Strategic Patterns in terms of Knowing, Feeling and Action

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Strategic patterns in terms of knowing, feeling and action:
-- using a Chinese perspective
-- using a symbolic perspective
-- using an alternative Chinese perspective

Strategic patterns in terms of knowing, feeling and action: using a Chinese perspective

The four generic conditions highlighted in Figure 1 (whether associated with knowing, feeling or action) lend themselves to a potentially very interesting way of classifying any strategic undertaking or engagement. This can be done by using the binary coding system as applied in Chinese culture to the encoding of the conditions of change and decision-making identified by hexagrams of the I Ching. Aside from its value as a coding system, a case may be made for such an exploration in the light of the arguments of Susantha Goonatilake (Toward a Global Science: mining civilizational knowledge, 1999) as discussed previously (Enhancing the Quality of Knowing through Integration of East-West metaphors, 2000).

Rather than focusing on the classical BaGua combinations of three lines (two such combinations being used in each hexagram), the focus in what follows is on the use of the three pairs of lines that constitute a hexagram. Each pair of lines can take four forms, associated here with the conditions of the table.

Figure 2: Association of generic conditions with classical Chinese binary codes
(the word order of the descriptors in the feeling and action columns has been inverted, the abbreviations added here are used in mouseover labels within Fig. 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Binary Coding</th>
<th>Knowing (upper pair in Fig. 3 hexagrams)</th>
<th>Feeling (middle pair in Fig. 3 hexagrams)</th>
<th>Action (lower pair in Fig. 3 hexagrams)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KKK</td>
<td>known</td>
<td>felt</td>
<td>done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowns</td>
<td>knowingly</td>
<td>knowingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KLU</td>
<td>known</td>
<td>felt</td>
<td>done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unknowns</td>
<td>unknowingly</td>
<td>unknowingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UKK</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>felt</td>
<td>undone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowns</td>
<td>knowingly</td>
<td>knowingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UKU</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>unknowingly</td>
<td>unknowingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUU</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>felt</td>
<td>undone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unknowns</td>
<td>unknowingly</td>
<td>unknowingly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The possible combinations of knowing, feeling and action are then expressed by using the top two positions of a hexagram for the 4 variants of "knowing", the middle two positions for the 4 variants of "feeling", and the bottom two positions for the 4 variants of "action". This allows the combinations to be expressed by the following classical arrangements of hexagrams to constitute various possible "periodical tables" of strategies.

Classical Chinese Arrangements of 64 Hexagrams in Squares
Figure 3: Classical Chinese Arrangements of 64 Hexagrams in Squares

Placing the cursor on each hexagram below exposes the code pattern of Figure 2 and a version of the I Ching hexagram quality. Clicking on any hexagram below opens a page describing the hexagram condition from a policy perspective.

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**Figure 3a: Strategies ordered by Fu Xi pattern**
(see also J.M. Berger, *Eight Palaces Circular Arrangement*, 2006; also traditionally named as Eight Houses)

**Figure 3b: Strategies ordered by Jing Fang pattern**
(see Edward L Shaughnessy, *I Ching -- Mawangdui texts*, 1997)

**Figure 3c: Strategies ordered by King Wen pattern**
(the order of the hexagrams in the I Ching)

**Figure 3d: Strategies ordered by Mawangdui pattern**
(see Edward L Shaughnessy, *I Ching -- Mawangdui texts*, 1997)

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The four alternatives of Figure 3, raise the question of how many other “interesting” ways can such hexagrams be ordered in a square (or circular) arrangement. Of what value is each such arrangement to distinguishing the knowing/understanding, feeling and doing/action dimensions? To the extent that each is a form of “periodic table” of strategies, what is the significance of alternating between them?

For example, could each such ordering be in some way related to the four cultural “mindsets” identified by Magoroh Maruyama (*Mindscapes, social patterns and future development of scientific theory types. Cybernetica, 1980, 23, 1, pp. 5-25*) or to the four “languages” identified by Antonio de Nicolas (*The Four Languages of the Rig Veda*)? In that light, from a management perspective, Maruyama stresses the need for “polyocular” approach involving a plurality of orderings (*Polyocular Vision or Subunderstanding, Organization Studies, 25, 2004, 3, pp. 467-480*). On the other hand de Nicolas sees the four “languages” as relating to the processing styles of different brains, as discussed elsewhere (*Four+ Complementary Languages Required for Global Governance, 1998*).

