Varieties of Rebirth
distinguishing ways of being "born again"

Introduction

There are a number of threads that indicate quite different senses of being "born again". These threads may interweave to reinforce each other -- or may reflect contrasting, even incommensurable, understandings or experiences. In a larger multi-dimensional scheme all these threads may together constitute a larger fabric of insight to which humanity has yet only partial access.

The threads or clusters explored are tentatively ordered in terms of increasing experiential implications for the individual. Two "paths" may be distinguished to relate the clusters

- A. Cultural rebirth (renaissance, aesthetic birth, mytho-poesis)
- B. Socio-religious rebirth (birthright, destiny, reincarnation, social status, ceremony, ritual, group affiliation, games, sports)
- C. Psycho-behavioural rebirth (sin-to-virtue, changing patterns of consumption, conversion)
- D. Developmental rebirth (education, perspective, initiation, cultural creativity, individuation)
- E. Therapeutical rebirth (release from trauma, mentors, self-help, discipleship)
- F. Cognitive perspective (metacognition, critical thinking, philosophy, aesthetic sensibility, orders of thinking, systematics, orders of abstraction, disciplines of action)
- G. Experiential rebirth (operacy, flow, embodiment of mind, speaking with God, born-again, possession, psychedelic experience, embodiment in song, spiritual rebirth)

A. Cultural rebirth

This is significant as an exciting context from which individuals may benefit. However its scope, as possibly recognized only with the hindsight of historical commentary, may well beyond the capacity of any to recognize in the moment [resources]:

- Renaissance as a metaphor: Here the focus is on cultural rebirth, after a period of decay or some form of "dark ages". The European Renaissance is a prime example. Such metaphorical use is also employed to promote a new renaissance, as in the case of European renewal (see Renaissance Europe), to counteract the erosion of quality of life. The term has also been applied to zones in which a form of collective rebirth takes place (see Renaissance Zones)
- Aesthetic rebirth: A typical characteristic of rebirth is in relation to art, due to the rich cross-fertilization of insights and perspectives. Although this may be more immediately evident, it is to be noted that it is characterized by presenting works for view, with little attention to their effect on the observer -- it is the art that is reborn and only secondarily the appreciator thereof.
- Mytho-poesis: This is the larger story that is told, through epic works of art, to explain and give coherence to a period or a sense of a larger temporal context. It offers links to the distant past and serves to bind its relevance to the present. It offers symbols to which people may relate and which provide a framework for stories of psychological significance to the extent that the symbols are activated in the individual psyche. Many births refer to the birth process with specific exemplars recognized as "twice-born" or "thrice-born" (as with Hermes Trismegistus). For Louise Cowan (Epic as Cosmopoiesis. , 1992): "If we read epic poems with attentiveness, putting aside preconceived ideas about the dominance of the patriarchal virtues, we see in them something of a palimpsest, indicating that nations are not only 'twice-born' but 'thrice-born'"

B. Socio-religious rebirth

Here the focus is on socially recognized processes (notably religion), irrespective of the experiential implications for the individual. Such
experiential significance may be deliberately attributed to these processes and claims may be made in this respect, but the various dimensions of being "reborn" are here considered primarily in terms of their "external" social implications. These may not preclude an "inner" experiential sense of having been "born again" (discussed later), but they should not be understood to guarantee them [resources]:

- **Birthright**: According to some belief systems, being reborn is a birthright. In Hinduism, for example, males in three castes (Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vysyas) are declared to be "twice born" once they have engaged in a special ceremony at puberty. In this sense any members of a hereditary aristocracy could be considered "twice-born".

- **Destiny**: Some individuals, whatever the circumstances of their birth, are recognized as having a special destiny which distinguishes them from ordinary human beings. The much-documented story of recognition of the Dalai Lama is of this kind. The individual is recognized as "reborn" -- or in that case as a reincarnation. This category can also be extended to include those peoples "chosen by God" for a special destiny, or in some way "elect".

