

SUMMER COURSE OF THE WORLD FUTURES STUDIES FEDERATION



THE YOUTH FOR A LESS SELFISH FUTURE

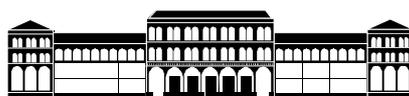
PAPERS OF THE

I. BUDAPEST FUTURES COURSE

Edited by: Erzsébet Nováky, Tamás Kristóf



Department of Futures Studies
Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration



Budapest, 2000

SUMMER COURSE OF THE WORLD FUTURES STUDIES FEDERATION

THE YOUTH FOR A LESS SELFISH FUTURE

PAPERS OF THE

I. BUDAPEST FUTURES COURSE

August 7-19, 1999
Budapest, Hungary

a UNESCO sponsored event
organized by a 30-year-old research center
on the crossroads of East to West and South to North

Department of Futures Studies
Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration

Budapest, 2000

Written by

Simone Arnaldi, Enric Bas, Jerome Bindè, Tamás Gáspár, Éva Hideg, Endre Kiss, Mária Kalas Kőszegi, Tamás Kristóf, Erzsébet Nováky, Judit Pék, Anita Rubin, Richard A. Slaughter, Tony Stevenson

Edited by

Erzsébet Nováky, Tamás Kristóf

This book of studies is sponsored by UNESCO.

© *Erzsébet Nováky, Tamás Kristóf, 2000*

ISBN 9635032447

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Publisher.

Publisher:

Department of Futures Studies
Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION – Erzsébet Nováky	7
MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR UNESCO IN THE COMING DECADES – Jerome Bindè	9
ARE WE READY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY?.....	9
1. FIRST CHALLENGE.....	9
2. SECOND MAJOR CHALLENGE: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.....	10
3. THIRD MAJOR CHALLENGE: THE DRUNKEN BOAT SYNDROME.....	10
4. FOURTH MAJOR CHALLENGE: PEACE.....	11
FACTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE PROBING FUTURE ORIENTATION IN MODERN AND LATE MODERN SOCIETIES, ESPECIALLY THE CASE OF HUNGARY – Éva Hideg, Erzsébet Nováky	13
INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS.....	13
1. THE NOTION OF FUTURE ORIENTATION.....	14
1.1 THE APPEARANCE OF THE SUBJECT MATTER IN FUTURES RESEARCH.....	14
1.2 THE THEORETICAL DEFINITION OF FUTURE ORIENTATION.....	16
1.3 LINKS TO TRENDS IN FUTURES STUDIES.....	19
1.3.1 EVOLUTIONARY FUTURES STUDIES.....	20
1.3.2 CRITICAL FUTURES STUDIES.....	21
1.4 THE EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION OF FUTURE ORIENTATION.....	23
2. THE FUTURE ORIENTATION OF HUNGARIAN YOUTH.....	24
2.1 SECONDARY MODERN SCHOOL PUPILS AGED BETWEEN 14 AND 18.....	25
2.2 UNIVERSITY ECONOMICS STUDENTS.....	26
2.3 ENGINEER-ECONOMISTS TAKING PART IN RETRAINING COURSES.....	29
2.4 NATIONWIDE REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF YOUTH.....	32
3. FUTURE ORIENTATION AND SOCIAL TRANSITION IN HUNGARY.....	33
3.1 THE FUTURE ORIENTATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND SOCIAL TRANSITION.....	33
3.2 THE FUTURE OF THE TRANSITION IN HUNGARY AND THE FUTURE ORIENTATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE.....	38
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	41
IN THE SEARCH FOR A LATE-MODERN IDENTITY – FACTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES PROBING THE FUTURE ORIENTATION IN THE MODERN AND LATE MODERN SOCIETIES, ESPECIALLY THE CASE OF FINLAND – Anita Rubin	42
1. TRANSITION AND LATE-MODERNITY.....	42
2. THE CHALLENGES OF INDIVIDUALISATION.....	43
3. CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY BETWEEN THE OLD AND THE NEW.....	45
4. THE IMAGINED PERSONAL FUTURE.....	48
5. THE FUTURE OF FINLAND AND THE WORLD IN THE IMAGES.....	51
6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	53
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	56

YOUTH AND FUTURES VALUES: AN OVERVIEW OF THE SPANISH SURVEYS – Enric Bas	59
1. WHAT IS YOUTH? REFLECTING ON THE CONCEPT	59
2. DETERMINING “YOUTH”, AS A GROUP OF AGE, IN SURVEYS: THE CASE OF SPAIN	61
3. BACKGROUND; VALUES AND ATTITUDES OF SPANISH YOUTH UNTIL THE 1990s	62
4. PRESENT TENSE; VALUES AND ATTITUDES OF YOUTH IN SPAIN TODAY	72
4.1 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS	77
4.2 SELF-CONCEPT	78
4.3 SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT	82
5. VALUES, ATTITUDES AND EXPECTANCIES	85
6. CONCLUSIONS	87
BIBLIOGRAPHY	89
POSTMODERNISM AND FUTURES RESEARCH – Endre Kiss	90
1. OLD AND NEW GOLD-MINERS – THE GENEALOGY OF POSTMODERNISM	90
2. THE CRITIQUE OF LOGOCENTRISM	95
BIBLIOGRAPHY	98
PLACING THE FUTURE ON THE EDUCATIONAL AGENDA – Richard A. Slaughter	100
1. THE EMERGENCE OF FUTURES STUDIES	100
2. WHY THE FORWARD VIEW IS ABSENT FROM EDUCATION	101
3. FUTURE KNOWLEDGE AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE FORWARD VIEW	102
4. FUTURES STUDIES PROVIDES NEW TOOLS FOR EDUCATION AT EVERY LEVEL	104
5. CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION OR FUTURES IN EDUCATION?	105
BIBLIOGRAPHY	106
CREATING POSITIVE VIEWS OF FUTURES WITH YOUNG PEOPLE – Richard A. Slaughter	107
1. THE DILEMMA OF THE YOUNG	107
2. THE PROBLEM	108
2.1 UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTS OF YOUNG PEOPLES’ MEDIA	110
2.2 CHANGE FEARS INTO MOTIVATIONS VIA THE EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLE	111
2.3 EXPLORE SOCIAL INNOVATIONS	113
2.4 SEE THE FUTURE AS PART OF THE PRESENT	114
2.4.1 CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE	114
2.4.2 WEAVING THE PRESENT FROM PAST AND FUTURE	114
2.5 USE FUTURES CONCEPTS, TOOLS AND IDEAS	115
2.5.1 CONCEPT MAP OF THE FUTURES FIELD	116
2.5.1.1 THE FUTURES FIELD	116
2.5.1.2 ALTERNATIVES AND CHOICES	116
2.5.1.3 CREATING FUTURES	116
2.5.1.4 ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING	117
2.5.1.5 FUTURES WHEELS	117
2.5.1.6 CRITIQUE	118
2.5.1.7 ACTING	118
2.5.2 WHAT CAN I DO?	118

2.6 DESIGN YOUR WAY OUT OF THE INDUSTRIAL ERA	119
2.6.1 ASPECTS OF CULTURAL DESIGN	119
2.6.1.1 THE LANGUAGE SYSTEM	119
2.6.1.2 THE SPATIAL SYSTEM	120
2.6.1.3 THE REGULATORY SYSTEM	120
2.6.1.4 THE TEMPORAL SYSTEM	120
2.6.1.5 THE ETHICAL SYSTEM	120
2.6.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STRATEGIES	121
BIBLIOGRAPHY	121

THE INFORMATION SOCIETY (IES); REFLECTIONS ABOUT THE DUAL CHARACTER OF THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION (I&C) TECHNOLOGIES – Enric Bas	122
1. WORLD OF DIFFERENCES / WORLD IN TRANSITION; SOME PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS	122
2. ATTITUDES TOWARDS TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE	127
2.1 POSITIVE - OPTIMISTIC	127
2.2 NEGATIVE - PESSIMISTIC	129
2.3 PRAGMATIC - REALISTIC	129
3. IMPACT ANALYSIS	130
3.1 ECONOMY	130
3.1.1 MACRO-LEVEL: DEVELOPMENT VS. UNDERDEVELOPMENT	130
3.1.1.1 DEVELOPMENT	130
3.1.1.2 UNDERDEVELOPMENT	132
3.1.2 MICRO-LEVEL: EMPLOYMENT VS. UNEMPLOYMENT	134
3.1.2.1 EMPLOYMENT	134
3.1.2.2 UNEMPLOYMENT	135
3.2 CULTURAL	137
3.2.1 MACRO-LEVEL: COMMUNICATION VS. ISOLATION	137
3.2.1.1 COMMUNICATION	137
3.2.1.2 ISOLATION	138
3.2.2 MICRO-LEVEL: HOMOGENIZATION VS. HETEROGENIZATION	138
3.2.2.1 HOMOGENIZATION	138
3.2.2.2 HETEROGENIZATION	139
3.3 POLICY	140
3.3.1 MACRO-LEVEL: MEGASTATES VS. ANARCHY	140
3.3.1.1 MEGASTATES	140
3.3.1.2 ANARCHY	141
3.3.2 MICRO-LEVEL: MORE DEMOCRACY VS. LESS DEMOCRACY	142
3.3.2.1 MORE DEMOCRACY	142
3.3.2.2 LESS DEMOCRACY	143
BIBLIOGRAPHY	143

EMERGING COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AND THEIR FUTURE SOCIAL IMPACTS	
– Tony Stevenson	146
SUMMARY	146
1. TOWARDS AN INTERACTIVE DIGITAL TELEVISION	148
2. A CYBERMARKET?	149
3. SOCIETY AND CULTURAL CHANGE	149
4. ADOPTING NEW TECHNOLOGIES	152
5. OTHER CONTRADICTIONS AND DIFFICULTIES	152
5.1 INCREASED PACE OF LIFE	153
5.2 PERSONAL	153
5.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC	153
5.4 EDUCATIONAL	154
6. THE IT PRODUCTIVITY PARADOX	154
7. A LEARNING PROCESS	155
8. THE NATURE OF TECHNOLOGY	156
9. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE	156
10. SOCIAL INVENTIONS	157
11. NATION STATE UNDER THREAT	159
12. AN ETHICAL MINDSET	160
REFERENCES	161
FUTURE ORIENTATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON – Tamás Kristóf	
INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS	163
1. STUDIES OF COUNTRIES	164
1.1. AUSTRALIA	164
1.2. FINLAND	164
1.3. GREAT BRITAIN	166
1.4. HUNGARY	166
1.5. SPAIN	167
1.6. THE UNITED STATES	168
2. CONCLUSIONS	169
BIBLIOGRAPHY	174
THE FUTURE ORIENTATION OF THE BUDAPEST FUTURES COURSE PARTICIPANTS	
– Erzsébet Nováky, Éva Hideg, Judit Pék	175
1. THE SURVEY	175
2. THE BREAKDOWN OF THE RESPONDENTS	176
3. INTEREST IN THE FUTURE AND THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE	177
3.1 WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THE FUTURE?	
WHY DO YOU THINK OTHER PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN THE FUTURE?	177
3.2 WHICH DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE TRUE OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?	178
3.3 DO YOU USUALLY THINK ABOUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO...?	179
4. ACTIVITIES PERFORMED IN THE INTEREST OF THE FUTURE	180
5. EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE	183
5.1 HOW DO YOU THINK THE FOLLOWING WILL BE IN ... YEARS COMPARED TO	
THE PRESENT?	183
5.2 DO YOU THINK ... WILL BE HAPPIER COMPARED TO THE PRESENT?	186
6. SUMMARY	187
SUPPLEMENT - QUESTIONNAIRE	189

CULTURE AND FUTURE ORIENTATION - AN ORGANISATIONAL PERSPECTIVE – Simone Arnaldi	201
INTRODUCTION.....	201
1. DEFINITION AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF FO.....	201
2. INFLUENCING FACTORS OF FO. INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES.....	202
3. ORGANISATIONS AS SOCIO-CULTURAL ACTORS: DO THEY HAVE A FO?.....	203
4. ORGANISATIONS, FO AND EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.....	204
5. CONCLUSION.....	206
REFERENCES.....	206
THE YOUTH AND THEIR RESPONSIBLES FOR THE FUTURE – Mária Kalas Kőszegi	208
1. MENS SANA IN CORPORE SANO.....	210
2. FIRST STEPS.....	211
2.1 GET TO KNOW ALL THE SITUATIONS THAT ARE IMPORTANT FOR YOU, LEARN THE EXPECTATIONS, AND EVOLVING OPPORTUNITIES.....	211
2.2 GET TO KNOW YOURSELF.....	212
2.3 TO LEARN YOUR OWN COUNTRY.....	214
2.4 GET TO KNOW THE WORLD.....	215
3. INFORMATION, INFORMATION BASE.....	216
3.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIABLE INFORMATION.....	217
3.2 THE ADVANTAGE OF KNOWING RELIABLE SOURCES.....	217
4. GEOGRAPHICAL KNOWLEDGE.....	218
5. COMMAND OF LANGUAGES.....	219
6. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT.....	220
6.1 RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FAMILY.....	221
6.2 RESPONSIBILITY OF ADULTS.....	221
6.2.1 THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS.....	221
6.2.2 THE ROLE OF THE PEDAGOGUE.....	224
7. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE YOUTH.....	225
FINAL REPORT OF THE FIRST BUDAPEST FUTURES COURSE OF THE WFSF – Erzsébet Nováky, Tamás Gáspár	227
INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS.....	227
1. AIMS AND PRINCIPLES.....	228
2. IS YOUTH FUTURE-ORIENTED?.....	230
3. LINKING POINTS AND COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION.....	232
4. MAIN CONCLUSIONS.....	236

INTRODUCTION

This collection of studies contains all the lectures and papers presented at the first Budapest Futures Course (August 7-19, 1999, Budapest) of the World Futures Studies Federation that closely relate to the main subject of the summer course, namely *The Youth for a Less Selfish Future*, and, in particular, to the investigation of future orientation.

Results based on empirical surveys corroborate the impressions generally held about the attitude to the future of American, Australian, British, Finnish, Hungarian and Spanish youth. This collection will provide further insight into the details of Finnish, Hungarian and Spanish empirical surveys. A separate study analyses the results of a survey conducted among the participants of the Budapest Futures Course. It can be concluded that the group was rather homogeneous, future and action oriented, ambitious and considered its own future the most important. Their attitude to the future revealed features of egoism.

This book of studies also shows how future orientation can be developed, and what role education can play in that. We stress that teachers from primary schools to universities are of utmost importance in enhancing the future orientation of youth. Yet it is only teachers who themselves have future orientation that are able to educate young people to have an even more forceful future orientation. The responsibility of futures researchers, therefore, lies not only in identifying the social, economic and environmental development trends, but also in developing the way of thinking of young people, especially of young futures researchers.

A future-oriented way of thinking and its development are essential in shaping the fast-approaching information society, since new communication technologies will be decisive in moulding the society of the future, for which a way of thinking embracing vision, complexity and integration will be indispensable.

While futures researchers are certainly responsible for the future, institutions and young people must also shoulder the heavy responsibility of building the future. Nothing but future-oriented individuals and societies can lead us closer and closer to a less selfish world.

I wish to express my thanks to the World Futures Studies Federation for their faith in us, to UNESCO for its financial backing, to the lecturers, the workshop leaders and the attending “students” for their professional work, active and constructive participation, and to the organisers of the summer university for their tireless dedication. Only concerted efforts such as these will lift us onto the level of post-industrial societies which, we hope, will be less selfish than the current ones. It is with this hope in my heart that I publish this book, the computer editing of which was done by one of the beloved graduate students of our department, my co-editor, Tamás Kristóf.

Budapest, February 2000

Prof. Erzsébet Nováky, DSc.

*Head of Department
Course Director*

MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR UNESCO IN THE COMING DECADES

Jerome Bindè

Analysis and Forecasting Office, UNESCO

Are we ready for the 21st century?

Four major challenges have to be met in good time if humanity wishes to survive the coming century.

1. First challenge

Will the 21st century lead to the development of growing inequality and unprecedented poverty while generating unparalleled fortunes hidden behind the bullet-proof glass of social apartheid and urban apartheid? Between 1980 and 1996, some 15 or more countries experienced remarkable economic growth and most of their billion and a half inhabitants have seen their income rise. During the same period, some 100 countries experienced economic decline or stagnation, with a consequent fall in income for 1.6 billion people. In Asia, a series of financial crashes has now brought about dramatic recessions in countries, which were only recently enjoying rapid development.

At the dawn of the 21st century, more than 1.3 billion people live in absolute poverty and their numbers are increasing constantly. Some experts even believe that the figure is closer to 2 billion people. Today, over 800 million individuals are suffering from hunger or malnutrition; more than a billion have no access to health care, basic education or drinking water; 2 billion are not connected to an electric grid; and more than 4.5 billion people are deprived of basic telecommunications – that is to say, of access to the new information and communication technologies – which are becoming the keys to distance education. Much is said today in praise of the Internet but we will continue to live for a long time in a world of

electronic highways and *subways*. The future itself seems in jeopardy. It is unpredictable in the North, where most of the rich countries now have a negligible birth rate. It is already mortgaged in the South, where children and women are the ones who most suffer from poverty: two thirds of the world population living in absolute poverty are under 15 years of age and more than two out of three of them are women.

We can only give a future to freedom at the price of justice, sharing and solidarity. While the old social contract of 1945 – that of the welfare state – is crumbling and disintegrating, the new phase of globalisation and the third industrial revolution which underlies it have not yet been accompanied by the new social contract that they require. It will have to be invented, and life-long education for all should be one of its foundations.

2. Second major challenge: sustainable development

Are not our modes of development, based on the squandering of non-renewable resources, putting a strain on the development of future generations? Three planet Earths would be necessary if the whole of the world population were to have access to the North American modes of development and consumption. Human beings throughout the world today are assuming rights over the human beings of tomorrow, and we are beginning to realize that we are in the process of jeopardising the exercise of their human rights by future generations. Humanity now has the capacity to destroy itself as a species. Who will teach us how to ‘master mastery’?

3. Third major challenge: the drunken boat syndrome

Admittedly, as the wisdom of mariners and philosophers has it, ‘there is no favourable wind for he who knows not where he goes.’ But nor is there a favourable wind for he who has broken his rudder. In other words: *have we set ourselves a course for the 21st century? And do we have the instruments to keep ourselves on course?* Most States give the impression of having lost their instruments of action as a result of globalisation. Democracy seems to have lost its hold on events and to have fallen into the hands of ‘anonymous masters’, abstractions

such as financial markets, interest rates, exchange rates, commodity prices, indices and statistical artifacts.

What is more, most of the problems today extend beyond national borders. Water is becoming an international issue, to such an extent that the 21st century might be that of wars for water. Financial transactions, pollution, epidemics, organised crime and money laundering do not quietly stop at the Customs post. They carry no passport; they are *nomadic*, borderless. Solutions must therefore be found which also extend beyond borders. The conclusion of a number of multilateral agreements and the holding of world conferences such as the Earth Summit in Rio, or the Kyoto Summit are first steps. Should we not, however, go much further in the next 10 or 20 years? There are those who reply: sorry, we cannot afford it. Yet the Cold War is over, and we still invest massively in insecurity instead of investing preventively in the construction of peace. Defence expenditures worldwide represent \$800 to \$920 billion annually. According to former Secretary General of the Summit on Cities Mr. Wally N' Dow, resources are available to provide everyone 'a roof, drinking water and basic sanitary facilities at a cost of less than \$100 per person.' This effort would amount to \$130 billion for the 1.3 billion poor people on Earth.

The key issues of regulation and governance will lie at the centre of the world debate in the next two decades. Given the scale of the three challenges I have referred to, *can we or can we not assume that we are moving, towards a planetary democracy? Can we imagine a mode of international integration similar to that of European construction or the Mercosaur; or is it merely a dream? In the face of the development of a worldwide market economy, do we need to devise, as Jacques Attali suggests, a democracy 'which, like the market, is not confined to a specific territory, but rather a democracy without frontiers in both space and time'?*

4. Fourth major challenge: peace

As Boutros Boutros-Ghali recalled at the *21st Century Talks*, which we organise periodically, peace is the precondition for solving the first three challenges. The euphoric illusion according to which the collapse of the Berlin Wall was going to lead instantaneously

to perpetual peace and usher in a new era of development has vanished. Scores of wars have taken place since the end of the Cold War, and some 30 conflicts are going on at present, mostly within States, with this unprecedented phenomenon the collapse and disappearance of States in bloodshed and tragedy.

Faced with the risk of contagion from policies of ethnic cleansing and genocide, it is vital that we promote, as emphasised by UNESCO, *a culture of peace* through education, effective implementation of human rights and the promotion of tolerance and cultural pluralism. Peace is not merely the absence of war, or order imposed by hegemony. Authentic peace is the positive peace which, according to the philosopher Spinoza, 'is born out of the strength of the soul, concord and justice': it is based on genuine values and principles.

The General Assembly of the United Nations subscribed to this vision by proclaiming the year 2000 International Year for the Culture of Peace. If we truly do not want tomorrow to be already too late always, anticipation must take precedence over adaptation, the ethics of the future must overcome the tyranny of emergency, and the notion of sharing must override blind selfishness. It is with this prospect in mind that UNESCO has organized the *Dialogues of the 21st century* from 16 to 19 September, in order to light up the paths of the future through encounters between leading experts, and that Mr. Federico Mayor published a White Paper on the 21st century in 1999.

The issue is clear enough. Ethan Kapstein, member of the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, referred to it in the following terms: 'the world may be moving inexorably to one of those tragic moments that will lead future historians to ask, why was nothing done in time?' And yet, 'as danger grows, so grows the path to safety', Holderlin wrote. Solutions do exist: the awareness of problems has become more acute; what is really missing today is political will, which is now a prisoner of short-term interests. Globalisation cannot be confined to the worldwide expansion of telecommunications, computers, the mediasphere and markets. It must be founded on greater international democracy and on an anticipatory conception of democracy, the main pillar of which are: a new social contract for the 21st century; sustainable development, that is, to say a 'natural contract'; a new international contract encouraging world-wide regulation and integration; a culture of peace and ethics for the future; and life-long education for all.

**FACTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE PROBING FUTURE
ORIENTATION IN MODERN AND LATE MODERN SOCIETIES,
ESPECIALLY THE CASE OF HUNGARY**

Éva Hideg - Erzsébet Nováky

Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration, Hungary

Introductory thoughts

The subject matter and thorough examination of future orientation surfaced in the 1990s in several different countries around the world (especially Australia, Britain, Finland and Spain) independently of each other. Hungary was no exception. The first systematic research into the Hungarian citizens' attitude to the future was launched in 1992 by the Department of Futures Research at the Budapest University of Economic Sciences. It was within this research that we defined the notion of future orientation, providing its contents as well as components, and endeavouring to gauge it.

Our 1992 research findings on the basis of a representative sample convinced us that the future orientation of the individual is an existing and measurable category through which we may gain insight into the way of thinking, conduct patterns and system of values of individuals. The multitude and great variety of information obtained from a small sample encouraged us to conduct a nationwide research. In 1995, the question we put to a representative sample of 1000 people focused on their attitude to the future and how the different components of future orientation manifested themselves in the way of thinking, activities and expectations of Hungarian citizens.

Tracing the future orientation of Hungarian society in the years of the transition is of particular importance. *The future orientation of young generations and the changes it undergoes* is vital in shaping the future of Hungary *as the success and speed of the transformation hinge greatly on these*. For futures researchers to be able to exert a positive influence on the future orientation of young people they must become familiar with the

youth's attitude to the future, with how they envisage the future, whether they have any expectations of the future and if yes, what those are, and what they do or would do for the future.

Working in an academic environment, we have for many years been able to survey the attitude to the future of various generations of young people. Analysing the outcome and changes in time of the empirical surveys we conducted between 1992 and 1999, i.e. in the initial years of the change of regime in Hungary, has been particularly informative. We relied on questionnaires, the time-honoured method in futures research, to review the attitude to the future, future orientation and how future orientation has changed among certain groups of Hungarian youth, such as 14-18-year-old vocational school pupils, undergraduates at the Budapest University of Economic Sciences, undergraduates between 25 and 30 who have had to abandon their engineering studies for studies of economics (so-called engineering-economists) and a representative sample of young people in Hungarian society.

This paper renders an account of what future orientation is, how it can be gauged and the attitude to the future of young people, or rather certain groups of young people in Hungarian society and what changes it has undergone throughout the 1990s.

1. The notion of future orientation

1.1 The appearance of the subject matter in futures research

Future orientation first appeared in futures research literature as something negative. It was A. Toffler who first described the phenomenon in his book *Future Shock* published in 1970 as the reaction of the individual to being overstimulated (Toffler, 1970). *Negative future orientation, or future shock, in Toffler's assessment, is the result of the individual being overburdened by the challenges of the future and excessive environmental stimuli, under which he breaks down.*

The individual may react with rejection, retreat, fear, exhaustion, by seeking refuge in an illness or with violence to the stimuli which constantly flow from the world around us and which regularly put to the test the individual's ability to adapt. If this conduct of the

individual becomes widespread, future shock can be observed and understood on a social scale in as much as psychic illnesses may spread among the people, drug abuse may become large-scale, irrationality may grow and society may run wild.

Toffler discovered the problem of future shock in American society in the 1960s, at a time when it was still the golden age of the industrial and consumer society yet signs of the pressures for the individual to change in order to keep adapting had surfaced. Since these incipient changes had caught American society unawares, *it reacted with future shock rather than future orientation to the future suddenly turning into the present*. The message of Toffler's research and book, however, is not only that changes are harmful because they exhaust society's ability to adapt but also that *future orientation, a positive attitude to the changes can help one to prepare for and live with the changes*.

Interpreting things from our Central and East European region and from the perspective of our past experience, we found the magnification and problematic nature of the negative attitude to the changes surprising, since *it was precisely the individual and social problems of the lack of change or invariability that had become depressing*. That is why, among other things, we thought that we ought to seize the positive attitude to change and to the future, because interpreting our society which is keen to develop and change would otherwise be impossible, as would a thorough study of its future too. This is how we came up, for the first time in futures research, with the notion of future orientation based on a positive attitude to change and the future.

In order to elaborate this notion we looked to psychology, the new trends in futures research and to reality. By dealing with the individual's conscious and unconscious attitudes, *psychology can provide knowledge about how a person may be characterised by his/her attitude to the future*. *The new trends in futures studies*, by emphasising a positive attitude to and responsibility for the future, allow us *to interpret future orientation as a category of futures research*. This kind of examination of reality provides facts about *how people as individuals and as groups experience and interpret their attitude to the future here and now*.

1.2 The theoretical definition of future orientation

Social psychology may well provide the bases for the elaboration of a theoretical definition of future orientation. In the 1920s and 1930s, social psychology research, particularly developmental, personal, work and social psychology research, saw the emergence of investigation concerning the problems of time perspective and future perspective. The subject matter was thrust into the spotlight especially when researchers tried to find the behind-the-scenes motivation for the emotional and intellectual development of young people, and its time perspective/future perspective components. Research into time perspectives slowly petered out, however. No special branch of psychology developed an unbroken, continuous, and consistent line of research in this field. This is because the subject matter requires a complex investigation, one aspect of which belongs to the sphere of developmental and social psychology, while the other aspect is related to personal psychology.

Piaget and Lewin were the first to deal with the subject matter of time perspective and future orientation. (Piaget, 1927; Lewin, 1931, 1935; in: Váriné, 1992, 62) Piaget considered future orientation as a cognitive and structural question, while Lewin thought of it as a cognitive and motivation issue rather. Piaget believed that events projected to the future could be conceived in their cause-and-effect relations and placed in chronological order. He examined future orientation in its creation and development, placing the emphasis on the historical dimension. Lewin introduced the notion of time perspective and, within that, future perspective. He stressed that the individual (consciously and less consciously) shapes his view of the past, the present and the future, constantly moulding them. The “psychic space” he introduced embraces the anticipation, hopes, desires and fears of the individual in connection with the future. The “psychic space” plays an intermediary role, spans like a bridge, between the individual’s past and present depicted in experiences and his future envisaged in objectives, hopes, desires and fears. Formulating and verbalising goals exert a motivating influence on the acts of the present, while one’s present deeds may take one closer to or farther from the goals envisaged.

Later research distinguished two forms of future orientation:

- a positive attitude to the future;
- and one that wishes to avoid it.

A positive attitude to the future indicates that the individual is attracted to the future and knows where he/she wishes to arrive, while a person who wants to avoid the future finds it important to escape from the present as soon as possible and does not even ponder what he wants to reach.

