

Macrohistory, a tool to face complexity

Fabienne GOUX-BAUDIMENT
proGective / WFSF
Minneapolis - 30 July 2007
projective@projective.com



contents



- situation
 - convergence and integration
 - acceleration
- tool to face it
 - macrohistory: the Time Machine





]

1. situation

references:

- C. DARWIN
- P. TEILHARD DE CHARDIN
- E. MORIN
- M. CASTELLS
- R. REICH
- I. WALLERSTEIN...





When China's and India's GDPs Would Exceed Today's Rich Countries

]

global convergences

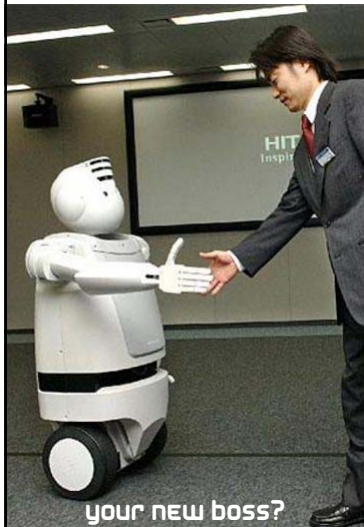
- expanding global economy
- accelerating pace of scientific change and dispersion technologies
- emerging powers; slow democratization and better governance
- global aging phenomenon
- expanding educated middle class
- increased pressures on international institutions for global regulation



Source: Goldman Sachs, *Global Economics Paper No. 1*




technology convergence



- force-multiplying convergence of the technologies: information, biological, materials, nanotechnologies, etc.
- growing two-way flow of high-tech brain power between developing and Western countries
- increasing size of educated workforce in some developing countries
- dual-use of new technologies
 - for freedom and for control
 - for commercial and for military

G solutions perspectives

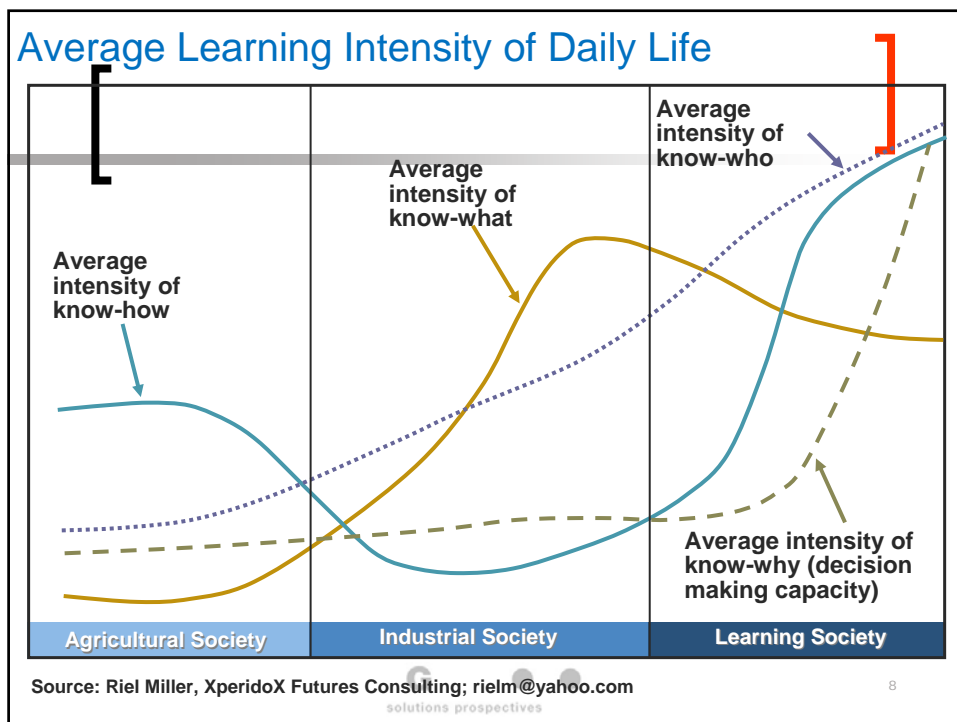
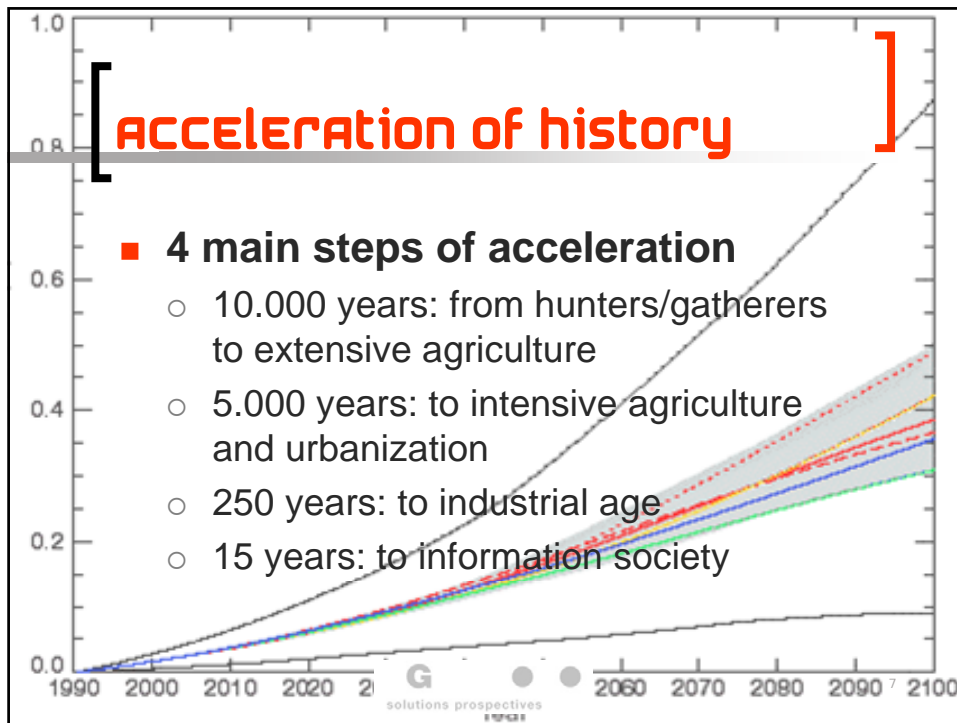
5

