Lecture 5
Hermes Exemplar

Dino Karabeg

Impacts for Sustainability: Epistemology & Research Activism

Civilisation at the Crossroads – Response and Responsibility of the Systems Sciences, European Meetings on Cybernetics and Systems Research, EMCSR 2014 Vienna

Join us in making a breakthrough on three related frontiers:

- Sustainability or thrivability
- Social impact of systems sciences / evolutionary and moral action-oriented approaches in systems science
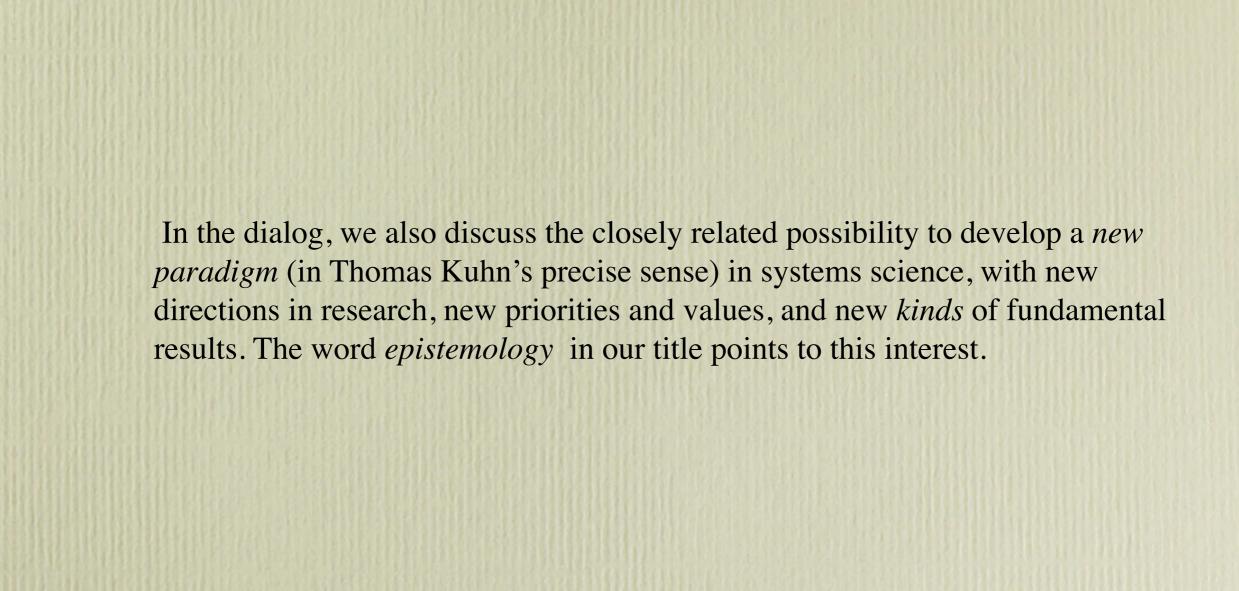- Knowledge federation / Program for the Future Challenge

The Impact for Sustainability: Epistemology & Research Activism symposium at the EMCSR 2014 in Vienna, where with your help we will initiate this breakthrough, will consist of two 1.5 hour events: a Dialog where we shall co-create a shared vision; and a World Cafe where we shall begin to realize this vision in practice.

Dialog

We prime our dialog by sharing a brief Web documentary, where by using stories and pictures it will be shown that

- conventional approaches to sustainability tend to be systemically misconceived hence strategically misdirected (there are systemic reasons why they don't and probably cannot work; which might explain the record of achievement so far)
- a different approach to sustainability—through social-systemic re-evolution or *systemic innovation* as we sometimes call it—has not only the potential to bring us to a sustainable course, but even to an 'end of scarcity' (as Bucky Fuller predicted) and to global *thriving*
- by presenting them from certain angles, and using suitable communication design, this new strategy and the insights on which it is based can be given massive appeal (they can be turned into popular, viral, sticky… public issues)

This Web documentary will be shared in advance, and only briefly shown at the dialog. The idea is to initiate a good conversation, and give it sufficient time. If we succeed, a shared sense of opportunity, and of commitment, will emerge.

In the dialog, we also discuss the closely related possibility to develop a *new paradigm* (in Thomas Kuhn's precise sense) in systems science, with new directions in research, new priorities and values, and new *kinds* of fundamental results. The word *epistemology* in our title points to this interest.

World Cafe

To prime the creative process, we share a draft of a plan for a systemic remedy to the above anomaly, to be completed at our World Cafe .

Our proposed system design can be imagined, metaphorically, as a three-stage rocket, whose purpose is to use the power of new information technology to give the results and insights of systems scientists substantially higher visibility and impact.

In the **first stage**, the systems scientists propose, select, organize, explain… the insights that have the largest potential to positively impact society.

Initially, this first stage is envisioned as an application of the tools and processes of DebateGraph; Dr. David Price, DebateGraph's co-founder, has agreed to advise us.

From an academic or fundamental point of view, the challenges that this first stage presents to systems scientists illustrate the mentioned *new paradigm* .

In the **second stage**, the insights created, selected and explained in the first stage are made transparent, and more impactful, by using the skills and techniques of contemporary communication design. Fredrik Eive Refsli— a reputed Norwegian communication designer—has agreed to creatively contribute to this stage.

In the **third stage**, the results of the second stage are strategically placed into media and political campaigns. The choice of collaborators—to complete this minimal real-world model or *prototype*—is under negotiation.

At the **first table**, we will discuss and select the insights to be federated. What can systems science contribute to the world, that can make a difference that makes a difference? How can we make those insights palpable, and obvious?

At the **second table**, we will co-design the federation process. How will systems scientists be selecting their impactful ideas, reaching consensus on their validity and value, and making them accessible—in the second stage—to media, policy makers and general public? What technology should be used to implement those processes?

At the **third table**, we will co-create the strategy for the third stage. How to put systemic insights into the media? And into politics and policy? In what way will the insights of systems scientists inform the evolution of key real-world systems?

Highlights

- evolutionary (or 'design') epistemology

- a paradigm in (systems) research

- evolving 'living systems' vs. 'sustainability'

- bootstrapping social-systemic change

- state-of-the-art approach to real-world system

- 2018 demo

Picture