small and exclusive group of the Executive to make and execute decisions. These mechanisms systemically organise a hierarchy of inequality and value, and focus power narrowly to an oligarchic elite and drain power from the populous. Alternatively or additionally, *government of the people, by the people for the people,* in an interpretation based on a context of deep inter-connectedness, both experiential and conceptual, there is no dichotomy in the maximisation of individual empowerment and power of the whole – these concurrent realities operate inseparably and synergistically, and the qualities of equality, inclusivity and participation are characteristics of deep experience rather than ideals. However, the dominant psycho-social paradigm shapes the interpretation of democracy and so I examine democracy from within this cultural context.

While democracy is a system of collective organisation for governing, power is of another realm. Power is defined as the ability to act, which is conventionally exercised in relationship to something or someone else and implies the exercise of control and domination, namely *power-over* (Katherine Ainger 2003).

> Power is defined and determined solely by the fact that it can be inflicted by the will of one against the will of another. (Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor 1991:355)

Politics can be seen as the distribution, trade and exercise of power to act, influence, impose, force, manipulate or share. The power can be derived from various sources, be it moral, dynastic or legitimated violence. In the context of representative democratic government power is delegated authority and agency, which is granted in
trust by the society, the people. In addition to the power to act and *power-over* are other forms of power such as *power-with* and *power-from-within* which lead to differing designs of democratic government as they arise from a differing experiential and metaphysical base.

**Separateness**

**The metaphysical base of the western psyche**

In contrast to an interconnective reality, the dominant western paradigm privileges a world characterised by separateness. The foundation from the Genesis creation story of the three great mono-theistic, patriarchal religions sets in place a psyche ‘hard-wired’ with a metaphysical base of separateness and consequent dualism and hierarchy of power and value (Elaine Pagels 2004; Stephan Hoeller 1997; King 1989a; Beaumont 2002). Reinforced by the dominance of linear, segmented rationality through the so-called ‘Enlightenment’, people, particles, phenomena, events, objects, forces and every-‘thing’ are imprinted as atomised and experienced as being essentially separate.

The naturalisation of this foundational assumption has consequences for the systems of knowledge, philosophy, science, theology, institutional government and ethics. Separateness as an experience, a belief and perception results in dissociation between self and other, human and divine, human and nature, man and woman (King 1989a; Cranny-Francis et al. 2003). Beliefs born from experiential separateness give rise to classical physics, a theology where divinity is separate and above humanity, and mythological ideologies which aggrandise the individual, sometimes as the titular centre of the universe. The self, the ego, the identity, becomes the focus and reference point of a small and isolated world, thereby creating the context for existential aloneness. As Andrews notes ‘our curious pursuit of greater self-fulfilment has significantly produced a painful confrontation with personal isolation’ (1993:2).

While perhaps the gift of the west is recognition and honouring of the individual (Edward Edinger 1973), this respect for the individual is not translated into the spiritual dimension, particularly in public life. The west is not so much secular as anti-spiritual, with selective, non-recognition of the spiritual dimension of life. While the west remains transfixed in materialist rationality, the potential of the full
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wholeness of the individual is not acknowledged and the potential for conscious co-evolution is stifled.¹

**Dualism**

The tension between self and other as the bedrock of the western paradigm is not the sacred balance of complementary energies as in the yin-yang, yab-yum of Eastern philosophies. The self-other dichotomy is insistently positioned by the western culture in an opposing duality as play of antagonists in a war for domination. Culturally, separateness is mythologised in stories, philosophies and symbolism which then are modelled in our institutions, which in a circular fashion, reinforce dualistic perceptions, belief systems and tunnelled binary thinking. In the isolating gap between the separate self and the other, judgement from a base of self-similarity, leads to fear and mistrust. Dualistic mentality in the face of difference easily transmutes into oppositional aggression which is the behaviour played out in our parliaments, courts, board-rooms and is acted out as war in the interaction of nations.

**Adversarial democracy: a model of war**

**Westminster democracy**

The Westminster system of government currently used in Australia and many democracies is premised on separateness (Beaumont 2002). The metaphysical foundation determines our form of self-organisation as government. The Westminster model has served to take the authority to govern from violence and genetic lineage, to share power with the people, however it still resonates with much the same underlying dynamics. As previously stated the Westminster parliamentary symbolism and actuality operates as adversarial dualism and is recognised as a model of warfare (Keegan 1993). Eleanor Clift and Tom Brazaitis refer to adversarial politics as ‘war without bloodshed’ (1996). Deborah Tannen notes that fuelled by drama hungry and market controlled media, the degree of agonism in adversarial forms of government is increasing (1998, 2000). She quotes analysts and exiting politicians who say that the intensity and extent of aggression has made this system of government in USA unworkable and the role of parliamentarians untenable. Australian parliamentary

¹ In contrast are Indigenous cosmologies and those of Hinduism and Buddhism which while centred around individual spiritual development distinguish the ego as inherently interdependent within the dynamic interconnectedness of all phenomena and Life.
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Politics is showing a similar excessively abusive style of interaction which makes good government virtually unobtainable (Hugh Mackay 2001, 2002, n.d.; Malcolm Marr 2000).

Aggressive behaviour selected

Additionally, the institutionalised structure of oppositional dualism privileges certain behaviours and thereby limits participation. The adversarial nature of the system selects for aggressive, competitive dispositions, particularly for leaders. Despite the contemporary rhetoric eulogising competitiveness, from an evolutionary perspective this behaviour is arguably dysfunctional. Strong communities depend on the cohesion of diversity, cooperation and flexibility wherein communities with ‘the greatest number of sympathetic members’ flourish (Charles Darwin in Andrews 1996:1).\(^2\) Competitiveness entrenches division, distrust, elitism, hostility, disconnection, fear and hatred which grows as attention increasingly narrows to the object of opposition. A senior Australian public servant made the chilling observation that ‘the ones who succeed in the Westminster system are those who are able to hate most intensely’ (pers. comm. 2003). The consequent, abusive environment encourages armoured behaviour, fortressed outlooks and a certain degree of dissociation. The physiological effects which occur before and during conflict, of ‘adrenalin rush, tunnel vision and auditory exclusion’ (Sarah Williams 2000:7) restricts the quality and nature of interaction. The combative structure, energetic environment and selection of participants systemically limit the clarity, centredness, connectedness and wholistic perspective required for wise decision-making in these critical times.

Hegemonic masculinity

The present system government also privileges a particularly aggressive, violent expression of masculinity – one which dominates the Australian cultural identity (Martin Mills 2001; Robert Connell 2000; Mike Donaldson 1998; Eleanor Hodges 1982).\(^3\) This expression of masculinity is characterised as tough, strong, aggressive,

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\(^2\) From a different ontological base, HH Dalai Lama regards aggression and competitiveness as inherently dysfunctional (HH Gyatso Tensin 2000).

\(^3\) Masculinity is a fluid, unstable identity which is constantly culturally reinforced into certain expressions which can be internally contradictory and which differentiate across and within cultures and time (Connell 2000). The areas of signification of the dominant masculinity in Australia are sport, work, alcohol, technology and politics (Mills 2000). Mills directly links the privileging of this masculinity to violence in Australian schools. Australia has a higher rate of domestic violence (male
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competitive and violent. The hegemony is normalised by cultural mythology espousing that these behaviours are men’s natural disposition and God ordained order – which in turn legitimates violence, hierarchy and control. The traits have their own expression in the board-room, parliament, sports-field and the home (Mills 2001). This exclusionary national image calculatedly omits women, Indigenous Australians, men who do not live out this stereotype and the obvious multicultural make-up of modern Australia.

Connell argues that this violent, hegemonic masculinity is globalised and dominating western political, social, economic and institutional processes (2000). It drives western imperialism, neo-capitalism, white superiority and war-loving behaviour. Australian democracy shares a world-wide trend of (mostly) male dynasties occurring within politics (David Marr 2001). This occurrence of power passing through genetic line appears an anathema to democracy and signals a failing of the system. Moreover, studies of these political and economic holders of inherited power indicate they are raised to be emotionally disconnected, have born-to-rule attitudes of superiority and are mistrustful of friendship and communion; as one commented ‘power isn’t kept by a system of friendships’ (Donaldson 1998:103).

In adversarial government, the masculinist culture shapes all parliamentarians including the women. Bullying, denigration, abuse and trade in loyalties are the modus operandi in the parliament, party rooms and Cabinet. Ex-minister Jocelyn Newman explained her difficulties in Cabinet meetings where to compete with the raised, louder male voices she would have to bang the table and shout ‘I want to be heard’ (Jane Cadzow 2000:21). This cameo encapsulates the appalling atmosphere and bar-room genre in which the small elite of the Executive government make decisions.

Costs of adversarial government

There are significant costs to the dominance of the hegemonic masculinity and the ensuing aggressive culture. Brenda Hall-Taylor found these behaviours also occur in the Public Service arm of Australian government (2002). At the executive levels, she found that men still far out number women, and they display tough, workaholic, task-
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oriented styles which entrench a specific masculinist culture. This culture, described as ‘woman irrelevant’ and where women were ‘systemically and systematically excluded from full participation’, was guarded by exclusionary practices and intolerance. The women’s abilities to facilitate team-work, collaborative working styles, open multi-layered communication, power-sharing in decision-making, direct speaking, and management rather than suppression of conflict, were marginalised. The masculinist culture of parliament causes a similar exclusion of skills to the detriment of good government. A good case can be made for a certain feminisation of politics – not simply concerning gender numbers but the transformation of practices and culture (van Ecker 1999).

A system of government which encourages disconnectedness enables systemic violence towards people and the Earth. Resultant anti-Life decisions and actions cause high costs for individual people, societies and our living planet (Stuart Rees and Gordon Rodley 1995; Vandana Shiva 2000; Sanders 2001). Perpetuating a pattern of warfare as a mode of government is simply unsustainable. It is also an enormous psychic burden to have at the core of our collective and national decision-making, a living symbol of war. To make collective decisions from such a narrow and systemically disconnected base is a distortion of democracy and is dysfunctional in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and justice. The dualistic adversarialism promotes and sustains divisiveness in the community by igniting fear, anger and hatred, and feeding tribal mentality – as seen in Australian race riots (Martin 2005; Gargett 2005; Ridgeway 2004). The institutionalised culture excludes the very processes, people, skills, insights and energies which are needed for modern complexity, diversity and evolution. Funnelling the complexity of contemporary society into a dualistic system is simplistic, leads to a limited expression of views and knowledge, and a narrow agenda which is easily manipulated. It is in contradiction to the processes of Life. Morphologically we either go beyond dysfunctional ossified habits or we falter in evolutionary terms.

Public disengagement

The Westminster system fails basic democratic criteria of inclusive participation and equality. Peter Bachrach and Aryeh Botwinick observe that political participation correlates to personal empowerment and efficacy however representative government per se, entrenches passivity in most of the population (1992). Reciprocally it delivers
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and fortifies an elite sequestered oligarchy enabled by selective, exclusionary practices to exercise power and control, and who display little faith in ordinary people.

Australia’s electoral system of single member seats for the House of Representative exaggerates the presence of the two major parties, exacerbating the narrowness of representation.\(^4\)\(^\text{4}\) Australia is following the world-wide trend of the dominant parties converging in similarity (Mackay 2002), which is ultimately exemplified in their amalgamation into the ‘Grand Coalition’ governing in Germany. ‘The perfection of the representative system is the transition of power from one party to another of the elite political classes’ (Gustavo Esteva 2003). Rigid party discipline further silences any surviving diversity and increases the power of the Executive. This structure of government gives power to those addicted to its pursuit, firmly consolidates elites, encourages disengagement of the populace and strengthens disconnection as the formative ground of decision making. The design works against the engagement of people and the realisation of democratic ideals of equality, inclusivity, participation and justice.

Substantial monetary donations to political parties additionally diminish the integrity of government and stifles democracy (Chris Harries 2000a, 2000b; Geoff Elliot 2003; Australian Electoral Commission 2005). The recent rise of the Christian right in the major parties in Australia challenges the principle of separation of state and religion. Paradoxically, this ascendance runs together with increasingly harsh social attitudes and anti-democratic trends (Maddox 2005, 2004; Mackay 2005).\(^5\)\(^\text{5}\) Additionally, the expansion of globalised capitalism increases interference by large, self-interested corporations which further erodes democratic processes as nation states relinquish responsibilities of government to the myopia of market-forces in the name of economic rationalist dogma (Saul 1997, 1999, 2001; Jamrozik 2005).

\(^4\) Many European parliaments and New Zealand have a more proportional system of representation creating greater diversity of representation which predisposes more cooperative approaches, however they are still dominated by a ‘tribal mentality’ rather than cultural wholism.

\(^5\) The rising power of the religious right is a startling emergence in secular Australia where only 15% of people attend services of any religion and where active evangelicals make up only about 2% of the Christian population. There are a disproportionate and increasing number of fundamentalist Christian parliamentarians in the major parties. Marion Maddox quotes the chilling aim of the extreme elements of this group, namely to turn Australia from a democracy to a Christian theocracy, and this to be achieved through stealth (2005).
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These systemic distorting factors affect the citizen as empowerment and efficacy are directly related to participation and realistic opportunity to participate (Bachrach and Botwinick 1992). The cumulative disconnection effectively dis-empowers most of the population generating a trend of non-engagement. Worldwide, voter participation is decreasing over the last 20 years in response to the convergence of the major parties as voters see less different between them (Ian McKellaster 2004). In Australia, which has compulsory voting, the disengaged are determining the government as the cohering relationship strengthened in a sense of shared belonging erodes together with perceived efficacy and agency (Willis and Carden 2004). The media, big spending campaigns and political donors play an increasingly definitive part in politics. In Australia about a third of voters are making their decisions in the last week of an election which exaggerates this base of de-facto and unaccountable power.

The young in particular are disengaged from mainstream politics (Murray Print 2004; Mackay 2002). This does not however indicate lack of social commitment as studies show a high level of care and action concerning many environmental and justice issues locally and globally among young people (Asia-Pacific Forum on Environment and Culture 2002). They are media savvy and not beguiled by political rhetoric and prefer news via satirical humour (Danna Young 2004; Janet Jones 2004). French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu says it is conventional politics which the young are distancing from – they want a new form of politics (2000).

Disillusionment is increasing as governments, unions and churches are not listening to their constituents (John Menadue 2004). McKay associates this growing pessimism and despair with shattered trust and consequent non-belief in leaders of all sectors in Australia and world-wide (2002; 2001). Furthermore, Mackay sees social disengagement as a breeding ground for fundamentalism where in the intensifying complexity of societies, confusion rises and simplistic directives offer solace and security (2005). Additionally there is a growing level of public disgust in Australia with the processes of parliament, and standards and behaviours of parliamentarians (Farr 2000; Mackay 2001). This lack of standards is seen also in religions as hidden sexual abuse continues to be disclosed. People no longer believe or trust the leaders of government, commerce, religion, military and bureaucracy (Hugh Mackay 2002a, n.d.; Rees and Rodley 1995).
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**Crisis in democracy**

Czech ex-president, Vaclav Havel gives a warning of the ‘deep crisis of traditional [parliamentary] democracy’ and not to eulogise this system as the ideal which alone is capable of guaranteeing human dignity and an independent role in society (1992:209). He says that similarly to totalitarian states, people are manipulated, although more subtly, to release personal and concrete responsibility. The ‘omnipresent dictatorship of consumption, production, advertising, commerce, consumerism culture and all that flood of information’ focuses attention on a narrow and inherently unfulfilling field of activity (1992:208). This diminishment of responsibility allows violence and domination, and restricts making a genuine, personal contribution to the creation of social/collective destiny. As an alternative to a default to western democracy, Haval advocates a renewed focus of politics on real people, and on human and inner relationships rooted in the universe ‘to newly grasp a sense of higher responsibility’ (1992:210).

**Systemic obstacles to democracy**

The Westminster system has systemic obstacles of its metaphysical base of experiential separateness and atomised, hierarchical organisation, which fundamentally preclude the actualisation of equality, inclusivity and responsibility so fundamental to a democratic system. Primary identification with the group/tribe/party, compounded by an excessively material and external focus, leads to disconnected decision-making which has accumulative, destructive consequences to the whole of planetary Life. The problem is one of fundamental design and calls for basic transformation. Westminster is one stage in the evolution of democracy however this particular system of organisation falls far short of democratic principles. The centuries old system is anachronous with present levels of literacy, education and life expectancy in western countries. It now inhibits social progress responding to the complexity and immediacy of inter-relatedness of modern global living. German Green politician, Petra Kelly, articulated dominant form of thinking and culture informing decision-making of western democracies.

Today’s politics are based on the mechanistic worldview that prefers assertion to integration, analysis to synthesis, rational knowledge over intuitive knowledge, competition over cooperation, and expansionism.
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over conservation. A few new ideas is not enough. We need an entirely new way of thinking. (Kelly 1994:40)

**Western culture and sacredness**

New thinking arises from new metaphysical sources – which I suggest can devolve from a formative base of experiential interconnectedness. The world viewed, the rational-mind-in-dominance, monetary dogma and same-same dualistic government of western society do not arise from nowhere. They have deep mythological sources, developed and protected from the bastions of the western tradition whilst omitting an experiential base of sacredness.

**Limits of cultural acceptance**

As stated separateness and disconnection permeates the western psyche and culture including religion and attitudes to spirituality. The dominant Judeo-Christian western culture does not support direct and unmediated spiritual experience. Recognition of the sacred is mostly limited to certain religious institutional settings and ceremonies wherein connection with the sacred is mediated by authorised functionaries (Campbell 1988), with the imprimatur of validation firmly controlled. Even within these prescribed situations the saints and mystics have often had a difficult time with the hierarchies of power (Hay 1987). People outside the pillars of the establishment risk ridicule, trivialisation or worse if they claim spiritual experiences or knowledge. There is a distinct boundary of acceptability when it comes to un-mediated interaction with the sacred. Even the mystic St Teresa cautioned her nuns not to talk of their spiritual experiences with the priests lest they be misunderstood (Mary Giles 1982:24). Authorities have historically exerted force and violence to suppress direct experience of the sacred, particularly against women (Starhawk 1982; Christina Larner 1984; Anne Llewellyn Barstow 1994) and unto present day silencing of people like Teilhard, Matthew Fox and Paul Collins. Western culture has a schism at the interface of authentic, inner power and the imposed power of external authorities which is replicated in religion, academia and politics.

Swimme believes that the capacity to experience the sacred for westerners has atrophied (1990:2). The resultant loss of a sacred cosmology enables mal-aligned behaviours. He says ‘our modern sensibility is the most deformed in all 50,000 years of homo sapiens’ existence’ (Arguelles 1987:13). Swimme cites that 17th century
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Europeans could stand next to a screaming animal and claim it could not feel pain (Arguelles 1987:12). Within this occluded worldview is gross disconnection from the enfolding, living world (Abram 1997). The cultural legacy of distorted and muted sensibilities arises from the cultural mistake of seeing a physical world as separate from humans and that humans are transcendent – enabling the evidenced capacity for environment destruction and nuclear holocausts. Swimme encourages beginning the task of awakening the full spectrum of human psychic sensitivity to then contribute to cosmogenesis.

Sutherland’s research on the effects of Near Death Experience (NDE) on people’s subsequent lives showed that people did not speak of this powerful spiritual experience, sometimes for decades, because of fear of ridicule (1992). They particularly hid their experience from professional people, the elite authority figures trained deeply in the mores of cultural and academic monocognism. John and Bruce Klingbeils who investigated the practice and influence of prayer, believe that the social sanctions against self-validation are internalised so that people self-censor when they do have spiritual experiences – that people do not acknowledge spiritual experiences even to themselves or easily forget it or set it apart, segmenting it from ‘reality’ (1980, 2001a).

However Sutherland found that for many the experience is so strong that it is kept and cherished quietly within, shaping the person’s life from that point on. That the cultural prohibitions and denigration did not dint the power and personal relevance of the experience is a comment on its strength and deep significance. The domination of a blinkered culture did not disturb the transformative experience, however outer behaviour is adapted to function in the culture – so perhaps the capacities are not atrophied so much as hidden. Hay’s documentation of the commonality and personal significance of spiritual experience validates this proposition (1987, 2000). Additionally, his comparisons of research between 1987 and 2000 show that willingness to speak about spiritual experiences, albeit hesitatingly, is definitely increasing (Hay and Hunt 2000). Either there is less social censorship or people are

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6 Research in 1987 showed 48% of British people had religious or spiritual experiences. This increased by 60% to 76% by 2000. In the same time church attendance dropped to 8% of the population attending weekly. This has also been my own observation over twenty years of public speaking and dialogue in political forums and academic conferences. Discussion of spirituality and deep experience
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becoming more trusting of the authority of their own experience. However the culture’s institutions are lagging behind this shift.

**Cultural inertia**

Interconnectedness, as a recognised reality and experience, is suppressed in western culture. While the authority of science has relatively unquestioned acceptance and association with truth, and possibly more influence on beliefs than contemporary western religions, old habits die desperately hard. Despite the fact that physics has recognised and been integrating an interconnected reality for almost 100 years, this is not the commonly accepted reality and does not underpin or inform the culture. This situation is paradoxical. Albert Einstein himself had trouble accepting the implications of his findings not only socially but scientifically (Laszlo 1996). He still used the parameters of time and space for mathematical expression even though all his deductions, later validated by empirical evidence, indicated that these do not exist as they are presently interpreted (in the domains covered by his theories). Reanney (1994) and White (1990) believe that such perception of time and space are a function of the filtering of our present brain’s structure. Sheldrake sees the persisting dominance of this mode of perception as the repetition of cultural habits sustained by the self-perpetuating nature of morphogenic fields (Sheldrake 1994c). The dragging inertia of old habits of beliefs is strong and nurtured by vested interests.

Capra says that while interconnectedness is understood conceptually in the west, the actual realisation of this experience is the vital and missing element for its absorption into societal thinking (1985:230). Similarly Hagelin says that a conceptual approach is at best incomplete as the totality is too vast and complex to be understood intellectually (1992). However he emphasises that the unified field of existence can be comprehended by direct experience and that by repeated experience the mind becomes identified with this field. With similar emphasis, Murphy says that the power of the koan, which is non-sense to the everyday mind, elicits direct presentation of the mystery of being, evoking a falling back into experience of the true nature of who you are (2004).

now elicits interest and acceptance. Hopefully, the next prejudice to breakdown will be serious discussion of the power of love.
Chapter four: western psyche, mythology and democracy

Such direct experience and the reality it reveals is not accepted or encouraged in the dominant western discourse. The cultural barriers are currently reinforced by the non-recognition within academia of the large body of documentation on spiritual, psychic and consciousness studies – which if seen as being present are then ignored or trivialised. Silencing of alternative perceptions by ignoring, ridicule and attack, Kuhn identifies as mechanisms of resistance to transformation of a culture’s paradigm (1970). Inhibiting the expression of non-dominant realities, particularly in the public domain, he said, is a defensive response by those who are deeply invested in the dominant paradigm through association with authority, power and status within the status-quo. Discussion particularly in the mainstream media often belittles genuine spiritual exploration as in dismissing so-called New Age seekers and westerners dedicated to spiritual paths from other cultures. These tools of derision and border patrol are familiar in race and gender politics. The processes of denial further colonise the inner thought habits when reinforced by the mind-field of cultural mythology and discourse. This stifling of options works to our detriment.

**Time of transition**

The present is a time of changing paradigms where the long-standing ways of being and seeing, sit alongside newly emergent and fundamentally different worldviews (Campbell 1986; Davies 1992; Capra 1992; Theobald 1997; Masini 1999a; Slaughter 1999a). The juxta-position of alternatives sets up a creative dissonance. The dominant, western way of being, thinking and living cannot solve the social, political, economic and environmental crises which it increasingly creates. These conditions are indicators of a time of paradigm change as noted by Kuhn. The new social paradigm, he said, first emerges as metaphysical symbols or generalisations (1970:182-4).

Fromm says that for the first time in human history the very survival of the human race depends on a change of heart – there will be an affective shift in consciousness or we die (1976). Swimme regards society’s present direction as suicidal as a species and that an evolutionary jump is required, an orbit jump of human consciousness (1990). Houston believes that in these times our very nature is in transition – the circumstances are calling forth new patterns and potentials never needed before (2001a, 2001b). She says that contemporary ferment may be the catalyst for such an evolutionary breakthrough as individual and the collective psyches manifest as many
different singularities in movement through convergence and transition to a greater unity. I also believe that we need to expand past the context of outmoded and now dangerously limited constructs and see common experience of interconnectedness as a key to social transformation lead by ordinary people.

**Pragmatic realism of interconnectedness**

Present forms of adversarial democratic government do not and cannot do justice to the secular-sacred goals of human life. While interconnectedness is understood as a concept, an ideology and a system, what is missing in the western psyche is the experiential realisation of interconnectedness – actualised integration of an interconnected reality that is both inner and outer. *In-the-experience of* interconnectedness the dualistic relationships dissolve to offer the synergistic *power-with* each other and all. Andrews (1996), among others, specifically advocates promoting the use of examples of interconnectedness drawn from the western canon to increase the awareness and acceptance of interconnectedness within a western cultural view thereby influencing the integration of deep structures of thinking and perception through the creative tension of paradox. Interconnectedness-within offers ways of thinking, being and relating, which are practical, realistic and re-kindle a sense of the sacred – and which are resonated by nature, Earth and the dynamics of evolution itself. It is inherently unrealistic to keep using what does not work, namely consciousness of disconnectedness, to address the problems it inevitably, and ongoingly creates.

**Evolve democracy**

The binary mind-set framing our system of government persistently sees the individual in opposition to the whole/society/collective. I suggest that it is time to evolve beyond such assumptions and rhetoric of dualistic conceptualisation and hierarchical thinking, wherein power is persistently seen as *power-over* which is exclusively exercised by ‘the individual’, an elite or the collective. Concurrently ignored is *power-within* from the ‘within of things’, and *power-with* from inherent interconnectedness. These forms of power experientially dissolve disconnectedness and offer synergistic potential.

Arguably, it is time to further evolve democracy to inclusivity as the definitive form of collective self organisation. As consciousness evolves, social institutions evolve.
Chapter four: western psyche, mythology and democracy

As Haval notes the changes in democracy must be greater than of a dry organisational nature and involve our deepest existential sense of relatedness with each other and the planet (1992). Bachrach and Botwinick suggest that people’s full creative and effective potential comes to the fore in participatory democracy where there is a synergistic balance and mutual enhancement of the individual and the collective (1992). Basically, to embed inclusivity and inherent equality into our social institutions requires an experience of consciousness which is inherently inclusive as a metaphysical source from which to pattern our behaviours, foci and ways of being-together. Seen from this perspective, the crisis in democracy at its deepest source is essentially a metaphysical or spiritual issue. A change in the formative base of consciousness to experiential interconnectedness can enact visions where politics becomes the art of living together peacefully and creatively.
Chapter 5: It’s time to dream again

Imagine our power of loving developing until it embraces the total of man and of the earth. (Teilhard de Chardin 1969a:292)

Introduction

Imagination is my exploration in this chapter. Firstly I examine the capacities, actions and domains of influence of imaginative consciousness beyond usual boundaries of mind. I situate this within a universal context where imagination is a powerful impeller to aid our human journey with the cosmos. I then examine the socio-political relationship between imagination and society in terms of freedom and active imagination, and societal future self-images. These issues have implications for democracy. Finally I indicate that at this point in western history, women have freedoms due to liminality within a patriarchy, to efficiently envision transformative futures.

Imagination

Imagination: magnetic and creative

Teilhard’s words indicate the powerful role that imagination can play in the expansion of love, the future of humanity and Earth, and as a spiritual political practice. Einstein
believed that imagination is more powerful than knowledge (Swimme 1990:2). His statement honours the creative and directive power of imaginative thought which opens across timespace, the known and unknown and independently of the past prescribing the field of attention. \textit{Gedanken} or imaginative thought experiments were central to Einstein’s work. He said of breakthrough science that ‘the basic premises of scientific theories … are always the fruits of the disciplined imagination’ (Laszlo 1995:26). Mental discipline and intentionality gives imagination, as an investigative tool, a direction and logic consistent unto its world of exploration. The imaginative mind goes ahead to draw forth new knowledge, realms and connections beyond personal experience, preparing the ground for actualization. Just as in science, the imaginative capacity has a powerful role in disciplined extension of possibilities for socio-political development. In the intense and somewhat stuck sphere of the so-called \textit{real-politik}, the use of imagination may offer insights for a jump in democratic evolution.

Human imagination works through many spheres such as dreams, language, conversations, stillness, fantasies, literature, physiology and more. In these domains imagination is awakened by resonant recognition and relevance across apparently dissimilar contexts and appearances. Kuhn identifies ‘acquired similarity recognition’ in persons who can bridge the gap between paradigms of distinctly different constructions of reality (1970:189). Abram links imagination with participating perception (1996). The perceiving body, which participates gregariously in the life-world, sends imagination beyond the cacophony of inputs to make contact with the hidden aspects and render order. In the flux of open participation, choice through attention focuses the possibilities.

Houston comments that within our selves, there is ‘nested gnosis’ wherein we contain and know ‘so much more than we think we do’ (Abraham et al. 1992:xvi). The imaginative aspect of mind is able to dissolve through the doorways of timespace, self-focus and orthodoxy to access deep knowledge and worlds of possibilities beyond our surface knowing. Houston relates this depth of accessible consciousness to the ability to envision, which is in turn vitalised by sharing – ‘the mystery of intelligence which when ignited, can call forth incendiary visions which quicken in dialogue, with remembrances of things future and as well as things past’ (Abraham et al. 1992:xvi).
Chapter 5 It’s time to dream again

Some imaginative experiences embellish ordinary daily life and others jump the consciousness into more vast realms. The later are characterised by changes in consciousness, perception and cognition, and their nature is more that of revelation rather than recognition – the unknown becomes revealed rather than an imagined extrapolation of the known. In addition to the magnetic nature of human imagination drawing forth synchronised knowing, there is a dynamic, creative action to this capacity of consciousness. McKenna describes these experiences as the human imagination interfacing with that of a greater reality, perhaps the cosmic mind, and is privileged to briefly observe (Abraham 1992). The interaction reveals the ever-presence of intense and extreme creativity pervading our cosmos and realities. The interface experience can be accompanied by, and facilitate, an intense flow of creativity and its expression.

The power of beauty is one source of inspiration mysteriously resonating-through-being the universe’s patterns and creativity, evoking ineffable response and activation. Imagination thus stimulated, can create further beauty in a way which transcends our own understanding (McKenna in Abraham 1992). Similar up-wellings of imagination can be accessed and inspired by vision, myth, symbols, sacred sites/thin places, ceremonies, psychedelics and spiritual practices (Campbell 1986; Rose 2000; Deloria Jr 1993; Abraham et al. 1992; Narby 1999; Wilber 2000). These gateways of imagination are similar to those of the sacred. These multi-dimensional resonator vehicles trigger awareness to that which transcends both the mundane and the human (Eliade 1960, 1963; Campbell 1974, 1986). The implication is that the cosmic invitation to participate in co-creation beckons.

**Role of imagination in humanity’s evolutionary journey**

Western science reveals the universe as an endlessly, unfolding process of creativity expressed in multiple, never repeated creations (Swimme and Berry 1992; Swimme 1984). As Abraham says ‘evolutionary creativity … is creativity that keeps on happening’ (1992:41). The essence of the universe, and by implication we humans also, is profound and on-going creativity. The understanding echoes Australia’s Indigenous peoples’ Dreaming which is ever present and creatively acting and in which humans participate through certain sacred activities (Lambert 1993; Rose 2000). In the Native
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American Wheel of All Beings, the human gift, responsibility and action-within-the-whole, is to direct energy (Reagan 1980). Teilhard (1969a) and Swimme (1995) join the human imagination with the journey of the Earth and ultimately the cosmos itself. Similarly Griffin links human imagination with the creativity of nature (1996). Within this grand scale, Teilhard proffers that imagination is a means of active and conscious participation in our own personal spiritualisation and species’ evolution (1969a). These perspectives imply an interactivity of the human imagination with All-that-is which is inherent, intimate, active, creative and sacred.

McKenna sees creation, imagination and chaos as fluidly interchangeable (Abraham 1992). He describes the creating function of imagination as a ‘kind of eschatological object shedding influence throughout the temporal dimension and throughout the morphogenetic field’ (1992:49). Thus he postulates that imagination actively creates the fields of possible futures. This view is consistent with consciousness, attention and choice collapsing an array of possibilities into discrete events in the quantum realm (Laszlo 1996; Reanney 1991). The inter-dimensional image-in-action navigates and correlates across timespace interacting with energy-matter, activating fields of energy and shaping form from the sea of possibilities (Goswami 2000).

**Ethical alignment of imagination**

Teilhard articulated the enfolding processes of evolutionary creative synthesis therein implying the existence of the Omega Point – the attractor which is entraining human beings as personalised wholes and as a whole being, at-one-with-Earth (1969a). From this perspective, successful evolutionary developments which thrive are those which are in alignment with the confluence of evolution’s arrow. In a phenomenon akin to grace, the universe thereby supports its own unfoldment. Reciprocally, as Teilhard (1969a) and Wilber (2000) point out, if human self-organisation is not in line with the direction of the cosmos, the human line will extinguish. The universe is not impartial; it has process, direction and purpose. If events and processes of species self-organisation are aligned with this same processual direction then such creativity will be supported synergistically by the whole universe. At a social level Swimme sees this relationship and congruency with the universe as a base for ethics – the ethics of cosmogenesis which are the

With this alignment, the powers of imagination are congruent with the powers of Life, oriented by love. Embodied interconnectedness instantly aligns with this field, process and direction of interactivity. With cosmogenic alignment, personal identity, motivation and purpose orient to the whole inter-being of humanity and Life. Aristotle expressed this conceptual orientation as entelechy, the personal experience of ‘dynamic purpose that propels us towards fulfilling our own reason for being alive’ (Houston 2000:35). Thus how we image and think – when directed by aligned intentions, choices and experiential states – shapes our destiny and contributes to the human pattern of self-organisation within the whole of Life. Thus Teilhard indicates an important socio-genic tool – where the intentions and interactions arising from authenticity and inter-being are aligned by cosmogenic dynamics and creativity, imagination serving the expansion of love can and does feed outbreaks of inclusive forms of collective unification (democracy by another name).

**Collective images of futures**

**Power of societal future image**

Through his seminal work on image in the art, myth, symbolism and language of many cultures, Fred Polak demonstrated the powerful influence a society’s future image had on its own evolution (1953). He regarded the role of societal imaging as pivotal in the historic process through its dynamic influence on social organization and change.¹

Futurist, Elise Boulding, who translated Polak’s work, concurs ‘that images of the future motivate behaviour in the present is a theory with both socio-historical and psychological

¹ There are of course other significant influences in the processes of societies’ histories. I choose this particular factor because the use of image and imagination is grounded in the present and is also future oriented. Imagination is empowering in its accessibility to any individual as a starting point – particularly if social alternatives are difficult to perceive even as possibilities. The focus also flows with Teilhard’s suggestion of using imagination to lead forward human evolution.
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evidence’ (1985:17). In this process, imagery is continuously generated about that which has not yet occurred – the future – where future-directed image-making occurs at every level of awareness from the individual through to the world community. The imagery shapes beliefs, attitudes and expectations, and influences intentions underpinning purposive action. This imagery subsequently influences daily choices and actions steadily moving the person or group towards that seen or felt image of the future. The collective image is projected forward and to some extent magnetises and organises the collective field of thoughts, decisions and actions into confluence with the imaged beacon – whether it is desired or feared.

That people see or image society in the future, implies a recognition of society as an ongoing shared phenomenon – there is an embrace of the society as a whole entity and identification with it. In addition to the societal future image having a definitive effect on its present decisions and hence directions into the future, through identification it importantly influences the sense of well-being, hope and happiness, or despair and dis-empowerment of its citizens in the present. Polak demonstrated that every society that has a positive image of its future is empowered (as a whole) and empowers its citizens, via that inculcated image. Conversely, a future societal image perceived as negative, causes despair and dis-empowerment among its citizens. If a society does not have a future image, it becomes stagnant.

The land of Oz

Australia-as-a-nation provided an example of a rapid change of self-image, relationships and future directions. Preceding and during the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, Australia cultivated an image of a friendly, open, multicultural nation, welcoming of all peoples – lots of energy, inclusion and joie de vivre. The national image projected through the media seemed to enliven Australian people in a self-fulfilling prophecy. However, it was short lived. This image of Australia changed overnight in late August 2001, as the shadow of the Tampa filled national and international media and blotted out the image of warmth and generosity. The Norwegian freighter, Tampa, had responded to the distress

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2 Inayatullah confirms the critical role a society’s future images have on that society’s directions and decisions and he includes its social metaphors (1995).
call of a small boat sinking in the Indian Ocean. It was packed with 433 Middle-eastern
refugees hoping to find safety in Australia. In a cacophony of ugly threats, lies and
military power, the Australian government made it clear that at Christmas Island,
Australia’s nearest landfall, there was no room at the inn. Exclusion replaced openness,
brute force replaced welcome, fear replaced joy, and guns, in the faces of men, women,
children, elderly and new born, replaced shared humanity. With media complicity, the
fears of ‘boat-people’ as invaders (possibly terrorists!) descending from the north were
amplified and choreographed for political purposes (Jordens 2003). Trust and love
transmuted into fear, aggression and rejection. The image of the friendly nation died in
the wake of callous, militaristic responses to vulnerable asylum seekers.\(^3\) The resultant
switch showed in the national psyche as selfishness, contraction, bigotry and division –
together with shame and grief for what we can be but are not enacting.

**An epoch of cultural pessimism**

Polak described cyclic historic phases of optimism and pessimism in the imaging of
collective futures (Boulding 1999). Sometimes a people see themselves as co-creators
with God or nature, and at other times as helpless objects of supernatural action. In
periods of pessimism there is pervading sense of helplessness among people, together
with decrease in the quality of future imagery. As cosmic helplessness feeds collective
pessimism, intentionality declines and the envitalisation from confluence with a positive
collective vision, drains away. There is consequently diminished access to or use of
imagination. Societies entrapped by this pessimistic condition are fixed in the patterns of
the present with little internal dynamic for change. By contrast eras of optimism are
accompanied by ‘a utopian sense of human empowerment set in motion by a powerful
dynamic’ (Boulding 1988:20).

Polak asserts that the western psyche in the 20\(^{th}\) century was particularly stagnant due to
a lack of belief in an attractor – whence ‘everything is referent to the past up though to

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\(^3\) Virtually all of these asylum seekers have been verified to be ‘genuine’ refugees. Some have died, some
have returned to their war-torn countries to face torture and death, fortunately many are happily settled in
New Zealand and a handful are now in Australia.
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the present and goes not further’ (Boulding 1999). At the time of his work in post World War Two in Europe, Polak believed that there was an atrophy of the capacity to visualise a wholly different world. This paralysis, he regarded, as a consequence of the incomprehensibility of the unprecedented and previously un-imagined scale of destruction and murder overcoming the psyche. The stasis and backward looking orientation generated no positive belief to inform a better future while the old ways of configuring no longer served.

From her decades of close interaction with many diverse groups, Boulding observed the personal difficulty for the modern western psyche to imagine, and to imagine the society’s future positively (1988). She associates this impediment to the dominance of war image and idiom in western culture which shapes mental representations and identity in terms of perception of the adversary. Boulding refers to Deutsch’s identification (1966:105) of a ‘virtual coalition of war-promoting images’ which draw in an Armageddon mind-set of war as an evolutionary necessity and as God ordained – a deeply encoded fatalism of destructive finality, a built-in justification of horrors and all designed by God as the inevitable future. Present evidence of this war mentality on the world scale, is the invocation of ‘God’ by competing religious fundamentalisms with their calls to war and allusions to mythic finality (Maddox 2005). This same war-shaped mindset (backed by a small god of vengeance) constrains imagining alternative and positive images for democratic self-organisation.

Atrophy of imagination

McKenna places the diminished ability to imagine much further back in the macro history of western culture; he locates the demise at 5000 years ago, with the beginnings

4 While technological innovation has been thrust forward as the way of/to the future, this tool lacks the power of an attractor and does not mask the rising rates of depression in the west and worldwide.

5 Un-imagined horrors of 40 million dead and industrialised genocide created deep collective shock and the legacy of atomic weapons created a numbing inability to integrate the possibility of planetary destruction which is now in human hands ( Macy 1991). Australian documentary maker, David Bradbury insinuates the overwhelming experience aroused by images of the increasing number of mutated babies being born daily in Iraq as a consequence of depleted uranium. The visceral shudder of complicit association and responsibility increases a crisis of identity of nationality and values (2005).

6 The monocognism of the western dominant culture further limits acknowledgement of scope, realms and potentialities of consciousness and Life.
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of patriarchy (Abraham 1992). He associates the enhancement of imaginative capacities with regular, communal and ceremonial events which orchestrated the dissolution of the self as a separate entity and immersion within the whole of the community, humanity, Life and cosmos. McKenna states that the imaginative capacity atrophied with the decline in community rituals involving the use of psychedelics and sexual freedom. These communal activities, he says, strengthened inter-action and inter-dependence through defusion of accumulated tensions, dissolution of individual boundaries and affirmation of a non-centrist, non-dominant human place in an interconnected, interactive and sacred cosmos. Without orchestrated and honoured experience of interconnectedness, the imagination can be entrapped within the alienated individual centred in its small world.

Swimme also asserts that the modern (western) human’s capacity of imagination and for experiences of the sacred and awe, have atrophied (1990). He believes that community rituals, which are aligned and timed with the cosmos, are an important means to re-awaken these abilities. Community rituals which place at their centre of the celebrations the Earth, sun and moon, he believes, enable people to expand their worldview, re-affirm a sense of communion and re-orient the human to the cosmos. The full expression of imagination is clearly related to experiential interconnection within the whole.

Additionally McKenna believes that the western culture of last few centuries has compounded the diminishment of imagination (Abrahams 1992). Swimme sees the heritage of ‘The Enlightenment’ is a world with no God, where nothing is sacred and the future is adrift in a mindless and heartless sea of chance (1990:1). Abram comments that ‘in a culture that disdains the unpredictable and privileges “objectivity” people halt their participation of their senses … by projecting other phenomena and looking the other way’ (1996:59). The rational-mind-in-dominance thus reinforces its cultural worldview and quashes uprisings of alternative imagined perspectives and possibilities.

Evidence indicates that pre-patriarchal, palaeolithic, matriarchal cultures existed for thousands of years without weapons of war and fortification (Maria Gimbutas 1974; Christina Biaggi 1994)
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**Politics of imagination**

Social and political power effects imagination and human creativity. Griffin associates imagination with freedom which she discusses within the context of power and politics (1996). She sees imagination as the ability and freedom to see with innocence and hope, an array of possibilities. Reciprocally she notes where the weight of power and politics operate as a counter-force working against the exercise of imagination.

In the context of western culture Griffin observes that despite technological and material gains, the individual feels diminished in the shadow of anonymous power. I believe the shadow is extending globally. Inayatullah reiterates worldwide evidence that of non-communicable diseases, depression and heart failure will account for 70% of deaths in the third world by 2020 (1999d:816). Mackay (2001) and Cupitt (1998) both note that the sense of being overwhelmed by the present state of the world is increasing.\(^8\) While the *global problematique* can arouse empathy, compassion and deep connection, in a spirit-denying culture it fuels contraction, disconnection, apathy and retreat to a domestic world with a consequent increase in disillusionment and disempowerment. Griffin associates the lack of positive social vision and thinking with political and personal impoverishment.

Where once there were societies that served as models of a better future, ideologies, understandings, grand plans, utopias, now there are distrust, confusion and dissatisfaction with any form of politics, a sense of powerlessness edging into nihilism. (Griffin 1996:62)

Adrienne Rich says that short terms advantages are often the only ones available to the powerless (1995:35). Griffin also observes that despair is common not just among the disengaged but among those actively work for change. She notes the lack of hope, symptomatic of powerlessness, occurring under the continued impact of failed dreams, repeated patterns of suffering and philosophies of fear and hatred. Griffin says that there is a paralysis of mind and action which comes with cynicism born of relinquished desire. She regards the decline in hope and efficacy leading to a malaise of the spirit. Without

\[^8\] Some Australian universities have introduced chaplaincies just to deal with the despair of students as they learn more about the planetary situation.
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hope it is difficult to dream – without dreaming, actions become reactively focussed (through fear and hatred) on to that which is opposed rather than on that which is to be created. To free oneself from the old ways requires imagination (Griffin 1996:64).⁹

Social change activist Joanna Macy notes the numbing and denial which arise from despair and disempowerment (1991). Her strategies of empowerment involve fully opening to, and being overwhelmed by, the emotional, mental and spiritual impact of the present world situation. Ensuing surrender, expression of deep care and later integration releases energy for meaningful action.

Similarly, for a fresh view and a refreshed mind, Griffin advocates seeing clearly what is, as it is, and thence what is possible – ‘for to imagine is not simply to see what does not exist or what one wants to exist. It is a profound act of creativity to see what is’ (1996:65). Her words point to the importance of seeing beyond the perceptual boundaries limited by preference and fear to enable an embrace of the whole reality thereby opening into the fuller domains and actions of imagination.

Perhaps hope lies less in the direction of grand theories than in the capacity to see, to look past old theories that may obscure understanding and even promise. To assume what Buddhists call beginner’s mind. And to see what exists freshly and without prejudice clears the path for seeing what might exist in the future, or what is possible. (Griffin1996:62)

Griffin was enlivened by the story of the surrealist poet Robert Desnos. His story is an example of the interactive power of imagination when enacted and operating with freedom from the dominant perception of circumstances. Desnos leapt out from a line of men shepherded towards the gas chamber at Buchenwald Nazi concentration camp. With noisy gaiety he read the palms of the prisoners seeing hope, children and long life. The surprising glee was infectious. Even the guards were so disoriented by the mood change that they sent the men back to their barracks. Desnos believed imagination could transform society and in his mind and actions leapt outside the world created by the Nazi

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⁹ The smallness of vision in academic, political and public discourse about the future of Australian governance was evident at the Australian Constitutional Conference on an Australian Republic (1998) where minor substitutions to the present system was the extent of the discussion.
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SS. ‘Desnos trusted his own desire and the resonance of this desire with life more than any ideology’ (Griffin, 1996:63). He demonstrated the choice in every moment and the power of imagination when congruent with Life. His imaginative action was transformative.¹⁰

However, Griffin makes clear she is not suggesting denial of harsh realities. She cautions against the use of imagination to deny painful facts and conclusions. Imagination tempered by selective exclusion, acts as escape, where sedation replaces awareness. Disengagement from difficult reality leaves underpinning assumptions unseen and unexamined, and on return, the imagination remains shackled. She sees that positive movement requires a delicate aware balance of realism and enough playfulness to defuse fear and clear obscuration to seeing. It is the willingness to be aware of, to be present to, and engage with the whole reality, which creates the readiness for the gestalt switch in perception which enables integration, resolution, choice and transformation within the interconnected whole. An open state of being awake and present seems to be a precursor for the full creative and cognitive potential of imagination.

Unshackling the imagination

Griffin sees human societies as having two boundaries. One boundary is the requirements of the natural world. She believes that the western dominator-consumer has pitted imagination against nature. The other boundary is held in place by the collective imagination which, she suggests, is as necessary to a social order as any legal agreement. She recognises the power of the collective mind-field on and within the individual, with the attendant danger that unique and solitary voices may be silenced by the dominance of the mass habituated view. In fact de-colonisation of the mind from the ‘patriarchal dominator culture’ (her words) requires that the ability to imagine be reclaimed in a ‘re-cognition’ of the capacity to dream, to speak the truth of perception and open to the creativity of Life. Griffin also recognises the danger if the imagination is bounded by the limitations of the isolated ego, particularly in the atomised and alienated western society

¹⁰ Desnos did not go to the gas chamber but he died of typhus in Buchenwald a few days before liberation.
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– the canvas is too small when framed by self and human focus – hence the political importance of imagining from experiential interconnectedness.

Teilhard recognised the power of vision and imagination to energise and *vitalise* (1969a). Empirically, Boulding found visioning a positive future directly nurtures empowerment and altruism, action directed to the good of the whole (1988, 1995). She found that most people initially do not have an image of a peaceful world when asked to vision world peace, and that without it, it is very difficult to sustain hope in the future and belief in peace. However, expressing the heart-felt desire for peace unshackled the imagination. Macy noted a similar release of energy with the expression of locked grief (1991). Boulding also found that envisioning a peaceful world generates hope, optimism and readiness to act in the present to create those futures. Authentic expression appears to be a key to transformation and social action for change as it contributes alternative, positive patterns into the timespace of the future and destabilises the hegemonic monopoly on beliefs and possibilities.

Educationalist, Maxine Greene says that a space must be made in the imagination and heart before any social movement has sufficient depth – space for democratic imagining and practice (Willis and Carden 2004:10). Willis and Carden explore pedagogies for freeing imagination to specifically encourage imaging inclusive, compassionate democracy (2004). To nurture the democratic imagination, they advocate sharing experiences of oneness through dialogue, story and art. Griffin notes that every important social movement reconfigures the world in the imagination. She says that in sharing the playground of imagination, there is a rising of spirits despite the odds which enables the creation, at least temporarily, of a new world defined by different perceptions (1996).

I concur that compassionate, inclusive, democracy starts in the sacred space within, and takes root in shared experiences of deep interconnection. Imagination so freed, is impelled by love and urges on the heart’s desires for well-being, justice and peace. Utilising the power of imagination, which is in the hands of all, democratises the generation of social imagery and conscious choice of shared futures. To imagine transformed social circumstances, and to vision freely and differently are creative political acts.
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**Women and futures visions**

In this section I document the social and political visioning of women. I am not implying or denying biological differences, essentialism or cultural construction of gender (Walsh 2004; Connell 2002; Taylor et al. 2000; Scott 1986). I am taking observations phenomenologically and exploring their nature and implications about relationships with futures. My aim is to focus on ways to effectively and efficiently vision and actualise beneficial forms of democratic government. Data indicates that women have much to offer to this pursuit.

**Gendered visions**

Australian futurist, Ivana Milojevic notes the futures that most women envision are ‘quite different from the future envisioned by, if not all men, at least from the future envisioned by their most powerful members’ (1999:3). Futurists Eleonora Masini (1999a, b), Elise Boulding (1995a), Jim Dator (1994) and Patricia Huckle (1983) concur with her comment. This is not to say, as Masini points out, that some women are not still trapped in the colonised mind and that increasingly some men share this sensitivity (2001). As Boulding states, some men contribute to a new and different way and ‘have dreamed as women have dreamed’ (1983:10). She notes however, that men-as-a-group will need to change from present cultural patterns. Connell (2000) and McMahon (1999) note the active resistance of men to relinquish the ‘male dividend’ in the present gendered arrangement. While there are obviously great commonalities with women and men, much of women’s experience is different from men’s. Phenomenologically, from different experiences come different visions.

**Power at the liminal threshold**

Women, located at the periphery of a patriarchal culture, have a vested interest in deep social change. That alternative paradigms emerge from those outside the present dominant structures is well proven (Kuhn 1970). Based on her extensive international work, Masini notes that women globally are not captured by the social system of the western world because they are neither its builders nor beneficiaries. She says that women understand that ‘societies built on western industrialism have reached their
internal and external limits’ and that present government decision-making processes are rigid and out of date (1982:99, 2001).

Cross-culturally, Boulding observed that women can imagine the future more easily than men (1995). This enhanced facility and flexibility, she attributes to women’s experiences at the margins of power. This position also equips women with the ‘double vision’ of disadvantaged people. This deeper and multiple perspective is the capacity of any people on the periphery of a social structure whereby the fringe-dwellers are able to see both the dominant view and their own (Neilson 1990).11 Because of this dis-association from the structures of power, Masini says women can see the incipient changes more easily (1982:99). Boulding noted a parallel holographic activism through women’s ingenuity in enacting changes inside the cracks in the microstructures of society (1983:10). Masini says that in these times ripe for rapid social transformation, women are consequently well located as builders of the future as the margins are a locus of transformative power (2001).

American feminists of colour see the creative potential available at the liminal social position (AnnLouise Keating 1993).12 At the threshold between cultures, they say, is where new metaphors and mythology are created. Campbell says that the mythology of most cultures recognise the power at the threshold, particularly as embodied and enacted by the threshold figures (1986). In the gateways between worlds, these creator beings urge expressions of new mythology. The power of mythology is in its transfer of assumptions and world construction which underpin social fields and structures (Campbell 1988). The liminal betwixt-and-between space gives a wholistic perspective through position and freedom to re-mythologise culture (Keating 1993). The liminal ones have flexibility within worlds and multiple fields of vision from which to see and name beneficial options needed in times of danger and transformation. Naming what is present-
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but-not-articulated brings different realities, knowledges, mythologies and patterns into sight and expands consciousness (Copper 1994). To name what can be, from the depths of one’s authenticity and perspective, particularly in the presence of others, resonates possible futures into the present.

**Women’s capacities suited for the futures**

Masini says that certain qualities of women (or better preserved by women) enable them to better enact alternative futures as well as envision them (2001:6-7). At the individual level she notes flexibility, rapid response to emergencies, contemporaneous multi-tasking, adaptability and women’s more biological sense of time (2001). Additionally, Masini says, women have concurrent awareness of their physical, social, cultural and natural environments which simultaneously incorporate many dimensions of Life through the capacity to integrate intellect, emotion and intuition in complex situations (1982:995; 2001). These abilities of integrating multiple inputs from within and out, Masini believes, fits women for living in complexity and are congenial to a non-materialist society as women bring those skills from the private to the public sphere – however these skills still await institutional integration (Hall-Taylor 2002).

These processes flow into women’s self-organisation as groups. For example, Taylor et al. found that in response to stress women do not exhibit the biochemical or behavioural response of flight-or-fight noted in previous stress research on stress which had mostly been on males (2000). Females, in response to stress and tension, tend-and-befriend – by communicating, forming close connections, establishing cohesive supportive networks, and caring for the children, any children present not just their own. These behaviours are

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13 Masini cites a large amount of empirical research to validate this statement (Masini 1987; Masini 1991; Masini and Stratigos 1991; Masini 1994; Masini 1997).

14 Futures studies recognise the effects of different perceptions and experiences of time – linear, cyclic, spiral and now quantum (Inayatullah 1996). Copper relates the gender differences found in future visions and in modes of collective self-organisation to women’s experience of time (1994). She says that women are most able to experience time as an organic, non-linear phenomena and do not bond with the metaphor of time as linear and sequential. Masini says women’s experiential patterns of relatedness imbued in and through time are important to society during these rapid and continuous changes (2001). This immersed flowing relationship with time also embraces death as inherent in the Life process. The dominant culture’s denial of death feeds superficiality, anti-life compromises, submerged fear, meaninglessness, and the destructive choices of a materialist, disassociated culture. In contrast, flowing time-experience both deepens aliveness in the present and influences relatedness with the future by engendering a certain intimacy and responsibility.
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the glue of social, cohesive wholeness. They are the skills of interconnectedness and species-nurturing behaviours required for evolving in complexity and uncertainty.

Women’s patterns of wholistic, collective self-organisation are particularly evident in situations where social structures are non-existent such as war zones and ad hoc refugee camps (Masini 2001). In these circumstances the women quickly and simply self-organise in response to practicalities. The common factor of these groups is that they are independent, self-organised, unsupported by present structures, attuned to the situation and to the vulnerable. Masini states that ‘all over the world women and women’s groups are courageously (and without recognition) facing issues of vital importance for the reconstruction of the texture of society’ (2001:7).

Congruent with the findings of Taylor (2000), Huckle affirms that women are more likely to organise themselves into small egalitarian groups and work on issues which are commonly agreed upon in non-hierarchical networks (1983). Masini sees women’s preference for horizontal relationships equipping women for the establishment of differently organised social structures (2001). She adds that women’s social abilities to form solidarities and exchange, and their social commitments to peace, human rights and the environment, enhance their abilities to know, live and model alternative social structures. Boulding says that beneficial change depends on such abilities of working together across usual boundaries and on identifying common interests (Dator 1994).

Copper says that women’s style of working together reflects values of sharing, mutual validation, emotional support, cooperative bonding, reciprocity and nurturance (1994). This is certainly my own finding on patterns of self-organisation during women’s sacred ceremony (Beaumont 1998). In addition, I would add that the pattern of relatedness which arises is distinctly egalitarian. Where women are free to collectively self-organise, the mode of organisation enacts interconnectedness as a living pattern of inter-being.

Dator notes that women’s concerns for family and local peace expand care in the desire for a peaceful, just and humane world (1994). Boulding believes responsibility for maintaining family and resolving conflicts requires women to have a greater degree of understanding of a larger social context, grounded by knowledge of what acts as glue in communities. Hence she notes among women a concern for the total world (1995a). This
universalised compassion and inclusive wholism, Boulding says, is strengthened by women’s creativity when it is expressed socially. She sees this already happening on a global scale in non-government organisation (NGO) networks. Interestingly, the United Nations Resolution 1325 (passed 2000) says that women must be equally involved in all peace and security negotiations within and between nations. The tend-and-befriend stress response is certainly needed in conflict and peace negotiations which call for a different way of thinking, a different energy and different field of attention, from war.

Boulding regards the creativity of children as another important element of future change enriched by their play, thoughts, responses and imaginative ways (1995). Copper also notes children’s alternative frames of reference, playfulness and non-verbal means of communication (1994:503). She sees flexibility, fairness and letting go as legacies of motherhood. Boulding says that there is a specificity in women’s images of the future which is influenced by their traditional roles in child bearing and rearing (1995a). She sees women as world-changers through their increasing participation enhanced by social inventiveness and social creativity (1995). Milojevic says that flexibility, attunement to relationships and non-separation or objectification of ‘other’, of women and children, appears to equip them with inner compositions and interests advantageous to create life enhancing changes for the future of humanity (1999).

**Women’s authenticity: a transformative social force**

For women to be free to simply be as women – meaning not constructed in response to the *normative male* of a patriarchal culture – Masini sees as a major key for peaceful transformation of humanity’s collective future directions (2001).

Perhaps we could change the logic of aggression, violence, armaments and oppression which is characteristic of the world today. The possibility that women could live as women and not as men in the present and future world could be the only way of saving the human species.

(Masini 1982:100)

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15 Predictably this expansion of the attributes should be reflected among stay-at-home fathers who are responsible day to day parenting and whose lifestyles are breaking the grip of hegemonic masculinity as men relate differently from the hegemonic ideal (Catlett and McHenry 2004; Gavanas 2004; Connell 2000; Pocock 2003).
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In short Masini sees the influence of women’s authenticity on the future as vital for survival. She believes this is possible in the futures characterised by acceptance, peace and freedom – the very futures envisioned by women. The freedom for women to be authentic, to define themselves and articulate their/our reality in an authentic way, she indicates, is the method to bring about fundamental change. Griffin links authenticity to naming as a process which stretches assumptions to contain strongly evocative and transformative concepts (1996). Copper conjectures that women’s freedom to be authentic will lead to ‘an outwelling of ancient wisdom of the species’ (1994:504).