toward a converging society?

- emerging refusal of the increasing pressure on the environment and resources
- demand for a greater attention to universal human rights, democratic processes and sustainable development
- demand for transparency and accountability in the governance systems
- sensitivity to diversity, multiculturalism, recognition of minorities; revised values


G solutions perspectives

6



2. tools

- understanding the dynamics of change
- perceiving their long-run impacts
- → **macrohistory** : analysis of the phenomena capable to comprehensively influence the history of a society





[what is the future about?]

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ about Evolution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a five thousand years History ○ an ongoing increasing of integration ○ a speeding-up of events, S&T and change ➔ how to move within such a world? 	<p>lessons complexity uncertainty legibility</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ about Humanity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a search for happiness ○ a desire of progress ○ an inevitable responsibility ➔ how to get a more desirable future? 	<p>life quality HDI - S&T sustainable development building</p>



10

[the foresight process]



- *deep understanding*, a phase of diagnostic ensuring, through systems and dynamics approach, a deep comprehension of past and present evolutions;



- *imagining*, a phase to explore possible futures and to elaborate desirable futures, based on a problematisation process;



- *proposing*, a phase of presentation and discussion of the results in order to facilitate appropriation, recommendations and orientations.

solutions perspectives

11

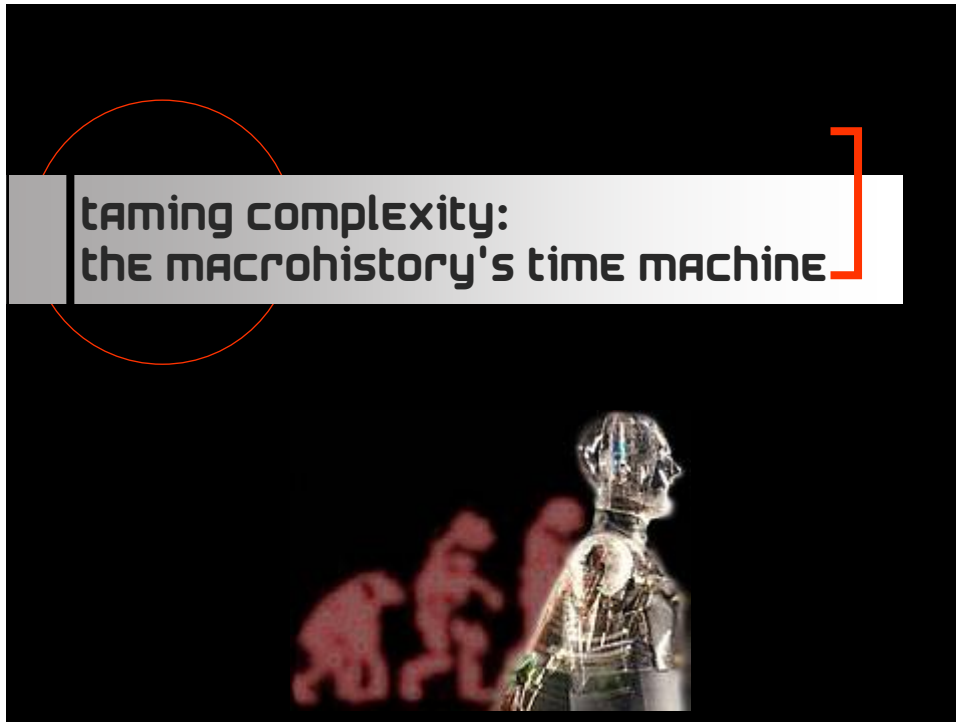
[The 5 pillars of futures studies]

