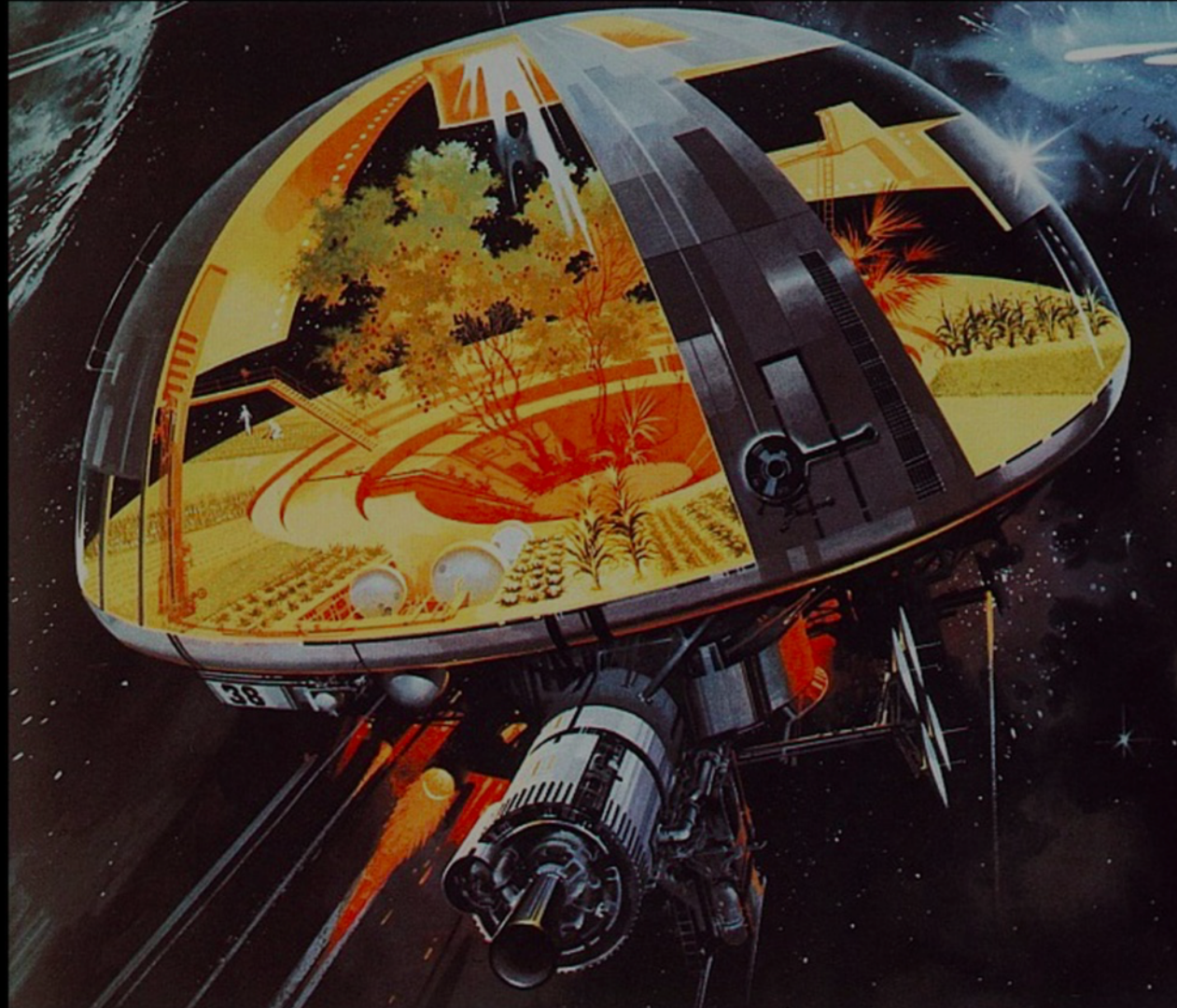# Building Better Worlds Through Science Fiction

By: Maheen Zaidi

The Undetected Signal
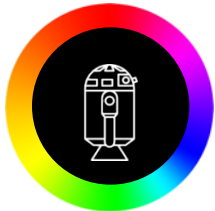
The Power of Narratives

Storytelling is Essential to Our Humanity

Objective Reality vs Fiction

Science Fiction Drives Tech Innovation

Science Fiction is Power.