Swimme says that women have been shaped by evolutionary dynamics to hold a sense of social relationships and expand affective bonds (1995:3). Masini suggests social transformation coming through women’s creative and empathetic responses. She elaborated that the potential is amplified when women are free not only to be who they are as a woman but free to be as a cohering self-organising whole (2001). The possibilities of transformation are strengthened when the freedom to-be-as-woman extends wholistically to freedom to-be-as-women.

Women’s visioning

Boulding describes women’s relationship with the future as ‘Tao of futurism, the way … a social dreaming space’ wherein the originating space and the mode of dreaming/visioning are inseparable (1983:9). Milojevic describes this space-of-being from which women vision, as transformative and empowering (1999). This space carries a strong sense of freedom, optimism and an extended range of possibilities. Boulding describes this ‘Tao of futurism’ as a ‘gentle listening’ from the private spaces of society. Women, she says, produce visions from presence within the daily round of their reality, and from the quiet of the heart and hearth. This awareness is distinctly different from sleep walking in the patterns of the past and so unconsciously perpetuating them. The visions arise from being present in the moments of ordinary life, being attuned with many sensory and intuitive nuances – seeing what is and its related and continuous flow in time and space. The visions arise from the heart and the place of belonging and
relatedness. Paradoxically, women vision expandedly and transcendentally from the groundedness of being present in ordinary, lived experience.16

Women’s visions of the futures have common features. Dator (1994) and Raine Eisler (1999) note the fluid gender and family relationships which are envisioned by women. Boulding observes that the contemporary disjunction of gendered private and public spheres is no longer present (Dator 1994). Milojevic says in women’s futures visions, women are seen everywhere as ‘speakers, doers and knowers’ in many futures rather than one universalised ideal (1999:8). She notes an alert wariness among women to avoid rigid prescriptive structures, particularly those from idealisations from the past and thence their projection into the future. Masini says women are vividly aware of injustices, (new) poverties and the costs of war mentality which are reproduced in the more-of-the-same scenarios of masculinist approaches to the future (2001).

Living in peace with each other and nature are ever present themes in women’s future visioning. Sexuality is presented as an open, respectful and potentially sacred experience which supports the embodiment of wholeness (Copper 1994). Individuals are respected and valued in terms of equal human dignity rather than hero elevation and hierarchies. Social and political power lies with the communities who live in close relationship with the land rather than distant governing bodies disconnected from both people and country/land/Earth. In women’s futures visions, social and government institutions take many forms and involve many types of activities. The picture is of a pluralist, inclusive, practical society with multiple options for social institutions, relationships, work, spirituality, creativity and living interconnectedness. Boulding encapsulates the common themes of women’s future visions auguring quite different expressions of social organisation and governing.

If one were to distil a common utopia from their [women’s] various organizational visions, it would be a pluralistic world society with equal life chances for every woman, man and child, equal participation and

16 In a similar vein, Mohanty advocates looking through the eyes of the most vulnerable to accurately and extensively ‘read up’ from the ground, the layers and dynamics of cultural and global structures (2003; 1986).
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opportunities for all, and innumerable interlacing networks of local people sharing common interests as private individuals concerned for public welfare. It would be a world conscious of its grassroots, and adept at individual-to-individual communication from anywhere to anywhere. It would be a world of diverse lifestyles freely chosen, ranging from voluntary simplicity to urban high technology. The most important feature of this vision is that no community would exist in isolation. (Boulding 1983:14)

Women quietly growing the future

Masini identifies two key trends shaping human futures globally. One is the influence of women and the other is the mingling of peoples through migration (2001). She notes an increasing awareness of the right to life with dignity and to have an equitable lifestyle, which arise from non-western values. She says this influence is growing as people mix more in daily life due to migration occurring in great numbers and in waves.17 Masini says this trend is combining with the growing possibilities of women to influence society ‘in their own way’ (2001:2). Over and beyond feminism, Masini finds that worldwide, women are becoming more aware of themselves, their social role and their position at the periphery of power. This growing awareness which has developed over the last century she says is now irreversible.

Milojevic says that because women’s influence on future unfolding is organic, it is less obvious (1999). As Kuhn notes, paradigms fix fields of focus and what does not have significance within that zone effectively does not exist and so goes unseen (1970). Masini claims that viable alternative futures, infused by women’s ways of being, knowing and relating, are being grown right under our gaze yet are presently unseen. Women’s abilities, Masini (1999, 2001) and Swimme (1990) observe, are as yet untapped in a collective creative sense – but are silently and actively present. What women need now, says Masini, is visibility and solidarity – ‘with these capacities, and in

17 This is not to parallel responses of fear, mistrust and violence (as seen in recent Australian race riots) or the terrible situations of women in countries such as Afghanistan. Houston believes this ‘fusion backlash’ is the response of the ‘old mind’ to unexpected change which has been exacerbated by the effects of globalisation of consumerism and pax American (2000:193-7).
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a society that has such need for these capacities, it is important that women become
visible in positive terms, that they be creative and contribute to building a different society’ (2001:7).\textsuperscript{18} She believes that planetary transformation, is coming as women
bring their ability to live and feel in complexity from the private to the public sphere. She
anticipates a coming historic moment when women recognise each other in the process
where they/we are not seeking power as such but bringing solidarity, compassion and
nurture into society.\textsuperscript{19} With visibility and shared recognition, the organisational structures
and organising principles become articulated and distinct thereby becoming more
accessible. She anticipates the inter-connection created by this recognition, to transform
with “female genius” into a cohesive organic whole (2001).

\textbf{Transformative spiritual action}

Boulding says that ultimately social transformation depends on there being enough
surplus energy of love, trust and action (1983:23). These qualities indicate social change
which is essentially spiritual. Copper sees women’s spirituality as a politics of being,
where consciousness is integrated within lived values and by so doing spiritually
integrates culture (1994). As Peggy Kornegger notes, the change is fundamentally one of
consciousness and spirituality.

Women understand that changes in consciousness (and in
perceptions of consciousness) are at the core of revolutionary change
and that those soul-shaking transformations are also the most
profound energy sustainers …To see being as indestructible energy,
death as continuation not obliteration, and revolution as psychic as
well as political movement is the vision of feminist spirituality.
(Kornegger 1979:9) (bracket in original)

Copper posits a living politics of inter-being as a spiritual context for cultural
transformation where inner states act to inform the future.

\textsuperscript{18} Mohanty gives a similar global perspective and third world view (2003; 1986).
\textsuperscript{19} French feminist philosopher, Luce Irigaray argues that women are more interested in love than
(conventional) power (1986). Love, of course, is a form of energy-activating power of another type.
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Rationale of methodologies for interconnectedness

The methodology I use in this research mirrors the foundational premise of the interconnectedness of phenomena and experience occurring within a wholistic, sacred cosmos. As stated earlier, my primary aim is not to prove this premise although the data does substantiate it inadvertently. I am inquiring into what interconnectedness reveals and increases as possible. My position subsumes the view that the whole of the universe is connected and supportive in an inherent creativity which holds all possibilities.¹ In essence, this cosmological context evokes the use of different or non-usual research paradigms because whether in research, politics or spirituality, ‘the means determines the ends that you can reach’ (Starhawk 1999:321). So in addition to conventional methods of qualitative investigation and validation, I include other ways of knowing appropriate for

¹ My assumptions underpinning this position are presented explicitly in chapter one and are further elucidated and substantiated in chapter two.
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the subjective, psychic, energetic, symbolic, wholistic and sacred worlds and phenomena. The pluralistic base of transpersonal methodology theoretically and pragmatically recognises the human body/mind as an instrument of reception, organisation, anchoring, resonance, projection, magnetism, alignment, re-enactment, image and pattern-making which can operate in various dimensions and states of consciousness. Therefore I incorporate metaphysical research tools. These include methods of changing consciousness and interactive engagement with the sacred, such as meditation, creativity, surrender, dance, sacred ceremony and alignment with specific locations and sacred places. The interface of consciousness and phenomena, I believe, offers modes of interaction and creativity which may bring forth knowledge potentially applicable to interconnective, inter-being politics devolved from of the deepest and most sacred of experiences which can, with attention and congruent action, be implemented in systems of governing.

However, centring on sacredness and fullness of Life limits the use of some research options. Linear, forward-directed causal analysis informed by convergent thinking blends the richness and essence of such experience, falsely reducing complexity and so is theoretically and methodologically inappropriate and inadequate for the task. To do justice to these fields complexity and uncertainty must be embraced. Braud quotes Godel’s theorem that ‘no system can explain any other system which is more complex’ to argue for the appropriate use of transpersonal research which opens the methodologies, and indeed the researcher, to the domains of uncertainty and the unknown (1998:215). White states that transpersonal research is a creative process of operating at the growing edge of ‘the known and accepted’ where the researcher is attempting ‘to discover what has previously not been captured or realised’ by incorporating other perspectives and keeping an open mind for the power of uniqueness to illuminate the new and extend consensual reality (1998:130). She suggests learning to experientially cooperate with the processes by honouring them and becoming familiar with the science associated with

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2 Kahuna shaman Serge King outlines varied healing modalities which become available by intentionally changing the foundational premises about reality in the mind of the practitioner (1988). His methods draw on the organising principles which operate through different mental constructions of the world where the various modalities are in fact effective in the worlds with which they are congruent. Tobin et al. elucidates expanded epistemologies and methodologies available from metaphysical and alternative premises (1997).
them. Similarly Inayatullah says that rational thinking is insufficient for complexity which requires the incorporation of spiritual ways of knowing (1999b:2). He also wisely advocates that any spiritual focus should not lose sight of power disparities of gender, class and race (1999d). Recognising the need for an inclusive and expanded theoretical base, he suggests looking at politics and government from the deepest epistemic underpinning to elucidate what is true and how can it be different.

A scientific response to uncertainty is ‘the science of what if’ used where staying in a narrow focus of predictability and the known, compromises safety (Ravetz 2000, 1997). Ravetz says the demands of complexity require the parameters of what-if science be pluralist and inclusive of multiple perspectives and extended sources of knowledge and contributions from outside orthodoxy. This new science ‘trawls for the unexpected’ operating on the margins and inviting different sorts of expertise, or no expertise at all, giving space and voice into an expanded dialogue. I believe that our present organisation of governing too narrowly restricts real participation and input, and the socio-temporal context in which decisions are taken is far too small to sufficiently address planetary and human needs and that if expanded spheres are not explored we-Earth-dwellers will continue to wallow in dangerous waters.

I attempt to incorporate these domains in the research methodology which is oriented to the future, pragmatically is informed by feminist ethics, situated in the inner and inter-subjectivity recognised in transpersonal research and the data analysis is informed by heuristic synthesis. Transpersonal methodology allows crucial perspectives enabling systemic knowledge of the whole. It recognises the sacred dimension of human Life and transformative engagement through the expanded perception of wholeness in its varying scales of manifestation and where conscious choice and intention orient a research inquiry. Masini states that the theoretical base underpinning Futures Studies is distinguished by the time expanded context and the attendant perceptual influence of deeply held values (1999c). Braud and Anderson link transpersonal and futures studies approaches through their shared focus on values.

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3 Australian paleontologist, Timothy Flannery, in his analysis of global climate change and the urgency for action, asserts that the scope of ‘what if science’ is essential in these times (2005).

4 Heuristic and transpersonal methodologies are further elucidated in Appendix Two.
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The far reaching goal of research is the *good society*, in which kindness, peace, and compassion preside. Living, as we do, in a global society composed of many cultures, languages, and traditions, the good society on a global level requires – even begs – a vision of what will bring us together. This vision is inevitably spiritual, for none other may help us transcend our individual and cultural limitations and vanities. (Anderson and Braud 1998:255)

**Future Orientation**

According to Australian futurist Richard Slaughter, academia has a predominantly past orientation and that consequently much scholastic endeavour operates essentially in the field of the known and resonates pre-existing forms (1999a). I believe the same is a true of the patterns of present forms of democratic government. Sacredness, however, includes the unknown and the unknowable expanding beyond these enclosures. Inayatullah emphasises that the future is inherently unpredictable and uncontrollable, and so humility is a good starting point (1999b).

**Future studies streams**

Future Studies as an academic discipline, started in the wake of the Second World War and developed into two distinct streams (Dator 1994). One stream was an American military pursuit which later included the interests of big business. This stream sees the future through the lens of American military, economic, political and cultural interests, with the aim to predict and control change along the lines of *Pax Americana* (Dator 1994). This genre is employed in the globalisation of corporate capitalism where self-interest is considered the most impelling organiser of human behaviour and is accepted as a desirable standard. The rational mode of thinking dominates and attends to narrow fields of focus. There is a concentration on technology as the inspiration and director of the future. These futures, predicted and amplified into the mainstream, not surprisingly portend more-of-the-same, with a technological pump-up and some genetic manipulation

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5 A study by the Rand Corporation, commissioned by the US military to study the Zapatista movement in Mexico, is an example of this military-business partnership and their shared focus (Naomi Klein 2001).
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added to the stew with the same old ingredients of domination-and-control, greed-and-violence, narrow-focus-scenarios and military solutions.

The other stream of Future Studies consciously includes participants from a broad range of countries and cultures. This humanist stream arose in response to the inhuman behaviour revealed in World War Two. It is motivated by humane values and focuses on peace, justice and analysis of underlying paradigms which lead to injustice, inequality and war. This stream allows and includes many ways of knowing including the spiritual. There is an emphasis on transformation, in the recognition that sustainability is insufficient to address the *global problematique* (Masini 2001; Inayatullah 1999d; Slaughter 1993; Halal 1993). Utopian thinking is developed and then moved into exploratory dialogue to consolidate the implications into visibility and practical application. The core concepts infusing this stream of Futures Studies are the expansion of alternatives and conscious choice. Additionally, with transpersonal methods, there is the recognition that real choice is extended by creative imagination and vision. Choice from the complexity of alternatives in turn fosters empowerment through agency and encourages democratic participation in consciously building the future. Slaughter suggests that it is the study of transpersonal phenomena which opens out major options for future human development and change because this approach is inclusive rather than excluding and reaches into broad expanses of time and space (1999c). He notes that ‘a transpersonal perspective says that futures are created internally in a multi-level flow of interactions which can be *directly experienced*’ (1999c:26; emphasis in original)

Alertness about the capacity for evil enacted by individuals and through systems is maintained in this stream of Futures Studies (Inayatullah 1999c, d). There is also an ethical awareness that while many problems are global the consequences are often felt locally so the research is guided by compassionate awareness of the suffering of the most vulnerable (Nandy 1987:26:14). The impacts of technology are assessed in relation to the

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6 Geoffery Fletcher identifies five elements which frame futures thinking – the existence of alternative choices, the goal of purposeful action, the value of wholistic involvement, the need to adopt an extended time perspective and the importance of guiding images (1979:25). White emphasizes the capacity of ‘double vision’ for the transpersonal researcher – the ability to see several patterns concurrently without distorting or obliterating any (1998).
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ethics of compassion, augmented by the precautionary principle together with awareness of longer term difficulties and potential misuse. There is attention to the disparity of access to beneficial, technological developments and consequent impacts on the most vulnerable. This transpersonal and humanitarian stream of futures research is where I locate my study.

Male dominated futures

Both streams of futures inquiry are however enormously dominated by men, mostly white men. Milojevic regards this domination as male colonisation of the future (1999). Her view is echoed in Dator’s laconic conclusion that one could assume by the circular accolades and referencing in this field that ‘the only relevant futurists in the world are a handful of old white American men’ (1994:1). Milojevic comments that the powerful bias, particularly of these type of men, eschews the agenda of futures research and the congruent dissociated methods used by elite ‘experts’ produces research which lacks any analysis of power distribution in a socio/political context or recognition of restricted availability of real choice for many people. Copper says that the futures these men project ‘are still captive to the masculinist values of excessive control, linearity, order through hierarchy and competition’ (1994:500). While Milojevic points out that this is not the position of all male researchers, she says it is however the approach of the dominating majority. Their influence on the future, through domination of images, discussions, decisions, power and fields of focus is disproportional. Furthermore, there is no awareness on the part of these individuals, of their influence or any clarification of their position within their own or a larger context. Their assumptions from the centre of the universe are unquestioned, unacknowledged and sub-summed by themselves.

Women and futures studies

In reference to the humanist stream, Dator however comments that ‘while, as usual, the western men seem to get all the credit, it is in fact often the women, western and non-western, who are doing much of the work’ (1994:7). Despite their small numbers, these women futurists, particularly the feminists, have contributed a broader and more inclusive dialogue with awareness of colonisation, the powerless, the unseen and unheard (Masini 2001; Milojevic 1999; Boulding 1995a). From an expanded and inclusive social
context, they have developed and utilised methods of researching the future which are empowering and transformative (Boulding 1995a). Boulding points to women futurists like Italian, Eleonora Masini, as an example of a woman futurist who has transcended westernism and has led the expansion of futures into a larger context where there is a concern for the whole world (1995a:4). Elise Boulding herself demonstrates this inclusive perspective in recognising the ‘very precious’ contribution of Indigenous peoples’ knowledge and understanding of how to live in a sacred relationship with land (1995a:5). She also notes that many Indigenous peoples hold images of the future, together with means by which the future is connected to the present, in a sacred relationship. She says that the sacred relationship Indigenous peoples have with the future is vital for themselves and the whole of humanity. She says relating in a sacred manner with the future is a missing element in the materialist western worldview.

Feminist Research Paradigm

Social transformation and personal empowerment

I frame this study within a feminist research paradigm. In a sense all feminist research is futures studies which are grounded in living reality, ethics and action to transform society. Feminist research, by its foci, methods and knowledge generation, aim to transform patriarchal systems, dynamics and cultures to ones of freedom and empowerment of all people in general and of women in particular. Justice and equality are central to feminist research which gives a voice to the unheard and presents previously obscured knowledge and ways of knowing (Belenky et al. 1986). Enabling women and others to articulate and reinforce their own realities, empowers.

Feminist research respects personal experience as a source of knowing which enables depth and has the vitalising dynamism of unmediated authenticity. Validation of each unique experience or identity affirms a concern for integration and wholeness. Commonalities in personal experience gleaned in the exchange of experiential truths, in turn, give a picture of systemic features of a culture revealing the structures of power and foci of attention. Hence the feminist adage, ‘the personal is political’. The cross-fertilisation of the personal and political – and spiritual – supports the articulation of authentic lived experience. Subjective and inter-subjective data keeps research close to
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the vibrancy and complexity of lived experience (Abram 1996) and thereby increases relevance and practical usefulness. Paying the respect of privileging people as the authorities of their own experience is a distinctive feature of feminist research. This is particularly so in areas not validated by dominant ideology such as spirituality.7

**Knowledge generation**

Much feminist research exhibits a connecting and inclusive, transdisciplinary approach, thereby expanding the knowledge base. As the social construction of knowledge is revealed, other sources and ways of knowing are opened and validated (Shulamit Reinharz 1992). Generation of knowledge then expands to include previously non-existing sources, and unacknowledged or invalidated phenomena. Flexibility and creativity in the construction and presentation of discourses in a pluralist inclusive way allows the many voices to be heard and integrated into a wholistic view.

In feminist research methods there is conscious acknowledgement that there is no value free research (Renate Klein 1989). The belief in neutral research is dispelled in the light of the observer-effect where the result observed depends on the methods and perspective of the observer (Cranny-Francis 2003). The values orienting all research are revealed in the underlying assumptions, the fields of attention and implicit power dynamics (Jamrozik 2005). Through honesty and ethics, the feminist researcher is called to communicate her position in relation to the context of the research and within the social structure. The reflexive nature of much feminist research means that less is assumed and more is examined (Milojevic 1999). The eyes of the beholder are firmly located in the personal, social, political and cosmological context and mind of the researcher filtering the research. Rich acknowledges the arbitrary power of the writer to give her version of events (1995:16). To some extent the researcher has similar power through selection and emphasis.8 My approach is guided by my stated aims to elucidate what transforms,

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7 Australian anthropologist, Dianne Bell, modelled feminist ethics and methodology by her acceptance of Aboriginal women as authorities on their own spirituality after their previous invisibility through the eyes of male anthropologists (1985).

8 Over and above observer effect, Sheldrake claims the same projection of bias pervades scientific research (by selective filtering of data and reluctance to present contradictory data) and is most easily seen when biases reflect political prejudice such as racial superiority (1994a:151-162). Kuhn notes the same tendency
empowers and opens beneficial possibilities of the future, albeit through my interpretation.

**Vision and visioning**

Inayatullah broadly describes three methodologies for exploring the future which are to extrapolate past patterns, watch emergent trends, and vision (2003). The first two methodologies fix attention and possibilities in past and the present, and extend these patterns. Masini says that real choice is extended by the creativity of imagination and vision which in turn are related to deeply held values (1999c). I use the third methodology of visioning for this research.

The techniques of visioning and visualisation are each applied in futures research to gather data (eg scenario building) and for specific behavioural effects (eg generating motivation, changing beliefs). Both methods use mental image-making but are different in technique and result. Visualisation is the intentional construction of a particular, chosen image – it deals in known images. Visioning internally evokes images rather than constructing them from a prescribing design or desire. As a research tool, visioning can expand conceptual boundaries of what is possible, explores and articulates new possibilities, refines intuitive insights, stimulates thinking, proactively and intentionally seeds ideas, agitates change and has metaphysical ramifications. Socio-political examples of visioning are the Seven Futures of Gaia which explores the Earth’s possible futures (Chris Jones 1989) and the systematic creative preparation for the future government of an autonomous Tibet (Gabriel Lafayette 1999).

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9 Visualisation is utilised to impact within, by transforming the self-images. Through conscious construction of self and world, interaction of the inner environment with the outer manifest environment shifts perspectives. Visualisation is used in personal development, healing, sports and military training. As a spiritual practice visualisation is a form of mind training to develop concentration and mindfulness, allowinvite experiences of certain states of being, develop imagination and powers of imaging, and develop the magnetic/radiant dynamic by actual embodiment of a state of being (Tulku Thondrup Rinpoche 2000). Thondrup Rinpoche outlines four aspects of the visualisation process – image-making; naming – acknowledging the real existence; feeling – feeling the presence of that existence and feeling as embodiment; and believing – undoubting acceptance, focused certainty.
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However, in relation to politics and power, much futures visioning simply becomes *imagineering* which linearly extends the status quo (Madron and Jopling 2003:18). Boulding ascribes this to fear and pessimism which are dogmatically associated with being realistic; this somewhat collapsed attitude then occludes positive visions (1999:5). This epidemic of Armageddon thinking, Inayatullah believes, pervades the socio-political system through to think-tanks and policy analysis (1999b:5). To overcome this barrier of fear and captured attitude, participants need to articulate and debrief the current dominant reality and seemingly overbearing obstacles to a different future to allow a creative response enabled by a clear psychic space from which other possibilities can be envisioned (Wendy Schultz 1995; Slaughter 1999b). As present and past are settled and released, a sense of control, fixity of self-identity and certainty of direction dissolves into open unknowing.

 Practically the focus needs to be far enough into the future to allow a ‘breach in time’ for the imagination to overcome doubt and dominance of current reality, while still close enough in time to be perceived as possible rather than fanciful. Thirty years is a common time-frame which is within the life-span of many and so relevant and personally engaging, yet long enough to allow major change (Boulding 1999:6).

In this research I also employ back-casting as an adjunct to visioning. Backcasting assume, for the purposes of the technique, that the future exists in some sense and so can be accessed to share the story of its making (Robinson 2003; Inayatullah 1999b; Schultz 1995). After a clear future vision emerges, attention is consciously moved (by intention and instruction) back in steps from the vision to the current reality – hence the name backcasting as compared with forecasting (Boulding 1988). The process alternates between imagination and analysis in steps of five years, thereby creating a series of signposts sequentially connected over time which are read backwards to give a strategic map.

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10 Thirty years is a common period of contribution for superannuation/personal insurance which is entrusted, in an act of faith, to the whims of the market where economic decision are made with an eye to quarterly indices (three monthly). At a Deep Futures symposium, CEO Lindley Edwards suggests that a longer horizon of over one hundred years, not only allows real engagement with complexities but also that the ‘I culture’ of my, one lifetime expands to a ‘we culture’ perspective with the longer view (2003). She also enthusiastically says that if you can dream it and think it, you can do it. This correlates with research cited by Boulding that levels of aspiration are accurate indicators of actual performance (1999:4).
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for implementation or counteraction. Cameos of the intervals are anchored by dialogue and shared image.

**Deeper visioning**

Slaughter comments that a good deal of scenario building used in futures research and business applications (eg motivational inspiration, mission statements) is somewhat shallow (2003). He emphasises the need for a deepening approach to visioning and notes the difference which thorough preparation makes to depth (2002). I believe the ‘drastic discontinuity in time’ (Boulding 1999:5) and jump in perception enabling deep visioning can be enabled by the expanded states of consciousness recognised in transpersonal research. Visioning does not utilise the rational mind. Vision of the new requires clear space and an unshackled open/empty mind. Vision then can come from the not-known, the void, from emptiness, from the dissonance of paradox, from alignment with Life, from transcendence, from sacredness – and be met with an open/empty mind free to see possibilities.

The visioning process can be deepened by utilizing practices, formally and secularly spiritual, which clear the mind. These practices, when refined, offer methodologies to intentionally change consciousness and thereby expand the modes of perception. For this reason Braud and Schitlz use ganzfeld mind preparation in transpersonal research (1983, 1989). Boulding notes that visioning is deeply rewarding when informed by spirituality and that this requires a lot of psychic energy (1995:3). These methods shift the state of embodied consciousness and so are consistent with the Slaughter’s suggestion to go deeper. For my research, experiential interconnectedness is congruent with the desired domain of sacredness and creative organization of enacted patterns of relatedness (Fritz 1984; Serge King 1988; Braud and Anderson 1998).

Sacred ceremony is a rapid, safe and efficient method for a shift in awareness to openness in body, emotions, mind and spirit, and to still remain grounded (Beaumont 1998). Remembering across dimensions as consciousness changes and the associated

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11 Ganzfeld or whole-field effect was first described by Arctic explorers. The practice of gazing at a featureless field of vision consistently and quickly induces altered states which correlate with heightened psychic abilities.
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framing drops away, is the challenge. However, the groundedness of women’s ceremonies tends to bridge this shift through experiential connectedness held in the body, tangibly felt with others and the Earth, all of which enable conscious remembering and enactment (Beaumont 1998). In applying ceremony to visioning, the vision may come through image, thought, body sensation, emotions and contemporaneous phenomena. These are anchored by articulation, movement, mudra, dance and writing. In women’s sacred ceremony, there is a paradoxical matrix of serious intent, lightness, surrender, service and utmost responsibility. The trajectory and domain of sacred ceremony are oriented, directed and ethically limited by the use of altruistic dedication (for the benefit of all), and clarity of the intention – yet the consequences cannot be predicted, willed or controlled.12

By using spiritual practices futures studies methods can potentially be expanded by the use of consciousness, creativity and sacredness. Inayatullah notes a distinctly Australian pro-active dynamic of action research orientation in the futures studies field (1999e). Use of creative and spiritual methodologies is consistent with this home-grown genre of futures research and with the basic premises on which this research is based. These tools I apply in a humble experiment aimed to elucidate government based on sacredness and processes of transition from here to there.

**Research strategies**

I conducted my research through two quite different strategies. The first was analysing my political candidature in an Australian national election. In the second strategy, a focus group participated in a visioning ceremony focused on future forms of interconnected governing. I interviewed the participants and supplemented that data with phenomenological data and heuristic synthesis.

12 Sacred ceremony requires surrender to and alignment with the greater whole. I am not talking about an ideology or institution as these are tiny and temporary parts of the greater dynamics of Life and the universe. Other inter-dimensional ceremony which does not involve dedication and surrender can be used to amplify personal and group/cult/social will. Dedication of service to all, is an antidote to abuse by will and misuse by fear.
Strategy one: political candidature

I undertook preliminary research in-situ in the present milieu of politics. Specifically I was the endorsed candidate for The Greens political party in the Australian national electorate of Eden-Monaro in the 2001 national election. The ecology of my mind in-situ gave me a timely opportunity to explore the interface of spirituality with present political situations. Of particular interest was the experience of being in and switching worlds, through the internal interaction of different paradigms of separateness and interconnectedness which are generally regarded as mutually excluding. I kept a journal covering my experiences, reflections, observations and interactions which I later mapped and heuristically analysed in a reflexive process. My inner experiences were complemented by perspectives on political events and power dynamics within a fiercely competitive arena of interaction where the issues of race, refugees and woodchipping forests were to the fore.

And why The Greens? Charlene Spretnak identifies a spiritual dimension of The Greens embodied in the underlying tenet of interconnectedness articulated as principles which inform Greens processes, policies and decisions (1986). These key principles are ecological wisdom; social, economic and environmental justice; participatory democracy; peace and non-violence. The Greens ‘flat’ grassroots structure and consensus processes of ‘doing politics differently’ are ways of putting interconnectedness into political practice.

Strategy two: a visioning ceremony on experientially interconnected government

The visioning process, as a sacred ceremony and as a research project, was guided by an intention. The research intention was to take the imagination to a reality where

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13 Eden Monaro is situated in the south east corner of New South Wales. It covers a large geographic area which rises from the coast to the Snowy Mountains and the border of Canberra, the Australian capital. The Spirit of the land is strong and resonant with many sacred places. The forests are tall and the oceans reverberate with whale-song. The electorate has a diversity of regions and communities with very different interests. Politically, Eden Monaro is called the Australian barometer seat; marginal swings in voting between the two major parties changes the outcome which predicts and reflects the final national election results so the media watch the trends with interest.

14 The principles of The Greens were first applied by political parties in Hobart, Australia and Wellington, New Zealand in the late 1970’s. The Greens are now worldwide in over 80 countries and have sprung up from the grass-roots where each nation’s party reflects its own local flavour (Christine Dann 2001).
government is underpinned by the knowing, perceptions and practices derived from the experience of sacredness – right on the ground of present Australian government, Parliament House, Canberra. The ceremonial intention as stated at the time was to vision government based on sacredness, on deep interconnectedness within each being, with each other, all people, all beings, this land and site, this continent, the Earth, the cosmos and the divine.

Practices to enable experience of the sacred cleared the space for visioning.15 From this timespace the participants were asked to be open to information, sights, symbols, behaviours, processes and experiences about the any processes, systems, environments and their stages of inception. Without breaking the flow of energy the participants then shared what they experienced in whatever form was useful (speech, dance, movement, drawings, patterns, sounds, descriptions stories, experiences, emotions etc.), thereby anchoring the experiences to be readily revivable. The visioning ceremony was consciously dedicated to the highest benefit for all to hold the (sacred) space, and direct events and outcomes.

The participants were group of women who had strong spiritual lives and were at ease with sacred ceremony and creative practices. They understood the meaning of living with sacredness and in interconnectedness, saw value of its application to government and were willing to make a contribution in the spirit of the intention of the research. Additionally, most shared a sense of disillusionment with war and present forms of government coupled with a feeling that the world and government can and should do better.

15 While I give more detail of these practices later in this chapter, sacred ceremonies are deeply experiential and are additionally bound by ethical precepts concerning their explication. In my personal experience Indigenous spiritual teachers and ceremonial leaders give very strong advice not to discuss the events of sacred ceremony out of context. For Tantric Buddhist practices non-disclosure is an obligation. For these reasons while I do describe the sacred ceremony it is not an oversight but a deliberate decision not to go into the detail. For the alchemy of intentionally changing states of consciousness, just like chemistry, it is the resultant product that is the focus – for this research, the focus is the insights, intuitive glimpses and actualised transpersonal processes which offer individual and collective transformation and interconnectedness. The powers and nature of sacred ceremony and their experiential and energetic impact are discussed in some detail in chapter two.
Chapter six: Methodology

There were nine women and an 18 month old girl present at the ceremony, another woman and her male partner joined with us from another location and one man spontaneously came to the area to provide us with psycho-spiritual protection. Other people were aware and connected with what was happening. The women present were all non-Indigenous Australians who live in Canberra, Sydney and on the south coast of New South Wales. The women were connected through personal networks. The actual visioning ceremony was a joint creation of women gifting from their spiritual traditions and experiences, practices which they felt would be efficacious. The women were co-researchers in the exploration.

The invitation to participate was selected somewhat intuitively – a form of spiritual snowballing. The initial invitations came from the ‘dreamers’ of the ceremony.\(^{16}\) A sense or energy of a woman arises in the mind, not the thinking mind, a clear, magnetic space. As a woman came to mind, she was then contacted and the possibility (ceremony and research) was explained to them and they were invited – then the issue was dropped and it was up to them. Each woman was empowered to call in any other woman. Not all who were contacted, participated. Some Koori women contacted at another ceremony said they would not attend but were aware and made some spirit connections. The women self-selected through an inner response to the invitation to participate. Additionally they cared enough to do it and believed positively in the possibilities. Their stated motivation for participation was concern for children of the present and future. A sense of fun was also apparent.\(^{17}\)

\(^{16}\) Dreaming-in-ceremony is done by persons who hold a space, a particular and aware openness, for indications, attributes and specifics, about a coming ceremony.

\(^{17}\) Abraham Maslow’s approach to humanist psychology of seeking the perspective of ‘ordinary people’ as well as ‘experts’ has always appealed to me (1956, 1968, 1986). This significantly influenced my choice of research method – and additionally because ethically, pragmatically and democratically, the future is the business of all people. Another source of information I found I used extensively was interviews with ‘experts’, and hence a number of Australian Broadcasting Commission interviews are cited in the bibliography. I feel people often hone the essence of their experiences and fields of expertise when in direct communication. Also personal interviews give a sense of the whole person, as well as relevance in the context of current social and political discussions, trends and events.
Vision ceremony: events of the day

The women met at Old Parliament House, Canberra. The morning was bright, crisp and clear. Each woman had brought a piece of wood from their home place to offer for the sacred fire at the Aboriginal tent embassy. The intention was to request permission to put the wood on the sacred fire and to connect with the spirits and the people who belonged to that place, and also in that action to ceremonially clear, burn away, any obstacles to our purpose.

We went to the embassy hut (temporarily destroyed by arson two months later) and spoke with the Koori Elder there and expressed our intention. We chatted for a while – where were we from, do we know certain people from our locales. There was a picture of a south coast Elder on the wall; some of us had been to camps and sacred places with him.

The Elder took us out to the sacred fire. She said it was the right thing to do – bringing the wood and honouring the land and spirits. We stood in a circle around the fire. She spoke-in the spirits and country and her ancestors. Her words rang deep – the presences and connectedness were tangible. We placed our wood on the sacred fire, each expressing an honouring or prayer. Each participant expressed her barriers to imagining positive futures and government based on sacredness. The Elder gave a blessing to our endeavours. With thanks we left.

As we drove the short distance up to Parliament House we passed people setting up for a demonstration against Australia’s involvement in the invasion of Iraq. The timing of the vision ceremony was to a background of war, social distress and global peace actions involving 40 million people.

The design of Canberra is aligned by sacred geometry to enable a flow of spiritual energy and symbolise democracy (Peter Proudfoot 1994; David Wright 2001). Australia’s Parliament House is aligned with significant sacred sites and the four cardinal directions

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18 The Aboriginal Tent Embassy was set up outside the Australian national parliament in 1972 to bring attention to Aboriginal land rights and that Indigenous Australians are treated like aliens in their own land – it is still there and so are the issues.
which are so central to sacred ceremony to different cultures around the planet. The architectural design maximises light and nature. The meditation room in Parliament House is situated on the first floor under the large central glass pyramid. Facilitated at different times by Senators Jo Valentine (Nuclear Disarmament Party) and Christobel Chammarette (Western Australian Greens) the meditation room has been used by small groups for meditation with the intention to lift the energy of the place. The room is an odd elongated shape with three semi-partitioned cubicles along one side. Apparently the room was an overlooked undesigned space in the original design. There is only doorway which opens directly from the elevator. There is no ornamentation save one picture which captures beauty, simplicity and future possibility in its layout on wood of a circle inlayed with the symbols of the major world religions and so is in keeping with the shared nature of the space for the cooperative use of practitioners of various religious and spiritual practices. However, if the blowflies on the window ledges are an indication, the room did not seem to have a lot of use. However the room offered a perfect symbolic and physical locus for exploration of sacredness in democratic government - to somehow place in trust or position our intention in the heart of the closest symbol we could find to change the way the government is run, [which] was the meditation room in Parliament House. That’s a symbol of change at some other level completely. I mean the demos were raging outside, and it just seems like another way to do it perhaps, to put into place some other energy … the meditation room is symbolic of going within and the sacred - going within to the sacred. So really that’s what I saw - twelve women dedicated to putting their energy in to create some kind of shift (Ruth, a participant).

Our time in the meditation room was full, joyful and intensely efficient. Sacred and protected space was created through alignment with the directions, by the consciously acknowledged intention for this experiential and actual space, and by expanding the sacred place/state within each person until that energetic resonance filled the whole site.

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19 Orientation of the elements, powers and embodied energies of the four directions is discussed in chapter two.

20 The meditation room at the United Nations building in New York is also undominated by any one religion or tradition and has a beautiful and simple play of light on a single large rock which captures the essence of the intangible which is known and common. I discuss this as a model of shared clear and sacred space in places of government in chapter eight.
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Each of these actions shifts and deepens consciousness and attention as a state of being. In this ambiance of sacred timespace, our intention for our time together was spoken-in. Ceremonially, sacred space opened gateways and deep connectedness with the Earth and the cosmos, and connected with the site, its spirits, human and non-human, ancestors and the living. The clear psychic energy of the space supported participants to be aware and present and out of linear time because sacred ceremony with some reliability helps to create the experience of interconnectedness, an experience of inter-being and embodied love. This inner state is the ultimate sacred space, a transformative and creative space. Sacredness and ceremony enabled clarity and embodied interconnectedness which facilitated connection and with possible futures in the path of the Life-stream flowing through us. In a weaving of beauty, each woman contributed from her experiences and spiritual practices which included prayer, chanting, mantra, guided visualisation, ritual, sacred symbols, blessed objects, sacred teaching stories, laughter and tears.

Central to the ceremony was a sacred circle, a talking circle held in sacred timespace and known in several cultures (and further described in chapter eight). By each person heightening the inner experience of interconnectedness and through shared sacred practices, the experience of becoming an interconnected unit, or more accurately a unity, arose. In this space each woman shared what arose for her. Distress at the war and world events came to the fore to be spoken and cleared for a deeper space of visioning. A time of meditation followed where the intention alone guided each person’s experience. The visioning flowed out of this time and space. Impressions were spoken to ground them and to bring the visions, feelings, experiences, symbols, words, thoughts, insights and states of being ‘here’ into the present, and to speak, ground, anchor and initiate them in body, speech, mind, energy field and site. Each woman’s speaking built the whole event and expression and was vital. Expressing heart-felt desires and perceptions in a sacred space was empowering. The use of sacred ceremony augmented the process of visioning. At a distinctly known point everyone felt that the sacred circle was complete. It was followed by sacred circle dance from the culture of one of the women where the women linked and moved in beauty as a single being of Life, and which through the moving flow of inter-being grounded an energetic pattern and symbol of being-together-as-one into the physical space.
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After the visioning ceremony, our group ran into The Greens Senator, Bob Brown in a corridor. Outside the demonstration was in full swing. The Koori Elder we had been with earlier brought the sacred fire to the doors of Parliament House to ceremonially smoke the place of evil.21 We joined the smoking ceremony and demonstration. The day was filled with synergy, synchronicity and love which seemed to affirm our intention. Then off down the hill we drove home.

As the anti-war demonstration raged outside, and as parliamentarians inside said the Lord’s prayer then argued loudly, twelve women were inside the closest symbol we could find to the heart of a new paradigm of governing – the place of stillness and contemplation in parliament. Our purpose was to vision from that symbolic place/space and the sacred place within, government based on sacredness. Of many possibilities for attention, the visioning ceremony (and research method) utilised states of consciousness aligned with the experience and reality of deep interconnectedness.

Data collection and analysis

For the research, the circle of women is taken as a particular kind of focus group which was using additional tools to focus intention and attention. The women previously gave written consent to tape-record proceedings. Although I took two tape recorders in the meditation room both were mostly indecipherable – as is often the way with sacred ceremony where the energy of the time and space defines what is permissible. The visioning ceremony became a preparatory experience, conditioning participants for insights which arose immediately and later, and were later shared in the interviews. I interviewed all but one woman within two days of the ceremony. I also interviewed the man who responded to his spirit to journey to Canberra and provide additional spiritual protection for the ceremony. With the participants’ written permission, I audio-taped, transcribed, and analysed the interviews. I returned the verbatim transcript to each participant for validation. They had full authority to delete, add to and/or clarify any material. Ethical procedures in relation to the participants, informed consent, data collection and storage were followed. Their words are in italics in the thesis. My

21 Smoking is an Indigenous ceremony to clear energy often as preparatory to further actions and ceremonies. It has some similarities to smudging ceremony of Native Americans.
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presentation of the participant’s contributions together with my analysis were also sent to
the participants for their validation – their responses were extremely positive and
confirmed the accuracy and authenticity of the results as presented in chapters seven,
eight and nine.

The women’s experiences, events of the day, synchronicities, inner states and synergy
between all of these, became part of the data later recorded. Some of the research data
arose phenomenologically from the events of the day which the participants indicated in
their interviews. Overall the data was internally validated as coherent by the recognised
techniques of triangulation of sources and methods, prolonged engagement with the
subject matter, peer debriefing, participant checks, rich thick description in the interviews

Phenomenology was an appropriate adjunct as a research method for experiential and
spiritual matters as it ‘does not explain the world, it describes the world as it is
experienced in its felt immediacy’ (Abram 1996:34). Adam Kroy describes
phenomenology as a ‘reflective, introspective study of consciousness by itself’ and states
that this does not make it irrational (1984). He says it allows discernment of patterns and
structures in conscious experience. Phenomenological data is appropriate for spiritual
enterprises and capacities of intention, insight, memory and purpose (Wilber in
Sutherland 1984) as it allows human fullness and complexity to be seen with the
presentation of unique viewpoint (Liz Stanley and Sue Wise 1993). The authority lies
within – as Hunt says ‘I know because I have experienced’ (1996:102).

During my political candidature (six months) I kept a journal to record thoughts, events,
feelings and reflections. This information was bracketed for later viewing, to enable the
perspective of distance to give shape and interpretation which then fed further direction
of the research. However I experienced a degree of crisis in confidence about this aspect
of the research, particularly my capacity to make comments from a spiritual perspective.
Additionally while the research was methodologically sound and revealed many
behavioural and systemic obstacles to cooperative, unitive peace-modelling forms of
politics, this was not my focus. I did not want to research the present problems but to
explore alternative possibilities. My few experiments into active, intentional interruption
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of adversarial patterns to supplant them with patterns of interconnectedness did identify some possible methods of wholistic integration, transition strategies and dynamics of transformation at the behavioural and systemic levels. These experiences do inform the research but more in terms of leaving me with a deepened sense of optimism and distinctly chosen orientation of attention which comes into play in the heuristic mode of analysis, rather than presentation of these experiences directly.

I integrated the differing forms of data (interviews, phenomenological, reflexive) in shifting rounds of categorization, synthesis and analysis in a heuristic process of immersion, in-dwelling, patience and empathetic engagement. Barbara McClintock speaks of ‘an openness to let it come to you’ (Anderson 1998:76). I tried to be open, listen and gestate – trusting that the unfolding of each step to be the foundation for the next.

The combined findings revealed possibilities which transected many fields of living and transformative zones of activity. Inayatullah discusses the integrated futures method of layered causal analysis which in a transpersonal and sythesist genre recognises the spiritual, metaphysical (symbolic, mythic), interconnected and dominant reality of consensual focus and ordinary life (2002). Each of these layers interpenetrates any phenomena and the lens focuses what is seen. Their integration allows a richer and more efficacious analysis within transformative spaces enabling relevance and realism. The results of the research reflect this multi-layered dimensionality of individual and collective life.

However for possibilities to be accessible they need to be plausible, achievable, communicable and concise – and I would add, inclusive of transpersonal attention and practices. This is my endeavour. I present the results in the next three chapters in three interweaving themes. They are withinness, vision as process, and sources of transformation. The results are not definitive or generalised; however they indicate the praxis of significant experiences, processes and potentials which can be realised in democratic practices and forms of governing thirty years hence.
Chapter seven: Withinness: evolutionary starting point

Introduction

In this chapter I explore issues and experiences arising from the visioning ceremony. The women spoke of the nature of their inner experiences and the roles that such experiences can play in democratic governing processes. They said the starting place for new forms of government lies within ourselves and arises in the personal journey as we each take individual responsibility for ourselves and concurrently for the whole. Of the many, I highlight several key actions/experiences from the ‘within-of-things’ as experienced by ordinary people which, I believe, is missing from current political practice. One is centring-within to come to a coherent integrated knowing as one’s truth. Another is the experience of surrender where one’s being and identity melds into the confluence of unfolding Life and mysterious vitalising creativity. Another is personalised experience of love as an entry into a universal, experiential force which unifies. All of these experiential states align the individual self as part of humanity, and indeed Life and all-that-is. With each of these experiences, women spoke of an attendant sense of purpose in contributing to the service of the whole.
I present the words of the women with minimal editing to allow their own voices to have their emphasis and style of expression. I selected the quotations in a balance between being concise, enabling their inputs to inform a synergised whole and at times allowing a story or viewpoint to be told. The women’s contributions are in italics. I make comment in the present tense to respect the validity of their propositions. I follow each section with analysis, substantiation and implications for future government.

**Withinness: evolutionary starting point**

**Earth pilgrimage – the meander to wholeness**

European Christian pilgrimages of earlier times often ended at the cathedrals. These intentional acts of walking the Earth to holy places were to transform drifting through one’s life to focused meaning, courage and purpose (Alan Jones 1992). Many pilgrims ended their journey to Chartres cathedral by walking the labyrinth, the centring mandala inlaid in the floor. Walking the labyrinth was/is an intentional enactment of the meandering journey to the healing centre of spiritual wholeness within – and then return with the embodied gift and focus to bring to the outer world. The walk was undertaken as a sacred ceremony.¹

The labyrinth is itself an astoundingly precise model of the spiritual understanding of the universe. Not only are the exact cosmic rhythms built into it but, as well, the other sacred measures that represent our relationship to the ‘journey back’ to our spiritual wholeness. (Keith Critchlow in Jones 1992)

Jones describes the traditional labyrinth walk as a Threefold Path (1992).² The first part was Purgation, letting go of worldly, daily cares to be in the present. The second part was Illumination, which arises as clarity of heart and mind by standing in the centre – the centre of one’s being and so the universe. The third part was Union, joining with the divine in the centre which then emboldened one’s re-emergence into the world.

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¹ The labyrinth is a continuous path covering the whole surface of a circle and is designed to integrate wholeness. A maze is designed to confuse with binary choices and dead-ends.

² Alan Jones is the dean of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, which has a replica of the Chartres labyrinth.
journey was one of coming-into-wholeness within, with the Earth, the divine and all. Interestingly the women also enunciate these pivotal, experiential steps for new forms of government shaped by the sacred. They use the terms, truth/centring, surrender/letting go and love/giving.

The journey is personal awakening

The starting point for social and political transformation is ourselves and spiritual awareness in our daily lives.

Tara: People often say “Well where do you start? How can we keep going?” And I believe that the way is for each person to be working on their own spiritual development, and just to have that daily awareness – it’s a very small thing, to be a good person, to be the best person you can day to day. … if I envisage that, then immediately we have a world full of harmony and peace. If each person feels personally at peace, and personally happy with that open heart, then we can’t help but be loving and kind to each other. So I think it starts day to day, with where you work, with your family, with your community – and that extends to all beings, not just people but all beings. You know, awareness of the earth spirits, awareness of animals, particularly awareness of the environment because the land is the mother. That’s a very simple concept – its common-sense. So I think if we start there, then we’ll achieve what we want.

The journey to wholeness and interconnectedness, starts with each person taking personal responsibility and action for their own spiritual development and awareness. The source of change and power is in the day to day life of ordinary people and in their interactions with all beings. Because the power of transformation lies with ‘me’, the first steps to changing the world are small, highly potent and eminently accessible – and which can then create/act outwards.

Lead oneself

The personal journey is one of awakening which calls for persons to lead themselves. Individual self-responsibility enables wholeness which, with the inclusion and integration of many perspectives, generates wisdom.
Chapter seven: Withinness: evolutionary starting point

Sam: The time of leaders is over – the time of gurus is over too in a sense, same sort of thing really. I think the journey is a personal awakening that we are having. It’s a personal journey and it’s a collective journey.

As you wake up and realise yourself, there isn’t a need for a leader or a master. It’s not to say that they are totally extinct because we don’t know everything – well we know everything and we don’t know everything. So there’s always other views, other perceptions; there’s always wisdoms and intuitions that we can learn from.

There’s levels of being, not that pyramid thing. There’s not somebody at the top and everyone’s down here going ‘oh yeah three bags full’ – it’s more like ‘oh yeah, OK, I hear what you’re saying, well that’s great, I’m alright with that’ or ‘this is what feels alright for me’ or ‘out of my truth it looks like this for me’ – so we keep talking about it and we reach some understanding.³

Truth

Truth is a key quality for governing from sacredness. Truth in this sense is not about ‘facts’ (which in the context of observer-effect are as diverse as paradigms), but about deeply integrated perception and knowing of each unique individual which arises with inner integrity as their truth – known in that moment in timespace and ideally when aligned by self-centring to the greater wholes of humanity, Earth and the cosmos. Such personalised truth is found by going deeply within, to centre in one’s own state of being and knowing, to coalesce as one’s truth. The skills of personalised truth extend from recognition, to dwelling with it and letting it play through you and thence outward into living and speaking.

Process of knowing one’s truth

One woman applied this understanding of truth to ways of governing. She spoke of participants (in government) connecting with their truth by turning attention within, to centre in stillness, with honouring, alignment and integrity, and so focusing through that distinct vibration of being. This level of attention is deeper than the present daily

³ Sam is referring to a nursery rhyme about sheep with the phrase ‘three bags full’; she is inferring behaviour like sheep, mindless followers.
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business of life. In application to governing from interconnectedness, truth and responsibility are honoured by appropriate attention, awareness in the present and inner connection with one’s truth. Decision-making which is on behalf of all, namely democratic government, is then a very serious undertaking requiring this degree of skill, focus and commitment.

Haley: The process is not only about sitting around in a circle but about connection, first with your truth in speaking. During this process you disengage the ego, so when you speak, it comes from a deeper place of being. It does not come from the same space or state of mind we do our busy life with. It is a deeper honouring of the decision that needs to be made and the level it needs to be made at.

Truth-recognition and emanation

Truth is recognised through some form of resonance – not, however, the resonance of like-to-like in terms of having the same versions of truth. Sameness of experience, perceptions or cognition of truth is not the source of activation but the resonance of being-in-one’s-truth, as a state of being. The state/process of connection-within to one’s inner assembling and integration of experience, sense, spirit and heart perception, authorisation and processing of truth, emanates a particular human energetics. The vibrating pattern of truth has independence from the content. The inner alignment leads to authenticity in presentation of one’s ‘truth’. Such truth has a wholeness which emanates and transmits a ‘vibration’ activating resonance of similar wholeness. This state of being is recognised. The recognition has a sense of certainty about its source and quality. Truth-recognition is recognition of a pattern which has a subtle quality of signal encoded in it by the state of being, integration and integrity of the speaker. It is the recognition of a pattern coming through whole and is a quality of wholeness in that moment.

On the receiving end, there is a kind of listening which supports the recognition of truth-speaking – it is awake, engaged in relatedness and attending. When listening for truth, hearing occurs with the ears and mind plus the heart and being. Listening as a process of present-being, is open, receptive and awake to inner interacting responses to words, vibration and being of the speaker. The heard truth may move the listener or not –
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however it is recognised as that person’s truth and evokes respect. Different truths which are personally wholistic have the same subtle energetic response. The actual version of truth may agree with one’s own or sit in dissonance or direct contradiction. This, however, is quite different from the sense of authenticity emanating from the speaker and the clarity arising from inner integrity.

Haley: It doesn’t mean that people won’t have different opinion of truth, it just means that when they speak, they speak with absolute clarity – so the other person can hear that truth in a different way. It is on a different level. It is not just with the ears or the mind, it’s with the heart and the being as well. And they can take that on board and process it, and may be moved, or not moved, depending on where they are ‘sitting’.

Truth-speaking from the heart and spirit

Speaking from the heart integrates politics and love. The clarity moves people and touches their souls – it nurtures their faith and trust. The effect of truth-speaking goes deep, touching the soul with resonance of wholistic knowing and being. One participant spoke of being touched to the soul at an anti-war rally.4

Tony: Bob Brown was awesome. He’s so right there. He spoke without notes. He didn’t sound like it was a diatribe – he just spoke from the heart, but with such points – it was amazing oratory. It was straight from the heart, but political. I haven’t heard a politician in Australia speak like that. I was in tears … I was so churned up.

Alignment with sacredness, within and out, enhances truth-speaking and takes the power of words across timespace. Space consciously dedicated as sacred empowers truth-speaking. A state of being present, and conscious of extended worlds of beings and energies, reverberates through all worlds, causing effects. The Koori Elder at the sacred fire at the Aboriginal Tent Embassy at Parliament House prior to the women’s vision ceremony, was aligned within and outward to/with the land, ancestors and spirit(s). She exemplified the potentials and power of truth-speaking when enacted in sacredness. Her speaking had a ring which resonated the souls of those present.

4 This energy and influence of embodied ‘truth force’ was called satyagraha by Mahatma Gandhi (1983).
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Gaia: …the ceremony at the Koori sacred fire at the beginning of the day, and the woman that held that circle for us, she was just right there, straight-forward, speaking truth, she was so aligned.

Ross: You could feel her lined up with the land, with the ancestors, with all that was there.

Recognition of untruth

The corollary of knowing truth is the recognition of untruth. Deliberate untruthfulness particularly, is known, acknowledged, processed and has effects. People know when they are being lied to, particularly so by their so-called leaders. There are consequences on the individual and for the social fabric and structure of relationships. The current barrage of lies is hurting people’s spirits. The psychic offence is too strong and people close down or turn away.

Sam: If you can believe it, this war is about peace, it’s humanitarian, liberators not oppressors – a daily oxymoron, spin, all the jargon. After a while people switch off, they can’t cope with that – they are not hearing the truth. They might not know particularly what the truth is, but it’s jarring their spirits somewhere in there. It’s too hard, no one’s listening to them – what do you do, where do you go – you don’t even know what you might want to say, you just know it’s not right, it’s not how they say it is. And people switch off. They are happier watching the tellie or going to the footie match. People switch off because they see no integrity. How can they say these things?

Interiorisation of truth

Repeated exposure to the dissonance of deliberate untruth is taking people to their own truths. A major social shift is going on which is as yet mostly unrecognised. The shift is one of spirit, power, relationship and authority.

Ross: People know they are hearing jargon. They see it for what it is. Something’s happened, people are different, they are aware, more active and they are switching on again.
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**Truth energy: centred within one’s truth**

In this section I substantiate the implications of the women’s comments to elucidate the processes and their potentials.

**Centred coherence within**

To centre, the mind is quietened to become stiller and stiller. In the centre is aware integration of the psychic field of one’s being to create a new arrangement of self. This is the truth of one’s being in that moment/event in timespace. Centredness is associated with states of stillness, focus, presence, creativity and relatedness. The associated quieting of the mind leads to alignment, coherence and knowing one’s own truth of perception which crystallises as inner knowing.

‘Personal truth’ is an aspect of *personalisation* or coming-into-wholeness, becoming a *centre*, as elucidated by Teilhard (1969a). Turning-within through self-reflexivity forms a unique whole personalised centre, through the coalescence of one’s consciousness. The centre is the point of oneness, wholeness, being a whole – like the centre *bindu* point in a sacred mandala around which all is constructed (Gilchrist 2004). The centre point flows outward to a circle and sphere of activity and symbology. Being centred-within is a form of inner harmony which inter-relates as a unity through fields of consciousness and thought across timespace. From centredness, a unique contribution vital to other wholes/centres can be made.

Empirical studies validate and characterise experiences of centring. Research on peak human experiences illustrate the various ways of centring can be taught and increased (Braud 1998; Andrews 1993). Meditation, creativity and human energetic/vibrational healing display unitary states of consciousness and illustrate the potentials of the associated coherent synchronisation (Davidson 2004a; Hunt 1996; Gerber 1988; Brennan 1988). Nitamo Montecucco found that intense creativity, profound well-being, intuition, meditation and relaxation created coherent states of brain synchronisation (1997). He particularly emphasised the efficacy of empathy and self-awareness to enable collective

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5 Coherence means the coordination of activity within a being or living system so that every aspect synergistically reinforces the whole and the whole supports all parts (Orme-Johnston 1992:6).

Physician Herbert Benson indicates that states of synchronisation can be achieved by various activities of focused concentration, as well as be induced by technical means (1975). He found coherence occurred in many devotional, repetitive practices such as the Catholic rosary, Protestant centreing prayer, davening, rocking prayer of Judaism, movement like tai chi, yoga, qigong, chanting, pre-suggestive stage of hypnosis and concentrated rhythmic drum beat. The process of centring also occurs in endurance physiology, classical and devotional dance (eg whirling), acting, breath exercises, mantra, song, sport, creativity and direct vibrational healing by the human energy field. These practices induce experience of the sacred.

Mediation practitioners have been used to study coherence over different states of consciousness. Mediation specifically trains the mind to be more aware and empathetic for the purpose of spiritual development. Whether the mind-training aims to open the mind more fully, converge to a one-pointed focus or another intention, the self dissolves as the primary focus (Walsh 1993). In mediation the mind becomes stiller. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi says that meditation techniques allow the excitations of the mind to settle down to an inner wakefulness which is a wholeness aware of itself and ‘a field of possibilities, where creative potentialities exist together, infinitely correlated, yet unexpressed’ (1976:123).

Richard Davidson (using functional magnetic resonance imaging) studied neurological effects on brain areas of advanced meditation (Zetter 2003). He found that during compassion meditation the meditator showed high levels of activity in the left prefrontal lobe – an area associated with feelings of joy, happiness and enthusiasm. He demonstrated a link between compassion and personal happiness. Davidson postulated that meditation not only is associated with these areas of well-being, but over time re-circuits the brain pathways to embed this as the basic disposition. The findings indicated that meditation has effects on the brain’s plasticity and ability to be ‘re-wired’ by experience through an accumulative influence. Psychologist, Paul Ekman validated these
findings in studies on emotional and physical well-being of 1000 prisoners in India (Ariel and Menahemi 1997) and industrial workers in USA (2003).