- **Macrohistory** - the study of grand patterns of change, including evolution;
- **Anticipation and Mapping** - foresight and insight through methods such as futures scans, emerging issues analysis, age cohort analysis, the futures triangle;
- **Multiple Epistemologies** - decolonizing received futures, and exploring alternative ways of knowing the world, through methods such as causal layered analysis and integral analysis that focus on deepening our understanding of the future;
- **Creating Alternatives** - the exploration and creation of new futures (social and political design) using methods such as scenarios and nuts and bolts;
- **Transformation** - going beyond strategy to create desired futures through methods such as visioning, backcasting and action learning experiments.

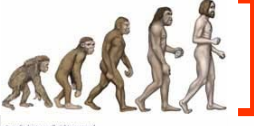
solutions perspectives

[from S. INAYATULLAH]

12



[the basics]

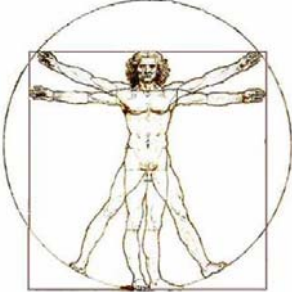


- from monkey to sapiens: **inheritance and novelty**
 - genetic program
 - adaptation, reproduction
 - memes?
 - high level of socialization
 - "social animal" Plato, trained for complexity
 - uniqueness
 - new capabilities (voice, bipedy, memory)
 - consciousness (spirituality, "I")
 - awareness (discovery, curiosity)

G ● ●
solutions perspectives

15

[human-being-ness]



learning
discovery
invention
mobility

curiosity

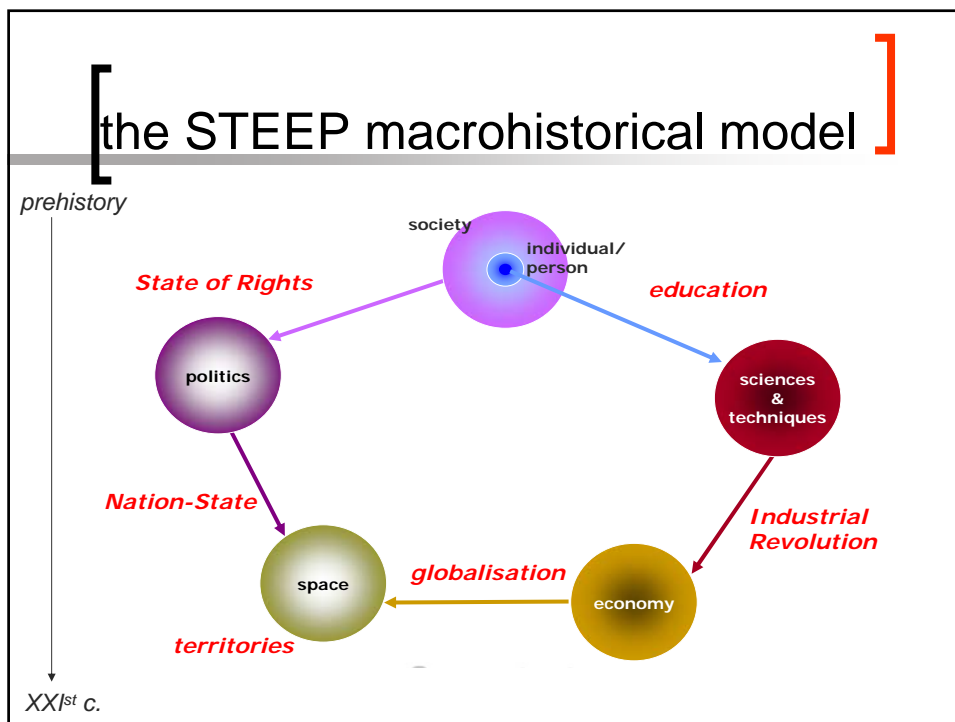
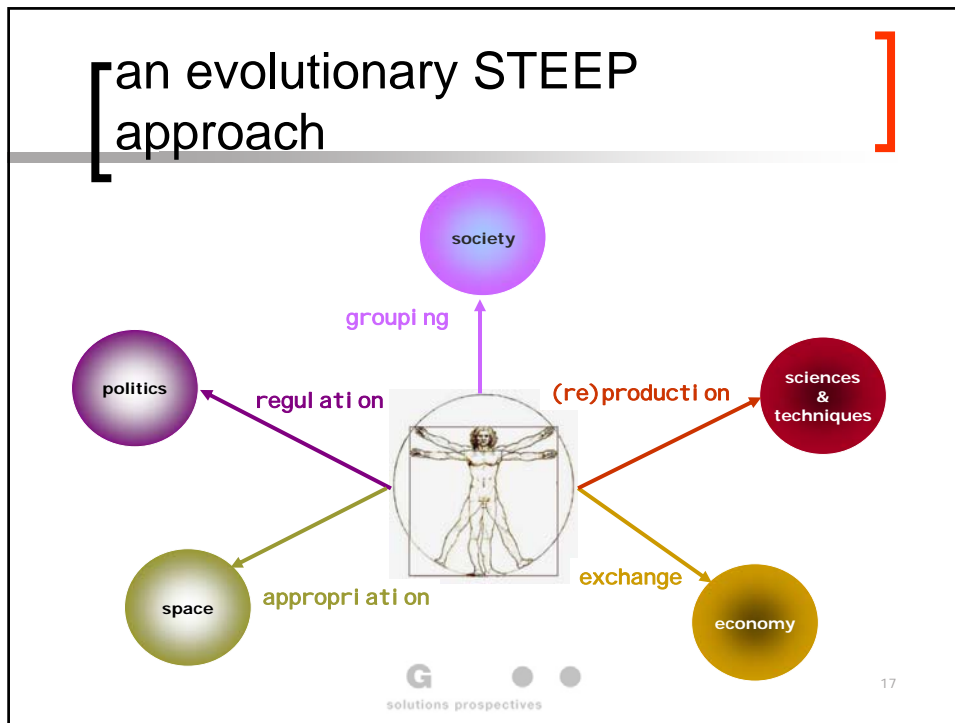
self-organization