- **Reincarnation**: This is a form of rebirth that is central to many religions and was once a feature of Christianity [more].

- **Social status**: Advancement within any social structure, with the acquisition of status, may reach a stage at which an individual passes a threshold or "breaks through" into another class recognized as being specially privileged, merit-worthy and otherwise distinct from ordinary people. In some cases this may be purely by marriage, by successful use of wealth, by bribery, or by patronage, or by achievement. The individual is effectively "reborn" -- or in that case as a reincarnation. This category can also be extended to include those peoples "chosen by God" for a special destiny, or in some way "elect".

- **Recovery**: The process by which an individual recovers from a life-threatening accident (including a near-death experience), from substance abuse, or from other disasters, may be perceived and experienced as a form of rebirth. The person is "born again".

- **Social "death and rebirth"**: The "death" experienced may be primarily social in that the person dies to society or is treated as dead -- possibly as the result of a scandal or conviction for a crime. Recovery from such a condition may again be perceived and experienced as being "born again" -- possibly to be repeated. The most frequently cited example is the recovery of the famous evangelist from being caught with a prostitute as described by Michael J. Giuliano (Thrice Born: The Rhetorical Comeback of Jimmy Swaggart, 1999)

- **Political rebirth**: The experience of political failure (or "death") by politicians, and their recovery from it, may be described as a rebirth. The probable electoral successes of Tony Blair, John Howard and George Bush, following the shambles of their initiative in Iraq, are described politically as being "born again". Many politicians have been nicknamed as "Come Back Kid" (Bill Clinton, Ehud Barak, John Kerry, Peter Mandelson).

- **Financial rebirth**: Many entrepreneurs experience cycles of success and failure as "deaths" and "rebirths". They may be described as "dead" as a result of failure (and association with improper deals) and may be recognized as "born again", once their fortunes improve again. Like politicians

- **Ceremony and ritual**: Society may use a particular prescribed ritual to signal rebirth. The ceremony may be understood as actually triggering that rebirth -- if only because of the symbolism of the ritual as laid down in sacred writings, for example.

- **Rite of passage**: symbolic death in the context of the initiation of boys into manhood. The boys' childhood identity must die so that they may be reborn as men in the community. This process almost universally involves a ritual in which the initiate must feel the terror of an encounter with death, frequently combined with the imprint of intense physical pain, by circumcision or through having a tooth knocked out.1 While such rites of passage do to some degree constitute a secret (from the women and young boys) initiation, they are more concerned with acculturation into society than with true spiritual initiation.

- **Baptism and confirmation**: For Catholics, the baptism of an infant ensures and signals that it is "reborn". For other Christian religion, it is baptism (possibly total immersion) as an adult that constitutes "rebirth". As an adult, the ceremony may involve a formal affirmation through which the individual claims to be "born again" and is recognized as such. For non-Protestant Christians (Catholics, Anglicans, Episcopalians, etc) the ritual of confirmation at puberty (or later) may be interpreted as a form of rebirth. There is however controversy amongst Catholics as to the extent to which this can be considered an "initiation". Typically the rituals of one social group are not recognized as valid by others -- however the individual may be understood to have been transformed

- **Awards, prizes, medals**: Social groups may choose to recognize achievements that constitute a form of rebirth through awarding honours and medals. The challenge of such ceremonies is typified by experiences of some who have been transformed by heroic achievements (as in warfare) but experience their transformation as completely diminished and degraded by the process by which their achievement is recognized and a medal awarded. The process may well have more to do with society's appropriation of "rebirth" than with the personal significance of being "born again" through that process.

- **Anointment**: In adulthood, the embodiment of the highest symbolic roles may be marked by anointment. Examples include the anointing of pharaohs and bishops. It may be typical in recognition of advancement within a priesthood.

- **Group affiliation**: Joining a groups may be perceived, experienced and described as a form of rebirth -- of being "born into" the group and its belief system. Becoming a Freemason has for example been described as a third birth, or becoming "thrice-born".