And Yet...

Science fiction does not influence social innovation to the same extent.

Why?

Slaughter: Why Organizations Fail at Foresight

Short-Term
Thinking

Bounded
Rationality

Unexamined
Presuppositions

Mainstream
Economics

Limited Use of
Futures Methods

Lack of
Futures Literacy

Lack of
Capacity

Let's Add One More...

We Do Not Understand
The Complexity of Our World

What's Missing from Science Fiction?

Science Fiction Narratives...

- Begin or end on the precipice of change

- Resemble alternative realities
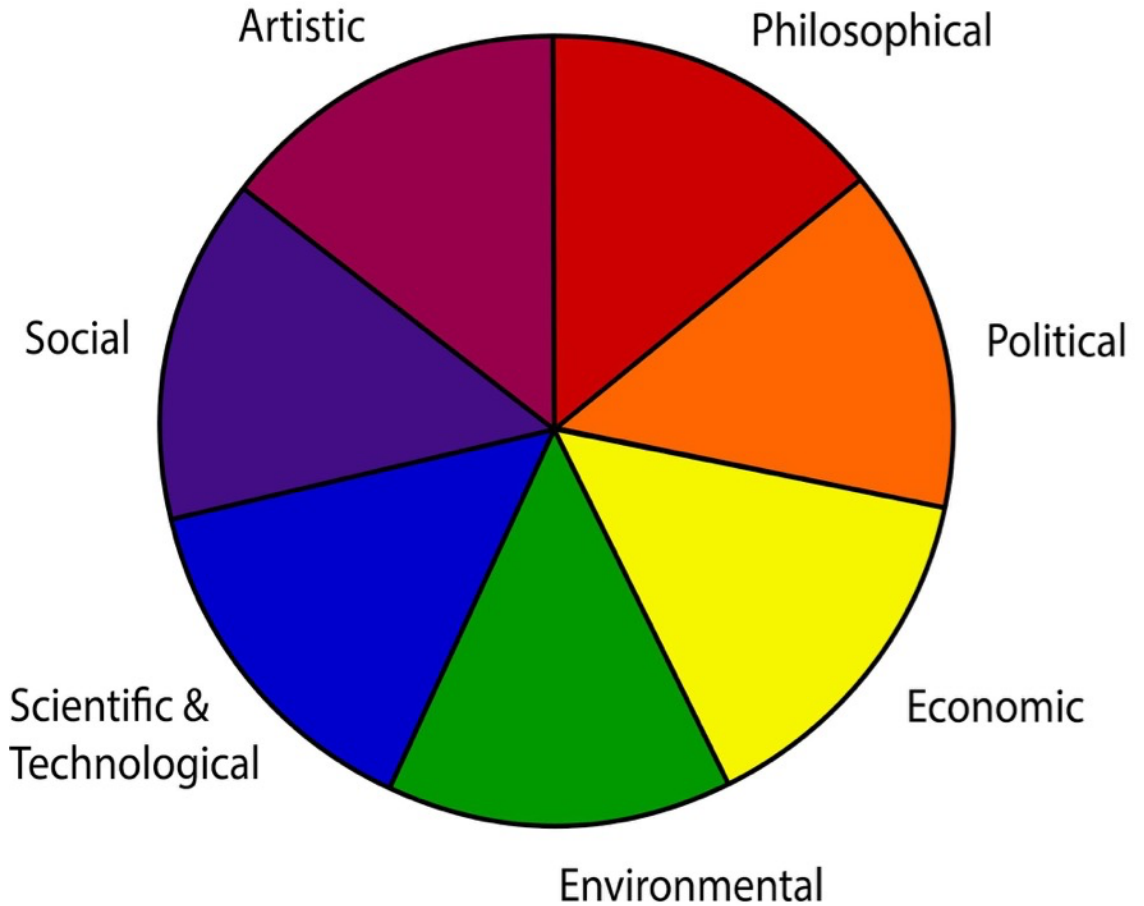
- Take place in a galaxy far, far away

What Do We Need?