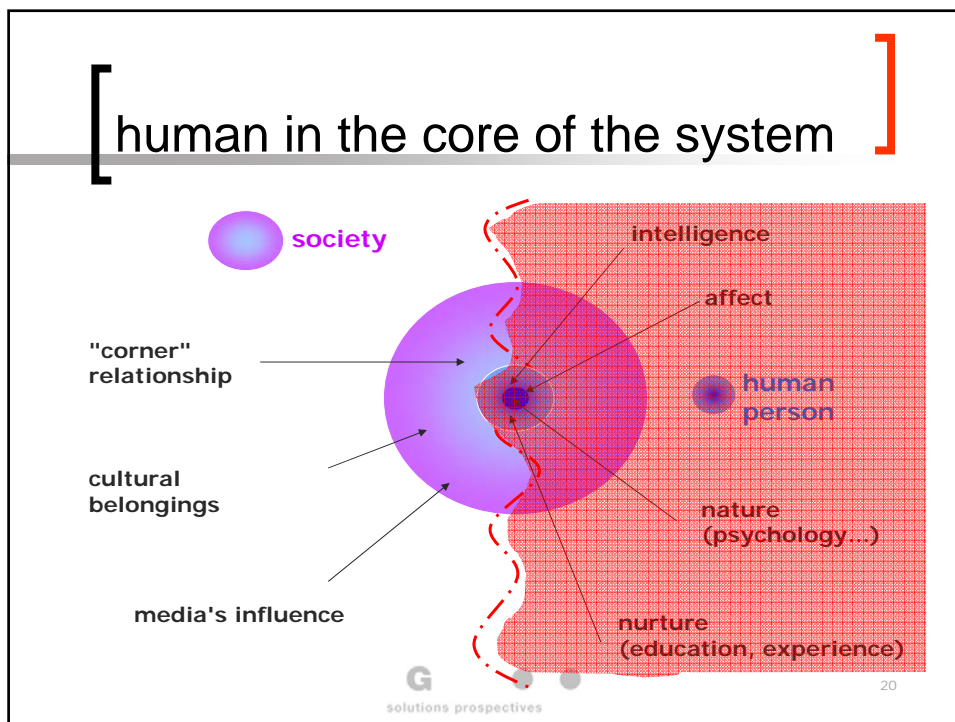
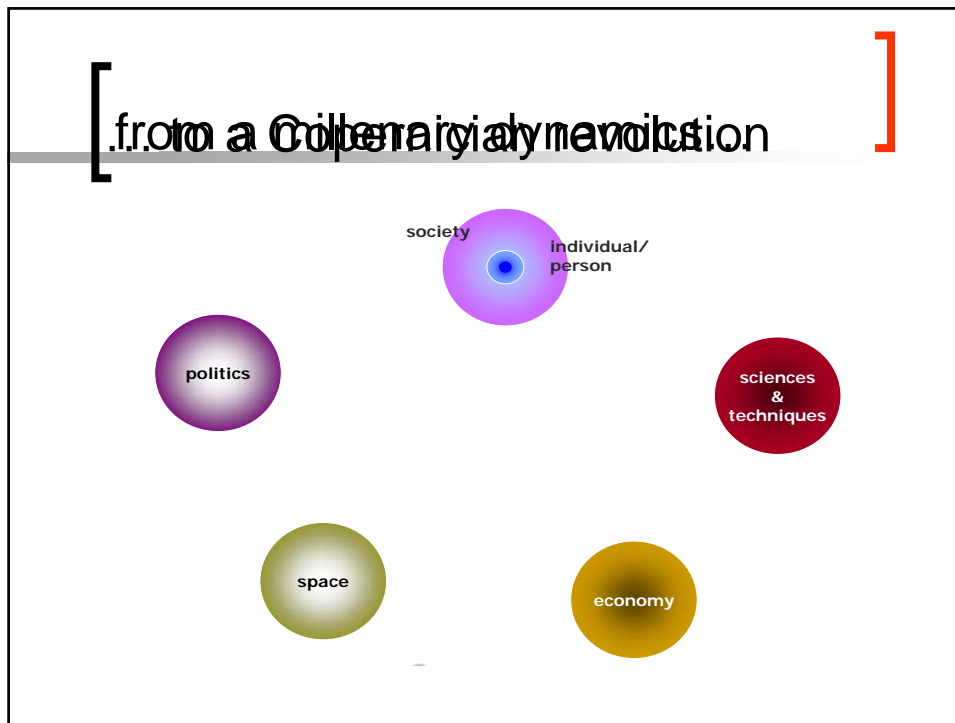
society/grouping
rules/politics