- **Games and sports**: Competition creates situation of "death" in the event of loss, and a form of "birth" in the event of success (and being recognized and honoured as "champion") -- people are "born again" or "reborn", especially after any previous "death". Of particular interest are the complexities of interactive internet games in which the participant operates competitively in a virtual
world through a personalized "avatar". Avatars may "die" many times during the course of the game, through accident or combat, but on each occasion then have opportunities to be "reborn". Such highly popular games may be seen as offering a simulation of the cycle of life and death that is a feature of the belief system of some religions.

C. Psycho-behavioural rebirth

It is in this category that the possible behavioural consequences of the forms of "rebirth" noted above may become significant for the individual and recognizable to a degree by others. A religious community may seek to facilitate such a shift in behaviour and to sustain those with a tendency [resources]. The focus remains however on the outer manifestations of any inner "rebirth".

- From "sin" to "virtue": Typical examples are the shift: from substance abuse (including eating disorders, alcohol, drugs); from sexual promiscuity; from gambling; and from domestic violence. These are themes that figure in the discourse of evangelists as necessary consequences of being "born again". A successful diet may result in an experience described as being "born again". However it is also the case that individuals, from a condition of "virtue", may discover such "sins" and be effectively "born again" into a life of sinfulness.

- Changing pattern of consumption: The emerging challenges to lifestyle, quality of life and the condition of the environment, and the reduced availability of non-renewable natural resources, may lead to changing patterns of consumption. The psycho-behavioural conversion to such patterns can range from mild to highly radical, as documented by Nadia McLaren (****). Efforts to downsize lifestyle towards voluntary simplicity may be experienced as a rebirth, as being "born again" into a new life -- possibly resulting from a form of conversion experience.

- Conversion: This is the process which may well take place independently of any ceremonial context -- or unforeseen by an individual in that context. It is the process in which an individual has (or claims to have, or is considered to have) a change of heart and mind.
  - Political: At one extreme it may be a political conversion through which the social structure is reinterpreted -- from/to communism or capitalism, for example.
  - Religious: For the religious, and typically Christian evangelicals and fundamentalists, it is perceived as a significant transpersonal experience, possibly triggered by the processes of a religious assembly. Through that process the person is understood as having "born again" into Christ. Since it may then evolve recitation of the "sinner's prayer", there is a natural openness to the conversion of convicted criminals. Some religious groups are more assiduous than others in seeking to test and verify claims of a genuine change of heart and mind through a conversion process.

- Lifestyle: ***

D. Developmental rebirth

The following understandings of rebirth no longer focus on preconditions but rather on a developmental pathway, or cycle, imbued by emerging awareness of the subtleties of its guiding values, perhaps as "strange attractors" (Human Values as Strange Attractors, 1993) [resources]. The emphasis here might be understood as more "descriptive" of the stages and their affective dimensions than on the cognitive insights associated with them (as discussed later).

- Education: An educational pathway (whether imposed, chosen, or the consequence of circumstances), offers a succession of steps at each of which the person may be "born" into a new context. Any graduation may be understood in that light. The new opportunities and freedoms may be experienced as a form of "rebirth"

- Perspective: Life may be progressively understood, independently of any formal education, as the acquisition of experience and maturity that offer a new perspective on psycho-social dynamics and the identity of the individual. Each new sense of perspective acquired may be experienced as a form of "birth", or a "rebirth" -- the emphasis being on the discovery of new viewpoints rather than subtler insights (discussed below) that may be associated with such perspectives.

- Initiation: Traditionally the mystery schools of all ages have focused on a sequence of initiations through which greater or more profound understanding is progressively embodied. Whilst entry into Freemasonry may be recognized as a "third birth", some forms of Freemasonry recognize up to 33 "degrees" -- each presumably associated with a new level of insight.