Future perspective is a person- and culture-specific phenomenon. As far as its formation is concerned we may go way back to the process of becoming human: developing orientating abilities became of utmost importance if the human being was to survive. This ability broadened in time and space alike: first the human being took possession of his habitat, only to widen his horizon to cover the whole region and the whole continent he inhabited, and later even beyond. His interest grew in time as well. He was no longer interested only in yesterday, today and tomorrow but also in the day after tomorrow. Certain animal species possess the ability to find their bearings: migrating birds, for instance, cover distances of hundreds of kilometres without human intervention; certain species of fish fight their way upstream to spawn; and some domestic animals “go home to their masters at dusk”. Their ability to do so is due exclusively to their instincts. They are not conscious of the future. The fact that they find their bearings cannot be labelled as future orientation. The human being alone has the ability to turn his bearings into specific orientation in which the cognitive, structural and motivational as well as the conscious and unconscious approach may all surface.

The human being has the unique ability to live not only the present but to look back on the past and look ahead to the future too. He can formulate an opinion about something as yet non-existent and can work out some sort of an attitude to the future. Thus the human being is not only familiar with space, the present and the near future, like many other living creatures, but to a certain extent he is constantly aware of the long-term prospects beyond his immediate surroundings.

Future orientation is the characteristic and the capacity, unique to human beings, which enable thinking to be regulated not only by the past and the present but also to reflect continuously assumptions and expectations regarding the future. Humankind has a historical view and also has an attitude to the future which is expressed in future orientation. The decisions and actions of the future-oriented person are guided more by

his/her intentions, goals and desires for the future than by his/her experience of the past. *The future inspires the driving force of human activity.* (Nováky, Hideg & Kappéter, 1994)

Future orientation (and the forms in which it is manifested) is equally influenced by biological factors (e.g. special human brain structures), *psychic and psychological factors* (e.g. individual attitudes, motivation for achievement and ability to tolerate strain, education for creative thinking and a future-oriented approach) and *social factors* (e.g. the level of development of civil society, the soundness or instability of the economic situation and the constraint of participating in changes). Different ages, cultures and societies have allowed people by varying ways and means to discover, to behold and to control the future, the future of the individual, of the groups and of the whole of society. Societies also differ in that they offer varying options for the shaping of individual careers: in some societies and periods in time clear-cut ways and career options crystallise, while in other moments in time this is not possible and the individuals waver in their choice. The conscious planning of the future gathers momentum in the 20th century, when one's conscious attitude to time and the future comes more and more into focus.

The biological, psychic/psychological and social factors affect every person in a different way. Their effect depends on the person's social position, his/her (healthy or disturbed) attitude to the future, sex, age, schooling, personal traits and many other factors. Since people and their careers differ greatly, obviously different types of future orientation will suit different individuals and groups.

Future orientation contains a number of components. Our research has shown that *the following components characterise future orientation:*

- interest in the future;
- thinking about the future;
- activities performed in the interest of the future;
- expectations for the future.

Interest in the future can show the person's most elemental attitude to the future, how the future touches him/her and whether the future belongs to his sphere of interest or not. Thinking about the future supposes a higher level of relating to the future. It is not the mere curiosity of an innocent infant but a conscious way of thinking about the future. Interest and

thinking (however positive) express a passive attitude to the future. A person with such traits is said to bear *passive future orientation*. Activities performed in the interest of the future *shape an active attitude to the future*. These activities may manifest themselves in different shapes, such as physical activities (e.g. keeping the environment clean) and intellectual activities (e.g. preparing and publicising forecasts). The two types of activities performed in the interest of the future are not positioned hierarchically, so the strength of an active future orientation is not determined by the physical or intellectual nature of the activity but by the frequency and variety of the given activity. Expectations are an inherent part of future orientation, being a special feature of passive future orientation.

In many cases interest and thinking cannot be separated completely so future orientation may often be characterised by the following three components:

- interest in and thinking about the future;
- activities performed in the interest of the future;
- expectations for the future.

Future orientation is manifested not only in the complex, conscious and active attitude to the future but also in the varying degrees of presence or absence of its different components, and in the not completely conscious or not solely harmonious or even disharmonious relations between components. (The attitude to the latter future is what was referred to as *future shock* in point 1.1.)

1.3 Links to trends in futures studies

The new trends in futures studies – evolutionary and critical futures studies – provide the framework of interpretation in which future orientation can become a futures research category (Hideg, 1998a). Conventional futures research, by placing the emphasis on the objectivity of a future yet to materialise, did not consider subjective attitudes to the future as determining connections of the future. Thus this notion failed to appear in its methodology. Although it made use of the experts' opinions concerning the future, it treated them, upon matching them with a future view, as preliminary objective knowledge related to the future. Through this method of collecting and processing expert views it endeavoured to separate the subjective elements from the opinions gathered. It is precisely in this field that the new trends in futures studies have transcended conventional futures research even in the

paradigms.

1.3.1 Evolutionary futures studies

According to the representatives of the sphere of evolutionary futures studies, doing futures research is unsatisfactory because its subject is simplified and its theory, applied methodology and methods are not apt for the discovery of changing reality and its determining future relations. According to evolutionary futures studies, therefore, the subject of futures research is *a future that is open, determined and non-determined at the same time, and is the scene of human activity*. The vagueness of the future is evolutionary, because at stake is the survival of human society. Methodologically this can be conceived as different, but it is *the evolution of complexities, the so-called emergent complexities, which also contain the subject, the human being himself*. For futures studies as a social science the importance lies with the complexities of which the human being and his society are an inherent part. *The human being forms part of these complexities not only as a biological but also as a psycho-social entity*. His biological participation and evolution are less important for futures studies, as such changes are very slow and their time perspective goes beyond the sphere of interest of futures studies. The sensitive and thinking human quality, which makes up different social organisations, is far more changeable than the human being's biological quality, so it is the interaction of the former quality and its natural and artificial environment as well as its cultural and social evolution that futures studies really focuses on.

Evolutionary futures studies *accepts the hypotheses of the general evolutionary theory* with regard to the general features of change. Society is self-organizing because its development is fomented by the change in the interaction between its subsystems, i.e. the human system (the communities, their needs and values) and the material system (technology and management). The setting in motion of the mechanisms that prompt society's self-development is accompanied by the wavering of the system of social values and the emergence of new situations and problems. Changes in society speed up, for instance, the constraint to adapt becomes permanent, which can be depressing for some people, and the social institutions face a crisis. Irregular solutions and possible future views inevitably emerge in such a changing and critical period. Values will then shift, new needs will spread and new ways to solve problems even amid the new circumstances will emerge in the course

of society's learning and adapting process. As a consequence of these changes society will transform and become more developed, and a new way of functioning will materialise.

According to the evolutionary interpretation of futures research, two tasks may be set for futures research. One is the investigation of development trends and their realisation, already practised by conventional futures research, and the other is the investigation of the possibilities for future evolutionary change and the discovery of future possibilities of a different quality in the evolutionary sense. *The forecast of development trends and of their realisation* is necessary and can be reliably carried out even during the period of evolutionary change. At the same time, *evolutionary change and the possible futures cannot be forecast in the traditional sense*, because they are fundamentally influenced by chance and the change of values. Still, the subject matter can and must be dealt with from the evolutionary perspective, but always with the knowledge that in such cases we do not forecast in the classical sense of the word but *present the evolutionary possibilities* (Nováky, Hideg, 1993).

The attitude to the future is of vital importance when interpreting evolutionary futures studies in as much as the human cognitive map of evolution may change, in other words the process of evolutionary change may be launched. The changes that surface or may be induced in this field determine, moreover, whether the future unfolds in a fatalistic way impossible to influence, producing the so-called evolutionary drift, or whether the future can be shaped and channelled into the intended or desired course. This way *both future shock and future orientation become key categories in evolutionary futures studies*.

1.3.2 Critical futures studies

According to critical futures studies, another new branch of futures studies, the future can be interpreted not only as something that will materialise as time passes but also as *something that exists in the present too, in our thoughts and emotions*. This future affects the present and forms an integral part of life's rules. Besides being a peculiar form of cognitive interpretation, it is also an emotional relation (optimism, pessimism, hope or fear). *This future which exists in the present is the most developed form of human foresight*. The latter is a human capacity, an ability that protects human beings from harm and which renders their activity smooth and uninterrupted. Foresight is set in motion by the interminable uncertainty

of existence, of biological life. It emerges in the course of learning and can be developed. At the human being's current level of development thinking of the future and having a consciousness of the future can no longer be regarded as two separate forms of thinking.

Critical futures studies also distinguishes the different time zones, the sequence of past, present and future. Yet these time zones exist in the present too. In our present existence, history, achievements and the condition of identity comprise the past, comprehension, perception and the sphere of facts and activities make up the present, while expectations, hopes, goals, plans and the scheduling of future activities constitute the future. The time zones in the present exist in the brain and in a cognitive interpretation, not only as separate entities but also in their constant interaction. Through interpretation the past affects the present and may serve as an escape from the present. Through anticipation the future shapes the present and can also be a form of escape from the present. In our conscience and psyche the time zones are in constant touch, undulating and permeating each other.

The present is, on the one hand, the limited time category of "here and now" and is, on the other hand, an "extended present" in our conscience, able to condense and update the past, the present and the future. This latter also has a historically shifting time zone, which is approximately 200 years at our present level of civilisation. *Human foresight functions in this extended present. That is why critical futures studies targets this type of future envisaged as human foresight, which is also the present but the extended present. Its task is discovering human foresight on the one hand and the further development of this activity, raising it to the social level on the other hand.* (Slaughter, 1995)

Futures studies that focuses on human foresight breaks with the time-honoured and widespread concept of conventional futures research that by forecasting the future it can also provide a prior knowledge of it. Critical futures studies considers this impossible and undertakes nothing more than to discover the future contents existing in the present, to analyse them critically and to provide help in developing individuals' and social institutions' ability to foresee. Due to its links to human foresight and its critical attitude to it, *this type of futures studies is called foresight or critical futures studies.*

In critical futures studies future orientation, the positive attitude to and content of the future, has become a pivotal category as the most developed premise of human foresight. Future

orientation has a fundamental role in both the individual's life and quality of life and in keeping the momentum of the process of social innovation. Futures research and the futures researcher bring up and show future orientation, and contribute through criticism, means of mediation and activities to enriching the content of future orientation and to increasing the chance of it materialising.

Future orientation is a central theoretical and methodological category in both futures studies trends. This change in the new trends also reflects how *futures research can find and fulfil its social role in our age beset with constant changes which entail a shift in values too.*

1.4 The empirical examination of future orientation

Examining future orientation provides specific knowledge concerning individuals' attitude to the future. We examine

- what part of people's sphere of interest, thinking and activities future constitutes, and
- what role future orientation plays in forming individuals' life strategies, and what conditions it provides for the formation and implementation of different future views and social programmes.

In the course of examining the components of future orientation we can draw conclusions as to what characterise the different components (i.e. how interest in the future can be "pinpointed"), how those can link onto one another and as to whether all the components (or simply one or some) can be detected all the time (e.g. in all ages) and everywhere (e.g. in each social group).

Empirical analysis can shed light on the nature of each component, such as, for example, interest in the future, thinking about the future, dealing with the future, decreasing the uncertainty of the future, activities performed in the interest of the future and expectations of the future; on the harmonious or disharmonious relationship of opinions concerning the components; and on the particularities of the future orientation of certain social groups trained according to different points of view.

We can obtain information on individuals' future orientation from *questionnaires*. These contain *open, closed and control type questions* regarding the given components of future

orientation. In the course of our *survey conducted on a target sample* many of our questions were the open type because, this being our first survey of this nature, we did not wish to influence or guide our respondents. We were eager to find out how the respondents word their answers and how they define certain aspects of their future orientation. This made processing the questionnaires slightly more difficult. It had to be done manually as the answers given in each questionnaire had us facing the decision whether they could fall into categories we had set up or whether they constituted new aspects or features. In the course of our survey based on a *representative sample* we relied on the findings of our target sample survey and asked closed questions, which allowed us to process the questionnaires by computer.

Investigating future orientation can form part of any forecasting in the subject matter of which the ideas, expectations and activities of individuals and social institutions concerning the future play a prominent role. Analysing future orientation and linking it to forecasts is of utmost importance in societies on the road to democracy. We carried out similar attempts at forecast in connection with our study on vocational training in Hungary (Hideg ed., 1995, Hideg, Nováky, 1998).

2. The future orientation of Hungarian youth

In the course of our investigations between 1992 and 1999 concerning future orientation we paid particular attention to discovering the future orientation of certain young age groups, which constituted part of some other research and also featured as the subject of an independent investigation. Our 1992 research on a target sample comprised as independent groups university economics students of the Budapest University of Economic Sciences and engineer-economists of the University of Miskolc. In our 1995 research carried out on a representative sample the social group under scrutiny was the 18 to 35 age group. We first examined the future orientation of university economics students of the Budapest University of Economic Sciences in the 1992/93 academic year and subsequently every year since the 1994/95 academic year. In the 1997/98 academic year we examined the future orientation of engineer-economists of the Budapest University of Economic Sciences and of vocational secondary modern school pupils aged between 14 and 18, who can be said to be typical in

Hungary's industrial society. The findings of our research shed light on the attitude to the future of certain groups of Hungarian youth, on their maturity, directions of change and on the connection between youth and the social transition under way in Hungary.

2.1 Secondary modern school pupils aged between 14 and 18

We examined the future orientation of secondary modern school pupils aged between 14 and 18 in the 1997/98 academic year. The students polled were *interested in the future because they hoped for better living conditions and wished to shape and plan their own lives*. Higher education and prospective workplaces were of very little interest to them, with no more than 3-5% of those polled expressing any interest whatsoever. Roughly one-third had no idea why they showed any interest in the future at all.

They think that others show interest in the future primarily because earning a living and shaping their own lives link them to the future. Other important reasons were curiosity, making money and avoiding problems. Again, approximately one-third have no idea why others are interested in the future.

Beyond their own future these students are equally interested in the future of their families and their place of residence. They are less interested, however, in the future of the country and the world. More than half of them think in a 1-2 or 5-10-year span. In the shorter run they are more interested in the future of their families and of their place of residence, while in the longer run it is more the future of the country and of the world.

These youngsters do a variety of useful activities in the interest of their future. *Over half of those polled study, one in ten does some sports and nearly one in ten works*. One in five (!), however, does absolutely nothing. Over one-third do something for the future of their loved ones, but another one-third do nothing. In order to contribute to the future of their loved ones more than one in ten believe that they need to study, 5% think they need to work and another 5% opt for ensuring material well-being.

In the interest of the future of the country and of the world these students protect the environment above all and wish to enter public life and work in the second and third place respectively. Approximately half of these youngsters do nothing for the future of their wider

environment. *They feel it is their place of residence that is worth doing something for in the interest of the future.* Over half do nothing in the interest of the country and of the world. Unfortunately, these vocational trainees, the skilled labourers of the future, know not what to think of activities that could be performed in the interest of the future of the country and of the world.

A little over half of these youngsters believe they will be a lot better off in 10 years' time than today, and only a low percentage expect their situations to deteriorate. They cannot make up their minds as to the future direction of change of their place of residence, the country and the world in the next 10 years: one-third believe the situation will improve, one-third think it will deteriorate and one-third see it as unchanged. Mostly they believe improvement will come in their place of residence and a deterioration in the country. As to the whole world, they foresee a deterioration rather than improvement or no change.

As far as specific events in the future are concerned, these youngsters believe that the process of impoverishment in Hungary could hardly be halted before 2020, but they are more optimistic about some positive change in the environment. What they have most faith in is that Hungary will become a full-fledged member of the European Union by 2000.

The future orientation of secondary schoolchildren is *rather underdeveloped, particularly as regards their wider environment and judging future spans.* Although they are interested in the future for practical reasons, they are uncertain of and pessimistic about their expectations. That they recognise and treat as equally important the future of their place of residence and the future of the family is the most positive feature of their future orientation.

2.2 University economics students

We first examined the future orientation of university economics students in 1992 and have done so each year since the 1994/95 academic year. Practically all those polled in every academic year were interested in the future. This is quite natural, as the respondents were futures research students.

The reasons for the interest in the future of these students were rather varied. The principal reason in each academic year was *the desire to influence and to plan the future*, though in a

decreasing proportion. The second most important reason was the wish to know the future, but also in a decreasing proportion. The third most important reason, i.e. the uncertainty of the future and the wish to decrease that uncertainty, however, is gradually gaining weight. Curiosity as a reason maintains a steady 10%. It is a remarkable fact that *fear of the future was totally absent from among the reasons listed.*

The polled university economics students expressed varying opinions concerning other people's interest in the future. In 1992-1993 they thought that others were interested in the future because they wanted to know it and influence it and they were uncertain and curious. In the subsequent academic years curiosity and uncertainty rose to the top of the ranking, while knowing and influencing the future dropped to second and third places respectively. University economics students *do not think that others are afraid of the future.*

Beyond their own personal future university economics students are interested in the future of their families, the world, the country and their place of residence in that order. The only change in this order of importance is that in the last few years the future of the family and that of the world have tied for the first place. *This openness towards the world, however, does not entail a greater interest in longer spans.* At any given time of research the 5-10-year span holds the most fascination, followed by the 1-2-year period. Spans longer than 30 years hardly interest university economics students at all. The dynamics of the three spans investigated highlights that the importance of the 5-10-year span has increased to the detriment of the 1-2-year period, while that of the over-40-year span has grown at the cost of the 30-40-year period.

University economics students *study* before anything else; secondly, they *look after their health* and thirdly, they *work in the interest of their own future.* These items appeared in the same proportion at all times when we conducted polls, yet on the last two occasions new activities, such as building interpersonal contacts, acquiring knowledge and thinking about the future, were also mentioned.

University economics students were rather hesitant when it came to answering the question what they did *in the interest of the future of their loved ones.* In 1992-1993 the overwhelming majority answered that they did nothing or did not even think about it. The ratio of the totally idle, however, had dropped considerably (to 10%) by the time the newer

polls were conducted. No one said they did not even think about it. Helping loved ones became the main activity in later years, while work and studies were also still present.

Although *the future of their place of residence* interests university economics students less, they are ready to perform certain activities for it. The protection of the environment and backing certain useful objectives and activities, such as area development, economic and social development as well as creating jobs, comprise their most important activities from this point of view. The number of those who do nothing in the interest of their place of residence has dropped radically, as more and more people do social work, enter public life and protect the environment.

In the interest of the future of the country university economics students study and back the different goals of social and economic progress they consider correct (e.g. creating jobs and developing the infrastructure). The fact that specific activities such as the protection of the environment, work, study, economising and political activity are gaining ground, albeit slowly, on general answers is only to be welcomed.

In the interest of the future of the world university economics students back good and useful objectives such as decreasing poverty, developing international relations and changing attitudes concerning global problems. Moreover, they study and protect the environment in the interest of the future of the world. It is a particularly welcome feature that the protection of the environment is becoming more and more important, while it is lamentable that the weight of learning is on the decrease. By the same token, the proportion of those who do nothing or want to do nothing for the world is declining, but still significant numbers simply do not know what to do.

University economics students display *more and more optimism concerning their own future*. Between 50 to 66% hope that in 10 years' time they will be better off than today, and only a low percentage think they will be worse off. They are not nearly as optimistic when it comes to the situation of their place of residence, of their country and of the world. As far as their place of residence is concerned some 50 to 66% think that the situation will not change. Concerning Hungary pessimism has replaced optimism: right now no more than 40% believe that the situation of the country will improve, as compared to the 50% who reckon that the situation will not deteriorate. The majority consider the situation of the world as unchanged,

though a growing number of students expect further deterioration.

Despite the fact that most students expect improvement in the situation of Hungary, they are extremely pessimistic concerning the process of impoverishment and halting the deterioration of the state of the environment in the country. Most of them do not think that impoverishment can be stopped before 2000, and not all believe that the date of 2020 is more likely. One third of the respondents are not sure. University economics students are even more pessimistic and uncertain concerning the situation of the environment. 80-90% do not expect improvement in the state of the environment before 2000, and even by 2020 no more than 35-40% expect some positive change. The number of those who believe that Hungary will become a member of the European Union by the year 2000 is also gradually decreasing. Currently, 90% of our respondents believe it will not.

2.3 Engineer-economists taking part in retraining courses

According to our 1992/93 survey engineer-economists were interested in the future for a variety of reasons. First was the future of the family and the immediate environment, second and third came shaping their personal fate and planning ahead respectively. All these accounted for 60% of all the reasons. Curiosity and a wish to know the future also featured on their lists. In the 1997/98 survey the order of priorities changed. *Shaping one's own fate gained prominence* among the reasons for interest, closely followed by curiosity and the future of the family.

When asked about others' possible interest in the future, they ranked curiosity first, shaping one's own fate second and the future of the family and the immediate environment third. In the survey conducted in the 1995/96 academic year, however, *shaping one's own fate and influencing the future ranked top of the list too among other people's reasons for showing interest in the future*. Curiosity and better living were the next important reasons. Fear as a reason attributed to others appeared in both surveys, albeit minimally.

In 1992-1993 engineer-economists placed *the future of the family and the world* on top of the list, followed by that of the country and, finally, of the place of residence. From the point of view of span the 1-10-year period was of utmost importance. The future of the family and the place of residence was interesting in the shorter run, while the future of the country and

the world was important in the longer run. In 1995-1996 their interest shifted towards the family from their own personal future, closely followed by the future of the country and the world. The place of residence still ranked last on the list. As far as span was concerned, the 1-10-year period was still of utmost importance. The importance of the 30-40-year period and beyond this time reached the 30% mark. Remarkably, this time the future of the family, the place of residence and the country interested the engineer-economists in the short term, and only the future of the world fitted the category of long-term interest. *The primary difference between the answers provided in the two different surveys was that while the engineer-economists concentrated on the family in 1992-1993, they focused on influencing their own personal future in 1995-1996. The need to live better is more important now than it was at the time of the change of regime. All this indicates that the change of regime only brought to the surface the problems, particularly problems of a financial nature, without solving them.*

Everybody does something in the interest of their own future. In 1992-1993 two-thirds of the respondents put down *further training and education* as their leading activity, which was followed by a number of different items in roughly the same proportion. These were work, investment, enterprise, building a house, culture and sports. In 1995-1996 further training and education also came top of the list of activities, but this time only by a 50% margin. In 1995-1996 a new activity emerged among the others category, which was the protection of the environment. *Extra work, investment and enterprise gained more prominence. This indicates that the market economy is beginning to work in Hungary, the first signs of which can be detected in the importance for the individual of extra work and enterprise.*

What do engineer-economists do in the interest of the future of their loved ones? In 1992-1993 over half stated that they did nothing. Those who did something, *invested in real estate and other property, and raised children*. In our 1995-1996 survey the proportion of those who did nothing dropped significantly. Those who do something for their loved ones did so mostly in the field of their financial security, but this time *it takes the shape of economising, extra work and insurance policies*.

In 1992-1993 almost one-third of engineer-economists reckoned that they did nothing in the interest of the future of their wider environment. Another roughly one-third believed it was up to the state and the local government. A mere 40% responded that they actually did

something for the future. Those who did something, worked to protect the environment as best they could and a small percentage took on political roles. Work was meant to improve the situation of their place of residence and of the country, while the protection of the environment served the interest of the world. *In 1995-1996 only one in ten respondents reckoned that they did nothing for the future of their place of residence, the country and the world, and no-one thought that it was entirely up to the state and the local government. Among the possible activities for the future, the protection of the environment, work and tax-paying ranked as most important. One in five respondents took on political roles. Work and tax-paying were considered to be important from the point of view of the future of the country, the protection of the environment from the point of view of the future of their place of residence and the world, while taking on political roles was significant for the future of their place of residence and the country. Approximately half of the respondents reckoned that they did nothing in the interest of the future of the world. The most significant difference between the two surveys was that the protection of the environment and taking on political roles gained importance among the activities performed in the interest of the future of the world, and in 1995-1996 the idea of leaving it all up to the state and the local government did not even surface. Work for the future of the country and activities to protect the environment for the future of the place of residence and the world emerged as dominant factors.*

Concerning their *expectations* for their own future in 10 years' time engineer-economists are more and more pessimistic and uncertain. While in 1992-1993 most of them hoped that their situation would improve, in 1995-1996 only half of them did so. Although nobody expects their own personal lives to deteriorate, *they foresee greater uncertainty and a lot fewer believe that their lives will definitely take a turn for the better. They were even more pessimistic concerning the future of their place of residence, the country and the world. In 1992-1993 two out of five expected the situation neither to deteriorate nor to improve. Most expected improvement in the country and reckoned the situation of the world would stay unchanged. Deterioration was mostly expected in their place of residence, but only in a small proportion. In 1995-1996 only one in three expected improvement, mostly in their place of residence, followed by the country. Between 50 to 66% believed the same for their place of residence, the country and the world. The respondents were less optimistic this time, and their optimism about the future of the country and the world had declined significantly.*

Engineer-economists are less and less optimistic. Now they do not trust their own ability or the power of the state to improve the future as much as they did at the outset of the change of regime. This becomes manifest in that they hardly believe that the process of impoverishment could be halted and that the state of the environment will turn favourable before 2020. They do not hope either that Hungary will become a member of the European Union before the turn of the millennium.

2.4 Nationwide representative sample of youth

Youth between the ages of 18 and 35 comprised a separate category for analysis in our 1995 survey carried out on a nationwide representative sample (Hideg, Nováky, 1998a). On that occasion we examined their future orientation not with the hitherto applied questionnaire but with another one containing fewer and exclusively closed questions. Seeing that this investigation embraced a segment of the population which had, perhaps, never come into direct contact with the issues linked to future orientation, we had to word the questions in a very practical manner, in a way closely related to everyday life.

We asked the respondents to rate the degree of truth contained in statements on a scale ranging from “not true” to “completely true”. 16% of young people said the statement “I do not think about the future” was completely true, while 25% denied this and stated the contrary, i.e. that they did think about the future. 21% said the statement “The future depends mainly on myself” was completely true, while no more than 9% believed it to be false. 18% felt they hardly had any power to influence their own fate, while 60% replied that they could more or less influence it. One in three looked to the future with hope, but unfortunately 11% had no faith in the future. 18% definitely feared the future, 50% had some degree of fear, and only 30% were optimistic without reservations.

Among the techniques to alleviate or pre-empt the uncertainty of the future young people mostly opted for insurance policies and games of chance. Only one in four had some money put by.

In the interest of the future they wished to work even more, study and/or look after the family. 5-10% were looking for a job, wished to improve their families’ situation and prosper

financially. A mere 5% thought that they did absolutely nothing for the future.

Concerning *expectations* for the future we inquired about finances and happiness in 10 years' time. 50% of the young people considered their possible finances to be better in 10 years' time than now, only 12% expected a fall, and 20% believed the situation would remain unchanged. They evaluated their families' finances in a similar fashion, but – interestingly – *they rated their own future situation a few percent better than that of their families*. They showed less optimism in predicting the finances of their acquaintances and of Hungary. Only half as many expected improvement in this case as in their own or their families' case, yet more predicted deterioration. *They were particularly pessimistic concerning the general finances of the country, as 30% expect further deterioration in the situation*. Another 30% were unable to answer this question. In other words, they were rather uncertain regarding the prospects of the standard of living and living conditions.

Our questions on happiness were meant to probe the human and emotional dimension of the future in young people. Consequently, we asked questions only about the future happiness of the individual and the family. 60% of young people thought they would be happier in 10 years' time than now, 15% did not expect a happier future, and 30% did not know. Slightly over 50% believed in the future happiness of their families, but 20% thought they would not be happier than now. 30% could not rate the future happiness of their families. *Hungarian youth were somewhat more optimistic concerning the happiness of the individual than that of their families*.

3. Future orientation and social transition in Hungary

3.1 The future orientation of young people and social transition

The young generations of Hungarians polled fall into three different types of future orientation. University economics students are the most future-oriented and most ambitious, engineer-economists have a confused future orientation, while secondary modern school pupils have the least well-formed (and probably the least developed) attitude to the future. The vast majority of the representative sample of Hungarian youth are characterised by a healthy but not too optimistic attitude to the future; 12-20% are fatalists and show

pessimism, while 10-16% may suffer from future shock.

University economics students are the most future-oriented because they do not fear the future and wish to influence it according to their personal goals and interests. Although they believe the future is uncertain, in their view this uncertainty can be reduced if one deals with the future. Beside their own personal future, *they are equally interested in the future of their families and the world.* The future of the country and of their place of residence is less important for them in comparison. The 5-10-year period and the 40-year-plus span becomes increasingly significant in their view.