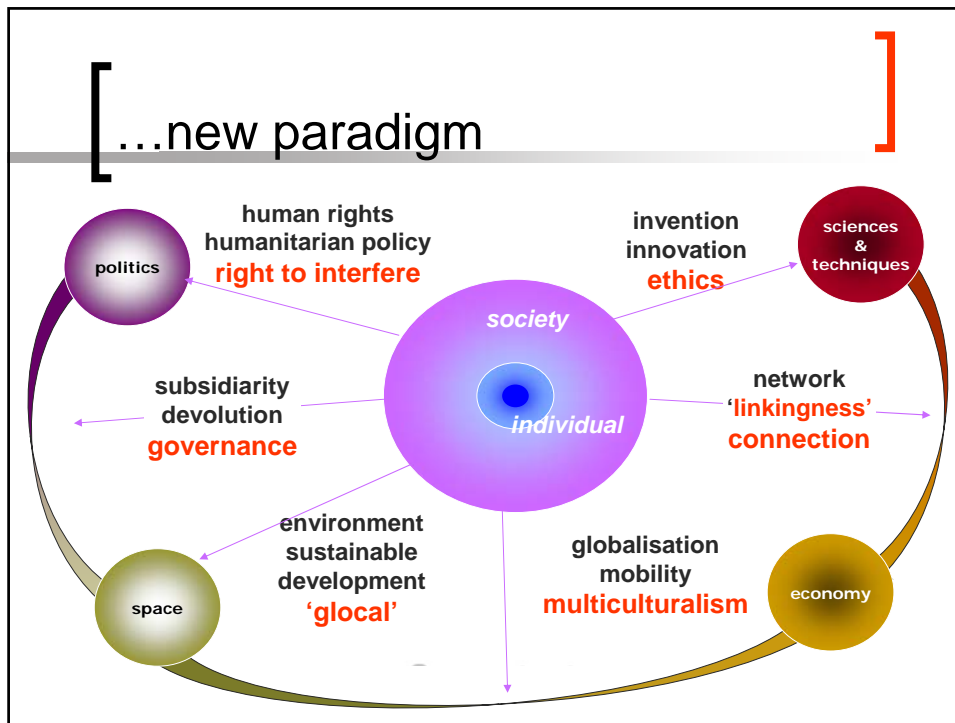
material improvement

from survival to life
adaptation
standard of living
consumption

solutions perspectives



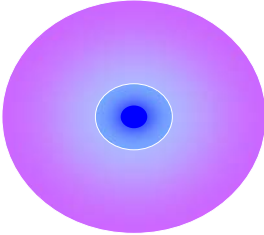




[the human capital]


revolution of intelligence

- **understand information**
knowledge society,
information economy
- **understand the Other**
network & project
collective intelligence
- **understand oneself**
bearings, identity, ethics,
father/mother-hood



human development

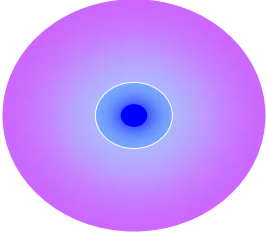
- **access:** to comforts,
knowledge, personal
flowering
- **progress:**
redeployment, long life
learning