- Cultural creativity: Independently of any particular therapy or experience, and perhaps sustained by the cultural context, individuals may acquire a distinct set of values, behaviours, perspectives and insights. Recent surveys have identified the set of such people as "cultural creatives" -- significant to the renaissance of society. The values may be associated with a form of altruism, but not necessarily in its traditional philanthropic sense [more ***]

- Individuation: Psychoanalysis and psychotherapy of the "healthy" may focus on an individuation process (a journeying or life pilgrimage) through which a person is successively reborn into new understandings -- notably guided by inner imagery rather than inculcated by outer prescription.
  - unborn, animals, blacks etc untermensch
  - Nibiru, gods on earth
  - achieving Nirvana: twice born capable of achieving Nirvana in any given lifetime
  - Maharishi
E. Therapeutical rebirth

In this cluster the focus is on the experiential quality of the individual, of which any behavioural consequences are merely symptoms. Here however the concern is with the actions of the therapist seeking to facilitate the "rebirth" of the person [resources]. In an ideal spiritual or religious community, this therapeutic preoccupation for the transformation of the inner life of the person would be distinct from any preoccupation with its outer consequences. The focus here might usefully be understood as being on the preconditions for any subsequent acquisition of transforming insight.

- **From anxiety, trauma and neurosis:** As with the preceding "sins", people may experience the release of these psychological constraints as a process of being "born again".

- **Midwifing the conversion rebirth:** Evangelical assemblies seeking to encourage conversions making extensive use of facilitation techniques to bring about a healing process

- **Psychotherapy:** The many forms of psychotherapy are particularly focused on means of facilitating a change of awareness than may be experienced and labelled as a form of "rebirthing" or feeling "born again". One form of psychotherapy is termed "rebirthing".

- **Mentors, tutors and coaches:** Although such guides do not claim to be qualified psychotherapists, they may offer insight specifically focused on a shift in the attitude of the person (see Attitude Entrainment)

- **Self-help:** As the term indicates, this is a form of do-it-yourself therapy that may offer the promise of being "born again" or "born anew" -- or becoming a new person.

- **Discipleship:** Individual therapy may also be obtained through discipleship, affiliation with a guru or master.

F. Cognitive perspective

Here the emphasis is on knowledge and how it is organized in terms of different levels of insight [resources].

- **Metacognition:** Educators recognize the role of metacognition at a very early stage in cognitive development in children. Animal behaviourists seek traces of it in animals. Its emergence is a form of "second birth".

- **Critical thinking:** This is the capacity to reflect on thought processes and to determine their adequacy to a situation. It is characteristic to different degrees, of a number of disciplines and professions. The breakthrough into critical capacity is intellectually a form of "second birth". It could be considered basic to any form of "research". It is a necessary characteristic of consultants in general (notably management consultants), therapists, professional critics (art, drama, literary, etc). It is also a characteristic of sceptics (cf the Sceptical Inquirer). Management consultants in particular are highly focused on the transition from an outmoded form of framing operational reality to one that is more appropriate (eg Edward de Bono. From Rock Logic to Water Logic). These transitions may be understood in terms of being cognitively "born again".

- **Philosophy:** Whilst critical thinking may be essential to some forms of philosophy, a philosophical perspective might be characterized primarily by a radical search for comprehensive coherence -- engaging the knower with the known. The point has perhaps been well made by the statement of Socrates that "An unexamined life is not worth living" -- or the Delphic injunction to "Know Thyself". A person's philosophical development may be marked by various forms of "birth" into new understandings. The flavour is also well carried by a book title of Mary Catherine Bateson (Composing a Life) or by the experiment with reality that Mahatma Gandhi used to frame his life (My Experiments with Truth).

- **Aesthetic sensibility:** For John Keats (Negative Capability, 21 December 1817), as a poet, the quality of knowing is as important as the grasping after what may be known. He recognizes the need to be "capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason". The sense of beauty then "overcomes every other consideration, or rather obliterates all consideration". (see inf qual *) Achieving such heightened sensitivity is a form of rebirth.