1. Stories that leverage backcasting and show transitions

2. Acknowledge that reality can be rewritten

3. Better integrate foresight, systems, and narratives

4. Focus not only on social innovation, but transition design

An Answer: Worldbuilding

The Seven Pillars of Worldbuilding

The Seven Pillars of Worldbuilding

Philosophical
- Epistemology, metaphysics, value theory, logic and reason, and human nature

Political
- Creation, maintenance, and governance of entities

Economic
- Management of wealth and resources

Environmental
- Ecological systems, including physical and contextual space

The Seven Pillars of Worldbuilding

Scientific and Technological
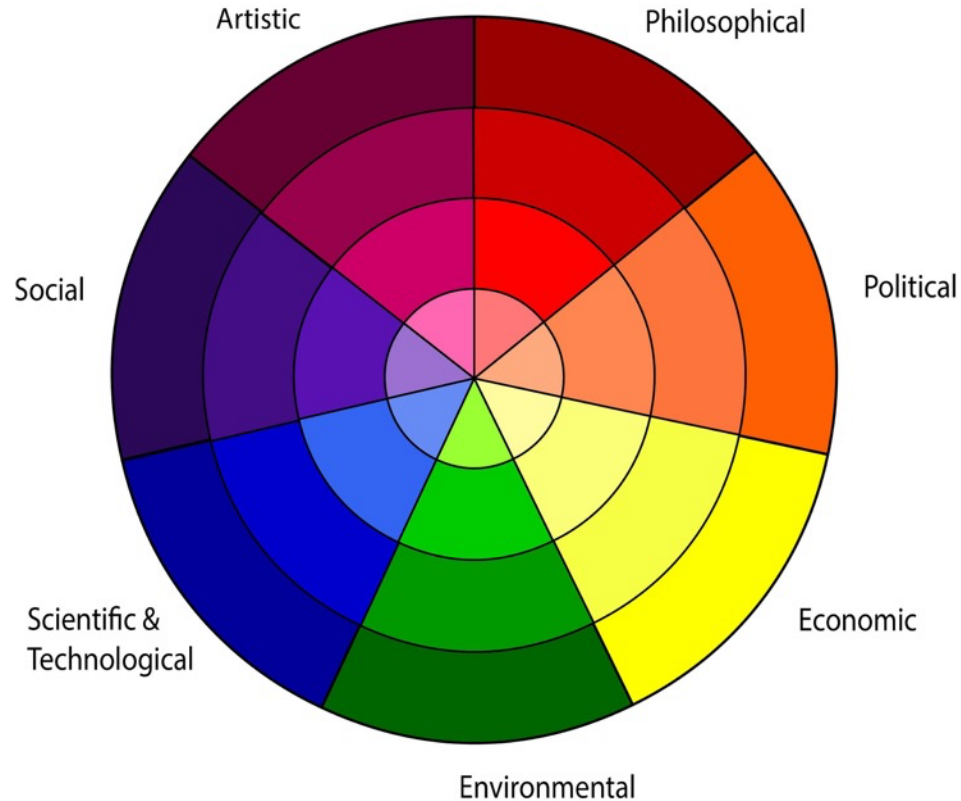- Observation of and experiment with the natural and physical world

Social
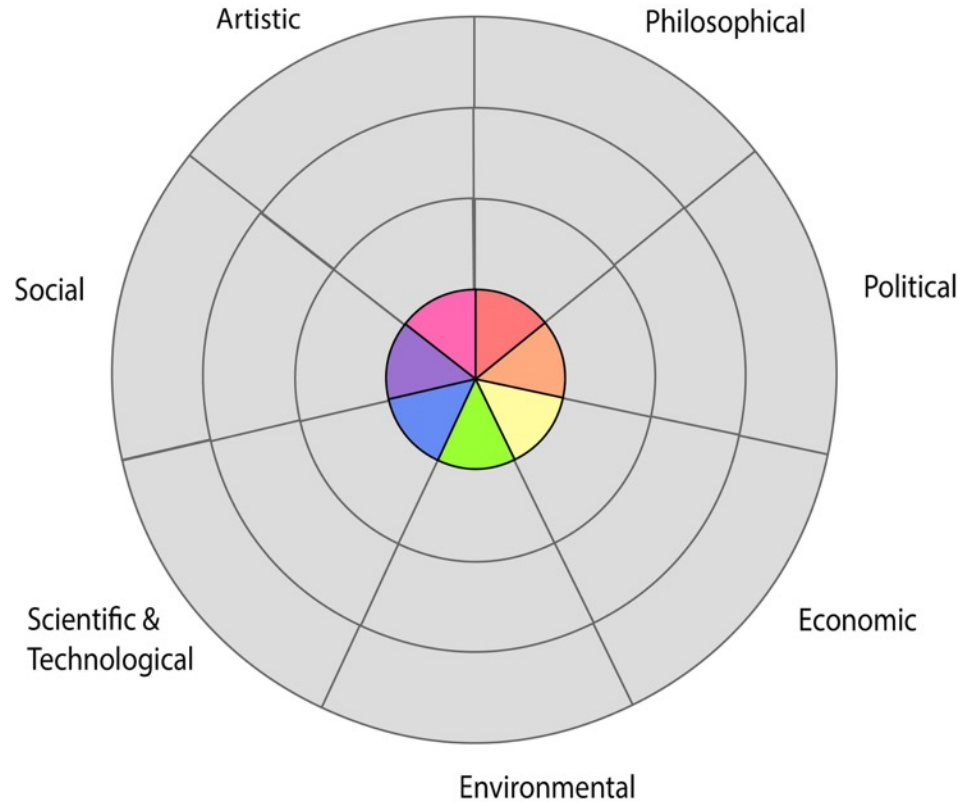- Social constructs, relational dynamics of our world and the systems