They are more and more convinced that they can influence and affect the future with their activity. They have most influence over shaping their own future and that of their loved ones. To this end they study and watch their health. They believe they can have some influence on the future of the country, the world and their place of residence too. They have progressed from passively backing good causes to recognising the importance of the protection of the environment, economising and taking on political roles.

They are less optimistic in their expectations. *Even so they have growing confidence in the success of their personal future because they are preparing for a profession that is prospering in Hungary.* Although they are increasingly pessimistic about the future of their wider environment, they are still more optimistic than other young age groups. They have no confidence in the significant improvement of the situation in Hungary because they reckon that the process of impoverishment and the deterioration of the state of the environment cannot be halted even in the longer run. They think that Hungary's accession to the European Union is impossible before 2000. They showed more optimism in these questions at the outset of the change of regime.

Engineer-economists represent a young generation that has gathered experience and has lived through great failures. Their future orientation is laden with a variety of problems. *They inwardly fear the future and are disillusioned with the change of regime because they had to change the line of their professional training early on in their careers.* They have come to realise that they have to deal with the future not so much in the interest of their families but for their own future and in order to ensure better conditions for earning a living. While the future of the family and of the world used to be equally important for them after

their own future, now it is the future of the family and of the country that has become of equal standing in their view. The future of their place of residence continues to hold no fascination for them. *Their vision has shifted from the short term to the medium term, and they now realise the need to deal with the future in a longer perspective.*

Many of them, though in a decreasing proportion, believe that *there is nothing they can do for the future*. Those who think they can do something consider their own retraining the most important. Many believed in investment and enterprise after the change of regime, but extra work has again become important for them by now. Economising and taking out insurance policies have appeared as new forms of activities both in the interest of their own future and that of their loved ones. At the beginning of the change of regime they did not consider doing things for the future of their place of residence, of the country and of the world but reckoned it was up to the government. Today, however, they believe they can do something by protecting the environment, working, paying taxes and taking on political roles.

Their optimism has decreased significantly in their expectations too. *Nevertheless, they expect some improvement in their own personal situation more than in that of their wider environment*. Most of them were uncertain about assessing the situation of the country and their place of residence. Fewer and fewer among them believe that the situation will improve in the next ten years. They show growing uncertainty about halting the process of impoverishment and improving the state of the environment, though they believe that the state of the environment is more likely to improve before 2020 than the process of impoverishment be halted.

Secondary modern school pupils, who will leave school in a few years' time after having studied a trade, show the least degree of future orientation. A significantly high proportion among them *has not even thought about the reason why the future might interest them or others*. Those who have given it a thought, though, show interest in the future primarily *for reasons of earning a better living*. Nevertheless, they are not really interested in further education or their prospective jobs and workplaces. They are the most money-minded, or perhaps the most sincere, because they express a value judgement strongly present in Hungarian society, namely that the future is interesting for reasons of earning money. They do not fear the future, but do not deal with the future with an eye to their eventual happiness either. Beside their own future, it is that of their families and of their place of residence that

interests them. *They do not know how to approach the question of the future of the country and the world. For them the future is really important in the short and medium run.* They have no long-term conscience of the future, though they tend to read and watch a lot of science fiction.

They have no sense of the future and its dimensions even in connection with their activities. Studying, doing sports and helping in the family are important for them, and even work emerges as a factor. Generally speaking, *they do not think that they can or will be able to do anything for the future of wider communities beyond the level of their own persons and their loved ones.* Their place of residence is the only exception. They believe they can do something for the future of that by protecting the environment and by assuming public roles.

Their expectations for the future are not too well-formed and uncertain. Half of the respondents believe their situation will be better, the other half believe it will be the same in ten years' time. They are absolutely uncertain about the future of their place of residence, the country and the world. As regards the future of the country they are uncertain because they do not think that the process of impoverishment can be halted in the country and the state of the environment can be improved before 2020. Yet it is this group that is most convinced that Hungary may become a member of the European Union by the year 2000.

Naturally, views of the future differing from the typical both in the positive and negative sense were also present in these young age groups, but the proportion of those holding those views is not significant. This may be due, we believe, to the fact that *the surveyed age groups have strong ties to certain types of schools, and the Hungarian school system is still rather closed from the point of view of social mobility* (Hideg, Nováky, 1998b). School and schooling basically determine people's future orientation. This is corroborated by the investigation of the future orientation of adult groups in Hungary too (Hideg, Nováky, 1998a).

The vast majority of youth in the representative sample is characterised by a healthy though not too optimistic attitude to the future: they think about the future, believe that shaping it depends to a certain extent on them, have more or less confidence in but some fear the future too. Unfortunately, *10-20% are fatalists and show pessimism* because they believe that the future does not depend on them, they cannot influence their own fate and have no confidence

in the future. *Approximately 10-16% among them might suffer from future shock* because, though the future might well depend on them, they do not deal with the future and also fear the future. Compared to the Hungarian average, young people are much more future-oriented and optimistic; they are not characterised by uncertainty and ambivalence despite the fact that some 10-20% show a rather extremist attitude to the future (Hideg, 1998b). Their proportion, however, is far lower than the same proportion for the national average; in other words, the change of regime and the transition do not take such a heavy toll on the younger generations as on the others. We may even state that *the change of regime influenced the future view of most young people in the positive sense, helping them to consider influencing the future as a realistic option. This does not come across from the opinions of the other adult age groups, which is why their attitude to the future is uncertain and ambivalent.*

Young people's activities performed in the interest of the future are mostly characterised by even more work, studying and caring for the family. No more than 5% say they do nothing for the future. In their activities young people are far more activity- and work-oriented than the Hungarian population on the whole. *The Hungarian population was always characterised by work-orientation, but the change of regime only reinforced that, at least as far as young people are concerned.*

Young people are the most optimistic about their expectations in Hungary. *An outstandingly high proportion among them expect improvement or no change in their own finances and happiness and those of their families.* The way they foresee the general finances of their acquaintances and the whole country is optimistic only in comparison with the average. For others they do not really think the situation will not deteriorate. *Their family-centredness also seems to be slackening* as only they can imagine that their own finances and happiness will show more improvement in the future than those of their families. In the case of elder generations and other social groups such divergence of opinions was rather rare. Apart from this, quite a high proportion (approximately 30%) of both young people and the adult generations does not know what to expect from the future. They are probably the ones who make up the categories of fatalists, pessimist and those suffering from future shock. *These disorders of future orientation are side-effects of the social transition in Hungary and incur a huge social cost.*

Public opinion in Hungary tends to establish a close link between one's finances and

happiness; in other words, our system of values is strongly related to material goods (Nováky, Hideg & Kappéter, 1994). This is so in the case of young people too. In fact, this link is even stronger in their case. Unfortunately, the change of regime has only reinforced it and made it even more logical. Up-to-date and post-materialistic values have, alas, not appeared on a massive scale in our society yet. Minor signs pointing towards post-materialistic values such as protecting the environment, looking after one's health and building relations, have emerged mostly among young people in the process of social transition.

3.2 The future of the transition in Hungary and the future orientation of young people

The current situation unfolding on the basis of our samples is not very favourable from the point of view of accomplishing the process of transformation.

At the outset of the change of regime, young technical professionals in particular, but even youngsters still at school as well as the university economics students of the time, hoped for fast and sweeping changes both in the political system and in their living conditions. Disappointment in the fast and positive changes of both their living conditions and of everyday life soon set in, however. By no means had they expected their own situation and that of the country to further deteriorate. *Pessimism and fatalism are becoming increasingly dominant* in Hungarian society, even among the young generations.

The future orientation of young people with secondary school education and vocational training who will constitute the bulk of the society of the future is not too well-formed and underdeveloped. *Schools in Hungary provide a bad basis for the formation of their future orientation because they still dish out specific knowledge and focus on the past. Education does not steer them in the direction of the future either but places the emphasis on cherishing the values of the past.* The future orientation of young people is, therefore, shaped mostly by the social environment and impressions and information gathered from the mass media. These are characterised by disillusionment, deteriorating living conditions, a focus on work and money as well as a feeling of helplessness and pessimism, all of which are adopted by the young people.

Although university economics students preparing for elite professions tend to have a well-

developed and active attitude to the future as regards their own future, even they do not express optimism concerning the country's future. They seem to accept that the way to realise their own personal positive expectations is to become the elite of society. Although in that social position they are able to do something for the future of their wider environment, they become more and more uncertain about the eventual success of their actions.

Today's young adults, the 18-35-year-old age groups, are not free of future shock and fatalism either. Although they have strong future orientation, the future is seen in the strict material sense; they see even their happiness in terms of material well-being. Post-materialistic values are detected in no more than traces in their case. At the same time they are ready and willing to act for their own future.

This unfavourable state of affairs of the future orientation of young generations, however, can and does change. This is corroborated by the fact that more and more people realise that it is the increasing uncertainty of the future and not the need to know the future that makes it imperative for them to deal with the future. *Passive future orientation is slowly being superseded by the widening circle of activities that can be performed for the future.* In this sphere the spread of activities in the field of environmental protection is particularly welcome as a means to shape the future of one's place of residence, the country and the world. The importance of the future for the individual, i.e. its individualisation, is increasingly pushing into the background the prominence of the future from the point of view of smaller or greater communities. The future becomes dominated by the desire to obtain material goods and a growing feeling of frustration at the same time. Even post-materialistic values fail to emerge with such intensity as was seen viable at the outset of the change of regime.

The future orientation of the young generations underwent both positive and negative change in this short period surveyed, which also underscores the fickle and chaotic character of the transition. In our earlier investigations this could only be linked to the social and economic macro-indicators (Nováky, Hideg & Gáspár-Vér, 1997). The instability of the social and economic environment and of future orientation means that the latter are not only changeable but *can be changed and influenced.* *This provides hope that the change of regime and the social transition, by renewing Hungarian society's attitude to the future, may be successful.*

We think that *exerting a positive influence on the young generations' attitude to the future* is a far more important task today than to see Hungary clock up spectacular economic achievements in a relatively short span. This is so because if society accomplishes these through constraint or due to external forces and *not by its own, consciously undertaken efforts, the results cannot be lasting and cannot serve as the bases for meaningful lives*. This way not even the ambivalence and pessimism of people's, particularly the young generations', attitude to the future can be solved. Unless the importance of the future, the variety of activities performed in the interest of the future and well-founded optimism reach harmony in people's expectations, the most humane and most abstract goal of the change of regime and of the transition, i.e. creating living conditions and everyday life befitting human beings, reaching individual happiness, will be lost.

In our opinion, *the attitude of the young generations to the future can be influenced in a positive way through developing schooling and education and through futures researchers' assuming new social roles*.

The latest reform of the Hungarian educational system creates an adequate basis for future orientation to appear in the fields of teaching, education and vocational training through restructuring and further elaborating the teaching material and through reinforcing ties between knowledge to be acquired and real life (Hideg, Kappéter & Nováky, 1995). Furthermore, *the introduction of teaching futures research at the secondary education level as soon as possible would be very useful*. The research and teaching experience our department has amassed would contribute greatly to this end. Systematically forming a positive attitude to the future *on all levels of education and training* is still but a dream. It is not a dream, however, that a type of thinking open towards the future and the technology of making it strike roots in teaching and education may appear relatively soon in the further training of teachers.

The way we envisage the new role of futures research and of futures researchers is that futures researchers, by acting as maintenance workers and developers of society's future orientation, can influence in a positive way the further process of the change of regime. This they can do by presenting *futures research products* which focus on the kinds of environmental conditions and target-oriented activities that can bring to the surface and

reinforce certain dimensions of the future. Such *futures studies must be widely publicised and integrated in the course of teaching so that young people are given means to actively reproduce them.* (This can be efficiently done by applying future workshop techniques and future training.) This type of *education for the future can enrich future orientation and develop harmony among its various components (interest, activity, expectation), which can exert a positive influence on shifting the future orientation of our young people and help to bring to the surface as soon as possible the positive elements of the change of regime and the transition.*

Bibliography

1. HIDEG, É., Új paradigmák: Evolúciós és/vagy kritikai jövőkutatás? [New Paradigms: Evolutionary and/or Critical Futures Research?] – *Futures Theories I.*, Department of Futures Research, Budapest University of Economic Sciences, Budapest, 1998 (1998a)
2. HIDEG, É., Differences in Future Orientation in Hungary. In: *On the Eve of the 21st Century* (Ed.: GIDAI, E.) Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1998. pp. 51-70. (1998b)
3. HIDEG, É., KAPPÉTER, I. & NOVÁKY, E., *Válaszúton a szakképzés [Vocational Training at a Crossroads]* (Ed.: HIDEG, É.) Ministry of Labour, Budapest University of Economic Sciences, Honfoglalás Betéti Társaság, Budapest, 1995
4. HIDEG, É., KISS, E. & NOVÁKY, E., *Posztmodern és evolúció a jövőkutatásban [The Post-modern and Evolutionary ideas in Futures Research]* (Ed.: HIDEG, É.) Department of Futures Research, Budapest University of Economic Sciences, Budapest, 1998
5. HIDEG, É., NOVÁKY, E., A jövőhöz való viszonyunk [Our Attitude to the Future] *Magyar Tudomány*, 1, 1998 (1998a)
6. HIDEG, É., NOVÁKY, E., *Szakképzés és jövő [Vocational Training and the Future]* Aula Kiadó Kft., Budapest, 1998 (1998b)
7. LASZLO, E., *The Age of Bifurcation*. Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, Philadelphia, 1991
8. NOVÁKY, E., HIDEG, É., Futures Research under Chaotic Circumstances in Hungary. In: Mannermaa, M., Inayatullah, S. & Slaughter, R. (eds.), *Coherence and Chaos in our Uncommon Futures – Visions, Means, Actions. Selections from the XIII World Conference of WFSF*. Finland Futures Research Centre, Turku, 1993. pp. 303-309.
9. NOVÁKY, E., HIDEG, É. & KAPPÉTER, I., Future Orientation in Hungarian Society. *Futures*, 26(7) 1994
10. NOVÁKY, E., HIDEG, É. & GÁSPÁR-VÉR, K., Chaotic Behaviour of Economic and Social Macro Indicators in Hungary. *Journal of Futures Studies*, May, 1997
11. SLAUGHTER, R. A., *The Foresight Principle*. Adamantine Press Limited, London, 1995
12. TOFFLER, A., *Future Shock*. The Bodley Head, London, 1970
13. VÁRINÉ SZILÁGYI, I., A jövő: vonz vagy taszít? [The Future: Does It Attract or Repel?] In: *Society and Higher Education*, Volume II, Official View on Youth, The View of the Youth on Society, Higher Education Coordination Office, Budapest, 1992. pp. 55-167.

IN THE SEARCH FOR A LATE-MODERN IDENTITY
FACTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES PROBING THE FUTURE
ORIENTATION IN THE MODERN AND LATE MODERN SOCIETIES, ESPECIALLY
THE CASE OF FINLAND

Anita Rubin

Finland Futures Research Centre, Finland

1. Transition and late-modernity

The course of development in the OECD countries heads towards increasing complexity and moulds the foundations of society. This transition affects both the socio-economic and cultural dimensions of everyday life. According to the writers who have applied chaos theories to social sciences from the point of view of futures studies (e.g. Allen, 1993; Laszlo, 1991, 1996; Malaska, 1991; see also Mannermaa, Inayatullah & Slaughter, 1993), social transition can be described as a period of critical shift between two states of steady development. During a stable development phase, social change is more linear and thus easier to quantitatively measure and also predict. However, the periods of rapid and unforeseeable change add to it qualitative and dialectic characteristics that are more complex in nature and therefore more difficult to explain. Some authors claim that this transition is the maturing state of modernity from simple to reflexive modernisation, or post-traditional high modernity (see e.g. Giddens, 1991, 1994; Beck, 1994). Some others insist that we already have reached a truly new phase in the course of history (e.g. Vattimo, 1989). Be it this way or that, it can be assumed that late-modernity involves an essential continuity with the past. The human way of reacting to the present and building the strategies for future is dependent on how people interpret the past.

The period of socio-economic and cultural transition means that many things that used to be stable and permanent no longer seem to be so. Many long-standing beliefs and models of explanation are no longer valid or able to explain the world and its escalating change that

can gradually lead to ever greater unpredictability and even chaos in many areas. It can be said that the very nature of change itself has changed. Development is no longer the same as growth, it is no longer a curve pointing upwards, but something unpredictable and confusing instead. The end results of choices and decisions are increasingly difficult to be predicted from past developments and trends – the accuracy of prediction has become rare. Giddens (1991, 1994) says that unexpected and unintentional consequences are exactly the essence which adds to turbulence and transition. All this results in turbulent and sometimes chaotic elements in society and thereafter, in the lives of ordinary people.

Plans for identity building are always based on expectations about the future and on social and cultural pre-knowledge. Together these factors form both the basic prerequisite for understanding new information and the criterion of choice in receiving and adapting to that information (e.g. Härkönen, 1994, 112, 145). This phenomenon inevitably has an effect on one's identity and self-image. Here personal, intimate struggles to construct an identity can be an aid in reconstructing one's social environment and social activity. Berger and Luckmann (1995, 203-206) speak about the dialectic relationship between individuals and their socio-historical background which moulds individual fates and lasts throughout life. While social reality sets the limits of individual action and consciousness, a person's actions also affect society in turn.

2. The challenges of individualisation

Late-modern societies increasingly emphasise individualism – the late-modern world can be described as a world of individuals. The development of individual's right to make choices can be seen as a way of trying to overcome the negative aspects of late-modernity. However, on the personal level, this tendency brings about other kinds of problems that affect culture and social life. By linking the process of individualisation with the process of the industrial society, we can disconnect a society's patterns of life from their frames and reframe them to adjust them to the new challenges of late-modernity.

Beck sees individualisation as the variation and differentiation of lifestyles and forms of life. He poetically says that individuals have to “plan, write, arrange, darn and patch their own

biographies, act, stage, show and direct their own stories, identities, social networks, commitments and ideologies” (Beck, 1992, 88, 27-28). While the status-based social milieus and lifestyles, typical to the class culture of modern industrial society, are losing their meaning, the process of individualisation brings about new forms and conditions of existence which individuals must consider. Individualisation is a social situation in which the industrial society’s ways of life are first disembedded and then re-embedded, so that individuals “must produce, stage and cobble together their biographies themselves” (Beck, 1994, 13). People have to choose – and vary – their social identities according to situational prerequisites and demands and take risks in doing so. The possibility to introduce fake, or virtual, identities in the discussion groups on the Internet can be taken as an extreme example of this.

Individualisation is a historical social process that can be seen both as a result of transition and as one of the causes that intensify transition development. It is therefore in constant dialectic relation with transition. Individualism is a subjective feature, the chosen way of an individual to react to the changing reality. Moreover, individualisation in itself creates new challenges to identity construction. This is why the ideas inherited from modernity of what a person needs in order to be successful or happy are in conflict with the demands of the late-modern age.

In the information society, citizens must choose between different sets of values, conventions, and ethical codes. Cultural norms are increasingly created through and by the mass media, which also facilitate the sharing of individual experiences with others – Giddens (1991, 4) speaks about mediated experience. The question is not so much of mass experiences per se, as of individual feelings and emotions that gain their validity through the knowledge that so many others are sharing those same feelings at the same moment. This knowledge also intensifies the emotion and makes the experience feel universal. As Bauman (1993, 42) says, although universal experiences are based not so much on shared roots as a common denominator, in the end universality becomes a matter of power. This might indicate that mediated experiences, too, are a way of exercising power with the very same mass media that make these experiences universal.

While it is characteristic to late-modernity to keenly accept and support differences between

people, it also mobilises collective emotions. Unlike the concept of modernity with its emphasis on “rationalised sociality” – i.e. generalisations, homogeneity and similarities – late-modernity underscores the importance of empathetic sociality, ambience, feelings, emotions, but also originality and individual creativity (Maffessoli, 1996, 11). This ambivalence, however, brings about confusion and new ethical problems, such as the disappearance of the collective ethos. In speaking of modern tribalism, Maffessoli describes present social groups as emotional communities, which are unstable, open and sometimes anomic with respect to the established moral order. The ethical experience of an emotional community is based on commonly shared feelings, impressions, rituals and solidarity. This type of collective imagination thus forms the basis of collective ethos and works as the cohesive aspect of the social sharing of values. The ethos of the *Gemeinschaft* of the tribe is the glue that holds together the diverse elements of society. (ibid., 15-20).

3. Constructing identity between the old and the new

As Furlong and Cartmel (1997a, b) have noted, the mixture of old and new, modern and “post-modern”, is the nature of this present late-modern, late-industrial time. Paradoxically, while the transition has brought about a number of technology-originated changes, which have resulted in the collective foundations of social life to have become more obscure, the powerful frameworks of modernity still affect society and individual people. They have not ceased from existing. The opening up of new possibilities increases risk and vulnerability, which may lead to problems in life management. Traditional models of behaviour and values, tested practices and long-prevailed institutional functions have by no means disappeared, but are put to trial by new and emerging phenomena, such as globalisation, networking, the growing information flux, increasing environmental awareness, global market economy etc.

Young people today are caught up in the middle of these transitory pressures and conflicting demands. They find themselves left alone in a situation where society more and more emphasises individuality, and places responsibility onto the individual self to build a happy and prosperous life. Furlong and Cartmel (1997a, 41-47; 109-111) speak of the illusion of individuality created by the breakdown of collective youth transitions – again a sign of

conflicting social phenomena. It has brought about completely new forms of vulnerability. Lifestyles are increasingly shaped by certain actors behind the markets and thus do not necessarily express true individual choice. Instead, those who lack resources to participate in consuming “lifestyle products” might end up in not only financial, but also cultural exclusion.

Young people spend much longer periods in a state of semi-dependency than before: It has become economically more difficult for young people to start living on their own as early as before. The labour market does not offer steady jobs as much as before. Youth unemployment seems to have become more permanent than merely a temporary state of affairs that can be dealt with better social decision making. The educational phase has become prolonged, as the need for more specialised job skills are required. The ‘youth’ life stage is therefore becoming longer and longer through a combination of increased economic dependency on the family and prolonged education (Pollock, 1997). This forces young people to delay their full independence.

Building up a strong self becomes more and more difficult as the world becomes smaller, but the amount of information about alternative ways of choices and living one’s life increases in amount. Young people have to choose their values and models and construct their identity from a very conflicting, multiple and ever-growing supply. The impact of media, networking and travelling all increase the possibilities to compare alternative lifestyles, cultures, ethnic and religious practices, values and habits, and so does the growing number of immigrants and refugees. Social institutions, such as school, with previously so unambiguous norms and values and inherited roles and positions are rapidly losing their authority to support a young person in their struggle to develop a coherent adult identity and become productive members of society. The model of life in industrial society and modernity provided young people with steady, stable and comprehensible norms, values, and lifestyles. In the present transition phase, family, school, education and other social institutions are lagging behind in their position as the providers of role and life models and norms, because they stick to their old positions, structures and methods of action (e.g. Saukkonen 1999). The construction of identity is no more merely a natural process of development, but it is more like a social task for young people, neither easy nor self-evident to complete with success. In this respect, it can be asked which values of which reference

group a young person should choose.

The process of individualisation contains features that accentuate the realisation of individual wishes and the attainment of occasional goals at the cost of wisdom and values (von Wright, 1989.) Collective ethos – generally shared moral uptakings, values, traditions – no longer supports the individual in decision making. One of the ways in which this tendency becomes apparent is the common mistrust of autonomous judgement. Society teaches human beings to mistrust their own ability to make moral judgements. Bauman (1993, 45) speaks about a tendency towards a new heteronomy that is emerging, but on a different level than before.

A situation that combines a growing emphasis on self-fulfilment and freedom of choice with powers that weaken the individual's possibilities for making relevant choices tends to turn people's attention away from the content of "being" and values. For instance, the trend to accept and express heterogeneity and individual differences exists simultaneously with tendencies in the society to return to collective values and to regain control of differences. The very essence of late-modernity is to avoid total explanations. Accordingly, people seem to have lost interest in moral issues, and they have a tendency to avoid ethical considerations which deal with issues extending beyond the wishes and expectations of individuals. Nothing in our current culture – not even morality – seems really irreplaceable anymore (Taylor, 1991). Morals have become a private matter and norms are increasingly labile and inconsequential. All this creates a need for authoritative guidance, but the old institutionalised forms of authority are not necessarily able to respond to this need (Bauman, 1993, 67).

The process of individualisation can also be seen as the fragmentation of life into separate circles: Allardt (1995) points out that people have ceased to understand broad social systems and collective ways of thinking, which, although they were derived from these systems, have become opaque. This process seems to be still stronger among young people. The generally accepted structure, which imposed the guidelines and conditions for everyday decision making and activities for such a long time, has now become useless. Thus, instead of just one accepted version of history we now have a variety of alternative images of the past, all of them deriving from different sets of interests and values (Bauman, 1993) and none of

them more or less true than the other. Accordingly, the decisions and actions of individuals can be based on very different premises and simultaneously existing worldviews. Young people have to be prepared to break with the past and to contemplate new courses of action that are not guided by established habits or patterns (Giddens, 1991, 73).

Finnish society has for long valued strong stamina and the ethos of coping. However, because the world has changed, coping and adjustment call for different types of action, capability and readiness than before – the traditional Finnish stamina is no longer enough. As a result of this, life is not as easily understandable and manageable as it used to be – the feelings of uncertainty and instability grows. It is as if the string has broken and the beads of events that formed the necklace of our everyday life, the continuity and logic of the reality, have all rolled here and there. It takes a lot of extra effort and time to find the beads and thread them back onto their string and to see the necklace instead of a pile of loose beads (Rubin, 1996, 1998b).

4. The imagined personal future

The contents of young Finnish people's images and their ideas about their own possibilities of influencing the future were researched in Finland in 1994-1995 (for a more detailed description, see Rubin, 1998a). The empirical data was constructed from three parts. The first data material was collected by a questionnaire from 12 schools and vocational institutions situated in different parts of Finland. The questionnaire was composed of both multiple choice questions and open questions and the number of respondents was 346, of whom 321 were under 22 years of age (183 f and 138 m). The empirical material most relevant to the needs of this article is composed of 24 thematic interviews, in which it was examined whether the main findings of the questionnaire can be confirmed. The results gained from analysis of the questionnaires were taken into account, when the outline of the thematic interview was structured. The respondents who were selected to the thematic interviews had earlier answered the questionnaire. The taped thematic interviews were coded, transcribed and analysed by using Hoikkala's method of close reading (1993). Each interview lasted from 25 minutes to 45 minutes. All thematic interviews were conducted in

privacy by the author.

The results of the analysis of the first two empirical materials cannot be extended to cover all young Finns, since all the material was collected at school environment and the answers to the questionnaire were partly written under teacher's supervision. Therefore, the comparative data material in this article deals with a large survey among Finns carried out by Statistics Finland in 1996. The basic sampling framework included all Finns, and the households of young people were randomly selected from the central population register. The survey concentrated on the impacts of information technology in Finland and it included a section on futures issues directed to young people. Those results are used here as a comparative material.

In the thematic interviews, each person was asked to imagine him-/herself 50 years from now, at a time when they would be in their retirement years. The results show that the personal images of the future 50 years from now for the average Finnish young person can be presented as the scenario of a neat and conventional nuclear family. There is a mother, father, daughter and son who live happily in their own two-storey suburban house. (The young people in country schools, however, emphasised that their home is situated in the countryside – they would not want to move to the city.) In addition to their house, these quite well-to-do families own a summer cottage, two cars and a boat. The parents (that is, the respondents themselves) are just about to retire, or they have just retired after a solid and upwardly mobile career. Their professions are described as those of the upper middle class – they have been doctors, lawyers, teachers, or entrepreneurs with private firms. The parents have also managed to give their children the same good education, and these children are now also described as holding good positions at the beginning of upwardly mobile careers, with rather high incomes and a safe and prosperous future.

The model of a good life and success in one's own future still remains very traditional, and the familiar wishes and expectations which have been connected to the idea of a happy Finnish family life are clearly visible. The images are affirmative reflections of the same model of the good life and happiness of the fifties and sixties, which their parents' and grandparents' generation held as their vision. It seems that socially shared future expectations and preferences color the ideas about personal future. Also Malmberg's cross-

cultural study among Swedish-speaking young Finns and Polish young people (1998, 100-103) confirms the result that Finnish adolescents expect their future to be very much alike the life course of their parents, while in Poland, that kind of social and economic continuum was not expected as strongly.