Earlier work by Benson also indicated the beneficial effects of meditation on physiological health which he called the relaxation response (1975). He noted common factors – turning within from external distractions, repetition of a word, phrase, sound or movement and continual return to the focus of attention. Itzhak Bentov showed that rhythmic, oscillating pulsations between the brain and the heart eventually activated lasting changes (1988). The movements within the cranial cavity and ventricles developed standing waves which had an acoustic effect detected as ‘inner sound’ which in the brain translated into electrical effects. The subsequent sounds and later lights, he associated with the ‘kundalini awakening’.

Hunt measured not only brain function but emanation of subtle electro-magnetic fields surrounding the human body (the aura) (1996). The measurements were simultaneously observed by persons with enhanced perceptual sensitivities. Her measurements of distinct frequency ranges and patterns correlated with the observations. Hunt gave particular attention to meditation and other centred, focused states and found them associated with enhanced well-being and coherent externally radiated fields.

**Intra and inter coherent synchronisation**

Montecucco developed research strategies to give a quantitative picture of brain and measurement of its degree of coherent synchronisation. While consciousness is certainly beyond brain activity, his work gives understanding of physical associations with fields of collective and individual consciousness. His investigations of the degree of synchronisation in the brain as wave coherence, during and after meditation experiences, yielded results with enormous implications for human and planetary transformation. His many experiments covered individual, inter-personal and collective synchronisation. Montecucco found that synchronisation or coherence of brain waves depended on the state of consciousness. In meditation the brain waves become coherent. In measurements

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6 Montecucco used a computerised electroencephalograph device to give a global map of brain functions with mathematical analysis of wave coherence (alpha, beta, delta and theta) during mediation.
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of synchronisation between different hemispheres of the brain of individual persons, health and well-being also correlated with high brain synchronisation. Depression and psychosomatic problems were associated with low brain synchronisation, namely unbalanced hemisphere activity. Thus the degree of synchronisation associated with hemispheric communication, integration and coherence correlates to a person’s different states of consciousness and psychosomatic health.

During meditation, synchronisation increases and reaches values close to 100%. In studies of experienced meditators, Montecucco found that very high synchronisation of brain waves formed into harmonic states of coherence of a single wave. The higher synchronisation was ‘perfectly ordered on a single harmonic wave as if all the different frequencies of all the neurons of the various brain centers were playing the same global symphony’ (Montecucco 1997:148). He says that the presence of harmonic waves in higher states of consciousness shows the human ability to fully synchronise the body, emotions, mind and consciousness as one whole. Harmonic states of high synchronisation were associated with intense creativity, profound well-being, intuition and meditation. He called this state of singular harmonic organisation, the ‘Highly Synchronised Harmonic State’.

Montecucco also found evidence of synchronisation between the brain waves of different persons meditating in close proximity (1.5 m). He measured the two hemispheres’ synchronisation of two people contemporaneously and analysed their degree of cross-synchronisation. The inter-synchronisation had peaks of 90%. The results substantiate communication and interaction between the consciousness of people and also the capacity to come into coherence of consciousness together.

Using advanced mathematical analysis, Montecucco also found synchronisation in entire groups indicating transpersonal communication and collective experience of coherent consciousness. The results showed brain synchronisation of persons in groups increased if they were meditating; then the degree of synchronisation approached 50%.

Self-awareness and empathy are states intentionally generated in meditation. Montecucco states that the evidence of group synchronisation in mediation ‘may demonstrate that human brains can be in communication with each other and that self-awareness and
empathy are psychological instruments capable of synchronising them’ (1997:149). He observed that even when participants moved far distances from each other but maintained the state of empathy, the level of coherence remained. Furthermore, he found that simply long empathetic contact was sufficient to create coherence of synchronisation. Thus embodied love, empathy and compassion create coherence and unifying-harmony. I believe that these states of embodied interconnectedness are obvious socio-spiritual tools for developing unitive government and evolved forms of democracy.\footnote{In discussions with Davidson and Ekman, the Dalai Lama encouraged scientific investigation of meditation effects so that these potentials could be expressed in a secular fashion to increase their accessibility and influence (Zetter 2003).}

**Socio-political synchronisation**

Numerous studies of Transcendental Mediation (TM) practitioners validate the socio-political influences of group meditation. TM studies confirm evidence of greater synchronisation and coherence of the brains of meditators, and also within groups of meditators as a whole unit (Orme-Johnson 1987, 1988, 2001; Alexander 1992). Furthermore, TM studies indicate that events of such unified consciousness induce coherence and well-being among people other than those participating in meditation. This harmonising influence, ‘the Maharishi Effect’, acts radiantly over large distances; it acts contemporaneously and so not independently of time. The size and skill of the meditators’ group correlated to the degree of influence of this expanded coherence-creating induction (Orme-Johnston 1992).\footnote{An annotated bibliography of 46 papers on the Maharishi effect is available from http://www.mum.edu/m_effect/summary_table.html} The timing and actions of the meditators showed high statistically correlated causal relationship with reductions in crime, accidents and acts of war in their vicinity (Orme-Johnston et al 1988; Assimakis 1989; Dilbeck 1990; Hagelin 1992). As Sheldrake predicted in relation to morphogenesis, the field/pattern with greater coherence and harmonised unification entrains less ordered fields (1981). The influence of more powerful meditation techniques of ‘super-radiance’, has been quantified. If the number of these meditators is about the square root of 1% of a population, a measurable and holistic influence of harmony and integration occurs in the entire population (Orme-Johnston 1992:9; Hagelin 1992). Therefore Hagelin posits that
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8000 skilled individuals meditating together can bring peace on Earth by leveraging their power to induce planetary coherence (Hughes n.d.).

**Unitary consciousness**

These scientific findings validate human capacities to achieve coherent wholistic states of consciousness which can further synchronise with the states of consciousness of other human beings to form a shared unitary consciousness. The inner unity emanates out to others and in their interaction becomes a new, more inclusive unified field of shared consciousness – validating the Patanjali Sutras that ‘in the vicinity of coherence, hostile tendencies are eliminated’ (Orme-Johnston 1992:7). Thus individual humans can generate unitary harmonised consciousness which can contribute to the development and evolution of collective consciousness. As Montecucco says, ‘re-experiencing one’s own inner unity and fluidity is the first step towards a holistic vision of existence’ (1997:150).

By connection and groundedness with the Earth, the newly evolving consciousness becomes inclusively planetary and associated with wisdom (Hunt 1996) – then as consciousness evolves, its rate of evolution increases rapidly. James quotes Buckle to elucidate unitary consciousness and infers a development so significant to humans as to indicate a new species through this mode of being and its inherent joyousness.

The prime characteristic of cosmic consciousness is a consciousness of the cosmos, that is, of life and the order of the universe. Along with the consciousness of the cosmos there occurs an intellectual enlightenment which alone would place the individual on a plane of existence – would make him almost a member of a new species. To this is added a state of moral exaltation, an indescribable feeling of elevation, elation and joyousness.

(Buckle in James 1902:389)

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9 8000 is the square root of one percent of the world’s population in 2004. The meditation practice Hagelin advocates is the ‘yogic flying technique’, an advanced mediation from the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali (Hughes n.d.).
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**Each a unique centre**

Hunt found that each person has their own distinct and recognisable energy pattern which persists over ranges of consciousness (1996). She also documented the focused interaction of direct energetic/vibrational healing methods. Hunt found that the transmission and interaction of a coherent human energy field draws chaotic fields into greater coherence and order. However, the entraining interaction of coherence and synchronisation unto harmonisation did not dominate in terms of individual uniqueness. Even with the newly gained greater coherence the recipient did not lose their own individually unique and identifiable energy pattern. This offers a model for inclusive and elevating democracy based on inner coherence and inter-being. These findings illustrate how experiential interconnectedness is a bridge to enhancing individual uniqueness and well-being whilst simultaneously cohering many unique beings into a synchronised whole. This is the possibility I see for an evolved form of democracy based on experiential interconnectedness.

**Inter-knowing from centredness**

These studies also have implications for inter-knowing, communication, scholarship and governing through application of experiential interconnectedness. Hagelin demonstrated that ‘human intelligence, like nature’s intelligence has at its basis a unified field of intelligence’, a state of consciousness where the ‘the knower, the known and the process of knowing are united in a single, self-interfacing structure of experience’ (1992:4). Because consciousness is a boundaryless phenomenon then all fields/states are accessible. Thoughts and actions as field phenomena can act independently of linear time and space and so persist though timespace (Goswami 2000). Consciousness and thought energy sustain like the ‘law’ of conservation of energy (Kraft 1988) so whatever was thought, albeit spoken or done, persists in the world of psycho-spiritual energy where consciousness acts independently of time and space. As Tara says – *all time is actually present in the one space now.*

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10 Hunt’s findings are consistent with those of Sagi (1997) and Gerber (1988).
11 Hagelin links the unified field of consciousness (accessible to human consciousness) with the Unified Field Theory of quantum physics through the Lagrangian of the superstring (1992).
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Hunt states that all thoughts, actions and events that ever happened are persistently present and can be accessed by the appropriate state of consciousness (1996). She emphasises, there are no private thoughts (1996:102, 135). Thus expansion of own/personal truth of being can inter-relate with/into multiple fields of thought and beingness and potentially illuminate more universal truths. The psycho-spiritual energetic interactions are universally accessible and are so all thoughts, consciousness and events are accessible. Acknowledgement of this repository of all personal and collective past and future occurrences exists in many cultures. It is sometimes referred to as the Akaskic Records (Hunt 1996) which can be accessed by deep centring within. Many shamanic traditions utilise ‘spirit journeys’ to avail knowledge (Narby 1999; Ingerman 1991, 1989; Eliade 1964).

Psychiatrist and psychic Judith Orloff (2000) emphasises the importance of discipline and daily meditation practice to develop inner stillness and resultant ‘psychic abilities’, skills of consciousness. She, like others, links inter-being and inter-knowing with compassion – ‘there is nothing more powerful than meditation in terms of going into the silence … and open up to the infinite, to the compassionate essence that is God, that from which all psychic information stems’ (Orloff, 2003:2). She says the shift to stillness is essential to be open and to receive guidance. In addition to meditation she advocates an attitude of willingness, a sense of reverence, a sacred space of focus and openness to synchronicities occurring wherein answers and guidance can come in any way including and particularly dreams.

The corollary of this understanding is that once any human has a ‘new’ thought (anywhere and anytime in the universe) then it is accessible to all humans. Sam expressed this paradoxical and multifocal position – we know everything and we don’t know everything. The focused and centred state supports the experience of inter-knowing and all-knowing, which opens in timespace of deep interconnected experiences. Access of such intuitive knowing is particularly enabled in Highly Synchronised Harmonic States and group coherence. Vine Deloria Jr. notes that experiences at some (revelatory)

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12 Braud and Anderson apply this understanding to the use of sympathetic resonance as a method of transpersonal research (1998).
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sacred sites enable knowing which is totally beyond usual perceptual and cognitive abilities (1993). Perhaps the evolving noosphere is a repository of all consciousness on Earth which is ever in the present and in a process of re-organising itself to new knowledge supporting the evolution of human consciousness (Teilhard 1969a). This mode of knowing, I advocate, can complement expansively informed, and creatively integrating governing.

**Implications of truth energy**

Because we are self-reflective beings we can consciously involute, taking our awareness deep within, connecting and centring in stillness to integrate – and knowing arises, as our truth. Because we are interconnected, we are inter-beings, we can align outwards and finely tune to the present with our authentic expression taking cognisance of the beings and circumstances surrounding and interpenetrating us. Because we are multi-dimensional beings we have the capacity to recognise truth-speaking – truth as an energetic pattern which comes from the authentic integration of many levels of being, each state of being having its own ways of knowing, unique forms of experiencing and perceiving. When these states of being and authentic expressions occur, we know it.

A person’s truth is their own unique contribution. Drawing down to centre in one’s truth, does not mean that perspective applies for others – in fact it is in the diversity and differentiation that the special values of each lies. Swimme says that there is a responsibility to be fully who we uniquely are, as this essence may be the only one able to awake special states in the interaction with others (1990:3). One’s truth is the truth integrated perceptions, awarenesses and insights known in that moment, when aligned by self-centring to the greater whole. The process of inner knowing of one’s truth does not negate reason but complements it. Reason alone is too limited and limiting as a system of mindfulness. Inherently reason always is confined by the parameters of its paradigm (Kuhn 1970). The greatest use for reason comes in extrapolating from the insight within a congruent system of logic, empirically testing the uncovered ‘truth’, and in implementation from the new perspective

Humans are capable of unity consciousness and socio-political synchronisation through centring within. The inner unity/centredness/harmony projects out to others and induces
collective unity. Inner communication and integration emanate and entrain synergistic inter-personal communication. Group coherence synchronised unto integrated wholeness is omni-centric; it contains the unique centre of each which is characterised by inner harmony, and the shared harmony held by the greater whole. Realised human potential for unitary states catalyses planetary consciousness.

These capacities of heightened, interactive synchronisation, I argue, have potential application for holding the space for government. Additionally, I believe the ability to sink into the centre of one’s depths is a skill needed for governing in present crisis, uncertainty and transition.
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Surrender

Surrender: a spiritual process opening to the new

The next experience that I focus on as relevant to governing based on sacredness, is surrender. Surrender as a spiritual act, is being alive and awake in the present, to the whole of what is present, however that may be experienced. Surrender is a deeply transformative and transpersonal spiritual process in which the present expands and is surrendered to – creating a new state of being, perhaps a new being and a new situation. It is an open, active state which submerges into the creative dynamic of Life’s flow. Surrender is an inner process of opening which births the new.\(^\text{13}\)

The subjective experience of surrender was enacted in the women’s circle through the tension and frustration of a mother. In the eyes of the mother, because her young child was in the meditation room, it felt impossible to have sacred space. By bringing herself to acceptance of what-is, the realisation arose that the child, the future is what this is all about. The child’s loud and chaotic behaviour overwhelmed the mother. The intense frustration of not being able to stop the behaviour resonated with the frustration of not being able to stop our country going to war in Iraq. The sense of powerlessness and helplessness was felt both within and out, together with the desire of wanting to make it different. Then she let go of the need to do anything and allowed the reality and her responses to be, and consequently allowed herself to be overwhelmed by the despair and powerlessness – then the gifts flowed through.

*Denia:* I spent the first few minutes there wanting to get her, grab her and run out the door because this was impossible – can’t do circle with her here, this is a joke. And then bringing myself back into a space of acceptance which is when I got – OK this is what’s happening, there’s no point trying to change it, this is what’s happening. And the first thought that came in – she’s what this is all about, the future. Then the madness of

\(^{13}\) In contrast to surrender as spiritual action, the patriarchal and military meaning of surrender refers to capitulation, resignation, exhaustion and defeat; the resultant effects are contraction not expansion. Surrender can also imply voluntary or unconscious acquiescence to the dominant mythology and mass consciousness through abnegation of personal authenticity and responsibility. I am focusing of surrender as a spiritual transformative act in this research.
having her in the space started to overwhelm me and the cacophony of noise that she was making, and the grasping and needing and the pulling at all the sacred objects.\textsuperscript{14}

Then all of a sudden just like a flash – the frustration of not being able to move, feeling helpless, constricted, yet needing to make it different … the parallel between that and what I had already experienced of the current world situation, the within-without-thing hit me.

I let go of her, the need to physically do anything to change and allowed that to just be. Then I became overwhelmed by the feeling of despair. I went into that feeling of not being able to do anything, being unable to change the situation, felt the restriction, confusion – and stopped fighting it – just let myself sit into the feelings, allowed them to come in, up and spill over – and then Amber quietened and sat down in my lap.

(Silence) … feeling the energy of surrender just came through, and the emotion shifted to very gentle. I can’t get the words – the tears, one by one – it wasn’t sadness, it wasn’t grief, it was just – this door. It is going to take years to get this idea, this sensate feeling of surrender. I just had that sense that in that place the possibility of change was there – that in that space, the amount of power in that column of – it looked and felt like the DNA chain of swirling, it had that idea of a column but – it is a gentle physical sort of thing – it’s quite wordless.

(Silence) … just a feeling, a clear vision, a sense of what it is I’m trying to create … I’m just knowing the fact that that’s it, it’s done, so be it, you know – it’s just, it’s done. I’ve asked for it, and the right thing will happen and it has no outcome agenda. It’s just that the current situation is wrong, it needs to change and this better thing, this feeling, needs to come in, and it will, and I don’t need to know how it will look. I don’t need to have any ties to it, it will come. And I got that it would.

That’s the fourth time of actually feeling it. The first time I had this surrender transformation thing happening to me, was sitting outside Chartres cathedral and having walked the labyrinth and experiencing that space … each time I have been in a fairly overwhelmed state with what was going on and I have gone to that surrender place of ‘I

\textsuperscript{14} Dena spoke of ‘doing circle’ – the word, circle, became a verb, an action, a process.
really don’t get what to do’, and it arises out of despair – something else comes and I have experienced a profound shift in my life in ways that I couldn’t possibly have imagined.

**Holding the space for surrender**

The women held a space for the action of surrender through trust, love and wisdom. As women, everyone related. With empathetic understanding and a deep trust in the persons and situation, there was no pre-mature closure of the tension. The mother acted out willingness, being present, authenticity and simply offering that which she brings which is also her child. With incredible commitment, beauty and strength, instead of dropping out of the process, she demonstrated ‘being’ as a transformative act of power.

**Ariel:** Amber was saying “Yeah, I’m chaos. I’m flickin lights on. I’m throwing these beads around. I chucking the essences. I’m stomping on the peace pills. And I’m having a good old time. I’m squealing. And for the mother who’s trying to hold sacredness in a way that her mind and our minds might think it needs to be held, that creates total torture. Because you [as the mother] are thinking – ‘but this is a sacred circle and you’re in there fucking it all up – and what do I do as the mother – do I stop you, do I let go, do I trust that you are here and what you’re doing is fine’ – so the war being waged in that moment for her, I totally connected to. And I think all the women had moments of being in and out of understanding that, and thinking “Ohhhh God”.

I so appreciated her willingness to be there in that conflict in her, and to be present in that frustration, and anger, and tumult of emotional stuff that was happening in her. She was willing to be there in that, saying ‘yes, and there’s this – you know I’m not pretending this is all love, light and easy, it’s not – this is really difficult to stand in this place, in this tumult, in this mother-child thing – but I’m here and very present – and offering what I bring to this, including my child’. And I think there is an incredible beauty, strength, and commitment in that. I really loved and respected her for that.
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**Gifts of the child**

**Openness**

The presence of the child brought particular contributions to the visioning process. Two years old Amber was present, playful and busy just being. People responded differently to her actions. Her presence and openness contributed to that time, place and intention of gaining insight into governing from experiential sacredness. She was a significant participant.

*Gaia: I loved Amber, the child, being there and just playing and being quite present, and wanting to touch and pick up all the little treasures we had put into the space – and the different sort of responses of people to her. She was a very open young being – really lovely to have her there and it just felt really right.*

**Letting go**

One issue Amber brought to attention was the importance of letting go of attachments, dogma and getting too serious about things (Tara). Children in their openness, total honesty, presence and lack of conditioned cultural bias offer important lessons – they are as they are. The lesson came through one woman softening her way of holding sacredness within her spiritual tradition.

*Tara: And there Amber was … it was just like she was saying very clearly ‘Yes, let go’ – it is so important that ‘let go’. Adults are so entrenched in what they are taught culturally that they don’t let go. When you get too bogged down in that head space you can’t actually make a difference. The only times that they [adults] let go are when they’re really upset, in love, hurt, angry or impassioned – a child can let go at the drop of a hat.*

**Lightness, joy and playfulness**

Lightness, joy and playfulness come with the openness of the child. These overlooked tools also catalyse positive social transformation.

*Tara: I think that was a very important message for me personally and for us in the circle – to look at it with joy and lightness because in that way you will get something done – there is playfulness there. Amber embodied that for me. It was perfect. I sat there with*
tears rolling down my face because of the strong feelings involved in what we were doing in that circle but every time that child came to me I was filled with a joy and lightness. Children are the greatest teachers. They’re little spirits that are open and with that they have an amazing sense of lightness and joy and playfulness.

Surrender space, energy and process

Surrender, the experiential process

Experientially surrender as a spiritual process is intense and personal, and occurs in the inter-relatedness of the internal and external. The person is transformed from being centred in their small-self based world into a stream of power of cosmic dimensions and purposes. The sense of self does not disappear but is re-contextualised within a vastly expanded milieu. There is a sense of being held in a greater and relentless power. Resistance leads to overwhelm and frustration in being unable to act or have any perceivable effect, engendering a sense of powerlessness and helplessness. Attempts at control give away to acceptance of what is. A settling and cessation of struggle occurs. With the shift in attention and action, insights and understandings arise. There is a change in the state-of-being with an attendant expansion and connections to similar resonant patterns. The transformation comes with letting go, allowing, letting be, with surrender. The change is rapid and gentle, subtle and powerful. The sensate feeling of surrender occurs in spiritual-psycho-physical domains. Stillness and silence arise – these are similar responses to experience of the sacred. Surrender, which arises from being, becomes an act of power. It is a particular experience of a particular energy mostly unarticulated in our western culture. Being leads any doing – doing is stopped, to be – and be immersed in the strong directional force of cosmic unfolding and Life.

Surrender as a space

Dena refers to surrender as channelling a space – the space is of a particular metaphysical nature and psycho-spiritual quality. This space has a shape. The shape is known from
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within its interior by the experience of being-the-space.\textsuperscript{15} The description evokes the classical metaphysical commentaries of mystics on form within emptiness and emptiness of form and being emptiness. In her comparison with the experience of giving birth, the space is for Life to work through – holding a space for manifestation drawn forth by Life. The space is held by staying connected with all of the sensed elements present – being a space holding the whole (however uncomfortable that may be). The all-ness of the present is held to the point that attention to it overwhelms the present frame structuring the world/reality.

\textbf{Surrender and vortex power of Life}

A relentless power is present in the space. The power/space/shape moves as a dynamic spiralling column. It has direction. Dena describes it as like DNA, like being inside DNA – the biophysical threshold interfacing and encoding specific living forms.\textsuperscript{16} The enclosing power is/appears like the power of Life creating itself. Dena’s description also evokes the image of a black hole which draws in all without exception within its energetic range and involutes the curvature of timespace into a crushing, compressing vortex which collapses all manner of matter, energy, time and space (and perhaps consciousness and thought-forms).\textsuperscript{17} In surrender, the individual is overwhelmed as ideas of what should be, crunch together with what is actually happening – crushing beliefs, desires, expectations as the spiralling space drags her-all inward. There is no illusion of personal control. In the awesome power/space anything is possible. The force overpowers conditioning and its world. Yet the individual consciousness is very present, awake, insightful and enlivened.

Surrender opens the being to the flow of Life manifesting with relentless attracting and coalescing power. The process is akin to Teilhard description of evolution wherein

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{15} The locus of attending is actually being-the-interiorisation – like the architectural forms interiorising the female form created by Christina Biaggi (1996) and experiential presence felt inside the mounds of the Neolithic sites, such as Newgrange in Ireland.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Narby discusses the Flying Rainbow Serpent journey of South American shamans interiorised within their psychic fields and concurrently interiorised within DNA (1999).
\item \textsuperscript{17} Black holes are gravity, a fundamental force in the universe which is the power of mutual attraction and is present throughout the cosmos. Teilhard says that love, as affinity, as attraction, is the fundamental structuring dynamic of the cosmos which draws all unto unification (1969a).
\end{itemize}
involution and integration of complexity and intensity create new forms of wholeness and Life (1969a). In creative step-wise jumps of consciousness-in-matter, the preceding forms surrender their habitual patterns and re-organise to bring forward the new. Immersion in Life and its directed flow, sweeps all with it beyond thinking, anticipation and imagination. Symbolically, metaphysically and in physical reality the experience is direct encounter and enactment with Life and Lifeforce – just as are birth and death. Eco-feminist Val Plumwood experienced meeting death in the jaws of a crocodile, a being symbolic of the thresholds between worlds (1995). As her reality shifted from person to prey, she said her perception jumped from an i-centred reality to a bigger, on-going reality where this i did not exist.

Dena speaks of a door and the possibility of change in the experiential space of surrender. A threshold is encountered – a between-place linking what? Campbell sees the threshold of inner space as a return to spirit and no-time which is experienced while still incarnate and present in the field of time (1986). He notes that the journey to and through this junction-point brings transformative knowledge and a pathway of metamorphosis. Campbell says that through the inseparability of the soul with the body, inner and outer worlds meet and are ‘transformed by fusion with accordant insights’ (1986:31). He quotes German 18th century romantic poet, Novalis (1798) to convey this mystery within.

The depths of our spirits are unknown to us
The mysterious way leads inwards.
Eternity with its worlds
The past and future
Is there in ourselves or nowhere (Novalis in Campbell 1986:31)

In the maelstrom of intense inner activity and intense outer activity surrender enters stillness, and thence re-synthesisation of all that is present into the fusion of a new unity. Campbell says that the journey through the threshold between realities, to the point of stillness, is driven by the chaotic dance of the vortex which is churned by desires, fears of loss and social commitments (1986:136). He equates ‘the still point’ to the immovable point found by Shakamuni Buddha under the bodhi tree. The still point is a place of mind which is always at the centre of the world. In this still point there is a time collapse into
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the all-present-now. From this location, says Campbell, one can ‘see in a sacred manner’ free from the vortex. In the still centred place grace is present to serve Life’s creativity. To capture the incarnate experience of stillness Campbell draws on T S Elliot’s poem, ‘Burnt Norton’.

At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,
Where the past and future are gathered …
The release from action and suffering, release from inner
And outer compulsion, yet surrounded
By a sense of grace. (Elliot in Campbell 1986:137)

Encounter with Life-force, through the experience of surrender, brings a clarity of knowing which has a distinct quality of certainty about the direction and nature of events yet to be manifested in time and space. The certainty is somehow related to that which is positive and of benefit for all and the whole. *This better thing* is not known in terms of the manner and form in which is will actualise – however, that it will occur and its nature is known with certainty. The degree of certainty over-rides restrictions of conventional knowing and accepted limitations of what is possible. It is almost as if the sense of certainty arises from the self re-identified with the greater milieu, rather than with the small self or social world.

**Surrender as creative service to the whole**

Surrender is always to something/one greater, be it God, Life, altruism, love, Mystery, nature. Spiritual surrender appears to serve the unfolding directions and expressions of Life, whether participation is willing or not. Beliefs and perceptions which are un-useful let go to serve the greater. In this space, personal will has no directive power and only has generative or creative effects within the context of the whole – classically Thy will not mine. James identifies a cooperative passivity of spiritual experience where the person ‘feels as if his own will were in abeyance, and indeed as if he were grasped and held by a superior power’ (1902:371). Service to something greater holds the inner space in connection with outer events of physical and psychic realities. Being authentically present to the whole of what occurs, draws consciousness onward to perceive the
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elements of this whole in new relationships and new unfoldings. A new, expanded world is entered – or created.

**Skills of surrender**

As discussed above, surrender can require certain abilities. They include willingness, commitment, strength, being present to the interconnected whole and holding presence through the intensity of its many perceptions, interpretations, layers and worlds, some of which are in apparent conflict and dissonance. Releasing attempts at control and letting go of structure removes self-generated obstacles to enable extended and engaged connection which stretches the boundaries of usual consciousness to open to the whole.

These skills and states can be created by choice and repeated practise. Many spiritual and creative practices re-create the inner dispositions which enable surrender. Buddhist tantric and *metta* practices use methods to dissolve into the embodied experience of love, compassion, joy, equanimity and to expand the capacities for these energies.¹⁸ Prayer and contemplation are examples in the Christian tradition which enter the expanded domain of mystery and Life’s creativity. The spiritual paths of devotion, altruism and dissolution of self can elicit experience where it is the intensity of joy which is overwhelming.

Engaged humility is both a skill and disposition which accesses the greater reality/whole which surrender opens (Briggs and Peat 1999). The innocence of the child offers the path of least resistance and greatest happiness. These skills can be learned and thence are available by choice with ease and grace. The pre-conditioning inner composure can be extended into daily life and oriented by altruistic motivation. Any individual can learn to recognise the circumstances/opportunities as they arise and by choice, dive into the Life-stream – to be moved and changed and serve by riding the energy of surrender to channel a space for creative, cooperative transformation. These skills can become a common tool

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¹⁸ *Metta* means loving kindness. *Tantra* means union, union with a deity, such as a deity embodying the divine energy of compassion. The practitioner embodies these states/energies and then sends out the energy for the benefit of all sentient beings.
Chapter seven: Withinness: evolutionary starting point of collective decision-making to energise and orient a culture and humanity to stream with Life.\(^{19}\)

In a shared creative act, the psycho-spiritual energetic environment which supports the experience/process/phenomenon of surrender can also be consciously created and held for another. Embodied trust, love, interconnectedness and allowing for any expression of authenticity enable and actively support the process. Space for surrender and holding this space for others is essentially holding sacred space of love with no attachment (Post 2002a, 2002b). Interpenetration of personally emanated/radiated love-energy and its direction by intention and being, establishes the environment. Like holographic wave interference patterning, the embodied energetic presence enables the withinness to appear. The women in the research demonstrated the act of holding a space for the process of surrender through ability to sit with tension, paradox and discomfort. Fritz (1986) and Koldon (1991) recognise these abilities as part of the creative process. In addition humour, lightness and play can supplement this body of skills available, accessible, practical and advisable for future, inclusive governing.

**Surrender in decision-making**

These processes and skills of surrender and space-holding are applicable to intense and difficult circumstances, including inclusive decision-making.

*Dena:* *It is by having a sense of time and meditation before the decision-making and surrender to the right process instead of going in with an agenda. … Being open in discussion to the possibility that another may have a solution that all could benefit from … The concept of this place would shift and change with so many directions, with so many people being different, surrendering their own hold on what’s best.*

Surrender in decision-making is letting go of control in an act of trust in Life and its directions. However it is not letting go of authenticity and participation, which is profoundly present and engaged. Nor is it letting go of reason and information. Rather it

\(^{19}\) Surrender to the void, simply by being, releases an enormous amount of energy. Bohm compares the energy released in ‘ego smashing’ to atom smashing as the atomistic notion is separateness is switched to fusion of one into One (1982; Weber 1985).
is bringing all elements together into an expanded/limitless space to enable reorganisation and synergy under the action of greater forces and spaces.

Surrender applied to governing is a unitive action. Processes for envisioned decision-making include intentional self-preparation, a sense of timing and surrender. A sense of right time, right process and right action, sensed within, overrides preset agendas of power, influence and outcomes. The necessary space is held for these to occur. The processes create openings for many voices in dialogue, possibilities and creative change directed by and for the ‘common good’ in a widely expanded domain beyond conscious knowing and certainly beyond the rational mind or ideology. Self-preparation through meditation and other means, before entering the decision-making process, awakens interconnectedness within each person and opens them for discussions to the possibilities and insights that can benefit all. Decision-making then is a vitalising, creative process which changes, evolves and unifies.

**Implications of the surrender experience**

However humble, the women’s visioning generated practical insights for moving to an aware, embodied consciousness, immersed with the power of Life birthing or bringing-into-form the new.

Surrender as a psycho-spiritual experience/action is a means of rapid, active, profound and gentle transformation which accesses universal creativity in service to all in a process of relationship with Lifeforce. It is immersion into and with a form of power which takes consciousness beyond egoic limits and the boundaries of knowledge and the known. In surrendering, sequentially structured time collapses into the ever-present where possibilities sit awaiting organising powers, of which love is the most powerful. How surrender plays out is never known; it enacts the mythic journey of death (of the socially constructed self and worlds) and through intensity and presence, re-birth in new arrangements and understandings.

The processes of surrender can be learned and practiced. I suggest surrender can be applied in the skills of future governing which is in-formed by experiences of expanded consciousness thereby engaging unitive creativity streaming with Life. This form of government is based on sacredness.
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**Love**

Women spoke of love as central for government based on sacredness, particularly experiential love which can trigger states of interconnectedness, altruism and spaciousness. In a very personal way the heart opens into a vaster space. In this spacious state the personalised experience expands to the transpersonal where a sense of purpose accompanies a willingness to serve or be used for the greater good. Embodied love enhances the ability to see the love and purity in others and the sense of self melds with other. From within this experience and perspective, there can be no decision of intentional harm to others.

**Interconnectedness and love**

In-the-experience, love and interconnectedness seem to resonate each other.

*Ross: The experience of interconnectedness brings me into that open heart space of love – and again it’s the actual experience that is important.*

**Altruism and spaciousness**

During the visioning process love as *we all experienced it*, was quite tangible. Experiential love opens spaciousness for an expression of altruism and purpose.

*Ariel: All this week I’ve been given a total heart opening that’s triggered in a very personal sense. I’m very aware it’s not about the personal stuff. What it’s about is this bigger space being utilised by a higher purpose.*

**Unity through love entrains harmlessness**

From the expandedness and experiential inseparability which arises with love, others are seen as self. In-the-experience of love, the ethical base for action shifts to this referential experience. From this formative experience, decisions of intentional harm are not possible.

*Ariel: When I’m in this bigger space I can see the love and the purity and the god-ness in other people. And when you see that you cannot make decisions that ask for them to be in pain. You cannot harm them because they’re you, they are the same essence as you.*
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**Decision-making from love**

One woman prayed that this love energy be applied in government through all politicians having a concrete and powerful experience of love which then infuses all their decisions and actions. Decision-making from love as an embodied experience is informed by experiential interconnectedness.

_Ariel:_ I asked that each politician, each world leader, each person in a place of decision-making, be given a tangible personalised experience of this love energy – to open their heart in whatever form will work for them – whatever you hold most dear – your child, your lover, your pet, your plant – whatever represents total unconditional love to you then bring it on (laughing), bring it on – so that their decisions and speaking and the laws that they create, are informed by that sense of connection that the love gives you – because in that you cannot make decisions of separation. It’s impossible.

**Denial of love**

Presently, love is never used in relation to Australian government, except perhaps in derision. There is no honouring of love, its power of active inclusion nor the considered use of love energy.

_Ruth:_ The word love is never used [in government] – the concept and the thought of it is never used except in the context of sexual partnerships and perhaps a few hippies who love trees. It’s almost a word of ridicule.

**Love turns worlds**

Love has its own dynamics which shape decisions, actions and outcomes. Interconnectedness, as an experiential state and an energetic environment, seeds motivations and actions, which place love at the centre of government. Love, centralised as the driving force in governing, turns different wheels and so opens different worlds from those at present. Placing love at the activating (heart) centre of government, privileges this unifying dynamic; it interconnects us with each other, all of Life and the planet.

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20 The term wheel is used in a similar sense to the Native American and Dharma Wheels alluding to interacting energies which create causes to turn/manifest worlds.
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*Gaia:* … so holding interconnection, holding that space and meeting from a place of heart to come purely and cleanly. Yeah, not going into the energy of competition and anger – and not bringing the anger energy into the desire for things to be different. Not that I think that anger’s a bad thing but in that dynamic of politicians and parliament, anger is a catalyst for all their wheels to turn. If we want new wheels then to come with love – the love wheel and the connected wheel, and forget the rest.

**Love cares**

In essence, actualising love in government leads to a world where things are cared for.

*Ruth:* Government of love, I guess, is just a world where things were cared for – maybe it’s as simple as that. And that is what makes all the difference.

**Love energy and action**

In application to governing, I discuss love as an energy, an evolutionary cosmogenic force and an experiential state.

**Love as energy**

A classical physics definition of energy is the ability to do work and to cause change. Energy cannot be directly measured and its nature is revealed through its actions and effects. Love, too, has discernable and measurable effects (Bohm 1985; Hunt 1996; Dossey 1993; Sorokin 2002) and can be justified as a form of energy which acts through consciousness, thoughts, actions and emotions (Kraft 1988:5). Teilhard says that energy is the capacity for action, and interaction (1969a:46). Its multi-dimensional effects include giving life, effecting change and organising other forms of energy. Consistent with the propositions of Sheldrake (1981, 1994c), Michael Talbot describes love-energy as a finer and more subtle form of energy which precedes the matter-energy forms of physicality (1991). Kraft ascribes to love-energy the same properties, processes and ‘laws’ of conservation as all other forms of energy which are discussed in terms of vibration with characteristics of frequency, amplitude, coherence, waveform and tone and where transformation is integral to its nature (1988). In recognising love as a form of psycho-spiritual energy, another dimension of interconnection between humans and our
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environments is made visible, adding the spiritual dimension to understanding and potentials for concrete, transformative and wholistic self-organising action.

Energy exists in potential in an energy source which, when released, can be transformed, transferred and transmitted. Sources of love-energy include Life; Lifeforce; inner stillness; spiritual and mental domains expressed in accumulated wisdom, experience and actions; personal life lived consciously through relationships, innerness and choices; creativity; nature; beauty; transformative experiences; heart-bursts like seeing the starscape on a winter’s night and other mysteries of the sacred. Deep experience of these aspects of Life evokes embodiment of love – being-interconnected-in-love.

As stated, the qualities and dynamics energy of any sort are known by its effects, seen in exchange and transfer of energy, and as energy itself changes state/expression (Kraft 1988). Love, as an energy, is directional and has a job to do; its actions reveal its intent and purpose (Teilhard 1969a, b, c, d; Sorkin 2002; King 1989b, 1996; Kraft 1988). Love is a binding cohesive force which synthesises unity thereby creating new centres and wholeness. Its omnipresent dynamic action interpenetrates all of existence at all levels – bio-spiritual, psycho-spiritual, consciousness-in-matter, physical – organising relationships to shape patterns/arrangements both within and out. Interaction with the energy of love is transformative in terms of consciousness, perception and physicality. Love is Life-giving, vitalising, cascading through layered forms of existence wherein bio-spiritual energisation flows with the physical and mental domains. Love heals disconnection, dis-unity and dysfunction to re-arrange and re-unite into coherent harmony. This occurs within the person, the community and the cosmos establishing wholeness. The actions of love, via a finer and totally penetrating vibration, repattern inter-relationships to be in congruent alignment with the direction of the universe. Love thereby drives the cosmos to further and further degrees of unity. Love is creative; it is sourced and always connected with the cosmic creative dynamism producing all form and formlessness of existence, in infinitely diverse expressions. Yet love is inter-penetrating of each being, and consciously experiential to every human being, both within and in relatedness. Love has a propensity to include, unify and expand out to embrace more. Love expands self out to tribe, environment, humanity-as-species, cosmos
and One/All. Love, personal and universal, makes space, and so structures the universe itself.

Sociologist Pitirim Sorokin researched the powers and actions of love particularly as expressed in creative altruism (2002). He identified five characteristics of love which are intensity, extension/expansion, duration, purity and adequacy. Both Teilhard (1969a) and Sorokin (2002) regard love as the highest form of cosmic and human energy which is both intensely personal and the most powerful force in evolution (King 2004). The energy of love acts through radiation/emanation and organising dynamism ordering arrangements of unification. Kraft says love is of a higher order than mental energy just as mental energy surpasses physical energy and hence it can organise other forms of energy (1988). ‘Love causes the cosmos to evolve to ever higher states of complexity, life, mind and spirituality’ (Kraft 1988:15). Love impels evolution to higher orders of arrangement and unity turning the causative Wheels of new worlds, as love itself evolves.

Most importantly, in addition to organisation of outer arrangements, love re-orders the within-of-things, in response to inwardness. Teilhard saw love acting with the innerness to deepen the deepest self, moving each person to greater sentience and intimacy within humankind (Teilhard 1969d:57). Love, as the same unifying force moving the galaxies, acts within to synergise wholeness in the on-going assent of consciousness. According to Teilhard, the pervading cosmic force of love ignites through inwardness, passion and aliveness. The actively connective, infinite cosmos touches the personal, self-conscious being attending inward – therein love ignites the fire of the next leap of the evolutionary journey through the self-aware, personalised being/centre swathed in psychic warmth of love which then expands outward with the alchemy of cosmic fire. The inner fire of personalised love is thus an expression of the evolving universe moving itself forward.

**Personalised love**

Love, as personalised experience, is both a state of being and an energy pervading self and also directed to another. Teilhard says that love personalises by totalising – in the couple, the team and the magic feat as a daily occurrence to be repeated on a planetary dimension (1969a:291). He saw love as the fundamental vibration acting through
relationships, sexuality, thence to society, the cosmos and a personal God – each focus of love looming large in personal relatedness and within. Teilhard recognised the personal need to love someone, a super source of love, ahead and ever present, with whom you can have a personal relationship (1969a:293). He saw the expansion of personal love to the transcendental and universal as the ultimate expression of love.

A universal love is not only psychologically possible; it is the only complete and final way in which we are able to love. (Teilhard 1969a:293)

Sorokin distinguishes two paths of love-energy – the personal (expanding to interpersonal, transpersonal) and nature/cosmos/beauty, which evokes a sense of the universal, the All (King 2004a). He locates personal love in family and relationships. Like Teilhard, he says that personal experience of love can be the expanding source to ultimately include all of humanity – and for James, the universe (1902:27). The expansion of personalised love was the prayer of one woman to in-form a new form of government.

Sorokin correlates the expansive nature of love to altruism; altruism being a relationship of care and cooperation which transcends the individual (King 2004a). Altruism contextualises the individual and their sense of purpose within an expanded, greater whole. In contradiction to the ‘selfish gene’ (Dawkins 1989), altruistic behaviour in a group/species increases survival and so is genetically selected (Swimme 2004:9; Sorokin 2002; Stewart 2000). In humans, cultural effects combine with genetics. Sorokin believed that cultural influences are greater than genes in developing altruism. Swimme specifically attributes this to language and symbolism (2004). Effectively Life, acting through genes and culture, privileges those who can love expandingly. In this light, reification of self interest (a neo-liberal article of faith) would appear to be an anti-evolutionary move.

**Love induced transformation**

Love, as personal experience, transforms through re-arrangement within and re-structuring of relationships, expanding awareness to a greater experiential world of

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21 Teilhard said that only love brings centre together with centre (1969d:244).
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being. This more spacious state opens options of creative, cooperative human technologies of mind and spirit as the person re-identifies themselves in relation to the spaciousness of a greater/cosmological context. Sorokin and Teilhard agree that experiential spaciousness is highly desirable for evolution of humanity and in fact vital for its very survival (King 2004a:87).

In addition to re-contextualisation, transformation of self also occurs through union. Bohm says that love, as a sort of intense energy, causes mutual transformation through mutual participation wherein love itself evolves (Weber 1985:77, 1986:124). The union causes transformation but not annihilation of self, which continues, albeit, transformed. Fromm describes love as union with the condition of preserving one’s integrity, one’s uniqueness (1975:24). He recognises that love is also an attitude or orientation that primarily determines the relatedness of a person to the contextualising world as a whole.\(^{22}\)

Recognition of the transformative power of love not only opens new fields of action and accessible free energy, it ignites fierce hope, purpose and zest for Life so needed in times of despair and fear (King 2004a). However, this phenomenon, energy and potential is under-recognised and so under-utilised as a source of social and institutional transformation (Kraft 1988). Both Teilhard and Sorokin advocate studying and using the powers of love. When humans take seriously the power of love, says Teilhard, then they discover the transformative and wild cosmic fire burning in the innerness of being. This, he says, will be as significant to human development as the discovery of fire.

Someday, after harnessing the winds, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love and then for the second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire. (Teilhard 1935 in Kraft 1988:1)

Love – by orchestrating union through enfolding, uniting and preserving diverse uniqueness within a greater whole, being/centre – acts as an ultimate democratising force. By binding societies and the planet, love transforms the individual and the whole in the energy of creative union which moves in the identifiable processual direction of

\(^{22}\) Bohm says that love, as a sort of intense energy, causes mutual transformation through mutual participation wherein love itself evolves (Weber 1985:77, 1986:124)
unification. Love en-spheres the planet (in the noosphere) and is co-existent with the
love-energy of the cosmos which acts beyond timespace. Love, says Teilhard, is the force
which will finally catalyse the noosphere to wholeness (ref). The transformative potential
of love acts with consciousness to progress new ways of being human. Only love can
take humanity through the next evolutionary step.

Love alone is capable of uniting living beings in such a way as to complete
and fulfill them, for it alone takes them and joins them by what is deepest in

Applications of love to governing

The data and analysis, I believe, indicate potential applications of love to human
collective self-organisation and hence to evolving forms of democracy.

The omni-presence of cosmic love energy resonates in personal experience and facilitates
embodiment of love-as-energy and cosmic force. This state expands the experiential
context, bringing spaciousness and a sense of purpose which serves the whole, as well as
the individual. Experiential love, like the related experiences of the sacred and
interconnectedness, is a commonality among all human beings – a commonality which
positively disposes people to personal enlivenment, cooperation together and alignment
with the powerful forces propelling Life.

Love, both personal and universal, is dynamic and rooted in cosmogenesis. Love is a
higher form of energy and by implication organises higher orders of being human –
predictably towards increasing capacity for universal love until it is held as an embodied
state. New ways of being human organised by love would in turn collectively encode
signifiers of culture (symbols, mythologies, languages) and thereby shape new
institutions. The people powerful in these institutions would be those who love greatly
and expansively.

Love-in-government can be manifested through creating and holding interconnectedness
– as a state within, between people and as a tangible quality of the enfolding physical and
psycho-spiritual space. In this energetic environment hearts can meet purely and cleanly
without dysfunctional turmoil caused by ego, fixed agendas, anger and competitiveness.
These later phenomena turn the causative wheel for the world of separateness. Enacted
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love manifests worlds of inter-being, peace, union and creativity. Government-of-love
nurtures a world where all are cared for, all are loved within the family of all beings.

Love – the impelling unifier to wholeness and inter-being, and arising as psychic warmth
in experiential love – is a source of energy and optimism abundantly and intimately
available. Government consciously enlivened by love is confluent with the flow of
Lifeforce. Reciprocally government of/by love is synergistically supported by the whole
cosmos. If firstly persons, then socio-political institutions, align with the creativity of the
universe by centring love in conscious self-organisation then, I argue, acts and decisions
of collective self-government will flow with this evolutionary force of love itself.
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Service to the whole

The experiences of centredness, surrender and love each inter-related the person within a greater Whole.

Spiritual service and aliveness

One woman expressed her inner state in the visioning ceremony as an experiential sense of purpose aligned with and serving the Whole.

Ariel: When I’m doing this [visioning and ceremony] I feel completely alive. I am totally without doubt. I feel sane, whole, strong, totally in integrity, totally on track, totally what I’m here for. And I’m completely present in it. When I’m not doing this I seem to easily fall into smallness – I am confused, full of doubt.

At this very basis is a huge call to spiritual service that you feel you are finally having an opportunity to act on. And that desire to be in alignment with the divine – to be utilised for divine purpose is the deepest, deepest calling. It’s an opportunity to join with source, and in that joining, in that creativity, in that explosion of awareness, there’s healing or completion, wholeness.

Dedication to service

An indicator of alignment with the greater whole, is the motivation and dedication to serve the benefit of all. Motivation is the seed source which infuses, directs and amplifies in actions, life and lifestyle. Dedication, as a spiritual act couched in humility, orients the personal journey by consciously directed intention which acts beyond the talking and knowing mind and distributes any benefits to all. Through these skills the personal direction is aligned with that of the Whole. In the Balanced Human Being Wheel of the Native American people alignment with one’s own spirit – which then directs decisions and actions – aligns oneself within the interconnectedness and purposes of all beings
Chapter seven: Withinness: evolutionary starting point

(Reagan 1980). Dedication to service for the benefit of all readies a person to respond when the offer to serve is called on.

Tony: I don’t know what life has for me, I don’t actually have a lot of agendas – whatever needs to happen, happens. What I ask each day is just to be of service, to be used, and I don’t know what that is. It’s like, if it comes, it comes, I’m not pushing for it, there’s more than enough to do keeping the grass down around here.

Dedication to altruistic service entrains the easy confluence of intuition, spontaneity and willingness which plays out through synchronicity.

Tony: It was all magic. I just got pulled to Canberra – there was this huge pull.

Aligned purpose or delusion?

With service there is a clear sense of right action and certainty accompanied by fulfilment; a trust that the organic process of Life is creatively orchestrating us, the individualised parcels of consciousness. There is no hint of separateness or superiority.

Yet, personal certainty, assent of others or success of a project can never be a measure of ‘right action’.

Ariel: How to discriminate divine purpose from delusion? Well when you are with others in that spot, in that purpose, there’s no room for the delusion.

The woman’s words at their face value are highly questionable as they can easily describe the certainty of the fundamentalist who is deeply wedded to their group’s version of reality, truth and natural order of the world whether their affinity lies in religion, science or ideology. A sense of alignment within the cosmological context of Life or divinity can and does get confused with the smaller mind-fields of tribal and group identity. It is vital to distinguish these different states which can have similar descriptions. I discuss this distinction in terms of the different worldviews shared by a

23 In the Balanced Human Being Medicine Wheel – the spirit directs, the heart-relatedness/emotions give, the body holds and the mind receives. In western society humans often are unbalanced wherein the mind directs, the body gives, the emotions hold and the spirit is ignored.

24 The servant leader role described by Greenleaf alludes to this composition where the ability to see things whole is an essential quality of leadership (1977).
community, the inner state of being, whether action arises from coherent experiential states or ideology, and the consequences of any action taken.

Different realities or paradigms have different parameters of ‘rightness’ and modes of validation which are shared as a group phenomenon. Kuhn makes clear that one paradigm ‘sees’ a different world from another (1970). Consequently, one paradigm does not make sense from the frame of reference of another. The concerns, logic and language of the one reality have no meaning in another – a different world of perception, experience and meaning is entered. A new view is neither predictable nor imaginable from within another paradigm. Serge King delineates a similar shift of worlds as consciousness changes states (1988). So the woman’s certainty is congruent from her state of consciousness and its world.

The inner state which accompanies the experience of service to the Whole is that of interconnectedness, belonging, wholeness, sanity, strength, integrity, purposefulness, being on track and expansion. Being-present-in-the-moment shows in spontaneity, love and openness. The path of service is often very ordinary, anonymous and without glamour – there is rarely acclamation of the hero held above the masses. While a sense of exaggerated personal power is absent, courage may be called for. Service is selfless and connected – humility and empathy are required. There is no attachment to the outcome as contrasted with dogma, although there certainly may be preference. Expectation of reward, now or in heaven, is not part of the experience. In the encompassing perspective, the outcome is beyond the knowing of the co-operative player.

Presence of experiential inclusivity or exclusion, distinguish actions of service and delusion (while both are powerful, intense and personal). The suicide bomber may also feel directed by divine guidance and share a sense of certainty. Yet, in-the-experience, embodied interconnectedness is openly inclusive beyond religious and political affiliation. There is no discriminating restriction of in-group and out-group, good or evil. Interactions are marked by respect, inclusivity, equality and importantly, personal autonomy. These feelings are distinct from those which accompany mental illness, delusion, fanaticism and mass hypnosis/consciousness where euphoria can be as binding as hatred.
Aly Waleed claims that terrorist groups are very like cults (2005). Leaders in cults are the exclusive source of authority and the dogma is unquestionable. He says that in cults and terrorist groups adherents share intense feelings of social alienation and humiliation (rather than inclusive connectedness). He believes suicide bombers suffer from a spiritual void rather than experience spiritual fulfilment.

Distinction is also clear in the consequences of any actions. James says that experiences of spirituality are distinguished from self-delusion by their fruits (1902). Violence is quite different from gentle lightness and fun. Intentions also indicate whether service is to wholistic sources or lesser gods of ideology. Actions arising from interconnectedness have the intention of absolute harmlessness reflecting experiential inseparability of self and other. Intention to inflict pain and suffering on others does not mark spiritual experience and service to a greater purpose. Spiritual upliftment and engaged energisation are more common results. Similarly, the means tend to reflect the ends – setting out armed simply with prayer and love as opposed to bombs makes a predictable and obvious difference. Importantly I re-iterate that spirituality is not coterminous with religious affiliation and dogma.

Ariel: There is no excuse for killing and for furthering the pain. That’s not a choice one would make in any sane place. It’s what the ego creates to keep us in separation, to keep us from experiencing the truth of what we are which is that loving connectedness.

Authority and self-responsible service

Overt authority diminishes self-responsibility. Psychiatrist Scott Peck who studied the My Lai massacre in Vietnam during the American war (as it is called in Vietnam) identified key factors contributing to this type of horror (1994). One factor was abnegation of personal responsibility to a group or authority. In anonymity and group identity, individuals can release personal restraints on their behaviour. Peak also found that specialisation exacerbates the diminishment of self-responsibility. When roles

\[25\] Humour of the absurd directed to self tends to keep self-importance in check. The traditional role of the jester and Heyokah was to check self-importance, particularly for those with power. This ego-breaker opens creativity. The political cartoonist, to some extent, is the modern equivalent. Interestingly 20% of young university students in USA get their news about events and leaders from satirical newscasts, not conventional media presentations which are not seen as credible (Young 2004; Doherty 2004).
Chapter seven: Withinness: evolutionary starting point

become so separate and isolated from the whole of which they are a part then individuals
easily side-step responsibility for the part they play – even when they are the ones pulling
the trigger. An absence of personal responsibility, communication and perception of the
whole, enables avoidance of responsibility, even for one’s own actions. Of 500 persons
involved with the My Lai massacre, one helicopter pilot questioned the slaughter by
challenging the commander at the massacre site and soon after informed the headquarters
by radio. He was dismissed by both at the time and later did not speak up. A culture
which encourages submission of the individual to the group or culture encourages
abnegation of self-responsibility, and both the individual and culture become capable of
horrors. Compliance to overt authority is encultured in the military services, religious
establishments and through ‘party solidarity’ in parliaments.

A void of ethical restraints also diminishes self-responsibility. The famous Stanford
Prison experiment in 1971 identified that de-individualisation, de-humanisation, lack of
restraints and an anonymous environment, pre-dispose people to conduct brutal
behaviours (O’Toole 1997). Philip Zimbardo, the chief researcher, said the power of
unequal roles, hierarchical symbolism, group identity and situational validation of
behaviour enabled actions ‘that would generally repulse ordinary individuals’ (O’Toole
1997:2). Interestingly and even more concerning, it was not only the student-
participants who lost their sense of responsibility. The experimenters/academics
themselves became caught up in their own form of group-mind and were de-sensitised to
cruelty. Despite the obvious brutality, humiliation and damage being perpetrated in front

26 Manhattan project which developed the two types of atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki
illustrated the further lack of responsibility of individuals for the consequences of their actions. Although it
was obvious where the project was leading, among the numbers of thousands of the ‘world’s brightest’,
Joseph Rotblat was the only person to resign for ethical concerns (2005). Bertrand Russel once said ‘he
who watches a crime in silence, commits it’ (in Reanney 1991:238).
27 Martin Luther King believed that groups are capable of greater evil (not just on scale) than individuals
(Starhawk 2002).
28 University students who responded to an advertisement for paid participation in a psychology
experiment were randomly designated as guards or prisoners and put in a simulated prison situation after
several assessments that they were ordinary psychologically healthy people. The only instructions were to
the guards to keep order and not to use violence. Within the first day participants fully identified with their
roles and displayed behaviours of brutality or disempowered helplessness.
29 Within 24 hours behaviours were seen such as naked prisoners with bags over their heads, sexual
humiliation, forced cleaning of toilets with bare hands etc – similar to events at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.
Even within four days of the experiment, four ‘prisoners’ were so harmed they had breakdowns (Zimbardo
2004a).
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of them and for which they were responsible, they took no action to stop or ameliorate the behaviours or experiment. It was not until PhD student, Christina Maslach, walked into the situation, was horrified and denounced what she saw, that the experiment was questioned. Before her action over 50 psychology colleagues had witnessed the experiment and not been disturbed – to the contrary they were ‘enthusiastic about what was going on in the name of science’ and exerted quite a ‘group pressure’ pathologising Maslach for her response of visceral doubt (O’Toole 1997:1). Zimbardo said later that ‘she challenged us to examine the madness she observed, that we had created and had to take responsibility for’ (O’Toole 1997:3). Ultimately self-responsibility is the barrier to horrific behaviour enabled by institutional authority and role entrapment (Zimbardo 2004b).

Thus, service to the Whole is characterised by self-responsibility, autonomy and interconnectedness. The origin of such service is not pre-set in time by an ideology or external authority of any sort (James 1902:20). Experiential interconnectedness as found within, is not mediated by a commander, professor, priest or mullah – the interaction is direct. 30 In contrast, present governing is characterised by disconnection, hierarchical exclusion and slippage away from self-responsibility which can result in great harm. However, there is no hierarchy of power in wholeness.

Ariel: In taking responsibility you come from a place of wholeness, you have room to give completely of yourself.

**Wholeness and service**

Spiritually aligned action originates in, and enhances, moments of wholeness. Such action, aligned by deep experiential connectedness, fulfils a sense of service. This experience of service within the greater whole, has a distinct feeling/state of aliveness and alignment, certainty and purpose, which is quite different from the smallness of egoic focus with its constructions, fears and desires. 31 The state is fulfilling and creative,

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30 This is not to under-value the guidance of a spiritual teacher, however, as most teachers stress, responsibility ultimately lies with oneself.

31 Fritz describes the experiences of creators/artists who move with the flow of creativity into a state of vast openness, connecting and aligning with many worlds and realities. He observes that when the person acts for the good of what one holds dearest – namely acting from the experience of embodied love – then he
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and answers a deep call of service to the Whole giving a sense of meaningfulness found in relationship within the greater cosmology of Life in which each being inextricably belongs. Wholeness, then, brings a sense of completion in that moment; the personal journey, as the process of self-responsible becoming, completes in service and in the flow of Life.

I suggest that altruistic service is a desirable disposition and skill for participants in governing – that government based on sacredness is public service to the whole of humanity, the planet and Life. Service is a personal contribution to the whole – and often a source of joy.

I slept and dreamt that life was joy.
I awoke and saw that life was service.
I acted and behold, service was joy.

(Rabinthranath Tagore, in Goswami 1993:268)

**Experiential routes to wholistic government**

The data derived from the visioning process is both content and process rich; it indicates a balance between shared coherence and healthy doubt which can inform evolved collective governing. From the data, I discuss several routes to individual wholeness which can be integrated into governing process. They are truth, surrender, love and service to the Whole.

Each experience illustrates a process of participation with Life and with the sacred. In each experience the individual lets go into the unknown and universal inter-being and creativity. Wholeness, as discussed in science, becomes experience. The truth that is known within one’s centre, is a grounding point for reference, assessment, responsibility and speaking. This truth magnetises knowing and lets the spirit, as personalised wholeness, coordinate and direct rather than the rational mind. Surrender in an action of co-participation through being, immerses into the unfolding creative space of Life’s Mystery, beyond what is known and constructed. Experiential love, the desire for the
well-being of another and expansion to all others, streams with dynamic and unifying love-energy of the universe. In these experiences, the wholeness found within echoes with infinite wholeness, within which one belongs and so serves.