Artistic
- Representation, expression, and form
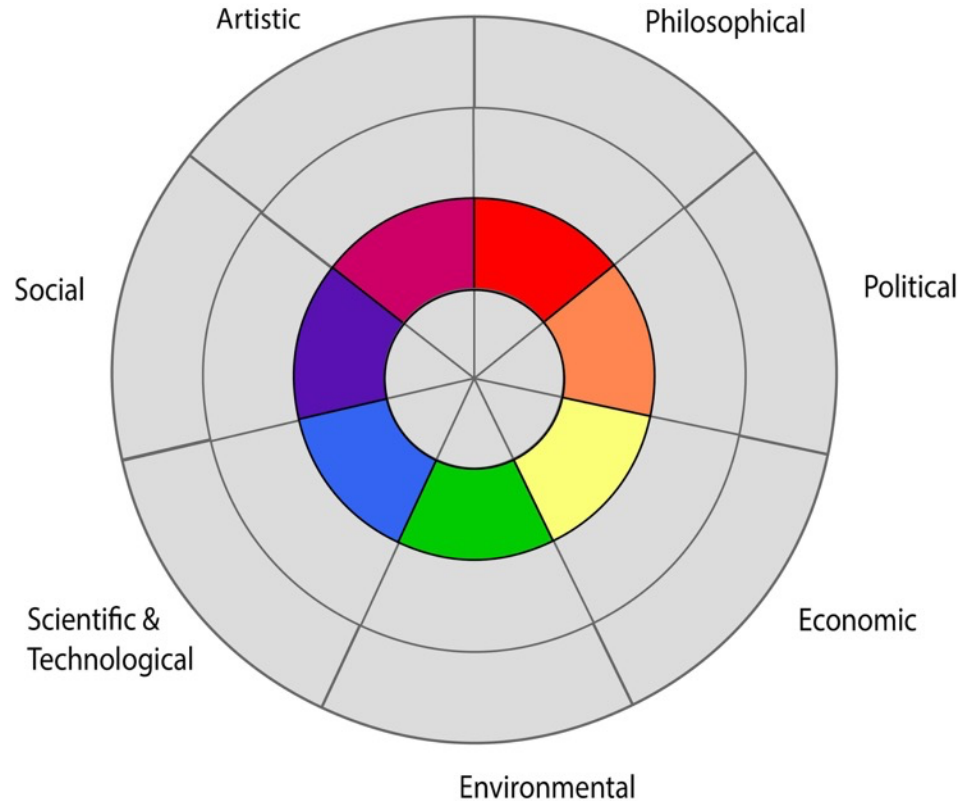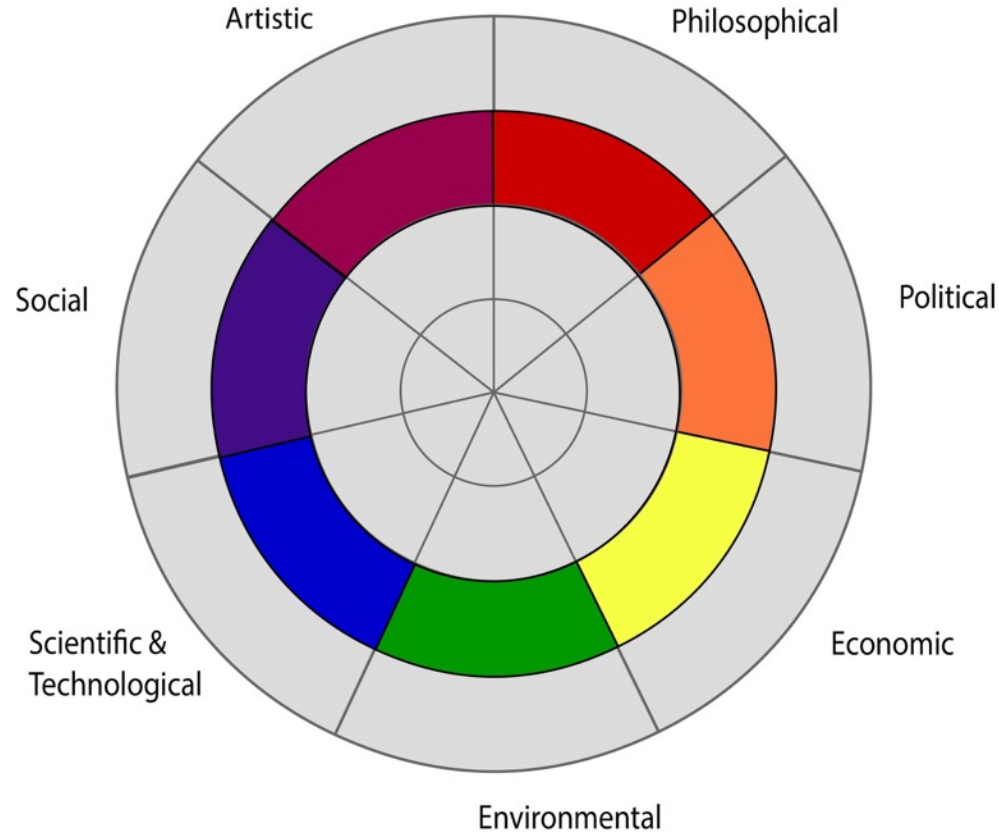