Both authors effectively highlight the inadequacy of “mono-lingualism”, which might be understood in strategic terms as the assumption that collective (or individual) strategy could be adequately articulated in a single “language” -- an issue highlighted by the need for both the wave and particle theories of light, despite their paradoxical incompatibility. Such arguments can be enriched by research on the cognitive implications of pluri-lingualism as giving rise to enhanced capacity to shift between alternative perspectives without excessive attachment to what may appear obvious through any one such perspective. Is it currently being assumed, for example, that any global strategy can indeed be adequately articulated through a single “language” or epistemological framework? Might current planetary crises require a “pluri-lingual” approach, reflecting the epistemological plurality of both cultures and disciplines?

The challenge of shifting between epistemological frameworks has been elegantly highlighted by the challenge of using different tuning systems in music. It is appropriate to note that Jing Fang played an important role in the development of music theory.

**Strategic patterns in terms of knowing, feeling and action: using a symbolic perspective**

The relationships highlighted in Figure 1 and Figure 2 suggest the possibility of ordering strategies in terms of the approach developed by Arthur Young (*Geometry of Meaning, 1978*) as discussed previously (*Typology of 12 complementary strategies essential to sustainable development, 1998*). In the table in the latter paper, the dimensions distinguished in an adaptation of Young's work, are:

- 3-fold (corresponding to knowing, feeling, action in Figure 2):
  - Knowledge, Comprehension, Framing, Scoping
  - Concern, Involvement, Participation
  - Grounding, Praxis
- 4-fold (corresponding to known knowns, known unknowns, unknown knowns, unknown unknowns, etc of Figure 2)
In *The Geometry of Meaning*, uses his analysis to combine the 3-fold and 4-fold sets of categories in an articulation of learning-action cycles, relating the 12 resultant conditions to the traditional qualitative conditions associated symbolically with the zodiac -- as a "Rosetta stone of meaning". He provided a diagram of relationships based upon the twelve measure formulae of modern physics, which he used to describe the interaction of mind with matter. The 12 conditions are then symbolized as combinations of the traditional 3-fold categories (cardinal, fixed, mutable) and 4-fold categories (earth, air, fire, water).

The possibility of some such interface with a symbol system, held to be meaningful across a wide range of cultures, merits consideration at a time when the credibility of modern institutions and strategic initiatives is now questioned -- as most recently exemplified by the financial crisis (*Credit Crunch engendered by Hope-mongering: "credit crunch" focus as symptom of a dangerous mindset*, 2008).

**Strategic patterns in terms of knowing, feeling and action: using an alternative Chinese perspective**

In the light of the manner in which 3-fold and 4-fold category systems can be considered as interrelated, it is appropriate to note the complementary categorization of conditions of the *Tao Te Ching*, notably as experimentally related to another classic of that period, the *T'ai Hsüan Ching* (*9-fold Magic Square Pattern of Tao Te Ching Insights: experimentally associated with the 81 insights of the T'ai Hsüan Ching*, 2006).

Rather than the binary coding system of the *I Ching*, giving rise to 64 hexagrams, it uses a ternary coding systems that gives rise to 81 tetragrams.

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**Figure 4: Strategies ordered in the light of the *Tao Te Ching* and *T'ai Hsüan Ching***

*Commentary on Tao Te Ching Interpretation and the possibility of higher order patterning*, 2003

**Placing the cursor** on each tetragram below exposes a code pattern adapted from Figure 2

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Clicking on any tetragram below opens a page providing an interpretation of the tetragram condition -- Disabled facility

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There are potentially valuable insights to be derived from a mathematical, strategic and mnemonic perspective from such patterns, as previously discussed (*9-fold Higher Order Patterning of Tao Te Ching Insights: possibilities in the mathematics of magic squares, cubes and hypercubes*, 2003; *Hyperspace Clues to the Psychology of the Pattern that Connects in the light of the 81 Tao Te Ching insights*, 2003).

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