As empathy is learned (not necessarily by all, perhaps even few) to embrace all of humanity then the pre-conditions of greater and greater coherence radiate into the collective mind-field. Empathy, compassion, embodied interconnectedness and awareness are keys to planetary transformation – and to coherent, unifying modes of governing. These brain shaping states and skills can be taught.

I suggest these steps to wholeness can be applied in democratic government based on sacredness. These experiences described, ground embodied patterns of inter-being as interconnectedness. They are available to any person and enact cosmological powers. These experiential processes have personal, social and species-ial (Teilhard’s meaning) transformative power. They are inherently democratic ways of aligning with, participating in, and being supported by, the sacred Mystery of Life, and hence have application in the practice and evolution of collective self-governing, namely democracy.
Introduction: possibilities for future government

The visioning ceremony gave insights about processes, emotional impetus and the value of clear space as sources of empowerment, social transformation and futures possibilities of being together in a unifying vitalised Whole. Experiences of interconnectedness and clear space linked the personal to the universal. Coming together in an ambiance of acknowledged sacredness supported certain processes of inner being and dynamic interconnectedness. Potentially, these states and processes can inform forms of government which are in harmony with sacredness and in congruency with evolutionary forces drawing human interactions forward to a unified and harmonious Whole.

Singing Hill: a site for visioning

In a parliamentary speech, Senator Jo Valentine read a poem, ‘Singing Hill’, by archeomythologist, Dorothy Cameron (1991). Singing Hill, the site of the Australian Parliament (and the visioning ceremony), is said to be a sacred women’s birthing site (pers. comm.)
Chapter eight: possibilities and processes

The poem speaks about the power of place and Gaia, acting through ordinary people/women and ceremony in both timeless and obvious reality where possibilities of wise government at one with the Earth and cosmos await re-activation.

The men in dark suits
With endless disputes
Sit in the marble temple
In the shining edifice
Built upon the hill

They are the elders
Of the present day tribe
Quite unaware that eons ago
The Hill was sacred
And magic was there

For once it was the Singing Hill
The hill that sang with the Earth Song
At the meeting of the ley lines
And the crossing of the songlines
At the centre of the Hills of the Circling

The song of the Earth was the women’s song
They were the tribal elders then
Who knew the Mysteries
Who drew down the moon
And who nurtured the Earth and its singing

Unknown to the dark suits
Shouting within

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1 This information came from three sources but I do not wish to name the Indigenous women for cultural reasons.
Chapter eight: possibilities and processes

The women are returning
To the Centre of the Circling
Reclaiming their own

Circling the fountain in the shining edifice
Circling the pyramid of the thrusting dome
They return to their own
And the chanting is beginning
The humming has begun

With the passing of the seasons
Music of Singing Hill
Will transcend the voices
Of the dark suits
Shouting their abuse

New tribal elders
The re-emerging Daughters
Will awaken Gaia
And the shouting will be stilled
The healing of the planet will begin

Gaia’s woman energy
Will link the endless cosmos
With the light of inner knowledge
And a reverence for the Earth

And the daughters of a different Dreaming
Will recover the Mystery
Rediscover the harmony
Of the Centre of the Circling
Around the Singing Hill
Chapter eight: possibilities and processes

Sacredness within
My reference point in this research is sacredness, which can be embodied and engaged, and which dances we beings throughout the cosmos in wholistic interconnectedness.

Premise of the sacred
Sacredness as the acknowledged working premise shifts the cultural paradigm to a different world and values of respectful inclusivity.

Ruth: I certainly see more acknowledgement of the sacred – the sacred of the ordinary up to the extraordinary. I think if there was a concept of sacredness of the Earth, of other people, of all life, to be held in a certain respect – it would be a huge difference – just slip that in and the whole world would shift. Its paradigm stand would go. It’s a totally different starting place, totally different values, totally different working premise.

The word, sacredness
Culturally, the word and concept of sacredness is not honoured. Acknowledging the sacred brings balance to the profane. There is recognition of sacredness yet it is hidden in response to some sort of cultural cringe.

Paola: So many people recognise it [sacredness] but there’s the official voice not recognising that connectedness. So many people are spiritually aware, very spiritually practiced, but are using other words. They are still hiding behind a mask because their credibility might be on the line using that word.

Ross: In political and academic circles the word, sacredness, almost startles people.

Experienced sacredness
The actual experience of the sacred is a key to inclusivity and connectedness because it is common to all paths, including the secular. The conceptualisation and cultural beliefs built around it maintain separateness. The experiential state connects with inestimable power, in the instant.

Ariel: That’s the key you know. It’s that experienced sacredness. The concept of it – no; cultural beliefs about it – no; it’s that experience of it. There’s a million ways of getting there, but being able to touch that place, to come from that space when it really is
important, anything can be, anything can happen from that space – and quite
instantaneously.

**Human be-ing**

**Expanded human identity**

Human identity, from the experience of the sacred, is multi-dimensional and fecund with potentialities where *being* leads *doing*. Humans, in their/our multi-dimensional identity more easily know truth, right action and timing.

*Haley:* It does take time for me to connect back inside of myself, and from a place of truth understand what I need to do, or what is right action. It’s going from being-out-in-the-world feeling state to connection, like a sinking-into-yourself and honouring the greater multi-dimensional beings that we are.

**Disconnectedness**

Full human capacities are hidden in this culture. There is a monochromatic filter on the rainbow of life.

*Sam:* At the moment people operate on a very little framework, this tiny little mind-set – people aren’t in touch with the multi-dimensionality that their spirit truly is. So they think they are just this little thing, and yet all of the time we’re all of it, in any moment.

*Haley:* When I disconnect from my own soul or spirit, to just go into doing, I tend to be less conscious. I tend to just operate out of habit, what’s expected.

*Paola:* Well interconnectedness – it’s being human isn’t it. It’s like we get these theories and we become professionals and somewhere along the line we seem to come off track and forget what we are actually doing. … It’s time to go back to that real simple human being for it to actually be in harmony.

Our human potential is beyond present knowing; this can be explored and utilised in social organisation.
Chapter eight: possibilities and processes

Sam: I think spirit’s open, it’s limitless, it’s expansive, I think it’s – I don’t even know what I think it is – it’s beyond, all the time. And there’s an exploration that some people are having planetary-wise that we could be having.

**Interconnectedness**

**The web of Life**

Humanity is part of the interconnected web of Life. Remembering this connectedness changes the actions we take.

*Gaia: The collective of our humanity is a part of the interconnected web that has been broken – we’re forgotten our humanity and how that links us all, every single one of us to every human being in the planet. Yeah, I really grieve for people in Iraq. If we acknowledged interconnectedness even just within our own species we would change what we do.*

**Interconnected across lifetimes**

A kaleidoscope of experiences threaded through lifetimes gives a larger picture, with acceptance of human diversity.

*Sam: How could people be racist if they were in touch – if they realised that last, next life-time, another aspect of them or however you put it, is a black person. Changes everything around, doesn’t it – brings people into a bigger picture of themselves.*

**Connected within the cosmos**

A sense of the cosmos, our habitat, expands our framework and brings a sense of belonging.

*Brenda: I thought of how we must encourage a sense, in ourselves and others, of the real Cosmos we live in – our real Habitat – in its local, planetary, and cosmic dimensions. We need to regain a Larger Picture, and a feeling of belonging here.*
Chapter eight: possibilities and processes

**Connected through time and Earth**

Connection to a particular location and life-form, such as a tree, enables the connection through to Earth’s time and space whence may come new forms of government. These tools of connection can be used in future governing.

*Brenda:* I sat with my back against the Big Tree in my back yard, joining you all where you were in Canberra in meditation and visioning for new ways of governing. I felt it was better for me that I join you from my Place – rather than have gone to Canberra – as I have a clearer sense of Earth’s Time and Space here, which is where it seems to me that ‘new’ ways of governing must come from.

**Connectedness of global humanity**

Humans acting by individual choice and heart-felt action in the present on a single focus, in this case peace, illustrate the growing global body of interconnected humanity.

*Tara:* The peace marches we see around the world are unprecedented prior to this particular conflict in Iraq. Because they are happening in so many countries of varied cultures, leads me to believe that we are interconnected as a global body and we want peace now.

**Harmony across scales of size**

Government which embodies interconnectedness is the culmination of fractal patterns seeded from inner harmony.

*Tara:* All of us wish for a government that will embody that interconnectedness and give the long lasting peace and harmony that we want. Nobody wants conflict – whether that’s on a global scale or day to day in your personal life. We all know that we feel happiest when there’s harmony in our own lives, and our own communities, and that extends out and out.

**Shared wish for peace**

While cultures may differ, people are deeply interconnected in their desire for peace and happiness.
Chapter eight: possibilities and processes

*Tara: I feel Middle East culture is so different from ours in many ways and yet is really driven by its spiritual beliefs – basically we are incredibly interconnected. We all want the same thing. We all want to be loved. We all want to explore our spiritual side. We all feel the evolution personally that’s available in that humanity, that wish by those people too, to leave their children a happy peaceful strong world.*

**Emotion and compassion**

*Emotion*
Recognition, expression and ownership of emotions engages our full humanity.

*Gaia: In the visioning ceremony it is quite clear to me about the need for emotion, and the need to grieve, and express our humanness by expressing our emotions – so that we don’t shut down to atrocity and to our anger and everything we feel about the injustices and the madnesses of the world that we live in. And that if politicians did that, then they would change. They would cry in parliament, they would weep and wail and, yeah, they would make different decisions.*

**Passion for spiritual values in governing**

Spiritual values are not raised in the political domain, discussion and analysis.

*Sam: The last government elections I didn’t hear anyone talking about spiritual values and I’d end up shouting at them on the tellie – ‘What about compassion? Why aren’t we talking about compassion? Why aren’t we talking about kindness? Why don’t we talk about some real issues’? We are not brought up on spiritual ideals. We don’t honour people for their wisdom, for kindness, for love, generosity of spirit, patience.*

**Hope**

Hope impels a vision.

*Tara: There was a very strong feeling of hope and that delighted me because I feel that without the hope and with the vision that this can work, it won’t happen.*

**Shared responsibility**

Individual sovereignty balances with collective responsibility for the happiness of all.
Chapter eight: possibilities and processes

Dena: It [interconnected government] exists in a culture where people are able to recognise individual sovereignty, and yet there’s no sense of isolation, separation. It’s shared responsibility for each other’s existence.

Emotional zest and spiritual values

Emotional culture and com/passionate empathy

Emotions are not static but rather fluid processes of energy-in-motion directly permeating our motivations, moral sensibilities and relations with others. Hunt claims that emotions organise our intensely significant and spiritual experiences (1996:109). Because emotions infuse all relations, Goodwin says they are central to collective organisation and hence the cultures of social institutions (2001). These institutions are shaped by the present western mind-set, which Swimme believes, holds in place the smallest world seen by humans for eons (1990:1). Arguably, if decision-makers feel the depths of their heart-connections and express themselves from this well of emotional energy, institutional cultures would re-organise – and, yeah, they would make different decisions.²

Teilhard emphasises the zest coming from passionate love, expanded consciousness and hence expanded identity (1969a). The connective emotions of compassion and empathy are the glue of inter-being. These states-of-being not only position and interconnect with a greater social whole but, because of their activating relatedness with the Whole, energise the Whole itself unto re-organisation. As Montecucco demonstrated, these emotions draw forth coherence and synchronisation as a Whole, acting even over distance when the feelings are sustained (1997). The experience of deep connectedness changes self-identity and brings people into a bigger picture of themselves to then act through empathetic inter-being.

²Recent parliamentary discussion in Australia about the abortion drug RU486 released the vitality of emotions which flowed with personal stories, deeply held values and ‘felt politics’. The outcome of the rare conscience vote was very different from the usual locked dualism rigidly enforced by party discipline as new and unique constellations appeared as participants expressed emotions in a fuller view of themselves.
Emotions not only organise experiences and relationships but this primal energy fuels survival, evolution and political action. Swimme suggests the cosmogenic power of transformation shows up in empathetic desire for universal justice (2004:8). Teilhard believes that emotion is more significant to evolutionary synthesis of humanity than economics and materialism (1969a, d). He advocates channelling the passionate connectivity of love-energy into engaged political activism as a form of spirituality appropriate for our times.³ Goodwin similarly states that in political contexts, affective ties bind networks more strongly than cognitive or ideological links, and furthermore that this connectedness determines identity and strategic dynamics (2001). Allahyari stresses such ‘felt politics’ as an impeller for activism (2001). Longer term emotions, such as respect and trust (associated with empowerment), and depression and resignation (associated with dread), influence political activism rather than fleeting reactions (Jasper 2001). These deeper emotions, Jasper claims, are more generalised about the world and thus organise/position/identify kinship of a person within this larger context (2001). A shift in emotional culture comes in moments of charged collective identity (Young 2001). These events create new motivations as beliefs, symbols, group stories and values change.

**Spiritual values for inclusive governing**

Indian sage, Gopi Krishna notes that the difference between psychics and mystics is that mystics live by spiritual ideals and spiritual values (White 1990:121). Hunt similarly qualifies observations on psychic abilities and mystical dispositions (1996). Spiritual values act as tracking beacons to guide in life situations which in turn create future circumstances. Spiritual values which strengthen experiential connectedness accompany an expansion in consciousness (as contrasted with separating moral/religious binary judgements), and prescribe against abuse of power. Values privileging interconnectedness (compassion, empathy, love, patience, generosity, hope, aligned action), I suggest are obvious for deep and evolved democracy. Such spiritual values

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³ Such encouragement of political activism shaped by interconnecting and non-discriminating love is shared by Gyatso Tensin, the Dalai Lama (2000) and Robert Muller (1982), and is suggested, in the expansion of universal care and responsibility, as the genesis of a global spirituality.
Chapter eight: possibilities and processes

embodied-as-being enable transformative processes and patterns for inclusive, democratic governing.

Adult educator, Peter Willis explored such ‘dispositions of the soul’ which enable inclusive, democratic practices over two days at the School of Social Ecology at Western Sydney University in 2003 (Willis and Carden 2004). I was fortunate to participate in this exercise. The conclusions of the discussions concur with my own findings which centralise around feelings of oneness-with, which expand the limits of self.

Ethically, democracy enables people to participate directly, whereby efficacy and agency grow with a sense of belonging (Bachrach and Botwonick 1992). As a principle of natural justice, decisions require a living connection with those affected. Connectedness and empathy fuel a sense of responsibility to ensure fairness and justice. Empathy is central to grounded imagination of walking in another’s shoes where the real dimensions of life events become apparent with purposive attention (Goleman 2004:282).

Democracy, as Saul stresses, is hard work thus hope and optimism are essential (1999). They empower a sense of positivity which potentiates visions of the possible and empower actions to facilitate actualisation. Clarity holds vision seeded from the deepest motivations and feelings. The power of expectancy keeps the energy of a thought-form/vision directed and drawn forward through timespace unto manifestation. Faith in the human spirit to orient to futures shaped by love, sustains the inner disposition in the time before manifestation.

Zest for Life and intensification of powers of love and kindness (Teilhard 1969d:290-1), and celebration of Life (Swimme 1995:5, 6), provide energy to stream collectively self-organised governing with Life-force. Trust in Life, spirit, deity and self expands possibilities and is a circuit breaker to old patterns. Moment-by-moment awareness offers a choice in every moment and opens to the interconnectedness of all. Truth, as connectedness-within, centres, integrates and opens – thereby setting up a radiant field of integrated human energy. Compassion and empathy as embodied states of connection

Revolutionary educator, Paulo Friere says that trust in people is essential for social transformation (1972:36). Mahatma Ghandi expands the concept saying we must trust our enemies (1983).
align wholistic coherence and ground it through loving kindness and care. Willis stresses, in inclusive, compassionate democracy, courtesy and respect lubricate interaction and extend the celebration of others and difference.

**Sacredness together: process as living model**

**Process of coming-into-wholeness-together**

Government based on sacredness evolves from honouring the sacredness within our selves and others. This creates a special kind of space. The process and physical space are circular/curved emanation. The sacred circle is a unity of beings who connect at the physical, energetic and group level creating a new integrated entity.

*Haley:* *Being in the meditation room, and taking time to tune in, to still, the vision that came in for me was a future government that was based on sacredness, in honouring ourselves and honouring each other. The practical way that was embodied and demonstrated was in the structure of the building – it was a circle, or a hoop style, with the meditation room all the way around it.*

*To walk into where decisions are made, and where parliament is held or whatever form of government it is then – was acknowledgement that we need to still from everyday life and tune into a different way of being – before we join in community in the circle to make those decisions.*

*Once we have stilled and quietened and connected to ourselves, as individuals and as representatives of our communities, when we come into the circle – it is a space that is created that is of a different energy, a different dimension, a different way. It is very respectful and honouring as we have already respected and honoured ourselves. And it is a sense that everyone holds that place inside of them that is in integrity and not needing to project onto each other or fight or fight to be heard or have that kind of disrespectful discussion around issues. It actually has taken the ego out of it because there is no need*

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5 A sacred hoop is a Native American ceremony of dialogue in sacred time and space (Gunn Allen 1986; Peat 1994).
to have to defend yourself in speaking because you know you will be heard and respected in the space.

**Self-preparation**

Self-preparation before the sacred circle is a practical and serious responsibility to be centred and synchronised within, and so connected with one’s inner being and truth.

*Haley: Before you walk into where you make a decision, it’s almost like a vibration shift, that outer circle. And imagine having a mechanism that gauged your vibration – like an outer confirmation. For learning, it would be great to have some sort of vibrational calibration outside of ourselves to check-in – like ‘are you truly connected to your inner truth and being’.*

Sacred ceremony is one means to achieve experiential interconnectedness.

*Ariel: I’d love to see sacred ceremony, even in preparing – a sense of ‘I’m going to lay aside my egoic self so that I can be in the connected source.’ So it’s again bringing together the sacred with everything else and using that as the basis on which to make decisions and laws that will act on behalf of the people that inform it. And it’s utterly connected.*

Inner connectedness creates both the space and state for connection and union with others.

*Haley: … the need to connect inside of ourselves to the clarity inside, prior to speaking [in the circle]. I know it inside myself when I touch on that place, there’s no question, it just is. For how on Earth can we expect to communicate with each other when we are doing it out of that place of disconnection. There is no place to hear the other person because there is no space inside of ourselves.*

Experiential tools such as a labyrinth can create experiential interconnectedness in preparation for decision-making.

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6 Technology to measure states of coherence (brain and auric) within an individual and between persons is available (Montecucco 1997; Hunt 1996).
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Ross: *There could be tools, like a labyrinth, built into the parliamentary space – simple things for people to get themselves into a clear inner space.*

**Commitment to be present**

Participation is taken very seriously. A person can participate by their presence and by holding the state of connectedness. Absence from the process is not an option.

Dena: *If people really felt heard then there would be no sense of not turning up for meetings. There is nothing more important. You would want to be present.*

*If* you can’t take part in the discussion, you can’t not be present – you can’t be off playing golf – you sit in silent meditation if you can’t find the words – then come out of meditation and into the circle.

Ross: *You are connected with the circle, holding that connectedness, anchoring it.*

**Lead from the sacred site within**

Insightfulness comes from being in touch with yourself and your sacredness within. This inner connection expands and evolves the insights for governing.

Tara: *The present situation in the world demands that there be insightful leaders and that space really comes from being in touch with yourself, and your sacred site.*

Ariel: *… deeply felt connectedness and an understanding that if you are in a position to act on the behalf of people, you must act from the holiest place in yourself. You cannot act from the head alone, from greed – and the part of us that is egoic and utterly corruptible, because that’s not about connection – that’s the bit that’s separate, that’s sick, and that’s the bit that at the moment our government’s operating from. But it doesn’t have to be that way. It can be completely different.*

Sam: *If there is a body of people making decisions that are going to affect you – you’ve got to trust that it’s not ego based, that it is actually for the greater whole. A lot of cultures had checks and balances to see that the situation didn’t arise, and if it did arise they knew they were in big trouble.*
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Council of elders

Elders are people who are out of their ego, and are identified with the whole.

Sam: I like that word, elders, wise ones that advise, somebody with wisdom, and been on the planet for a long time. Then I do think they can make decisions that would include the greater – out of their ego. Maybe that’s the lynch pin, someone out of their ego can make decisions that everybody would be quite happy with. What we’re not happy with is the ego making the decisions.

Dena: I see a Council of Elders, chosen elders from communities, coming together to oversee right decisions. Decisions will need to be made for the whole good. So it’s the wisest person, not necessarily the oldest, to best represent the interests of all and bring forth the needs of the community.

Wholeness in groups

The participants describe multi-layered participatory processes rather than mechanistic structures.

Centring and circles

The process of inner centring is mirrored in coming together in a circle interconnected as a whole. This fractal-like patterned process repeats throughout the society. Decision-making is a multi-directional, multi-dimensional and multi-scalar process of inter-being.

Haley: The individual people that come in this place have also gone through this process in their community of stilling, connecting, honouring, being in integrity in that vibration. So that representatives would have had that level of circles, within their community right back through the various levels of society to our core family. We would have a place perhaps within the home where you connect with yourself, and with the Earth or beings that help still the mind and connect as-above-so-below. And so it is actually embodied in the society itself. So when it flows to, let’s call it parliament, it’s actually a congruent process throughout the entire society. It’s actually embodied in the culture. So information goes through that process to the parliament, and also the decisions made go
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*back through those circles of communication as well as the media, processing anything that needs to be processed in the community that so everything is clear.*

One woman saw circles of people around the black marble pool directly under the pyramid at Parliament House. The image of ‘tiers and tiers of circles’ illustrates flow of shared power throughout the many communities of society – like the flat even flow of water in the pool at the centre of the Directions.7

*Dena: I imagine that each of the people standing, sitting around the pool would be coming from their communities – gathering around the pool in open discussion as to how the needs of one community can also be brought into the needs of the greater community. And each community is doing a similar thing so you are having tiers and tiers of circles going down – down only brings it closer to the community, it’s not down in a pyramid. The tier is actually flat.*

Authority is close to the ground.

*Sam: They can meet and talk and discuss, and maybe they can guide. Maybe they’ve got great ideas, maybe they haven’t. And the ideas can flow out and people can return to their communities with them and then they can talk about it – but nobody should be telling. Maybe that body can make a decision but if they do it’s because way back here, in the community, everybody has said, ‘OK well make that decision’.*

Vision of government is one of concentric and interweaving circles moving out from personal harmony to the planet with the wisdom born of connection.

*Tara: … vision of government as having that concentric circle type of effect – envisaged as personal harmony in her own home, with some kind of a space for worship and spiritual development, a place of loving kindness, and from that a movement outwards*

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7 The black marble pool lies directly under the large glass pyramid in the centre of Australia’s Parliament House which is itself shaped as a vesica pisces aligned with the cardinal directions. The water flows up from a hole in the centre of the flat marble block and sheets over the four edges as one moving indivisible whole. The water creates white noise so, like the black, absorbs all. The pool offers symbolism of thinking-together like water – of moving, coherent fluidity which takes the shape of the vessel in that time and space.
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into the local community, the local area and all over her country – so that all people are included and then that spreading out over the world.

Ariel: My sense is very much about sacredness. There is no system as such that we know – but that within each small community is a circle of speaking and sharing and out of that comes wisdom born of connection. And then they take that wisdom to a bigger circle, and that that is entered through sacredness, and then that circle is informed by connectedness and love, and then they take that wisdom to the commonwealth level or whatever.

**Different sources of experiential sacredness**

In government, based on sacredness, all ways of experiencing the sacred are honoured, valued and respected.

*Haley: There really is an honouring of the Earth. There is an honouring of whatever beings and religions each person holds dear.*

Co-existence of different spiritual paths and the energies of different worlds were enacted and modelled in the women’s ceremony. To achieve this degree of inclusion requires not simply tolerance but openness and deep acceptance.

Ariel: I found in our sitting was an example. We all come from different understandings and different practices, but there was total respect for each person’s practice. It was all understood, respected, valued – so there is room for difference in expressions within that interconnectedness, and that total connection. But the minute we feel that ours is ‘the only way’ or ‘better than’ then we are slightly off kilter. The ego will use anything – it can be the most spiritual sounding stuff.

An inclusive and genuinely egalitarian platform of different expressions of the experience of sacredness offers a model for coming-into-harmony and union.

*Ariel: So in a bigger platform than the one we brought together, if there is such a thing, it should be possible to find a way to resolve differences or come to harmony despite differing experience and differing views. Yeah, it was a model.*
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Different cultures bring their gifts enabling the integration of many wisdoms and direct knowledge from many sources.

*Sam:* I’ve learnt so much from the Aboriginal people, the Red Indian people, the Maori people, by looking into their cultures and how they have the world set up for them.

Various roles which engage and respond to a bigger world are present.

*Ruth:* Shamans use what they got from plants as a kind of authority on how to run their society, how to heal and how to live your life.

*Sam:* Tribes had the shaman that interfaced for them between this world and the other.

*Ross:* In a big vision of government, you’d have resident artists and others who are there to vision. And you’d probably also have your clown, that watches for the ego, pulling it back in, and parodies it if it’s there – and the oracle, a seer, a person that knew how to open up, to move in time and into other worlds – it’s not that that would wipe out all other perspectives but you’d certainly take that into account.

Spiritual/ceremonial tools can support government of interconnection and sacredness.

*Paola:* …acknowledging Indigenous tools like a talking stick, sitting in a circle, putting all the voices in.\(^8\)

*Dena:* Perhaps you could have someone with the black rod handing it to the next person to speak. It is like a circle where at the end someone asks ‘Is everyone complete. Has everyone spoken what they have to speak’.\(^9\)

**Inclusivity**

Universal creativity is activated by dynamic energy of difference.

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\(^8\) The talking stick is used in Native American sacred ceremony, particularly the sacred hoop. It empowers deep connection within and authentic speaking supported by spirit. Whoever holds the talking stick speaks and all others give their attention. When what is to be said is complete, the stick is placed in the centre of the circle for whoever is next.

\(^9\) The Black Rod is a symbol of authority and power in the Australian Westminster system; it sits on the table in the centre of the House of Representatives.
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Council of All Beings

Different beings and worlds are represented so the decisions come from this greater inclusive awareness.

Gaia: To have all beings represented I took little symbols of the other worlds in [to the meditation room] – you know, of the winged ones, ocean life, the mineral world, the plant world – they came into the space with me and were represented. I only did that in a small way with symbolic little things but it’s quite a strong energy if those other life-forces are present, even in a symbolic form. And if in our parliament these were acknowledged, then we would make decisions differently – ‘Well what does this mean for the trees? What does this mean to our animal life?’ – yeah, bring that awareness into decision-making.

The process of a Council of All Beings was suggested as part of the governing process.10

Ross:: What if we had someone speak for all beings – the animals, plants – like in the Council of All Beings – not even speaking as an environmentalist or from a human view but let the forest speak, speak as the trees.

Difference engaging creative governing

Thriving on the creativity of difference enables solutions, enhancement, fulfilment, achievement. Genuine engagement of differences shifts fear to openness and common good, moving diversity into inclusivity and difference into creative wholeness.

Dena: … allowing for difference – because we are all different, we have to allow ourselves to be different – you need that sort of drama to spark creative ideas, it’s dynamic – so common interest, by recognition of differences, without that causing fear. So if you take away the fear that people are going to loose something and show how we will gain, then I think that most people make right decisions.

10 In the Council of All Beings process a person chooses and deeply identifies with a life-form or natural object – extending their consciousness to listen fully and then giving voice to this being into the human world (Flemming and Macy 1988a, b). Starhawk’s futuristic novel, The fifth sacred thing, gives an example of integrating this form of dialogue into governing (1993).
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Ross: … using the dynamic energy of difference to create with, to create solutions and enhancement.

Earth connectedness

Connectedness with Earth grounds sacredness through the place you are at.

Ruth: Just lock in that sacredness of the Earth, start with that, the Earth as your mother, mother of everything really.

Haley: I don’t know one human being that doesn’t get affected by sitting under the stars or sitting on a rock in the bush or connecting with the energies that are there to support us. It feels really important to have the physical environment support the process.

Ross: In the meditation room you could feel the heart-beat of the Earth. Government would have to have a deep connection with the Earth.

Tara: The land holds a lot of spirits and we tend to disregard those. We can feel from our Earth, the spirits of the past and the spirits of the future sit right with us now ... we have a responsibility in both directions of healing for the past and healing for the future.

Sacred circle

Examples of collective decision-making in an interconnected, sacred manner exist – Dadirri of Australia’s Indigenous people (Ungunameer 1988; Atkinson and Ober 1995; Fredericks 1995a, 1995b; Wanganeen 1994, 1995; Stockton 1995), the sacred hoop of the Native American peoples (Gunn Allen 1986; Briggs and Peat 1999), and women’s spirituality (Beaumont 1998, 1999). Crucial factors in these examples are that reality is recognised as interconnected and interactive, and the cosmos and all Life are acknowledged as sacred. There are some similarities with some wholistic group processes (Mindell 1995), consensus decision-making (Briggs 2000) and the process of ‘dialogue’ as described by Bohm (Keepin 1994; Jaworski 1996; Briggs and Peat 1999), however these processes do not consciously engage a sacred cosmos – this distinction makes a significant difference. Acknowledgement of the sacred entrains the whole which includes all beings and the fullness of being human. More importantly, imbusement with the sacred, acknowledges and engages the Mystery, what lies beyond human knowing. In
addition, a sacred connection with the Earth is consciously acknowledged and so decision-making takes place in deep connection and support of sacred ground, sacred space and all who this connects with.

Indigenous Elder Miriam Ungunameer describes Dadirri as an inner listening and quiet still awareness which links with the sacred sites within (1988). Bronwyn Fredericks refers to Dadirri as ‘listening deeply to ourselves and to each other, speaking from the heart, from one’s deepest feeling place’ (1995:261). She says the process of Dadirri reflects peace, oneness and wholeness In a parallel description, Paula Gunn Allen describes American Plain’s Tribes’ experience of a sacred hoop. She says ‘the concept is one of a singular unity that is dynamic and encompassing, including all that is, contained in its most essential aspect, that is life’ (1986:56). She writes that in Native American thought the natural state is wholeness and that healing facilitated by the sacred hoop and ceremony, is the restoration of wholeness from a condition of division and separation from the harmony of the whole. The sacred circle and hoop create wholeness.

Descriptions in my own research of the spiritual ceremony of a group of non-Indigenous Australian women were similar, where I documented the paradigm perceived by the women when gathered in sacredness. The women said that the sacred circle was their basic tool of ceremony and described it in paradoxical ways. They said that the beauty, simplicity and power of the sacred circle was not commonly known or utilised in this society and that it offered another way of being together and relating – and perhaps governing.

All three sources say peace and harmony are created through the wholeness. It is an exciting thought that in shared experience of sacredness which has connectedness with the Earth, the same form, power and experience of communication and interconnection arises.

**Processes in shared sacredness**

In dedicated sacredness, the alignment of consciousness where all-is-connected, is enhanced as a living reality. Through spoken words and focussed consciousness, an intentional resonance of energy is created, opening the membrane of
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timespace/energymatter and positioning a protective boundary, effective at all levels. Connectedness is orchestrated as an embodied state within, with each other, with the Earth, the specific location and with Spirit.

The sacred circle is described as the power of unconditional love in connectedness – ‘a circle of pure connectedness which can be as small or as large as you choose to make it … which has infinite power, and embracing power to hold in it anything’ (Beaumont 1998:153). The power of love-in-connectedness is profound. The power shows as deep healing, transformation and unifying creativity. Interconnectedness reveals itself by spontaneous intuitive insight and surprising synchronicity.

The sacred circle functions on at least three experiential levels, that of the individual, the circle-as-a-whole-singularity and as a patterning of energy in the cosmos/greater morphogenic field. These contexts can be visualised as a rippling of concentric spheres of energy or consciousness.

Individual within the circle

The ambience of sacredness facilitates each (willing) person to come to the core of their being. To be fully one’s self is essential to the work of the sacred circle. Deep trust and willingness facilitate being and expressing fully who you are in the moment. This responsibility to be authentic extends to not withholding. Ruthless honesty and courageous surrender create the freedom to fully be. Being true to oneself entails staying present. Holding this embodied presence creates safety and physical stability. The sacred circle is a grounded sacred space where different levels of consciousness are held and focused into the present time and space, and yet is ordinary. The presence that is required supports ‘normalisation’ and grounding of the experience. The circle acts like a bridge between dimensions.

By being aware and awake in the moment enables stillness and presence. Inner composure centred in a balance of body, mind, spirit and heart-relatedness arises effortlessly in viscerally tangible interconnectedness. This core of being accesses multidimensionality of being experienced as expanded openness which is ultimately vulnerable. The greatest personal contribution is complete authenticity and self-
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responsibility together with holding a state of connectedness. Experiential interconnectedness as wholeness is reflected in others and the shared space. In the balance of interconnectedness and individuation, unity is experienced.\(^\text{11}\)

The environment of focused sacredness enables a special kind of space, an open, accepting, attentive yet empty space which supports deep involution within. The space/emptiness is available to each – danced by individual choice. The presence of love allows the safety to be in any way and to speak whatever arises. The acceptance and presence of wholeness enables the experience of belonging and deep intimacy. The space acts as a touchstone for each to hear their own truth and listen to that of each other.

Speaking in the sacred circle is described as voicing one’s truth, free from that which is conditioned and unauthentic. Listening is active, fully present, aware, self-responsible – listening with the whole living organism without blame or judgment. If a strong reaction arises while listening, the first place of inquiry is oneself; to own and explore one’s inner state and take responsibility for that state and any subsequent action from that understanding. Listening has the quality of presence and is a dynamic action of attending which directs and projects energy. US ethicist, Sarah Hoagland refers to the ability of attention to give power to the object of focus and sees it as a strategy for empowerment (1992). Contemporary French mystic Simone Weil advocated the use of attention as a spiritual method (Hohlwein 1982). Attention in the sacred circle is to the speaker, the self, the energetic environment and other dimensions concurrently.

**The circle as a whole entity**

The sacred circle acts as an organic unity with its own consciousness and life – a collective space where each individual is still their own unique being within the wholistic entity. The interconnection of the whole unit would be incomplete through non-inclusion, denial, censoring or omission of any part. Each person has choice within responsibility, to play their individual part in the whole.

\(^{11}\) John Michell from his investigations of sacred Celtic stone circles in Ireland described the experience of wholeness which arose in the circles and their empty centres (1975). He said that the lived experience of being in these physical sacred circles evoked a balance of mind, focused clarity and centring of wholeness. I suggest that the same can be said for sacred circles of people.
Agreement as a group is not sought or desired. In fact acceptance of non-agreement is vital for creative interaction. The non-discriminatory process is not lack of ethical awareness but rather an encompassing realism. Inclusiveness allows the whole picture as it presents at a particular time, to be played out. Inclusivity operates to synergise the whole. Paradox and all positions are held by individuals within the whole phenomenon, and sometimes concurrently within individuals. Allowance for all is required to create wholeness which echoes within and can be drawn forth consciously at later times of fragmentation.

The sacred circle is actively transformative and creative. Inclusivity in the environment of sacredness acts somewhat alchemically – by transforming the disparate and apparently contradictory positions to synergise unitary cohesion. The empty yet generative space supports the centring within and magnetises expression from the core of being. In the process of inclusivity, dissonance is simply allowed to be, building creative tension (Fritz 1985; Koldon 1991) and psychic temperature (Teilhard 1969a). In a process of creative orchestration, dissonance appears to transform into harmonised oneness paradoxically through allowing the interplay of full individuation and the wholeness of interconnectedness where the varied inputs synergise mysteriously. Audre Lorde comments that simple tolerance of difference denies the full potential of the creative function that deeply engaged difference enables (1983). Embodied sacredness aligns with the whole field of the cosmos enabling its cohering creativity to be expressed. Connectedness acts with the embodied presence of love to create unity among difference – similar to individual notes sounding together to create harmony which included harmonics not existing before that moment. The individual expressions harmonise because they are interconnected and energetically held within a greater Whole. The process requires individual authentic expression yet an individual can not do it – group connectedness is required. Allen describes the process in the sacred hoop where ‘all movement is related to all movement – that is harmonious and balanced or unified’
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(1986:56). The theory of holography and the imagery of fractals mirror the process. The circle becomes a living creative entity of consciousness.\(^{12}\)

**Circle as a pattern of energy**

The singular unit of the circle itself becomes a pattern of energy which arises from the interaction of the active consciousness of the beings participating.\(^{13}\) In sacredness, the pattern of the relationships emanated, and embodied states connecting them, creates a design of energy which is egalitarian, circular and love-based. The new wholeness/centre/unity radiates a psycho-spiritual pattern of wholistic inclusivity and individual expression, harmonised within a greater whole. The details of what occurs are never the same but the energetic pattern of interaction is consistent and repeatable. The patterned energy is not static but pulsing alive emmanance. The pattern expressed and emanated is egalitarian harmony of individuation in connected wholeness creating peace experienced as belonging. Once established the energetic pattern exists and persists, having power and effects beyond itself and the present.

The embodied and shared state of consciousness expands out from the circle in the same pattern that occurs and is held by the group. That particular patterned design of vibration resonates in the collective consciousness. The resonant form or symbol of embodied consciousness of shared sacredness creates a metaphysical template. The sensed metaphysical action of the circle is consistent with the processes of morphogenic fields and harmonic resonance (Sheldrake 1981; Arguelles 1987; Hagelin 1992; Goswarmi 2000).

**Socio-political application**

The inner processes and embodied states set the patterns for the group processes and energetic inter-being. In summary the sacred circle:

- creates wholeness

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\(^{12}\) Similarly, Teilhard writes about spiritual union, where because the union is spiritual, it differentiates (1969a:288).

\(^{13}\) In sacred timespace there is no reason to assume that interaction does not include other beings across time and space – connected and acting in the present, reverberating in response to the resonance of relevance – which is available to those with the sensitivities to see, hear and feel.
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- enables changes in consciousness
- acts as a bridge between worlds, states
- is grounded and ordinary
- is personally accessible
- is egalitarian in power and responsibility
- functions holographically
- is multidimensional
- creates and resonates morphic fields of interactive behaviours
- generates/enacts metaphysical symbols (circles, sphericity)
- catalyses cosmogenic creativity.

The processes are flexible and so consistent with Inayatullah’s suggestion for future socio-political processes to have inherent flexibility to enable responsiveness to increasing uncertainty and unpredictable change (1995).

These models/processes of direct experience of sacredness are,
- transformative (dissonance to harmony)
- unifying and synergising (segmentation to wholeness)
- efficient (of people, their knowledge, experience, wisdom and of non-human resources)
- inclusive (all aspects, attributes, fears are non-discriminately included)
- egalitarian (all parts/beings equally integrated in the process and outcome)
- spiritual (sacredness flows in the participants and onward)
- creative (the new and perhaps unforeseen emerges)
- peace-making (generates dynamic equilibrium, peace as intensely creative)
- effective (they work by reconciling within greater creative unity)
- democratic (presence and expression of all abide in the whole).

Kuhn says that new paradigms arise first in patterns of inter-relationships in community, which become generalised metaphysical symbols (1970). Thus the ways of the future are foreshadowed in patterns of interacting. Kuhn also said that new paradigms come from unexpected sources outside the dominant paradigm. Hence I emphasise the importance of taking attention off the old players and systems when looking for significant options for enacted future governing.
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Dadirri, the sacred circle and hoop all centre sacredness in governing – and are consistent with suggestions in the data. These examples of shared sacredness and sacred space offer models of wholistic group coherence with active engagement, personal autonomy and authenticity. The dualistic assumption that personal autonomy and collective synchronisation are exclusively oppositional, is ill founded. I believe forms of government based on sacredness, and hence commonality of optimal human experiences of interconnectedness, are possible and desirable. These experiences are congruent with individual wisdom and universal connectedness. The sacred circle is one such model for government which is democratic in its wholistic inclusiveness and shared power. It also models and generates peace, and synergistic creativity in response to difference and union. The sacredness supports personal integrity, respect for others and the Land, and synergy of wisdom. This model can be practically applied to management (eg of a school), in workplace relations, exploratory discussions and for the evolution of deep democracy.
Sacred timespace

Present actions create future government

Our actions and thoughts now, create the patterns for the future. One woman explained her insight that future government is made by living it now with strongly empowered, conscious intentional enactment. She elucidates this process through her understanding that all time is present now – actions and behaviours now create/are the future.

_Tara_: _My personal belief is that all time is actually present in the one space now and that what actually takes place now, strongly is a part of the future. Which is why at this moment if we continue with this new feeling, this new movement of positive harmony, that things can happen out of this, that things can push forward and we will have that harmonious, interconnected government. To be positive now, will produce positive government thirty years down the line and that actually is part of that future government._

_So if we look at this with the belief that we will have what we want – which is a government which listens to the people, that doesn’t see one nation opposed to another, but sees all people, all beings of the world as equally important, equally interconnected, working together in a harmonious way, helping each other with a balance, sharing resources, where everything belongs to everybody – because you are the person next to you, you are the person across the world, you are your dog that you sit beside._

_That what we do now is vital – that what we wish for, what we hope for, what we work for each day, will produce what it is that we need. So I’m totally convinced that we can have a government that considers all those things, if we continue the way we are going now._

Play and festivity

Life and people are at the heart of government in pleasure, play and ceremony as ways to interconnect and come into union.

_Gaia_: _We had fun. And the sight of all those kids playing in the water out the front [of Parliament House] at the end of the day – it’s like, yes this is the parliament, this is the_
core, and here are the people playing – you know, there’s play, and ceremony, and festivity and community – people are giving expression.

The present moment accesses all time through sacredness, experiential interconnectedness. This quality of time, Swimme refers to as sacred, an element of Mystery (1990). Individual and collective futures arise from the inner state, wishes and actions now.\footnote{This dynamic of personal and collective creativity is recognised in some Buddhist and Hindu traditions as the creative principle of karma (Robina Courtin 2002, 2005).} Hope impels the vision generated therein. Positivity sustains the wished for and envisioned future, energetically reverberating it through creative time to manifest in future linear time. Celebration which lives the chosen future now, enlivens it into actualisation through the path of heart, joy and community. This unity, danced through play and celebration, immerses in universal creativity. The active generative moment/site/event is open space and present time. New government is created now, by dreaming and living it.

**Clear space**

**Clear space in the moment**

One woman spoke a prayer of blessing during the visioning ceremony.\footnote{The intention of clarity does not preclude experiencing ambiguity, paradox and uncertainty, nor our carried biases, wounds and stories – the intention to have clear space, perhaps also as clear knowing as a form of further integration, guides/navigates through the sea of possibilities (Goswarmi 2000).}

*Gaia: The depth of that simple prayer, just giving blessings and giving thanks – it’s like that moment to moment awareness of sacredness. Yeah if we spoke a prayer like that with consciousness we would have that place of awareness – that this moment is special and significant and there’s a choice to make in that moment, and in every moment. And certainly that seems to the lacking of our current parliament.*

**Ceremonial, sacred space**

Sacred ceremony focuses sacred space as an environment, and deep connectedness as an experiential state, quickly. Christian ceremony is already in Parliament. Government can take place in sacred space maintained by many spiritualities.
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Sam: Yes, ceremony creates a space and takes you out of that little world into a larger context. I can see ceremony in parliament. I heard the Lord’s Prayer when we were there the other day as I went past one of those monitors – and I thought – it’s there.

Ariel: Sacred ceremony is there perhaps it can be built on.

The space is waiting and the people are ready.

Paola: It’s like we’ve set up this fantastic institution that has so much sacredness all around it and it’s now waiting – and it just takes people that are willing and being present. And there’s plenty that are right now, ready to go.

Clear space and synchronous flow

The space, as an energetic environment, is crucial to the flow of expression so that people are able to authentically be themselves. A clear space within creates the clear energetic space for collective decision-making.

Sam: That lovely room, it was round, and people had to go in through meditation so they came to it in a clear space.

Gaia: What is needed – mm, just a clear space.

The visioning ceremony enacted an energy which flowed as synchronous happenings which felt like a pattern was affirmed and imprinted. Governing can flow as patterns of synchronous energy supported deeply and cosmically.

Gaia: And things have felt synchronous or affirming in that way that there’s been an acknowledgement that a path we created there, will continue.

Clear space within governing

The need for clear space is repeatedly emphasised. This is both clear, inner space and the clear shared psychic and environmental space for creatively working together. The clear space in the within-of-things is the place of stillness and integration, a place/experience deeper than language, a doorway to all-that-is which is ever available by turning within. Additionally clear/empty space is an activation site to ground universal creativity.
Chapter eight: possibilities and processes

Inclusivity and clear space are not contradictory, together they catalyse wholeness of inter-being. Sacredness in government awaits the use of consciousness, embodied interconnectedness and clear space at the centre of decision-making.

**Clear space at the United Nations**

Dag Hammarskjold, a past Secretary-General of the UN, understood the importance of clear space and its creative role in active politics for global peace (Muller 1982; Keyes n.d.). He spoke and wrote about ‘the deep places of creation’ and the constant opportunities for such creativity available in any moment and in response to what comes – opportunities to create new institutions, new ways of acting, new patterns which may initially look small but later grow to be powerful and significant. Hammarskjold modelled peaceful risk-taking in meeting current conditions and advocated its use for moving humanity forward (Wallerstein 2005).

Hammarskjold designed the mediation room at the United Nations in New York. Symbolically and actually, such clear space is one way to bring spirituality into politics.

> We all have within us a center of stillness surrounded by silence. This house, dedicated to work and debate in the service of peace, should have one room dedicated to silence in the outward sense and stillness in the inner sense.

> It has been the aim to create in this small room a place where the doors may be open to the infinite lands of thought and prayer.

> People of many faiths will meet here, and for that reason none of the symbols to which we are accustomed in our meditation could be used.

> However, there are simple things which speak to us all with the same language. We have sought for such things and we believe that we have found them in the shaft of light striking the shimmering surface of solid rock.

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16 Dag Hammarskjold, is called ‘the mystic in the UN’. He steered the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN General Assembly (Muller 1982).
So in the middle of the room we have a symbol of how, daily, the light of the skies gives life to the earth on which we stand, a symbol to many of us how the light of the spirit gives life to matter.

But the stone in the middle of the room has more to tell us. We may see it as an altar, empty not because there is no God, not because it is an altar to an unknown God, but because it is dedicated to the God whom man worships under many names, and in many forms.

There is an ancient saying that the sense of the vessel is not in its shell but in the void. So it is with this room. It is for those who come here to fill the void with what they find in their center of stillness. (Hammarskjold 1964)

Hammarskjold’s legacy of ‘a room of quiet’ has many of the elements which the women mentioned as important for government – a clear space enabling the spiritual connection simple and inclusive of many different spiritualities and religions, uncluttered by cultural symbols yet inclusive of primary earth elements (such as light, rock and their evocative meeting) and importantly the void and its magnetic creative presence and power.

In cosmogenic synergy and social contrast of places of power and powerlessness, a disused laundry has been converted into sacred space at Mulawa, the principal women’s prison in New South Wales (Wiseman 2006). Here, too, clear still silence induces reflectivity and peace – and perhaps a creative ripple of social transformation from a place of the unexpected.

**Emptiness and creativity**

Whether approached from physics, mythology, philosophy, psychology or spirituality, the void/emptiness is regarded as containing nothing, yet contains the potential for everything.

All the energy within our universe – the energy of suns and galaxies – is as a mere flicker on this vast ocean of nothingness. Like the big bang origin of the universe – the creation of all that is – began as a tiny fluctuation within an ocean of absolute silence. (Peat 1994:74)
The silent emptiness is the source of everything. Both cosmogenic and inner clear space also sits in silent emptiness which is yet full (Reanney 1994:17). The human link which activates cosmic creativity seething in the clear emptiness of the microcosm and macrocosm, is consciousness. George Smoot, who discovered the ‘wrinkles in time’ – the dis-symmetry assembling structure from background homogeneity – says that as we converge on the essence of creation the constituents and laws become ever simpler where the microcosm and the macrocosm become the same pursuit (1993:290). As Reanney writes, ‘the void whispers very softly, “the universe began as a thought that dreamed itself awake”’ (1994:26). So too, new forms of government are dreamed awake in the deep thoughts, dearest wishes and living dynamics of people, now.

James includes among the characteristics of spiritual experience, ineffability, where the states are more like feeling that intellect and so are more difficult to articulate. He says that hence the methods to teach, share and transfer must be experiential – ‘No one can make clear to another who has never had a certain feeling, in what quality or worth it consists’ (1902:371). It is from those who are ready and willing to share their deep ways of being that forms of government based on sacredness, love and interbeing, come.

Shri Chinmoy provides an example of practical creative spiritual political action. He used to meditate daily in the meditation room at the UN (Muller 1982). His skilled presence generated and resonated a field of love. Connection into the clear inner space can create and emanate the pattern of love into the shared psychic field for the ambiance of government – inner space patterning love into patterns of governing. In his inaugural speech as the democratic president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela alludes to the bigness of the human part in the dance of creation.

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.

(Mandela 1994)

**Application of interbeing processes to governing**

People ask me how a form of government based on sacredness would look. Their question sometimes has a mixture of anxious hope and cynical amusement. And they want a detailed manifesto, preferably in two minutes. This I cannot do as the deep
collective transformation required, draws from the unknown. Kuhn says new paradigms are never incremental from the known – the ‘rules’ and structure come after the symbolic enactment in community (1970). The data indicate not so much structure (except as symbolically implied in circles and sphericity), as process – as enacted in community from people interconnected in the experience of sacredness and guided by intention. The data provide not the what-it-can-look-like of structure but the how-it-can-act-from-being of process. These processes arise from experiences of interconnectedness within and together.

Bohm describes reality as holomovement – a moving fluidity with relatively stable patterns centred in a certain region of space and time which actually involves the whole fluid (2004:93-4). He quotes Leonardo da Vinci that it is moving fluidity which gives shape to form. Bohm comments that artists seem to easily understand this ‘primary role of movement quite naturally and spontaneously’ (2004:95). This is what I am saying the data suggest – that government based on experiences of sacredness arise from/within the moving processual fluidity of interbeing – where the processes are shaped in the space of deep interconnectedness wherein personal involution responds to cosmogenic dynamics.

To the resultant implications of process, I add the element of space, clear space, which enables creativity emanating outwardly from inner being. The sacredness-within flows together in shared sacredness. In the same way that the sacred circle/hoop is renewed each time so it is specific for those people, their links, that time, and energetic environment of the timespace and the global psycho-spiritual weather, so too can it be for processes of collective government. Processes of interbeing are always unique, yet constant in their wholism, coherence of/by love and resultant care and wisdom. As such these processes are applicable in fractal-like reiteration over inestimable ways and scales of grouping/interconnecting people with interests, issues, beings and not-yet-known possibilities.

We can, and I argue should, learn the skills of inner flow with cosmogenic dynamics, and very intentionally and experimentally apply these skills to evolving democratic governing through inter-being. I regard this as a pragmatically realistic endeavour for our
times and achievable in less than thirty years. Possible processes of such transformation I explore in the next chapter.
Chapter nine: transformation

Introduction

In this chapter I identify methods, actions and ways of living which are transformative at the individual and social levels, particularly those which are available to all in the ordinary and exceptional moments and events in life. I situate personal empowerment within possibilities of whole-system societal transformation, rather than adjustments within the status-quo. The dynamics indicated in the data I correlate with Haval’s pragmatic and metaphysical analysis of how ‘deep’ democracy will evolve.

Dreaming and being dreamt

Dreaming is a powerful world-making tool.

Being dreamt

One of the women elucidated her experience of dreaming as an awake, creative act of vision and consciousness. Reciprocally, being dreamt is being at the effect (not the cause) of the collective dream.
Chapter nine: transformation

Sam: It’s not my theory about dreaming – that if we are asleep then we are dreamed. It makes sense to me on some level. If we’re not conscious to ourselves, our possibilities, our divinity, we don’t know ourselves very well. If we are still sort of asleep and going through the motions in society, then perhaps we are actually dreamed into this collective consciousness that wants war.

Because it seems like in dreaming, collectively we create the world – we dream it and it comes into being. So a lot of people keep dreaming war, because there is still war going on, on the planet.

Unconscious dreaming

Social reality (the consensual agreement) follows the collectively focused thought-field shaping the world around it.

Sam: I can see, for example, as cities have grown on the planet – where that city is, might have been a forest once – now the dreaming changed it from a forest to a city. When it is a city, those people are no longer dreaming a forest, because it doesn’t exist. When you get lots and lots of cities they have forgotten the forest. And what I see is the forests are shrinking – [because] it’s not being dreamt.

Awareness

The power of awareness, mindfulness, enables conscious participation in dreaming and brings the option of choice in social patterns.

Sam: And when you wake up a little bit and you discover yourself and you learn about it and you start living these other values – based on sacredness and your spirit – your energy’s not being siphoned off to run that war machine.

Attention

If energy does follow thought, then does attention on war, in the desire to stop it, contribute to that energy field of war?

Sam: Now there is a growing number of people that aren’t dreaming war, but they are still being asked to try and stop it. I saw this dilemma with the forests a long time ago –
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does that protest add, give it power? I think I solved it, yet I wrestle with it again. Even if you are opposed to something does your energy still go towards it? I suspect it is.

State of being

The effect and nature of an outcome may depend not only on attention, thought and focus, but be circumscribed and resonated by the inner state of being of the beholder.

Ross: It might depend on where you are acting from. If you are basically in a kind of afflicted war state while you’re saying no – I think you are totally supporting the energy of war. If you are actually coming from love, then I think you are not feeding it [war] but something else.

Life the celebrated focus

Life, the antithesis to war, has become the celebrated force and focus of many people. The anti-Iraq war protests were a celebration oriented around Life where lived patterns of war were replaced by solidarity, diversity, connection and joy in community enactment of consciously lived peace.

Sam: Someone in the newspaper had a go at the demonstrators because they were having a good time. And I thought, ‘we’re celebrating life’ – that’s what it’s about for us. Seeing the broad spectrum of other souls, from the tiny to the old to the all sorts – it does your heart so much good. All the stories of people’s own activisms, it gives you a real charge.

Mind-made peace and war

There is a personal input to collective dreaming, hence a serious responsibility for our thoughts, actions and states of being. This process is illustrated through the dreaming and making of war. Inner states of separateness, hatred and conflict project outwards to become energetic pollution perpetuating outer conflict and disharmony.

Ariel We all experience inner conflict, and while we are unwilling to take responsibility for looking at the truth of whatever that is, there was little option but for it to be played out, in the way that it is being played out on the planet at the moment, as a representation of our collective unconsciousness, and our collective inner conflicts.
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While people are still seeing through the eyes of separation – there’s still hate, they’re still in conflict, they’re still in war about their very existence. So that’s the way they try to resolve the problems they have created and of course they create further problems. It never works.

Old war habits

When ‘being dreamt’ by being unconscious, the patterns of mass consciousness dominate, entrain and shape the individual mind-field. In being dreamt, the person is sung by old collective habits, stories, thoughts and existent patterns. War is a tired old story, yet people are outgrowing it. Growth in awareness gives choice between being-dreamt and dreaming – many people are choosing and acting peace.

Sam: The tired old stories on the planet run round and round, and hook people in and hook people in. In some sense war is that – it’s a tired old story – and I think mostly a lot of people have grown out of it, personally. Something’s happened. So maybe it’s not so much about stopping the war but about turning people on, to be present [and] dealing with the war within perhaps.

Peace as interconnectedness

Peace is an inner state of connectedness rather than separation, and has different outer consequences.

Haley: Peace has a different vibration. There is a sense of realness and connection and honouring of our multi-dimensional selves.

Pattern-making

Living the dream

Dreaming becomes real, actualised, grounded, by living it.

Sam: Dreaming our community and dreaming our space – that’s what we are doing – living like this, we’re dreaming it. We are living the dream as we go.
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Pattern-making from our daily lives

Personal dreaming is brought into Life through ways of living. We each make an imprint which is then easier for others to step into – then, gradually, the personal dream becomes the collective dreaming.

_Sam_: Well I had a personal dream in the sense that I wanted to live simply on the planet and walk as softly as I could.

_I guess you’ve got to come back into the local, your own world, your own community and try and put footprints down and in that, it will have an effect out. And I do believe that we do all make a mark – that we can actually put footprints down for others to follow or to find later on._

Politics of living consciously

Living becomes a form of creative activism by consciously taking responsibility for the one’s being and the effects of its ripples.

_Sam_: And I wanted to live my politics, by trying to bring my life in as much as possible, to be responsible for as much as I could be and for that to be a role model for others to step into – that was my vision of living my life. So I’m living that and doing that.

Choice of focussed attention

Attention directs energy. Awareness about what is thought about, attended to and valued, directs energy to the chosen focus. Consciousness of the creative power of our minds gives choice of worlds and a place to act positively. Deliberate attentiveness to non-hegemonic reality is not political acquiescence, apathy or collapsed disengagement.

Consciousness, as awareness, is a source of empowerment and intentional creative action.

_Sam_: I really don’t care too much whether people like John Howard change or not. I certainly don’t put any energy into even wishing that – apart from a common prayer

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1 John Howard is the present Prime Minister of Australia who is socially conservative and economically fundamentalist.
where I wish all beings realise themselves and find their heart and divinity, and it’s all different. So I pray for them in the context of the greater whole.

It’s like they’re off on that path – personally I don’t like it, I don’t think it’s really going to take them anywhere although it causes a lot of suffering along the way – but there’s actually something else going on – and we are part of that, and living here has taught me that.²

**Dreaming patterns the future**

The dreaming goes ahead of you to make an energetic pattern to walk into. Living the dream absorbs your attention in the present. Dreaming requires renewal and new creation.

*Sam: I had a vision that brought me to here. I don’t know if I have a vision that takes me from here. Because it seems that you then get so involved in living the vision – as you must at some stage – that you forget to dream again. But as far as what it could look like en mass, I don’t really know – I think perhaps it’s a bit hard to see when you are in it. And maybe we don’t need that long term goal if you are living presently anyway.*

**Acknowledging the grounded dream**

Acknowledging and accepting the actualised dream, evokes a call to dream again, to take the dream on, to continue creative evolving. To dream, to vision, empowers and creates.

*Sam: We’ve dreamt the vision this far, now we actually have to go – OK, yeah, got it, thank you, lovely, appreciate it, it’s all fine – and dream again. And I think that’s where I’ve got a little gap at the moment – it’s time to dream again.*

**Dreaming in daily life**

Living the dream grounds it in daily life. Living-in-the-present is the locus and action for manifesting the creation. Thus dreaming co-creates our reality, and perhaps even our form of government.

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² Here, that Sam refers to, is the south coast of NSW. In this area one in three people self-identify as some form of artist. In contrast, past traditional activities of conventional fishing, farming and forestry together make up only 10% of local livelihoods.
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_Sam:_ I suppose it unfolds in our daily life – like talking about what else government could look like – that’s taking the dreaming on.