The values and preferences that create, support and characterise the images of personal futures can therefore be seen as a specific product of modernity and industrialisation. The interviewees show a strong or at least clear indication to values, which were specifically sorted out from the transcribed material and characterised as belonging to modern industrial society. It can be also concluded that, when compared with the social development of the last decades, the images dealing with personal future are rather realistic, even though they seem to be for a large part composed of expectations on material welfare and property. The general course of development has been that the younger generation is supposed to gain at least as high a standard of living and material welfare as their parents, if not greater.

These images, however, can no longer be connected to any wider value system, e.g. religion or political conviction, or conscious identification with a certain social class or group. In spite of the fact that such explanatory factors were not specifically highlighted in preparing the thematic structure of the interviews, there is nothing in the answers, which would indicate such dependencies. For instance, of the 13 girls, only one and none of the boys showed a religious worldview. Even though family's social background was not taken as a variable in the study (in spite of a possibility to divide the material according to the place of living to agricultural countryside, small towns and city areas), nothing in the written responses suggests that belonging to a certain class would affect the answers. Moreover, rather similar results were gained from all groups irrespective of gender and age.

Even though home background has a clear impact on the formulation of young people's past time activities and on their educational possibilities and career formation (see e.g. Siurala, 1991, 86; Kivinen & Rinne, 1995), it seems that the dreams of what a life should be are very similar among all the interviewees in this study. The economic recession clearly colored the tone of the answers dealing with the main concerns of one's own future such as employment. The level of Finland's youth unemployment was at its highest during the time when the study was carried out – according to the statistics of the Ministry of Labor, the rate of youth

unemployment for 15-19 years old was 37% and for 20-24 year-olds, 32%. This problem was also widely discussed in the media at the time. However, in contrast to answers to the open questions in the questionnaires (Rubin, 1998a) where unemployment was regarded as one of the main concerns in personal future, unemployment did not hold sway in the images presented in the interviews – in fact, it was generally not mentioned without the interviewer bringing it up. Even then the interviewees usually pushed the option aside by saying that perhaps there was a short period of unemployment after graduation, but it lasted only a short time. The fact that high school students, and especially AMK¹ students and students at vocational institutes, were getting close to the time when they were going to graduate did not reflect itself in the form of employment in the discussion.

5. The future of Finland and the world in the images

The scenario painted of Finland's future turned clearly being more negative and pessimistic than that which could be drawn from the ideas about personal future. Finland's future 50 years from now seemed like drawn as if straight from a science fiction disaster movie: decay and overpopulation of cities, high numbers of refugees and the depopulation of rural areas, pollution of the environment and a certain loss of control in all areas of life. The worst case scenario threats were the fear of nuclear war, pollution, the uncontrollable growth of population, refugees etc. In the Finnish forests of the future nothing much grows; or if something does, it cannot be touched - berries or mushrooms cannot be picked because they are too toxic. The lakes are dirty, the countryside is isolated or turned into an urban stone desert. The cities are jammed full of people, and violence, criminality, alcoholism and drug use are common. Moreover, there has been a nuclear catastrophe or war somewhere near Finland's borders. The standard of living has gone down and the administrative bodies are falling apart because of the pressure from the growing population. On the other hand, some interviewees drew a picture of Finland becoming empty – all those who have the means have gone away to countries where life and earning one's living is easier.

¹ Following the recommendation of the OECD researchers on university policy issues, the Ministry of Education in Finland has recommended 'AMK institution' as the English translation for the Finnish vocational (polytechnic) institution.

However, after describing the future of Finland as explained above, many interviewees mentioned that after a period of despair Finland has started to recover. The idea was that the country – especially in environmental issues – will go through rough times and will have to face deep problems, but in the end they are solved and the country faces a better future. Those good times are still very far ahead in the future.

An issue that was of major concern in the interviews was the state of the Finnish environment. Environmental awareness brought out by the media and school education seems to have reached young people, but the content of those future images seems negative and pessimistic.

It was surprising that most of those who considered the issue of the internationalisation of Finland took a positive attitude towards this, even though membership in the EU had earlier been regarded in the questionnaires as a negative future option by many (Rubin, 1998a). However, by the time the interviews were carried out Finland had been a part of the EU for some time (up to six months), and it is possible that young people had had a chance to adjust to the situation somewhat.

Some young people pictured themselves receiving at least a part of their education, or working their entire life, in a country outside Finland, although they did not want to stay abroad after their studies. The attitude towards refugees and immigrants with their differing cultures and ethnic heritages was clearly divided: While the opening up of Finland brought whole new possibilities for many, others, however, had a clearly negative attitude towards this. New influences seemed to bring out fear and even anxiety.

The image of the global future could be painted as a scenario which included the same aspects as that of Finland, only on a larger scale. The atmosphere in these images was gloomy and frightening, and the future of the world was seen as a cloud of impending doom from which it is impossible to protect oneself. Again the interviewees described a future devastated by pollution, dirty oceans where no fish can swim; of the destruction of the ozone layer which causes cancer, and of a world where people cannot go out unprotected anymore; of global hunger and huge population moves; of wars; of leaking nuclear plants; of overpopulation, and contaminating diseases.

Those images and the structure of the concerns and fears behind them are understood as reflection of late-modernity, the growth of information related to global level problems, the growth of environmental awareness, and changing society. Only one in both the interviewed girls and boys did not indicate any values at all that could be regarded as informational (dealing with communication, global possibilities etc.).

However, when the future images of personal happiness were confronted with the future images of national and global disasters, the interviews revealed confusion in young people's minds. It seemed as though it was very difficult to set the idea of happy personal future in the gloomy context of the future expected in Finland and in the world. This question dealing with how it is possible to plan and build a course of personal life as happy and prosperous as just described in a world so disastrous, as also just described was placed in the end of each interview. The most often given answer was a perplexed "I don't know, I never thought about it".

6. Results and discussion

It seems that late modernity presents great challenges for young people's ability to control the circumstances of their own life. Their understanding of the world and the way it affects their lives has changed when the society entered the period of transition. In social terms, the "phenomenal" stage of life is increasingly global, while young people's individual life continues to be played out in a local setting (Giddens, 1991, 187). The results indicate that the images of the future of young people reflect a late-modern identity. The world is no longer "out there" but inside individuals, within the sphere of their everyday experiences and perceptions. Similarly, conflicting expectations and the discontinuity of images of the future can be present in one and the same young person who probably has never really become aware of the dilemmas himself or herself, but which nevertheless affect his or her choices and decisions.

In daily interaction, spatial and temporal distance is losing meaning and capacity to define reality by differentiating and outlining the course of events. As Giddens says, "The

appearance, personality and policies of a world political leader may be better known to a given individual than those of his next-door neighbour” (ibid., 189). The increasing importance of information and the media has also increased the general understanding of how people perceive their own role in the society. In addition, young people’s sense of responsibility is increasingly affected by the idea that local choices and actions may have consequences that reach far beyond the immediate environment and far into the future.

At the same time, the actual decision making body is becoming distant and its tasks more and more unclear in the eyes of ordinary citizens – together with the growth of perceiving responsibility as both global and individual, power relationships are changing. People have begun to grasp the complexity and irreversibility of decisions and their consequences. New decisions are always built on top of previous decisions and their consequences, and even if it becomes obvious that the first decision was unwise, it may prove difficult and extremely expensive to try to undo the whole set of decisions and consequences. Moreover, the interaction of different things and developments makes it even harder to correct the original wrong decision.

Today’s teenagers seem to possess hybrid identities, which appear flexible and changeable, which can be easily removed and switched according to the needs of a new situation. The present time of transition seems to make this necessary. Young people have to construct their identities in a society that creates and mediates constantly varying forms of lifestyles and lifestyle cultures, value structures and impressions. The traditional means for identity construction, such as strong family ties, or unified value-oriented school education, do not seem to be enough to help young people to adjust to the new situation of global networks and increasing information. New rituals and a new kind of global solidarity are needed and created, and social empowerment is increasingly based on communication abilities and the knowledge of information technology. As a result the need for belonging is increasingly being filled by both global networks and local mosaic tribal groups.

The local social environment is in constant interplay with the needs and requirements of globalisation on one hand, and with the claim of individualism on the other. Individually tailored services and markets offer an illusion of personality, while in reality, the construction of the self becomes more and more dependent on internationally mediated

models. At the same time, the pressure to be prepared for and to fit into the global information society as an eligible citizen is getting stronger. Instead of receiving information on how to influence in the future and on how to build it the best possible future, young people have to face an increasing number of external demands, detailed instructions of necessary abilities and talents, and lists of qualifications that information society is supposed to require from them. The idea is that the information society arrives like a cloud impending the sky, and in order to survive and cope in it, each young person has to prepare him/herself to be accepted as a fit member. Amidst all this, young people are urged to find their own way and build a strong identity. It is no wonder that all this produces cultural and social problems: it appears as if our age was suffering from moral constipation, emotional flatulence, and the diarrhoea of consumerism at the same time.

When young people's images of the future are explored in detail, there are elements in the images which seem stable, unchanging and even conservative – elements that contrast with global fears, anxiety, and destruction, which seem to colour other images. The social requirements which young people's images reflect originate from two fundamentally different, but still simultaneously co-existing narratives of the present time – that of modern industrial society, and that of global information society. The problem is that the images in their present form do not support young persons in situations when they have to make decisions that affect their whole life, for instance, what to study, or whether to start a family. On the contrary, because of their dichotomic and discontinuous character, the images are apt to weaken the grounds of coping and social empowerment and to make realistic and sensible long-range planning more and more difficult.

People increasingly construct their understanding of their own identity based on a media-image of what they would like to be, instead of constructing it on the basis of their profession or their social class. The variety of possible identities makes the lives of individuals increasingly complex, especially when they have to choose the elements of their identity from among several possibilities and models. In general, identity is a source of self-expression and it establishes meaning, whereas roles establish action. However, identity is no longer a fixed entity. Individuals choose characteristics and attitudes for a given situation and then rejected them when they are no longer useful or pleasing. As a consequence, identity seems to become increasingly identical with role. In a social context where the

fragmentation of everyday life is increasing and where the ability to switch roles becomes increasingly useful, the task of identity in establishing meaning seems to have become blurred, or lost its relevance for the benefit of action (Bauman, 1993, 19).

However, this brings morality back into the discussion: if responsibility is regarded as a feature that belongs to a certain role, can one take it off with the role? The second question of importance deals with an individual's relationship to the environment: In order to cope in late-modernity, must the individual him/herself change, or is it more beneficial to start and try to change the social environment?

Society expects different and contradictory qualities and competencies from an individual thus creating a situation that tends to increase the feeling of confusion and lack of vision in the present time. This produces a great challenge for educators and the school system, as well as for the decision-makers who deal with youth issues: how do they create tools which would make it possible to understand processes of change and their effect on individuals? How do they construct models designed to help and motivate a young person to make good decisions? How do they support young people in their struggle to construct images of the future which are realistic and attainable, and provide them with a model of a good and happy life they can achieve? This may not be impossible, but it will require a new and proactive way of thinking about the future. The story about reality we have been telling ourselves during the last decades no longer tells the whole truth, but only a pale reflection of it. The other part still remains untold as a whole, but it exists as hints, partial explanations, and feelings of change. It reveals itself in the form of expectations and anticipations, fears and hopes. And it can be traced in the weak signals around us, in the spectre of alternatives and possibilities we can sense ahead.

Bibliography

1. ALLARDT, E., Tiede ja olennaiset kysymykset [Science and the fundamental questions] *Tiedepolitiikka*, 4, 1995. pp. 5-12.
2. ALLEN, P., Coherence, Chaos and Evolution in the Social Context. In: Mannermaa, M., Inayatullah, S. & Slaughter, R. (eds.), *Coherence and Chaos in our Uncommon Futures – Visions, Means, Actions. Selections from the XIII World Conference of WFSF*. Finland Futures Research Centre, Turku, 1993. pp. 11-22.
3. BAUMAN, Z., *Postmodern Ethics*. Blackwell, Oxford, Cambridge, 1993

4. BECK, U., *Risk Society. Towards a New Modernity*. Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, 1992
5. BECK, U., The Reintervention of Politics. Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization. In: Beck, U., Giddens, A. & Lash, S.: *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, Transition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*. Polity Press, Oxford, 1994. pp. 1-55.
6. BERGER, P. L., LUCKMANN Th., *Todellisuuden sosiaalinen rakentuminen [The Social Construction of Reality]* (Finnish translation by T. Aittola, V. Raiskila). Like, Helsinki, 1995
7. FURLONG, A., CARTMEL F., *Young People and Social Change. Individualization and risk in late modernity*. Open University Press, Buckingham, Philadelphia, 1997. 141 p. (1997a)
8. FURLONG, A., CARTMEL F., Risk and Uncertainty in the Youth Transition. *Young*, 1, 1997. pp. 3-20. (1997b)
9. GIDDENS, A., *Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Polity Press, Cambridge, 1991. 256 p.
10. GIDDENS, A., Living in a Post-traditional Society. In: Beck, U., Giddens, A. & Lash, S., *Reflexive Modernization. Politics, Transition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*. Polity Press, Oxford, 1994. pp. 56-109.
11. HOIKKALA, T., *Katoaako kasvatus, himmeneekö aikuisuus? Aikuistumisen puhe ja kulttuurimallit [Is education disappearing, is adulthood becoming hazy? The discourse of growing up into adulthood and the cultural models]* Gaudeamus, Jyväskylä, 1993
12. HÄRKÖNEN, R.-S., *Viestintäkasvatuksen ulottuvuudet [The Dimensions of Media Education]* Tutkimuksia 125. Dissertation. Helsingin yliopiston opettajankoulutuslaitos. Yliopistopaino, Helsinki, 1994
13. KIVINEN, O., RINNE R., *Koulutuksen periytyvyys. Nuorten koulutus ja tasa-arvo Suomessa [The hereditary nature of education. Young people's education and equality in Finland]* Statistics Finland, 1995
14. LASZLO, E. (ed.), *The New Evolutionary Paradigm*. Bantam Books, New York, 1991
15. LASZLO, E., *Evolution. The General Theory*. Hampton Press, New Jersey, 1996
16. MAFFESSOLI, M., *The Time of the Tribes. The Decline of Individualism in Mass Society*. (Translated by D. Smith) Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, 1996
17. MALASKA, P., Economic and Social Evolution: Transformational Dynamic Approach. In: Laszlo, E. (Ed.), *The New Evolutionary Paradigm*. New York, 1991
18. MALMBERG, L-E., *Education and Students' Future-Orientation. Adolescents' Future Preparation, Future Goals and Self-Evaluation in Educational Contexts in Finland and Poland*. Dissertation, Åbo Akademi University, Vaasa, 1998
19. MANNERMAA, M., INAYATULLAH, S. & SLAUGHTER, R. (eds.), *Coherence and Chaos in our Uncommon Futures – Visions, Means, Actions. Selections from the XIII World Conference of WFSF*. Finland Futures Research Centre, Turku, 1993
20. POLLOCK, G., Individualization and the Transition from Youth to Adulthood. *Young*, 1, 1997. pp. 55-68.
21. RUBIN, A., Alas apatia. Tulevaisuus omiin käsiin [Down with Apathy. Taking future into one's own hands] In: Remes, P. & Rubin A., *Tulevaisuutta etsimässä. Tulevaisuusteema opetuksessa*. Board of Education, Helsinki, 1996. pp. 41-86.
22. RUBIN, A., *The Images of the Future of Young Finnish People*. Turku School of Economics and Business Administration, Publication Series D:2, Turku, 1998. p. 189. (1998a)
23. RUBIN, A., Giving Images a Chance. Images of the Future as a Tool for Sociology. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 3, 1998. pp. 493-504. (1998b)
24. SAUKKONEN, S., Myöhäismodernin uusvanha koulu [The old and new school of late-modernity] *Kasvatus*, 2. 1999. 2. pp. 185-188.

25. SIURALA, L., *Urbanin nuoren vapaa-aika. Helsingin koululaisten vapaa-ajan vietto 1982 ja 1990 [The free time of an urban young. The leisure time activities of Helsinki pupils in 1982 and 1990]* Statistical Office, Helsinki 1991:7.
26. TAYLOR, Ch., *The Ethics of Authenticity*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge and London, 1991
27. VATTIMO, G., *Läpinäkyvä yhteiskunta [The transparent society]* (Finnish transl. By Jussi Vähämäki) Gaudeamus, Helsinki, 1989
28. VON WRIGHT, G.-H., Arvot ja tarpeet [Values and Needs] In: Malaska, P. Kantola, I. & Kasanen P. (Eds.) *Riittääkö energia – riittääkö järki? [Enough energy – enough common sense?]* Gaudeamus, Helsinki, 1989. pp. 151-166.

**YOUTH AND FUTURES VALUES:
AN OVERVIEW OF THE SPANISH SURVEYS**

Enric Bas

University d'Alacant, Spain

1. What is youth? Reflecting on the concept

“Young” can be an imprecise sociological term because it is a very diverse cultural concept: the distinct manifestation of the concept of youth depends on the concrete social and historical setting. Thereby there are multiple operative definitions depending on the context the concept has to be analysed; as argued, at least two aspects have to be considered: the sociocultural and the biopsychological (Saltamacchia, 1989).

In spite of it, in modern societies most studies do about youth without a previous methodological reflection, but about this changing and complex concept, acting as if the operative contents of the concept were clear and irrevocable. This is because in modern societies, without practically no “social rituals” that confer explicitly to the individual the quality of “young”, the social researcher tends to be in a situation of such familiarity with the concept “youth” that can confuse the scientific concept with the sense that popularly is attributed to it. To act forgetting the relative character that can have the definition of a concept (and its indicators) like reference to study a phenomenon. It seems to be a situation that takes place in many other fields of social research where the rhetoric replaces science (Edmonson, 1984; Perelman, 1979).

Conceptualization is essential in any social research that pretends to be scientific. Confusing the “vulgar term” with the “scientific” one leads to ambiguity and this causes that very different things meet in fact under a same name and in a same explanation (Durkheim, 1982). It can slant the obtained information, turning into sterile the made efforts. Thereby, it is always advisable to refine at the time of conceptualizing and defining the analysis units,

until having the correct and most exact definition of which you want to analyse (Dane, 1990).

But, in the concrete case of youth research, conceptualization is a very difficult task. Quantitative research methods treat youth as objective phenomena while, on the other hand, and according to the constructivist viewpoint, youth as an objective phenomenon does not exist, but is an agreed upon social construction (Puuronen, 1994).

A generalized option of validation consists of generating a grouping of individuals and contrasting with other groups to characterize the differences that define to it operative. This procedure incurs obviously of being a deceit from a methodological point of view, since the descriptions that could be founded later do not justify the criteria of conceptual outline that would explain the initial formation of a group of age.

But we have to take account that the limits that define any group of individuals are always blurred. In the concrete case of youth, the complexity of contemporary societies makes asynchronous the incorporation of the young people to the society of such form that happens in a membership and simultaneous nonmembership to different social groups. Thereby, a young could be in a simultaneous way: political adult, economic young, intellectual adult, emotional young etc. (Alaminos, 1999, 106).

We have to take account this reality for reading under a relative point of view the results of any qualitative social research about youth: the more usual in surveys is to outline operative the “youth” concept by determining groups of age. This implies to remove important qualitative information, f.i.: to define the differences between the people included between the margins determined for “youth” and those who are near – upper or lower – but out of these margins (those that indicate us who is – and who is not – young) (Kaufman, Spilerman, 1982). By other side, it can be a mistake to believe that the group considered as young in operative terms has homogeneous and excluyent (referred to the rest of population) behaviour and attitudes. These are some aspects that advise us to be prudent and to take account the relative dimension of the concept “youth”.

2. Determining “Youth”, as a group of age, in surveys: the case of Spain

Both in case of a specific survey on youth, or a general one on the total of the population, if we are going to undertake the study of the values and opinions of the young people, first we have to fix reference parameters (limits of age) that allow us to distinguish who would integrate – and who not– the social group “youth”.

But, what means to be young in terms of age? As suggested above, to fix age limits is a problem in itself. If what is tried with a survey of these characteristics is to obtain information on the values and opinions of a group of population determined based on its age, with the aim to infer the obtained results and to establish conclusions with respect to its future effects on the social change, it is necessary to take account the structural factors that configure the context within the survey will be done. This way, some demographic, cultural, political and economical aspects have to be considered.

For instance, and referred to the definition of the concept “youth” in a survey design, a social researcher can find great differences between Malawi, with a life expectancy at birth of 39 years, and Sweden, with a life expectancy at birth of 79 years (United Nations, 1999). Obviously both cases are extreme, but they show that, f.i., life expectancy is a factor (related as well to economic development etc.) that determines the relative nature of “youth” in general terms: while in Sweden a person aged 35 could be considered relatively young, in Malawi is practically an elderly.

If we consider the limits of age used in Spanish surveys, choosing a representative sample of the monographic researches about youth since the seventies, we can appreciate that:

1. The lower limit used to be fixed on 15 years (one less than 16, the age required by law to start working).
2. The upper limit has oscillated between 24 and 29. Each time is more usual to find studies that fix the end of youth in 29; this is because the added “new” concept of emancipation (depending on stable work and living by his/her own).

3. The inclusion of emancipation as a determinant factor reveals the effect of social structure on survey design: high levels of unemployment, the generalization of access to high education, the arise of life expectancy, the maintenance of protective patterns in family management.

3. Background; Values and attitudes of Spanish youth until the 1990s

The end of seventies and the beginning of eighties is a time period well know as the “transition years” in Spain. After 40 years of dictatorship, the democracy starts in 1978 within a pacific but political convulsive environment.

Between 1978 and 1992 a relevant social and political change take place in Spanish society. During this time, values and politics are reflected on political options and attitudes towards institutions. Thereby, to analyse these options and attitudes has been considered the better way for to explain the evolution of values in Spanish youth and its relationship with social change until today.

The forthcoming tables have been done based on the data matrix of five research data bases of the official sociological research center, the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociologicas* (CIS). Although there are about 20 significant studies available (see Panel 1), I have considered those produced in July, 1978; July, 1982; July, 1986; and, mainly, July, 1989 (“Attitudes and Opinions of Young people”, Code 1813) and July, 1996 (“Expectancies and social worries of youth”, Code 221).

The CIS reports of 1989 and 1996 have been used as central references because three main reasons: accessibility to data matrix, the complete character of these surveys (design and treatment), and the official nature of the research center that guarantees methodological standards. Anyway, it has been reviewed some accessory reports for contrasting and supporting the results and conclusions (Alaminos, 1999, Orizo, 1996).

Panel 1. Some relevant recent studies on youth in Spain

IOP	1964	“The young women”
IOP	1967	“Youth and delinquency”
IOP	1968	“Spanish youth”
CIS	1982	“Youth”
CIS	1983	“Attitudes and opinions of youth in Madrid”
CIS	1984	“International survey on youth”
CIS	1986	“Attitudes of Spanish youth towards military service”
CIS	1988	“Attitudes and opinions of Spaniards about the new plan of youth employment”
CIS	1989	“Attitudes and opinions in Spain”
CIRES	1993	“Youth-1993”
CIRES	1994	“Youth-1994”
INJUVE	1996	“Youth-1996”
CIS	1996	“Expectancies and social worries of youth”

Taking a view to Table 1, and taking account that self-position goes from 1 (extreme left) to 10 (extreme right) in a one-item political scale, we can see:

1. Since the restoration of democracy to the beginning of nineties the young people seems to be more leftist than the other groups of age, more centered.
2. This means that political attitude of young people and recent adults (those who were young at seventies and the beginning of eighties) seems to be constant in time during the period considered.
3. The difference between the young and adults, referred to ideological positions, changes in 1982 (the year of the elections that won PSOE, the socialist party). Since 1982 we can observe more homogeneous political positions within the different groups of age.
4. That the cohort that was 18-21 years old in the moment of restoration of democracy (1978) keep a more radical attitude than the following cohorts of the young.

Table 1. Evolution of average self-position by age groups

	1978	1982	1986	1989	
18-21	4.4	4.5	4.1	4.2	18-20
22-25	4.2	4.4	4.0	4.1	21-24
26-29	4.5	4.5	3.9	3.9	25-28
30-33	5.0	4.7	4.2	3.7	29-32
34-37	5.0	4.7	4.3	4.4	33-36
38-41	5.1	5.1	4.6	4.6	37-40
42-45	5.1	5.2	4.7	4.5	41-44
46-49	5.2	5.4	4.7	4.7	45-48
50-53	5.2	5.4	5.0	5.2	49-52
54-57	5.1	5.5	4.9	4.7	53-56
58-61	5.2	5.2	5.0	4.7	57-60
62-65	5.4	5.7	4.6	4.5	61-64

Source: CIS (1978, 1982, 1986, 1989).

We can deep in this analysis, concretely point 4, taking a view of Table 2, where the ideological self-position of young Spaniards in 1989 is decomposed by groups of age considered within the general concept of “youth”:

Table 2. Ideological position of young Spaniards by sub-group of age (in %)

	15-17	18-21	22-25	26-29
1-2	6	9	10	11
3-4	15	28	35	36
5-6	18	20	20	22
7-8	6	8	7	6
9-10	2	2	2	1
NS/NC	53	34	38	25

Source: CIS (1989)

Here we can observe that the effect of age on political ideology is greater in left positions than in right ones: the subgroup aged 26-29 declares himself as leftist in a percentage of 47% and sympathy by left ideologies in youth, although remains dominant, decreases as the age diminishes.

The center and right ideological positions maintain a more homogeneous behaviour respect the different segments of age. This evidence can be explained by the socialization context of the different groups of age: those youth socialized during the end of dictatorship and the transition years maintain a more constant and radical attitude, as suggested before.

If we make a distribution analysis by genre (see Table 3) can observe that – in porcentual terms – while men tend to self-position in leftist positions majorly, women usually choose the non response and more centered options; anyway the difference is very little (about 2-3 points). This tendency is similar to the observed one for the population in general.

In this case, we can observe this difference but conclude that genre is not so determinant in 1989 on ideological position as age.

Table 3. Distribution analysis by genre of ideological self-position (in %)

	Men	Women
1-2	11	8
3-4	29	26
5-6	19	20
7-8	7	7
9-10	2	2
NS/NC	32	37

Source: CIS (1989)

Since the restoration of democracy Spain is not explicitly a confessional state, although, as well known, the major part of population profess catholic religion. The relationship between church and dictatorship also has determined the ideological position of the young between 1978 and 1989, and consequently their values and attitudes, as we can see in Table 4:

Table 4. Distribution analysis by religious assignment (in %)

	Catholic/1	Catholic/2	Atheist	Indifferent
1-4	22	41	64	52
5-10	39	25	14	19
NS/NC	38	33	20	29

Source: CIS (1989)

Note: Catholic/1 is a Catholic who usually participates in religious rituals.

Catholic/2 is a Catholic who does not usually participate in religious rituals.

Data show a strong relationship between the degree of religious self-assignment and ideological position of the young. Not only the young people with a low degree of self-assignment is more leftist, but also shows a more defined political position, as we can see in the percentages of non-response. This can be explained, as suggested, because the tendency to identify church as institution with the non-democratic regime.

Another way for contrasting the heterogeneity of values and attitudes of young Spaniards can be a distribution analysis by educational level. Here we can distinguish two levels of analysis: one, attempting to the current level which the interviewed is studying at the time of survey; second, attempting to the higher educational degree obtained (for those interviewed who are not studying at the time of survey). The first option is showed in Table 5; the second one in Table 6.

Table 5. Distribution analysis for current students (in %)

	Elementary	High School	University
1-4	17	27	43
5-10	23	29	36
NS/NC	60	43	21

Source: CIS (1989)

Table 6. Distribution analysis for former students (in %)

	Elementary	High School	University
1-4	38	45	50
5-10	26	32	29
NS/NC	35	22	20

Source: CIS (1989)

The first we can observe contrasting both tables is that, as we can wait for, the percentage of non response is much more low within the former students (between 20 and 35 per cent) than within the current ones (between 21 and 60 per cent). It is relatively easy to understand this because, f.i., the people who declares that studied until Elementary school can be aged between 17 (the age for starting at High School) and 29 (the upper top considered for “youth” group). This means that the people whose opinions are showed in Table 6 have in general terms a greater degree of personal and intellectual maturity.

Consequently, in both tables, it can be observed (independently of the ideological position) the way the interest in politics growths with the educational level observed.

Also can be pointed, contrasting both University columns, that – considering that the percentage of non response is similar (20/21) – the former university students show a more leftist position than the current ones. This agrees with the tendency detected before: the young people socialized during the transition years (those who in 1989 are about 25-29 years old) are less conservatives than the younger generations.