22

[ageing]

learning to leave together

- **usefulness of the most aged people**
- **dealing with financial & physical dependence**
- **the throes of « jeunisme »**
- **adaptation of amenities**
transportation & housing
dedicated activities



the lack of young people

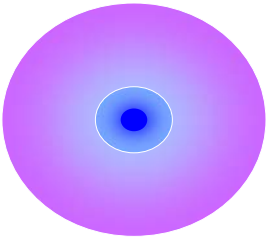
- **immigration** : importation of young foreign skilled labor force
- **inequalities** : pauperization, unusability
- **emigration** : *brain drain*, geotropisms

G solutions prospectives 23

[the time issue]

mobility

- **transportation**
automobile saturation,
inadequate public transport,
ecological concerns
- **displacements**
pendular, consumption
society, tourism as an
escape
- **transformation**
isochronize



densification of the present

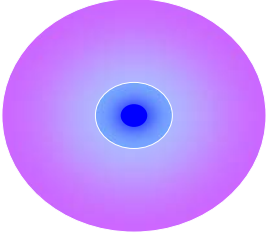
- **acceleration of rhythms** :
adaptation of the public services;
stress
- **densification of exchanges**
dematerialization, nomadic
devices (cell phones, laptop)
immediateness (baby, fedex...)

G solutions prospectives 24

[new governance]

emergence of the civil society

- **will to express oneself** whatever the topic
- **desire to be listened to:** fill the gap between decision-makers and citizens, gain a better knowledge of the real life
- **refusal of responsibilities** only those who are in charge are responsible

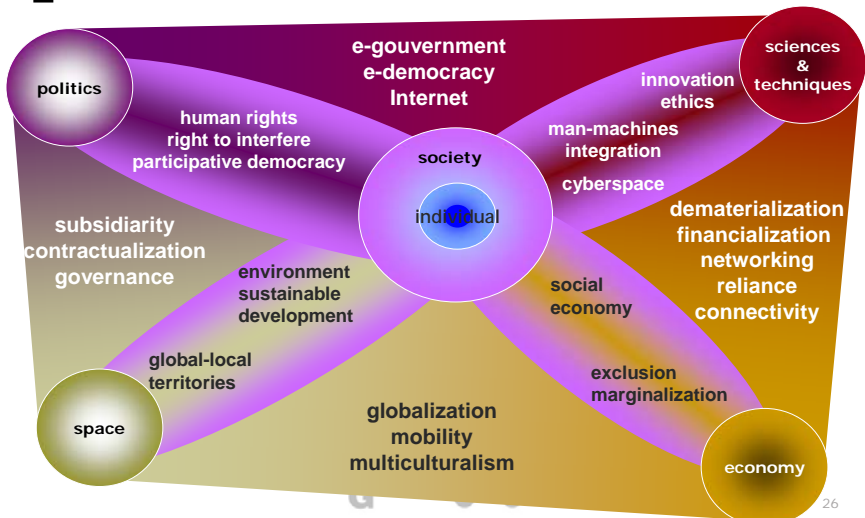


multi-level governance

- **partnership, cooperation** mutualisation of the risks, PPP
- **subsidiarity** devolution, decentralization

G solutions perspectives 25

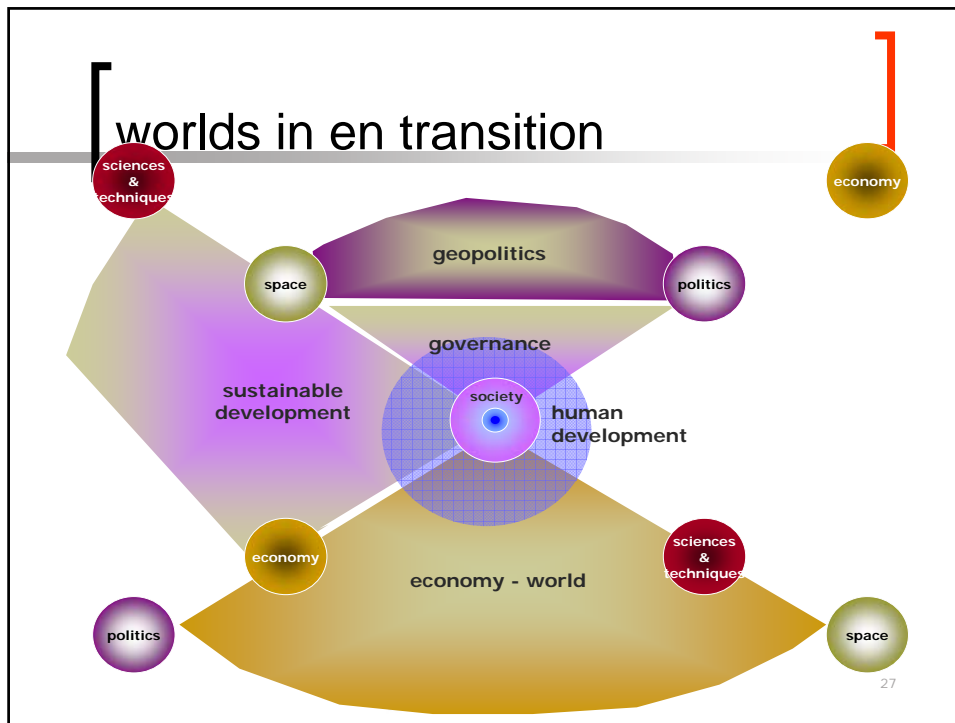
[an approach to complexity]