- **Orders of thinking:** Various efforts have been made to distinguish different orders of thinking. The implication in this context, being that the discovery of the relevance of a new order of thinking is a form of cognitive "birth"

- **Cybernetics:** For Francis Heylighen: "First order systems thinking assumes that there is a 'real world' of systems that we can know, independent of the observer. Second order thinking adds the dimension of the observer into the approach. I contend that if we continue this process to a conceptual 3rd order thinking process, we'll realise that ONLY the observer is of any significance. If external events are unregistered by the observer, it is as if nothing has happened for that person. With this 3rd order (?) subjective model, different items become important than with the so-called 'objective' models". [more]

- **Cognitive development:** The model cognitive development of R Kegan (In Over Our Heads: the Mental Demands of Modern Life, 1995), according to Bernie Neville (Some Gebserian and Keganesque Reflections on Academic Writing), proceeds through a series of increasingly subtle subject-object differentiations.
  - In infancy (first order thinking), subject and object are not differentiated.
  - In early childhood (second order thinking) the immediate perception moves from being the subject of experiencing to the
object of experiencing. The child identifies with her experience.

- In late childhood/early adolescence (third order thinking) cross-categorical meaning-making becomes the subject which acts on the objects of experiencing. The adolescent identifies with the contents of his mind.
- The older adolescent (fourth order thinking) can disidentify from her thoughts (My thoughts are something I have, not something I am) and becomes capable of reflecting critically on the contents of her mind, which now become the object of her experiencing.
- The mature adult (fifth order thinking) can make a further subject-object differentiation, disidentifying from the system of thinking which frames fourth order consciousness and relativising its truths.

- **Cognitive structures:** Bernie Neville (Some Geobserian and Keganesque Reflections on Academic Writing) acknowledges that Kegan's model (see above) deals only with cognitive development. He sees Jean Gebser's archaic and magic structures (The Ever Present Origin, 1985 [1951]) in first and second order thinking.

- Third order thinking is grounded in the mythical structure. A great deal of what we habitually refer to as "thinking" is a rationalisation of myth. Our beliefs and reflections are collective, not individual, enmeshed as they are in the taken-for-grantedness of our tribal narratives. We can reason abstractly within a cohesive set of assumptions but fail to disidentify from our reasoning, which is framed entirely by a consensus view of reality which is identified with "truth" within our culture or sub-culture.

- Fourth order thinking is grounded in the mental structure. We engage in it when we leave the security of consensus reality and critically reflect as individuals on the validity of our ideas.

- Fifth order thinking may then be thought of as a manifestation of the integral structure. In Kegan's description we find reiteration of essential characteristics of an aperceptual, ego-free, integral consciousness:...In Gebser's notion of integrality and Kegan's notion of fifth order consciousness, reality is manifested not only in the aggregation of complimentary and incomplete "truths", but also in the contradictions and tensions between them. Where mental/rational consciousness fragments reality, the efficient integral consciousness "prehends the whole".

- **Systems comprehension:** J. G. Bennett (The Dramatic Universe, 1956-1966) articulated 12 levels of systems comprehension to replace the dualistic Aristotelian and Kantian categories (see Representation, Comprehension and Communication of Sets: the Role of Number, 1978) and developed an approach to organized complexity termed systematics of which Anthony Blake is now the key investigator. Comprehension of the systems proceeds in a definite sequence, given their order of emergence into awareness and the minimum number of terms required to exemplify their attributes. Although systems of any number of terms may be considered in order to encompass whatever degree of concreteness an individual is capable of grasping. The limitation is one of understanding.