**Choosing values, choosing lifestyle**

Chosen values are enacted in Life. Living particular values patterns them into a way of being and the nature of the community. Sacred values offer a way to move on.

_Sam:_ I know it’s kind of arrogant (laughter), but in some sense we are living a little bit of the future because we’ve turned away from that materialist, competitive, consumerism. We’re trying to operate the best we can within that system but not add to it – by operating under different values – perhaps even sacred values. And that’s got to be the way it’s going to go.

**Spirit led evolution**

Dreaming may be led by our spirits infusing our way of being.

_Sam:_ Spiritually I don’t know what that looks like but I have some sort of faith in our spirits rising to the occasion. We don’t even know what’s possible yet as human beings. We aren’t even really exploring.

**Possibilities of conscious living**

Actualising our human potential is a work in progress. Through tuning into each other – becoming a harmonised whole – what is possible? Do we reach for the stars, planets, the teleological Omega? Can self-government happen through the interconnection of thought, feeling and knowing at the psycho-energetic level?

_Sam:_ And we don’t even know what’s possible yet as human beings. We aren’t even really exploring what’s possible. You know they say we only use 10% of our brains so goodness me what could we do … if we actually tune ourselves into each other, and we have all got another paradigm, another set of values that we operate from? Do we need surgery for healing – probably not – which we already know in some sense. Do we need the education system to look like that when it’s all on another flow? Do we then just go to the stars? Do we open up to other planets?

_Ross:_ … government and decisions could almost be on the thought level.
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Articulating the pattern

By living the dream, it is danced awake. The pattern is imprinted by living, practicing and repeating it – then it gets a life of its own. Writing about the present dreaming makes mythology, the deep psycho-spiritual coding. Honouring the dream created, the something-else-that-is-going-on, strengthens it to spiral out and touch others.

Sam: [It’s] a pattern of energy, a way of being. I’m not in my head about it – it’s in doing it – you know, learning about it day by day, but doing it as much as I can. Then other people can just come across it – when they read the newspaper, pick up a book, go on their holidays or whatever – it spirals on from there. I have a great deal of faith in that sort of scenario unfolding. I’m trying to write stories of this place at the moment to convey the ‘something else that’s going on’.

Finding the voice

When inner truth is given voice and action, it can be transformative. Transformation also involves acknowledging the spirit and nurturing the soul.

Haley: I get a sense of a transformation and awakening of human beings on the planet. It comes from a lot of individuals who can more and more hold that energy of truth and of clarity in their speaking. So when other people hear their words they are affected, not just by their minds through their speaking but through the vibrational energy the person is emanating when they speak. … what I’m getting is the people starting to speak up and speak out … to say, hang on, something inside me just is not OK about this, and so much so that I need to stand up for it. So for me the step is finding the voice … and doing things that nurture my soul and first off acknowledging the soul, acknowledging the spirit

Consciousness human energetics

Introduction: dreaming and pattern-making

The women indicate methods of human energetics which vitalise transformative change and which can be consciously and creatively applied. Among the processes are dreaming and imprinting a pattern of living. Dreaming, in the context of this data, refers to a process of creating, reproducing and reinforcing thought-forms and grounding them into
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reality by living them. Inherent in these capacities is the presumption that our minds/consciousness can create new thought and thought-forms, and that thought appears to direct and shape energy. Consciousness interacts with fields of energy whose quality and shape bring form into being. Form in this sense mirrors Sheldrake’s use in describing the action of morphogenic fields on physical, biological and behavioural forms (1981, 1987). Repetition of thought, language and enactment ground and concretise the fields of energy. This process is referred to by one woman as *dreaming* – not the dreaming of sleep but the dreaming of active co-creation. The process arises from our own withinness in its compositions, patterns and energetic interactions.

Aware consciousness holds and patterns the personal energy field and directs it towards that which is deeply valued and that attend to. Each individual’s personal energy field interacts constantly with shared fields which then come into form and appearance. The demonstrations in opposition to Australia’s participation in the invasion of Iraq are an example. Half a million Australians demonstrated, which is 1 in 40 of the population physically acting for peace. The protests offered a point to link up and feel the solidarity, diversity and connection of the community through shared actions and stories in a celebration of Life which was the focus – thereby the sacredness of Life, which energises and transforms, was reinforced.

**Dreaming – a co-creative process**

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the planet like a flowing interactive envelope of the noosphere.³ Dreaming is thought-form-making and pattern-making concretised into language and lifestyle which brings it into form in lived reality. So in dreaming we collectively create the world.

In the interconnectedness of the living world, energy of the many mind-fields inter-penetrates and interacts, flowing between, within and out, in time, space and events. The energy of our personal thoughts expands out reinforcing and/or interfering within a collective field of thought-energy (White 1990:43-5). People are unconsciously dreaming all of the time and contributing to collective mind-fields and worlds without necessarily being aware of the creative power of their mind, states of being and thoughts as a source of reality. So personal responsibility extends to the energies held within and emanated. We are each a responsible holon in patterning the Whole. Reciprocally, in being unconscious and unaware, we are dreamt; as our world is created around us by habits of human collective consciousness and its patterned interaction with many fields. So passivity of consciousness allows personal entrainment by the established patterns of the collective consciousness – the consensual agreement, in which many are asleep (Donner 1991; Castenada 1973).

Are men the factors of some dream, the dream-like unsubstantiality of which they comprehend at such eventful [spiritual] moments? (Symonds in James 1902:377).

Consequently, war and social despair can fester as collective habits for lack of conscious and positive dreaming. People forget to dream when they are asleep in life, obsessed, addicted, oppressed or disempowered (Starhawk 2002; Johnson 1987). The process of switching off from societal events self-silences conscious energy and voice. A socio-energetic back-water is left in which the old dreamings play without being stirred by

³ White describes thought-fields and the relationship of thoughts, emotions and actions with the state of the planet. He says in interaction with and within the noosphere ‘thought activity extends beyond the body, partaking of a “field of mind” surrounding the planet and extending into space for an unspecified distance. The mind-field is composed of the collective experience of the human race. That is, our thoughts, feelings, and actions are somehow impressed or encoded into the field of mind energy, creating thought-forms. Untold numbers of thought-forms over millions of years have been contributed by the human race to the planetary mind-field’ (1990:43)
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energised alternatives. People are hooked by habituated old stories and maintain existent patterns via contributive participatory acquiescence. Unconsciously projecting or leaking the energy of un-owned inner conflict (Goleman 2004; White 1990) reinforces this war dynamic in the collective consciousness field which manifests as violence and murder, and acts out the capacity for evil with consequences in the world at all levels.\(^4\)

Somnambulism abnegates responsibility and hence power to change. Thus people are dreamed into the hegemonic reality and unconsciously contribute to it. When war is enacted by governments – through those deliberately chosen to represent the people in a collective field of public engagement – then these representatives are players in a mythic realm and they both focus, and are the focus of, mass attention.

Several participants spoke of the need to dream peace and that this needed a jump up in human energy and consciousness. They discussed psycho-spiritual-physical energy as being able to be generated, shifted, raised and changed in the world at large and in the domain of the human energy field and its interactions, and within one’s being and consciousness. Awake attention is a circuit breaker which starts within, with self-responsibility, aware choice of thoughts, actions and imagination. Being awake in the personal and collective dream enables conscious participation to peace. Peace is a recognisable inner state. Fritz describes peace as experience of oneness, joy, compassion and shared passion which is bonded by love (1984:120). Maharishi’s states that peace is not a state of inertia, stagnation, rigidity or passivity, but is a lively, creative and dynamic interaction among different elements and groups of a social system in which all behaviours are mutually supportive and harmonious (1986:74). Living peace reinforces peace in the Whole – with minimum effort and maximum efficiency.\(^5\) Thus inner and world peace are a personal responsibility.

Both peace and war come from within and build the shared mind-field and noosphere. All that exists emanates and makes an energy field with its own distinct pattern (Hunt

\(^4\) As soldiers are trained not to question, just to obey; they are the perfect actors of the dominant mind-field. However studies show that even in war, soldiers need to be specifically trained to overcome the deep inhibition to killing (Starhawk 2002:225).

\(^5\) ‘Maximum efficiency with minimum effort’ is a law of Sweet Medicine of the Native American peoples (Reagan 1980:1). The other two laws are ‘everything is born of woman’ and ‘nothing must or should be done which will hurt the children’. 
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As humans individually develop their consciousness and so evolve, new and different vibrational patterns appear in matter. Humans can empower the process of intentional field-making because of reflexive consciousness and so have the potential to consciously cooperate by creating/developing themselves as a *personalised centre*. This unique centre emanates the new in the noosphere and ultimately contributes to new forms of consciousness-in-matter, namely new humans. Teilhard (1969a) and James (1902) say this process is developed by spirituality and imply potential consequences for physical human form, capacities and DNA. Consciousness-in-matter acting through embodiment and enactment makes fields through repetition of action, size of participation and quality of vibration. Christ and Buddha are examples of humans who carry new fields of human embodied energy which are so strong that they imprint fields of being on Earth and in the human field, which last through the age and bring new fields of consciousness into more common being (Campbell 1988). Meditation studies show that repeated meditation practices activate the left frontal lobe of the brain associated with happiness and peace (Davidson 2004a:156, 2004b:285). With repetition, this changed pattern of brain activation and pathways becomes permanent. Thus spiritual practices contribute in very direct physical ways to the consciousness-as-a-whole of humanity.

When differing collective fields meet there is a psycho-spiritual, energetic interaction wherein the patterns resolve through harmonics and wave-form dissonance. A change in collective energetic fields (or archetypes) was noted at the time of the decline of the oracle system of immersed divination and was ascribed to the concurrent growing strength of the field of Christianity (Hale 2005). Campbell claimed that now the collective mind-field/archetypes are changing again (1986).

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6 Teilhard implies that in some energetic play between matter and consciousness this new embodied state of being becomes embedded in DNA and evolves a new human so different that it requires new nomenclature (1969a). James says the expanded consciousness from spiritual experience places existence on a new plane so different as to be a new species (1902:389).

7 In the time of the Roman Empire, emperors poured great material support into the Delphic Oracle and often sought counsel on significant matters. When Emperor Diocletian asked why the oracular responses were becoming weak, the Oracle answered that ‘the Christians were interfering with the divine flow’ (Hale 2005).
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**Tools of conscious dreaming**

Individual choice, consciously enacted, may contribute to the re-shaping and re-patterning the collective thought-field.

**Awareness and attention**

Awake consciousness is self-aware, environment-aware and aware of the multi-dimensional nature of being human. The fruits of awareness appear as values which translate into lifestyle and ownership of one’s psycho-spiritual energy feeding realities (James 1902). For example, Sutherland found that the majority of people who experienced Near Death Experience subsequently change their lifestyle to centralise spirituality and altruism (1992). Cupitt notes the trend to craft one’s own life as a modern spirituality which indicates a common growth of individual awareness, choice and self-responsibility (2003).

Indigenous Elder, Miriam Ungamerr says that ‘nothing is more important that the choice of what you give your attention to’ (Stockton 1995:182). Attention projects psycho-spiritual energy. Maharishi (1967) says ‘what we put our attention on grows stronger in our lives’ (in Alexander 1992). Attention engages a particular field of focus and streams energy to the object of attention sustaining and empowering its existence, activities and consciousness. The stories coursing through the talking-mind focus on that world which the words/language build, and reinforce that dreaming. Awareness about what is attended to, empowers choice of worlds, in one’s own life and in the collectively created worlds.

Expanding the scope of awareness, creates the space for choice, and intentional creation and maintenance of preferred worlds/realities/dreamings.

Receiving the directed energy of attention is noticeable and has direct effects on the receiver of this focussed energy (Sheldrake 1994a, 1999; Kellerman et al 1989; Schlitz

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8 Near Death Experience is followed by a deep shift in values which are lived out even if there is no social validation for this transformation.

9 The field of attention also changes the attender. Davidson found the plasticity of the brain responds to that which is attended to, thereby re-shaping the brain (2004a, 2004b). Varela noted that trained musicians have enlarged relevant parts of their brains which increase the number of neurons involved and increase their conductivity (2004:285). Thus repeated experience and the field of attention changes the brain.

10 Reciprocally, attention received through focused, attentive listening also acts to empower the speaker to connect deeply within and magnetise their speaking from that place (Hoagland 1992).
and LaBerge 1997). This has metaphysical implications for supporting dysfunctional political systems and players. Captive attention to the players of old patterns, which is the focus of media-manipulated attention, locks in that world. This domain is not the source of the new (Kuhn 1970). The logical corollary is to stop giving undue attention of the old political players or trying to change them despite the emotional hooks – it is wasted energy which can be directed to more consciously chosen options. Aware choice about the focus of personal attention is an act of power, and consciously directed attention is a transformative political act.

**Choice and creativity**

The act of conscious choice is a major factor in evoking creativity (Fritz 1984). Zukav, linking quantum mechanics and metaphysics, emphasises the power that choice makes available (1991). He regards conscious choice, particularly at the point of intention and response (not reactivity), as critical to directing outcomes. Similarly, Reanney recognises the power of choice in creating realities by consciously directing the quantum possibilities (1991).

Choice in a creative sense is premised on freedom of possibilities. Choice based on reaction is inherently restricted and locks on that world being reacted to. Koldon states that creating and reacting are two different species which have very different outcomes (1991:27). Fritz contrasts the open state of the creative orientation (which accesses creative energy) to a reactive orientation (which entrenches the status-quo). The reaction orientation is similar to incremental adjustment within the dominant paradigm as contrasted with paradigm change (Kuhn 1970). Luce Irigaray makes a similar distinction between ‘struggle’ with present situations and work with vision to create basic transformation (Whitford 1991).

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11 Kuhn said that differing paradigms evoke a choice as they offer differing ‘universes of discourse’. The choice of paradigm is never settled by logic or proof; it is finally an act of faith which is neither rational nor ultimately correct but is made on the basis of aesthetics and what is sensed as appropriate (1970; 94, 152, 158).

12 Visioning does not preclude social activism or participation within the dominant modus operandi. Teilhard, Pribram, Sheldrake and Sorokin all worked both in their scientific and academic fields (at the leading edge) and as well as within new paradigms.
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Freedom of choice increases with expanding awareness. Sheldrake comments that mystics display a great degree of personal choice over their participation in morphogenic fields, and collective fields of thought and behaviour (1981:195). Serge King notes the power of shamans because they are consciously aware of multi-dimensional worlds (each with its own governing principles) and so can choose where and how to effectively act (1988). Similarly Fritz says that creators/artists live simultaneously in many universes; this space/locus is shared by physicists who work deeply with the timespace continuum which tends to transfuse their experience (1984:ix-x).13 The liminal space connecting worlds offers perspective and choices (Keating 1993). In the in-between space is access to creative energy. As Griffin notes, being open to the whole, engages imaginative creativity as consciousness expands to hold what-is with all its contradictions (1996). Such ability to hold paradox connects many worlds and enables creativity (Fritz 1984). The interconnecting space/experience allows conscious use of creative energy through deliberate choice which occurs in the alignment of the concurrent worlds wherein the act of consciously choosing, both empowers and orients the individual and collective life-streams.

Imagining government, as a creative act, connects deeply within, with others and Earth, in an experience of interconnected time and space. One woman said that daily spiritual practice gives the experience of *deep time and space*, which while not (yet) measurable, is experience-able and is a time/place from which interconnected living, and hence governing, can arise. Within this expansive perspective, the past and future sit together in the present, and actions taken now are inseparable from the future. As Tara said *what we do now is vital, what we wish for, what we hope for, what we work for each day, will be*
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*produced.* She stresses the importance of positivity in the present, to energise, empower and sustain the embodied belief and future goal.¹⁴

In the creative process, Fritz observes that creators/artists embody their chosen outcome/future in the present moment before it has actually manifested. The state of being initiates and holds the patterns – like the amplification of initial conditions in chaos dynamics. Embodiment of the desired future patterns that future. The energetic field we emanate comes from our inner state of being (Hunt 1996) which seeds motivations patterning subsequent actions. By implication, our ethical responsibilities for the future extend to our thoughts, actions and deepest motivating states in the present. As Gaia suggests for creating a government of peace, turn *the love and interconnectedness wheels*, not those of separation, competition and hatred enacting models of warfare.

Awareness of the everyday power of human energetics increases choice, freedom and responsibility (Teilhard 1969d:64-84). This awareness empowers the possibilities for participatory co-creation. Choice of states of being and thoughts shift self-identity and realities in which one intentionally participates. Intentionality guides, directs and shapes thoughts, perceptions and consciousness (Anderson 1998; Braud and Schitz 1983, 1989; Schiltz 1997; Sheldrake 2000, 1994a; Goswami 2000). Conscious dreaming, empowered by intentionality, can thereby set a path of energy which is then released to its course. Co-creation requires equality and altruism – both of which arise effortlessly and synergistically in experiential interconnectedness within the Whole.

**Grounding the dream/pattern**

Willis and Carden emphasise the need to follow visioning with grounding of the vision into reality, particularly in relation to imagining democracy (2004). HH Dalai Lama emphasises that *being* (as in meditation) is not enough for political and social transformation – action is required to energise and ground transformation (Gyatso Tensin 2002). In this section I discuss states and behaviours which ground and breathe life into dreams.

¹⁴ Heuristic observation when running for parliament left me optimistic; the old way is unsustainable, and the new is starting to emerge in people’s spontaneous and frequently expressed desires for much better ways of governing.
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**Embodied pattern and lifestyle**

Living, orchestrated by values, grounds and normalises an embodied pattern-of-being into the social domain, potentially seeding transformation. Intellectual conceptualisation lacks the vitalising energy to dance the dream alive. Inayatullah says that actualisation of the future comes from day to day life, ‘from nappy changes to playing with my children’ (1999:5). Copper referred to living politics in daily life as a form of (women’s) spirituality (1994). Living heart-felt values becomes a potent political act.

Visibility strengthens patterns of living. Modelling a way of being, displays possibilities by making them visible and laying down a pattern which is then easier for others to follow. Like a thought, once a behavioural pattern is created it is then available to all across time and space without attenuation (Sheldrake 1981). The mode of connection is resonance, which acts even without consciously knowing the patterns or their existence. At some deeper level, the existence of the living pattern is felt. By repetition, the patterns are strengthened in thoughts, actions and behaviours (Sheldrake 1981).

Fritz says that the final step in the creative process is acknowledgement and acceptance of the creation (1984). Koldon found this to be the case for practicing composers (1990). Recognising and acknowledging the dream come alive, is an important step in grounding a pattern. Similarly, Belenky found that interconnected knowing is strengthened by recognition by self and others (1986). Thus acknowledgement recognises and energises an actualised dream, giving it first personal, then social visibility.

Mutual recognition brings the existent but un-named into sight. The perspectives given by discussing, analysing, drawing and singing about the pattern of living, each strengthen the pattern into visibility. The song-maker and film-maker play a role in the journey of our times by expanding the space to entertain new dreams – many, however, as Campbell observes, merely reiterate old mythology rather than expanding the options of consciousness and connectivity (Grof 2004). Development of consciousness occurs not through convergent agreement but by having diversity of unique perspectives.

**Voice**

Belenky found that finding and expressing one’s own voice correlated with heightened empowerment (1986). Personal wholeness and inner authority grow with the authentic
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voice which in turn consolidates self-identity, self-respect and self-transcendence. Naming reality as it is personally experienced, strengthens inner authority. As the inner voice is heard, experiential knowing becomes inner knowing. As the inner voice is spoken outwardly in communion, inner knowing becomes integrated into connected knowing and wholism (Belenky 1986). The empowerment of speaking inner knowing strengthens one’s perspectives of reality and feeds a perspective of the inter-related Whole. Such marriage of private experience and public discourse, ‘the native tongue’, has a dynamic realism (Leguin 1989:152). Voicing one’s own experience and perspectives into recognition activates transformation; it extends the whole as held in shared recognition and strengthens the resonance of a pattern into visibility, being and form. Naming thus evokes realities and has the power to shift reality, through exercise of imagination to see clearly what-is and name it, thereby changing consciousness and in turn forces social re-ordering.\(^\text{15}\) Belenky called this exchange, the ideal political voice (1986:145-6).

Speech that simultaneously taps and touches our inner and outer worlds within a community of others with who we share deeply felt, largely inarticulate, but daily renewed inter-subjective reality. (Jean Bethke Elshtain 1982 in Belenky et al. 1986:220)

Bringing successful enactment of alternative values into the social awareness further stretches the space to perceive possibilities for social change which are grounded from the people up.

**Political voice and choice**

Political participation, empowerment and efficacy are directly related to voice. Voicing the truth of one’s own experience is a political act which resonates a pattern in the public sphere and brings another degree of visibility thereby expanding the public space.

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\(^{15}\) Some significant experiences are difficult to articulate in the language of the dominating culture, be it economic rationalist, patriarchal or secularity. Copper notes the power of naming-that-which-exists but is as yet un-named, to bring mythology and culture into being (1994). This is strengthen in one’s community. Naming encodes the clustered entity of a phenomenon, enfolding its web of being within a sound/sight shape and brings it into form in the mind’s eye (Elgin 1985).
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Speaking the reality experienced is a central practice of the revolutionary process of conscientisation of Paulo Friere (1972). In this outstandingly successful literacy training method, the reality, as experienced by Brazilian and Argentinean people, was the self-generated content of literacy classes. By constructing their own relevant worldview, the participants highlighted the truth of their reality and quaked the socio-political dynamics.\textsuperscript{16}

Voice usually maximises self-development and promotes communal values. The interdependence between personal evolution and group empowerment facilitates a sense of shared purpose, responsibility and personal efficacy (Backrach and Botwonick 1992:33). Backrach and Botwonick stress the importance of creating a political space which allows the underclass to acquire voice and an empowered sense of community.

Kuhn states that values define communities (1970:184-5). When the choices are war or peace, the lines between differentiating values run deep. War ‘in our name’ provides a powerful incentive to identify with the community which expresses one’s values. Values then define self-identity, allegiances and political choices wherein authenticity rapidly becomes radically transformative.

Personal choices and values played key roles in the transformation of South Africa and Czechoslovakia, not just of government but of the system of government. Rick Turner highlighted the pivotal role of personal and social choices in setting the destiny of South Africa where the country’s wealth depended on the black workers (1978). He emphasised that in every situation there is always choice, even though exercising its power may cost your life.

Haval stressed ‘the power of the powerless’ is exercised in the daily choices of ordinary people whose compliance is required for domination. He noted an empowering transition when people dissociate from ‘living the lie’ of the dominant reality, to authentically ‘living within the truth’ (1992:150). The daily choices and actions of ordinary people ‘to serve truth’, he said, set in place the platform for major political transformation in Czechoslovakia (1992:191). Such genuinely meaningful moments of departure have an

\textsuperscript{16} Friere’s method is still used extensively for empowerment and social activation (Friere and Macedo 2001).
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element of universality wherein personal responsibility for the truth is grasped in the
moment and deepens into responsibility to and for the whole (1992:196). These repeated,
consistent and concrete actions, even though they may have seemed inadequate and
insignificant to one person only, over time built an alternative polis.

Hegemony depends on the subjugated majority believing that rule by an elite is the
natural order (Gramsci 1971). Hegemony, in a nation like Australia, relies on tacit
complicity. People’s minds become so colonised/sedated, that at best only very minor
changes to the existing power relations can be imagined; changes which are ineffectual in
terms of real substantive change. Importantly, transformation is not about replacement
within the habituated hegemonic mind-set – like a succession of dynasties where a
monarchy still remains. Transformation lies not in imposed control but in intensification
of complexity pressuring synergistic reconciliation amid authenticity, truth force, so the
hegemonic voice becomes not The One but one.

The creative transformative power lies in speaking what is real for oneself, what is
precious, what is worrying, what heals – speaking the many, many personal and shared
realities into visibility and recognition. The butterfly wing effect of individuals’ choices
and actions has the power to re-organise the internalised relationships. As people
withdraw their Copenhagen Syndrome like fixity of attention from the hegemonic actors
and follow the scent of love to attend to what they love and what sparks their passion, the
mother-ground for transformation is created. 17 These changes arise in people’s hearts and
mind, literally – whence the outward change emanates as values become clear and
articulated, as people live-in-truth, as people voice their reality, as people direct their
attention to love – then the whole encompassing arrangement of relationships and the
nature of power transforms in timespace of events.

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17 Copenhagen Syndrome is the phenomenon when prisoners fixate on, become obsessed by, and fall in
love with those holding them prisoner.
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**Something else is going on**

Despite mass media saturation reinforcing tired old stories, the dreaming is changing. *Something-else is happening* which is very positive and appearing worldwide where people are enthusiastically waking up in Life (Swimme 2004:5). With seriousness and love, people are enacting their gifts and unique person-hood with a view to contribute to a better world. These people are in identifiable communities which are growing and linking around the planet.

*Sam:* *This something-else-going-on is kind of un-namable. It’s positive, very positive. I think perhaps the protests of people against the war in all the different countries, show that there is something else going on – that people are into their lives, into their art, seriously into making the world a better place, healing the environment, each other, singing – whatever people are seriously into. And that’s how they are living.

There’s lots of them, pockets all over the planet, so we are a big sort of mob now. And we’re linking up – because we can feel it and we can taste it and breathe it and meditate [on it] – and we’re linked up with it and it’s like that rises up. And that’s what’s going on, alongside this other thing.

**It is about love**

The pattern of living which is rising, is about love and the indefinable, real essences of Life. Human life patterned by love, growing in each moment, is quietly becoming a powerful dynamic subtly organising humanity.

*Sam:* *There doesn’t need to be as many of us as them. It’s not quantity, not when you are talking about love. Only when you are talking about bombs it’s ‘I’ve got more than you’. But love’s not like that. We are talking about those indefinable, intangible essences that we know are real – and I think they are going to win the day. I think they have won the day – they are winning in each moment in a sense.*

**Meaningfulness within Life**

The desire for life to be meaningful is the terrain shaping the human river.
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Gaia: … a desire for life to have meaning – that our existence is meaningful. We’re here to do something positive and creative and inspirational and wonderful. Life is such a gift.

Oscillation of attention and lifestyle

Awareness strengthens the chosen direction over default societal habits.

Sam: As far as energy goes, mostly I want to put my energy into nurturing this something-else that’s going on. That’s where I’ve decided to act out. Still we get drawn into this other thing.

Living another future

People are into Life

Something-else is happening. A large sub-culture is growing as people live new stories, values and patterns. People in the sub-culture are rejecting materialist consumerism and spiritual impoverishment of mainstream western society and turning their serious attention to personal meaning which contributes to the well-being of all and the Whole. They are living their deeply held values as their chosen life-paths. They seek experiential, personal fulfilment concurrently with holding the ‘big picture’ of Life. They relate deeply with Earth and meld with the patterns of nature. They are putting love into Life. They are concerned with healing psychically, environmentally, socially – and beyond this to take responsibility for healing the past and significantly – for its profound implications of possibility – for healing the future. This is leading edge behaviour. Abram acknowledges that in deep connectedness with the planet and Life there is a responsibility to heal its past and present, in the present (1997) – and as Tara suggests, including the future. Participants in this research appear to be part of this sub-culture.

The emergence of this chosen lifestyle trend is documented in Australia. Clive Hamilton’s research indicates that this group makes up 23% of the population and is growing (2003a). In Australia, the shift in values and lifestyle is called the ‘sea change phenomenon’ as many of these people do actually move out of cities to rural and coastal

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18 Hamilton researched the actual lifestyle changes of 30 to 59 year old Australians. He excluded three large groups from the study so the figures were not spuriously skewed. The groups excluded are new retirees, those returning to tertiary study, and women leaving the workforce after childbirth.
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areas, changing their occupations, style of parenting and living. The younger people are, the more they express post-materialist values which explicitly reject consumerism in favour of simpler and more sustainable lifestyles (Hamilton 2003b). On the whole this rather enormous social change is going on without significant attention from the mainstream, media and major political parties.

Through their thirteen year study, Ray and Anderson estimate that 50 million in the USA belong to this sub-culture (2000). These ‘cultural creatives’ as Ray and Anderson call them, are particularly sensitive to authenticity for themselves and also have a radar for lies and inconsistencies in public figures and institutions. They like intimate, engaged knowledge, and perceive whole systems with clarity and interconnection. They translate their non-materialist values into social and personal action. Women make up the majority (60%). As a group, the well-being and social ascendance of women is paramount. Ray and Anderson note that the sub-culture is made up of two groups. One, the core group, are slightly less than half, are activists, better educated, are intensely committed and are creative leading edge thinkers. Additionally they are dedicated to their inner development and spirituality – many see nature as sacred. They centralise their values of altruism, self-actualisation and spirituality in their interest for social transformation and action. Around ninety percent believe that ‘every person has a unique gift to offer’ (2000:15). Women make up two thirds of this core group. The other group is less concerned with inner life and are religiously conventional, their values are less intensely held and they are more pragmatic, less educated and less activist. Ray and Anderson say that what is required now for this group to become a more powerful, transformative, global dynamic is collective self-recognition.

19 ‘Spiral dynamics’, developed by Graves (2002), and Beck and Cohan (1996) identifies stages of evolving human thought and organisations, wherein people of these sub-cultures are wholistic thinkers of the purple meme.

20 Masini also stresses the issue of visibility for women’s role in global transformation as a coming step in planetary transformation (2001). Hagelin encourages the ‘cultural creatives’ to become visible by exerting their ‘political clout’. He believes better government cannot be expected until the masses are awake. He says ‘third’ political parties outside the political-industrial oligarchy can push nations in new directions – ‘ninety percent of all the ideas we cherish in our democracy [USA] originally come from third parties. Such parties have a power disproportional to their size’ (Hagelin in Hughes n.d.).
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Through the chosen lifestyles of their members, these communities are growing a different paradigm distinguished by post-materialist and spiritual values. These ‘downshifting’ people are dedicated to making a better world by living alternative future options. As previously stated, Kuhn notes that values distinguish communities and that patterns of relationship modelled in community indicate the pattern of dynamics of that paradigm (1970). The lived values are an indicator of the shift in consciousness. This major values shift is already happening and is very hope giving. Despite being given no recognition in hegemonic discourse, at some point the social force of this ready made ‘second culture’ will come above the surface appearing in dynamics of social transformation.

These people are distinguished by their ordinariness. Hamilton comments that ‘they’re ordinary people from the mainstream, who are rejecting over-consumption and deliberately reducing their income in search of a more balanced lifestyle’ (Burke 2003a). They are certainly not the politically disengaged retreating to very small worlds. Nor are they looking for some hero leader figure but are engaging the leader-within and demonstrating forms of universal care and responsibility. New patterns are arising from the daily patterns of inter-relating which are reinforced by repetition every day by these ordinary people. Social ecologist, Stuart Hill notes that personal transformation enacted in the small, meaningful steps in people’s own lives, precedes social transformation (2001). There is no master plan orchestrating this social transformation; it is simply, organically and superbly arising in ordinariness, humility and love.

Research indicates that these sub-cultures comprise one in four people in Australia (Hamilton 2003a) and USA (Ray and Anderson 2000) and the numbers are growing. The phenomenon is worldwide. The actions of 20 – 40 million people who marched, sang and picnicked for peace rather than war on the eve of the Iraq invasion evince their presence. Such numbers of people acting simultaneously with the same intention have never been seen before on the planet – ordinary people personally taking political action

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21 Hamilton calls these people ‘down shifters’ as well as ‘sea-changers’ due to their deliberate choice to trade a financial focus to values centred on Life.
22 Houston notes similar ‘integral cultures’ in Europe, parts of South America and Asia (2001a:96).
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for peace. Their choices and preferred direction for humanity are clear in their celebrations of Life.

The concurrent actions around the globe of people united in thought and intention for peace repeated the pattern around Earth. They were making a coherent energetic net around the planet whose geo-global imprinting and enfoldment impacted the noosphere.

Through acting locally, acting personally, acting in concert, the effect is planetary. Autonomy legitimated in the local and the particular grounds the interconnectedness of the universal/global. These subtle, powerful influences are starting to appear tangibly within global humanity.

These individuals and communities are finding each other and linking up. They recognise a resonance of similarity in the ways of being, lifestyles, values and planetary views. They perceive the presence of each other in the rhythm arising in being as a living, rich, visceral pattern and in experiences of wholistic engaged action. Houston identifies this trend to think rhythmically and organically with breath, taste, body and meditating with it in a world too complex for linear thinking (Ray and Anderson 2000:9). People are sensing the resonance of a growing psycho-energetic field – which rises like yeast with psychic warmth and strengthens with connection and recognition (Teilhard 1969d). This population phenomenon is very grounded and being tangibly lived in daily life.

Life is the focus of these people, where each person’s own life is like an artwork in progress. These daily celebrations of Life are going on alongside the mania of consumerist materialism. These people have clearly chosen which world they want and are stepping into it. The indefinable essences of Life are known as real even if they are un-namable. The something-else-going-on epi-phenomenon is very positive. The positivity is a visceral feeling.

23 There is an interesting contrast between these demonstrations and those opposing the Vietnam war. The latter had a particular megaphone oppositional style. The Iraq war peace demonstrations were focused on peace at a world level and were very peaceful in style with a great mix of ages and carnival atmosphere. Starhawk elucidates similar styles and processes of dissent which operate through egalitarian networks creating a wholism without overt leaders (2002; Morton 2000).

24 The psycho-energetic influence of these simultaneous anti-war/world-peace marches around the planet on 15 March 2003 was detectable in the recording of noospheric coherence of the Global Consciousness Project (http://noosphere.princeton.edu.demo030215.htm).
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The essences of Life, in their nature, warmth, connectivity and vitality are held in interconnection by love, not materialism. People are responding to the allurement of what is meaningful and exhilarating for them – what they love – in the way that Campbell suggests for a life well lived, sat chit ananda – follow your bliss (1988). The power of love does not depend on large numbers because it functions through interconnectedness. Love is the cosmic power drawing forth inter-being which creatively synthesises unity with diversity (Teilhard 1969a, 1969d). The power arising from experiential interconnectedness is power-with and power-within – among other actions, it energises connections and makes the whole visible. In contrast, hegemonic power-over arising from separateness operates through atomised units in aggressive competition for dominance where numbers and weapons do matter. With the relentless, cosmic power of love and Life working together it is inevitable that love will win the day.

Additionally, the evolutionary dynamics at this point of expression arguably foster, sustain and privilege conscious, human love as a synergistic power of coming-into-unity (Swimme 1995:3). Love, according to Teilhard, is the only force which can and will stabilise the noosphere (1969d:292-3). Because (human) love streams with Life, love’s presence and actions are supported by synergy and synchronised coherence within the whole universe – as it is now and as it will be. So love has already won the day – reverberating a unity that lies under the appearance of separation, through the powers of interconnectedness available to each in any moment in an expansion of consciousness.

A second culture

The something-else-going-on, I suggest, is indicative of processes of social transformation. While these sub-culture may be cynically derided by some, that too is part of the process of paradigm transformation as documented by Kuhn (1970), Ravetz (1984) and Moyers (1990). Kuhn states that paradigm change only occurs when there is an alternative available.

Haval concurs that a ‘second culture’ waiting in the wings is a pre-condition for social and political transformation (1992:192). He says that from living-in-truth, people create the life of an independent society whose evolution is inseparable from the phenomenon of dissent from the established order because people are still linked to it by thousands of
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relationships. However, the parallel structure responds to the inevitable tendency to self-organise and institutionalise as a society thereby expanding the space to ‘live within the truth’. Haval says people in the second culture live as if – as if they are in the society that they want, and so live-in-truth. The rudimentary forms of the eventual system are patterned from below by the people ‘because life compelled them’ (1992:194). The hidden sphere expands the social space by the indirect pressure of alternative thought, values, behaviours and independent social realisation. These factors act not directly on the political system but are opening new spaces in ‘a genuine expression of the tendency of society to organise itself’ (1992:200). The gradual process becomes visible through the action of a social catalyst.²⁵ According to Haval, the catalytic events that transform societies and their forms of government occur outside the political domain yet activate a deep tectonic shift taking the political institutions in their wake as the consciousness shifts (1992).²⁶

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²⁵ Catalysts greatly accelerate organic and inorganic chemical reactions. Their action depends on their morphology, their structure by which they hold other molecules in a specific physio-energetic relationship which is appropriate for that particular reaction to occur (Sheldrake 1981:80). A parallel social metaphor is the action of a human catalyst who by their authentic alignment of body/heart/mind/spirit attuned to a specific time and place, can catalyse the whole. Rosa Parkes provides an example when her aligned actions ignited the American social rights movement.

²⁶ Haval describes how the catalyst that set off the political transformation of Czechoslovakia from an overtly totalitarian state to a democracy was the arrest of a rock’n’roll band, The Plastic People of the Universe. The authorities objected to the band playing the so-called subversive music of The Velvet Underground Enico and Frank Zappa. The arrest of the group of young musicians surprisingly catalysed large scale public action, releasing a reservoir of feeling dubbed the Velvet Revolution, which finally led to a change not only of the government but of the system of government (Welch 2006).
Evolving collective consciousness

Fundamental shift

The suggestion is that the collective dream, like the personal dream, is for a world of peace. However, dreaming, talking and even action, while vital, are insufficient to manifest a world of peace – a deep shift in consciousness is required to evolve.

_Sam_: What do we dream of? We say, we’ll dream of a peaceful world, a better world. So much has to shift for that to happen, right within consciousness, right at a real, base level. People’s level of consciousness has to change. From birth in our society particularly, we are not brought up on spiritual ideals – until people grasp sacredness, I can’t see any shift. We can only talk about doing this and that – but there’s a fundamental thing in our psyche that has to evolve.

Being present, being responsible

Being present and deeply embodied enables a shift in consciousness. Taking personal responsibility spiritually creates the conditions to creatively integrate our individual consciousness and then together cooperatively build a world of peace.

_Sam_: … that can only work if everybody’s in themselves, and accepts self-responsibility, and is actually moved to some other level – so that we can all cooperate and build a world together.

From self to altruism

Spiritual aspirations and their enactment shifts attention from the self to altruistic purpose within the Whole.

_Ross_: It goes back to people having a shift in consciousness which puts things on a bigger scale – that shift is going beyond self-interest and bringing back spirit into the culture – a resacralisation.

Personal gift

By living our own unique life authentically we each make our own imprint. We are each a gift to contribute to the Whole.
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Sam: What gets under-utilised in this world, is people’s gifts – everybody has something to give, everybody is something and gives something – has a gift. They are under-utilised or ignored.

Evolve with compassion

From the people comes the impetus for governments to evolve through compassion for the children and a world of peace.

Tara: If we can’t have an influence on our government to evolve with compassion and humanity, then we can’t expect to leave our children a suitable legacy, which is a world of harmony and peace.

Education for technologies of the mind

Some women spoke of the need to educate people about the power of their minds to create realities as a creative, social process.

Brenda: I thought of how we must encourage more awareness, in ourselves and others, of how our individual and collective imaginings create our daily reality. Each one must know this power in our daily lives – how we then co-create the larger reality. This usually requires a spiritual practice of some kind – a regular space in one’s life for reflection and consciousness. This kind of space also allows an entering into deep space and time, and is the place for gaining perspective.

Co-evolution of consciousness

A fundamental shift

Humans are very much works in progress, whose becoming moves with consciousness – and as Disraeli said, ‘this is nowhere to stop between ape and angel’ (Reanney 1991:236). Despite the strength of the dominant habituated mode of the psyche, I believe a shift is happening which is starting within the individual, not as an incremental creep, but a fundamental event through a process of oscillation unto integration in consciousness which is actually real – like the formation of a centre with the attributes of actualisation, irreversibility, autonomy and transcendence of the previous state (Teilhard 1969a:297). The shift expands awareness of the connectedness and mutuality of inter-
being and belonging which gives perspective on our part in the Whole. Swimme identifies an expansion from the local mind to comprehensive compassion (1995:7; n.d.). Sorokin believed that the next shift in human consciousness is beyond self-interest and tribal mind to creative altruism which serves the Whole, the group and the individual at the same time (2002) – the way the holon serves the Whole (Wilber 2000).

**Possibilities of living consciously**

Alexander claims that most humans use only a small proportion of the brain’s potential (1992). Krippner calls this potential the brain’s reserve capacity (1996). Expansion of human consciousness and full use of the potential of our brains awaits its moment to manifest. Teilhard conjectures that the unutilised parts of our brains will come alive in our plurality and the pursuit of union (1969b). Davidson’s (2003a, b) and Varela’s (2003) findings on the responsive plasticity of the human brain affirm the potential for this change.

Evidence indicates that a shift to intentionally compose and hold coherence is not hard to teach. Davidson and Kabat-Zinn showed that responses to secularised mindfulness meditation training show in the temperament of people in a relatively short time (2003b). From psychological tests, they found that the participants’ anxiety levels and negative emotions (eg depression, resentment) decreased, while positive emotions (eg zeal, enthusiasm) increased. These results correlated with EEG measurements of activation of the left frontal lobe of the brain associated with positive emotions which persisted for at least four month after training. Additionally their immune systems were enhanced – the larger the leftward tilt in the frontal brain, the greater the immune

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27 Kabat-Zinn taught a meditation technique to stressed employees of a biotech company for 40 minutes in a two hour session each week for eight weeks plus one full day retreat. The participants were volunteers who were randomly allocated (in a double blind) to the training group or a control group (who received no training). All were given EEGs of frontal brain activity and blood tests were taken to assay immune function before and after the training. The participants were asked to practice each day for 45 minutes; many did not practice at all. There was no correlation between regular practice and the effects. Davidson believed that the 14 hours of the training sessions went past the ‘tipping point’ for change.
strength. The studies demonstrate the rapid physical, behavioural and emotional responses to even short meditation courses and resultant coherence.\(^{28}\)

Alexander relates the utilisation of the brain’s resources to enlivening a highly coherent state of consciousness which, he says, ultimately becomes permanent through repetition (1992). Alexander says that in meditation thoughts become stiller until ‘thought itself is transcended’ leaving the person dwelling in a fully awake state (1992). Attention inward then deepens to experience unity which shows in coherence of brain waves and synchronous correlation across frequencies and cortical locations. The shift is associated with heightened creativity, learning, moral reasoning and neural reflexes. Davidson (2004a, 2004b), Varela (2004) and Alexander (1992) note the resultant physiological changes associated with the ‘biochemistry of peace’ and believe it offers a practical and accessible route to world peace. This state of embodied peace stands in stark contrast with the physiology of conflict so evident in adversarial politics (discussed in chapter four).

Alexander identifies such experiences of unified consciousness as coherent with the cosmic forces of love and devotional awe wherein one becomes identified with these fields in the cosmos (1992). Hagelin links the unified field of cosmic consciousness with the unified field of physics saying they share the same essential qualities, characteristics and ‘quantitative spectrum of excitations’ (1992:4).\(^{29}\) Orme-Johnson and Dillbeck see alignment and coherence of inner experiences of heightened consciousness (which combine unification, balance and dynamic creativity), resonating with cosmic unified fields as the basis for establishing world peace (1987).

I suggest this correlated synergy also holds a key for future forms of evolved democracy by arising from experiential interconnectedness, namely experience of the sacred. This potential application is not fanciful or difficult but grounded, real and pragmatic. As Sam comments *this is an exploration we could be having*. A deep shift in consciousness is the

\(^{28}\) Other studies such as those of Hunt with athletes, reinforce these findings and broaden the base to include many contemporary secular ways of enabling experiential coherent consciousness (1996).

\(^{29}\) Hagelin, a noted quantum physicist, extrapolates the Lagrangian of the superstring (unifying domains of physics which have different ‘laws’) to include states of consciousness linking the objective and subjective realms of existence within a unified field (1992).
key to human progress. White outlines the progression whereby personal transformation becomes social revolution – as changing consciousness chances thought; changing thought changes behaviour; changing behaviour changes society (1990:24).

Haval states that the evolution of ‘deep democracy’ requires an existential revolution – a fundamental shift in the psyche. Systemic consequences of inner evolution are the source of ‘deep democracy’ based on a radical change in thinking and in the way humans understand their position in the world (1992:206). The required depth of transformation, he says, is significantly beyond the capacity of traditional democracy which does not offers solutions which are sufficiently profound, and the established manipulation of that system is too pervasive, subtle and refined (1992:208). The existential revolution/evolution necessitates and renews human relations rooted in the universe bringing a higher order of responsibility, new inner relations with other people and the human community (1992:209). The consequences of an existential revolution, Haval suggests, will be reflected in the constitution of structures of ‘deep democracy’ wherein it becomes possible for ‘real people’ to make a genuine and concrete contribution to the destiny of society and humanity (1992:208).

Teresa of Avila counselled her nuns that ‘there is something unique for each of us to do … a vital something to do which is our unique response to the creative urge within and which is essential for life’ (Giles 1982:29). Hunt found through measurement of emanated bio-energy that each person has a distinct, unique pattern of energy, which persists, is recognisable and is representative of their unique way of being (1996). She writes of lifehoods as personalised streams of human energy and consciousness which she regards as threaded through an enfolding continuum of many lifetimes. In this understanding each person is a stream of evolving consciousness within which they are each centred, with its own unique pattern of energy, vibrational emanation and enacted contribution and purpose within the Whole. Everybody is something and gives something (Sam). Thus simply by being one’s authentic self is a gift to others – be it a state of being, a pattern of interaction, special knowledge, or what-ever. The findings of Hamilton, and Ray and Anderson indicate that a significant proportion of people are seriously crafting their own lives and enacting their gifts, and that soon they will start to recognise each other. Swimme says that each person has a unique subject-hood which
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alone may be the key to awaken something vitally creative in another when met with presence (1990:4). Houston highlights this power of evocation in another as a means to expand care and an enhanced relationship with Earth (2001:97).

**Empathic connection**

The action of *tuning to each other* offers another means to come into coherence at the level of personal love and consciousness thereby enacting patterns of harmonised interaction and union. Ekman believes that compassion is basic to human nature (Goleman 2004:155-6). Deep care for and attunement to ‘the other’ evokes alignment and harmonisation of consciousness, recognised as empathy (Montecucco 1997) and altruism (Sorokin 2002). Montecucco demonstrated that empathy connects and sustains across time and space. Attuning is a skill of consciousness, heart and human energetics, which is not limited by time and space – so attunement with any beings is ultimately as accessible as *you are to the person next to you, the person across the world, the dog sitting beside you* (Tara). Swimme suggests that attuned union with another causes deepening and change to both/all by the organising action of love itself (2004:3). Behaviours then become based on synergistic relatedness and synchronised action-within-the-Whole.

Mutual attunement strengthens in community celebrations of joy, play and fun particularly when centred on Earth and the cosmos. McKenna suggests celebrations such as carnevale, which dissolves the usual social barriers, are times dedicated to celebrate connectedness (Abraham et al. 1992). Teilhard sees zest for Life itself as both a vitalising energy and embodied state cooperating with the powers of evolution (King 1996). The glimmers of such a planetary mythology of universal love and Life-centredness are playing through people’s lives which centralise Life. The patterns of Life can be centred and can be celebrated in practices of governing and concurrently expanding compassion and consciousness.

Tuning with/to Earth offers another route to grow coherent, interconnected consciousness (Hunt 1996:64-9; Grandpierre 1997; Peat 1997). Intimate connection with the local land enables deep Earth interconnectedness (Mowarlarli in Collins 1996; Leathem 1996; Starhawk 2002). Earth attunement enables a synaptic connection and entry point to all
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matter per se including planets of our solar family. Teilhard conjectured that at the end of the life cycle of humanity on Earth will be a jump of consciousness to the stars, however only after we are at one with Earth (1969d:312-21).

I suggest that, logically, personal and community life centred-in-Life is synergistically supported by current evolutionary dynamics. Aligning with nature’s patterns reciprocally resonates expressions of authentic being with the universal patterns of creative expression in this curvature of timespace. These patterns, when embodied, equate with states of consciousness enabled by spiritual practices, sacred ceremony and other activities in coherence with cosmic universal patterns, thereby enabling reconciliation with Earth and allowing us to thrive together with her (Dahlke 2001:36). The same patterns of Life pattern the future and human organisation. It is a co-evolutionary choice whether to flow with the direction of these cosmic forces or not.

Resistance and inertia

While indicators of social transformation are happening, so too is inertia and resistance. The dogged persistence of dominant attention drags on consciousness – as Sam says still we get drawn into this other thing. Capra suggests that some people are in a childlike state of not wanting to take responsibility (1992:192). Fear of being overwhelmed or out of control also plays a part in defaulting to the familiarity of paternalistic relationships. Additionally, active resistance to change is not to be under estimated. In analysis of patriarchal hegemony McMahon (1999) and Connell (2000) found that ‘male dividend’ of privilege and power was not shared, not for lack of awareness of its basic injustice, but because of conscious, systemic and active resistance to change. Similarly, Flannery cites active political resistance such as the wilful destruction of documents by industry and government advisors in USA to forestall transformative action on global heating (2005:241). Ghandi’s analysis of peaceful steps to successful social change offers a context to situate such resistance. In essence he said that first they ignore you, then they
ridicule you, then they get angry and possibly violent, and then opposition collapses and the change happens (Johnson 1987).  

**Oscillation to wholism**

It is not normally possible to see a world which is not in the field of resonance of a particular form of consciousness. Swimme illustrates the different worlds seen by differing consciousness by comparing the sensitivities of a dragon fly with a horse (1990:7). Linguist, Suzette Elgin is cognisant of this impasse in her novel Native Tongue where babies, and later beings from other worlds, are blown apart by dominating exposure to other consciousnesses – the consciousness binds to a form of existence and its world (1985). Kuhn describes the perception of another paradigm/consciousness as a total, instantaneous gestalt switch which opens a new discourse (1970:85, 150).

Any new consciousness is hard to hold and needs to be constantly reinforced (Swimme 2004:3, 1995:2). While positive, powerful and pervasive, the experience of interconnectedness is transient and requires acknowledging and reinforcing to build – hence the value of *a regular space in one’s life for reflection and consciousness* (Brenda). James states that,

> Mystical states cannot be sustained for long … when faded, their quality can but be imperfectly reproduced in memory, but when they recur it is recognised; and from one recurrence to another it is susceptible to continuous development in what is felt as inner richness and importance. (1902:372).

There is oscillation between experiences. Repetition strengthens the personally new pattern of consciousness and gives perspective on the options of experiences, vibrational fields, zones of action and worlds attuned to, through expanding consciousness.

Oscillation is a bridge to evolved political possibilities. Present oscillation of attention and states of consciousness of individuals is building conditions for collective phase change. Repeated oscillation of experiences amps up the power and connection across worlds of consciousness and scales of inter-being (cosmic, global, local, daily,  

30 Kuhn states that resistance by those with vested interests in the status-quo is to be expected but becomes illogical beyond a point (1970).
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individual. Oscillation accumulates power to arc the gap and fire a spark of ignition – like the early awakeners of a new paradigm who have the ability to move between worldviews (Kuhn 1970; Ravetz 1984), like shamans who move between worlds (King 1988) and like artist/creators who live simultaneously in many worlds (Fritz 1984; White 1990).

Oscillation also creates a vortex of consciousness and attention (Kryder 1994:8). Back to back disjunctive experiences generate an inner creative vortex – a space of creation of consciousness, worlds and unknown possibilities – by the turbulence of interacting energy fields, thoughts and states of being. In the aware perspective of the co-existence of many worlds, is choice.

Swimme comments that impulsive action of species sets their world/environment in which to live and hence the direction of the species’ evolution (1990:7). However, for consciously aware beings in addition to impulse there is also choice. The choice is more than one of response to circumstances; for humans now is the deeper responsibility of which future world do we make. Do we abnegate creative potentials (and possibly destiny) to the soporific inertia of consumerism, materialism and militarism or choose deep unity and the creative peace it offers? What world do we build together? If it is based on individuals’ experiences of interconnectedness, new archetypes will pattern the psyche, the patterns of inter-relating will re-configure, power will be foundationally different, and so collectively organised government will organise and proceed differently.

**Socio-political transformation**

Imagination, thought-making, pattern-making, conscious daily living and psycho-spiritual education are transformative ingredients in futures creation – perhaps in co-operation with others (species, planets) and the primal energy of Life itself. Teilhard advocates the use of imagination to grow our capacities for love. Swimme says that the activation of care beyond the family or even human species is a new form of synergy and sensitivity. He sees comprehensive compassion as a way forward for humanity to evolve towards unity. Many events indicate people are ready. I argue that nurturing universal compassion, love and interconnectedness are also ways forward for evolved democracy if it is to be in a sustainable form.
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Furthermore I suggest that the source of socio-political transformation is in the many experiences of embodied, conscious interconnectedness and living patterns of interconnectedness in people’s daily lives. These ordinary daily actions build new ways of being together through a psycho-spiritual form of holographic reprogramming. At a certain point not only will the organisation of government occur but the very nature of power will transform.

I conjecture that in the understanding of timespace being ever present now, perhaps the ‘numbers’/patterns are accumulative whereby the vibration of all people who have ever lived and achieved unitary consciousness, is still acting here and now and their imprint in/on Earth is building to a tipping point or critical mass.\(^{31}\) Thus this strengthening pattern, which is resonating and building coherence, may be added to by every being in their daily and special moments of connectedness. Perhaps the numbers are already in place for transformation of consciousness and hence society, yet await a catalyst – whose appearance, as Haval says, is unpredictable and most likely will come from outside the political domain (1992:194).

The women point to something else that is going on, which is an identifiable, under-recognised second culture centring on love, Life, Earth, creativity, positivity and meaning with the Whole. These people are linking up as they put their communitarian, Life-centring values into their lifestyles and living their politics. The data indicates that patterns of being, which come first from consciousness and embodied emanation, are grounded by living such patterns in daily life and are articulated into personal and social visibility. By acting locally with awareness of the global situation and contributing to change of collective patterns through their authenticity and spirituality, they set in place the pre-conditions for deep transformation and cultural re-orientation.

While this may not have the ring of a strategic manifesto, this finding is consistent with the ‘deep’ democracy which Haval suggests will come from a revolution of Being – which I posit, is consistent with experiential interconnectedness acting as a formative

\(^{31}\) The term ‘critical mass’ comes from studies of nuclear energy. When there is sufficient concentration of the radiating mass, a nuclear reaction – a self-activating reaction from the nucleus/centre – sets off an unstoppable, accelerating transformative reaction in the whole. The concept has been applied to sociological and business studies to communicate similar rapid and wholistic changes in behaviour.
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base for governing. I suggest fundamental change is coming from deep and subtle changes in consciousness as the source of major social transformation – which will probably be seen only when virtually complete. As the rap song says – the revolution will not be televised.
Chapter Ten: spiritual revolution and its consequences

Introduction

Contemporary spirituality includes many paths to experiential interconnectedness. Such spiritual experiences open a greater and interconnected reality. Among the many expressions of emergent spirituality I focus on those of science which validates interconnectedness and cosmogenesis, and personal integration as a process of centring consciousness confluent with Life. These spiritualities are generating a major but unrecognised transformative force. They lead to empowerment and decisive awareness in a radical re-contextualisation which is evoking new forms of social organisation, power and politics. Contemporary spirituality is emerging in response to conditions never seen before in a cultural and planetary context. I discuss this emergence, which is becoming visible in the lives of ordinary people, in terms of socio-political consequences.
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Consequences of experience of sacredness

James says that spiritual experiences are known by their fruits (1902). Spiritual experiences have personal and social consequences.

Expansion and space

Experiences of sacredness, of interconnectedness, open perceived reality to a context of greater proportions than those bounded by the self and social construction. Consciousness expands with a sense of inner and outer spaciousness and inter-relatedness. Alignment and connection within the greater, living whole/being shifts the sense of identity through a deep sense of belonging – consciousness stays connected with, yet expands beyond, the boundaries of social identity. In the expandedness the inner being re-organises and re-orientates. When integrated, significant or repeated spiritual experiences infuse and reframe the personal life journey in terms of inner disposition, values, behaviours, lifestyle and worldview.

Centredness

James states that a single such moment can change the direction of a life by ‘the formation of a new centre’ (1902:405). He quotes St Teresa saying that such a moment ‘leaves the soul upon the highest level of emotional excitement’ indicating the enormous psycho-spiritual energy effusing through centrification. These definitive experiences turn the vortex drive of centrification in the individual organising the process of personalisation, the self-transcendence to a new autonomous, irreversible, actualised, living whole (Teilhard 1969a:297). Centrification is a dynamic power of the universe swirling purposively within each being (Swimme 2004:1). Additionally centrification coalesces and reconciles the person within the greater wholes of humanity, Earth and the cosmos.

Re-contextualisation and comprehension

James says that in spiritual experiences there is sudden comprehension of what was previously heard but its deeper significance was not understood – words, sound, light on water ‘all bring it when the mind is tuned … to a life continuous with our own, becoming and inviting’ (1902:373). He notes that these experiences perpetually utter the unity of
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humanity and the cosmos (1902:414). Swimme believes that when people gain a perspective of the Whole through those moments of mind-stopping awe in daily life, then the creativity of the cosmos links with our personal lives (1997). These moments offer the realisation that we are participating in the creation of ultimate reality through the upwelling of (cosmic) energy within us – ‘to realise that we are exactly that’ (1997). Security, trust and balanced humility arise with the sense of belonging.1 Swimme says the inculcation of the experiences evokes deep wisdom and responsibility.

Authority

Spiritual experiences bring understandings which are deeply and personally significant. James notes that the experiences bring an authority which is rightly absolute for that individual and rightly not for others (1902:419-20). Knowing arising from sacred experience is fresh and highly independent from pressured, social construction. Houston calls the experience being ‘in the flow’ with ‘a rapturous union of spirit and movement’ (1999). Fox describes the definitive certainty accompanying spiritual experience where ‘the “blood within” has been turned by his or her deep unforgettable, and therefore truthful experiences’ (1988:49). Immersion within the Whole appears to directly access knowledge relevant to oneself and/or the times, and that the person is strengthened to be independent from socially recognised authority. The authority, knowing and self-responsibility are couched in a universal context.

Choice

The awe in these moments has transformative energy which is directed by choice. The potential of the power housed in human conscious awareness speaks of universal responsibility. Dante called these moments the threshold of assent (Swimme 1997). The giving of assent in that conscious moment through choice sets the direction for the flow of energy directing the life and perhaps Life. Choice places the potential of co-evolutionary breakthrough in the hands of each person. Teilhard was poignantly aware

1 Non-mundane experience which inflates egoic self-importance can be of quite another nature and comes from the experience of separateness dominating perception and awareness. Resultant self-delusion, aggrandisement, superiority or nihilism which arise in the experience of separateness, ameliorate in identification within the Whole.
that these moments of aware choice and decision held consequences for cosmic evolution (Swimme 1997).