Worldbuilding Model: Adding Timescale
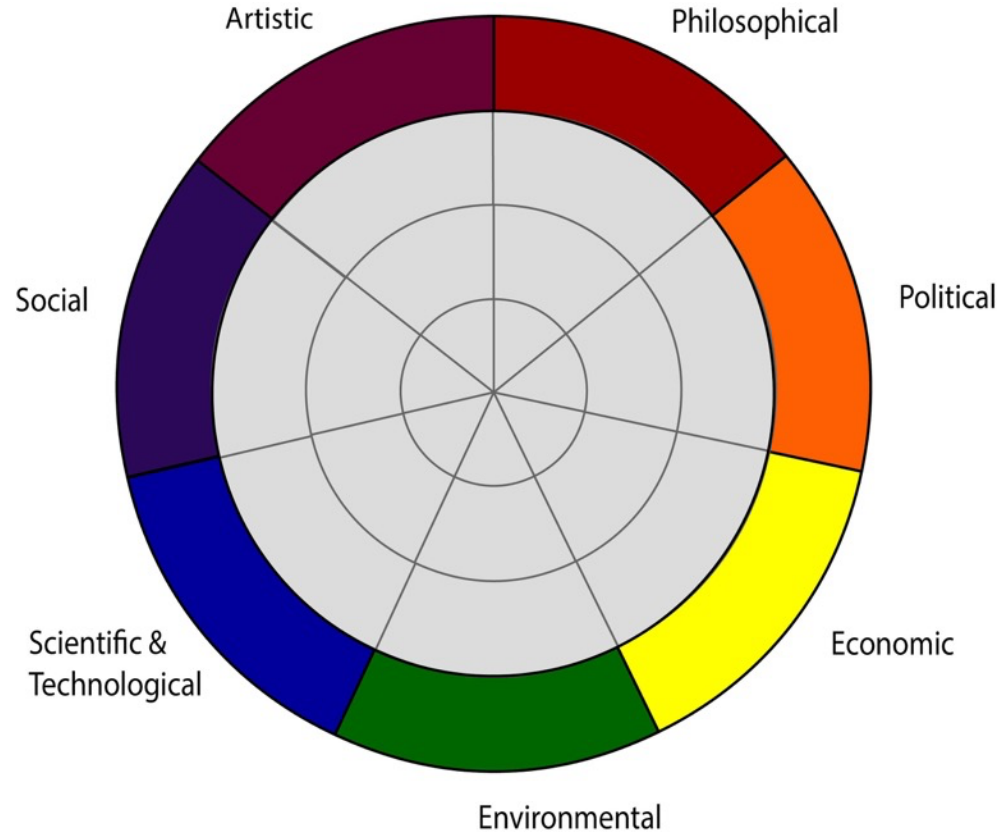
Time Scale: Individual