- **Orders of abstraction:** Alfred Korzybski (Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics, 1933) proposes a focus on orders of abstraction in order to break away from the limitations of daily language through new ways of "thinking". He advocated 'thinking' on silent levels in terms of visual images, and he developed many visual aids for his theories including the Structural Differential, which in its most detailed form was a '3-dimensional' model of the differences between the orders of abstraction. Differences between the orders of abstraction include differences between verbal and non-verbal levels, between descriptions and inferences, between descriptions (2) about descriptions (1), between inferences (2) from inferences (1), between affect (2) about affect (1), between what we see and the external stimuli themselves, between one person's abstractions and another's abstractions, etc. [more] However it is claimed that the relevant work done in recursion theory, linguistics, artificial intelligence, the philosophy of language, natural language processing, formal semantics, denotational semantics, has been undertaken after Korzybski's formulation [more] although questions continue to be raised as to whether this is based on a misunderstanding [more].

- **Processing levels of scientology:** These are the levels through which a person is claimed to progress by "auditing", from first beginning in Scientology (L. Ron Hubbard, The Creation of Human Ability: A Handbook for Scientologists, 1954) to achieving the celebrated state of Clear, as a basis for the Operating Thetan levels beyond. This is defined as a state of complete spiritual freedom is attainable, achieved not on a temporary basis but on a stable plane of full awareness and ability, unqualified by accident or deterioration. The succession of levels is known as the "Yellow Brick Road to Total Freedom":

  - **Expanded grades:**
    - ARC Straightwire: Restoring a person's direct and immediate understanding of self
    - Grade 0 (Communication): Ability to communicate freely with anyone on any subject
    - Grade 1 (Problems): Ability to recognize the source of problems and make them vanish
    - Grade 2 (Overts and Withholds): Relief from the hostilities and sufferings of life
    - Grade 3 (Upsets): Freedom from the upsets of the past and ability to face the future
    - Grade 4 (Abilities): Moving out of fixed conditions and gaining abilities to do new things

  - **Solo:** Freedom from dramatization and return of powers to act on own determination

  - **Clear:** A being who no longer has a reactive mind

  - **Operating Thetan:** Levels I-VIII: Knowing and willing cause over life, thought, matter, energy, space and time.

- **Disciplines of action:**

  - **Disciplines:** Peter Senge (The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization, 1990) has articulated a set of disciplines for an organization that are primarily complementary rather than successive in their acquisition:
    - First discipline: Personal mastery is an individual's ability to know what they want and to work toward their goals.


To foster this discipline, a learning organization would create an environment that will allow members to shared vision, develop themselves toward the goals they choose.

- Second discipline: Use of mental models as an organization's and individual's internal picture of the world. In other words, this picture of the world is a paradigm to the organization.
- Third discipline: Shared vision where there is a building sense of commitment among the members of an organization to develop a common image of the future.
- Fourth discipline: Team learning works toward developing the collective thinking skills of members in an organization.
- Fifth discipline: Systems thinking as a way of thinking members adopt about the forces and interrelationships that shape the overall behaviors of a system.

- Meditation
- Cognitive dissonance

G. Experiential rebirth

Sections include [resources]:

- **Operacy**: This is an approach articulated by Edward de Bono (*New Thinking For The New Millennium*, 1999) that focuses on the essentially experiential skills of doing or making things happen, as well as devising mental patterns more effective than the mind's routine habits -- in marked contrast to descriptive thinking. Operacy is the management of thinking about doing. These are the skills gained in the process of developing a new idea (a strategy for action), developing a plan of how to implement the idea and then implementing that as an action, are important life skills. Operacy is the learning involved through the process of creative thinking, developing action plans, implementing these plans and reviewing the effects of their actions.
- **Flow**: A particular kind of rebirth is the understanding associated with the dynamics of the "flow experience" as documented by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (*Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, 1991).
- **Speaking with God**: the interaction of an individual with God, during a period of prayer or meditation, may ... God speaks to me (Catholic discipline with respect to its assessment)
  - hearing voices
  - voice of one's conscience
  - guardian angel, spirit
  - familiar
- **Born-again**: This is the conversion or resurrection experience, in Christian terms -- understood as an event which the spirit rises from the dead, where the conscious mind becomes aware of the superconscious mind.
- **Possession**: The, "born-again" experience, can be associated or confused with a "walk-in" experience in which another entity takes over the body and possibly the person's life, completely transforming the personality.
- **Psychadelic experience**: Users of psychedelic drugs claim that they offer a direct experience of the divine, undistorted by church, belief or revealed word [more | more | more]
- **Multiple personality (disorder)**: The transition of an individual (or a group) from one personality mindset to another (in a set of such personalities) may be perceived as the re-emergence or rebirth of the second [more]
- **Embodiment in song**: The embodiment of knowledge in the light of the chanted hymns of the *Rg Veda* has been explored by Antonio de Nicolas (*Meditations through the Rg Veda*, 1978), using the non-Boolean logic of quantum mechanics (P A Heelan, P A Heelan. *The logic of changing classificatory frameworks*, 1974). Language grounded in music is grounded thereby on context dependency; any tone can have any possible relation to other tones, and the shift from one tone to another, which alone makes melody possible, is a shift in perspective which the singer himself embodies. Any perspective (tone) must be "sacrificed" for a new one to come into being; the song is a radical activity which requires innovation while maintaining continuity, and the "world" is the creation of the singer, who shares its dimensions with the song.
- **States of consciousness** (see John C. Lilly. *The Center of the Cyclone.*) [more]
  - Perspective of yoga (I.K. Taimni. *Science of Yoga*)
    - Vitarka: Neutral biocomputer state, the state for the absorption and the transmission of new ideas
    - Vicara: Level of professional Satori or of basic Satori.
    - Sananda: Blissful state, making the Christ, the green qutub, realization of baraka, the reception of divine grace, cosmic love, cosmic energy, heightened bodily awareness,
    - Sasmita - nir bija: Point source of consciousness, energy, light, and love.
    - Dharma-Megha Samadhi: Classical Satori. Fusion with universal mind, union with God
- **Gurdjieff vibration level**
  - 768
  - 384
  - 192
  - 96
  - 48
  - 24
  - 12
Perspectives for the understanding of forms of rebirth

From the above schema, links are provided to excerpts from web resources presented as an annex (Web Resources on Being "Born Again": Annex to Varieties of Rebirth, 2004). Some of the distinctions made above are quite artificial. They are not necessarily mutually exclusive. There is a high degree of overlap or mutual interweaving between some of those highlighted -- consistent with their interweaving within a larger fabric. In considering understandings of rebirth from the above distinctions, it is useful to draw attention to the following:

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**Interrelationship**

**Authenticity**

Education (through a succession of qualifications) can model the succession of "rebirths", and the facility through which they may be achieved. Authenticity may be challenged by "tests" and "interviews", and recognized by "certification" and "qualifications" following specified periods of training or experience. As with education, the qualifications may also be obtained by deception, by payment, or be associated with false claims and counterfeit certificates with the complicity of bodies of the highest repute [more | more]. The nature of the rebirth may be a matter of assertion by those so "reborn" and any lack of verification may be tolerated by their communities.

Both the schema and the selection and presentation of resources are considered tentative. They are presented in this way as a means of...
introducing an argument (*Strategic Opportunities of the Twice Born: reflections on systemic camouflage of mass deception*, 2004) regarding the vulnerability of society to those of "higher" orders of insight -- who may not necessarily act in the interests of those of "lower" orders of insights, whether or not they make the unverifiable claim to be doing so in the longer term.

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THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD is the wisdom of man--
This is the end of Being, wisdom; this
Of wisdom, action; and of action, rest;
And of rest, bliss; that by experience sage
Of good and ill, the diametric powers
Which thwart the world, the thrice-born might discern
That death divine alone can perfect both,
The mediate and initiate; that between
The Deity and nothing, nothing is.

*Knowledge* by Philip James Bailey (1816-1902)

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