Political ideology, showed through ideological self-position, is a concept that generally hides a core of values and attitudes, and a way of understanding and promoting social change, because any political option supports an ideal of future’s society. The attitude to social institutions and groups is linked directly with values, and can be contrasted with political ideology, as we will see.

Table 7. Average Sympathy of youth towards social institutions and groups (SI&G)

Ecologists	7.00
University	6.62
Press	6.05
Police	5.37
Autonomous Government	4.89
Magistrates	4.75
Church	4.53
Civil Employees	4.50
Unions	4.49
Business-Men	4.48
Congress of Deputies	4.42
Feminists	4.08
Bank	3.88
Political Parties	3.62
Army	3.51

Source: CIS (1989)

Table 7 shows the degree of sympathy (based on a scale between antipathy to extreme sympathy, 0-10) of the Spaniards aged 15-29.

As we can see, only four institutions of the sixteen quoted have received in 1989 an average assessment upper 5: Ecologists, University, Press and Police. It is interesting to point that Ecologists have a better assessment (about 3.4 points, an added sympathy of 100%) than Political Parties; curiously, the ecology option in Spain, as we will see and contrary to other countries like Germany, has not turned into a political option and still remaining a mere ethic attitude. Some questions can be considered: Are young people tired of the current political system? Cannot they translate their values into political attitudes?

Another interesting question: the autonomous government is better assessed by the young than an institution directly linked with central government: the Congress of Deputies, and

even with the central government in itself. Proximity of – and accessibility to – public managers seems to be a valuable preference for young people.

In the end, the antipathy for the Army. For understanding this attitude, we have to take account the recent history of Spain (where we can find some military punches, the last of them failed in 1981, eight years before this survey), and also to consider the arise of peace and coexistence as dominant ethical values between Spanish youth.

It is interesting to contrast the attitude towards these social institutions and groups with the ideological position we have been analysing before.

Table 8. Sympathy to SI&G according to ideological self-position

	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
Church	2.7	3.7	5.1	6.3	6.8
Army	1.9	2.8	4.1	5.3	6.1
Bank	2.6	3.4	4.3	5.2	5.5
Business-Men	3.0	4.0	5.0	6.0	6.2
Political Parties	3.8	4.1	3.5	3.8	3.5
Unions	5.3	5.1	4.2	3.8	3.3
Magistrates	3.8	4.6	5.1	5.4	5.4
Autonomous Government	4.6	5.0	5.0	4.9	4.7
Civil Employees	3.9	4.4	4.7	5.1	5.4
Press	5.7	6	6.1	6.2	6.1
Police	3.9	5.0	5.8	6.6	6.5
University	6.1	6.4	6.8	7.0	7.0
Central Government	3.7	4.9	4.4	4.2	3.8
Feminists	4.6	4.2	3.9	3.5	3.5
Congress of Deputies	4.0	4.8	4.5	4.5	4.2
Ecologists	7.5	7.1	6.8	6.3	6.2

Source: CIS (1989)

According to the data showed in Table 8, we can find a relationship between sympathy to institutions and ideological self-positions. Therefore, we can talk about a certain “polarization”: the extreme positions in ideological self-position (intervals 1-2 and 9-10) agree with opposite attitudes (that reach until 4 points of difference in a concrete institution: the Army) in the major part of the SI&Gs considered.

There are only four SI&Gs where we can find a certain homogeneity about the sympathy showed by the different ideological groups: Political Parties, Autonomous Government, Central Government and Congress of Deputies. In all of these cases, rarely the degree of sympathy reaches the middle of the scale. Considering that the four items quoted refer to institutions or groups strongly related with the democracy as political system, both trends detected, homogeneity and average valuation, suggest at least two different – but not excluyent – interpretations.

The first one, more probable, would be: this survey is done in a moment of political stability, just at time when democracy seems to be consolidated in Spain: since 1986 we are members of EU and the Socialist Party keeps the power in its second legislature. When Franco died (1975), the young considered in survey were 15 years old or less; this means that their process of socialization has been completed in democracy. Democracy is something normal for the youth of this time. Thereby, the social institutions and groups linked to it are considered also “normal”: practically nobody considers its existence as a topic for discussion. No passionate feelings are generated.

The second one would be: after a convulsive and intense frametime of political and social change, having reached stability, the democratic institutions are not something important for the young people (who majorly don’t know what is the meaning of the lack of democracy); sceptic attitudes can be developed in this environment. Politics, at least explicitly, passes by to a second level of interest.

Let’s take a view on the degree of satisfaction with Democracy, related with ideological self-position, in Table 9.

Table 9. Degree of satisfaction with democracy of youth (in %)

	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	NS/NC
High/Middle	42	62	51	39	30	44
Low/None	53	34	43	54	63	36
NS/NC	5	4	5	7	7	20

Source: CIS (1989)

These data show us that the higher percentage of the young satisfied with democracy is located in ideological positions of center-left (3-4), that agrees with the trend showed in Table 9, where – although rarely reach a degree of sympathy of 5 – we can see the young who show a higher level of sympathy to the four items mentioned before are those who place themselves in an ideological position of center-left (3-4).

We can contrast this information with another kind of data, those showed in Table 10:

Table 10. Preferences of youth referred to political regime (in %)

	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	NS/NC
Democracy	82	89	82	71	57	70
Authoritarian	4	3	5	15	23	4
Indifference	7	5	10	10	15	14
NS/NC	7	3	3	4	5	12

Source: CIS (1989)

Here we can see that the greater preference for democracy as political regime can be founded between those who have an ideological self-position between 1 and 6. We have to point that – and this is a serious thing – only ten years ago, about a third (25%-38%) of the Spanish youth self-positioned in right or extreme-right ideologies doubted about the convenience of democracy as the better political regime.

4. Present tense; values and attitudes of youth in Spain today

The same way we have done with the general survey of 1989, we gonna start to analyse the values attitudes and values of the Spanish youth taking a view of their political preferences.

As we can see in Table 11, and comparing these data with those showed in Table 2, the young Spaniards of 1996 are a little more conservative than the 1989 ones. Contrasting both tables we have that positions 1 to 4 have decreased in practically all subgroups of age; on the contrary, positions from 5 and 8 have growth, specially the interval 5-6 (between 8 and 10 points, what means a relative growth in all subgroups of about a 50% respect the 1989 estimations). The growing of the interval 7-8 is obvious but less significant (between 1 and 3 points).

Table 11. Ideological position of young Spaniards by sub-group of age (in %)

	15-17	18-21	22-25	26-29
1-2	5.8	9.5	10.6	9.9
3-4	20.7	26.7	29.7	29.5
5-6	26.5	29.7	29	30.2
7-8	9.4	11.6	7.8	7.8
9-10	3.6	1.7	1.7	0.8
NS/NC	34	20.8	21.2	21.8

Source: CIS (1996)

This doesn't mean a radical turn to right positions but a trend to self-position in centered positions. We can say that Spanish youth still being, in political terms, between center and left positions, but is more conservative than past generations.

Also can observe, referred to 1989 attitude, a decreasing of No Response (NS/NC): although No Response stills high (about 25%), the young tend to express their thoughts with a greater conviction and/or less fears than in the past (we have to remember that the No Response

detected in 1989 was between 25 and 53%). Maybe the complete consolidation of democracy and the universal access to education and information are the keys.

About the distribution of ideological self-position by genre, and contrasting it with the 1989 data (Table 12 vs. Table 3), we can find that the behaviour of man and women looks similar: the percentage of the young that place themselves within interval 3-4 is exactly the same than in 1989. The greatest change we can found is the translation of the No Responses to centered positions (interval 5-6 that grows about 10 points) and right-centered ones (much less significant).

Table 12. Distribution analysis by genre of ideological self-position (in %)

	Men	Women
1-2	9	9.1
3-4	28.7	25.7
5-6	29.7	28.3
7-8	9.5	8.9
9-10	1.9	1.4
NS/NC	21.3	24.8

Source: CIS (1996)

Therefore, being man or woman seems not to be determinant at this level. The mature character of democracy and the scandals of political corruption (from 1992 to 1996), together with the sixteen years of the Socialist Party in La Moncloa, have eroded the observed traditional leftism of Spaniards (the trend detected in the young is similar to the referred to the total of population) but not too much, according to this survey.

It is remarkable that this survey was done in 1996, the same year took place the last general elections. It is well known the Popular Party (self-defined as “center” party) win the elections but without a great margin respect the Socialist Party: in fact, the Popular Party governs at the moment in coalition with nationalists.

Table 13. Distribution analysis, for former students, of ideological s-p (in %)

	Elementary	High School	University
1-4	29.3	38.5	44.6
5-6	19.1	29.9	34.2
7-10	10.3	10.5	8.9
NS/NC	41.3	21.1	12.3

Source: CIS (1996)

Referred to the importance of educational level on political ideology, we can observe that education still being a determinant factor in ideological self-position: the more education the more leftist attitude. This trend, observed in 1996 (Table 13), is the same observed seven years ago, in 1989 (Table 6). Maybe knowledge (to have information and tools for understanding reality) implies a more critical attitude that determines political option.

Table 14. Distribution analysis by religious assignment of ideological s-p (in %)

	Catholic&Others	Indifferent	Atheist
1-4	25.5	51.1	54.1
5-6	36.1	22.9	22
7-10	10.5	4.3	6.3
NS/NC	28.3	21.8	10.7

Source: CIS (1996)

Also religious self-assignment seems to determine the political attitude. The same way that in 1989 (Table 4), both ideological position and non-response have a behaviour determined by the religious: the less religious, the more leftism; the more religious, the more non-response.

The relationship between the young and their parents, referred to politics, is showed in Table 15:

Table 15. Intergenerational degree of agreement about politics (in %)

	Most of times Disagree		Most of times Agree		
	0	1	2	3	NS/NC
Percentage					
of the young	7.8	17.0	34.2	23.6	17.3

Source: CIS (1996)

Table 15 shows the response to the question: “When you talk/talked about politics with your parents are/were...?”. As we can see, more than 50% of the young are placed between levels 2 and 3. This means that there are an important degree of agreement between parents and sons. This could be the reason why we have founded a consistent level of leftist ideological self-position across generations.

Spanish youth still thinking that democracy is a good political system. The 1996 questionnaire doesn’t have direct questions like the 1989 one (see Table 10): nowadays it is no necessary nor useful as it was one decade ago. But at least we can take a view of a question indirectly referred to this topic: “Which of this expressions you are agree with?” Results below, in Table 16.

Table 16. Valoration of the vote in public elections (in %)

“Abstention is a way for expressing the own thoughts”	19.2
“Sometimes, do not vote is the best you can do”	15.0
“It is a mistake not to vote”	59.8
NS/NC	6.0

Source: CIS (1996)

Anyway, there are some indicators that recommend us to be cautious: the same way than other European countries (e.g. Italy of France) since the eighties the Spaniards have lost great part of their trust in politicians. Some corruption affairs have undermined the reputation of the political class. Confidence in politicians is needed for supporting

democracy. We can easily find examples that show us the lost of trust in politics have implied dramatic changes on the political system and the lost of democracy at medium term, f.i. the end-of-thirties' Germany or the current Venezuela.

The present degree of satisfaction of youth referred to politicians can advise us about future possible attitudes to democracy or politics in general.

Paradoxically, the 1996 survey, gives us together the results showed in Table 16 and those showed in Table 17, that is referred to the concrete question: "Which of these adjectives are those which better define Politicians? Choose only three".

Table 17. Valoration of Politicians according to adjectives used (in %)

	A	B	C
Ambitious	67.9	-	-
Far from people's worries	11.9	29.2	-
Egoists	5.1	25.2	14.8
Competents	4.0	12.8	5.1
Needed	2.3	14.6	12.1
Without convictions	0.4	8.3	14.2
Honest	0.3	2.3	2.2
Generous	0.1	0.7	1.4
Dishonest	0.3	4.3	29.2
Responsible	0.1	2.2	17.8
Others	6.4	0.3	3.3
NS/NC	1.1	-	-

Source: CIS (1996)

Note: the options A, B, C obey to the order of recording the results of questionnaire

The questionnaire of the 1996 survey includes less questions about politics (at this moment democracy is consolidated) than the 1989 one, and much more questions related explicitly with values and attitudes.

Let's take a view to some of the opinions required:

4.1 Social Movements

Table 18. Sympathy of youth towards contemporary social movements (in %)

	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9	10	NS/NC
Ecologist	0.9	1	2.2	14.7	28.5	8.8	41.7	2.1
Pacifist	1.5	2.3	3.6	19.1	28.8	8.3	33.7	2.8
Pro Human-Rights	0.3	0.6	2.6	15.9	26.3	11.5	39.7	3.3
Anti-Abortion	12.9	10.4	4.7	25.9	13.4	3.9	18.1	5.9
Gay/Lesbian	1.1	1.8	3.3	18.2	30	9.6	33.2	2.9
Pro-Aids Help	0.7	1	1.8	10.8	26.7	11.1	45.6	2.4
Social Volunteers	0.3	0.4	1.7	9	28	11.5	47.2	1.8
Against Racial Exc.	1.0	0.8	2.8	13.8	25.3	10.3	42.8	3.2
Consc. Objection	9.6	8.8	12.4	31	17.2	3.5	12.6	4.8
Feminist	10.5	9.6	14	30.8	15.7	3.3	12.4	3.9

Source: CIS (1996)

Table 18 shows that more than the 30% of Spanish the young feel the highest degree of sympathy (10) about the social movements quoted, except in the concrete cases of Anti-Abortion, Conscience Objection and Feminism, where the people tends to adopt a more centered attitude.

But, is this sympathy only a mere aesthetic attitude at the moment or, on the contrary, it is agree with the real social behaviour of young Spaniards?

Table 19. Participation in social movements (in %)

	YES	NO
Are you involved in any social movements described?	4.8	95.2

Only 110 of the 2286 interviewed young (the sample considered) are involved in some social movement. Thus, we can infer that less than 5% participate in some way in social movements.

The social movements where more people are involved in are, in this order: Social Volunteers (a kind of social workers), Ecologist and Conscience

Objection, as we can see in Table 20.

Table 20. Degree of activism by social movement

Ecologist	22.2
Pacifist	3.7
Pro Human-Rights	15.8
Anti-Abortion	4.1
Gay/Lesbian	9.3
Pro-Aids Help	3.5
Social Volunteers	34.2
Against Racial Exc.	2.7
Consc. Objection	1.8
Feminist	2.6

Source: CIS (1996)

4.2 Self-Concept

Some questions of the 1996 Survey refers to self-concept of the young Spaniards. Let's take a view to the more interesting ones.

Table 21. Degree of agreement towards the sentence

“Today’s Youth waste a lot of good choices” (in %)	
Very much agree	5.4
Agree	29.9
Nor agree nor disagree	6.0
Disagree	41.9
Very much disagree	15.3
NS/NC	1.5

Source: CIS (1996)

Up we can see that practically the 50% thinks that Spanish youth profits correctly the emerging opportunities. But also, about 35% think the contrary (what is really interesting). Positions are well defined, cause nor intermediate nor non-response options are too much high.

We can infer that, although young Spaniards are majorly satisfied with their own attitude towards emerging opportunities, there are shadows of doubt.

It is much more higher the difference between those who think that there exists a lack of ideals within Spanish youth and those who don’t think so: more than the 70% (51%+19.6%) of the young Spaniards are disagree with the idea about the absence of ideals on youth (see Table 22).

Table 22. Degree of agreement towards the sentence

“Today’s Youth has not ideals ,, (in %)	
Very much agree	2.9
Agree	17.0
Nor agree nor disagree	7.5
Disagree	51.0
Very much disagree	19.6
NS/NC	2.0

Source: CIS (1996)

The lack of ideals in youth is a very usual topic of discussion between different generations, between fathers and sons, in Spain. Those who now are fathers were young at sixties and/or seventies, two decades of political and social convulsion. Although they have become more conservative as aged, usually accuse youth of a lack of radicalism and idealism, and of an excess of hedonism. This do not seems to be an opinion agreed by the young Spaniards, who do not define themselves as completely hedonistic, as we can see in Table 23.

Table 23. Degree of agreement towards the sentence

“The young only think on party” (in %)	
Very much agree	5.0
Agree	20.9
Nor agree nor disagree	10.7
Disagree	46.6
Very much disagree	16.3
NS/NC	0.5

Source: CIS (1996)

Tables 24 to 31 show the self-definition of young Spaniards. No comments are needed.

Table 24. Selfconcept/1. We, the Spanish young, are... (in %)

Cynics	25.9
Sincere	56.5
Nor Cynics nor Sincere	10.6
NS/NC	6.9

Source: CIS (1996)

Table 25. Selfconcept/2.We, the Spanish young, are... (in %)

Irresponsible	29.7
Responsible	51.8
Nor Irresp. nor Resp.	13.4
NS/NC	5.2

Source: CIS (1996)

Table 26. Selfconcept/3.We, the Spanish young, are... (in %)

Unsupportive	16.0
Solidary	71.3
Nor Unsup.nor Solid.	7.8
NS/NC	4.9

Source: CIS (1996)

Table 27. Selfconcept/3.We, the Spanish young, are... (in %)

Polite	47.0
Bad-mannered	30.5
Nor Polite nor B-m	17.0
NS/NC	5.5

Source: CIS (1996)

Table 28. Selfconcept/4.We, the Spanish young, are... (in %)

Dogmatic	16.5
Tolerant	66.0
Nor Dogm. nor Tol.	9.6
NS/NC	8

Source: CIS (1996)

Table 29. Selfconcept/5. We, the Spanish young, are... (in %)

Dependent	46.9
Independent	41.8
Nor Depen. nor Ind.	6.5
NS/NC	4.8

Source: CIS (1996)

Table 30. Selfconcept/6. We, the Spanish young, are... (in %)

Egoist	45.3
Generous	34.1
Nor Eg. nor Gen.	13.6
NS/NC	7

Source: CIS (1996)

Table 31. Selfconcept/7. We, the Spanish young, are... (in %)

Mature	42.8
Inmature	36.3
Nor Matu. nor Inma.	13.8
NS/NC	7.1

Source: CIS (1996)

4.3 Social environment

What are the main social problems for the young Spaniards? Contrasting some frequency tables, we can infer these results:

Table 32. Main Social Problems for the Spanish youth (in decreasing order)

Drugs Abuse
Unemployment
AIDS
Violence/Delinquency
Lack of perspectives for youth
Housing
Ecology Disaster
Racism
The arise of poverty
The economic situation of the older

Source: CIS (1996)

Paradoxically, while the situations of explicit inequality seem to be less relevant than other for Spanish youth, a less urgent problem, about a 60% of them think that the Spanish society is “unjust” or “very unjust”, as showed in Table 33:

Table 33. Youth’s perception of Spanish society in terms of justice (in %)

Very Fair	0.9
Fair	24
Unjust	50.1
Very Unjust	9.9
Other	12.2
NS/NC	2.9

Source: CIS (1996)

Although seems to exist a certain degree of non-satisfaction with the society, in terms of equality or “justice”, it has not been detected any loss of confidence on public institutions (as we can see in Table 32): if a concrete problem appears, the great part of the young would entrust in official or existing organizations and institutions. There are not signs of discontent

with institutions, and the young don't seem to look for alternatives to what they consider a "unjust" or very "unjust" society.

Table 34. To whom would you apply if any problem appears? (in %)

To the official institutions (council etc.)	40.1
I would meet with other people to look for a solution	12.4
I would wait for and participate in protest acts	8.9
To other existing organizations	25
I would do anything	6
NS/NC	11.2

Source: CIS (1996)

Table 35. Degree of youth preference respect to the items considered (in %)

It is needed in Spain...	
Justice	19.8
Order	3.3
Freedom	11.2
Economic Development	12.3
Peace	14.9
Work	36.6

Source: CIS (1996)

Paradoxically the need of justice remains in second place on the young's preferences (Table 35), far way (about twenty points) from work, the first preference considered. This is easy to understand in a country with one of the highest percentages of unemployment in Europe (about 20%).

5. Values, attitudes and expectancies

High degrees of unemployment can also to explain the great importance that family have for young Spaniards. The same way in other Mediterranean countries, family means, in Spain, not only emotional but also economic support. Family is a central social institution for understanding social change processes in Spain.

Table 36. Youth's evaluation of diverse topics (in %)

	Very important	Important	Not important	NS/NC
Friendship	67.4	31.5	0.9	0.1
Family	75.7	23.2	1	0.1
Politics	4.7	17.1	77.6	0.5
Religion	9.8	26	63.7	0.6
Education	40.4	47.1	12.2	0.2

Source: CIS (1996)

Informal relations have a great importance as we can see: family and friendship are the axis of Spanish society. Without this way of understanding life it would be very difficult to explain the maintenance of social peace in periods of economic depression or difficulties (as the scarcity of work).

The table below shows the youth's expectancies of finding a job in a short term (within the next 12 months).

Table 37. Degree of optimism towards work (in %)

	Very Probable	Probable	Not probable	Impossible	NS/NC
Man	9.8	36.6	35.3	11.8	6.5
Woman	8.2	27.8	38.7	18.6	6.7

Source: CIS (1996)

As we can see, the young are not much optimistic about finding a job in a near future. It is remarkable the little more pragmatist attitude of woman.

Table 38. Determinant factors for finding a job (in %)

	First	Second
Good Luck	16.9	24.6
Being well prepared	50.0	26.7
To have good recommendations	28.2	29.8
Being smart	1.8	6.9
To speak well	2.6	10.6
NS/NC	0.6	1.5

Source: CIS (1996)

Education is the first needed for finding a job, according to the youth's opinion; the second most important factor is "to have good recommendations"; as suggested before, informal relationships are determinant one more time.

About tolerance we have a question within the 1996 survey: Do you feel good with people which have ideas, beliefs or values different from yours? See Table 39.

Table 39. Degree of Tolerance (in %)

Great (Yes, a lot)	50.9
Middle (Yes, a bit)	37
Low (Not much)	8.4
Nule (No, never)	1.9
NS/NC	1.8

Source: CIS (1996)

Do you feel good with people which have ideas, beliefs or values different from yours? And finally, an opinion directly related with the preferred futures: a subjective evaluation of current society on Table 38. What do you think about the society you live in? (one answer permeated)

Table 40. Degree of Conformism (in %)

Great (It is ok)	2.6
Middle (a few changes are needed)	30
Low (some important changes are needed)	55.4
Nule (it is needed a radical change)	11.2
NS/NC	0.8

Source: CIS (1996)

6. Conclusions

Youth (according to the surveys analysed those who are aged between 15 and 29) represents the 25% of the Spanish population.

Always, and specially in Spain (because its recent political transition), we have to take account the recent history (and this includes the history of social surveys) for understanding present values & attitudes, and to foresight future changes on them (Bas, 1999). Working with surveys is very difficult (if not impossible) to build forecast-oriented time series, because we are not working with panels, and much of questions used in spaced surveys are sometimes too much different between or there are not included.

Here, although considering and contrasting other surveys, we have analysed the evolution of youth values in Spain basically with the results of the two national specific surveys realized at the moment: 1989 and 1996.

According to the data analysed, the trend determined in prior analysis (Alaminos, 1999) (Alaminos, Bas, 1995) seem to still alive:

- There has been an ideological change on Spanish youth during the last twenty years, and mainly since the middle of eighties.
- This change has two dimensions: first, an each time lower interest in politics, motivated by the consolidation of democracy as political system; second, a tendency to more conservative positions in youth.
- Anyway, the change seems not to be too much strong: Spanish youth believes in democracy and public institutions, and this attitude can be considered within a detected trend. Also stills being mostly leftist (although less than “old youth”. Both things can be explained according to the high degree of communication within families. “Memory” has “cushioned” the impact of corruption affairs and political crises at the moment.
- The less leftism between youth (although still important) can be inserted within a trend where the Spanish people tend to prefer non-statal economic organizations. Also within a trend where youth tends to prefer the personal dimension than the political one of Politicians. This is a consequence of the maturity of democracy in Spain, and the complete integration of our country in capitalist system (European Union, OTAN etc.), where free market is the law.
- Work and other materialist values seem to be stronger than postmaterialist values. This does not agree exactly with the Inglehart thesis that suppose that a – more or less – consolidated democracy has to show higher levels of postmaterialist values. There exists a historical tension between stability (order f.i.) and social progress (freedom f.i.). Economy (the material) as a value seems to maintain a crescent trend that still alive, as we have seen.
- Spanish youth shows a great degree of sympathy for social movements, but this attitude contrasts with a very low real involvement.
- The young have a very good self-concept. Although self-recognized as Egoists and dependent, they consider themselves as responsables, idealistic, sincere, solidary, polite, tolerant, non conformist and mature.

- They consider Spanish society as “unjust”, but do not claim for justice but yes for work (Table 35). On the contrary, their evaluations seems to obey to the lack of work. I mean, to material values, if this is not a contradiction.
- They are most pessimistic than optimistic about finding a job, and think that Education and Contacts (personal recommendations) are the key factors for working.

Bibliography

1. ALAMINOS, A., BAS, E. (Eds.), *Sociological Report of Alicante (1990-95)*. Diputación de Alicante, Alicante, 1995
2. ALAMINOS, A., *La Ideología política de los jóvenes españoles (1987-1997)*. Observatorio Europeo de Tendencias Sociales, Universidad de Alicante, 1999
3. BAS, E., *Prospectiva; herramientas para la gestión estratégica del cambio*. Ariel Editorial, Barcelona, 1999
4. DANE, F., *Research Methods*. Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1990, p. 176.
5. DURKHEIM, E., *Las Reglas de Método Sociológico*. Ed.Orbis, Barcelona, 1982, p. 53.
6. EDMONSON, R., *Rhetoric in Sociology*. McMillan Press, London, 1984
7. INGLEHART, R., DIEZ NICOLÁS, J., *Tendencias Mundiales de cambio en los valores sociales y políticos*. Fundesco, Madrid, 1994
8. KAUFMAN, R., SPILERMAN, S., The age structures of occupations and jobs. *American Journal of Sociology*, 84, 4, 1982. pp. 827-851.
9. ORIZO, A., *Sistema de valores en la España de los 90*. CIS. Madrid, 1996
10. PERELMAN, C., *The new rhetoric and the humanities*. Dordrecht, 1979
11. PUURONEN, V., Does Youth really exist? The construction of youth in Finnish youth research. *ISA paper*, 1994
12. SALTAMACCHIA, R., La juventud hoy; un análisis conceptual. *Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, 28, 3-4, 1989. pp. 43-67.
13. United Nations, *World Population Trends*, 1998. Data available on <http://www.undp.org/popin/wdtrends/p98>

POSTMODERNISM AND FUTURES RESEARCH

Endre Kiss

Lorand Eötvös University, Budapest, Hungary

1. Old and new gold-miners – The genealogy of postmodernism

The key to real understanding of postmodernist scientific theory is the reconstruction of the structuralist scientific theory. This is a defining genealogical line especially in the case of postmodernism, and also the *single* possibility to create a sensible and justified metalanguage in order to reconstruct postmodernism so that *affirmative* research can be avoided in a sense of which only such statements would be possible to make on postmodernism which postmodernism makes on itself.

What is today called *postmodernism* has been created in a lengthy procedure, which mainly took place under the surface. It is not by chance that from all the competing terms *post-structuralism* ran the best chance, and was also the most exact to indicate the new age, and the new thought.

The main context of the *epistemological* relationship between structuralism and postmodernism is that structuralism introduced the need for *basic*, and that time *novel* epistemological reform. Talking about the outstanding examples of linguistics, formation theory, and ethnography this demand seems to have been fulfilled, what's more, towards the late sixties and early seventies it was justified to consider that a "scientific revolution".

The following *comparison* demonstrates the basic formula of the relationship between structuralism and postmodernism: with its strict, revolutionarily scientific aims structuralism was like a miner, who builds several tunnels and routes into the mountain which contains gold, in order to reveal the treasure. Meanwhile some of his tunnels and routes prove to be successful, and lead to part of the treasure (at this point the analogy can be considered rather complete; these treasures are individual sciences successful from the point of structuralism,

like linguistics or ethnography). Several other routes however prove to be dead ends in the literary sense, they are abandoned and not built further (these are sciences and fields of study on which the structuralist approach proved to be useless). At this moment two parallel procedures start out.