Time Scale: Communal/Organizational
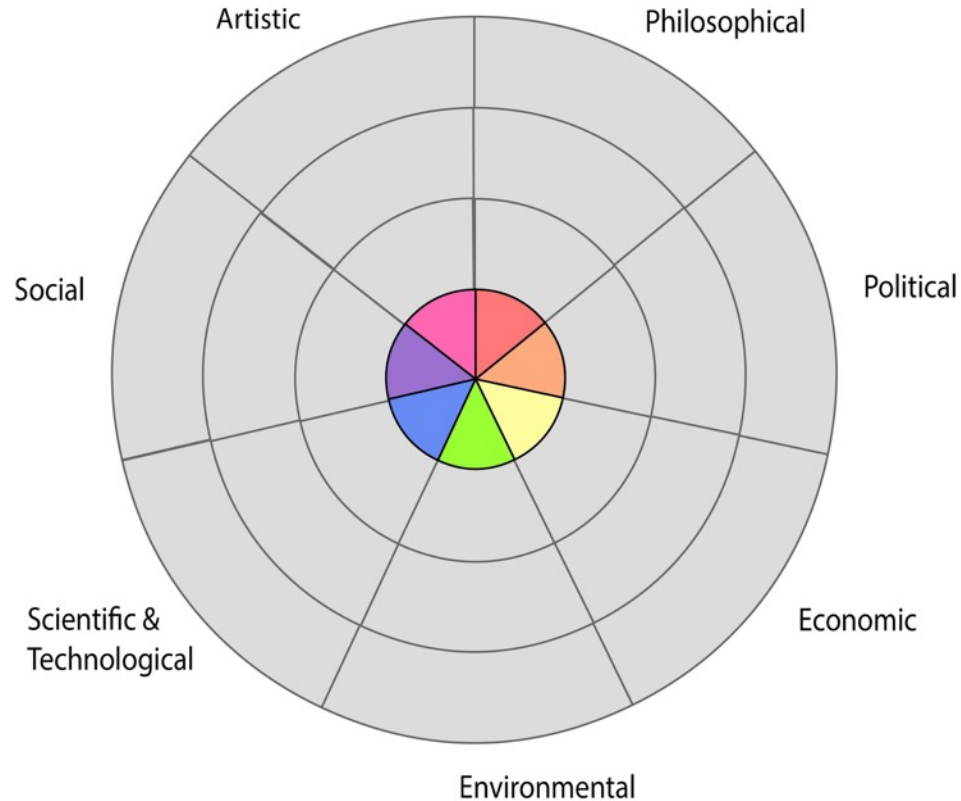
Time Scale: Societal
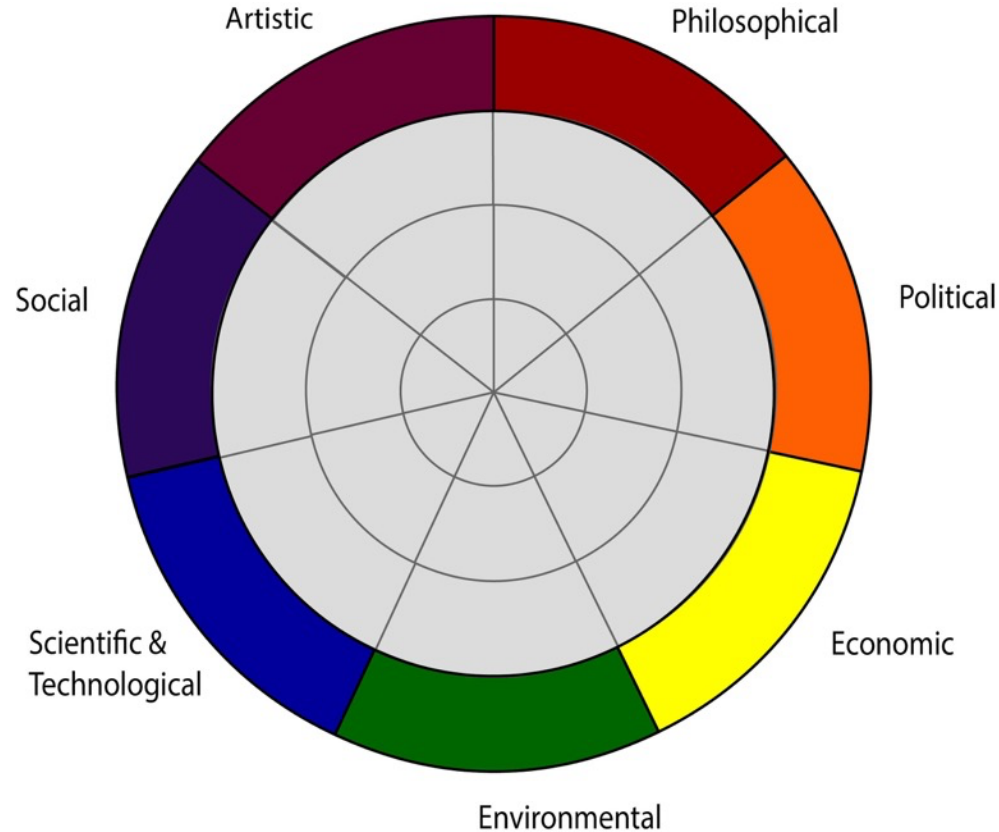
Time Scale: Civilizational