**Energy and purposeful action**

Experience of sacredness usually energises. Experiential interconnectedness draws up/in the transformative energy of Life. The expansion, vitalisation and assured belonging empower. Meaning is related to the Whole. A clear sense of purpose is revealed in moments of sensing one’s unique place and contribution within the Whole. Houston refers to this aware coherence within the cosmological context by Aristotle’s concept of entelechy – ‘the dynamic purpose that propels us towards our own reason for being alive’ (2000:35). She says that people regain a sense of purpose when they are clear about what really matters. Goswami describes the interconnected perspective of entelechy as ‘a non-rational causal factor that guides a living system wholistically’ (2000:8). Entelechy is associated with joy and blissful felicity responding to the lure of the large enough vision which calls us into participation (Houston 2001:39).

**Social significance of spiritual experiences**

As James says spiritual experiences have authority for that person but not for others and rightly so (1902:419-20). He says however that the internalised authority does breakdown the monopoly of dominant reality and consequently opens social inclusion to other orders of consciousness. Spiritual knowing as inner authority breaks down hegemonic influence in people’s minds. Gramsci described hegemony as a temporary combination of force and consent to maintain relationships of control (1971). These power structures depend on the hegemonic group projecting their reality of the world and relationships so it is accepted as commonsense and the natural order by those subordinated by it (Bullock and Trombley 2000:388). A consequence of spiritual experience is a decolonisation of the mind which in turn expands orders of social inclusion with concomitant implications for changing power structures.

**Optimism and vision**

The social significance of spiritual experiences also lies with their power as sources of inspiration, optimism, empowerment and peace.
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We pass into mystical states from out of ordinary consciousness as from a less to a more, as from smallness into vastness, and at the same time as from unrest to a rest. We feel them as reconciling, unifying states. They appeal to the yes-function more than the no-function in us. In them the unlimited absorbs the limits and peacefully closes the account. (James 1902:407)

The experiences glimpse visions of possible futures large enough to inspire. They excite possibilities which meet a human hunger for inspirational ideals of peace and optimism. These moments have social import for all people whether they are open to the realm of spirituality or not. They offer direction and hope for all humanity.

[Spiritual experiences] point in directions to which the religious sentiments of non-mystical men incline. They tell of the supremacy of the ideal, of vastness, of union, of safety and of rest. … The supernaturalism and optimism to which they would persuade us may … be after all the truest of insights into the meaning of this life. (James 1902:419-20)

The consequences of these grounded moments of experiential interconnectedness, the sacred, are intermingling with the every day spirituality of Life (Cupitt 2003). I am suggesting that the pivotal awareness and power accessible in these commonly known moments be intentionally incorporated and centred in collective decision-making.

**Contemporary spirituality**

**Value of secularity**

Gyuto Tantric Buddhist teacher, Jampa Tashi, believes increasing contemporary secularity contributes to world peace (2004). He says that most enduring wars come from religions. He felt the movement away from traditional religions enables world peace through a worldwide reduction of religious rivalry and sectarianism between wisdom paths.

West discusses contemporary and secular spirituality in terms of the integration of post-modernism where a world devoid of a god is now a source of hope (2004). The legacy of post-modernism, he says, is respect for others’ views, an equality of cultures and faiths,
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valuing the local, valuing self-authoring of one’s own life, a fluid creativity and a perception of culture as an on-going, participatory process. The expression of this, he says, is in personal experience of an alive and embodied spirituality experienced as a sense of interconnectedness and a cause for celebration of unity in diversity. West believes that the present world challenges can only be met by such inner connectivity enabling the clear in-between space of I/Thou mutuality which is only possible with equals and wherein creation is waiting. He directly relates this experiential base and expanded context to democracy.

Such true democracy, which I believe can probably only flourish when people are alive to a truly interconnected embodied spirituality, is at heart all about how we see and treat ourselves and others and creation as a whole.

(West 2000:172)

Australian secularity and spirituality

Australia has been called the most secular nation in the world. However, Leunig, one of Australian’s favourite poets and cartoonists, forever presents the every day perspectives of spirituality in Australia in our small and ordinary lives. Robert Fitzgerald identifies an unseen but growing spirituality which is emerging in inter-personal dialogue and which has at its core the notion of fairness for all, a deep compassion and desire for community, which, he says, is rebalancing values in the wake of economic materialism (2000). Secular and new expressions of spirituality share a grassroots, nature and community based expression (Goldsmith 2004). A common feature is strengthening relatedness with this continent through intimacy with a local place and sacred sites. Tacey says the Australian landscape has enormous power to crack open the egoic psyche to the mythic

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2 The separation of religion and state is formally expressed in s. 116 of the constitution which prevents a state religion and any religious test for office. Predominantly the High Court has ruled on s. 116 in terms of upholding majority interests (Hogan 1981). There is no protection of minorities or active encouragement of tolerance which in multi-cultural modern Australia is a serious omission, particularly as anti-Islamic political rhetoric increases. Maddox notes that a feature of a highly secular society is an unease and imprecision with terms such as sacred, spiritual, cultural, which in Australia, has worked to the detriment of Indigenous peoples and their spiritual rights (1999). Australia’s secular image also hides the enormous political power of Christian churches, particularly Catholic (and more recently prosperity fundamentalism), directly on the government and socially through the publicly subsidised, private education system (Marr 1999).

3 Robert Fitzgerald was the New South Wales Community Services Commissioner in 2000.
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New human context

As previously stated, participation is traditional religions is on the decline, while spirituality is increasing (Hay and Morisy 1978; Hay 1987; Hay and Hunt 2000). Berry believes traditional religions and philosophies do not have a context for, and so are unable to address, the urgency of bio-cide, eco-side and geo-cide (1999). Swimme says they do not speak to the mind re-shaped by empirical evidence about the cosmos and the human place in it, namely co-evolution (2004:3). I believe that same can be said for our political system. Teilhard (1969a, 1969d), Sri Aurobindo (King 1989:165-74) and the Dalai Lama (2000) see a spiritual revolution as the way forward for humanity where people directly experience their immersed interconnectivity. Many believe this revolution has started (Tacey 2003a; Cupitt 2003; Fitzgerald 2000; Mackay 2002, n.d.). In Australia and USA post-materialist values are being enacted through lifestyle and responsibility for the whole planet by a significant minority (Hamilton 2003; Ray and Anderson 2000). Expanded perspectives informed by science are contributing to this new consciousness.

Science as emerging spirituality

Science, the bastion of modern ‘truth’, is also a source of spirituality and metaphysics. Teilhard predicted that science would lead to a universal spirituality crossing cultures and nations by infusing understandings of reality and the human place in it (King 1996). Reanney suggests that science is re-developing a sense of the sacred (1991:250). Science writer Corey Powell sees the growing conjunction of science and religion as a new spirituality (2005). He calls this new synergy ‘sci/religion’ which he believes is the religion of the future. Einstein indicated a universal spirit revealed through science which he called Lambda.

The areas of growth in traditional religions are in experiential paths and mysticism – such as charismatic Christianity and the growing interest in Sufism among young Muslim men who are finding their identity in cross-cultural lives – not in fundamentalisms as politicians would have us believe (Heelas 2005a, 2005b).

Tacey documents the commonality of ‘eco-spirituality’ among young Australians; eco-spirituality is deep environmental care, a planetary perspective and valuing experiential events (2003a, b).
Everyone who is seriously involved in the pursuit of science becomes convinced that a spirit is manifest in the laws of the universe – a spirit vastly superior to that of man. (Einstein in Powell 2005)

From science we know that reality is interconnected, intercommunicative, interactive, subjective, inter-subjective, omni-centric, purposive, creative, flowing conscious aliveness in which we intimately participate, are implicated throughout and evolve. When these perspectives are deeply dwelt with – an action somewhat like surrender where the idea is allowed and entertained in a way which allows the perception to reshape one from within, (like Abram’s interactive perception) – these understandings become infused as states of open consciousness reconfigured to experiential interconnectedness. This has personal and social consequences. Swimme says that science is moving into a new phase from materialistic analysis and worldview to the ‘ecstatic side of life … by going into an infinite bottomless intimacy in the universe’ (1997). Opening to the full possibilities of this view is spiritually transformative. Teilhard says it leads to a post-materialist life – to be and to know, not possess (King 1996:174).

The greatest gift science could give us is a way of easing out of materialism into the depths of spirituality within the context of an evolving universe.

(Swimme 1997)

Berry and Swimme see scientific evidence of an evolving cosmos filled with creativity and consciousness as revolutionary (1992). This, they believe, is a totally new perception for humanity and frames a new story, a new mythology of an intimate sacred cosmos in which humans play a vital co-creative role. Absorption of this reality and its implications creates an expanded energising perspective which opens experience to the magnificence of the universe and the primal energy infusing Life.

Life as contemporary spirituality

Western spirituality of Life

Living itself has become an emerging contemporary spirituality enacted through one’s own life, own truth, a sense of responsibility and ownership. Working from empirical
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research grounded in the communication of everyday life, British priest and theologian, Don Cupitt, identifies a shift in contemporary western culture from traditional religions to a spirituality of Life (2003). Cupitt suggests that now persons mediate themselves in a spirituality akin to artistic expression expressed in sculpting one’s own life (1998).\(^6\) This emerging spirituality’s practice, prayer and meditation is attention to being, simply in Life as it is, with meanings that we give it, as we build our world, interpret our experience and shape our lives.\(^7\) Evaluation then becomes concerned with the kind of person and world we create. Life, as both experience and a phenomenon, is felt to be sacred and language indicates that people are expressing a commitment to Life; a sacred duty to maintain the continuity of ordinary Life and an equally sacred responsibility to assume full responsibility for one’s own life – here and now, in everyday life, in this body, this world (Cupitt 1999). Spearitt summaries Cupitt findings.

> Love of life is emerging as the new spirituality and is expressed in everyday language of ordinary life. Life itself has become the new religious object in the gap left by God. (Spearitt 1999)

**Language of Life and It-all**

Cupitt investigated ‘ordinary language theology’ by observing common idioms and their application in the vernacular. He found that people put Life at the centre of their lives as the ultimate reference and value. Cupitt believes that in the past century ‘the religion of Life’ has arisen spontaneously from communal life together (1999). The word ‘Life’ is changing its meaning to become more ‘religiously charged’ (Geering 1999).

> ‘Life’ has become the most popular totalising word in public use which invokes the whole of the human world encompassingly as ‘It-all’. (Cupitt 1999).

Among new meanings of Life is the recognition of interconnecting flux of Life as the medium in which we humans are, be, exist, take part and belong, as living beings. As

\(^6\) Bohm also recognises the creativity connected to every aspect of daily life where ‘fundamentally all activity is art’ (2004:133).

\(^7\) The use of the first person pronoun is deliberate, following Cupitt’s example to convey the deeply personal nature of this emergent spirituality.
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Cupitt notes, we are always in life and this permeates how we view and experience everything – ‘Life is the new religious object – it’s in us all, it’s that in which we live and move and have our being’ (1999). The word, ‘Life’ also reminds people/us that we are a part of Life’s process. Additionally Life has been personified in language as an engaged agency, acting directly in the lives of all beings. In this sense, Life is spoken of as calling, guiding and teaching, by effectively, intimately and personally playing a part in personal fates.

These colloquial meanings acknowledge an alive and personally supportive medium of which humans are an intimate and inseparable part. The void of cultural acknowledgement of the sacred content of ordinary life is being quietly by-passed by ordinary people who are evolving a new focus of attention and meaning (Cupitt 1998). A language is developing which frames and gives expression to the felt significance of Life, which directs attention to Life and articulates an emerging mysticism of the ordinary which through Life is at one with nature, grace and the sacred (1998). An accessible and mystical language is emerging ‘to allow people to re-engage with and articulate their spirituality’ (Mann n.d.). Life, like all expressions of mysticism, is centred in experience.8

The changing meanings in language indicate that an evolution in cultural symbols and thence structure is occurring. The evolution of language through creative articulation of experience, fields of attention, thought and concepts, is part of the current evolution of consciousness drawing forth the manifestation of its forms. Deleuze and Guattari (1994:108) note ‘the creation of concepts in itself calls for a future form’. Linguists and post-modernists both recognise the generative relationship between language and conceptualisation. Contemporary spirituality reveals a post modern perspective where there is no essential or dominant truth. Significantly Cupitt stresses that emerging spirituality is not driven by the concepts of an elite but is growing from the people and ordinariness in their daily lives. This self-authorisation is an inherently and delightfully democratic and secular-spiritual process – a democratisation of spirituality. A profound

8 Mann says the ‘modern view of language appears remarkably similar to mystical religious traditions’. Karen Armstrong observes (in Mann n.d.) that it is the mystical traditions that are alive today, rather than traditional theology of Islam, Christianity and Judaism which is in demise in terms of common practice.
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and organic shift in power is implied with consequences for collective self-organisation, democracy. As people are *languaging* what is most important as it arises in their lives, there is a huge shift in power, with a fundamental social re-ordering and deep democratisation occurring.\(^9\)

The power of language to encode, signify, structure and privilege, together with the power-of-naming, are being exercised by ordinary people and in a different way. The power-to-name-one’s-reality, namely authorize one’s own experience, give emphasis and direct focus of attention, is a measure of autonomy and freedom. Importantly, the power to name that-which-is-of-ultimate-significance is essential for religious freedom and personal spiritual liberation. The change in common language is indicative of a movement away from hierarchical structures, privileged exclusive/ing knowledges and dominance of elites. The change is of the heart and spirit and is effortlessly taking place and embedding in culture without imposed control and direction. It is a guiding star to future forms of collective inclusive social structures modelling themselves on Life and which are being grown from the ground up – as secular, democratic, unpredicted spirituality.

In identifying a ground-swell change in language Cupitt identifies a shift in attention and consciousness.\(^{10}\) Teilhard indicated that human evolution is now primarily in the field of consciousness and that Life is its dynamic vehicle (1969a). Life-centredness is a new consciousness in a western, popular sense, and in its inclusive and global, if not universal and cosmic nature, it is transforming human identity. Mann notes that consciousness, acting as a force-in-Life, causes a huge eternal flow of energy, which in turn generates language (n.d.). The language change is an indicator of a deep change in society and in the psyche – a paradigm shift, a new worldview arising in modern sensibilities of ambiguity, uncertainty and pluralism, centre on Life and be-ing (Cupitt 1998).

\(^9\) The process is like an organic version of Friere’s *conscientisation*, where people articulate and strengthen their own reality and analysis of what is crucially important (1972).

\(^{10}\) Kuhn (1970) and Eliade (1960) noted that each worldview or paradigm has its own language.
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**Be-ing as One in Life**

People now identify with the Life process. Cupitt ascertains that a Life-centred view is now more powerful than theology because it is a wholistic and inclusive cosmology (1999). He believes that the old dualistic distinction between the secular and the sacred is now fused in a new outlook. Life is not a distinct and separate being (like God) but ongoing interactions, relationships and communication in a continuum without distinction between temporal and eternal, sacred and secular, inner and outer (1998). In Life everything moves, shifts and changes in a mingling interconnectedness which manifests as finite, immanent and all inclusive. Cupitt says that in responding to Life people accept ‘It-all’, love it as a whole, trust it, commit to it, and orient to make the most of it. He says that with acceptance of the whole, there is a renunciation of victim psychology and the impulse to complain and blame.\(^\text{11}\) This commitment to Life, Cupitt believes ‘is the only fully immediate and non-dualistic religion’ (1999). In emerging spirituality Life is recognised as sacred and the finite, where this world here and now is valued and ordinariness is seen as divine.

A spirituality where Life is interiorized, is very focused on the present moment with attention on *being* in Life where the action, attention and state of *being* is experienced as immediacy in Life. The vortex of Life occurs within each human being, and be-ing human occurs within the vortex of Life. The process of existence is *outsideless* where *being* is finite and contingent on Life in a single continuous whole of which we are seamless parts (Cuppitt 1999). There is no separateness. In this sense Life is both common and public as people share a common, interacting world together.

**My life, a creative work in progress**

Paradoxically, within the inseparable commonality of Life, personal responsibility and autonomy arise in the understanding of a personal lifespan. Cupitt says that people’s awareness of themselves as the owners of their lives is a modern phenomenon arising in a context of increased lifespan. This new perspective has occurred over the last century,

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\(^{11}\) Post-materialist down-shifters do not complain to authorities but take action personally, particularly for social transformation (Burke 2003a, 2003b; Hamilton 2003; Ray and Anderson 2000).
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where life for westerners is both longer and more secure.\(^\text{12}\) There is now sufficient time and commonly accessible knowledge to develop an awareness on Life as one’s own, where ‘my life’ has become a distinct understanding. With the sense of ‘my life’ is the option to choose what ‘I’ do with ‘my’ life.\(^\text{13}\) Cupitt believes that responsibility to fully appropriate and shape ‘my life’ is now felt as a sacred obligation of great religious significance (1999). This realisation implies a level of self respect as a living and conscious being who has an imperative to take full moral responsibility for one’s own life. The emergent cultural trend is very similar to the evolutionary step of personalisation elucidated by Teilhard (1969a) – that of becoming full and whole within oneself.

The ethical implications of focusing on Life and on ‘my’ lifespan, is that lifestyle becomes a living ethic. Lifestyle is the way a person expresses their own distinct and finite life (Cupitt 2003). In taking responsibility for ‘my life’ together with seeing Life as a whole, actions and thoughts of an individual become elements in the unified whole. Cupitt says that morality is now directed towards becoming a unique individual self who is in relationship with all (1999). This morality contrasts with that of alignment of personal behaviour with imposed, external rules.\(^\text{14}\) The realisation of autonomy is balanced with personal responsibility which is directed through lifestyle towards a sense of universal responsibility, responsibility to/for the whole. In the interconnectedness of Life it is ‘by the way we commit ourselves ethically and immediately to other people and to life, we can make sense of life’ (Cupitt 1999). It is the individual’s commitment to Life and all-that-is as-it-is, in the present, which gives personal life expression, meaning and fulfillment. There is the emergence of a sacred obligation to find and follow a personal lifestyle so this is lived as an authentic, unique and fully expressed individual being.

\(^{12}\) In wealthy countries, life expectancy has increased from 30 years in 1800s to 80 years now and rising (Cupitt 2003). This life expectancy for Australia’s Indigenous people is 20 years lower.

\(^{13}\) Cupitt comments on the acknowledgement of crafting one’s life inferred in speaking at funerals, weddings and naming ceremonies.

\(^{14}\) A relational context for ethics is congruent with that of women and oppressed peoples (Gilligan 1982) and ethics arising from Earth connectedness (Naess 1988b).
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Spirituality of life is the finding and living out a pattern of life through which individuals find fulfillment and happiness by being in harmony with this whole and alive world. (Cupitt 1999)

The actualisation of self also involves authenticity and expression of self in the public domain – this Cupitt describes as an act of ‘publication’ of self in a flow of ‘outwardness’ (1998). Realisation equals publication of the authentic self. Teilhard’s process of personification, the turning in and actualisation of individual wholeness, followed by an emanation of be-ing, follows the same living process. An outward radiance of a uniquely patterned aspect of Life as expressed through each person, their being, is verified by Hunt (1996). Cupitt uses the sun as a metaphor of the outward process of solar ethics which ‘like the sun is a pouring-out of self in a way that is beyond the duality, of inner and outer, life and death’ (1999). In this context both personalised reality (isness of being) and truth (authenticity of being) are processual and involve a continual coming-out into the open (Cupitt 1998).

Social influence of Life spirituality

A grass-roots move to authenticity, contribution and self-responsibility, and thence universal responsibility, implies a cultural shift valuing diversity – the more unique and varied are individual lives, then the richer is the common world being built together. As Cupitt says the human task for each person is to live a life that is fully our own and to make a contribution that is authentically our own and distinctive (1999). The individual as a holon in the whole of humanity holographically contributes to and strengthens the pattern of wholism. Living in authenticity and in relatedness generates an expansive, interconnected, processual ethics akin to embodied love and the blessing of grace. An expressive/solar spirituality of Life streams with the flux of existence and emanates its self/beingness along with all other beings (1995). This understanding weaves with that of Teilhard of reciprocal resonance of persons and the whole entity of humanity within an ultimate expression of Life, Omega (1969a). Such Life-centred spirituality pressures the re-ordering of complexity to an interacting unity of humanity-as-a-whole. The development actively resonates and strengthens the consciousness of a global-humanity-entity within the planetary mind-field of the noosphere around/within Earth.
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Cupitt says the spiritual person is someone who plunges into Life by living a spirituality of Life where the spiritual practice is being (1998). And in the being of self-in-relatedness, there is a generosity of heart/spirit where we wish other people the same freedom and authentic expression (Cuppitt 1999) – an actualised democratic benevolent empathy. The centrality of Life is linked to the desire ‘to operate as a collective agency for progressive social change’ (Mann n.d.). Individualised responsibility for ‘my life’ inseparable from Life within the Whole, implies a responsibility for the State and for the society in which we live (Geering 1999). There is an ethical imperative to act for the betterment of society through our own unique contribution. This disposition is noted in the data and among the ‘cultural creatives’ (Ray and Anderson 2000). Ordinary people when centred in Life feel motivated and empowered to change political and economic arrangements to equably benefit all. As Life is grounded in the here and now, Cupitt believes this realization of ‘the Edenic vision’ will come through a certain should-do/will-do orientation to make life better, for all, now (1999).

This compelling impulse of altruism, arising from Life and authentic living, is inclusive and inherently democratic.

From spirituality to politics

As Sam said the personal journey is one of awakening which calls for persons to lead themselves … and to take full personal responsibility. Taking responsibility for one’s self and one’s life does not mean selfishness or isolation from the social context and participation with it. Paradoxically, with self-responsibility, there is also responsibility for the whole, for one’s contribution to the whole and also direct responsibility for the other as there is no separation. The journey leads to alignment with, and service to, the greater Whole. Personal wholeness, the interiorisation to a whole/personalisation/centre, entails a shift to self-authority, and hence self-responsibility. The essence of this personal journey is the process of personal responsibility, authority and development. The first steps to changing the world are small and highly potent. It is a spiritual journey to wholeness and inter-connectedness, lead by oneself; it is also a political journey.

15 Campbell regards the emphasis on the individual as a unique centre, as the gift of western mythology and culture (1986:73).

16 Campbell’s comment that in the new planetary mythology all places and Life will be realized as sacred, not just Eden, has the same inclusive character (1986:17).
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Individual wholeness has huge social implications. Re-designation of authority dissolves compliant participation with the traditional role of leader. Self-authority and self-responsibility usher in democratisation of both spirituality and of socio-political systems – the one occurs with the other. This new positioning of ‘centre’ stands in contrast with traditions of hierarchical structures of power and conceptualisations about processes concerning spiritual development, power and progress. Power is not finite when from within. The new centrification activates. Relationships re-organise under the action of mutuality of ‘centres’ and become mutually respectful with equality of inter-change. With omni-centricity, underpinning dynamics shaping collective organisation have increased degrees of freedom. Inclusion of more perspectives deepens and expands understandings where more wisdoms cohere. This process of inclusivity follows the inner state which holds the energetic pattern of interconnectedness and inter-being. As Bohm says, because reality is a process not a fixed static entity,

It is participation which counts – what you do and importantly how you think, but importantly practice must follow out of something deeper. (Bohm 2004:143).

From the evidence, a spreading, mainstreamed enculturation of the spirituality of Life and consequent ways of being is occurring. A grass-roots democratised spirituality is emerging from within, where the meanings, obligations and individual responsibility for the All, is lived out in the choices of daily life. This spirituality of Life may indicate a progression for evolving democracy – from representative democracy to participatory democracy unto living Life democracy. One processual path to evolved democracy is then in being fully who we are and giving that outwardly to the whole of humanity and the Earth, in which we seamlessly belong.

As a consequence of actualised spirituality of Life, the experience, nature and source of power is fundamentally changed. Power-arising-from-experiential-confluence-with-Life is fundamentally different from power-arising-from-atomised-separateness. The significance of this shift cannot be overstated. This building systemic phenomenon creates the pre-conditions for a change in expression and organisation of power. The restructuring of language is already happening with consequent introduction of formative
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concepts and re-orientation of attention and relatedness. As the tipping point for social inculcation of Life-centredness-in-personal-life is reached, an actualised system of collective/wholistic organisation will manifest as omni-centricity where authority will not lie with a hierarchy but within.
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**Inner authority: coming into a whole centre**

I believe the present socio-political conditions are encouraging the actualised embodiment of self-responsibility and wholeness. This is occurring through a fundamental breaking of trust in societal authority. ‘Truth in government’ has become an issue in Australia as the government has been found to be directly and repeatedly lying to the public. Responses include a shift from external authority to internalised authority. People are turning within for authority which intensifies the process of centrification unto omni-centricity which reflects the processes of Life and the cosmos. This has consequences for social re-organisation

**Authority untrustworthy**

A well known Australian example of lies and obfuscation in public office is the ‘children overboard’ debacle. When Middle-eastern refugees were rescued from a sinking boat by the Australian navy off our northern coast, the Prime Minister and other ministers amplified and perpetuated an untrue story about the refugees throwing their children overboard. Vitriolic, political rhetoric stated that Australians do not want that type of (sub-human and racially different) person here. The story was completely untrue and known to be untrue yet perpetuated repeatedly by various authorities. Government ministers, the head and senior members of the defence forces, intelligence officials and public servants all contributed to the false information and loss of public trust – some by their explicit lies, misinformation or evasive reframing, others by their silence (Turner 2003). When the lies were exposed no ministers were sanctioned nor resigned for misleading the Parliament or the people. The actual ‘spin doctors’ were prevented from attending the subsequent Senate inquiry by their ministers. This manufactured situation was a malicious use of vulnerable people for power and misleading propaganda purposes. The events evoke questions about foundational democratic accountability and the responsibilities of all individuals. Where is the moral line when a public servant or military person will speak up or if needed, disobey orders, for truth? As learned from My

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17 The original situation occurred in the last weeks of a national election campaign and was used to political advantage by the government. The Opposition was silent.
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Lai (Peck 1994), unless there is a personally acknowledged and socially valued threshold for moral dissent for persons with public responsibilities, the institutional conditions are ripe for grave misuse of power which can lead to genocide, torture and massive betrayal of humanity – these things we are seeing now.

Another significant and symbolic Australian example of disconnected and self-serving leadership was provided by the action of Governor General Hollingsworth. The issue concerned his inappropriate responses over the revelation of repeated sexual abuse of a child by a priest under his authority when Hollingsworth was bishop of Brisbane, and then compounding behaviour when the issue resurfaced. At the time of the original revelation of the crime, Hollingsworth displayed gross abnegation of responsibility and duty of care to the minor involved, and additionally to his community when he simply transferred the priest to another location. In the later exposition during his time as Governor General he additionally showed an absence of a humane, empathetic response. Hollingsworth in fact implied that the child was the cause of the crime. His lack of minimal understanding of the power dynamics involved in child sexual abuse demonstrated a remarkable and worryingly narrow exposure to social developments and concerns over the last few decades when these issues have become well discussed, analysed and contextualised in the public discourse. Hollingsworth’s primary response appeared to be self-protection. As in many countries, this was one of a litany of sexual assault cases involving clergy and subsequent establishment cover-ups. The incident caused public outrage which lead to Hollingsworth’s resignation and fuelled the increasing mistrust of religious institutions and their hierarchies. Additionally the office of Governor General was brought to public focus, amplifying the debate on Australia becoming a republic. The selection of the Australian Governor General is solely at the discretion of the Prime Minister, itself an office not mentioned in our constitution. The antiquated systems of governing structures set in place hundreds of years ago, were called into question – yet no change has happened.

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18 The Governor General is the Head of State standing in the place of the Queen of England in Australia’s constitutional monarchy. The appointment of Hollingsworth is the one time the separation of state and religion has been transgressed in Australia. His appointment was by Prime Minister Howard.
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**Lies, spin and broken trust**

Untruth breaks trust; inaction, arrogance and dismissal following the revelation of untruth shatters any remaining trust. As previously stated, worldwide people are increasingly loosing trust in their leaders and the established structure. Deliberately manufactured untruth compounds the phenomenon. John Mendadue particularly notes the increasing power and numbers of ‘spin doctors’ and the willing reliance on them by politicians (2004).\(^{19}\) Spin is a deliberately slanted view intended to retain power by obscuring a larger picture, and directing attention to one particular focus and away from others. Moral philosopher, Sissela Bok calls ‘spin doctors’ the masters of misinformation; they are significant power brokers who, in all Westminster governments, are replacing career public servants as advisors to government (2002). They are not publicly accountable and operate without the ethical and legal constraints of public servants who are intended to still give ‘frank and fearless advice’ to ministers. Australian academic Rick Snell says that the aim of spin is to gain and retain power by controlling perceptions – not good government, or even government at all (2002). The process of disseminating untruth, namely lies, is virtually institutionalised. A proposed Orwellian-style ‘Office of Strategic Influence’, one of whose stated roles was ‘to put out disinformation’ for the US Defence Department, was shelved only after public uproar (Correy 2002). In a similar vein, Leo Strauss, a rather obscure philosopher of the mid twentieth century is being strategically brought to prominence by right wing think-tanks – somewhat like the managed ascendance of early neo-liberalist theorists encouraging zealous fundamentalism of blind faith in ‘the market’ (Shields 2000). Strauss advocates that a government can not only lie but has a duty to lie to the populace (Shorris 2004).

Bok believes that there is not necessarily anymore lying now that other times but what is clear is that the public know about the lies now (2002). She says that the people understand about the manipulation that is going on. Manipulation through the growing industry of ‘spin doctoring’ is discerned by the public as sly and misleading. BBC journalist Nick Jones says that perceived manipulation of the media by government is

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\(^{19}\) John Menadue was a past head of the Prime Minister’s Department for both the conservative coalition and Labor Australian governments
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Increasing general public cynicism about politics (2002). He notes that voter participation in the last English election was the lowest for a century.\(^{20}\) Australian academic, John Uhr, indicates that this culture of lies and un-accountable power ‘are a growing trend in democracies based on the Westminster system’ (2002). Bok warns that

> If veracity is lost in public or private life, then societies begin to fall apart …
> trust and integrity are precious resources easily squandered, hard to regain.
>
> They can thrive only on a foundation of respect for veracity. (Bok 2002).

A statement by Australian diplomats and ex-military chiefs called for ‘Truth in government’ over their concern about untrue information used to justify Australia’s invasion of Iraq. Their statement foreshadows a change in social structure.

> Australians must be able to believe they are being told the truth by our leaders … it is dangerous and wrong for our elected representatives to mislead the Australian people … without that trust, the democratic structure of our society will be undermined. (Stephens 2004).

As the barrage of lies, manipulation and abuse of power assail ordinary people, a relationship of trust is being violated – it’s jarring their spirits (Sam). By their own actions, the foundations of social authority are presently being undermined by the very persons entrusted with these responsibilities. Because these leaders and figure-heads are pinnacles of social authority the consequences are occurring deep in the collective mind-field causing disengagement and destabilisation of the collective structures. These forms of social structure depend on acceptance of positioned relationships, authority and devolution of power. In a democracy the source of this power is ultimately the power from within each person and is entrusted to another to serve for the good of the whole.

The breaking of trust and subsequent disassociation from the structures of collective power is creating conditions for a major shift in consciousness. With the eroding destabilisation of the present structures of collective organisation formalised as social institutions, the space is being created for new and differently structured social systems to arise from the change in social relationships. As Kuhn observed paradigms are

\(^{20}\) Voting in England is not compulsory as in Australia.
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reflected in the patterns of relationships within a community holding the same worldview – as the relationships change so do the paradigms (1970). He also stated that a new paradigm is taken up when the older paradigm can not solve the contemporary problems – particularly the ones which it creates. The pre-conditions are growing which can dispose people to internalisation of authority thereby profoundly changing the patterns of social organisation.

**Process of authority internalisation**

A process of internalisation of authority has been mapped. Belenky in her detailed documentation of ‘women’s ways of knowing’ also outlined the process and associated conditions for the internalisation of authority (1986). When the inculcated system of social authority fails the woman at a personally critical time, and the failure is coupled with a confirmatory experience of her own inner knowing, then a fundamental shift occurs. There is a cessation of trust in the dominant mythology and a conscious rejection of external authority. The inner foundations for external authority collapse. An awakening of self-trust arises in the space, as inner listening nurtures into visibility the woman’s own sense of reality. The source of authority involutes and becomes her own inner voice, personal truth and self-definition. The woman then authors her own decisions and life accompanied by an insistence to severe connection with the old ways. The internalisation of authority after a point of fusion appears to become irreversible.

If the process is sustained by an environment inducing this growth, the direction of personal evolution and experiential base of internalised authority grows by proceeding from self-trust to building trust through empathy, to include and integrate the knowing of others. Belenky says that ‘empathy is a central feature in the development of connected procedures of knowing’ (1986:143). Empathetic interconnection simultaneously integrates the inner voice and the voices of others. This empathetic mode of understanding is then applied to people, the written word, ideas, so-called ‘experts’ and even objects wherein new worlds are opened up. As Barbara McClintock, who utilised these intimate ways of knowing to open new fields in microbiology said, ‘you have to have the patience “to hear what the corn has to say to you”’ and an openness ‘to let it come to you’ (Keller 1983:198). These are the skills of inter-knowing and inter-being.
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In the experiential logic expanded with others’ way of thinking, the woman uses herself as an instrument of understanding sensitive to the resonance of communion – a skill developed by turning within and listening. Belenky notes that when a person no longer adheres to external authorities for truth and knowledge, they then develop intuition, intuitive knowing and attend to their own integrated truth. Twentieth century mystic Simone Weil refers to this ability as attentive love (1951). Sara Ruddick calls it maternal thinking (1980). The woman becomes aware of the working of her mind and stretches the outer boundaries of her own consciousness.

The internalisation of authority converges to an essence, a centre, which becomes is a point of expansion of human consciousness. Internalisation of authority strengthens the centring process of personalisation, wholism, and coupled with resonance of communion, consolidates inter-being. Because of the deep emotional states involved, the transformation within the individual is probably irreversible (Goodwin et al 2001; Ball 1999). Integrated self-authority exists in a very different paradigm and world from that of externalised authorities and its structures of power, namely conventional politics. This interconnected world is characterised by reciprocity, omni-centricity, cooperation, empowerment and absence of domination.

Social consequences of internalised authority

Failed social authority is happening throughout society. As Tara says around the world there’s an incredible awareness that things haven’t worked, that governments have let us down on many levels. In the absence of somewhere in society to place authority externally with any trust, the conditions are ripe for the internalisation of authority. Additionally, as voices of concern, dissent and question are ignored, ridiculed and silenced, the responses to being unheard and unheeded take several paths. Some people turn away in apathy, disempowerment, disgust, despair and powerlessness, creating a docile polity that takes no responsibility. Others turn away and inward – finding their own source of authority and authorised actions – turning within to fuller wholeness. The very political structures and manipulative methods which facilitate public disempowerment in fact drive the interiorisation and personal ownership of authority
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more powerfully.\textsuperscript{21} The disillusionment with societal authorities is orchestrating the coming-into-wholeness of individuals and groups with consequences for those individuals and for the present social fabric and emerging pattern of relationships. Without trust, the social fabric goes (Frie\-re 1972:36).

Australian author, lawyer and government negotiator, Anna Funder described the ‘children overboard affair’ as a fundamental rupture for Australia because ‘you’re not living in the same place as you were before’ – what is a government, who can act so cruelly and dishonestly, now capable of? She compares the situation with the recurrent struggle of German people with their collective past.\textsuperscript{22} However, for Australians, the process is in the present and the ethos of the promulgated national psyche was compounded by re-election of the same government by citizens who knew they were being lied to (2006).\textsuperscript{23} Now years of keeping children behind the razor wire of Australia’s refugee detention camps with their growing lists of suicides and deaths from despair, deepens the shame not just about the present government, but for the complicity and shared responsibility of the nation – poor fellow my country.

The powerful emotions and clear choice of values are defining identity and community, with differentiations deep enough to rupture coherence of the assumed order. Active rejection of the hegemonic ethos generates spaces both inner and cultural. The space, a space of personal clarity, becomes a spot-light on values and a passion for justice, pride and self-respect. As people of similar affinity magnetise to each other, the embryo of alternative cultures grow based on their shared values. The ‘second culture’, the prerequisite for social transformation as described by Haval, is certainly growing and is based on spiritual values of compassion, honesty, generosity, kindness, respect and fairness.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{21} For example, Rawlston Saul points out that a majority of people still do not accept economic rationalism despite 30 years of intense political and media saturation propaganda to sell it (2004).
\item \textsuperscript{22} Anna Funder is the author of \textit{Stasiland} for which she spent seven years living in East Germany and researching the operations of the East German secret police and questions of people’s willingness to comply to authority. The book has won several international awards.
\item \textsuperscript{23} My students speak of the same dilemma. Personally, I shared the anguish and find as I distance more from the present Australian ethos, in the space is emerging a citizen-without-borders with a stronger planetary identification. I suggest, for some, there is a re-identification on a larger scale occurring.
\end{itemize}
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Presently for some, attention is oscillating between old style leaders and systems, and the inner, integrated voice of internalised truth and authority. Oscillation by individuals (of attention and inner states) prepares them and the collective by building the internally contained energy, for the full and permanent jump to inner authority and wholeness. Omni-centric wholeness and ensuing inter-being reconfigures power, its nature and expressions. People awaken within themselves and progressively distance from the establishment, its leadership and actions. This is happening with the young in Australia (Tacey 2003a, 2003b; Eckersley 1999) and world-wide as they distain old style politics and particularly its leaders (Boudrieu 2000).

Haval stated that individuals confirm the system by living-the-lie, accepting the dominant ideology and thereby giving complicit approval for ensuing actions (1992:136). A power structure depends on a certain order binding its components in coherence through identity and ideology. In a democracy, government power gains its legitimacy ultimately from public consent to its enacted ideology. Dissent from that order, by rejecting a culture of lies and cruel decisions, creates incoherence in the system, and, as Haval states, it creates space for alternatives. At a metaphysical level, the clear personal choice of very different values and ideology interacts energetically. If expressed publicly in word and/or action, the inner coherence and cohesion of the system is disrupted more directly. Dissent from condoning the lie clarifies commitment to inner truth and clears space for living-in-truth. People then align with their community through values (Kuhn 1970), and the overall coherence of the controlling system is destabilised (Haval 1992). As more and more people dissent from the ideology and actions of government, at a certain point disruptive tensions force an overall re-organisation.

Spirit led political transformation

The point I am emphasising here is that there is a fundamental transformation happening. Among the many, many powerful influences affecting people, I am pointing to several spiritual and political epi-phenomena which are building a platform together for a fundamentally different basis of re-organisation; one which gives hope and is creating space – space to re-assemble, a space perhaps which is a doorway, a threshold. These epi-phenomena are the commonality and new diversification of spirituality, the
experiences of inherent interconnectedness which are sources of an existential/spiritual revolution arising and emanating outward from the hearts and minds of ordinary people. Additionally, forced political choices about values, identity and community ethos are pushing people through the space/doorway. Living-in-truth is widening the self-created fracture-lines of Westminster democracy. Inevitable transformative events will not come directly from the political arena but from unexpected domains (Haval 1992) – probably un-recognised and perhaps even disparaged.

From my assessment, some of the population are undergoing an internalisation of authority which is being fed by growing spiritualities, particularly those centred on Life, and the moral pressures of the political climate. These emergent phenomena share a concurrence of Life affirming values, altruism, and expanded context and responsibility. In this time of confusion and flux, subtle and powerful patterns are changing at a deep level of experience, consciousness and choice. The premises of truth and their accepted sources are shifting. The shift is one of spirit, relationship, authority, truth, power and devolution of power. I believe there are two important consequences, one political and the other metaphysical. The political consequence concerns the re-organisation of the system of power and the metaphysical is the gaining of wholeness.

In reference to evolving democracy, Ricardo Blaug saying that it is ‘not so much about creating democracy but creating circumstances, or environments in which democracy can break out’ (Carson 1999). I believe this inducing environment is innermost.

The political bifurcation driven by cherished values, is deepened by the rise spirituality. There will be no deep political transformation until there is an expansion in consciousness to interconnectivity and consequent social inclusivity. These are fruits of spiritual experiences – as James stated spiritual experiences are known by their fruits (1902). Additional gifts of the spiritual revolutions are the vision, positivity and hope they bring. This is the existential revolution that Haval points to.

The growing and grounded personalised spirituality documented by Cupitt is encouraging wholeness of autonomous, irreversible, actualised, transcendent centrification experienced as belonging within the milieu of Life. This process is accelerated by present socio-political conditions. In internalisation of authority, people
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are irreversibly actualising their own wholeness, forming a centre – and so, many co-existent centres.

Omni-centricity, I suggest, is organically emerging as the internal organisation of the collective entity. This emerging self-organisation does not need a majority or some act of elite power – it is happening, it is here. The issue and phenomenon is deeper than the form of government (which is a consequence), there is a change of consciousness afoot. At a certain developmental stage, critical mass, tipping point, the transformation will ripple through the whole system catalysing a new form of unified organisation. The transformative phenomenon needs to be met with alternatives ready which have been grown in fertile ground (Theobald 1997; Eckersley 2001).
Chapter Eleven: possible new forms of government

Introduction

Life as experientially sacred offers ways of being and thinking as processes for evolved democracy. Additionally, living enactment within Life draws cosmic synergy to the human journey as it is in turn fired by the universe. Such alignment is vital for governing which is sustainable as a process. The theoretical and empirical basis of Life sciences inform understanding of the living flow of which we are a part and within which we can choose to model our collective institutions. I highlight key understandings of Life as a socio-ecological process. These observations mirror the research findings on process, being whole within greater wholeness and creative transformation/evolution. Additionally, the research findings make the vital experiential link grounding conceptualisation about democracy moulded within Life, drawn forth by Love, creatively sustained by involution and supported by evolution of the universe.
Chapter eleven: New forms of government

**Life as a model for democracy**

**Life: an interconnected awake milieu**

Dynamic interconnectedness distinguishes the processes of living beings and systems (Capra 1982; 1992). Phenomenologically, Life actualises as diversity, complexity, co-existence, flexibility, adaptability, inter-dependence, openness and aliveness in ever interacting and changing exchanges of creativity. Accumulative insights recognise living processes as advancing developmentally with timespace (Darwin 1958; Teilhard 1969a; Berry n.d.; Capra 1982, 1992; Swimme 1990; Samson and Pitt 1999). Additionally, Life, like the whole of evolution, advances in a particular processual direction. In essence, all-that-is is recognised as intricately and intimately interrelated in dynamically interacting and context-aware networks, which are evolving. ¹ These views come from the extrapolation of empirical observation of nature, Life, living beings and the universe where inter-relatedness and fluid process are primary within the integrated Whole.

**Wholes and their diverse relationships**

Comprehension of wholes, whole living systems and beings, is central to perceiving the ecology of Life. Wholes arise from the integration of inter-relating parts which have qualities that are different from the resultant whole. So a system/holon can have the independent properties of a whole/centre and concurrently the dependent properties of parts (Wilber 2000). Self-organisation of wholes cannot be explained – not even in principle – from previous properties and relationships (Wallaceczek 1993). The behaviour of the individual parts making up the whole entity can be unique and irregular and may show no obvious relevance to the whole. This is a key understanding its application as a model for democracy. The greater whole does not suppress or dominate its constituent parts. Coordination of the relationship of part and whole allows for this variation and flexibility which then enables an organism to adapt to new circumstances and to evolve. There is a high degree of internal plasticity among these inner relationships. In populations and social groups internal variability or diversity determines overall flexibility and hence health. Importantly the whole must not be reductively broken down to its constituent parts in order to account for

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properties which are unexplainable from prior points of perception. The integrity of
the whole is the source of its own powers, properties and explanations. The interior
patterns of relating create a dynamic stability of non-equilibrium which is necessary
for self-organisation. Acknowledgement of wholes includes the aliveness and
purposiveness of wholes.

Process as living rhythms

Capra calls these integrated wholes, systems (1982, 1992). The awareness of process
underlies the systems approach wherein wholes, organic beings and structures come
into being through formative processes and their on-going life and form is determined
by process. The internal processes include growth, self-organisation, self-renewal,
self-maintenance, reproduction and self-transcendence. These processes interact,
oscillate, adapt and progress in cycles, and are flexible, open and autonomous in
manner. Loss of oscillation results in rigidity, atrophied adaptability and hence
reduced capacity to evolve and survive (Capra 1982:294). Thus living occurs as
processes of continually swirling movement between variables in interlinked creative
tensions whose oscillation and fluctuation sets up rhythms.

In the milieu of urges, movement, tensions and creativity of wholistic/living systems,
rhythm plays a fundamental role whereby ‘ordered structures arise from rhythmic
patterns’ (Capra 1982:326). Order comes from rhythm. Processes and stability are
compatible only if the processes form rhythmic patterns of fluctuations, oscillations,
vibrations and waves. Fluctuations are crucial in the dynamics of self-organisation
and are the basis of order in the living world. Rhythmic patterns manifest at all levels
of nature wherein the rhythm allows individual expression within a unified pattern.

Within a wholistic Life perspective, attention to rhythm is highly significant, and
entails a perceptual shift from the rigid habits of structuring conceptualisation to
being-within and being danced within Life. This open alignment is by no means new
to human experience as we know when we are in synchronisation within, with each
other and the universe –the experience, however, receives little cultural
acknowledgement and honour.

2 These processes correspond with some dynamic powers of the universe. Swimme identifies powers of
the universe as centration, allurement, emergence, homeostasis, cataclysm, synergy, transmutation,
transformation, interrelatedness and radiance which all act together within the seamlessness of
existence (2004).
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**Autonomy and flowing open relationships**

Living beings and communities are open ‘systems’ and so have continuous exchange of energy/matter with their environment. As Rose points out the ecological unit is beings-with-environment (2001). However, while there is continuous interaction with its environment, the living being/system is not determined by it (Capra 1982:290). The self-organisation of living systems is autonomous and arises from within itself in the internal interplay of self-renewal and self-transcendence.

Self-renewal maintains the integrity of the being/system. However the drive for self-renewal decreases with greater complexity while that of self-transcendence increases. Capra describes self-transcendence as the ability to engage with creativity beyond physical and mental boundaries; this is demonstrated in the processes of learning, development and evolution (1982). The creativity and autonomy of living beings respond to the urges of self-transcendence in, for example, times of stress induced change. The responses become somatic if the processes are sustained. This internalised adaptation re-establishes flexibility and takes the organism to a new state which becomes irreversible as an evolutionary process.\(^3\) Evolution is a combination of responsive adaptation together with the creative self-transcendence inherent in all living beings which results in new structures (Capra 1982:296). Such self-organisation is a pervading dynamic of the universe enabling evolution.

**Relationships between whole living systems**

Symbiotic cooperation or synergy characterise successful relationships in ecosystems and evolution (Swimme 2004; Capra 1992). As a specific whole system self-organises and self-regulates, these mutually enhancing relationships undergo responsive fluctuations. Any serious disturbance of one being is felt rippling throughout its interconnected matrix of beings and environments as the self-transcendence and adaptability of one affects all.

In their relationships, living communities/systems stratify into multi-layers of complexity. Within each layer of complexity, the systems are integrated wholes which consist of smaller/less complex integrated wholes. There is interconnection and interdependence between all systems and all complexity domains. At each level is a

\(^3\) Irreversibility is one of the four characteristics of evolutionary steps noted by Teilhard (1969a:297). The others are autonomy, actualisation and transcendence.
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dynamic and complementary balance of self-assertive and integrative tendencies
acting together in creative tension (Wilber 2000). Importantly all layers/fields interact
in interdependent harmony as a non-hierarchical, supportive whole. Herein lies a clue
for synergistic wholistic collective self-government.

The important aspect of the stratification is the organisation of complexity
not the transfer of control. (Capra 1982:305)

Human choreography

Life is thus an evolving dance of inter-being, in which we humans are awake and can
deliberately self-choreograph. Life models processes which offer templates for human
organisation. The insights of Life sciences can be applied intentionally to human self-
organisation. However just applying systems theory and ecological understandings is
insufficient. Such ‘formula’ risk mechanistic interpretation and conceptual
ossification. Dynamic self-organisation occurs in a milieu of non-equilibrium and
creativity. The issue is not so much about applying insights of Life as a model, but
aligning with Life itself as experienced living vitalisation. Conscious experience of
being, which I call spirituality, is required to bridge the gap between another theory,
albeit a persuasive one, and the essence of living reality and its evolving ways
forward. Informed by the perspective of Life science, spirituality of living and
interacting can become part of the wholistic self-governing process. Hence I suggest
that future forms of sustainable government are fields of dynamic interaction fed from
the seething universal creativity which is experienced in many ways and known from
the clear space within, where the urges of the universe are heard and the spirit dances
in response.

Capra applies insights about living rhythms to human communication which he says
‘takes place to a significant extent through synchronisation and interlocking of
individual rhythms’ (1982:329). He says that the synchronisation lasts as long as the
people remain attentive and involved. In contrast ‘opposition, antipathy and
disharmony will arise when the rhythms of two people are out of synchronisation’
(1982:329). This describes the milieu of our present system of government which I
suggest is antagonistic to Life and its rhythms. The potential for synchronised
interaction has clear application for real dialogue in wholistic governing.
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In addition to dialogue, which I explore later, there is a deeper interlocking enmeshment available. Shared silence offers a deep space of interconnection where personal psycho-spiritual emanation swirls and self-organises into inner wholeness, which can be a preliminary source of effortless aligned integration unto greater unity and resolution wherein each holds/retains/emanates their centre as an open state. The Society of Friends and traditional meetings of the Iroquois Native American people are examples of using awake silence as an active space for integration into a greater whole. Such processes of whole-governing can be aligned with the universal dynamics. For example Dadirri, the sacred hoop and circle align through conscious sacred connection with Earth. Such immersion and alignment are experienced and known in ‘moments of perfect rhythm, when everything feels exactly right and things are done with great ease’ (Capra 1982:329). Capra calls these moments of aligned unification ‘high spiritual experiences in which every form of separateness or fragmentation is transcended’ (1982:230). These conscious moments can be, and I believe should be, central to governing which is wholistic, inclusive, equable and sustainable into our shared future.

**Coherent, synergistic self-organisation**

Coordination of a whole occurs as a field phenomenon through the interconnectedness throughout and not from a single source with downward hierarchical organisation. Importantly, the concept of smaller units integrated into larger ones does not imply any hierarchy of value. Life models non-hierarchical relationships, or more accurately relatedness, with no centralised power or control of any being/person or grouping/system/unit/community. From within that understanding, elitism however perhaps benevolently intended, has no meaning or place. Such dominance within a living system signals dysfunction which sounds its own death knell.

Additionally, with the wholeness there must be coherence (Bohm 1990) – both within and seamlessly, interconnectedly outward. A large enough vision attuned to the times coheres awareness. The urgency to respond collectively to global heating is one potential source of coherent focus (Flannery 2005; Swimme 2004). However, using a problem solving orientation may leave the predominant consciousness and ensuing
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social systems unaddressed. 4 This orientation lacks the uplifting vitalisation evoked by vision, love and unification. The point I am emphasising is a switch from survival mode to co-creative participation in response to inspired creativity swept along by Life. The powers of a positive vision align, cohere and create thereby enabling collective self-transcendence (Teilhard 1969a; Boulding 1999).

Transcendence increases in times such as the destruction of the present era (Swimme 2004:5). Present times of stress and compression are inducing transcendental change which however, will only be cosmologically supported if in coherence with Life – namely, sustainable and appropriate change will only be useful and on-going if wholistic, self-organised and Life-aligned.

The life of humanity-as-a-whole arises in its internal dynamism of self-renewal and self-transcendence. With increasing complexity the impulse to self-renewal of the existing internal arrangements decreases. Reciprocally impulses to wholistic self-transcendence increase. Major evolutionary changes are preceded by foreshadowing behavioural changes; this is known as the Baldwin effect (Swimme 2004:6). Self-transcendence is appearing at a deep and personal level – as expressed in personal creativity in living, modes of thinking and overtly recognised interconnectivity as evidenced in spiritual Life-orientation and lifestyles oriented to personal significance and meaning with the Whole. These behavioural changes may foreshadow transcendent transformation of humanity-as-a-whole.

As previously stated, self-organisation as a cosmic dynamic, pervades human evolution which is drawn forth to patterns favoured by the universe. Arguably democracy is one such pattern of self-organisation as yet not fully realised as the work-in-progress of creating humanity-as-a-whole – but the dynamics, source and potential are identifiable.

Thus governing systems, to evolve or even keep pace with Life, need to be open and also process based. Process in this sense does not infer the fixity of habituated

4 Hermann Scheer, a member of the German parliament, when asked if he endorses the suggestion of a Manhattan Project style approach to address global heating on a multi-national basis – where thousands of the youngest and brightest are drawn together to crack through the science involved – replied that it was too technological, could, like nuclear weapons, bring greater problems and does not address the underlying existential crisis of civilisation. He prefers an Ecological New Deal program (like Roosevelt’s New Deal) which has a deeply based approach to re-orient thinking in a more socially inclusive and decentralised context (2006).
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procedures but dynamic processual interaction throughout the Whole and in the all-encompassing present. The implications for governing are that systemic self-transcendence ascends with increasing complexity as the present form of self-organisation cannot respond to the new conditions and so must not maintain but transcend whereby collective evolution can be, and tautologically must be, embodied in governing as dynamic and conscious.

Pragmatically, it is inherently unrealistic to keep using what does not work, namely consciousness of disconnectedness, to address the problems it inevitable and on-goingly creates. Such dogged adherence seems not just unwise but almost as if stupefied into mental ossification by the crescendo and urgency of the times. Changes of a deep nature are called for. Contextualising government from experience of the sacred is pragmatically realistic. Experiential interconnectedness as a formative state of consciousness resonates a form of collective self-organisation which is in resonant congruence with Life. The inner world of personal spirituality and its recognition is integral to forms of governing sustainable in Life. Dynamic symbiotic cooperation and synergy within humanity accompanies a re-orientation of values with behaviours privileged within Life’s processes.

Centricity and omni-centricity

The processes of transformation of the whole community lie with the inner being of individuals. The essential envitalising quality of spiritual co-evolution comes from the source within and the transformative impeller is embodied love. Spiritual evolution through awake, individual experience orchestrates centricity and hence omni-centricity of consciousness and authority. The up-welling of centrification inherently creates omni-centricity which in open interaction is formatively democratic. The coexistence of many paths of sacredness creates the milieu for high tolerance and creative, respectful dynamism. New spiritualities, shaped with current consciousness drawn forward by present circumstances, predictably mirror a multi-centric and multi-cultural environment. The picture is similar to the evolving cosmos presented by science of an omni-centric universe.

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5 Kuhn does note that the one thing that those with vested interests in the dominant paradigm will never do in a crisis is renounce that paradigm (1970:77)
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The cosmological picture of experiential interconnectedness is one of omni-centricity where each being is centred in its own unique existence and connected intimately with the whole and all other centres. Each being is profoundly implicated in the existence and functioning of every other being (Berry n.d.). From an Indigenous perspective, ‘each viewpoint is unique, self-centred and interconnected to other like viewpoints [and] are each interconnected with all beyond the ones that are similar’ (Stockton 1995:45). The multiple centres are in perpetual flux. Rose describes the cultural perspective of omni-centricity of the Australian Indigenous Yarralin people.

The view from inside is one of a multi-centred world in which each centre is structurally equivalent, and linked, to every other centre. (Rose 1992:220)

From centricity the field of experience can be inwardly directed or outward and both concurrently. The turning point of attention from innerness to outerness may be pivoted on the point of responsibility. As the dynamic process of reflective attention turns – in or out – there is a certain completion-of-a-whole, a defining crystallisation and re-orientation. Self-responsibility arising with wholeness expands to be universal with being and belonging within the whole cosmos as the frame of reference. Both turning outward to the outer reality and the universe, and inward to a spiritual domain, is in strong contrast to ego-as-reference in a mono-dimensional materialistic culture.

On the outward orientation Stockton identifies wonder as a religious attitude where ‘my wonder pushes out to the furthest edges of the universe’ (1995:44). With the power of imagination these edges can be pushed further into engagement with unfolding evolution. Stockton acknowledges each being as having a unique centre emanating an expanding radiance – ‘that the universe pulsates with a kind of energy, of lifeforce, which I am emitting and receiving from others at the same time’ (1995:44). He describes a shared domain, shared also by spirit, where communication and transmission of ‘knowledge, affection, lifeforce and whatever else moves between us’ (1995:45). He sees us all as part of the universe story, each contributing from a unique centre arising from experience spanning across time and space.

Comprehension of centres co-existing in omni-centricity re-arranges atomised hierarchical thinking to mutual co-participation.
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**Pattern-thinking**

Petra Kelly noted that new ways of doing democratic government require new ways of thinking based on Life (1994:40). Experiential inculcation of interconnectedness and omni-centricity lead to modes of thinking which arise from perceiving and living within patterns, in a patchwork of patterns, within the greater Whole.

Capra sees Life as a dynamic integrated system. This Life perspective is ‘based on awareness of the essential interrelatedness and interdependence of all phenomena – physical, biological, psychological, social and cultural’ (1982:285). Integrated understanding of this systems approach enables *systems thinking* which is attuned to the perception of wholes and relationships/relatedness thereby embedding unity-making within the thinking process itself. In systems thinking there is a basic switch in orientation and focus from attention to object, to dynamic relatedness. Capra describes systems thinking as *process thinking* where ‘form becomes associated with process, interrelation with interaction, and opposites unified through oscillation’ (1982:288).

The wholistic perspective of *process thinking* is a significant advance on thinking dominated by rational thinking. Systems-thinking focuses on processes of interaction but not organically and actually from within these occurrences. *Pattern thinking* of Australia’s Indigenous peoples takes the process further and deeper by experiential re-identification of the whole self within the processual nature of the whole of Life. This occurs through visceral and spiritual relatedness with the land, with Earth, the Mother which feeds our bodies and souls, and by immersed belonging in the sacred cosmos (Mowarljarli in Leathem 1996). Organic expanded identification re-moulds a person from within the greater whole. Serge King writes of such complete identification as the action to move into the world of oneness (1988). Consequences and conscious uses of experiential oneness re-mould human consciousness and ways of being and relating. From this re-invention of the human are different ways of thinking which are at one with Life’s stream.

David Mowaljarli, an Elder of the northwest Australian Naranyin people, said to be the oldest continuous culture on the planet, shared and taught pattern-thinking

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6 The switch in orientation and focus is similar to that of Faraday away from energy sources to apprehend fields (Sheldrake 1994a:75).
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(Collins 1996). He called pattern-thinking, the Indigenous spiritual gift to the nation as it offers to non-Indigenous people a way of belonging through deeply identified relatedness with the locale which expands to the processes of country, Life and the cosmos (Leathem 1996). 7

**Pattern thinking** is Aboriginal thinking.

There is no big boss.