During one of them it becomes obvious to the miner (or, to be more exact, the mining enterprise) that the previous expectation according to which all routes in this mountain lead to treasures, and the ultimate and absolute quantity of treasure, as well as the complete and ultimate method of treasure-seeking, which makes all other searching obsolete, would be found was not proven. In the analogy this corresponds to the series of crises which original structuralism had, and which raised a number of new ideas already at structuralists themselves concerning intellectual treasure-seeking; all of which however could do little to change the final disappointment. At the very same moment though another process started out, which can still be fitted into our analogy. During the formation of routes it turned out that even though the results did not *completely* come up to previous expectations (despite the fact that *there were* achievements, which were later going to be denied by many for completely different reasons), for many this experiment had *already transformed* the method and procedures of gold-mining radically. It would still be possible to return to earlier methods of treasure-seeking (the structuralist procedure did not bring complete success), but for new treasure seekers it is obvious that the structuralist experiment has completely transformed intellectual gold-mining, and even though by itself did not bring complete success, it shook the bases of the previous methods' authenticity.

It becomes clear to them that they can obtain recognition by offending the methods (scientific, or gold-mining) previous to structuralism, and enter the scene as those beyond structuralism. They are gold-miners who do not hope for gold any more (how typically postmodernist behavior!), but are able to take over the professional control by means of criticizing pre-structuralist methods, and subtly but completely concealing close connections to structuralism while continuing with its worthy elements. They have one certainty. They saw and studied the example of structuralism, which showed that the previous methodology was dead (at least seemingly). New gold-miners, the post-structuralists, meaning the later postmodernists do not have any idea whether they would find gold or not; the only thing they are certain about is that methods previous to structuralism are disqualified. They have

to make brand new achievements (which they can only reach by sneaking into the long deserted tunnels of structuralism, and search for positive results, or new means of criticism, but in the meantime they cannot reveal that new results and new criticisms derive from the interrupted creativity of structuralism (for which reason they have to legitimize their activities that have started out under the above conditions “on the way”).

The scientific revolution of structuralism evolved and had its revolutionary effect in the intellectual vacuum between fading standard science that was becoming routine (and therefore also unable for articulation and dialogue), and (neo-) Marxism. From today’s perspective a historical examination would point out the complexity and versatility which characterized the close connection of structuralism to main trends of neo-Marxism. Even though the theses and concepts of neo-Marxism are widely known and obvious, its specific problems of scientific theory that time could be considered underdeveloped, primarily as a result of the hegelian attitude of neo-Marxism, which raised hegelian Marxism above all past and future sciences, and as an example entered the so called “positivism” debate without any obvious and exact interest in scientific theory. In a wider, culture philosophical reflection it also stands out that the “revolutions” of neo-Marxism (both political *and* epistemological) and structuralism (epistemological) strengthened and supported each other intensely against everything “old”.

The appearance of structuralism as a fundamentally new “science” was a widespread basic concept, while even the most educated spectators struggled with basic problems of categorization trying to grasp this new scientific quality, this radical change of perspective (beyond its own historical significance this problem has to be addressed *also because* the exact same problems of understanding and categorization appeared in the case of *postmodern* thinking, and later in *postmodern* science). An outstanding author, such as Gilles Deleuze attempts to extend the “structuralist” methods of linguistics to other fields of study like the following: “And if structuralism is extended to other areas, in that case it can no longer be considered an analogy: it does not simply happen in order to have new methods introduced which are equivalent to these (to linguistic methods – E. Kiss) having proven to be successful in linguistic analysis. Really there is no structure beyond language, be it an esoteric, or non-verbal language. It only has so much unconscious structure as the unconscious speaks...” (Deleuze, 1975, 269-270). At this point Deleuze clearly states that

this cannot be considered the extension or transfer of a “scientific” method. What really happens is a general revaluation of the material sphere of individual sciences, their taking out of previous context of scientific categorization and conceptualization, which means the conceptualization of the material spheres of individual sciences as *languages*. Through the conceptualization of the material spheres as languages a particular *de-scientific* turn comes about, as a result of which a new center of cognition is to be found.

As a result of dissolving the accepted and used, scientifically based material sphere in language the new (structuralist or postmodern) material sphere holds the promise of discovering a *new* material world *beyond* the already known material layers. These are literally “*secrets*”, which promise the contour of a new existence beyond the scientific world image that has been perceivable so far (referring to the analogy of gold that is hidden inside the mountain). *New achievements are also those of new quality*, which can only be made by means of such methods and perspectives completely alien to the standard science of the time (that is, the methods of structuralism).

Postmodern *philosophy* (as we saw it not just one of the central characters were personally structuralist and post-structuralist philosophers), postmodern *art*, and along and in complex interaction with these processes a postmodern *historical age* were formed.

Since our present task is to reconstruct the postmodernist scientific theory, we can forbear the introduction of several individual regards of these three central problems. At the same time all significant regards of postmodern philosophy have a direct science philosophical relation, and no interpretations of postmodern science can become independent from postmodernism as an independent historical age, therefore it is obvious that only the complex of postmodern art can be excluded from our study.

Considering the debates during which postmodernism was put forth against “*modern*” in the search for definition, it became obvious that since “*modern*” *as such* has no directly articulated, distinctive scientific theoretical concept, everything that can be defined as *particularly postmodernist scientific conceptual element* appears as lacking preliminaries and being completely autonomous. The significant drawback of such attempt for definition is that it *hardly gives any useful science philosophical results*. The real arbitrariness of postmodernist thinking, and suitably that of postmodernist scientific theory lies not in some

sort of deconstruction of the “modern”; *taking over structuralism’s achievements of relativity, and those deconstructing standard science without adopting structuralism’s positive reconstructionist intentions* (that is using the tunnels inside the mountain without the intention to, or faith in finding treasure).

The fundamental arbitrariness is to *use the discourse of hermeneutics or reconstructionism without the positive intention of hermeneutics or reconstructionism*, and as a result, for various reasons (among which one is legitimization) to extend the deriving *naturally* deconstructive behavior. The basic question is extremely ironic, and at the same time instructive, since in order to *actually* define postmodernism against modern we ought to reveal a *center*, a positive solid point within postmodernism, the existence of which is denied as a basic definition by leading postmodernist expressions. *Postmodernism’s lack of a theoretical center is at the same time very obvious if compared to structuralism*. Beyond that a more specific scientific theoretical analysis has to point out that in this relation a deficiency of structuralism that evolved through no fault of its own also plays role. By having defined the overall aim of structuralism as presenting an essentially new structure *behind* the phenomenal world it did not obtain a metalanguage relating not to the phenomena, but to structures themselves. A structuralist cannot *talk* about the metalanguage. Therefore as postmodernism deconstructs structuralism it is taking over the latter’s ambitions to deconstruct the standard scientific approach, as well as its other achievements in certain regards, and this way leaves structuralism without a chance to protect itself.

Considering the mature postmodernism to be a *philosophy of history* shows a peculiar direction on the way to discover the postmodernist scientific complex. The idea of “history philosophical breach”, deriving from this concept, *can also be applied to the basic categories of cognition*, which means that the history philosophical breach can obtain cognitive theoretical significance, even though in the narrow sense this history philosophical significance has already been formed on the basis of epistemological radicalism.

Since postmodernism is a *philosophie of history*, or sort of history philosophical term *defining an age*, this function of it can also legitimately lead to the definitions of postmodernist epistemology. However, the way that leads from structuralism is more relevant, because it contains actual scientific theoretical starting points.

2. The critique of logocentrism

The staggering attack – which was fitted into an ideology-critical system – on knowledge and all traditional forms of knowledge structures has been the main scene of the expression of postmodernist thought. The scale and intensity of this “relativization” activity can be defined exactly, by comparing it with, say, Karl Mannheim’s *ideology-critical* approach. In the process of making forms and articulations of knowledge relative the mature postmodernism went beyond the area of “ideology”, outlined by Mannheim as the most extreme “ideology suspicion”; *the critique of “ideology” was changed into the critique of “logocentrism”*. All of these particularities, which characterize the postmodernist thought in general, from the point of postmodernist scientific theory also mean that on this field as well postmodernism enjoys the fruits of structuralism’s often inconsiderate destruction against the so-called standard scientific approach. Beside all that postmodernism is capable of expressing itself as a comprehensive philosophical view, as opposed to certain philosophical generalization problems of new settings, which derive from structuralist ideas disintegrated already, for disciplinary reasons.

The critique of logocentrism *fulfills* the ideology-critical relativization of all knowledge. The result naturally means that all basic forms of human knowledge become relative. This has a series of consequences also from the point of philosophical sciences (the transformation of hermeneutics, loss of reference in semiotics, or in linguistic philosophy). From the point of standard sciences and scientific theory the change is more than defining: because of general relativization the differences between individual disciplines merge together. Not only new approaches are not gained for the more exact definition of science, but previous criteria are lost, since one of the major questions of scientific theory is to find the distinctive features of science over other sorts of knowledge. It is very typical that in one of his basic studies Jean-Francois Lyotard, who is considered postmodernist, mentioning the problem of great narratives lists specifically “scientific” and “non-scientific” narratives without any distinction, thus demonstrating that for him – in the context of logocentrism, and through other forms of relativizing the forms of knowledge – *no real and worthwhile difference exists between philosophy, ideology, science, and other kinds of knowledge*.

We have seen that structuralism insisted on the existence of directly perceivable structures that go beyond the empiric material sphere, do not exhaust in it, and question the order of knowledge in till then accepted scientific disciplines. Postmodernism questions the existence of these basic structures. This is the difference we have to examine from the most possible angles. *Postmodernism does not put a revolutionary science in the place of another revolutionary scientific theory. Postmodernism does not put any science in the place of another revolutionary scientific theory.* Representing this *nothing* that turns up in science and thinking is really the problematic postmodernist phenomenon. And the reason why is that while standard sciences may continue their operation in the context of the preferred *nothing* over them, the idea of the theoretical and scientific *nothing* always has support of seriously inestimable quantity and power.

Not one representative of postmodernist scientific theory cannot believe that for example Friedrich Nietzsche's scientific theory, which in their eyes contains several new "postmodernist" elements was in its time based on a *cosmologic theory*, meaning that it represented a scientific concept (Klossowski, 1986, 165). As a further element of postmodernist scientific concept the complete relativization of the forms of knowledge, as well as the full arbitrariness of interdiscursivity or deconstruction are considered such "human rights" (basically principles merging into politics and ethics, but not declared in this way) the debate of which (whether it takes place with the purest scientific theoretical arguments) recalls categories of *unfair behavior*. This phenomena is an important element of the real *social existence* of the postmodernist phenomena. Another important factor of the related and interconnected structuralist and postmodernist scientific theories is that the structuralist revolution was a *promise* to reveal a *secret*, a sphere *beyond* the perceivable and perceived world that has never been explored before, and which could best be described through the difference between "*parole*" and "*language*" in the philosophical generalization of structuralist linguistics. Now postmodernism even profited from the program and emotion connected to the disclosure of these secrets when it definitely denied the *existence* of such hidden objects (in the words of the analogy: the existence of treasure inside the mountain). Because it upheld the existence of secrets, but did not trust the reality of disclosing them postmodernism turned into a program of *making the world a secret completely* (which is one feature of deconstruction); criticizing any interpretation of meaning, while – in an only

seemingly paradox way – the loudest critic of any interpretation of meaning *holds up for itself* the monopoly of interpreting any meaning.

The postmodernist phenomenon is a philosophy, but at the same time also a series of new phenomena, in part not even discovered, only perceived, but not sufficiently categorized. Often it is difficult to decide whether its primary sense is philosophy, or the huge, complex, and often frightening social dimensions that already in themselves threaten the although verified and working, but *traditional possibilities of cognition and social perception*. Now since the seventies or eighties, through yet undiscovered mechanisms, the postmodernist conscious, the postmodernist society *has not primarily experienced the social change, but has been talking about a fundamentally new thinking*. The transformation of thinking and philosophy is representing the *whole* process. Postmodernism however is not (*still not*) a fundamentally new way of thinking that defines itself as being new, the appearance of which as being new is by the way accelerated by successful strategic calculations of postmodernist philosophers, while as a result of structures and tactics that have been conventionalized as being new, exact and impeccable reporting on these strategic elements is of great difficulty. One significant philosophical reform of the mature postmodernism is *extending the classical form of knowledge sociology* (identified as that of Mannheim) *to infinity*. Now a metalanguage, meaning an even more extensive, reflexive knowledge sociological frame should be found for this infinitely extended knowledge sociology, which theoretically approaches impossibility, and the postmodernist strategy earns quite some profit on this material impossibility.

All things considered, postmodernism is not so much new thinking as *new attitude*, appearing in thinking and outside thinking as one (*the essence of the new attitude when projected to science is the lack of positive goals; in comparison with structuralism the lack of interest in revealing the underlying structure; in general the positive conceptualization of lacking a center; and referring to our earlier analogy the giving up of treasure-seeking*). And once this happens to be so, the *exclusive* attention that is directed to the feature of being new in quality distract attention from actually new social changes, ones that naturally have cognitive dimensions in themselves.

Almost every relevant representative of postmodern thinking outlined the thesis that all previous thinking, previous philosophy, and previous science has become legitimate,

outdated. Philosophical analysis of the three most characteristic opinions (Lyotard, Foucault, Derrida) may well bring several great results, even above the appraisal of all previous work. As for this work, out of all several consequences of theses that announce the end of each philosophy, we should highlight the single relation that has direct and essential, as well as basic importance from the point of future research. For future research (being a unique discipline in a sense that problems of methodology question the meaning itself, bringing up the dilemma of “existence” vs. “non-existence”) all theses expressed as the end of each philosophy and science are of direct importance (notions on the ends of great “meta-narratives”). This is all because future research is not supported by the columns of standard scientific research, and institutionalized research bodies deeply integrated into social existence, which following the long known social needs can continue to operate relatively undisturbed under circumstances when the right of their applied methodology to existence may be questioned. By continuing its everyday work, future research is *extremely concerned* in each science’s (to move philosophy out of focus) thesis of becoming legitimate.

Bibliography

1. *A posztmodern állapot [The postmodern state]* Osiris, Budapest, 1993
2. AUBRAL, F., DELCOURT, X., *Contre la nouvelle philosophie*. Gallimard, Paris, 1977
3. BACHELARD, G., *Der neue wissenschaftliche Geist*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1988
4. BAUDRILLARD, J., *Le système des objets*. Harmattan, Paris, 1968
5. BAUDRILLARD, J., *Die göttliche Linke*. Beck, München, 1986
6. BENNINGTON, G., DERRIDA J., *Jacques Derrida*. Harmattan, Paris, 1991
7. DELEUZE, G., *Proust und die Zeichen*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1978 (original: 1964)
8. DELEUZE, G., *Woran erkennt man den Strukturalismus?* In: *Geschichte der Philosophie*. Herausgegeben von Francois Chatelet. Fischer, Frankfurt am Main-Berlin-Wien, 1975 (French original: 1973)
9. DERRIDA, J., *L’écriture et la différence*. Gallimard, Paris, 1967
10. DERRIDA, J., *Grammatologie*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1983 (original: 1967)
11. DESCOMBES, V., *Das Selbe und das Andere. Fünfundvierzig Jahre Philosophie in Frankreich 1933-1978*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1981
12. FOUCAULT, M., *Die Ordnung der Dinge. Eine Archaeologie der Humanwissenschaften*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1971
13. FOUCAULT, M., *Die Ordnung des Diskurses*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main- Berlin- Wien, 1982 (original: 1974)

14. FOUCAULT, M., *Von der Subversion des Wissens*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main - Wien - Berlin, 1978
15. HABERMAS, J., *Die Neue Unübersichtlichkeit*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1985
16. *Historikerstreit. Die Dokumentation der Kontroverse um die Einzigartigkeit der nationalsozialistischen Judenvernichtung*. dtv, München-Zürich, 1987
17. KLOSSOWSKI, P., *Nietzsche und der Circulus vitiosus deus*. Hanser, München, 1986 (original: 1969)
18. KREMER-MARIETTI, A., FOUCAULT, M., *Der Archaeologe des Wissens*. Fischer, Frankfurt- Berlin - Wien, 1976
19. LANG, H., *Die Sprache und das Unbewusste. Jacques Lacans Grundlegung der Psychoanalyse*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1986
20. MAN, P., *Allegorien des Lesens*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1988
21. PIAGET, J., *Le structuralisme*. Presse Universitaire, Paris, 1968
22. *Postmoderne. Zeichen eines kulturellen Wandels*. (Ed. HUYSSSEN, A., SCHERPE, K. R.) Rowohlt, Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1986
23. *Postmoderne und Dekonstruktion*. Reclam, Stuttgart, 1990
24. RORTY, R., *Der Spiegel der Natur. Eine Kritik der Philosophie*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1981 (original: 1979)
25. SCHÖNHERR, H.-M., *Die Technik und die Schwache. Ökologie nach Nietzsche, Heidegger und dem "schwachen" Denken*. Passagen-Verlag, Wien, 1989
26. SLOTERDIJK, P., *Der Denker auf der Bühne. Nietzsches Materialismus*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1986
27. *Studien zur neueren französischen Phaenomenologie*. Herausgegeben Ernst Wolfgang Orth. Alber, München, 1986
28. TOURAINE, A., *Critique de la Modernité*. Gallimard, Paris, 1992
29. TROTIGNON, P., *Les Philosophes françaises d'aujourd'hui*. Presse Universitaire, Paris, 1970
30. VATTIMO, G., *Das Ende der Moderne*. Reclam, Stuttgart, 1990
31. VAY, T., *A posztmodern Amerikában [Postmodern in America]*. Tematikus napló, Magvető, Budapest, 1991
32. WALDENFELS, B., "Verstreute Vernunft. Zur Philosophie von Michel Foucault". In: *Studien zur französischen Phaenomenologie*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1986
33. WELLMER, A., *Zur Diagnose der Moderne*. Beck, München-Zürich, 1990
34. *Zur Diagnose der Moderne*. (Ed. MEIER, H.). Beck, München-Zürich, 1990

PLACING THE FUTURE ON THE EDUCATIONAL AGENDA

Richard A. Slaughter

Swinburne University of Technology, Australia

1. The emergence of Futures Studies

In traditional cultures there were few reasons to look ahead. Yesterday's solutions would be adequate for today's problems. But in cultures affected by powerful 'shocks', de-stabilising trends and deep-seated change in almost every area of life the forward view becomes a necessary part of civilised life.

The field of Futures Studies (FS) has steadily emerged during the latter half of the 20th century in response to these non-traditional conditions. 'The future' no longer emerges as a natural and inevitable consequence of past and present. Rather, it is the cumulative result of a continuing stream of actions and decisions made by everyone. Moreover, some of the futures in prospect are not at all pleasant. So FS tries to clarify what is at stake and to identify levers of constructive change in the present in order that we can consciously 'steer' toward desired ends and away from other. A whole field has developed to take on this historically unprecedented task and it has made a great deal of progress in the last 20 years or so.

It is notable that the most powerful actors on the world stage – the transnational corporations – already know how profoundly useful the forward view can be. That is why they have taken up and used standard futures methodologies (such as Delphic surveys and scenario planning) for their own ends. What I find interesting is that governments have been so slow to adopt these methods and that in particular those who are currently running education systems do not have the faintest idea of what 'the future' might mean or what educationally useful tools are available to explore and implement it. The consequences have serious long-term implications for society as a whole. Governments are attempting to govern on the basis of

short-term time frames (normally 1 to 3 years) while the environment that they and we exist in cannot be understood other than in much longer time frames (say 5 to 50 years). Similarly, schools and school systems rhetorically claim to be ‘preparing young people for the future’. But, in reality, they are doing no such thing because ‘the future’ as a substantive domain of human enquiry does not exist in education at the present time. School systems are driven by the past as expressed through largely redundant political and economic theories.

2. Why the forward view is absent from education

In the early 1980s I completed a Ph.D. which explored the link between futures thinking and education. It concluded that futures thinking was, and is, an integral part of every aspect of teaching and learning at every level. Now if this had been an invalid result the notion would have been critiqued out of existence and buried along with all the other unsuccessful attempts to canvass new ideas and promote innovations. But what actually happened is much more interesting.

As I moved around the world I found that others in many different countries had also understood the centrality of futures thinking to education. Moreover, in countless seminars, workshops, conferences and, indeed, in university Masters units, I saw teachers and teachers in training, take up the tools of futures work in education and apply them enthusiastically. So at the level of teaching practice I have no doubt at all that futures concepts and tools have a vital part to play in ‘educating for the future’. Indeed, the Board of Senior Secondary School Studies in Brisbane, Queensland, agreed to the extent that it initiated a new trial subject called Futures for years 11 and 12. However, what is interesting is this. The higher you move up the layers of bureaucracy in school systems the harder it gets. You can certainly find verbal support about the desirability of ‘educating for the future’ from isolated individuals, but what you do not find anywhere is any interest in an engagement between, on the one hand, what could be termed ‘high-quality education’ and, on the other, ‘high-quality futures’ work. That remains our opportunity and challenge.

Several years ago I addressed a roomful of persons in the Rialto Building in Melbourne (the offices of the Victorian Department of Education) who constituted what was then called the

Schools of the Future task force. It was a sound, well-prepared seminar, and it was enthusiastically received. But in the weeks that followed the silence was deafening. It spoke eloquently about how those wise individuals in the highest administrative roles had snuffed out the possibility of there being anything substantive behind the empty rhetoric of the ‘schools of the future’ program. Indeed, those schools should rightly have been called ‘schools of economic rationalism’. It was only when I read John Saul’s stimulating and provocative book *The Unconscious Civilisation* that I understood why the movers and shakers in the educational establishment had failed to pick up FS and integrate it – not just into the curriculum, but into every aspect of educational administration and provision.

Saul wrote that:

corporatism – with its market- and technology-led delusions – is profoundly tied to a mechanistic view of the human race. This is not an ideology with any interest in or commitment to the shape of society or the individual as citizen. It is fixed upon a rush to use machinery – inanimate or human – while these are still at full value; before they suffer any depreciation.

In short, behind current education systems is an instrumental view of people and society; one that de-focuses whatever might be meant by ‘the future’. Of course, educators at every level can ‘have their say’, ‘express their views’ or write articles in educational publications on any topic at all. But this is all effortlessly dismissed because the operational imperatives that are running the system are the familiar triad of efficiency, effectiveness and control. Education, under these conditions, is simply not about the future. It is about a view of reality that is itself a product of the way that powerful interests have hijacked civilisation and culture in the drive for global economic hegemony.

3. Future knowledge and the evolution of the forward view

Futures Studies itself is not free of the accusation that it too operates largely on behalf of the already powerful. But what is widely overlooked is that over the last two or three decades the field has diffused out of the think tanks and corporate convocations into many other arenas

where perceptive people in many cultures have applied it to every area of human endeavor. The result is a multi-faceted and international discipline which is, to be sure, grounded in a number of universities, but which is also applied in practice by a host of educators, consultants, social innovators, businesses and many other groups.

As this process has unfolded, so the forward view has also evolved. In order to develop this point I must make a brief comment about the type of knowledge involved. Everyone knows that from an empirical point of view ‘the future’ does not exist. This is a fact, and it has been used to pour scorn on the whole futures enterprise through dismissive questions such as: ‘if it doesn’t exist, how can it be studied?’ But this cynical question, and others like it, actually rebound on the questioner in the form of questions such as: ‘what type of knowledge are you interested in?’ For it is true that there are no future facts; the realm of futures studies is one in which interpretative or propositional knowledge is applicable. Wendell Bell, a professor of Sociology at Yale University, has proposed the term ‘critical realism’ for this type of knowledge. So for those interested in exactly how we can say that we ‘have knowledge of the future’ there are appropriate answers. Incidentally, this kind of grounding is vital if FS is to be successfully integrated into educational theory and practice. FS will have to go through the same tests of validity and truth, the same path of legitimation as any other field of enquiry.

So, in brief, the forward view is a collective construct. It gives us what I call a ‘structural overview’ of the coming decades. While this overview of the ‘near-future landscape’ is never clear in all respects, it is my considered opinion that it is extremely useful. In fact, when this forward view is well rendered, i.e. supported by all the relevant forms of data, trend analysis etc., it begins to provide us with ‘signals’, ‘messages’ or, more simply, clues, to what lies ahead. Within this broad arena we can deploy a number of futures methodologies to explore different tracks or scenarios through the near-future landscape. The upshot is that we can spot things that need doing (or ‘opportunities’) and things that we should work hard to avoid (or ‘threats’). I claim that the need for education systems to be informed by high quality forward views is as great as for any commercial enterprise on earth. But at present the former are wholly past-driven and unresponsive to what has been called the ‘global problematique’. Hence, just as Saul suggested, these systems are neither serving their students nor the needs of the wider society. It is a colossal and very expensive blunder –

but fortunately one that can be fixed.

4. Futures Studies provides new tools for education at every level

It is a mistake to conceive of ‘futures in education’ only in terms of curriculum content. Of course there are multiple curriculum implications. But to only explore these is to marginalise FS in this context; that is, it becomes the concern of teachers at the school level and maybe one of a million concerns for hard-pressed principals. The place to begin with FS in education is in the educational heartland; that is, in university and government departments of education. Universities should be employing staff with futures expertise, mounting new courses and actively engaging in the high-quality international discourse which, at this moment, is flowing around them unseen and under-utilised. If this process continues for much longer, the universities will find themselves stranded, isolated from more vibrant streams of discourse that do not wait upon funding, internal politics or permission from deans or heads of departments to seduce students away to more active forms of engagement and learning.

Government departments of education should take up and progressively implement some of the leading futures methodologies such as: environmental scanning, scenario-building and strategic foresight. The single greatest priority is to address the current lack of human and professional resources available for this task. Failure to do so will render the bureaucratic core increasingly diversionary and professionally irrelevant to hard-pressed schools and teachers. It is a fallacy that ‘the future of education’ can be assured through budgeting formulas and plentiful supplies of new computers, important though these may be in other ways. The fact is that there is a profound lack of leadership and vision at the very centre of these enterprises. The leadership is politically neutered and such vision as there is, is shallow and radically disconnected both from the real issues of concern in the wider world and the pressing needs of students who are confused by mixed messages about their schooling and deeply fearful of long-term unemployment.

If the central power blocks in education stick to their traditional views and priorities then the task of shaking the system up falls to those middle-level players who could, if they worked together, initiate some changes in the direction I have been describing. In Australia, governments can only dictate policy for short periods of time. But the rest of the educational

infrastructure is, presumably, around for the longer term. The curriculum organisations, subject associations, principals' groups and unions should begin to seek a common view about the centrality of 'the future' in every aspect of education. They would each need to decide which part of such an agenda they would be prepared to support and attempt to integrate this into an overall strategy.

At the school level principals can do much to help their staff to understand how futures concerns intersect with everything that they do. In other words, FS should not be presented as just another 'flavour of the month', something to be looked at and dismissed. Rather, it should be presented as an integrated perspective that can enliven and support all educational tasks. The evaluations from the Masters modules in FS that I taught for several years at the University of Melbourne indicated very clearly that teachers do thrive on this material when they are given the chance to do so. Hence, the problem then becomes an operational one: how to provide teachers and groups of teachers with the opportunity and time to consider futures themes actively? This question has been answered in South Australia where a number of interactive seminars and workshops for teachers were held over a period of time. One consequence was the formation of a Futures Group in the Hills District around Adelaide.

At the level of classroom practice the old questions about space in the crowded curriculum readily arise. But, in fact, most can be side stepped once we look at FS as being more than just curriculum content. I am not alone in producing source books for teachers which contain numerous futures concepts and tools that can be integrated into just about every subject area. The problem, as ever, is energy and time. So the practicalities of implementing futures work in classrooms depend upon school principals, districts and systems making sure that such work can be properly engaged and supported.

5. Conclusion: the future of education or futures in education?

I am often asked to speculate about the future of schools. But I have to reply that others can answer this question far better than I. For me it is not productive to try to speculate about 'how schools will look in 10 years, 20 years' ... etc. To ask about the future of education is to

begin a task of extrapolation. This can certainly be done. But what I have argued here is that this is a lesser task. The far more important one is to somehow shake up the presently-powerful, those who are currently 'leading' (and hence constraining) school systems to the point where they will actively integrate futures thinking into every aspect of their out-dated structures and processes, beginning with the central offices and the universities.

If that task were to be engaged with a fraction of the energy, enthusiasm or commitment that it now takes just to be in schools, I would feel much more confident in anticipating a lively and viable future for them. But until that happens, my fear and concern is that schools are steadily being led into a cultural wilderness from which they may never escape. That wilderness is one formed within an industrial worldview that is now defective in major respects. It is sustained by a pervasive corporatist ideology that itself rests on dysfunctional economic prescriptions and a thin and unproductive view of reality – what Wilber simply calls 'flatland'. I do not believe that these currently sterile grounds of educational administration and provision are at all compensated for by current short-term politics. Though there is no evidence of an open conspiracy, the old worldview, corporatism, economics and politics line up in a formidable array against those who are currently working in schools. It is no wonder that teachers and principals all feel the stress of what is, in fact, an untenable situation.