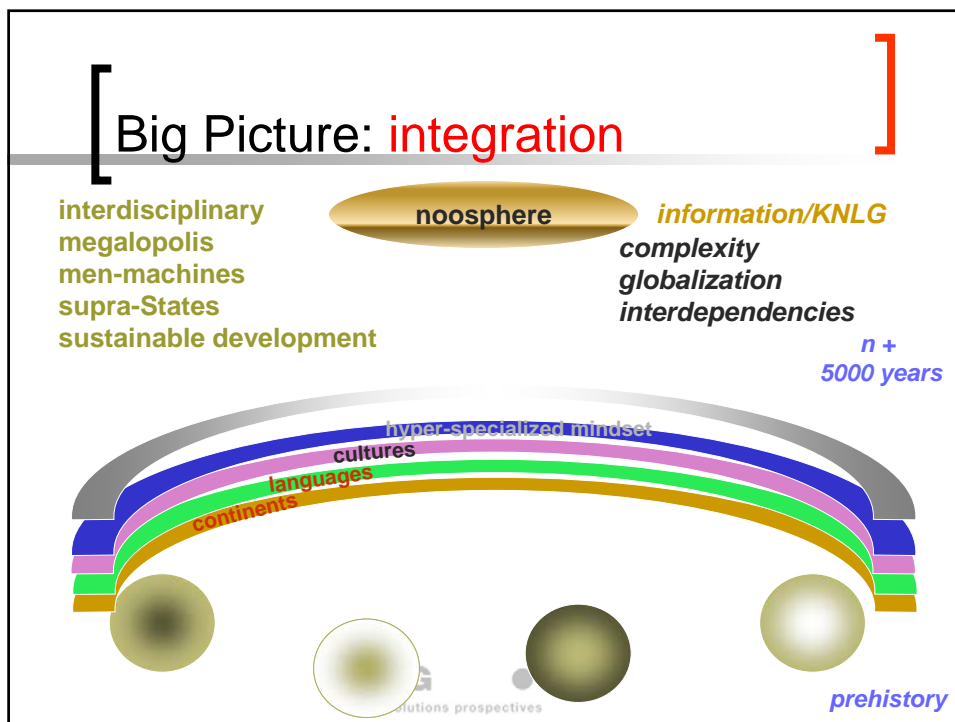
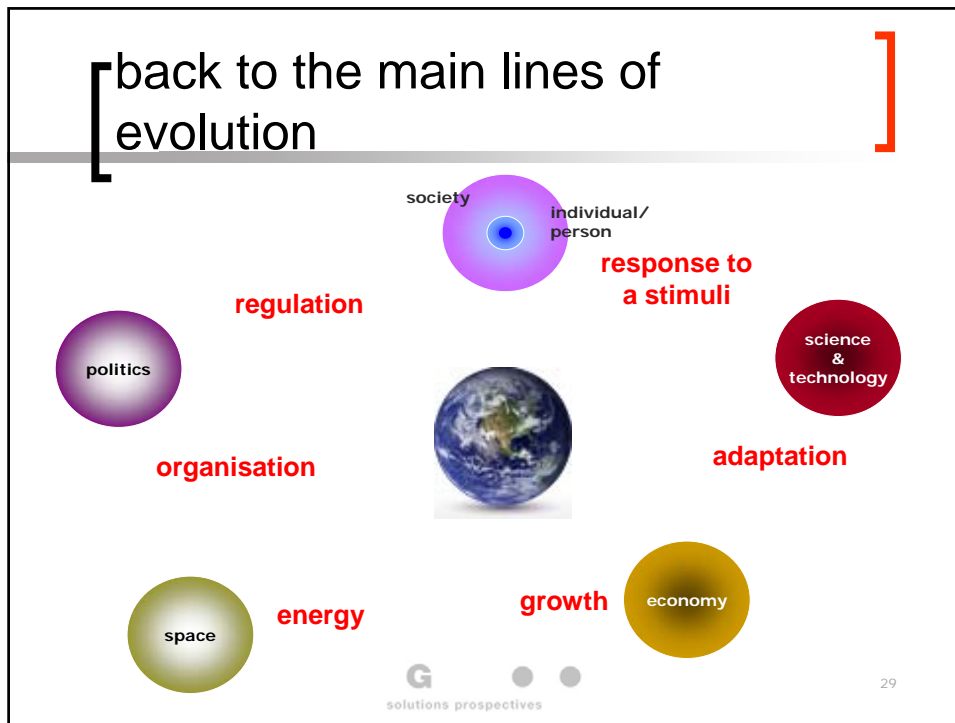
The diagram illustrates an approach to complexity centered on the **individual**. It is surrounded by several interconnected domains:

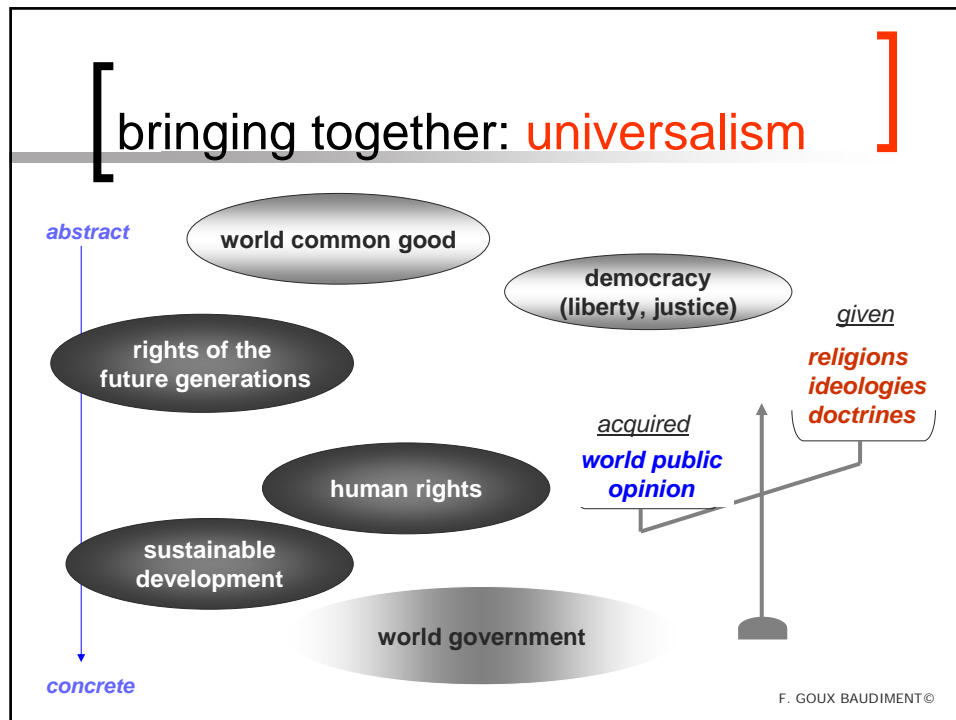
- politics:** human rights, right to interfere, participative democracy
- e-government / e-democracy / Internet:** innovation, ethics, man-machines integration, cyberspace
- sciences & techniques:** dematerialization, financialization, networking, reliance, connectivity
- economy:** social economy, exclusion, marginalization
- space:** subsidiarity, contractualization, governance, environment, sustainable development, global-local territories
- globalization:** mobility, multiculturalism

G solutions perspectives 26




A slide with a dark background and a white horizontal bar containing the text "3. conclusion". A red circle is partially visible on the left side of the slide, and a red bracket is on the right side.





[in spite of resistances...]

- although so slow, this movement is now perceptible at the scale of a generation. Hence some spontaneous resistances (xenophobia, 'sectorialism', identitarian withdrawal...).
- hence the need to look for what bring people together rather than to what oppose them; hence the emergence of "universalistic" (humanist) movements (Enlightenment, Renaissance...)
- this transformation opposes itself to the need of personal expression, demanding freedom and refusing to follow a common pattern.



32

[our future is still ahead of us]



Uncertainty, complexity and convergence are the main megadrivers mapping the road to the Future.

Creating the world we want is a much more subtle but more powerful mode of operation than destroying the one we don't want.

intelligence

vision

humanism

policy design

reality principle

implementation