End Result: Reimaginings of New World Orders

- Complete worlds

- Systemically designed

- With civilizational foresight in mind
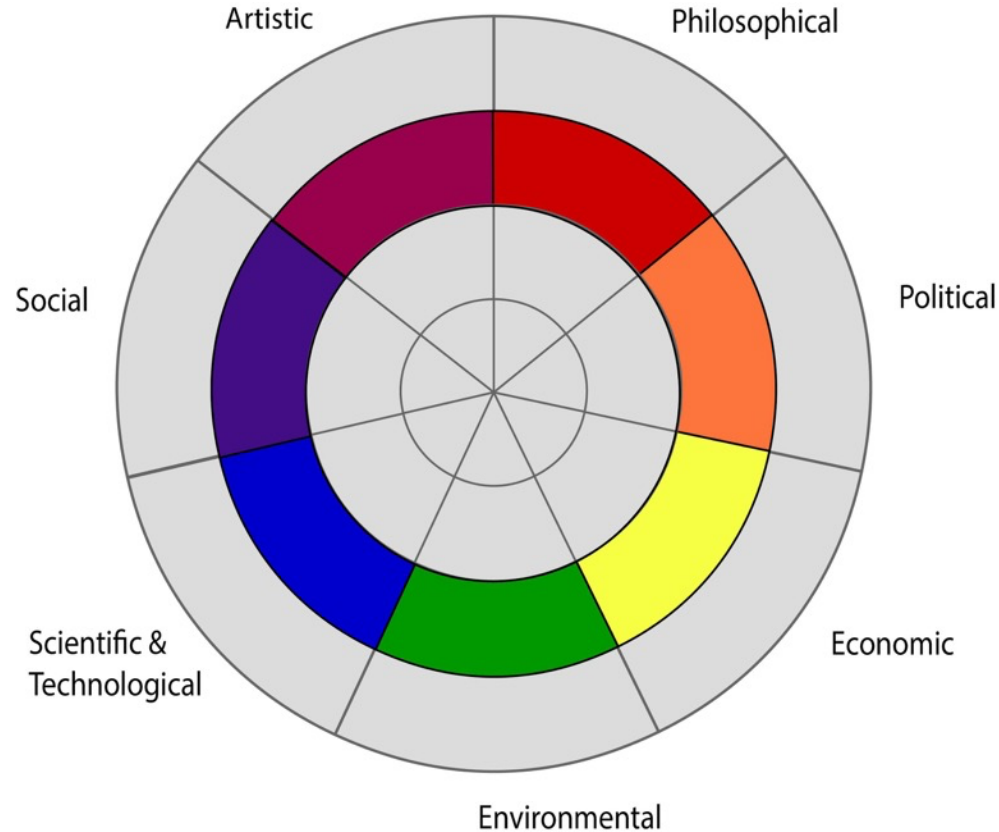
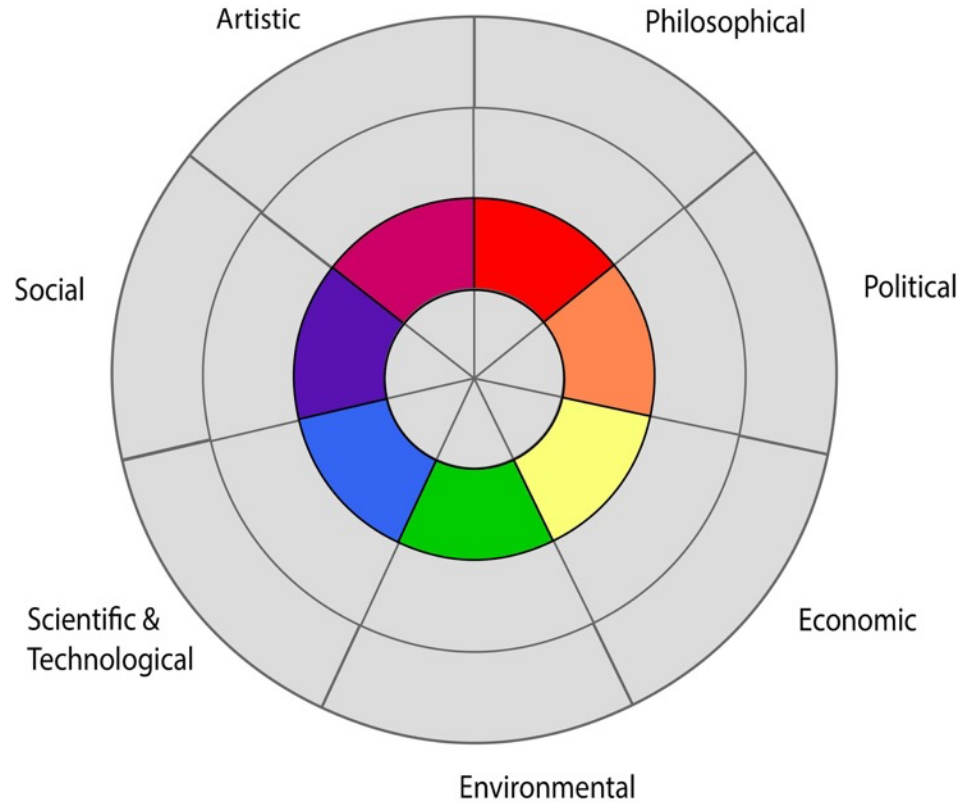# Incremental Shift: Current State

Preferred State: 30 Years

Backcast: 20 Years

Backcast: 10 Years

End Result: Transition Design

- Systemic evolution over incremental periods of time

- Backcasting a system from its preferred state

- Transition plan that connects our current state to that preferred state
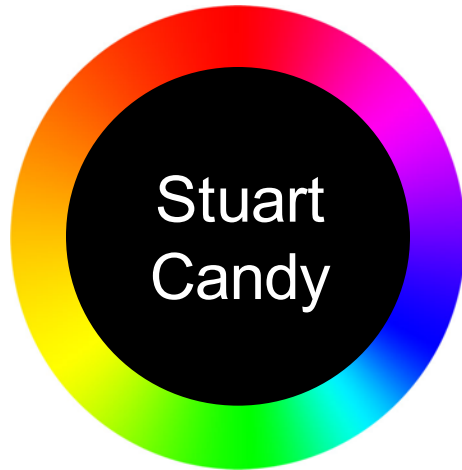
Real World Applications

- Creating new systems

- Transitioning current systems

- Foresight tool

- Narrative design tool

Implication for Science Fiction: A New Subgenre

Write Transtopias

Show us not only what the future could be but also how to get there.

Thank You

Stuart Candy

Michele Mastroeni

Your Feedback is Welcome!

Contact me:

Maheen Zaidi

mzaidi01@gmail.com

Live Long and Prosper