In summary, what we now have are school systems that have their origins in the 19th century. They are facing the 21st century without having truly come to grips with, or resolved, key concerns that emerged in the 20th. To even begin to do so they will need to abandon their past-driven stance and open up in every way possible – intellectually, organisationally, practically – to the future, not as an abstraction but as a dynamic field of potentials and challenges pointed right at the heart of education as we know it today.

Bibliography

1. BELL, W. , *The Foundations of Futures Studies*. Vols 1 & 2, Transaction Publications, New Jersey, 1997
2. SAUL, J., *The Unconscious Civilisation*. Penguin, London, 1997
3. SLAUGHTER, R., *Futures for the Third Millennium: Enabling the Forward View*. Prospect, Sydney, 1999
4. SLAUGHTER, R., *Futures Tools and Techniques, and Futures Concepts and Powerful Ideas*. Futures Study Centre, Melbourne, 1996

5. SLAUGHTER, R. A., BEARE, H., *Education for the twenty-first century*. Routledge, London, 1993

CREATING POSITIVE VIEWS OF FUTURES WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Richard A. Slaughter

Swinburne University of Technology, Australia

1. The dilemma of the young

The late 1990s are imbued with a sense of things falling apart, of a radical loss of certainty and vision. Young people, growing up and maturing at a time when many of the old certainties have broken down, have inherited difficulties from the industrial era, which have few or no historical equivalents. The term ‘global problematique’ – or interlocking set of social, economic, political and environmental problems – coined by the Club of Rome to draw attention to this, has recently been varied to ‘resolutique’, to draw attention to possible solutions. Clearly, however, solutions are difficult to find and even more difficult to implement.

In this context, it is easy to feel cynical, depressed or fearful – avoidance strategies are commonly available through a range of increasingly compelling media. Yet young people continue to have fears about the future. They worry about unemployment, family breakdown, personal security and overall life prospects. These fears arise in the context of wider concerns about the state of the planet, and, in particular, long-term environmental deterioration. Young people are aware, for example, of living through powerful, often disturbing, historical shifts. Sunbathing in Australia, for example, is no longer the carefree hedonistic experience it once was. The AIDS pandemic has introduced new anxieties into teenage relationships. Examples such as these are only the tip of the iceberg; at a deeper level, young people know that there is much more to come.

It follows that their fears and concerns should be respected – they are not illusions. On the whole they are based on reality. There are, however, many ways of helping the young move toward more positive, creative and empowering views of futures, for themselves and their society.

2. The problem

Two decades ago, Donald Schon, described how social systems tend to move disconnectedly from one period to another: we are living through such an interregnum; the old era falls apart before the new comes together. Those trapped in the transition, however, are often unable to grasp the new picture and see only the old one being lost. Hence, there is a tendency for great anguish and uncertainty in those involved, simply because the old system provided identity and purpose.

We have left the industrial era and its unquestioned belief in material growth, progress, scientific and technical optimism, materialism, and the careless exploitation of natural systems. That world is over, though its effects will continue to be felt for centuries; the era we are moving toward is still taking shape. Many old certainties have gone, but, on the whole, they have not been replaced by new ones. The result is a frightening social and spiritual vacuum, felt, at some level, by everyone.

It is hardly surprising that young people turn away from uncomfortable realities to a wide range of avoidance strategies: sport, video, tv, drugs, music, and a mostly vapid, chronically oppositional, pop culture. Within this glittering arena of media and marketing there are many compelling diversions, but little in the way of penetrating insights into the grounds of the condition experienced by young people. Computer games become more sophisticated each year, virtual reality is on its way, and so the technological screen between young people and the world becomes more opaque and more difficult to penetrate or understand. It is a confusing time, where powerful forces working within the human system and the wider world are often out of sync., adding up to less than a coherent whole. Mystification is rife and some resort to desperate solutions.

One might expect educators to deal with this bleak outlook effectively, and, to be fair, some have tried. But, they are up against powerful system imperatives that continue working in a different direction. While many talented and dedicated teachers work hard to serve their student's best interests, they can do little to overturn the basic assumptions structured within – or inscribed into – educational systems. The latter continue to be driven by the past, focused on the short-term present and unresponsive to the future. During settled times, such

a stance would be appropriate as yesterday's solutions would apply today, sufficient to meet current needs. But, in unsettled times, when everything is at stake, short-term thinking is dangerous and unproductive.

In the late 1990s, futures thinking and futures methods are routinely employed in some government and many commercial enterprises. Yet, in most cases, educators, even at the highest levels, do not use them and do not even know they exist. Without wishing to paint the entire educational enterprise as a failure, it is fair to say it has failed to understand the implications of futures as a principle lying at its heart, and is badly positioned to deal with the range of futures-related concerns now becoming real social crises: drugs, violence, meaninglessness, unemployment, and the rest. The system is ill-equipped because it is crippled by the paradigmatic limitations of prevailing politics and economics. Metaphorically, it has had its head in the sand for too long. However, futures concepts, ideas, teaching methods, and so on, can be implemented quickly and easily, once the threshold barriers – explaining the point of the exercise – are surmounted.

So, in summary, the great problem for young people is being born during a time of transition, inheriting a technically powerful culture, which is humanly weak and spiritually desolate. It is a 'thin' culture; one which has lost sight of limits, values, meanings, myths, rituals, commitments and principles. All of which are needed for a robust, healthy and wise society. In the age of 'the fast buck', of compulsive merchandising, legalised insanity, chronic derivative fantasy and the endless fictional rehearsal of disaster, it is genuinely difficult to grow up sane.

Six strategies for young people

- Develop an understanding of the effects of young peoples' media.
- Change fears into motivations.
- Explore social innovations.
- See the future as part of the present.
- Use futures concepts, tools and ideas.
- Design your way out of the industrial era.

2.1 Understanding the effects of young peoples' media

Young peoples' media includes books, films, comics, tv and video, computer games, arcade games, fantasy games, simulations, and, before long, virtual reality (VR). While there are many fine books for the young, the decline of print-based literacy is matched only by the rise and rise of the image. We are, as J.G. Ballard has observed, 'obsessed with the image'. And with the advent of cheap computers, TVs and video machines we have access to a richness and variety of images without precedent.

In a futures context, three major concerns arise from this media-rich environment. First, representations of futures, whether overtly fictional or otherwise, exhibit a familiar and stereotypical constellation of qualities. First among these is violence, emerging from an openly dystopian context that is the dominating dynamic in many films, videos, comics and games. Second, 'the future' tends to be represented externally through the display of things: computers, mega-cities, robots, space stations etc. As noted above, one must look long and hard to find credible images of people as people – rather than servants of the machine – in these images. Clearly, such futures are built externally through science and technology – rather than through human decisions. This is a spurious and unhelpful view. Third, the future is not seen as a dynamic field of potential interpenetrating the present, but, rather, as a kind of blank screen, somewhere 'out there', upon which contemporary hopes and fears are projected. The array of alternatives that arise from the study of futures, and translate into present options and choices is obscured, and the young are thereby disempowered.

The portrayal of the basic polarities of life, such as good and evil, right and wrong, science and magic, is a second concern that can be explored through the structuring of categories in futuristic media. Studying this material brought forth the conclusion that these important categories were irretrievably scrambled at the epistemological level. The argument is not that young people are helpless or incapable of responding, rather, that a significant amount of popular culture in these modes is trivial, diversionary, and, in the first instance, confusing. There is a *prima facie* case for considering much of this material as detracting from young people's attempts to make sense of the world and to feel at home in it. This contrasts dramatically with more positive uses of some mainstream literature, and, say, traditional fairy stories, which arguably rehearse more viable life strategies.

The point, however, is not to rail against ‘the media’. Having outlined the problem, we can draw attention to the need for a strategy of response. The real problem, perhaps, is that a great deal of low-quality material is experienced by young people with minimal filtering, thus by-passing the critical faculties and going straight into the subconscious. I doubt if anyone knows just what the consequences are – and that alone is cause for concern. Are young people being subtly – and not so subtly – moulded in unknown ways? A lot more research is needed before we can be sure of the answer. There may, however, be a surprisingly simple interim solution.

If some of the more questionable material was intercepted before passing into the subconscious, I have no doubt that most young people would be able to assess its significance, understand its uses and limitations, and begin to develop some critical insight into cultural imaging processes. In other words, parents, teachers and others working with young people should try to ensure that there are plenty of opportunities to process media experiences. This would mean, for example, that TV would stop being ‘wallpaper’ and be regarded far more critically as the very powerful symbolic medium it really is (analogous in many ways to a powerful drug), and, therefore, used with similar attention and care. Early work in this area has shown some promising results.

2.2 Change fears into motivations via the empowerment principle

When the question of attitudes arises, many people tend to think in terms of polar opposites: optimism and pessimism. This is fine because, as far as it goes, it is far better to adopt an optimistic attitude than a negative one. However, optimism and pessimism are too simple to be applied uncritically to futures problems. In fact, both terms are ambiguous. An optimistic person may believe there is no cause for alarm, when in fact there may be very good cause for it. Similarly, a pessimistic person may get so concerned about a particular problem they will be motivated to do something about it. So, importantly, it is not a person’s starting disposition that matters, but what – if anything – then follows. The key to dealing with issues, concerns and fears about futures lies in the nature of the human response. I call this ‘the empowerment principle’: an important part of futures education.

The next step for students is to hold the images, associations, feelings or responses out before them, in a relaxed and non-judgemental way. Four sets of responses are then

explored.

1. Accept the possibility that what is feared will come to pass, and explore low-quality responses.
2. Accept the possibility and explore high-quality responses.
3. Reject the possibility with low-quality responses.
4. Reject the possibility with high-quality responses.

The acceptance/rejection distinction is not clear-cut in all cases and can generate ambiguities; in this context, they are not important enough to waste time considering. The first point is that the exercise generates up to four sets of strategies for comparison. Possible solutions emerge across each of the four categories. At this point, further questions arise: what appeared to be the 'best' solutions? What resources, changes, commitments and/or support would be needed to put a preferred strategy into practice?

It may be helpful to consider some of the criteria that may be applied to decide if a response is 'high-quality' or not. To begin with, they can be seen in a wider context – there is always a wide range from which to choose. Second, many fears are overstated and can be scaled down to a less over-blown status. Third, fears which are linked to images or concerns about futures are both provisional and negotiable. They are not set in concrete, but represent opportunities for engagement, choice and purposive action. Concerns about the future depend on human vision, perception and understanding, and, as such, the locus of power lies in people, and not in a disembodied vision beyond human influence. Finally, a high-quality response is, above all, creative; it has the capacity to go beyond the given and break new ground.

Young people who begin moving away from a preoccupation with optimism or pessimism, will view their initial responses in a wider context, considering the nature and grounds of high-quality responses, and will find themselves fashioning a fundamental and important shift of perception. It is a shift away from having things happen to one, to a position where one takes greater control and makes things happen. In other words, a big step towards personal empowerment.

2.3 Explore social innovations

A social innovation is something someone has created out of a perceived need. Human societies are made up of countless social innovations: courts of law, bike helmets, credit cards, insurance, group therapy, franchising and institutions of foresight.

The best way to begin with young people is to consider local examples of such innovations, and, if possible, to draw on the experience of local people who, perhaps, had a hand in getting them adopted. The actual focus is less important than the principle involved, which is, that if enough people care about something, there is a good chance that it can be made to happen (or, if appropriate, avoided).

How do enough people begin caring sufficiently to create a long-term change? Usually, one person – or a very small group – has made a long-term commitment and worked hard over a period of time convincing others. The big social movements: women’s rights, the environment, peace, and so on, all started in small ways. But, in time, they stir governments and alter public perceptions in major ways. So, it is worth taking a close look at such innovations and movements and attempting to understand how they work. It is generally a mistake to proselytise on behalf of such entities, but it is responsible to make sure that they are included on the significant map of knowledge.

Young people can try out the process of social innovation easily and safely. There are basically just a few simple steps:

1. Get informed about something important (environmental scanning).
2. Investigate the topic for a period of time (research).
3. Develop some initial conclusions about it (analysis and reasoning).
4. Discuss these conclusions with advisers (check for safety and appropriateness).
5. Construct a project and present a proposal (project formulation).
6. Expect indifference, opposition etc., but don’t give up (social process).
7. Evaluate the outcomes (evaluation).

By following this kind of approach, young people learn about ways societies respond to attempts at change. They learn about barriers to change, about the uses of power and authority, the importance of clear thinking and communication skills, and so on. The main

thing they will learn, however, is that in a very positive sense people are powerful; if they decide to something constructive – and do it carefully – there is a very good chance that their efforts will be rewarded. Such grassroots efforts have the potential to profoundly affect the present, and, therefore, the future also.

2.4 See the future as part of the present

The tenses of the English language create three distinct ‘boxes’ for past, present and future, thereby creating false boundaries between each and confirming an illusion of separateness. It is true they are different, but it is not the case that they are separate.

2.4.1 Connections between past, present and future

The connections are richer, however, since the ‘flow’ is not all in one ‘direction’. For example, hopes or fears about futures may not just affect the present, they may also cause one to reconsider aspects of the past which led in such a direction. Similarly, any projects which one may elect to undertake do not spring fully-formed from the present; they arise from the historical and cultural matrix in which we exist. Thus, while the body may be constrained within a fairly narrow present, the human mind and spirit are able to range at will across very broad spans of time and space.

Boundaries between past, present and future, are, in fact, fluid and open; instead of being ‘stranded’ in a narrow and restrictive present, there are other creative and cultural choices available. In fact, normal living requires a fluid and easy movement between past, present and future. Only the brain-damaged, with impaired memories, lack this capacity; they are locked into a confusing, and deeply frustrating, moving present, which they can neither remember nor foresee.

2.4.2 Weaving the present from past and future

Mental processes, centrally involved in constructing the present, divide between the interpretation of past experience and the anticipation of possible futures. These two processes are not in opposition; one cannot be considered more or less important than the other. Both are mutually reinforcing and mutually necessary to support normal

consciousness. It is risky and escapist, however, to attempt to remain in the imagined past or future for any length of time, because of a failure to re-connect with the present; futuristic fantasies, historical novels, films and costume dramas, may fulfil this function.

The present is not a fixed period of time; it varies according to perception and need. Whatever notion of the present is adopted, however, it is possible to see it at any time as, in some sense, 'woven' from past and future: from memory and prevision; from experience and goals; from identity and purpose. The 'here-and-now' may indeed represent a very restricted span of time, however, the materials imported into this arena may come from far and wide. In other words, young people need not be, in some sense, 'locked into' a narrow and alienating present; if they begin journeying more widely into past and future, they will discover many of the resources they need to survive and prosper in difficult times.

2.5 Use futures concepts, tools and ideas

To be active in politics one needs a political discourse, in economics an economic discourse, and in futures – a futures discourse. None of these is exclusive, yet each tends, first of all, to develop in a particular context. The most useful linguistic, conceptual and symbolic resources subsequently become public property. This is beginning to happen to futures concepts; they may have developed in isolation, but they are now used more widely.

Futures concepts have been widely overlooked. But they are important because they provide part of the means by which to consider futures. Like the language and symbols of any area, they give substance to what may otherwise seem vague and unreal, providing clarity and definition to bring hitherto obscured ideas and possibilities into sharper focus. In other words, they augment the natural capacity of the human brain/mind system and raise its power to engage in futures work to new levels. (Some examples of futures concepts are given below.) Futures concepts and methods are the most important tools for teaching futures. They are not used merely to forecast or predict 'what will happen' (a self-contradictory enterprise that rules out the active role of humans in creating their history), but, rather, to elaborate our understanding of futures in the present. This is a more interesting and educationally productive task. Here are a number of futures concepts and methods in wide use.

2.5.1 Concept map of the futures field

2.5.1.1 The futures field

It is useful to begin with some kind of ‘map’ to provide an overview of the field. Using such maps as starting points, one begins to locate some of the methodologies, processes and, most importantly, people who work in the field. The work of outstanding individuals represents a legitimate way of introducing futures to students. Clearly, this is a multi-disciplinary area, so it can take a little time to feel ‘at home’. Yet this broad structure gives access to a very wide range of conceptual, intellectual, practical and human resources.

2.5.1.2 Alternatives and choices

These are two key concepts of the field; each suggests no single, deterministic future, rather, a range of options and possibilities, which invite a range of human responses. How can one conceptualise alternatives? They emerge from engaging with the subject matter over a period of time, from looking beyond the obvious, from examining assumptions and, perhaps, using some of the major futures techniques: environmental scanning, the cross-impact matrix, cultural critique and the analysis of cycles of change. Since each can be approached at a range of levels, they can all be adapted for educational use. Understanding alternatives creates a decision context for considering choices.

2.5.1.3 Creating futures

The central point of teaching about futures is to show that we are all involved, all capable of pursuing ends and purposes, which lead away from some outcomes, and toward others. It helps individuals feel capable of contributing to ends which matter, and not feel intimidated by vast collectivities of power, prestige and profit, which may sometimes seem overwhelming.

Futures are scanned: routinely and informally by everyone, and routinely and systematically by forecasters and strategic planners. Futures are created – or avoided – by the sum total of formal and informal processes by which important social decisions are made, and acted upon. All these processes can be clarified, studied, and subjected to careful and informed

analysis. Moreover, individuals are free to participate. Carefully reviewing the work of citizen action movements, shows that governments are often the last to know when a major shift is under way. Many such shifts developed, grew and gained legitimacy because people cared enough to get on with the necessary work. Hence, there is a notion of active and responsible citizenship at the centre of futures teaching. It is realised, in part, through simple teaching methodologies, several of which are outlined below.

2.5.1.4 Environmental scanning

Key to an implementation of foresight is the certainty that one is receiving the right messages from the environment, being alert to information about relevant matters. Students can be assigned the task of monitoring specific areas over a period and begin to develop the necessary skills. Clearly, this ties-in with other curriculum areas: philosophy, English, media studies, and so on. Environmental scanning is an activity that need not remain the province of large organisations. Individuals, too, can learn some of the skills involved: being alert for precursors (or early signals); sorting information from propaganda; discerning trends; summarising data and keeping it organised in an accessible and useable form. These skills can all be taught and learned in schools and other contexts.

2.5.1.5 Futures wheels

Futures wheels are one of the most flexible and useful tools available. Students begin with a large sheet of blank paper and ask a ‘what if’ question: “What if cars were banned? What if the human life-span doubled? What if wars ended?” etc. This possible future event is placed at the centre of the paper. The next question is “If this happens, what would happen next?” In this way, a ring of immediate consequences is placed around the original event. The ring can be extended by considering secondary consequences, and so on. The result is a pattern of judgements. There is no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, simply an incorporation of assumptions, both positive and negative, which dictate how patterns could develop. The futures wheel can be “re-run” according to different assumptions. It can be regarded as an end in its own right or as a starting point for further work. Often the outer edges of the pattern throw up fresh ideas. They can be created with students of any age and level of sophistication. With very young children teachers can write responses on a wall board, while, with older people, the exercise

can be developed and extended in various ways.

2.5.1.6 Critique

The dominant Western/industrial world-view has at least two kinds of major systemic defects concerning futures educators: underlying assumptions (about technology, growth, progress, the environment etc.) are proving wide of the mark and a number of core meanings and commitments are breaking down. This suggests attention be paid to major shifts in areas such as: work, leisure, health, defence and, indeed, education. Careful futures work in each of these areas reveals both a loss of coherence and a number of alternative interpretations vying for attention. Careful attention to what is happening here reveals grounds for informed optimism via the outlines of a renewed world-view. As this becomes clearer and better understood, so it will be realised that no teacher or pupil need ever feel helpless; critical world-view analysis and positive critique leads directly toward empowerment.

2.5.1.7 Acting

One of the most common responses to futures work is a feeling that the world's problems are too great to be addressed by individuals. Students may see the point of something, but they will often respond by saying: "OK, but what can I do?" This is a legitimate question that every teacher, youth worker and parent should be able to answer.

2.5.2 What can I do?

There is a wide range of resources to be drawn upon. In a futures context, first and foremost are an individual's own capacities and perceptions. Both can be looked at and consciously developed. Next are futures concepts and methodologies which articulate futures concerns and provide ways of approaching them. Finally, there is the study of real-world processes, describing what is happening in the world and providing starting points for an infinite variety of projects.

If there is a single answer to dealing with the problems of a world in transition, it is learning to act effectively and to persist until constructive changes are achieved. One reply to the question "What can I do?" is "the answer is a journey." This short summary statement is useful because it points people in the most promising direction of all: the development of

their own capabilities. It is a journey of inner discovery, as individuals come to know their own capacities and purposes. It is also a journey of exploration, research and action in the wider world. This twin journey identifies a central purpose of education at any level; but futures education gives it both substance and direction.

2.6 Design your way out of the industrial era

After opening out a new range of alternatives in terms of ideas, visions and options, the next step is to look at other possible changes in the ways things are understood or done. To some extent this is already happening in areas such as energy conservation and re-cycling. There are many other ways, however, of applying the notion of 'design'. The idea of social innovations can be extended, challenging us to find new ways of applying creative imagination.

2.6.1 Aspects of cultural design

Design is routinely applied to the technical system and, indeed, with many uses. As we move into the 21st century it will be necessary to re-think and replace many technical and infrastructural systems that were founded on old assumptions (rapid growth, unlimited fossil energy, high environmental impacts). In their place we will need to adapt, re-fit and create new systems based on different assumptions (steady-state, or qualitative growth, energy conservation, low impact). There is scope for a great deal of innovative design work, some of which can be carried out by young people. However, the notion of design can also be applied to other domains including: the language system, the spatial system, the regulatory system, the temporal system and the ethical/moral system. There follow some key questions that may be asked in relation to each.

2.6.1.1 The language system

What ideas, images and metaphors from the past are no longer helpful? How can language accurately represent the interconnected global system and the major defects which impair its operation? How can language (and imagery) be used to explore a wide range of future options and alternatives? What types of humanistic and artistic productions are suggested by

the above?

2.6.1.2 The spatial system

What assumptions about space have been inherited from the past? How has land-use been conditioned by cheap petroleum, and city layouts by the private car? What changes might be foreshadowed by using different assumptions and different drivers of change? Similarly, how do patterns of housing, transport, industry and mining reflect industrial priorities? What kinds of spatial design solutions will be needed in an information, image-rich society attempting to move toward sustainability?

2.6.1.3 The regulatory system

How can a regulatory system based on precedent and past practice begin to deal systematically with new problems and dilemmas? How can it be modified to give a voice to the disenfranchised, and to future generations? Is there a role for an ombudsman for future generations? How can one mediate between a productive system hooked on growth and the need to preserve the environment's integrity? How can regulation actively encourage closed-loop processing and ecological restoration?

2.6.1.4 The temporal system

Western cultures seem to pay much more attention to space than time. Yet time is culture-bound and powerfully conditions the social order. How can time be studied? What models are useful for understanding it? How do linear and cyclic models affect social processes? What is future-discounting and how does it operate to 'make the future vanish'? What are time-frames, and how are they used? How might we use time-frames more consciously, matching them with particular activities?

2.6.1.5 The ethical system

Our ethics are badly in need of an overhaul. The diminished 'ethic' of marketing and consumerism have become system imperatives, yet, they are patently destructive. How can they be changed or replaced? What other sources of value and meaning are available to us? How can they be accessed? What is the grounds of a stewardship ethic? Could this play a

more central role in a society of the future? How might we begin to activate the notion of a wise society? What might a wise culture be like, and how would its operating assumptions differ from present ones?

Such questions can stimulate young people to look beyond the obvious for insights and materials that lead away from the abyss to new and renewed ways of life.

2.6.2 Limitations of the strategies

Each of the above provide a number of starting points that can be used successfully to deal with many fears and concerns. But we should not pretend that they exhaust the field or that all problems have solutions. Many problems do not, in fact, have solutions on the level at which they are first understood or experienced. A qualitatively different approach is needed for dealing with systemic difficulties and deep-seated world-view assumptions and commitments.

Bibliography

1. SLAUGHTER, R. A., *The Foresight Principle*. Adamantine Press Limited, London, 1995
2. SLAUGHTER, R. A., BEARE, H., *Education for the twenty-first century*. Routledge, London, 1993

**THE INFORMATION SOCIETY (IES); REFLECTIONS ABOUT THE DUAL
CHARACTER OF THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION
(I&C) TECHNOLOGIES**

Enric Bas

University d'Alacant, Spain

1. World of differences / World in transition; Some preliminary thoughts

We live in a world of differences: a world of cultural, linguistic, religious and economic differences. The cultural, linguistic and religious differences are good for the human being; this heterogeneity gives us the treasure of diversity. On the contrary, economic differences are blameworthy, and dangerous for the stability – in terms of security and peace – of the world system; the different levels of economic development determine different levels of social development, and also wars, poverty and discrimination everywhere.

Certainly, the human being history is composed by a succession of stages; it is the history of a never-ending transition, of an “evolution”: the human society can be considered as a dynamic system immersed in a continuous changing process towards each time more organized and complex stages (Laszlo, 1988, 93-95). According to Laszlo (1988:102) “the evolutionary conception see to fly the historical arrow of time: hunter/harvest society → agricultural/shepherd → agricultural → preindustrial → industrial → postindustrial (...) Societies progress basically when create, assimilate, or adapt technological revolutions...”

This point – the idea of the tendency towards complexity – relates evolution to progress, and suggests – at the first time – the important role of scientific and technological advances in progress and – at the second time – the relationship between technology, economy and society. This “technological” way of understanding progress did not have its origins exactly with the industrial revolution; the seed of this way of thinking could be founded in Descartes (*all sciences conform human knowledge, that remains always one and always the same*), Newton (*men can amplify their control of Nature because can, through reason, identify its*

unchangeable laws) and Bacon (*the aim of science is basically to give human life new discoveries and faculties*): “the 18th and 19th centuries science tended to maintain the opinion that the things of the world followed an ascendant, tidy and predictable spiral, in where human perfectibility and technical progress were intertwined” (De Carlo, 1965, 13).

Nowadays, Laszlo (1988, 102) assures that technological change induces societies to progress (in the sense of the “arrow” quoted before) because, generally, technological change is irrevocable. Maybe the irrevocability of technological change is the main reason that could explain the tendency that, according to Marchetti (Devezas, 1995), has the successive socio-economic system to become increasingly complex.

This tendency to complexity could be easily observed in the analysis of Kondratieff’s long waves, specially the innovation cycles (Devezas, 1995, 39). This analysis approach tries to explain the relationship between economic-development cycles and technological-innovation cycles. Even though the existence of these long waves was studied at the end of thirties (Schumpeter, 1939), recently this perspective analysis has generated much more literature.

According to Devezas (1995, 30), maybe the larger acceptance of this idea today can be explained on the basis of the existing similarities between the present recession and the 1930s one; these has been observed by some economists before (The Economist, 1987). The idea about the evidence of living in a “changing time-period” towards a new informatic-based economy strongly based on a new telecommunications structure should be also considered (Freeman, 1994).

Truly, we are living in a transition time where technology is having bigger effects over economic development and social structure than never before in human history. Since 18th century, within every Kondratieff cycle, technological innovation has renewed the productive system, has produced economic development and has modified social structure through social change; but maybe never have had so fast and strong effects as now.

We can say we are at the beginning of the 5th Kondratieff cycle (Devezas, 1995, 39), or immersed in the 3th Industrial Revolution (Piatier, 1981) of the capitalism; even some people say that the industrial revolution we are involved in maybe is not the third one, but the second one (Schaff, 1995, 2-3). The truth is that we are in the way to a new society

where the social and economic relationships will be different from the modern ones. This feeling of change is emphasized by the immediacy the social and economic relationships are affected by technological innovations the time gap between the innovation and its impact is smaller than never. The speed with each new innovation follows the last one, is faster than ever. It seems that new technologies run so fast and so far as ever before, transporting us to a new and more complex world. This is the way that goes from the industrial society to the “postindustrial society” (Bell, 1973), also called “postcapitalist society” (Drucker, 1993), “information society”, “knowledge society”, “communication society” etc.

Nowadays, at the end of the 20th century, we are living much of the changes forecasted by Naisbitt (1982) more twenty years ago:

- industrial society to information technology (computers+telecommunications);
- rude technology to high standing technology (the microprocessor);
- local economy to global economy (economic globalization);
- centralisation to decentralisation (in decision making);
- administration aid to self-aid (crisis of the welfare state);

... and another ones were not forecasted by Naisbitt, like:

- population growth (arising the “limits”);
- loss of real alternatives to capitalism (the end of formal ideologies?);
- restructuration of world politics: loss of nation-state role (new organizing ways);
- arise of nationalism and integrism (reactions to a “homogeneous” world).