**Patterns are about belonging.** Nothing is separate from anything else.

The land is not separate from nature, people, the heavens, ancient stories.

Everything belongs in a pattern.

There is no ‘ownership’ in pattern thinking. Only **belonging**.

Money cannot buy bits of a pattern.

Power runs through a pattern. It cannot be sold. It is not separate from the pattern. (Mowarljarli in Stockton 1995:42 – 43; bold in the original).


Pattern-thinking reflects Life’s repeating patterns across scales of timespace which resonate holographically through associated symbols and artworks to deeper layers of the individual and collective psyche. 8 In the mythic level of consciousness everything is experienced as part of a pattern and exists in relation to everything else in an inseparability of relatedness experienced as belonging.

Wider social inculcation of pattern-thinking gives rise to New Dreaming which has been indicated/sung in traditional stories/artwork/songs where the ancestors speak of a coming time wherein all people experience their deep belonging (Mowarljali in Leathem 1996; Wanganeen 1995; Mackenzie 1990). A sense of belonging though indigenisation with Earth brings meaning, responsibility and purpose within the whole cosmos. Pattern-thinking, as thinking within living connectedness, can translate to

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7 In this context, the term ‘country’ as used by Indigenous people, means belonging place, place of inter-connected beingness in an inseparability of the law (of Life), the people and the land – not a nation state.

8 Thomas Kuhn implied the significance of inter-connected relatedness in his recognition of metaphysical representations or symbolic generalisations as the precursors and templates for mental, social structures ie paradigms. He also noted the skill of ‘acquired similarity relations’, a perceptual ability to apply patterns across diverse expressions (1970). This way of seeing is akin to pattern thinking.
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pattern-being and self-shaping as an aware pattern of being, through surrender to be shaped by patterns of Life.

**Life-centredness for collective organisation, democracy**

Life offers a model for democracy and more – Life, centred in collective governing, offers a processual mode of aligning with cosmogenesis. Life is purposefully centred and privileged by a focused cluster of cosmic powers in the processual direction of evolution. I suggest that democracy which is aligned for vitality and viability, will have Life at the centre/heart of governing,

- as model – modelled and structured on the interconnectedness of Life,
- as mode – as a dynamic process of living, a vortex drive of flowing inclusive interconnective, aliveness,
- as symbol and signifier – resonating metaphysical patterns of thought and behaviour,
- as a living template of ethics for governing,
- as a source of reverence and respect central to behaviours and criteria for decision-making and action taken in the name of all,
- as an inner state of being whilst participating,
- wherein governing becomes a sacred process.

**Subjectivity of inter-being**

Immersion in Life patterns experience, and reciprocally deep experience aligns with Life. Life’s patterns have various characteristics which can be directly experienced and be seen in living systems. Experiential interconnectedness embodies and expresses the qualities of Life and living systems which are able to expand without loosing coherent integrity in communication and relationship patterns. These patterns or forms of self-organisation can be applied to relatedness, be it inter-personal, wholistic self-government or institutionalised expressions. If embodied, experiential interconnectedness were the organising dynamic envitalising governing-within-Life, in iconic and enacted symbolism, in ceremony, in processes, in behaviour and most importantly within the participants, then it would entrain certain qualities, patterns and processes. These characteristic principles would include:

- centricity, emanated uniqueness in pattern of being with autonomy, actualization, irreversibility and transcendence,
- inner coherence,
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- connectivity within, throughout and with all,
- cohesion, within and out, social glue,
- interactivity – which is continuous, acting through many media including resonance of like, agitation of unlike and communion,
- subtle feedback through full and continuous communication and interaction between all parts,
- inter-communication – instantaneous and responsive to each and the whole,
- omni-centricity – co-existence of alive centredness of unique beings,
- inclusivity – experienced with a sense of belonging and open connectedness,
- supportiveness and mutuality working for the integrity of the part and the whole,
- synergy – engaging cooperation, collaboration, shared creativity
- synchronicity – operating with information, connection, meaning and events across time and space,
- integrity of coherence – patterns repeat across scales of size, time, space and consciousness without loss of structural and patterned integrity,
- adaptability and flexibility of living systems,
- wholism – where there is a dynamic holographic exchange between each and every part within the whole enabling interaction and transformation of patterns through changes occurring in the parts,
- omni-centricity,
- fluid aggregations of energy with transient power,
- dynamic and on-going transformation,
- harmony – among the different parts (like musical notes) and creating new harmonics and creative dissonance,
- co-creativity,
- deep embeddedness within and inseparability from the Earth and the inner and outer cosmos,
- embodiment, groundedness and practicality.

From these qualities of interconnected consciousness, beings and systems characteristics of interconnected government can be anticipated. These are:
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- wide inclusion of multiple perspectives which include awareness and consideration of the cosmos, planet, environment, all people and beings and coming and past generations,
- compassion as all beings are not separate, but intimately connected as self-as-other,
- direct, interactive participation,
- cooperation and cohesion – integrating diversity to unity while retaining uniqueness,
- inclusive and creative engagement of difference,
- universal responsibility, inseparability, wisdom,
- altruism, motivation of service to the benefit of all,
- balanced humility of being a unique part of an infinite, intimate cosmos,
- respect showing as self-discipline, deep attentive listening, authenticity in being and speaking, and responsibility to be fully present,
- egalitarian in assumptions and practice,
- materialism and technology in service to the well-being of all,
- wholism – inter-relatedness of belonging, responsibility and participation,
- collective and individual creativity leading to creative decision-making, transformation and transcendence of prior states,
- groundedness, with the Earth and body/mind, practicality,
- democratisation, inherent equality of experiential interconnectedness and ensuing embodied inclusivity
- harmony of parts within the inter-connected whole
- love, urge to come into unison with profound upholding of each individual’s uniqueness
- perception and perspective of the whole – listening with new sensitivity to the whole entity which has its own life and purpose

These attributes describe a living model of peace.

This I believe is the value of the women’s contributions as they shed light on ‘experiential’ Life and link how such experiences can be orchestrated and lived out as a form of unitive government – a form so different from present systems that the word government is not really appropriate as it evokes the old forms of association –
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hence I use the active present tense verb of governing for the not-quite visible processes that I am attempting to articulate. The women offer a bridge to Living government through elucidating process as experiential and indicate how the inner being experiences these processes. The description of non-hierarchical relatedness of autonomous but intimately interconnected wholes/centres echoes the images of tiers of circles, each an autonomous whole in terms of inner integrity whilst totally enfolded within the Wholes of humanity with the planet and the universe. There is no hierarchy or accumulation of power. For humanity, coordination of the whole occurs through alignment of consciousness which is synchronised within the whole, whilst each individual still concurrently expresses the vital authenticity of self.

Importantly in this possibility there is no framing of the individual or the collective as an oppositional and excluding binary – experientially both states of consciousness co-exist and so can be manifested in enacted form and processes. The skills and qualities for interacting effectively and affectively in an interconnected reality may become required for decision-makers.

**Pragmatic democracy of interconnectedness**

In government the above qualities appear as maximisation of difference in composition, input and perspective. Uniqueness is valued for its special voice and gift. Difference is valued as it is understood as essential for the unitive harmony of wholism, and for the engagement of creativity which serves all. In fact lack of diversity/difference in government signals concern and is an indicator of dysfunction. This conscious diversity extends to opening awareness to the cosmos, planet, environment, all people, beings and coming generations – and also connecting through time come the voices of the ancestors. Inclusion of multiple ways of knowing, receiving and perceiving enabled by experiential interconnectedness is part of the diverse whole-system processes. Egalitarianism, inherent in experiential interconnectedness, is the assumed base for practices. Empathy is a connector across beings, time and space. Collective and individual connectedness vitalised by the dissonance of difference, leads to creative decision-making and transformation – and on-going self and collective transcendence of present orders of inter-being. Creativity accessed by aware, active presence in a milieu of interconnection, is fast, efficient, fair, democratic and highly economic of time, energy and resources. Unseen influences, tenuous presences, flitter through the clear, creative space drawing forth
articulation beyond knowing. Universal responsibility results from the inculcation of inseparability and seeds wisdom. Groundedness within the body/mind and the living Earth contextualises processes within a greater cosmology and brings a practicality, where materialism and technology serve the well-being of all. As the democratic governing processes move from representation to direct, active participation many decisions are made close to the ground, the Earth, the community. In evolutionary progression, experiences of inter-being enable grounded democratic application and utilisation of tools of interconnected consciousness. The skills for interconnectedness, complexity, uncertainty, cooperation, mindfulness, cohesion and integration are valued, privileged, taught and encultured. The processes are known, practiced and mapped, and can be expand without loosing coherent integrity in communication and relationship patterns.

**Inter-being politics: the experience**

Examples of collective decision-making in an interconnected modality exist and are exemplified in sacred circles, Dadirri, the sacred hoop and Council of All Beings where the experiential depths are the links to self and the cosmos (see chapter 8). Subjective experiences of these processes reveal an embodied sense of connectedness, deep trust and responsibility while being present and grounded. There is a responsibility to being authentic, staying aware, to honesty and to holding connectedness as an embodied state. The interaction is characterised by authentic speaking, deep listening, respect and multi-layered attention. The state of aware, embodied interconnectedness where inner/outer cosmos is engaged, shifts the ego-as-the-centre-of-reference to contextualisation with an infinite Whole. Wholeness as indivisibility, is felt in layered experiences as the individual, group, humanity and beyond – like resonant echoes of nested fractals. At the personal level wholism is experienced as a sense of deep belonging and mutuality, supportive affinity, shared responsibility, active participation and aliveness. The experience is special and also very ordinary. Ethics of interconnectedness arise in the resonance of inter-being. Compassion, patience, generosity, kindness and practical wisdom are favoured in a state of being which recognises self-as-other in an understanding of living inseparably

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together in an expansion of time and space. Balanced humility of being a unique part of an infinite, intimate cosmos reinforces altruism as the motivation for participation and actions. Individuals hold interconnectedness as a state of being and the emanated field of inter-being.

**Power in inter-being**

Inter-being governing is not just an evolution of structure and processes – the very nature of power itself, the meaning of the ability to act, changes fundamentally. Power that arises from interconnectedness is distinctly different in nature and potential from power that arises from separateness and resulting hierarchy. Acting within inter-being stretches the imagination and being to glimpse, taste, intuit, profoundly different forms of interaction which, when they are in the flow of the possibilities of those states of consciousness (love and interconnectedness), evokes senses of fluidity-with, bursts of creativity, laughter, deep silent mutuality, instantaneous consequences over distance, intensity, and clarity – like the clear state of being both the bell rung and the sound together – being both cause and effect simultaneously and all happening in amazing deep intimacy with others.10

The experience of deep union offers some clues to the powers, potential and experience of inter-being governing. Deep connectedness – experienced as union with a person, tree, mountain, group, water, guru and whatever evokes the sense – can be the modus operandi of governing. The taste feels like joy and mystery and a deep peace of rightness – in the experience of being united with others in the depths of conscious living and simultaneously deeply awake and centred. I suspect that inter-being government can create exquisite joy – in absolute ordinariness of living as we can. The process is transcendentally creative. Houston describes the extraordinary confidence arising in the experience of being ‘in the flow’ (1999) – when the essence of a process or lineage sweeps you along choreographing your actions, molecules, mind, knowledge in spirit union and effortless doing. This is possible and desirable for fully democratic governing. And the energy stream conjoined, can be that of the unfolding cosmos wherein lies humanity’s most optimal futures. This is a choice. The leap to actualise inter-being governing comes from the expanded and borderless consciousness of

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10 One bell can sound all others in its frequency range.
embodied interconnectedness, as experienced in spirituality. Petra Kelly knew that new forms of governing came from within, an innerness that had (r)evolved.

The healing of our planet requires a new way of thinking about politics and about life. At the heart of this is the understanding that all things are intimately interconnectedness in the complex web of life. It can therefore be said that the primary goal of (Green) politics is an inner revolution. …  
Politics needs spirituality. (Kelly 1994:40; brackets added)

**Heart’s desires amplified**

In chaos theory, the patterns, (which are initially unseen within the milieu of interconnectedness), are amplified from the initial conditions. For inter-being governing these initial formative patterns are the deepest motivations in the hearts and minds of the participants. Senator Bob Brown articulates such connectedness and also the ethics of universal responsibility (2004). His words illustrate the qualities of love, empathy, service, capacity for wonderment (at creation), realism and intimacy with the lineage of humanity and Life.

The world needs leaders who care for all people; who can feel the misery of the disposed; who seek power for its use in allaying misery, discrimination and unfairness; who celebrate creation and abhor the weapons that make killing easy; who appreciate the beauty of the Earth and the diversity of life; and who while ever vigilant and active against criminality, go out at night to see the stars, as their forebears saw them. (Brown 2004:13)

Kuhn clearly indicated that a new paradigm never comes from those invested in the established order of the status-quo (1970). Hence new ways of doing democracy will not come from those people privileged at the centre of present forms of political power. The sources of transformation and the new consciousness may well come from ordinary people and particularly those at the margins of present forms of power. Often it is participants of the unacknowledged epi-phenomena who hold the living patterns of the future in their actions and in their hearts (Swimme 1995).

Such leaders will not come from the stock exchanges or oil corporations, they will come from the hearts of the people at large, borne up by the idea
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that respect for the Earth is the key to humanity’s future security, and so
to good government. (Brown 2004:13)

The new mythology for ‘our soon to be unified planet’, says Campbell, is found in the
heart and will be for the whole human race (1986:14, 19).

Engaged activism and spirituality

The processes of Life are greater than conceptual understanding – these cosmic
dynamics are experientially present, namely in people’s direct spiritual experiences.
The challenge in basing politics on the power of interconnectedness is to bridge and
ground this experiential state in the present oppressive and compressive ambiance of
adversarial power – to grow the alternatives in the fertile and somewhat protected
niches. Various people offer examples of this dynamic interface where living-in-truth
meets old power politics.

Power of living truth

Gandhi recognised satyagraha, truth force as the power from acting and speaking
from the centred power of being, in his life-long experiments with the powers of truth
as a spiritual practice (1983). This is the power recognised by the participant, Haley,
who describes the experience, conditions to enable it and how it can be applied in
interconnected governing. Victor Frankel demonstrated the pragmatic deep
acceptance of one personal power left to him in Nazi death camps (2004) – whatever
he was asked, knowing the answer could take him to the gas chamber, did not try to
second guess and always told the truth as he perceived/knew it– then he said, he could
accept the consequences.

A person emanating truth force can act as a social catalyst (Kelly 1994). They have a
radiance, an emanation, born of being centred in inner and outer alignment, and by
being present in the moment, are finely attuned to the historic moment. Rosa Parkes
provides a well known example of truth force; she was aligned with her deepest truth
both of social justice and simply being tired after hard work. Her personally
courageous and ordinary action sparked a social evolution in civil and racial rights in
USA. No doubt in the fearful moments of being thrown off the bus and arrested, she
knew only the truth of what-was-hers-to-do-in-the-moment and not the huge
consequences of her actions. One lessons is that we, as individuals, do not necessarily
know our role or significance the big picture – only how to be aligned with it and be authentically who we are and be present. Termites when physically separated from their community still know their contributing action which is aligned with the endeavour of the whole community (Sheldrake 1994:74). Personal truth gives the same alignment. This skill of deep inner listening, personal integrity and holistic alignment can be trusted to be applied within governing/operating of the Whole of human communities; the knowing is embodied by experiential interconnectedness – just as for the termite. Experiential interconnectedness is the coherer and tool of alignment – in the most ordinary of ways.

Haval saw firsthand the pragmatic relationship between living-in-truth and social transformation (1992). He says that the essential element for transformation comes from repeated, consistent, concrete action which serves truth and Life – even though it may seem inadequate and insignificant and of one citizen alone (1992:191). This, he says, sets in place a foundation which is not directly political but is essential for political transformation. The deeply radical change required happens within, which is thence social and political (1992:206). Political transformation is preceded by an existential revolution which sets up a parallel social structure, a ‘second culture’ self-organised to ‘live within truth’ and which will inevitably grow (1992:194). Haval comments that ‘all eventual changes in the system, changes we may observe in their rudimentary forms have come about … from below, because life compelled them to’ (1992:194). He states that when sufficient numbers of people are inwardly ready for social transformation then this collective state simply awaits a catalyst.

**Spiritual orientation and political action**

Teilhard foreshadowed the emergence of an engaged spirituality of working within the present machinations of social situations as part of the unfolding evolutionary dynamics of humanity (King 1989b). Spiritual orientation deepens the potential of political action. It also lends courage, passion, vision and responsibility to endeavours. Haval says the existential revolution (from the metaphysics of being) leads to a radical renewal of human relations rooted in the universe thence a moral reconstitution of society (1992:209). This, he says, brings a higher order of responsibility mirroring a new inner relationship with others and the human community. This relationship of being connected together within the universe, he
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suggests, will be reflected in social structures and processes ‘deriving from life, from a new atmosphere and a new spirit’ (1992:212).

Additionally, those who are empowered by spirituality know the vastness of reality being drawn forth by the shared future in concert with Earth. They have the courage and vision in the present milieu of despair and fear, to act for a future and world which is well beyond present political gamesmanship.

A spiritual leaning used to mean total inactivity … suddenly the only people who seem to have the courage to act are the deeply spiritual – because it’s only those who know there is another world, another dimension, who are not intimidated by the world of organised power.

(Shiva in Brown, 2004:10)

Contemporary spiritualities and post-materialist cultures are characterised by engaged activism for social transformation where personal development, spiritual transformation, ecological sustainability and honouring the feminine come together in social activism (Houston 2000:96). This, I posit, is a growing ground of being laying the pre-conditions for transformation to interconnected governing. Haval sees a model arising from citizens and communities which are small enough to have a living sense of solidarity and belonging and where ‘living in truth’ is articulated with a higher responsibility to all life (1992:212). He contrasts this with ‘living the lie’ in both totalitarian communism and consumerist materialism. The alternative, he claims, is ‘living the truth’ which arises in Life. This human enacted model of Life, he says, arises from an existential revolution of inner truth and authority which forms a social pattern of inner integration and outward interconnectedness. This, however, cannot be realised within the strictures of an out-dated form of democracy.

The systemic consequences of an existential revolution of this type go significantly beyond the framework of classical parliamentary democracy.

(Haval 1992:211)

Hill warns about social re-adjustments or substitutions within the present system aimed in reality to make it more efficient thereby sidestepping transformation and fundamental re-design of social institutions from another experience of consciousness (2001). Because the planetary crisis is so dire, these are not times for passivity or
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perpetuation a dysfunctional and demonstrably inadequate system based on the consciousness of disconnectedness.

Haval offers reflections on the enactment of living change as forms of organisation for government. He believes that from living-in-truth a rehabilitation of values of trust, openness, responsibility, solidarity and love will arise. These deeper and more open ways of relating will generate sudden and powerful feelings of genuine community which will be the foundation for a better, society and ‘deep democracy’ as a consequence of authentic social self-organisation (1992:210).

He suggests a flowing view of omni-centricity in the exercise of entrusted and temporally focused power. Haval believes that political and economic life can be founded on varied and versatile cooperation of dynamically appearing and disappearing organisations where the principles of internal organisation should be diverse (1992:212). Just like a dance is Haval’s suggestion that societies and governments organise around groupings which come in and out of existence (1992:210). These transient clusters of interconnections blink into action with no persisting structured hierarchy of power or control. Their authority and decision-making criteria are in concrete terms specific for a given situation which is their only significance. The structures, which enthusiastically arise from below as a consequence of genuine social self-organisation, are open, dynamic, small and alien to accumulation of power (Haval 1992:210). They derive vital energy from living dialogue addressing the genuine needs of open, informed, non-bureaucratic, dynamic communities from which they arise. Importantly this form of government, compelled by Life, has ‘the full existential backing of every community member’ – not as a static ideology but from dynamic authenticity and interconnection (1992:210). This foreshadowed society and brighter future comes from the existential revolution, which Haval states, is here around and within us (1992:214).

**Energy and engaged action**

Macy (1991), Peavy (1986, 2001) and Boulding (1988b, 1995) see a switch from despair and passivity to empowered activism through the release of grief at the state of the world. This re-orientation releases the free energy for personal, social and evolutionary transformation. Positivity, vision and acknowledged love for the planet and others releases energy to see desired options as possibilities making a person
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*action ready.* I suggest this re-orientation is happening through contemporary spiritualities, changing lifestyles and internalisation of authority, all of which have fundamental social and political consequences.

Experiential education is one route to social activism. John Seed realised some decades ago that intellectual understanding rarely changes individual and collective patterns of behaviour and that it is through experiential changes in consciousness that deep transformation lies (2004). Transformative experiences lead to action. Ball observed that transformative experiences, where deep levels of consciousness and Life are experienced, as being the personal turning point and source of conviction for environmental activists (1999). Goodwin links engaged action to deep emotional forces fuelling a person to act for the planet (2001).

Socially transformative actions take as many forms as there are people as individuals follow their own inner call and find they have the matched skills and opportunities. Tensing Palmo, an English Buddhist nun, had a radio with her in her twelve year retreat in a cave in Tibet. She listened to the BBC daily and sent love/spiritual energy to areas of suffering (pers. comm. 2002). While the effects of spiritual practice, embodied love and directed energy are demonstrable, HH Dalai Lama says that meditation alone is not enough to actualise social change although it certainly creates causes – action also is needed to catalyse and ground transformation (Kristin Weber 2002). Innayatullah gives a reciprocal warning not to focus exclusively on spiritual enlightenment and forget power structures of gender, class and race (1999e:5).

The Dalai Lama demonstrated the scope of a team approach when he encouraged his friend Petra Kelly to continue with her activism and ‘I will do your meditation for you’ (1994:xv). Their example shows the potential of generating and holding a space and pattern for action which others may be the agency of acting out. The cooperation coordinated through consciousness offers a potential process for governing. The Dalai Lama links spiritual practice and action to connection and positive social purpose – ‘we use the strength it gives us to serve our societies, then we have progress’ (Weber 2002). By chipping away at the ego and self-interest, feelings of love start to arise with ‘the radiant pulsing joy of life… when we begin to sense that unity, we start to feel compelled to make life better for other people and for animals and the earth’

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11 This example is referred to in chapter three.
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(Dalai Lama in Weber 2002). As Boulding states, for social transformation there must be sufficient love, trust and energy (1983:23).

**Cultural diversity, a driver**

The social reality of daily exposure to the planetary diversity of cultures and contexts expands awareness drawing attention beyond the tribal group and universalising from its codes. Presence of difference expands experiences and perceptions. Truly and deeply embracing diversity is a step in personal expansion of consciousness preparatory for a collective jump in consciousness (Houston 2000). Experiential inclusivity arising in embodied interconnectivity readies collective psycho-energetic patterns for the expansion and vitalisation gifted by diversification. Despite hegemonic dominance, multiculturalism is the reality in nations like Australia with an attendant plethora of spiritual expressions (Cahill et al. 2004). Inter-mingling of peoples and cultures opens space for inter-being and readies the psyche for a new unity which preserves and values individualised expressions. Compressing planetary forces encourage the integration of living diversity which drives evolution to the spiritual gift of creative peace.

As the collective mind-field unifies in a form of inclusive integration this transfuses actions in time and space manifesting in our social institutions which are concretisations within collective organising fields. So transformation in society and democratic governing which is informed by the embodiment of interconnectedness, appears with new forms of synergy, new connections, new skills, new processes, new integrations and constellations formed when activated by synchronicities and creativity. Perhaps in an oscillating tension between old and new political forms/patterns, this actualisation is orchestrated when the worlds of individuals, groups and humanity align and cohere in a concrete situation of authentic life needs – then together as one, what is possible?
Introduction

This thesis centralises on experiential interconnectedness which I name as sacredness. This vision of sacredness as the formative base of government focuses on the evolution of human consciousness through the experience of interconnectedness. It is the commonality of this experience and its qualities that I believe are the way forward for humanity and for forms of collective self-organisation, as expressed in governing in particular. This recognition includes the spiritual aspects of being human and the choices this invokes in the contextualisation of democracy. Primary to this way forward is the growing of consciousness, consciousness-in-matter, which is the pathway of all evolution. I suggest that experiential interconnectedness gives glimpses of inter-being which strengthens the possibility of allowing love, as a cosmogenic universal force, to orchestrate our collective and individual actions. The praxis of the women’s experiences in the data offers insightful bridges to recognise how the cosmos and Life are intensely and intimately experienced and how these experiences can be applied to new forms of governing. Grounding the possibilities which express the potentials and powers of inter-being, oneness, experienced in
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interconnectedness and which are later concretised into new institutional forms, requires new dreaming, language and symbols (some of which are identified in this research). To this end in this chapter I explore the possibilities and praxis identified in the data which are substantiated by actual examples of these implications. Other implied potentials I extrapolate from selected analysis to develop the envisioned possibilities into visibility. Theobald similarly impresses that in the urgency of these times it is the important to develop alternatives.

Positivity

Together with the growing Life-centredness spirituality identified by Cupitt (1998, 1999, 2003), I suggest that a global context is also permeating the psyche with planetary awareness contextualising individual speech and consciousness.¹ Teilhard predicted the emergence of a global, expanded, practical and active spirituality energised by zest though love for Life (King 1996) which he extrapolated from empirically identified processes of evolution (1969a). From the heart of pragmatic international politics Muller also posits a global spirituality (1982). Tacey identifies this emergence in young university students as eco-spirituality (2003a). Haval (1992), Kelly (1994) and Brown (2003), who are not armchair theorists but speak from the maelstrom of present politics, see a spiritual revolution as the way forward for governing and peace. These insights and trends, I suggest, are leading us to a Life sanctioned future; Life will support these emergent phenomena as they enact an expansive consciousness which has integrated a planetary perspective. I believe the very curvature of timespace and consciousness make the unity of humanity inevitable and are a source of great optimism despite the dark night of our collective soul. Life and Earth are allies for this orientation aligned with the unfolding direction of the universe. Our cooperation is however a choice.

I am not ignoring the enormous power of things such as economic rationalist fundamentalism capturing attention and forced into prominence and its very real effects. However, logically consistent with the basis from which I have developed this whole thesis (of interconnectedness and evolution progressed from common spiritual states), I suspect that this completely unsustainable trend will pass rapidly – probably

¹ The common recognition of the urgency to address global warming is a practical example of global thinking.
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killing itself off from its own autolytic toxic processes of greed and self-interest as seen in the collapse of several global corporations. There is no comparison of scale with cosmogenic forces which, I believe, will absorb and reconfigure them.

And also I am not ignoring the many violent conflicts occurring in which participants are coherent within their own perspectives, often based on religious affiliation. These intense current realities, I argue, are increasing the psychic temperature and compressive forces for an evolutionary phase jump which this time is less likely to be biological (but it could be) but wholly in consciousness. All of the individual and group states of consciousness, fields of thought, emotional energy and powerful real actions are contributing to the rapidly accelerating intensification and complexification of the noosphere. There is coming a tipping point, a state where the conditions will pop into an different organisation of planetary coherence (see appendix 1 on noosphere and global consciousness).

This new collective wholeness will, I suggest, arise from and mirror, individual wholeness expressed as integration, self-responsibility and authority which will then cohere through strengthening empathy, outward care and spiritual and political activism in extra-ordinary and ordinary ways. The personal centrification or wholeness will echo in epi-phenomena of group wholeness and unity such as the sacred circle which give the experience of consciously and actively being in the one mind which can hold the co-existent fields of many consciousness and presences. This unity is a living entity which radiates out to all, some of whom can sense the presence of this pattern of oneness. Such omni-centrity creates the conditions for creative, unitive governing from expanded states of consciousness which are pragmatically grounded in planetary realities.

As stated (in chapter four), politics is about power and democracy seeks to share power equably rather than concentrate it. Omni-centricity evokes the power of oneness and wholeness in which the very nature of power changes. Mowarljarli says there is power in the patterns, in Life’s patterns (Stockton 1995:42-3). The power is experienced in being-the-pattern – immersed in the being and expression of the pattern. Swimme endeavours to articulate powers of the universe expressing in human behaviours (2004). Teilhard contextualises the teleological processes of pervading cosmogenic powers, particularly as potentiated through conscious self-awareness. The power experienced and available in experiential interconnectedness is awake and
alive in this interactive cosmic habitat. The ability-to-do, power, expands to new
domains and dynamics through the power of oneness and its uses. The implications of
this expanded base of power derived from expanded consciousness I explicate further
through logical extrapolation and later, by building imaginative scenarios.

Praxis of experiential interconnectedness

In my exploration of the worldview/paradigm of interconnectedness as experiential
sacredness I have articulated and analysed the praxis of interconnectedness through
direct experience at the inner level, personal behaviour, interpersonal and social
interaction and how this plays out in the ‘real world’ encounter as an expression of
personal experience in the dissonance and resolution of competing paradigms, and as
social agency. From either a personally significant experience of interconnectedness
or repetition of the experience, a shift in paradigm occurs from a world seen through
eyes filtered by separateness to a world where all is inherently and intimately
interconnected.

To foreground discussion of social possibilities of actual praxis of experiential
interconnectedness, I critically analysed the phenomena of paradigms and the
processes of paradigm change drawing on the seminal of Thomas Kuhn (1970) and
others. Importantly, a paradigm is not merely a differing belief systems but an
internalised metaphysical structuring phenomenon which shapes the world perceived
(Kuhn 1970). Thus competing paradigms implies a much deep dissonance than
simply differing belief systems within the same metaphysical base.\(^2\) As a community
phenomenon a paradigm can be characterised by the map/pattern of relationships in
that community A well known historic and scientific example of a paradigm shift is
the acceptance that Earth revolves around the sun and not the other way around – this
took great effort for individuals to comprehend and its inculcation fundamentally
changed not just science but theology and human identity within the cosmos.

A clash of paradigms, as in the present world of crisis, offers a choice of worlds so
different is the perceptual base.\(^3\) Recognition of the ‘real world’ is a sticking point

\(^2\) An example of differing beliefs yet devolving from the same metaphysical base are discussions of the
left and right in traditional politics which are both still held in a shared paradigm and arise from the
same state of consciousness with the same metaphysical suppositions.

\(^3\) Crisis which the present dominant paradigm cannot solve is itself an indicator of a time of paradigm
change (Kuhn 1970). The basic choice between paradigms is never based on logic as the systems of
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which evokes the quantum question, albeit a chose – ‘whose world are you in?’ (Swimme 1990). The ‘real world’ questions of utopian thinking challenge the hegemony of the habituated forms of perception. Utopian political thinking and praxis pressures the present institutional design to extend closer to expressed ideals through intensifying the psycho-political context with alternatives and the question of under what environment will positive transformation thrive (Biaocchi 2001:44).

Praxis, as the integration and application of theory into actual practice and experience, is an in-vivo experiment in Life where possibilities (as implied in data) meet current personal and social reality. My focus is lived reality, namely, experience, as the formative source of social transformation. Of particular note is the praxis of the socio-political influence of the spiritual energy of consciousness particularly when amplified by coherence. From that basis I posit that the praxis of ‘deep democracy’ starts within the glimpse of unitive consciousness, which, in those moments can reorient the inner being and subsequent behaviours, actions, lived values and chosen styles of living.

It is important to note that the praxis of interconnectedness in intra and transpersonal events is invisible if viewed from consciousness still seeing a world of separation. For this reason many indicators of paradigm change and actualised trends go unremarked in the dominant narrative where transpersonal phenomena such as the real energy of thought or epiphenomena of unitive relationships have no place to exist, be seen, acknowledged or elucidated for serious attention. I reiterate some of these transpersonal experiences, behaviours, actions and their consequences as analysed in this thesis to set the stage to take this exploration further – not simply to substantiate an evolution in consciousness but to explore the implied possibilities and ways forward in personal life, as a society and species.

In chapters seven, eight and nine I examine in depth the praxis of deepening consciousness which expands awareness and fields of perception and knowing logic are inherently and mutually excluding, arising as they do from their own perceived structure of reality. The ‘gestalt switch’ between paradigms is based on aesthetics – the new alternative seems simpler, more appropriate and more beautiful. The jump in perception, which is ultimately a choice, is total and immediate. Kuhn noted that who first change paradigms are marked by a high tolerance of paradox and dissonance of creative tension, open intuitive thinking and ‘moral courage of daring’ as the newer perceptions and positions never arise in nor are valued by the echelons of the dominant establishment – quite to the contrary those publicly putting forward the new paradigm are historically ridiculed or worse.

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occurring in the interiorised interplay of dynamically competing paradigms occurring within a person and their subsequent resolution resulting in changed states of consciousness which merge into the interconnected Whole. The experiences I analyse in detail are centring as inner attention, love as an experiential state, and surrender, as the experience of integrating overwhelming inner and outer circumstances. Each of these processes produces an expansion of consciousness occurring in ordinary events in the ‘real world’ where a person experiences being deeply integrated within a much greater whole. The experience of interconnectedness is central because conceptualisation alone is insufficient to extend the sense of self to that of intimately belonging in an interconnected and wholistic reality. The praxis of consciousness and experiential awareness of its changing states is central to my examination as these interiorised processes are the locus of experiential sacredness, which, as I argue and illustrate, can inform the evolution of patterns of interpersonal behaviours and hence democracy.

The personal, inter-personal and social transformative power of these experiences of consciousness are documented and analysed by Montecucco (1997), Hagelin (1992) and Orme-Johnson (1987, 1988, 1992, 2001) in relation to their qualities of radiant coherence directly and measurably affecting other individuals, community behaviours and political actions. My own focus has been more on the power of these experiential states to re-order patterns of relationships because I believe there lies the indicated potential for re-organised democratic forms.

Praxis of inter-personal processes which create unity is identified wherein individuals come into the experience of being-at-one as a whole entity such as the sacred circle. This epi-phenomenon of inter-being is substantiated through similar processes of the sacred hoop (Gunn Allen 1986; Briggs and Peat 1999) and Dadirri (Ungunameer 1988; Atkinson and Ober 1995; Fredericks 1995a, b). Egalitarian and network patterns of relatedness are also seen dialogue processes (Bohm 1996, 2004), wholisitic dispute resolution (Mindell 1995), women’s ways of self-organisation

4 My analysis of these three processes in particular is not to infer the exclusion of other pathways some of which are also indicated in the data (eg service, intention, wholeness, radiance) and others which are documented and elucidated in detailed application such as mediation (Montecucco 1997; Davidson 2004a, b), prayer (Dossey 1995, 1996; Klingbeils 1980, 1993, 2001; Sheldrake 1994a), intention (Goswarmi 2000; Zukav 1990), thought (Yogananda 1993; White 1990; Hunt 1996; Sheldrake 1987, 1994a).
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(Masini 2001; Taylor et al 2000) and political activism particularly among young activist (Starhawk 2002; Morton 2000). Mostly these processes are outside mainstream attention.

A number of social and political examples reinforce the socio-political power of these intra- and inter-personal phenomena and give evidence that these events are real and happening. Individuals in the political sphere, such as Bob Brown, Vandana Shiva, Dag Hammarskjold, Vaclaav Haval, Mohandas Ghandi and the Dalai Lama, illustrate the power of conviction born of transpersonal experience to empower political agency and actualised transformation. As stated earlier, in the cases of India and Czechoslovakia the subsequent events caused not only a change in government but a change in the form of government from colonial and communist to democratic. The praxis of social catalyzation through authenticity and being tuned to the moment whereby social conditions ripe and waiting are ignited, are illustrated by the examples of Rosa Parkes and the Czech velvet revolution.\(^5\)

Actual signs that change is happening are also evident in religion. While it is religious fundamentalism which is getting political attention there are deep shifts in orientation towards increased attention to the spirituality of Life, the Earth and mysticism (Cupitt 1998, 1999, 2003; Fitzgerald 2000; Stockton 2004; Hay and Hunt 2000) and these trends are particularly strong among the young (Tacey 2003a, b; Heelas 2005a, b).

Evidence indicates that a significant proportion of people are authoring their own lives and are making conscious choices to live values in contradiction to the dominant mythology (Sutherland 1992; Hamilton 2003a, b; Ray and Anderson 2000). The shift in the source of authority has latent consequences for the nature of social power and organisation of power which predictably are pressured to re-organise in decentralised omni-centric relationships.

The quiet powerful shift in chosen lived values defines communities building the growth of a second culture. The existence of a second culture is identified by Haval from his pragmatic experience as vital for political transformation (1992). Similarly

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\(^5\) The dynamics and interactive tensions are mirrored in the building intensity in the noosphere where the catalytic event of an emotional and psychic nature (Teilhard 1969a, d; Global Consciousness project 2003), whose timing is ever the unknowable factor, will ignite coherence and expansion of psychic energy and consciousness.
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Kuhn states that the existence of an alternative paradigm held by a community distinguished by different values is a pre-condition for paradigm transformation (1970). Again it is particularly the young who are the harbingers of a deep and distinct cultural change. Their emphasis is on personal significant experiences (Tacey 2003a) and they value cooperation not competition, community not individualism, strong protection of the environment and not the accumulation of wealth (Eckersley 1999) The political praxis of the young is more likely to be typified by laughter at the old political players than engagement with political parties and systems. However this does not indicate lack of care but a rejection of a failed system seen as dysfunctional for the planet (Doherty 2004; Print 2004).

It is the praxis of changing perception to engage the ability to perceive whole systems and their inter-related internal dynamics which I believe offers fruitful understanding of the present crisis and conflicts occurring around the planet.6 Wholistic view is held with the concurrent ‘double vision’ (White 1998) which perceives both the increasing fragmentation and a contextualising, unified whole hence there is no denial or avoidance of the suffering and chaos in the expanded perspective. Within a wholistic and also evolutionary perception the contradictory trends of interdependence and integration co-existing with increasing conflict and fragmentation, are seen indicative of conditions accelerating to a ‘tipping point’ of whole system evolutionary transformation.7 Within this view the present intensifying complexity, clash of differences (often violent) and increasing psychic temperature can be recognised as conditions which both indicate and impel paradigm change (Kuhn 1970), macrophase change (Swimme 1990, 1995, 2004) and growth in consciousness and hence human evolution (Teilhard 1969a, d). The perception of dynamic and processual progress generates both the radical optimism (Teilhard 1969a, d; Swimme 1995) and the deepened experiential interconnectivity of compassion with the consequences of ‘action readiness’ for very pragmatic and purposeful social actions (Boulding 1995).

Praxis as centred in experience of interconnectedness aligns with deep layers of reality and Life. It is this expanded and deepened context in which I locate visions

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6 Beck and Cowan in their theory and applications about stages of consciousness exemplified in socio-political systems claim their research indicates that at present only about 10% of people are able to think wholistically (1996).
7 This is the exegesis of Teilhard in positing the unifying coherence of the noosphere.
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and practices for deepened democracy as touched in experiences of interconnectedness.

**Linking islands of sanity**

Edward Podvoll applies a wholistic approach to treatment of the fractured psyche associated with many forms of mental illness (2003). In addition to documenting the history of the illness he charts and links what he calls the ‘islands of sanity’ where the person has times of clarity and calm. He has found that giving conscious attention to these experiences gives the starting ground on which to build the path to sustained recovery by strengthening them and thereby reunifying the fragmented psyche. He says that it is in the spaciousness of these moments of awakening and relatedness that the person reconnects with reality.

I believe the same approach can be taken to social fragmentation and dysfunction. Acknowledging islands of experiential inter-relatedness serves to link, consolidate and strengthen these experiences as a pathway of expanded awareness of reality which can then reach the threshold of cultural perception thereby changing the consensual paradigm - by ordinary people in their/our minds and lives. The praxis of experiential interconnectedness has at its centre the individual as relational from which the praxis of government can be built as an organic process in concert with Life. Italian writer, Carlo Levi, encapsulated the potentials which honour the individual and inherent inter-relatedness in government.

> The concept of relationships without the individual has no life yet is at the same time the basis of the organic state … as a community of autonomies, yet all inter-related … groups of inter-related communities in which the individual can participate in complexity of life of the polity to allow co-existence, inter-relatedness and autonomy. (Levi 1982:240)

**Oneness-in-action**

I believe the experience of oneness through the vehicle of interconnectedness opens multiple forms of human activity to tremendous possibilities. Oneness opens domains of power available from inter-being, inter-thinking, inter-communicating – utilising the inherent intimacy of existence which I mean in a very pragmatic sense and not poetically. If such interconnected intimacy becomes the default position for social
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reference then new forms of power become commonplace – as they are now but are still not acknowledged, developed or utilised. Then, as Houston comments, what is the potential of ‘the will and creativity of a united people’ (2000:165). And importantly, what is the creative organisation and urge of a people not united by sameness but by the envitalising and evolutionary energy released by drawing together difference, resonant similarity, diversity and dissonance into a dynamically integrated whole.

What if science

Ravetz elucidates the science of ‘what if?’ (2000). This pluralistic and divergent methodology is applied in the face of complexity, uncertainty and clear knowledge of the costs of a narrowly prescribed focus as the old systems fail. What-if science is deliberately inclusive of many contributions outside orthodoxy operating at the margins with alternative visions which are inclusively synthesised via sympathetic resonance into a finer order of harmony (Funtowicz and Ravetz 1993). Drawing on this research genre, I explore the powers of oneness implied by analysis of the data. What if we deliberately and actively utilise our knowledge of how to inter-connect deeply?

What if we centralise our inherent intimacy into our culture and maximise opportunities to engage the powers of interconnectedness?

What if we used all possibilities and capabilities available as human beings to set good government in place?

What if by working with sacredness, symbols and innerness, a metaphysical activation occurs to enable good government for the benefit of all? What can be possible?

The sacred is all inclusive and in the experience of sacredness there is no exclusion. In-the-experience of sacredness is a living model of pluralism, peace and unity.

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What if we extrapolate possibilities of the powers of oneness in present tense to support their recognition and resonance.

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Pedagogies of interconnectedness and love – what if?

As discussed earlier the major direction for humanity is in the domain of consciousness so pragmatically education for the growth of consciousness is logical. Life is probably the ultimate educator as its lessons are attuned to magnetizing future. Yet the way forward can be enabled by formal education which expands consciousness can open the way for the uses of Oneness and is arguably preparatory and attuned to these times of phase jump. A fundamental base of modern democracy is education, public education. In the west, education for growing the capacities of consciousness is occurring mostly outside institutional settings. Formally addressing and exercising expanded unitive, planetary and cosmic consciousness as embodied states of being, is occurring in independent literature, conferences, gatherings, common conversation and cross-pollination of spiritual practices and sometimes in the much disparaged explorations of the New Age. Some UN training programs display an openness to techniques which expand consciousness (Houston 2003).

Intentionally evolving our consciousness offers potentials through dreaming our selves on, by increasing capacities for love, and applying the powers of love, empathy and creativity to participation in the co-evolutionary next step of unification with each other and Earth.

Education for co-evolution appears to broadly need to:

- educate the imagination or people have great difficulty unshackling their minds from the strictures of the present social forms and institutions,
- educate about the universe, macrophase change and how the dynamics of the universe are experienced within each of us as we are at the creative edge of unfoldment,
- educate about consciousness,
- educate about love and processes to expand the capacity for love.

Pedagogies for developing the experiential skills of consciousness, love and interconnectedness cover many known experiences and understandings which are amazingly absent from present education. These approaches based on recognition of the interconnectedness of reality have new empirical and theoretical bases for research paradigms, methodologies, ontologies and axiologies. New epistemologies, to be relevant, address and meet the conjunction of the experiential and multiple
sources of knowing and knowledge. They include the phenomenology of interconnectedness, consciousness, thought and love as lived experiences and energies as it is living beings who can decode the patterns of consciousness (Walleczek 1993). Once developed, some validation using rationalist approaches may be utilised to check correlations but the essential basis is deeply experiential human abilities and energetics.

Teilhard (1969b), Huxley (King 1996), Aurobindo (King 1989b) and Sorokin (2002) all advocate the teaching of human energetics and its further research. The field of study has enormous implied applications for human development and organisation. Montecucco sees teaching children to achieve coherent states of consciousness as a vital step to human evolution (1997). Sorokin established the Centre for Research on Creative Altruism at Harvard which operated for 10 years. The Institute for Unlimited Love is one contemporary example of research into love (Post 2002a).

**Expanded perspectives**

Greater perspectives enabled by interconnectedness as a formative knowledge base are found particularly in science and mysticism. The story of the universe in terms of cosmic unfoldment is becoming a new mythology (Campbell 1986; Swimme and Berry 1992). Education for planetary awareness, which exists to some degree already, is augmented by education for deep experiential identification with Earth where the responsibility of ensuing planetary citizenship feeds into all decisions. With the growing pre-conditions for a human evolutionary phase jump, new psychological archetypes or shared collective mind-patterns are emerging bringing new perceptions of ontology (Campbell 1986). Education for the development of consciousness, love and imagination will be highly valued. Thought experiments of the disciplined imagination, like Einstein’s *Gedanken*, will expand utopian thinking to a science. Expanding identification to engage the imagination of the Whole is one real possibility. Bohm suggests that identification with the imagination of the Whole can work through alluring resonance and that the visualised response and the actual response are then the same action of consciousness (Weber 1985:211).

Einstein provides a powerful example of the potential and social significance of expanded consciousness of one individual. When Einstein upturned accepted understandings of time and space as linear invariants, he was twenty five years old,
had no (conventional) data, no experiments and no university education. He used the powers of expanded consciousness and deeply focused attention to intimately perceive physical reality. ‘He went into his own visceral movements – and paid attention to what was going on within’ (Swimme n.d.). Einstein expressed his clear sight of physical reality mathematically as gravitational equations which changed the perceptions of reality in western science still yet to fully influence society.\(^9\) Similarly, McClintock demonstrated the expanded knowledge available from merging consciousness with another life-form (Kellar 1983) – so what may be revealed from immersed connectedness with HIV or bird flu virus?

A pedagogy appropriate for these time and the future would expand the skill of consciousness. Skills which expand human consciousness are enhanced by deep connectedness with the natural world fostering experiential belonging among the planetary community. Acknowledging and teaching multiple ways of thinking confirms intuition and pattern-thinking. The ability to transfer the locus of the awareness to other spaces and beings enhances the ability to think like water, a mountain, virus, planet or whoever. To then open, think and speak out of that space, can be taught. Being a space for the voice of other beings is the process already used in the Council of All Beings (Flemming and Macy 1988a, 1988b) and oracular traditions. Having sufficient awareness of thought enables the power of consciously choosing beliefs, perspectives, perceptive filters, and cognitive alignment which enhances the intentional capacity to move between worlds and actively stimulate and/or track resonances (Serge King 1988). The ability to switch the inter-dimensional field of attention with a laser focus or wide awareness opens the scope of conscious interaction. Tools such as the labyrinth enhance the ability to centre, to come deeply into yourself and be, know and gift from the unique constellation of consciousness that is you. Also the ability to go empty - into the clear space of creative wisdom and service to Life – is important to social cohesion, development and governing. So too the ability to sit centred in the fire of overwhelming complexity, intensity, uncertainty and unknowing – yet be present and awake. All of this assumes sufficient awareness and psycho-spiritual energy to access these skills which Patanjali claimed are inherent in everyone (Bailey 1994). These are some of

\(^9\) Einstein had great personal difficulty accepting the implications of his own findings (Swimme 1997).
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the processes and skills which can inform education relevant for an intense and
wholistically creative future. These are also the skills and knowledge base for
democratic collective self-government based on experiential inter-being.

In deep democracy based in interconnectedness, centring to one’s own truth is
empowered, and once that truth is known its articulation enriches the whole with its
unique perspective. Belenky advocates that educators can help people ‘develop their
own authentic voices if they emphasise connection over separation, understanding
and acceptance over assessment, and collaboration over debate’ (1986:229). This
occurs well in learning cultures of mutual respect, valuing knowledge that emerges
from first hand experience and encouraging students to evolve their own patterns and
process of pursuing knowing. Empowerment for deep democracy includes knowing
ways of participation, wherein the processes of shared self-governing are embedded
in the culture and practiced in all levels of education. These processes are inclusive of
all – teachers, students, parents, administrators, cleaners and rubbish collectors.

Compassion

Compassion is the inability to bear another’s suffering (Dalai Lama 2000). Willis and
Carden found the pedagogy for deep democracy becomes inseparable from
compassion (2004). Compassion and empathy are central to pedagogies of love and
interconnectedness which are nurtured in inner and cultural environments which
value and cherish them. These dispositions of the soul are basic to human nature
(Ekman 2004:155-6) and are enhanced in the experience of embodied
interconnectedness. To develop and sustain empathy and compassion, the processes
of deep attention and attunement – tuning within, tuning to each other and to any
being in the universe to bring at-onement - are useful educational pursuits. Learning
and teaching attunement seems obvious for human advancement, as contrasted with
fragmenting competitiveness. Repetition of this experience of focussed inter-existent
alignment actualises these pathways in the brain and grounds the experiential state of
compassion as the default position of being (see chapters two, seven and nine). The
present education system can transform to be relevant to the future, serving positive
directions of humanity and equip people for a world of increasing connection by
maximising experiences of inter-being and authenticity.
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The further development of compassion moves with the present direction of evolution. Swimme notes Life itself is moving towards greater connection and emotional commitment and onward to comprehensive compassion to all and the whole (1995, n.d.). He identifies comprehensive compassion as an epi-phenomenon in evolutionary dynamics which are the root of organisation of life on Earth. As Campbell notes ‘the quality of mercy, empathy and compassion is also a gift of nature, late to appear in the evolution of the species, yet evident already in the play and care of their young of higher mammals’ (1986:15). Swimme suggests choosing to act with the future through the use of imagination to strengthen compassion. Education can proactively work with this stream of Life.

Love

Allurement, as attractive affinity of love to unite and give joy, is a power of the universe and so expands the inter-being environment to a cosmological context (Swimme 2004:2). Teilhard believed that a key way to evolve human consciousness was by using the imagination to expand our capacity for love (1969:292). Naess noted a changed sense of identification occurring through compassion and empathy as separation between self and other transformed to connection (1988). Berry reiterates that humanity, Earth and the cosmos are within an interactive whole and so all are our immediate community - all beings, particularly self-aware humans, are moving the whole entity unto its own self-awareness, impelled by the evolutionary dynamics of subjectivity, differentiation and communion (2004; 1990:4). Sorokin detailed the many ‘ways and powers of love’ to develop altruistic creativity and apply it to social transformation (2002).

Expanding our present capacity for interconnectedness and love seems central to human progress. Many modes of being can create an expanded, interconnected state of consciousness – some are very deliberately chosen and can be harnessed to contribute to the evolutionary journey of humanity – then as Teilhard states man will have discovered fire for the second time (1935).

Inter-knowing

Houston predicts that in scholarship the principles of discontinuity, simultaneity and multiple associations will become elevated over those of continuity, uniformity and repeatability wherein resonance becomes increasingly important (1996:5-6). In
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education shaped by interconnectedness as reality, the various ways that thought can be generated and strengthened are known (White 1990:43). In the phenomena of inter-knowing, all knowledge is available. The skills of magnetic emptiness, navigating through intentionality, focus and awake surrender (immersed beingness in Life’s stream) accesses knowledge as timely and required. These are some methods to open to the space and experience of inter-knowing which is instantaneous, total and authoritative (Grandpierre 1997; James 1902). Any knowing emerging can be tested empirically for verification however the means to access this knowing utilises methods of an interconnectedness epistemology wherein once any thought is created then it is available to all (Hunt 1996:102, 134). This awareness diminishes possessive ownership of ideas and creates the ground for a renewed culture of open scholarship, predictably a selfless altruistic culture. Such pedagogies are inherently democratic with the open accessibility to knowledge enabled by the state of interconnectedness.

The open nature of thought expands axiology. Because thought is not private or contained, there is also an ethical responsibility for personal thoughts entertained. The understanding that we create the future every moment from our deep inner being and actions expands ethics to the personal and social consequences of our minds and thoughts. Ethics and social responsibility become then intimately relational and immediate. Cultural recognition of the personal dream impacting the collective dream fosters the social environment to maintain the enculturation of inner dynamic peace and institutionalisation of a culture of peace. Reciprocally this feeds the soul and empowers each person (Boulding1988a). Capacity for dreaming/creating is affirmed together with the energetics of actualisation.

Teaching the science and skills of experiential and transformative methodologies holds a key to education for expanded consciousness and love. The students are ready and the times are ripe. Tacey’s first year university class in spirituality, which emphasises sharing significant and transformative experience, is immensely popular

10 White describes ‘thought-forms’ as energetic embodiment of the idea on which a person dwells and which then takes on external existence independent of the thinker. Thought-forms are ‘real but non-physical energy configurations, produced by human beings - and exist objectively outside the human beings who produce them’ (1990:44). They are a psychic force which mediates between matter and consciousness.

11 White claims that ‘mind energy interacts with the physical energy matrix sustaining the planet in space and can influence it’ both positively and negatively depending on the vibratory quality of the thoughts (1990:44). Hence the emphasis of Indigenous peoples on loving and respecting Earth, recognising our mutual interdependence, and on maintaining Life increase ceremonies.
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particularly with young students (2003a, 2003b). Buscaglia found that when his class on love was opened for enrolments, the 600 places were full in 2 hours with 200 more on a waiting list (1997). Both of these senior academics encountered extreme resistance from colleagues to their courses. However, the students are waiting for new education and there are communities that are ready to accept and support expanded pedagogies (Hamilton 2003a, 2003b; Ray and Anderson 2000). This readiness in the population does not have to be generated or manipulated, it awaits response.

Talloires Agreement and social education

Of the four major modern institutions of western societies (political, religious, industrial-commercial and universities), Berry emphasises the role of universities to address the scope of changes required for sustainable living because of their role in advancing education and humanity through expansion of knowledge (1999). The Talloires Agreement is an actual example of change to a global perspective. Now ratified by over 500 universities worldwide, it is a major link between universities and sustainable living. Established in 1990 at Talloires, France, the Agreement recognises the pivotal role and responsibility of universities in addressing planetary, environmental destruction. The Talloires Declaration states that,

“Universities educate most of the people who manage society’s institutions. For this reason, universities bear profound responsibilities to increase the awareness, knowledge, technologies, and tools to create an environmentally sustainable future. (1994)"

The Talloires Agreement aims to embed ecological principles, namely the patterns of Life, into the educational culture and all university courses. To-date, the implementation of the Talloires Agreement has mostly focused on accelerating efforts to teach environmental management specialists and ‘green campus’ campaigns. However, addressing the consciousness, the psyche of economic growth, consumption and control, which is driving planetary destruction, is neglected. Additionally, sustainability is not enough to address the global problematique (Innayatullah 1999b), as new ways of thinking, knowing, being and relating, albeit new forms of consciousness, are required. Essentially, this means that the recognition of the interconnectedness of living dynamics, becomes a foundational understanding
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suffusing all areas of knowledge, decision-making and action such as law, economics, science, politics, education.

Experiential exploration of Life’s processes – such as interdependence, synergy, communion, uniqueness – creates the conditions for a shift in consciousness which is consistent with the profound interconnectedness of reality. University educators have the opportunity and arguably the responsibility to develop pedagogies which enable experiential interconnectedness and apply this state of consciousness to the redesign of social institutions. There is a pedagogic imperative to develop expanded epistomological frameworks and ensuing research methods and practices appropriate for the consciousness of interconnectedness, Oneness.

Paradigms, language and symbols

Oneness brings its own paradigm, language and symbols. Every paradigm has its own mythology/story, symbolism and language reflecting its formative state of consciousness (Bohm 1990; Kuhn 1970; Eliade 1960, 1963; James 1902; Teilhard 1969a, d). White notes that when consciousness changes then thought changes, which in turn changes behaviours which then change societies (1990:24). Paradigm change equates to a revolution, so different is the perception of the world, sources of authority and new learning opened (Kuhn 1970:92, 111, 136). Paradigm transformation, according to Kuhn, occurs when there is an alternative available (1970:77). Similarly, Haval stresses that political transformation occurs with the existence of a ‘second culture’ (1992:192).

Both scientific and political revolutions are community based activities which emerge during a sense of malfunction (Kuhn 1970). A new paradigm is first discovered by scrutinising the changing community structure where the nature and symbolism of the emerging paradigm is revealed in the map of the relationships of its members, and how its sub-groups communicate with each other (Kuhn 1970:176, 179). This impression foreshadowing the structure of an emerging paradigm comes before ‘the rules’ (1970:46). The transition involves the formation of a field when the group members take the foundational reconstruction of group commitments for granted (1970:178, 181). Paradigm shattering emergence begins by finding the responsible group or community exhibiting a new set of relationships (1970:180) and ‘the process by which the community reforms into a single group which can then solve the current
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crises’ (Kuhn 1970:153). So the paradigm of inclusive oneness is revealed in epi-
phenomena demonstrating interconnectedness. Social epi-phenomena such as the
ways of organising of women (Masini 1999a), some activists (Starhawk 2002) and
young people (Morton 2000) reveal egalitarian network patterns of relationship which
mirror characteristics of democratic ideals.

Capra emphasises the constructing power of language to hold a world in place by
capturing perception and funnelling attention (1992:123-4). He indicates the pitfalls
of using misleading terminology, in particular he warns about the language of
hierarchies associated with patriarchal thinking, societies and consciousness (Weber
1985:237-8). Oneness requires its own language which predictably will reflect
coherence and resonance, rhythm and flow, and other descriptors to articulate a fluid
co-participatory, co-creative reality. Jungian academic, David Russell, advocates
moving nouns into verbs to interpolate flowing interactive relatedness and the
subsequent modes of being, thinking and seeing (2003). Bohm says the language of a
paradigm of experiential interconnectedness expresses the perception and enactment
of wholeness as it is experienced in both daily detail and a global nature (1985:98).
He suggests that from within this experiential immersion is total listening from
embodied personal wholeness to the greater wholeness.12

Walleczek notes that it requires a living being to decode the patterns of consciousness
(1993). Patterns of experiential interconnectedness as a state of consciousness will
then encode language. Coherence as a state of consciousness expresses the experience
of melding/coming-together as a synchronised phenomenon of inter-being
consciousness, choreographed by the cosmos. Resonance is excitation, activation and
sounding across spheres of Life via patterned similarities. Choice becomes a laser-
like action of conscious attention which navigates, focuses and magnetises among
probabilities. Subtle allurement, tendencies and synergy are spoken into
commonplace evocative recognition. The language of unitive inter-relatedness evokes

12 New mythology, language and symbolism are drawn from going to the essence of embodied
experience. For example French feminist, Luce Irigaray believed that the signification of patriarchy
was so deeply inculcated she advocated that to express the authentic patterns of ‘woman’ to go deeply
into the body and generate from the essence of the body entre femmes, wherein the embodied symbols
of women-as-women are co-resonated. These patterns, she believed, are coded on love rather than the
power of dominance (1986).
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the multi-faceted expansive experience of interconnected oneness. Matthew Fox alludes to this capacity in his ‘definition’ of mysticism.

My approach is non-linear and best understood in a circle, each with definitions feeding into it. By exposure to each of these ‘definitions’ the reader will begin to feel and make connections with his or her own mysticism, for the purpose of defining mysticism here, is to elicit the mystic within each person. (Fox 1988:48, italics in the original)

Symbols

Preceding new signifiers in language of everyday Oneness come congruent symbols. Kuhn noted that ‘symbolic generalisations’ come before the paradigm or its language. Campbell says the vitality of symbols speaks across dimensions and activates participation in the realisation of evoked/resonated consciousness (1986:15). Metaphysical symbols have deep and powerful effects on the individual and the collective mind-fields (Eliade 1960, 1963; Arguelles 1989; Scott 1989). Indigenous elders relate the power of symbols to configure consciousness to socio-political control of the society and power.

In political and social action there is a successful mastering of symbols, with the prospect that in the end power is to those who control the symbols. (Stockton 1995:20).

New symbols of connectedness reflect and activate cohering imagery and mythologies of connectedness. Houston suggests that circles will be common in future social symbolism (2003). Artness calls the circle, a master pattern (archetype) for unity and wholeness (2004). Michell notes that when standing within Celtic stone circles, power which facilitates integration and wholism is viscerally felt (1975). This is also the experience felt in a sacred circle (described in chapter eight).

From the data I add that circle and sphere symbolism also evoke equality. The symbolism, seen and enacted in the visioning ceremony, repeats circles. Swirling circles, concentric circles, inter-flowing circles which are associated with Life, interconnectedness and transformation, recur in descriptions of the experiences, processes and form, together with the image of Earth. Circle symbolism was enacted in the felt but wordless experience of being-together-as-one. The sensate feeling of
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surrender, associated experientially with the directional streaming of Life and represented through subjective imagery as a DNA chain/column swirling, was a gentle physical thing and resonated the centring experience of the labyrinth walk. Sacredness at the centre of governing was symbolically enacted through the visioning ceremony occurring in the designated sacred place in government, the mediation room where the women sat and danced in a circle in sacred timespace.¹³

Thousands of candles placed by people in a large circular peace symbol on the ground/Earth in front of parliament house organically and symbolically enacted the wish of people for unitive peace. Fire, the element of transformation, carries the inner light of each soul participating, to the tiny and many flames, drawing forward transformation. The sacred Koori fire keeps alight the alchemy of transformation in the national soul.

**Earth image**

In debriefing astronauts, Houston noted the deep spiritual effect that seeing blue-green beautiful Earth suspended in the blackness of space, had on them (1996). This highly evocative sight, which Russell calls the ‘spiritual symbol of our times’, evoked a wave of love and a shift in perception, affection and relationship with the Earth and humanity (1983:19).¹⁴ Lovelock’s thoughts mirror this expansion of perspective.

> When I first saw Gaia in my mind, I felt as an astronaut must have done as he stood on the moon, gazing back at our home, the Earth. The feeling strengthens as theory and evidence come in to confirm the thought that the Earth may be a living organism. (Lovelock 1988:205)

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¹³ The actual meditation room is situated in the north-west of the Parliament House building. This is the energetic place of sacred law and sacred enactment of the Star Maiden Wheel (Reagan 1980). The room is precisely adjacent to the large pyramid at the centre of the vesica pisces architectural shape of the Australian parliament. The vesica pisces in sacred geometry is the sacred marriage of the mundane and the divine (Pennick 2001). Like the Great Pyramid at Gaza, the parliamentary pyramid is angled at 51° 51’; the angle of the sacred circle in the square – the metaphysical geometric shape of unitive transformation. The whole building is sub-terranian and internalises the four sacred directions meeting at the centre, the creative void, the ever-flowing black marble pool directly under the pyramid. The architecture maximises light and spaciousness, and many sky-wells and tranquil garden islands offer spaces of stillness, openness and nature. Participants commented that the building awaits enactment of the sacredness-within and interconnectedness in governing.

¹⁴ Edgar Mitchell, an early moon walker, described our Earth as ‘a beautiful, harmonious peaceful looking planet, a deep sense of home, of being, of identity … instant global consciousness’ (Russell 1983:18).
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Beyond seeing Gaia as the co-operative and finite source of materiality, Lovelock recognises that the Earth is sacred and we share a relationship as alive inseparable beings together in a process of co-evolution. Lovelock advocates seeing Gaia, as a whole living being providing a template and model for relationships (1988:207). This relationship, he says, is loving and mystically ‘so deep that it cannot be articulated’ (1988:207). Deep relatedness with Earth also reinforces personal responsibility for the present state of Earth in that we are each accountable for the destruction through our actions and use of technology.

The image of Earth through its evocative effects offers direction in terms of metaphysical symbolism. Kuhn notes societies do not change their paradigm through proof or logic but a sense of aesthetics and appropriateness (1970:94, 154-5). It is therefore important to strike ‘the inner mystic chord of emotion’ not simply present facts (Wilson in Swimme 1997). As an image, the planet has enormous power to act as a unifying symbol with all its emotional, non-rational associations – the shared place of belonging, the source of material existence, spiritual alignment and companion in the journey of unitive and creative evolution. This powerful sight engages the wholeness of the body, mind, spirit, heart. Teilhard noted the important role of emotions in unification of humanity (1969a), just as Polak identified the power of societal future imagery (1953).

Earth, directly, offers the experience of inter-being and hence belonging (Mowarlarl in Collins 1996 and in Leathem 1996). Like all such unitive experiences, spiritual connection with Land and the Earth evokes a sense of inseparable, shared belonging which touches the deepest sensed knowing of truth (James 1902:407, 414). Deep land connection offers reconciliation through alignment the Land and within the experience of unity, oneness, where ‘nature organises the relationships’ (Rose 2004:208).

So what if we indigenise? What if we govern from Earth indigeneity?

**Earth democracy – what if?**

A potential use of oneness is the conscious intentional alignment with the Earth, by those entrusted with collective decision-making, at the time of decision-making. The standing electromagnetic wave around the Earth vibrates at 7.5 hertz. This vibrational field is our pervading, energetic environment within which we go about our daily
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lives. It is also the frequency of human brain waves when a person is in the coherent state of deep meditation, the intense flow of creativity, the alpha dreaming phase of sleep and a state of compassion (Grandpierre 1997; Peat 1997; Hunt 1996:63-4). All such human experiences are characterised by an embodied sense of interconnectedness - being a part of a cosmogenic picture.

Earth’s shape is also a pragmatic, as well as symbolic, factor. Her sphericity is significant because the very curvature compresses enmeshment, contact and feedback on itself of humanity and of thought on though in the inter-penetrative, inter-thinking milieu of the noosphere which accelerates the forces for hominisation through integration of the individual and of the collective (Teilhard 1969a). Sheldrake emphasises structure, both internal and external, in the coming-into-being of form choreographed by morphogenic fields (1981). Earth’s sphericity brings humanity collectively to a state of wholeness and the wholeness is resonated in consciousness by Earth’s image from both cosmic space and the inner space of clear mind.

Deep Earth relatedness is means to evoke the feeling of unity among groups, cultures and races. Relating to Earth in a deep and sacred manner offers the possibility to meet respectfully, whatever the ideologies and belief systems, thereby enhancing cooperation in sacred space. Through attunement to place, landscape, sacred sites, the whole Earth is aligned with humanity as a whole single phenomenon, and is aligned with the direction and dynamic force of evolution and Life. So the potential is to indigenise with the local place, wherever that is, to be present and deeply inter-relate with the heart, with extended sensitivities, with mind-shaping connection which is strengthened by information from science and Earth images, and to be organised by the encompassing coherence of humanity-and-Earth as an energetic field. From such connection decisions will never exclude the effects on the Earth and all her children (Reagan 1980) now and into the future.

Earth democracy utilises deep connection with the Earth, to connect with each other via heart and creativity in a dance of expanded wisdom, compassion and peace with no ego dominating. Additionally, deep Earth belonging enables the voice of the Land and all Earth beings to be heard, allowing her to educate and bring us forward to wholeness and within wholeness. Healing of the planet can be enhanced by listening
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to her about clearing of toxins and other matters. From within the experiential interrelatedness of the greater whole answers and resolutions can be found from the integration and reconciliation available within such unity; this can be applied to Earth healing, resolving conflict and making peace (James 1902:414).

What if democratic decisions are made in a state of consciousness aligned with the Earth? I suspect that decisions which exacerbate global warming would be impossible, they simply would not occur from that state of inter-being with Earth.

The context from which the present system of government operates is a closed system whose scope and context are which is far too small. The appropriate, and arguably only context for self-organising governing (democracy), is human consciousness in inseparability with Earth and the cosmos. As a statement of the obvious human communities are not separate from their habitat. Western culture needs to expand awareness to deep identification and belonging with the natural environment and our planet – and this expansion is happening for many eg the young (Tacey 2003a, b; Eckersley 1999). Additionally the whole cosmos is our habitat in a very direct way and is implicated in, and responds to, our actions and decisions.

The context of Earth and cosmos is accessible through the many forms of spirituality where in-the-experience of interconnectedness is profound belonging with the security and responsibility this experiential state of consciousness brings.

Experiential interconnectedness thus has the potential to improve our relationship with the environment through experiencing our deep inter-being with all living and non-living on Earth, and understanding that our destiny is inextricably tied with the well-being of Earth. From that experience our mode of relating with Earth becomes respectful and at times sacred. Once aligned, then responsibility is taken for the local, the personal and the global. With a similar recognition of Earth connection, Vandana Shiva advocates the practical application of such connection with the land as the basis for a new Earth democracy orchestrated through a shared sense of belonging and responsibility (2000).

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15 White discussed an intimate relationship between human mental focus and the planetary state (1990:45). Berry emphasises the direct interactive intimacy implicated in interconnectedness at all levels (2005).

16 Brenda: I thought of how we must encourage a sense, in ourselves and others, of the real Cosmos we live in - our real Habitat - in its local, planetary, and cosmic dimensions. We need to regain a Larger Picture, and a feeling of belonging here.
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A possible, practical step for the implementation is the establishment and alignment of a site specific structure wherein the structure is oriented and proportioned to synchronise with the optimal energy patterns of the location, Earth, galaxy and cosmos in its physical form and energetic resonance. In Australia we already have such a place for governing – which awaits the eyes and consciousness to see.

One potential result of identifying experientially with Earth and opening psychically to the metaphysical influence of the whole Earth image, is a change in significance of the nation state as land relatedness and planetary identification become the norm rather than national identity. Through intention and states of consciousness open to be suffused in Earth energies, the natural wholism of land forms such as islands and bio-regions become sources of heart and soul identity rather than the imagined and forced communities of nation states of cartographically defined sovereignty (Anderson 1991) over-rides a planetary perspective.

Council of Elders – what if?

The essence of this thesis is the proposition that people making collective decisions (or personal decisions and action) which affect the Whole, come from that part of themselves that is deeply interconnected, and that is imbued with the unitive action of love. Among the potentials of consciousness are states of enhanced synchronisation within and between people, and which in turn emanate and have effects on others within this energetic ambiance. Within the shared coherence are significant co-happenings and synchronisation within a greater whole. I suggest this phenomenon of generated coherence of consciousness can be applied to governing from inherent interconnectedness.

What if the psychic environment for collective decision-making were unitive and creative love rather than the present adversarial aggression? What if the space for governing, physically and psychically, were held in a field of heightened interconnected consciousness? What is possible for governing while a Council of Elders hold a field of oneness and love, vibrated in synchronisation with Earth?

The psychic space for governing can be made and held by persons skilled in intentionally generation of embodied states of interconnectedness. The present space

17 These issues are elucidated in chapter seven.
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and culture are impacted by division, competitiveness, aggression and separateness so what if there was a conscious, proactive and intelligent decision to create a more coherent and creative psychic environment. I suggest persons recognised as spiritually accomplished, generate, hold and deliberately emanate the energy of interconnectedness and love, as a field of consciousness where all-is-one, and which yet is grounded and aware. People from a wide range of traditions and practices - Indigenous, Muslim, Buddhist, Christian, secular loving people - who are able to experientially embody and hold the state of connectedness - can by their very presence and state of being, entrain the collective mind-field around them where interconnectedness is grounded as reality. These participants are people who embody compassion and wisdom. These states may be achieved by diverse practices and in that state of inseparable being the practitioner would unify and amplify the field of interconnectedness. It is experiential inter-being which is the key, not how the state is arrived at. However the composition of the Council of Elders would reflect diversity, individuality, multiple spiritual expressions, purposeful co-existence and respectful social acknowledgement of consciousness awakened to its potentials where spiritual development contributes directly to the execution of political power.

Participation could rotate often so the energetic environment of loving interconnectedness is held constantly and at the high level of coherent consciousness. The energy-field and connection can be enhanced by Earth through sacred sites and along songlines of creation, so access is possible to this energy field throughout the whole continent and the whole planet – 24 hour harmonised coherence funnelled from sacred sites working across time and space and in all dimensions. The elders could be all together or at different locations. They can at times direct their energy to specific persons and locations, as well as generally. Parliament House Canberra is one location but a system centralising interconnectedness would predictably be highly decentralised reflecting the omni-centric nature of power derived from interconnectedness and in alignment with the omni-centric nature of the cosmos.

Because power is central to politics and government, the Council of Elders can be in the highest systemic and symbolic place of power, be it the Governor General (for a

\[18\] There is allusion to ‘perpetual choirs’ in ancient Britain which were at a number of sacred sites and between them kept up constant harmony sung through that land (Michell 1988). Whether the perpetual choirs are true or simply an inspiring story, the idea is worthy of experimentation.
Chapter twelve: Ways forward

constitutional monarchy) or President (if Australia is a republic) – neither of these systems has ensured peace. I believe that Australia shares ‘the weakness’ of the USA identified by Native American Vine Deloria which is the eagerness to engage in war but the lack of the skills to make successful peace through genuine respect, open exchange of ideas and co-existence (2003). So I suggest this gathering of skilled people hold ultimate power by holding the *space* in which decisions are discussed and taken but, importantly, do not have decision-making power in any direct or personally influential sense. They may or may not even know what is being discussed, however their hold over the environment is strong and aligned with the energetic resonance of the cosmos and its impeller, love. There is a failsafe mechanism against elitism as those with the ability to hold the fields of interconnectedness for decision-makers have no direct power themselves. Additionally their power is of another nature and, due to changing membership, is transitory which is congruent with Haval’s suggestion of transient aggregations of power attuned to a specific purpose. The persons and processes of governing are then infused by a field of loving interconnectedness as the psychic environment which streams with the powers of the cosmos and the direction of Life.

**Participation aligned by personal love and sacredness – what if?**

In the thesis I have also explored, analysed and substantiated several ways to come to individual wholeness, an integrated space which can then open into *clear space* and interconnectedness. This state of being can be intentionally utilised in governing.

There is an inter-penetrating, coherent communication throughout existence which can be perceived, decoded and enfolded by human consciousness – why not use it and work with it for governing?

When love, as an energy and cosmogenic power is embodied, there is enhanced potential for creative, catalytic and transformative action. Martin Luther King demonstrated the power of deeply felt love in his political actions through their effects in social transformation. Such impassioned and embodied love contrasts with

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19 Australia is a warring nation. While only ever attacked once since European arrival, Australia has consistently been involved in many wars. The legacies of the war ethos, language and orientation permeate the nation eg the effects of war show in rises in domestic violence (already higher than comparable countries) correlating with the return of service men (Evans 1992:203).
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lesser power of belief systems about love which lack the catalytic energy and action of embodied-love-in-action (Post 2002b:12). The embodiment of love can be intentionally orchestrated in governing.

When a new Parliament of Australia opens Members of Parliament (MPs) swear allegiance to the Queen in front of the Governor General and usually holding the Bible. What if the structures and ceremonies that already exist, were extended and deepened?

Imagine if each MP was individually asked what is most sacred to them. What experiences evoke the sacred for them? What gives them deep connection with all-that-is? What causes their identity and ego to meld into a greater reality? What if each MP is asked to consider what takes them to a state of profound connection, humility and service to the good of all? What if each MP were asked to nominate before-hand and then during the swearing-in ceremony were to swear, specifically and individually, on that which connects them to the sacred and, importantly, to swear from within the inner experience evoked.20

For some it may be the Bible, Koran or another sacred text. For another it may be an image. It may be bare feet and hands on the Earth. It may be facing the sun or a sacred mountain. It may be the presence of the Eucharist. It may be the water from a wild river, a leaf, a relic, a song or sound. Whatever symbol, person or action which evokes in them the experience of being present with sacredness. For some they may swear with their hand on their child’s head. Whatever it is that resonates profound connection, belonging, aliveness, inclusivity - then bring that expression of sacredness present for each MP and they can swear by that.

And imagine if the full potential of the power of choice and intention is engaged to orient the conjunction of consciousness, timespace and energy-matter setting the trajectory for love-aligned participation. What if these commitments are taken with full consciousness and coming from the state and reality where we are all connected - so the oath is in resonance with experiential interconnectedness and oneness. The power of oaths taken in sacredness, the power of conscious intention and the power of sacred ceremony is enormous. All of these can over-ride the ego and habits of belief

20 This could be a transition step adapting representative government to directly participatory and omni-centric governing.
systems. What if we really used the organising power of intentions and oaths to serve the benefit of all? Imagine the parliamentary ceremony extended to be a lived expression of the inclusiveness of the sacred and Life, symbolically and in reality.

What if MPs swore to work harmoniously for the common good of Australia, its people and the Land, and for all humanity and the Earth with all her creatures?

Then imagine if the oath was sworn in the presence of a gathering or council of people who hold and emanate an embodied state of compassion and wisdom.

And perhaps this sacred ceremony can take place in nature under the sky of our vast universe, above and within - and on the Earth, our common-ground. And even better, at a sacred place of this continent where the very energy emanating from the site supports the body and mind to be present - in the presence of that which is sacred - perhaps the Koori sacred fire. Then the resonance of that time and space draw in inclusive interconnectedness and unity as a lived experience – presence that is sensitive and that tunes in – a state of radiance of cosmic, universal love.

What if we took governing this seriously?

**Government of Love – when?**

Another on-going theme of this thesis is the expanded, interactive cosmic context evolving forms of synergistic unification. Love as a cosmic force driving unification and as felt within human beings as powerful personal experiences, is impelling humans, as self-aware parcels of consciousness-in-matter, forward to a greater form of wholeness and unity – which is our unavoidable destiny as indicated by the universal processes. Cosmic love relentlessly unifies in connection and purpose with the cosmos, with all-that-is and all-that-is-to-come – this is the context for co-creative governing.

What if the processes of governing are intentionally molded by love, the cosmogenic force, acting through embodied interconnectedness and in an energetic environment which amplifies love? Love, as a cosmic dynamic, both unifies and enhances differentiation – not dominates and enforces sameness (Teilhard 1969a).
Chapter twelve: Ways forward

Ben Oquist suggests that for love in government, space is needed – inner and outer clear space free of a perpetual crisis driven culture - rather space to respond with love in practical action (2004). Government of love can consciously create morphogenic fields wherein love, as the highest form of human and cosmic energy, permeates all decisions and actions. Clear space seethes with creativity which can be consciously applied to provide an element, one of many inputs, to inform holisitic governing. Clear space brings each being into sacred and cosmic alignment so the space for discussions, decisions and actions is clear of domination by ego and ideology.

As the decision-makers prepare themselves for their responsibilities by practices which bring them into embodied interconnectedness, they align in coherent synchronisation as a whole and are supported in this alignment by the space-holders. The process of interconnected, unitive decision-making is then supported, aligned and resonated with Earth and the cosmogenic love.

**Expanded consciousness and unification – what if?**

The unit of being, environmentally and in evolution, is not the individual or the species but the organism-and-its-environm ent (Rose 2001). All human energetics and activities feed the noosphere as does all creativity, thought, knowledge and imagination. As the noosphere builds in complexity and intensity, it strengthens the pre-conditions for a macro-phase change. In evolutionary terms this agitation orchestrates a new arrangement of relatedness which is shaped by universal love. The pre-conditions of agitation and dissonance await a catalytic moment/event and the noosphere comes into coherence .

Major change in consciousness is building due to rapidly changing situations and growing awareness be it environmental, planetary, increased daily awareness and knowledge about cultural diversity, events and human experiences around the planet. Wilber points to the creation of new fields of thought and interaction such as those created by the planetary rise of women and feminism making thought-forms and new forms of consciousness which interpenetrate the noosphere and the state of consciousness of all humans (2000). As unitive activity, centrification and knowledge accelerate, the noosphere races towards an integration to a total whole.

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22 Ben Oquist was reflecting on his time as a political advisor to Senator Bob Brown.
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Importantly, macro-phase change in consciousness occurs through sameness or agreement of human beings on one idea, understanding or pathway. The conditions for catalysation depend on dissonant tension and difference to jump to another synergistic stage of unity. Just as the micro events, experiences and models of coming-into-unity such as the sacred circle do not depend on agreement to come into unity but authentic uniqueness/beingness and interconnectedness – nor do the macro manifestations such as humanity-and-Earth as a whole. The variety, dissonance and agitation of interactions are the fuel to ignite new united form of humanity. In the macrophase change of our times the present beneficial developments will be folded into the new integration and be continued as a sub-holon of the new form of unity. So the factors of involution/centredness-going-within/spirituality and small or large meaningful events of shared coherent interconnectedness, will resonate and strengthen the unifying action love in the noosphere. People may be able to discern which epi-phenomena will be privileged however Life ultimately chooses.

The intensifying noosphere is an active player in the dynamics of human evolution with implications for all Earth beings. The source of catalysisation and stabilisation of the noosphere is love. Love acts relentlessly as the cosmogenic force and is actualised as personal and universal love in human beings. HH Dalai Lama suggests that when the inner environment of embodied love and outer (cosmic) fields of love meet – then there is social transformation (Weber 2002). Actualising recognition of similarity across scales is catalytic. The mirroring fields meet and instantly flow together in congruent amplification locking in another stage of field-within-field inter-being. Embodied human love is then a predictable catalyst for planetary transformation.

While I cannot articulate any formula, manifesto or salvation I stress the inevitability of unifying change in which we can participate by embodied love, surrender within Life and centrification upon ourselves as our fulfilment and gift to the Whole. Transformative change is inherently unpredictable but faith in the direction and positivity is a bridge to the future (Johnson 1897:337-9; Elgin 1986:290; Teilhard 1969a, 1969d; Berry in Swimme 1995).

While the unitive processes do not depend on agreement or consent, humans have the option of assent to the development of consciousness and love, choice through small pro-Life conscious thoughts, decisions and actions, and of positivity. It is a choice of which world do we make in relationship with Life.
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While increasing knowledge, technology, thought and contact prepare the way, it is love, embodied love that stabilises our enfolding psychic environment, the noosphere. Only love can and is stabilising unified wholistic self-government of Earth-and-humanity which mirrors oneness and acts through unique individuals centred in their own wholeness and intimately within the interconnectedness of all. Democracy is a form of government which attempts to institutionally balance and synergise the good of the individual and the social group as a whole. This synchronised synergy is the pattern enfolded by the cosmogenic action of universal love.

After love stabilises the noosphere, what then are the work and joys of humanity-as-a-whole? What is the purpose of oneness?
Chapter Thirteen: conclusion

Research aims

In this research I have explored the possibility of evolving democratic government from the experience of sacredness. Namely that sacredness, as an experience generates experiential states of interconnectedness, love and centred wholeness, which can formatively pattern modes of interaction which can act as a metaphysical base for collective self-organisation actualising as wholistic self-governing as part of human evolution. I situate the exploration within the context of an intimate and evolving cosmos with an identifiable processual direction.

Summary of future visions of governing based on sacredness

While acknowledging the fulfilled promises of the Westminster system of democratic government I suggest it is now time to dream government again. The research data contribute to possibilities for the future governing and by expanding the discussion space to include the multidimensionality of being human.
Chapter thirteen: Conclusion

The essence of the visions rest on the orienting premise that all is sacred, all is interconnected – thence the paradigm structuring society is fundamentally transformed. Expansion occurs as experiential interconnectedness embraces the cosmos, Earth, Life, all beings and the multiplicity of experiences of being human including the sacred. The wish underpinning the vision is for inclusive peace where each is vital to the whole.

Sacredness is a linking and potentiating commonality of human experience – as an experiential state within and as an energetic inter-face offering access to much beyond mundane knowing and being. Love is recognised and engaged as a cosmic dynamic which orchestrates unifying and increasingly conscious vitalisation. Empathy as a state enables such inter-being and embodied love harmonises the connections into being together as a whole entity.

The vision suggests interconnective governing is motivated to act for the benefit for all beings; the motivation is framed and grounded by awareness of consequences for children, now and in the future. The Earth is sacred and government is aligned with the Earth, and through this inter-being, to her creatures and all worlds or domains of be-ing, including the spirit world. Life is a model for governing, in its processes, practical expressions of physical and spiritual evolution, and experiential flow within a journey of becoming.

Processes of centredness and becoming whole organised from experiential interconnectedness are central as a living, dynamic process in-forming governing.

The inner processes of wholeness act through dispositions of the soul seeding motivation to serve the well-being of all, to be clear and willing to surrender fixed beliefs and ideologies into the humility of not-knowing, responsible self-preparation and living spiritual values.

Inter-personal interactive wholeness is characterised by equality within flat/spherical activities of dialogue, decision-making and action focussed through varied scales of attention. There are no leaders as such yet individual difference vitalises. Individual wholeness resonates others by its own unique radiance. Creative integration to wholeness-of-a-group occurs in the milieu of awareness, shared responsibility, empathy, clear inner and outer space, wisdom, personal truth, trust and being present. Dialogue of expressed truths and attentive magnetic listening articulates the energies,
experiences and aligned states of being, expanding perceptions and consciousness. The jump to wholeness-as-a-group is catalysed by the convergent mingling of dissonant, distinct and unique expressions of authentic being meeting together in a unifying ambiance of love.

The energetic patterns of wholeness flow and interpenetrate, orchestrating and organising throughout. The patterns of wholeness express through multiple tiers of interaction and concretise outward in explosions of creative transformation, healing and manifestation. Patterns of interconnected coherence synchronise creativity among, the unknown, unseen, difference, dissonance, alignment, humility and open surrender to not-knowing enabling the new. The intention to hold the state of interconnectedness in all that arises, entrains this form of wholistic interaction in governing. From experiential interconnectedness flows acknowledgement of the sacred, the cosmos, sensitivity to coherence and resonance, inclusivity of many worlds, many states, many beings and Life. Indicators and methods include joy, lightness, playfulness, love, empathy, harmony, belonging and compassion together with utmost responsibility and seriousness. Interconnectedness discourages of the ego-in-domination.

These inter-being processes are actively inclusive. Physical enactment and symbolic representation is circular or spherical. The fractal patterns of egalitarian relatedness repeats within foci of society and over varied scales. With skill, the process can occur by energetic interaction at a distance. The energy of love permeating the environment and state of interconnectedness is held, grounded and emanated – perhaps by a Council of Elders who are psycho-spiritual, energy-pattern generators and maintainers and not decision-makers. The pattern and process of equal inclusive interaction is embedded in community and naturally, organically, proceeds from there.

Synergy, attunement, alignment and synchronisation are tools of harmony and collective creativity which are known, supported and used consciously. Inner and shared states of synchronisation (of the brain) are enabled by meditation, empathy and varied spiritual and physical practices. Tools such as a labyrinth, the talking stick and certain bio-feedback technologies support the same awareness. The geometric resonance of buildings and the energy of places and sacred sites enable the experiential states. Many pathways, traditional and secular, are available to bring in
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states of consciousness appropriate for decision-making for the Whole. Compassion, kindness, patience, wisdom, clarity, coherence, vitality, passion, dynamic interconnectedness and creativity are sought and valued.

A shift in consciousness is essential to a redefinition of power; this omni-centric power locates the power for transformation within each and any person. Government of interconnectedness arises from the grass-roots of a society where there has been a shift in consciousness to personal wholeness which is enacted in lifestyles and shared responsibility for each and everyone’s happiness. The skills of interconnectedness, consciousness, centring to wholeness and creativity are embedded in the society and taught throughout education. There is individual sovereignty balanced with accountability and collective responsibility in the lived potential of individual human beings and in circles of wholistic dialogue and being. The relational ethics arise with experiential interconnectedness.

Transformation comes from people who translate moments of embodied interconnectedness into their lives and are motivated by concern for all children, all beings and Life in the present and future. Additionally transformation requires sufficient, but probably not many people, who are aware, care and love enough to believe in and empower peace-making possibilities.

The transformation of the whole starts within. Centrification to wholeness, embodied energy of love and ability to surrender to Life-flow in service are some technologies of being which can ignite transformation. Empathetic connectedness coalesces the resonance of communion. Interiorising authority orchestrates wholeness which deeply changes dynamics structuring society and the nature of power.

Inter-personal transformation together is enabled by finding authentic inner truth and the courage to voice it in community, thereby emanating satyagraha, the truth-of-being-in-interaction, which speaks to the hearts and souls of others. Authentic being and attending deeply draws forth the gifts of others. Conscious choice empowers and directs catalytic change.

Transformation as a whole is enabled by the experience and absorption of an interconnected reality which then pre-forms structural change. Preparedness for this formative belief happens in education which is informed by the dynamics of Life – education then includes growing love, consciousness and creativity. Omni-centricity,
simply as it arises, grounds democratic equality and individual autonomy and dignity. A mutually supportive affinity of personally fulfilling purpose and social cohesion works dynamically and seamlessly as a whole which holds all the positions without diminishing the uniqueness and integrity of each.

In the milieu of interconnectedness as the integration of the sacred, collective self-organisation and self-governing, the individual person and humanity-as-a-whole elevate to meet potentials of being human. The patterns and processes are strengthened by repetition, drawing separateness and linearity into mutuality of inter-being and cherished uniqueness – preparing for the jump in shared consciousness by integration and expansion. The awareness of all-time-as-present-now foregrounds the power of conscious choice to set the trajectory through possibilities which await the impact of consciousness for actualisation. To release energy and create space, attention must be focussed off the old players and games, and on the margins and epiphenomena which pattern processes of interconnectedness and love-in-action. Experiential belonging embodied through local familiarity expands to the global and beyond – identifying as humans with Earth and feeling universal responsibility. Fractals repeating the patterns of respectful inter-being echo across scales of time, place, knowledge and interest as processes of self-organised governing.

**Democratic governing based on sacredness**

Democratic governing based on sacredness incorporates and utilises sources of experiential sacredness, as embodied interconnectedness experienced in the moment. The moment reveals individual and group wholism, centrification, which evokes omnicentricity. Earth, land and nature relatedness draw forth the same experiences.

Democratic governing based on sacredness is nurtured by the multiplicity and commonality of spiritualities and experiences of the sacred, in authentic living, in supportive cultures which honour the dynamic mystery of Life in a sacred cosmos. The power of clear space within each being, in inter-relating and in sacred timespace feeds the platform of formative experiences.

Democratic governing based on sacredness harnesses human energetics of direct clear and focused consciousness in activities of making and grounding patterns of being which are creatively aligned in ordinary daily life in resonance with the vibratory
field of Earth, sacred places of the land and with the power and direction of the universe’s unfolding journey.

Democratic governing based on sacredness arises in the experiential state of interconnectedness, wherein specific human energy fields are available as instruments and processes, states and orientation, providing purpose within the Whole. Embodied belonging arises in resonant centrifugation of wholism of the individual, group entities and humanity-and-Earth. From this alignment, ethics of inter-being, pattern-thinking and clear space simply arise.

Democratic governing based on sacredness utilises love as a power, an experiential state and an evolutionary force impelling unification. Love acts through empathy, humility, creativity and service.

Democratic governing based on sacredness draws on psycho-spiritual energy for macrophase transformation. This is available individually and collectively, by opening to wonder, facing the full reality of what is, and releasing energy held in denial, grief and social distractions thereby being in direct, active participation and entrainment with evolving consciousness-in-matter. This energy can be consciously and specifically directed to orchestrate the evolution of human consciousness to forms which are aware, unitive, centred, coherent, loving, inclusive and hence peace-making among humanity and with Earth.

Evolution of human consciousness is people-led in the ordinariness of daily life by choices, and by growing alternative ideas, ways of inter-relating and worldviews. This occurs best in somewhat isolated, yet still connected groups in environments unshackled from the dominant ethos where patterns of omni-centric inter-being are grounded into actuality. These micro changes create foundations for political and social change by establishing a second or alternative culture.

In essence, democratic governing based on sacredness is closely aligned with unfolding Life – in its forms of diversity (uniqueness, subjectivity), unity (wholeness, communion) and creative leaps of evolution (phase change). Experiential interconnectedness fundamentally aligns with these mysteries – this is best supported by a clear and compassionate mind seeking growth, equanimity and respect for all Life.
Chapter thirteen: Conclusion

We human beings are an expression of Life which is a quintessential threshold in the evolutionary phenomenon. Life is a phenomenon which is distinct, flowing, changing, negentropic, purposive, flexible, coherent, creative, exploratory, experimental and directional. Life is the vitalisation of evolution. The recognition that all life is sacred is at the centre of spirituality. Spirituality is direct experience of/with reality, the sacred and what is of ultimate significance and importance. There are now indications that Life is emerging at the centre of a mainstream, contemporary, secular spirituality.

Governing that arises by streaming with the sacredness of Life is shaped by the directional processes of love as unifying affinity which nurtures the unique and individual gift of being while synergistically harmonising the Whole. Governing is then democratic, wholistic, creative, altruistic, inclusive, egalitarian and participatory.

It urges and arises from individual centrality in communion with greater wholes. This active space upholds human dignity, autonomy, actualisation and transcendence in purposeful living. Once actualised as a whole entity, this form/process becomes irreversibly existent as the next stage in evolution of being human together.

While the future cannot be predicted certain epi-phenomena may foreshadow this form of inter-being. Transformative self-generation is happening and possibly glimpsed in the organising processes of the young, women, and some contemporary spiritualities and activisms. Emergent phenomena demonstrating egalitarian love in action require visibility, articulation and creative responses to actualise and strengthen.

**Sacredness as context**

In this thesis I am attempting to articulate a governing system from a different paradigm, a different mind-set from that dominant in western societies. Acknowledgement of the sacred opens to a greater embracing context for self-organised, wholistically conscious governing. Acknowledging sacredness was exemplified by the visioning group. While in one layer of reality the ordinary world was evident – shouting and prayers in parliament, a world of war, distrust of leaders, demonstrations – simultaneously another context was intentionally chosen. By embracing the sacred by ceremony and spiritual practices, the greater context of a sacred cosmos was entered. With this embodied premise, the identity of being human
expands and the world becomes tangibly interconnected, synchronised and synergistic. The context of the sacred is revelatory and transformative. A sense of belonging feels like home and the sea of interconnectedness is grounded by Earth-connectedness. Consciousness expands in dynamic inter-being which offers a vast and loving paradigm for governing with planetary awareness, congruent repeatable processes acting across practicable scales of size and engagement. The inner self and inter-relating process is fuelled by the wish for the well-being of all and is felt in inseparability of interconnectedness. From this wellspring of empathetic care, governing can be.

The experience of sacredness as interconnectedness in the moment carries transformational power to re-orient governmental processes and organisation. The most significant factor seems to be a shift in consciousness which in turn reconfigures relationships and redefines power.

**The source** of democratic governing based on sacredness is the experience of the sacred in the *within of things* arising as experiential interconnectedness. The experience is fed and entrained by many means, experiences and places. It is *being-in-the-experience* which is the key to unitive, creative, egalitarian communion.

**The model** is Life and its processes and powers in each person, in inter-personal relatedness, in groups as whole entities, and in humanity becoming a whole. This model centralises collective self-governing within the unfoldment of universal fulfilment – a privileged and intimately supported state/position modelling creative peace.

**The implementation** is through deep personal and social transformation occurring through ordinary people in daily living growing in consciousness, love, awareness and interconnectedness together. The process is rehearsed in imagination growing embodied love as a universal power drawing us together.

**Expanded context and consciousness**

I am resting my thesis on a couple of premises – the transformative experience of interconnectedness as congruent with an interconnected reality, and that the universe is a progressive phenomenon with creative macrophase changes of integrative synthesis involving consciousness.
Chapter thirteen: Conclusion

My position, my offer, from my thesis is that evolution of democracy derives from evolution of consciousness. My approach is obviously different from many approaches to democracy which address the global problematique. My suggestion is not an expansion of scale of present forms of democracy, which merely remake the present dynamic in new and larger domains with the same problems of adversarial methods and tribal thinking. While using the old consciousness of disconnectedness, the processes will devolve to elitism, corruption, ego and war modelling behaviours.

Alternatively, by expanding consciousness with the evolving universe and the power of love then the universe works with humans where perhaps, as Teilhard suggests, we are the spirit of Earth on a convergent, purposeful journey streaming with the curvature of timespace unto the compelling magnetism of our future. According to Teilhard, integrating the consciousness of the species in its full habitat, universal and spiritual, runs parallel with deep democracy.

It is upon the maintenance and growth in human consciousness of what I call ‘the sense of the Species’ that the realisation of a truly democratic world depends. (1969a:253)

I am not aiming to ‘prove’ or convince in this thesis but by presenting possibilities substantiated by evidence I am endeavoring to open space for consideration of multiple options. Expanded perspectives bring choice about repeating present patterns or consciously evolving distinctly different patterns. The gaps, bridges and creative tension between present politics and the elucidated possibilities are recognised in the data. Being-in-the-experience, then dwelling with utilising oneness, is a link to our greater identity and thence acting within the possibilities it brings.

We can bring conscious choice to bear on evolving present systems of democracy and expanding consciousness to expressions of inter-being. I agree with Monbiot (2003) and Fannery (2005) that these changes will not come from our governments, however, I believe they are happening now among many communities and within individuals. As Haval says ‘the brighter future is here around and within us’ (1992:214) – the issue is an expansion of awareness and shift of attention.

Inevitability of union

When asked if he believed in God, Thomas Berry replied that he believed in the curvature of timespace (Swimme 1990:2). His comments point to a certain
inevitability of human unification. The unitive drive of evolution, love, is powerful and relentless. Cosmogenic love will support those thoughts, states, actions and patterns of inter-relatedness which enact unity-in-diversity exemplifying expansion in consciousness and new forms of synergistic coherence. Conversely, behaviours which are out-dated or not confluent with evolution’s direction/desire will be eliminated. In the urgency of these times I believe it is sensible, realistic and imperative to broaden approaches to governing so sustainable peace is modelled.

I concur that positive unification is inevitable – because embodied unitive states, as in the experience of interconnectedness, namely sacredness, are in unison with the direction of evolution unto unification. It is in involution to one’s essence then outward pouring of self in love that I suggest guides our human progress forward in consciousness and will inform new forms of governing democratically. This proposition is of the nature of what Monbiot calls the metaphysical mutation (2003:260) and Haval calls the metaphysics of being (1992:210) which can be enacted in any moment through choice, consciousness, creativity, responsibility and actions.

My interests are in transformation and macro-phase changes when not only do elements change, systems change and moreover the dynamics by which systems govern change, albeit evolve. So this thesis is an inquiry within this context and purpose to attempt to articulate an evolutionary path in democracy, collective self-government, when it devolves from a major paradigm change – a paradigm based on sacredness as arising in-the-experience of interconnectedness and the inseparable states of love and belonging. This is my contribution – to discuss some ways forward for democracy in an expanded space and context and to bridge gaps by indicating and elucidating deep, positive, common experiences which can act as a formative base shaping evolution of democracy – thereby validating personal power in these times, sources of transformation and domains of possibilities.

Ultimately future forms of democratic government are in the present as choices, calling.
Appendix one: Global consciousness and the noosphere

Global consciousness and the noosphere

Teilhard saw the noosphere playing an integral part in human evolution and that the development of the noosphere correlates with the development of consciousness, both of which are sustained within the unfolding cosmos (1969a, 1969d). Evidence from the Global Consciousness Project (GCP) confirms the existence and development of the noosphere. The stated purpose of the project, established in 1998, is ‘to gather evidence and study indication of the subtle reach of human consciousness in the physical world and on a global scale’ (http://noosphere.princeton.edu). GCP works from the premise that ‘fields generated by individual consciousness would interact and combine, and ultimately have a global presence’ when there is a large-scale sharing of deep reaction to major news events of global significance. GCP looks at times of common focus with ‘an unusual coherence of thought and feeling’.

The GCP method was to set up a planetary network of Random Number Generators (RNGs) sensitive to coherence and resonance in the mental domain of human consciousness under special circumstances. RNGs are designed to work with natural random fluctuations of physical phenomena that occur many times per second, such as radioactive decay or white noise. The devices are extensively tested using well known equations for chance events.

Events of strong emotional responses and also spiritual actions are found to register at a planetary basis eg the Kumbla Mela gathering of over 10 million sadus/holy people in India, global anti-Iraq war peace actions (18-20 March 2003), terrorist attacks, deaths of Mother Teresa and Princess Diana. Interestingly, the effects start to appear a little before the actual event showing precognition eg on 11 September 2001 the anomaly in the data began to appear a few hours before the terrorist attacks occurred and the concurrent media coverage. Human consciousness on some level of interconnected timespace knows what is going to happen. Also emotions responding to suffering caused by human actions (eg war and terrorism) elicit a greater response that those of nature (eg Indian Ocean tsunami) perhaps indicates some expansion of
Appendix one: Global consciousness and the noosphere

empathy where humans are responsible for needless suffering and a more integrated acceptance of ‘natural’ causes of death and suffering. The correlation of strong emotions and responses of global human consciousness reinforce Teilhard’s prediction that emotions will be far stronger than economics and materialism to bring humanity into union and that it is love that will unite humanity (1969a).

The GCP data show evidence of the noosphere as an enveloping inter-penetrating, psycho-energetic field of thought, emotion, love and consciousness that is concurrently evolving with the whole Earth. Results indicate the influence of global consciousness and thoughts through non-local fields of meaningful knowing and information with direct links and direct knowing and where intentions have power in the world, including physical effects. ‘They suggest something akin to the image held in almost all cultures of a unity or oneness, an interconnection that is fundamental to life’ (GCP). The evidence offers physical and mathematical substantiation of our interconnectedness. Predictably the profound intimacy of our connectedness will show more clearly over time particularly as the process of global consciousness coming into coherence, accelerates. It also supports spiritual experience as direct connection, knowing and participation where thoughts can expand to the stars (as suggested by Teilhard (1969a) and Sheldrake (1994c)) and ‘may contribute into the role of the mind as a creative force in the physical world’ (GCP).

Evidence of the noosphere contextualises wholistic human self-organisation and self-government within cohering forces of differentiation and centrification of cosmic proportions acting through self-reflective consciousness. Love is the force which stabilises the noosphere and the growth of love and consciousness are contributing factors (Teilhard 1969a, 1969d).

The focus of GCP is times of coherence of consciousness on a single focus – like the unity of sameness. However, I believe, Teilhard is additionally indicating that the potential of the noosphere is both that and of a different and expanded order – that of global consciousness harmonised to unity from the complexity of different and diverse sources and expressions of consciousness – like the unitive harmony of musical notes lifting to another form of coherence, unity and beauty.
Appendix two: Transpersonal and heuristic methodologies

Transpersonal methodology

Honouring the sacred dimension of human life

Because honouring the sacred in special and ordinary experiences is at the centre of this research, the methodologies need to allow the full capacities of human being, thinking and knowing. Transpersonal methodology offers access to a research domain which honours the sacred together with ‘the transformative and spiritual dimensions of human experience’ which includes the implicit assumptions of ‘wonderment at the commonplace, recognition of the miraculous and transformative strata of all experiences and that all life is precious’ (Braud and Anderson 1998:iix; xxiii). By recognising as valid and authentic an expanded context within which to examine the fullness of being human, transpersonal inquiry draws on knowledge from non-ordinary states of consciousness, active dreams, dream incubation and processing, mystical visions and auditions, intentionality, imaging, kinaesthetic and somatic knowing and creative states of being. In a sense these sources of knowledge are a form of the humanistic, existential phenomenology advocated by Maslow which he called being cognition, the knowledge of being (1971). These methods enable fuller exploration of and merging into certain experience to enhance the authenticity of the states investigated. The breadth of awareness within the methodology supports the research process to validate, enliven, empower and energise human capacities.\footnote{Experiential phenomena, particularly experiences of non-ordinary consciousness are often regarded as of questionable existence and inappropriate as fields of study because recognition requires a restructuring of epistemic theory which comes about not by logic, proof or deliberation but as ‘a relatively sudden and restructuring event like a gestalt switch’ (Kuhn 1970:122). When these events occur they are often ignored or disregarded as anomalies within more conventional research paradigms. Kuhn notes that views which challenge the status quo are nearly always resisted yet paradoxically the history of science shows that conventional understandings are continuously being transcended (1970:7).}

Deep analysis of human experience and interaction is an appropriate base for study of democracy as the art of being together. Slaughter notes that accounts of expanded awareness indicate that they are inclusive and reach into broad spans of time and...
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space therefore making such states essential for creating planetary peace and advancing towards new forms of civil organisation (1999b).

**Expanded research tools**

With the inclusion of spiritual experience and the non-human worlds, the tools of research, validation and indicators are expanded. Deep attention, appreciation, wonder, humility and changed states of consciousness become entry points to an expanded epistemology. In praxis the distinction between intellectual, emotional, somatic, aesthetic and intuitive inputs is abstract because they all act together. However, as Braud emphasises, with intentionally focused attention each can be discerned ‘where their wholistic completeness, coherence and integration acts’ (1998:215). These skills of attention and perception can be learned just like the skills of reading and can be strengthened by honouring them and subsequent verification (White 1998). I further elucidate some of these sources of information and validation.

*Bodily wisdom* is commonly acknowledged in phrases such as a ‘gut feeling’ and when something ‘touches the heart’ which recognise a visceral resonance. Careful attention to somatic impressions offer signals of interactive responses eg attention to a subtle muscular contraction or sigh may reveal mistrust. When a researcher observes their own behaviours a deeper level of engagement with material is entered, provided however, that they are in a state of consciousness where they are present. Otherwise as Braud notes, evidence indicates that body responses are accurate indicators of that person’s history rather than the present (1998:217). Yet deep focus and in-dwelling, as is the inner composition of the break-through scientist, opens that person to a creative realm by being in the present (Kuhn1970:191; White 1998:130). This caveat underlines the importance of disciplined attention on the part of the researcher to maintain multi-leveled awareness.

*Emotions* also offer indicators of a deeper response to experiences, interactions and in the case of the researcher, data. The emotional feeling can give immediate feedback on specific findings and conclusions. Feelings of aliveness and vitality can indicate that the search is on track and the subject matter has not been compromised (Braud 1998:219). Braud states that when such excitement is supplemented by awe and gratitude a deep resonance has been reached and the researcher is being true to the experiences being explored.
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_Aesthetic feelings_ are also a commonly recognized response to a variety of phenomena and experiences. Deep attention to these responses offers another transpersonal research tool. Kuhn recognised the power of aesthetic apprehension to switch mental states and wholistically receive information whereby people change their worldview/paradigm, not through logic or proof, but through an evocation of aesthetic appeal by the newer and beckoning paradigm which is perceived and accepted because it is was simply more beautiful (1970).

*Intuition*, the ability to comprehend immediately and totally, is a well known tool of creative thinking and wholistic inculcation (Kuhn 1970; Einstein 1954). James considered this ‘noetic quality’ one of the four characteristics of transcendent experiences where ‘insights into the depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect’ arise as states of knowing (1902:293). James notes that all intuitively derived knowledge is definitive and authoritative for the experiencer but has no such status for anyone else until later tested and verified. Intuition through sympathetic understanding can also lead to appraisal of validity.

*A compassionate heart*, intuition, immediate apprehension of meaning and motivations of service to the most vulnerable are among the tools employed in transpersonal research (Anderson 1996:70). Anderson says that a transpersonal approach requires researching from a loving heart to generate compassionate knowing (1998:81).

> Engaging in research that delves into the depths of human experience demands compassion and understanding for the richness of human expression and possibilities and the interconnectedness of the personal – political – universal circle of our endeavors, especially our research endeavors. (Anderson 1996:80)

Compassion can compose the inner state of the researcher for empathetic listening to others and self. It can also infuse the analysis process to allow the data to shape itself in resonance with influence of this field. The intention of working within compassion shapes the questions asked, the data collected and the type of results produced.

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2 My analysis and collated presentation of the data from the interviews was checked and verified by the participants as accurate in both substance and interpretation.
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*Sympathetic resonance* is a response which is commonly familiar in relation to symbols and metaphors. Kuhn describes ‘similarity recognition’ as a perceptual ability to recognise relevance and coherence of patterns across varied spheres of Life and knowledge (1970:189-90). The physical phenomenon of resonance (such as a violin string responding to a tuning fork) is very finely responsive to a narrow and precise focus, and is unresponsive outside that range. Braud says resonance distinguishes *noise* from the *signal* such as the one note which shatters the glass (1998:225). In research, rich data can supply strongly resonating patterns which can be discerned and matched with other information which are mediated through the researcher. The more universal an experience, and the simpler, the more readily it is detected. Less common experiences are limited to those who have experienced something similar. Bias can act as an impedance to resonance (Braud 1998:227). Deliberate strategies of relaxation and mediation, particularly when supported by intentionality, can reduce the resistance of the rigid filtering dispositions of bias.

Sympathetic resonance is used to intentionally track knowledge. In sinking deep within and following a resonant inner response, unclaimed experiences of self and aspects of phenomena are made solid and real. Resonance operates even if the experience has no name and is ostensibly unknown. Anderson notes that in this process energy is released as sub-liminal configurations, which are nameless yet still powerful, are then integrated (1998). Sympathetic resonance is particularly applied in transpersonal methodology as a validation procedure for researchers for intuitive insights and synthesis (Braud 1989:224-5). Braud claims that resonant patterns acting across spheres/media provide indicators of replicability, reliability and generality of the findings (1998:226). Resonance can also be applied as a transpersonal tool of communication via symbols, metaphors, poems, stories and presentation of findings.

**Transformative engagement through wholeness**

*Coherence of aspects* of research methods correlates sources of validity which, as stated earlier, in fact occur in experience as an unsegmented whole phenomenon. Transpersonal research expands through the person-as-a-whole-phenomenon to Life-as-a-whole-phenomenon, as well as seeking answers to how people become whole. Wholeness as an active and internally integrated phenomenon is part of the methodology and focus. The wholistic nature of the methods used and the domains engaged, facilitates an inherent possibility of alchemical transformation. Because
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transpersonal research is transformative, it is social active itself wherein
transformation is both the subject and the medium. For this reason, Braud and
Anderson observe that transpersonal research is often engaged with a spirit of
adventure and some trepidation because, for the researcher, this also can mean

Interconnectedness in research methodology

Transpersonal research methodology provides an expanded and intimately
interconnected context in which to examine the fullness of human behaviours and
experiences within the context of Earth and the cosmos.

Interconnectedness as concept is implicit to transpersonal research and is congruently
applied in the praxis of methods and analysis. Interconnectedness across timespace,
nature, Life, cosmos, and within self/Self enables non-local modes of knowing and of
influencing (as recognised in quantum and systems sciences). Braud notes that ‘direct
knowing pre-supposes profound interconnectedness’ (1998:39). Interconnectedness,
in turn augers and reinforces a spiritual inclusive reality, wherein experience is deep
and rich. Anderson comments that what is experienced as sacred and miraculous in
the personal permeates and is manifest in the political and in the universal (1998:79).
As a holographic mode of operation is assumed between the personal and the
universal the implication is that these same skills and tools are applicable to politics
(Anderson 1998:75). Reciprocally, the processes of an interconnected reality shape
identity, behaviour and ethics.

Interconnectedness has important implications for our understanding
of who we really are, of our individuality, of our true selves; from
these implications flow other ethical implications for appropriately
interacting with others and with our environment. (Braud 1998:39)

Heuristic methodology of analysis

Experiential knowing

While transpersonal methodology is socially interactive, heuristic is personal. The
heuristic research pathway for both data gathering and for analysis is a deeply
experiential pursuit. Maslow’s comment that there is no substitute for experience
reinforces the value of experiential knowing (1966). Depth and uniqueness of
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knowing leads to elucidation of the whole attained through internal frames of reference of the experiencer. Anderson notes that ‘heuristic research yields perhaps the richest and most satisfying description of an important human experience to which the researcher has devoted extensive and deep attention for a long time’ (1998:47). Clark Moustakas elucidates a rationale for the heuristic methodology of research.

> Behaviour is governed and experience is determined by the unique perceptions, feelings, intuitions, beliefs and judgments used in the internal frame of reference of a person. Meanings are inherent in a particular worldview, an individual life, and the connections between self, other and world. (Moustakas 1990:32)

Heuristics is said to be more an attitude to research rather than a methodology as it immerses into connectedness of meanings to delve into their essence (Bruce Douglass and Clark Moustakas 1985). In its emphasis, heuristic research engages with and utilises an inherent connectedness and relationship with the universe. Anderson notes that the whole universe of a person’s experience channels in to illuminate the universal (1998:75). There is holographic resonance from the deeply personal to the collective universal. In an inclusive approach, the wholeness of Life feeds in data from multiple and varied sources such as conversations, the natural world, images, emotional responses and spiritual sources. Moustakas notes that ‘one seeks to obtain qualitative depictions that are at the heart and depth’s of a person’s experiences – depictions of situations, events, conversations, relationships, feelings, thoughts, values and beliefs’ (1990:52). All of these sources speak through different modes of knowing.

**Intuition and wholism**

The power of revelation through tacit knowing is an integral part of heuristic investigation. Polanyi writes of the focus of ‘soft eyes’ which reveals the subliminal, archetypal and preconscious perceptions (1964). He refers to an inherent ability to sense the unity or wholeness of something from an understanding of the individual qualities or parts (1983). Polanyi says that some elements of experience are visible and immediate – these make up the unique and distinctive features which are invariant (1983). Invisible features are in turn, brought to awareness by attentive focus and
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internal awareness. Combining the seen with the unseen aspects to achieve a unity of integration makes up the wholeness of a phenomenon.

The heuristic process respects and affirms imagination, intuition, self-reflection and the tacit dimensions (Douglass and Moustakas 1985). Just as the fragment of the fractal reveals the seed of the total pattern – which is repeated in scales of time, space, matter or energy – so too, the experience of the individual can reveal the whole. The unity-within resonates with the unity-of-all. A fragment glimpsed in a blink, can gain in strength to illuminate timely truth. Intuition bridges the realms of tacit and explicit knowledge in a leap which allows the perception of wholes (as recognised in systems theory (Capra 1992) and it social applications (Beck and Cowan 1996)). Kuhn notes that intuitive thinking which is required to see alternative paradigms, is instantaneous and total (1970). By being specific, unique and deep, heuristic methodology echoes into the universal with entraining sympathetic resonance. Intuition in the research process points to clues which may result in shifts in method, direction, field and analytic understanding, to arrive at the depth, substance and essence of the whole.

**Heuristic process**

Moustakas says the heuristic research process unfolds through six phases (1990). Initial engagement is the discovery of an intense interest within the researcher, which is personally compelling and socially significant. The researcher ekes out the core question and its context from a milieu of tacit knowledge, intuition and willingness. Through open immersion, the researcher then gets inside the inquiry, enlivening it from experience by ‘becoming one with what one is seeking to know’ (Moustakas 1990:16). Anderson describes the heuristic process as one of knowing-through-becoming (1998:51).

Intimacy with the question is then deepened as an inner space is cleared to allow the inquiry to pervade all aspects of life. The required state is one of sustained, relaxed receptivity. There is a recognition that control must be relinquished. A spirit of openness and a high degree of flexibility to the flow of the inquiry is surrendered to. The process mirrors the flow experience described by Michael Csikszentmikalyi

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3 An example in the data is the experiential praxis of surrender which phenomenologically revealed the process, symbolism and inner transformative power of surrender as a transpersonal phenomenon applicable in intense interpersonal situations and by implication is applicable to processes of democratic governing inclusive of full human potentials.
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(1990) which occurs in creativity through intense absorption. Sustained alertness to all inputs from the interconnectedness of Life feeds the focus of the inquiry. An extended time is vital for the identification and cognition of the knowledge and its meanings. Spontaneous self-dialogue, reflection and intuitive clues support the researcher to dance with the energy of the inquiry from a state of alert receptivity for knowledge to emerge.

Heuristic inquiry requires that one be open, receptive and attend to all facets of one’s experiences of a phenomenon, allowing comprehension and compassion to mingle and recognizing the place and unity of intellect, emotion and spirit. (Moustakas 1990:16)

A following period of incubation away from the intensely concentrated focus gestates the question to its full possibilities. There is a continuous trust and respect for the power of Mystery to invest memory, conscious imagination and symbolic associations with new perceptions to the investigation. With the naturalness of metamorphosis, the researcher from an open and receptive state, can be illuminated with new insights and dimensions of knowledge.

The next phase is explication of that-which-has-arisen-in-awareness and to explore its myriad inter-weaving for meaning. In the explication process, the researcher utilises attentive focus, indwelling, self-dialogue, disclosure and searching with an eye for unique and distinctive meanings. Indwelling involves turning within to attend unwaveringly on an experience to arrive at comprehension of its qualities and through that, the whole phenomenon (Moustakas 1990:24). By moving from whole to part and back in repeating flux of words, feelings, concepts, contexts, relationships and the inexpressible, the researcher seeks to understand the wholeness and unique patterns of the phenomenon. The process is repeated until its dimensions can be named, interpreted and expressed. From a position of familiarity and intimacy, together with a meditative process, the data digests and explications are creatively synthesised in a process which essentially grows itself. The inner journey is followed by willingness to deepen the knowledge through the eyes and voices of others. The final process is a creative synthesis which is generated from awareness of thoughts, feelings and clarified beliefs of the researcher in juxtaposition with the words and actions of others.
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In this research, the data, literature and other interconnected inputs are integrated by using a heuristic analytic methodology wherein uniqueness of being and experiences are expanded to the whole to generate implications for wider social relevance. While the research has input from heuristic data of the researcher in the political domain, it is particularly in analysis of the data of the visioning process by deep immersion that the heuristic method is applied. The combination of transpersonal and heuristic methodologies provide a means to bridge the phenomena of uniqueness and wholeness – with the richness of both deepened by the range of acceptable sources of input. The contributions are grounded by being based in real phenomena. The research is supplemented by phenomenological data of experiences and events.\footnote{Bohm says that the experiential is the ultimate test (1986).} Phenomenology centralises articulation and systematic description of phenomena as they are directly experienced (Abrams 1996). Due to the experiential nature of sacredness and spirituality, phenomenology is a research method appropriate for examination of personal and spiritual data. Additionally, the heuristic device is applied to integrate the dynamic (process) and static (structural) elements of political analysis (Jamrozik 2001:47). The methodology respects people as the primary authority, communicator and interpreter of their experience thereby grounding the data in lived reality. The research triangulates data from heuristic, phenomenological and visioning methods.
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