I have attempted to structure all these changes before (Bas, 1995) around three processes: economic globalization, technological change and population growth. As Immanuel Wallerstein (Wallerstein, 1994, 3) points, these are three historical processes generated by the capitalist world system, that it is expansive by nature.

Table 1. An approach to the processes and basic trends in the world system.

PROCESSES	CHARACTERISTICS	TRENDS
ECONOMIC GLOBALIZATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Antisolidaristic (not redistributive) 2. Directed/Sectarian (controlled by elites) 3. Classist (1+2=inequality) 	The “two Mc’s”: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business transnationalization global firm (McDonalds) 2. Decline of the role of the state global village (McLuhan)
TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Multiple 2. Expansive 3. Unequal 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Universalization (world-system expansion→world system) 2. New social relations 3. New ways to organize business 4. New ways of working/Unemployment
POPULATION GROWTH	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Crescent 2. Unequal 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aging population in developed countries 2. Each time younger people in sub.ones

These three processes can be considered the driving forces that are carrying the world system towards the future. All of them are interrelated, and they all are contributing to the conformation and configuration of the postindustrial society. So we could name this, evident (it follows to the industrial one) postindustrial society, *information society*: we are entering in a fully different kind of society, each time less based on manufacturing process (industrial) and each time more based on knowledge and information processes (services). Nowadays we are in a stage that “is characterized by post-mechanic technology, work automatisation, information digitalization, network widespreading, services commercialization and value globalization” (Tortosa, 1991, 80).

If active population could be taken like a good indicator for the transition referred, we can conclude that:

1. It is obvious that we go towards a society where Information, Communication and Services are dominant (maybe 75% year 2000 and, according to Makridakis close to 95% in year 2025).
2. It could be said that the apelative “information” is, perhaps, better for defining the current society that the “industrial” one for the final 19th and beginning 20th centuries society. This is due to the specific weight (in relative terms) of the dominant sector is now greater than then.

3. Maybe the industrial society has been only a necessary preliminary step to the information society. We can take the industrial revolution like another step in the innovation link that drives human kind towards the information society; under this point of view there is only one revolution, not two succesives. This is because Tertiary Sector (Services), and concretely Information and Communication Services, seems to be the only economic activity that has gone increasingly all along the human kind history.

An example that shows we are converging, basically since the 1980s decade, to a new society where information becomes each time more relevant, are the conclusions of the survey done by *High Technology Business Research* in March, 1988, where 200 USA risk-capital firms were interviewed about their particular fields of interest: the main three fields chosen were, in this order, superconductives, software and communication. It is well known that these are fields working, at different levels, in transmission of information.

Evidently, in this moment we are in a “world in transition”: the economic, political and social models imposed by the industrial capitalism of the 19th century are in transformation due to an unprecedent technological development which produces continuous change in the context. Technological advances are opening new, unimagined, possibilities; some of them are the showed in Table 2:

Table 2. Some Technological Innovations

<p><u>COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY</u> Internet, Fibre optics, Cybernetics, Networking, Electric vehicles</p> <p><u>REPRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY</u> Genetic engineering, Cloning</p> <p><u>PERCEPTION TECHNOLOGY</u> Virtual Reality, Intelligent Clothing</p> <p><u>PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY</u> Micro-electronics, Robotics</p>
--

Source: Bas (1995, 9)

The feeling of change inherent to any transition period is now greater than ever. New technologies, because they accelerate the communication and the transmission of

information, are the main reason why. Communication mass media also contributes to create this speed sensation announcing all the scientific and technological advances and imagining all the possibilities they can open us in the future.

New technologies are ahead in the transformation we are experiencing at the moment. Technological progress carry economy and society to the next stage, but maybe slower than it could do: nor economy (“As we can hope technology revolution moves faster than market” (Olmedilla, 1995, 53) nor society (“the limitation factor for the transformation it is not technology but incapacity of people for changing” (Benjamin, Blunt, 1994, 66) are going so fast as technology. In some way, this loss of synchronicity between technological development, social structure and policy system, was already forecasted in 1980 by Alvin Toffler (Toffler, 1980), who talked about resistance to change (the difficulties of the society who generates technological advances to assimilate them).

Telecommunications are producing this feeling of speed. Telecommunications play an increasing important role in the social and economic transformation because:

1. It is well known the important role of Telecommunications in economic development; thereby, since the first 1980s, Telecommunications have won an outstanding role in developing countries priorities (Castilla, 1989).
2. Telecommunications are the skeleton of the future society, the “information society”. Both technological offer (I mean, the market) and the organizational regulation of telecommunications are strongly influencing social change and modifying lifestyles (Lera, Tirado, 1995).

2. Attitudes towards technological change

2.1 Positive – OPTIMISTIC

The so called “technological optimism” is an attitude that implies a blind faith on the benefits of technology. It is an attitude with deep roots in the rationalist scientism of 18th and 19th centuries, which means that perfectibility and technical progress are intertwined.

An optimistic usually thinks “all technological advance is fully positive”; even being a bit

sceptic, he would think: “yes, maybe there are some problems to control technology consequences, but I guess the technological advance always has more positive effects than negative ones”. I mean, a technological optimistic is, in some way, a fundamentalist of technological advance, or – in a better case – an ingenuous gullible who thinks that technology is the solution for everything.

It is easy to understand this attitude, basically since the scientific and technological advances have contributed decisively to the improvement of life standards (life expectancy, health assistance, education etc.) last hundred years.

Nowadays, the optimistic attitude may be the more widespread one. The reasons why for this attitude are:

- *First*, mass media diffusion and high level of literacy increase exponentially the amplitude and speed of technological advances. People of the current generations – in general – have much more information about these advances (and their effects) than the old ones.
- *Second*, new technologies are generating a lot of expectancies for a better life. These expectancies often become hopes and desires.
- *Third*, expectancies in capitalist language mean business. The Radio, the TV, and the telephone were the first technological advances that became consumption products for masses. Afterwards appeared the fax, the videotext, and the “rosseta stone” of the future, the personal computer (commercialized first time in 1981 by IBM). Now, combination of computer+telecommunications opens a wide world of new and promising (business) possibilities.

Optimistic thinkers argue that technological advance “is carrying us to a new world (...) that will do possible to jump along society progress and will improve comfort and security of citizens” (Olmedilla, 1995, 52). It is usual to find ultrapositive “understandings” of the possible future consequences of technological revolution, falling sometimes on radical and aggressive apology, even labelling the critical points of view of “foolish” (Castells, 1996).

2.2 Negative – PESSIMISTIC

Technological pessimism is another radical approach; another kind of faith so naive as the optimistic one. This attitude shows the future world like an hiper-automatized, controlled, aggressive and less-human world; it is the vision of Aldous Huxley in *Brave New World*, or the George Orwell one in *1984*.

Although the negative reactions against technology are easy to understand when a disaster occurs (remember Chernobil or the Challenger), or some problems are envisioned, f.i. the future of work (Alonso, 1986), this is not a generalized attitude, although there are lots of frustrated expectancies (Schnaars, 1988).

The pessimistic attitude doesn't seem to be the preferred one among scientists and thinkers. Alvin Toffler, f.i., in his book *The Eco-Spasm Report* (N.Y., Bantan Books, 1975) showed his pessimist point of view and warned about a “general crisis of industrialism – a crisis that transcends the difference between capitalism and Soviet-style communism, a crisis that is simultaneously tearing up our energy base, our values system, our family structures, our institutions, our communicative modes, our sense of space, our epistemology as well as our economy” (Cornish, 1996, 30). Adam Schaff, who twenty years later also talks about a “possible crisis” of the industrial civilization (Schaff, 1995, 1) complains about the absence of criticism among his colleagues (Schaff, 1995, 5).

2.3 Pragmatic – REALISTIC

Evidently, within the last lines we have not talked about those who benefit himself of widespreading technology or those fool modern *luddites* who think that technology has the blame of all problems, and the best solution is to destroy it. We had not talked about ultra-extreme positions; obviously between Bill Gates and Unabomber there are multiple alternative positions. We have only described two different attitudes towards the future consequences of technological advances, but assuming the irreversible character of technology advances and their implication in progress.

Anyway, according to José M^a Tortosa, “to study the new technological impact with preconceived attitudes could mean not to understand it” (Tortosa, 1991, 4). Therefore, “not to take account the two-sided character of new technologies, because optimism, pessimism,

material interests or ideological interests, is to deny one of the two dilemma elements. The diagnostic, we believe, more appropriate is the one that accepts the contradiction. New technologies, in our position, are both positive and negative. Sometimes, we know (or believe to know), they are more positive than negative, or vice-versa. Other times, on the contrary, we only know that they are both positive and negative at the same time, but we don't know (we cannot quantify it) how much positive or negative they are" (Tortosa, 1991, 6-7).

The described attitude tries to release of previous prejudices that could produce a bias within the analysis. Pragmatic thinking treats to analyse, the more objectively, all the possible future effects of new technologies, studying the pros and cons of each technological advances. It is an attempt to "build a cognitive map" containing all the future possibilities that lies in the not yet well defined present trends.

The really important here (I mean, under a pragmatic point of view) is not to attack or to defend technological development but, knowing it is inexorability, to obtain references about all the possibilities. It is a way to profit the temporal margin for reflection, instead of fighting to defend a point of view concerning a reality that still has not arrived (Schaff, 1995, 5).

3. Impact Analysis

3.1 Economy

3.1.1 Macro-level: Development vs. Underdevelopment

3.1.1.1 Development

New technologies in general, and telecommunications in particular, can – and should – promote economic and social development; last studies show that telecommunications are reaching an each time more relevant position in the development countries priorities (Castilla, 1989). Evidently, at the developed countries telecommunications have this prior role since many years ago.

Table 3: European Community Research Funding for Telecommunications Development (1984-1998), EC framework programme (in mecus)

Research Lines	I 1984-87		II 1987-91		III 1990-94		IV 1994-98	
	Budget	%	Budget	%	Budget	%	Budget	%
<u>New Technologies</u> (ESPRIT, Biotechnology and Telecommunics)	680	18.1						
<u>Information and Communication Technologies</u>			2.275	42.2	2.846	38.9	3.405	30.8
*InfoTechnologies			1.600		1.762		1.932	
*Telecommunics			550					
*General Interest Services			125					
*Communications					566		630	
*Telematics					498		843	

Own Elaboration; data sources:

-1st Framework Programme (FP): EC Commission, *La politique de la recherche de la Communauté Européenne*, 1988, p. 13

-2nd FP: EC Commission: *Research and Technological Development Policy*, 1988, p. 26

-3rd FP: EC Commission: *EC Research Funding; 3rd FP. Guide for applicants*, 1992, p. 15 and *Eurotechnology*, n° 26, October, 1992, p. 10

-4th FP: EC Official Bulletin n° L 126/4. Annex I.

Since 1984 the I&C (Information and Communication) Technologies play an important role in the I+D Programmes of the European Community. At this moment they are included together with another departures within the First *I+D Framework Programme* inside the Research Line titled “New Technologies” (see Table 3).

As we can see in Table 3, investments in Information and Communication (I&C) Technologies has been growing (absolute terms) across the time, even though the percentage (relative terms) of money dedicated to I&C Technologies have gone decreasing progressively. Anyway since 1987 (II Framework Programme), this departure – I&C Technologies – is maybe the research line which receives more money from the EC research funds.

At a macro level, I&C Technologies, and particularly Telecommunications, have made

possible the globalization of the economy, quoted in first chapter as one of the three main trends that are shaping the future world system. Really, new technologies work dynamizing the economic relationships world-wide, making the processes easier (Rosenau, 1995, 30).

3.1.1.2 Underdevelopment

At first view, it is easy to find a cause-effect relationship between I&C Technologies and development: those countries which produce technologies also receive the derived benefit of using and selling these technologies; I mean, economic and social development.

Producing technologies requires departures (as we have just seen); an economic investment. Those countries, which cannot waste enough money for research, are condemned to depend on those who dominate the technology market. Perhaps new technological revolution will report undeveloped countries even “more dependent” on developed ones.

What is true is that, although I&C technologies will affect everybody’s life, this impact will be qualitatively different for everybody. It is unprobable that Zaire in 2025 will have so connected to Internet as USA or Spain (because firstly they had to cover their primary necessities, f.i. to eat, education, health etc.). By other side, one of the “technological fears” of, f.i., Spaniards is “being unable to follow the new technologies rhythm” (Alonso, 1986), maybe because – according to Rosenau (Waters, 1995, 30) – for accessing technologies there are needed money, time and knowledge – really scarce goods. Thus, access will be unequal due to different reasons.

Contrary to Spyros Makridakis (1993, 810), which justifies the high penetration of new technologies in most developed countries arguing that the obvious reason is that people want them and are willing to pay for reaching them. I think is – maybe – much more “obvious” that this is not exactly a problem of desire or willingness but of “to have” or “not to have”.

It is probable that an important percentage of people world-wide will “not be able to follow the new technologies rhythm” in the future. Undeveloped countries, besides the technological dependency, can have other big problems to implant, use, profit and widespread imported technologies: from “cultural adaptation (*we should remember that they are communication based technologies*) problems, on the rebound of technologies, spare

parts and logistic supply troubles” (Vicier, 1994, 113-126) to “mountainous field, dispersed population, inhospitable weather, low income-per-person *and* failed policy objectives” (Katochianou, 1995).

Inmanuel Wallerstein argues that “we are entering in a new A-phase (Kondratieff) where Japan, USA and EC will fight to obtain a quasi-monopolistic control of main new industries” and where “the new expansion areas will be China for the Japan-USA group, and Russia for EC” (Wallerstein, 1994, 4-5). It means that both globalization and technological-innovation processes don’t imply an evident benefit for everybody because both processes are not redistributive processes. On the contrary, these two processes are increasing the power of the powerful in two different ways: first, permeating the developed countries to control the new world division-of-work process induce by new technologies; second, permeating the developed countries the exploitation and control of the new potential markets that are arising from the globalization process.

Globalization and technological revolution act emphasizing the existence of two different realities (developed/undeveloped countries) through an accelerate *polarization* process; as Ricardo Petrella has argued (Stevenson, 1994), “a high-tech archipelago of affluent, hyperdeveloped city-regions is involving amid a sea of impoverished humanity”. Certainly, new technologies favour the economic development in some countries, but, at the same time, accelerate the undevelopment of others (Gonzalez, 1994, 35-47).

If a redistributive mechanism doesn’t run together with the implantation of new technologies, the strong dynamic that generates new technologies could amplify exponentially the differences between the developed and undeveloped countries; this trend to polarization would break the stability of the world system in the near future. This could carry us to a non very attractive scenario; according to Wallerstein (Tortosa, 1994, 35) “the next fifty years we will see an each time richer North, relatively egalitarian, and a poor South, ready for using the weapons, disturbing the world system, leaving occident values and with great population share emigrating to North, creating by this way a South inside North”.

3.1.2 Micro-level: Employment vs. Unemployment

3.1.2.1 Employment

An argument usually used for defending the “social interest” (economic interest is obvious because increases the potential benefits of the firms) of the implantation and diffusion of new technologies, is that “economies with higher technological potential and higher new technologies diffusion, USA and Japan, have a low unemployment level, about 5.5% and 3.2% respectively” (Castells, 1996, 11).

We live in a society where work is a central activity: on the one (qualitative) hand, the work acts structuring social relationships and gives the individuals the opportunity of self-realisation (it is a human right); on the other hand (quantitative), work productivity contributes to maintain the structure of the state which provides for another human rights like health, education, security and freedom. By this it is necessary not only to quantify how much people will work, but also to know the kind of work people will do. Nowadays, when Welfare State is immersed in a crisis, the nature of work must be central in the analysis, because it determines both at qualitative and quantitative the social effects of work.

What seems to be evident is the economic sector which will produce more employment in the near future is the Information sector’s (continuing with its historical trend, as we have seen before): in Germany (Nefiodow, 1994, 11-19), f.i., agriculture and industrial production are expected to provide only 2% and 17% of jobs by 2020 respectively (the data for 1988 were 4% and 31%); the tertiary (services) sector’s share of employment will increase only moderately, from 25% to 27%, but employment in the information sector will grow from 35% to 50%.

Japanese (Imai, 1994) case is similar, it is estimated that by 2010 employment will show an increase of about 42% in human resource sectors (management services, workplace training, housekeeping, information processing and education). Estimations for USA are stronger: it is expected that all job creation in USA through 2005 will be in the service sector (Huey, 1994, 18-51); concretely, services would make up 80% of the workforce (Coates, 1995, 17-22).

A more evident thing is the world of work is expected to become (qualitatively) completely different: more diversified, increasingly based on knowledge and ever more de-materialised (Blanc, 1995).

The structure of the current work teams seems obsolete: “actual offices with higher and more important chairs for the general manager than for the rest of the workers ones is ridiculous, ..., the workplace is a reality that will change soon”, said a Spanish business general manager. Precarious works is a consequence of this reestructuration; it is expected that work organizations will adopt a tripartite structure: a few permanent decision-makers, a little army of contractors and a mass of contingent part-timers (Shostak, 1993, 30-33). Telework could make it possible.

Telework could become a kind of “self-employment”; a good way for the capitalists (the owners of the production media), who should not make long-time contracts or pay health taxes for their “workers” to the administration. Capitalists can choose between lots of teleworkers competing (who’s cheaper?) for a temporary work: the “on-call work”.

Telework could be the long time wished recipe for liberal capitalism, and the end of the worker’s rights. A sample that can show us the possible effects of this recipe is the “underground economy” widespread in Spanish economy. The “underground economy”, a kind of “telework” less sophisticated, is a dark way for producing at a very low cost. As Tortosa points, “...one of the factors that can be seen as an explanation of underground economy is the presence of new technologies that permeates new manufacturing procedures, and, mainly, introduce comparative advantages” (Tortosa, 1991, 3).

3.1.2.2 Unemployment

As we have seen, all the optimistic positions about future consequences of technologies on work are assuming the relevant and increasing role of I&C on work generation, but always in relative terms. I mean, all these approaches argue that services’ sector will be the economical sector that will create more employment in percentual terms (according to the total work generated). This is, in some way, obvious: each technological revolution has provoked structural changes on change; a change which has been produced by an highest percentage of population working on activities related to the new technologies. Evidently, there are no

reasons for thinking that informational revolution will be an exception.

But this is not the real problem. The question that should worry us is: “Will new technologies generate more employment than destroy, in absolute numbers?”

Although some thinkers believe in a positive correlation between technological development and employment (Castells, 1996, 11), there are others that have serious doubts about this question. Concretely, in USA, a paradigm of prosperity usually used as an example by the optimists, we can find much of these critical positions.

Related with the work destruction, Jeremy Rifkin (Rifkin, 1995), in his explicit book *The End of Work*, explains that in the early 21st century close to 90 million American jobs that involve repetitive tasks will be vulnerable to elimination by sophisticated machinery and the re-engineering (Pearce, 1996, 10) of the production process; at this time significant advances in agricultural productivity are likely to displace a large proportion of the 2.4 billion people whose livelihood depends on farming.

Other authors (Shostak, 1993), being agree with this vision, argue that by 2000, 25% to 30% of all clerical jobs will disappear, displaced by automatic equipment, such as optical character and voice recognition. According to the foreseeing of Shostak, the “blue collar” sector will employ only about the 12% of the workforce in 2000 (23% in 1990). Sally Lerner (Lerner, 1994, 193) notices that: “if the political bases of North American society are to be sustained, and not give way to a chaotic search for ultimately authorial solutions, the governments of the USA and Canada must plan realistically to mitigate the negative effects of the high levels of structural unemployment that technological change and a globalizing economy seem certain to produce if present trends continue”.

We know, more or less, how much employment will be destroyed, but there are no vision about how much work will be created. An extremely pessimistic vision would be that all employers will be dedicated to design and build machines that will – in the end – gobble the workers, the same way – in Old Egypt – pyramids did with the “last” workers. The recent film “Matrix” puts this idea on the air.

3.2 Cultural

3.2.1 Macro-level: Communication vs. Isolation

3.2.1.1 Communication

An obvious impact of new technologies, because they compress space and time, is making easier to communicate. The mixture computer+telecommunications has done possible the phenomenon Internet, the earlier and revolutionary communication media. As I argued before (Bas, 1995, 8), “Internet shows us that we are caught up in a technological whirlpool which leads from the consumer society to the information consuming society”.

Nowadays, there are more of two million computers engaged to the world-wide network, with a total of about twenty-five million users. It is expected that by 2010, according to projections by the Japanese Telecommunications Council, fibre-optic networks will reach all firms and homes generating a multimedia market of 123 trillion yen (Imai, 1994). Other forecast that will be in 2023 when all the habitants of the planet will have access to Internet (Diez and Yraolagoitia, 1995, 148). In Spain it is expected (Peiro, 1996, 97) that by year 2000 there will be about 4.000.000 persons connected (30.000 in 1995).

Internet makes easier scientific work (to access to information, to join networks), permeates firms doing business more rapidly, can favour the intercultural exchange through communication, and undoubtedly it is an unexplored field full of opportunities. New technologies really increase the possibilities of communicating, and let to increase enormously the quantity of information running through the cable. But, do new technologies improve the quality of communication?

Levi Objiofor (Objiofor, 1994, 11), a Nigerian journalist, argues that “while the western world try to promote greater and faster ways of communicating based on the use of the latest communication technologies such as electronic mail and fax, Africa hopes to use the communication technology that will promote greater interaction and kinship relationships” because “a change in the pattern of communication such as the introduction of communication technology implies further strengthening or weakening of the socio-cultural practices” and “African societies are held together by their socio-cultural practices”.

“Internet, Gongman or both?”

3.2.1.2 *Isolation*

Although Eduard Barrera (European Community Telematics/Telework Forum) insists on the fact that, far from turning people on a kind of isolated hermits, telematics will favour the organisation of “telecentres in residential areas, thus returning to a life of neighbourhood”, “telematics does not seem the best way to agglutinate collective wishes or reinforce direct relationships” (Bas, 1995, 10).

Will telework be an added factor to a life of solitude – asks the journalist in the article that shows Barrera’s opinion. Miller (Miller, 1980, 163-166), through an empirical study, detected a “null” relationship between telephone ownership and the rate of direct encounters; also concluded that those direct encounters that imply the use of transports, far away from replacing telephonic contacts, increase them. The author argues explicitly that “it must be taken account this negative result runs against the unquestioned assertions of many geographers, urban theorists and environmentalists”. Miller wanted to revoke the belief that modern telecommunications based ways of communication will be a substitute for the direct, face-to-face, ones.

It could be very interesting that Miller does the same study, twenty years after, existing the personal computer, and the Internet. Anyway, working in front of a PC, and doing all the social activities (shopping, talking, playing etc.) through it, can be considered a clear factor of isolation. As has been argued (Rosenau, 1992, 1), new technologies increase the pressure towards both dynamics globalisation and individualisation centralizing, through reinforcing and offsetting at the same time.

3.2.2 *Micro-level: Homogenization vs. Heterogenization*

3.2.2.1 *Homogenization*

New technologies also are a way for the transmission of cultural values: because make possible world-wide and fast communication, and because the main users are people from developed countries (mainly western). Telecommunications are an expansive mechanism for

the English language (as a universal language) and the western values and culture. Another way for cultural imperialism and homogenization, as television and radio were before (Naisbitt, Aburdene, 1990, 164).

Western countries are the producers of new technologies; this is the reason why more than the 80% of the information stored in the more than 100 million computers around the world is in English language (Naisbitt, Aburdene, 1990, 167).

Western mass media show us globalization as a process where people of different colours but talking an only language (English) join each other for building a new common world. Language is another kind of imperialism: Yukio Tsuda (Tsuda, 1992, 34), f.i., see the English language dominance the third more important discrimination issue in the world after race and gender. So, it is useful for the longer term to analyse under a critical point of view whether expanded global commerce is more advantageous than the destruction of cultural diversity and cross cultural understanding, and the further centralisation of control in the hands of relatively more powerful economic and cultural interests (Stevenson, 1994, 43).

3.2.2.2 Heterogenization

Cultural imperialism is a clear proof of the expansive nature of capitalist world-economy whose last stage is the globalization process, that “is a process driven by the elites (World System Theory) and/or by the developed countries (Dependence Theory) which attempts to introduce global division of work at planetary scale. It is an homogenization process, not in a redistributive sense, but in the sense that, at the economic level, it makes homogeneous the offer (through transnational mega-companies) and the demand (through the consumer habit and advertising); also at the cultural aspect globalization makes homogeneous habits, languages, traditions, attitudes and everything connected with lifestyle” (Bas, 1995, 12).

If we take an overview of the backward analysis we can see some possible trends lying on it: the increasing of differences between developed and undeveloped countries, social polarization and conflictivity because changes on the work system, and cultural imperialism. If we add the only one general trend that we have not included yet in the analysis, the population growth (which by 2.025 could reach 8.4 thousand million (Coates, 1994), we can foresee a worrying scenario.

This is because population growth act increasing the effects produced by those trends, and carry up millions of people to a limit situation where both at economic, cultural and political levels, those who are exploited and colonized. This process of never-ending colonization could carry us to an extremely polarized situation, which could be hardly accepted by the marginated of the new society.

This is maybe one of the keys for understanding the reactive movements we can find world-wide at the moment. Therefore, I understand fundamentalism and fanatical nationalism not as an illness in itself but as “symptoms” of a reaction against the “current-state-of-the-art”; an “state of the art” which only benefits to developed countries and whose own internal logic (the accumulation of capital) turns integration and redistribution into impossible. A good example can be founded in the South-North emigration, that is each time more an option for survival chosen by those people living in an extreme and desperate situation, and can be at the end an unbalancing factor for the system itself (Wallerstein, 1994, 5).

Choosing political options like self-exclusion (Black Panthers, f.i.), fundamentalism (Arabic, f.i.) or nationalism (ex-USSR, f.i.) means to reveal against a homogenizator but non integrator nor redistributive system, based on a exacerbated re-affirmation of the dominant cultural and political pattern. Paradoxically, the homogenization process induced by globalisation is producing a tendency to heterogenization (by the way of reactive movements), a very risky trend for the capitalist world system.

3.3 Policy

3.3.1 Macro-level: Megastates vs. Anarchy

3.3.1.1 Megastates

Both megastates and anarchy could be extreme consequences of the possible tendency to a decreasing role of states in the world system.

Talking about “megastate” means a supra-national organization (Federation, Community or something like this) created for defending economic or strategic interests, which can be

composed by economic or physical neighbours. During last fifty year, there has been an increasing group of states around supra-national organizations like EC, NAFTA, NATO etc. Economic globalization impels states to join this “megastates”, looking for a stable market.

These kinds of relationships are widespreading so much that in the near future could produce paradoxical situations, like the incorporation of some former Warsaw-Pact states to their old enemy, NATO. This trend to grouping seems to become consolidate progressively.

New technologies make possible these great “megastates”, providing of mechanisms for making easier the communication: telecommunications erase physical and cultural distances and barriers. By other side, telecommunications could accentuate the omnipresent role of state. A new kind of great and hipertecnologized Leviathan (Hobbes), like the imagined by George Orwell in *1984*, could arise in the future. Telecommunications and robotics can get into the social control mechanism.

3.3.1.2 Anarchy

Anarchy means the absence of laws. Technological advances and particularly telecommunications can change totally our perception of power, law and social structure.

Eli Ginzberg organized in the University of Columbia at the beginning of 1960s a seminar about technology and social change; by 1964 published the results of the Seminar together with some relevant articles. Within the conclusions chapter, it is argued that during the seminar “much of participants perceived that if the current technological development trends continue, a little elite will control great part of the decision making mechanism in business and government soon, and the citizenship will have lost its capacity for taking part in decisive options that configure its own future” (Ginzberg, 1964, 168).

In this book, Professor Ginzberg points out the substitution of policy elites by economic elites, in a world dominated by multinationals, where capitalists become the real controllers of politics (there are no “real” frontiers). He continues saying that “it could be possible that an effective control by the Congress won’t be easy, related with the decision making tool relative to science and technology...”, and ends up with “...but there are no reasons for losing hope”. Jeremy Rifkin argues, more than thirty years after, that the power of the nation state

will wane as global corporations and fiscal crises induced by technological unemployment weaken governments anywhere (Rifkin, 1995).

The old order could be broken (at least unofficially), and world can become in a kind of scenario where there are a “symbolic” democracy, but where the real power belongs to a little elite. Change not always means progress: “as A. N. Whitehead has pointed, the art of progress is to preserve the order among the change, and the change among the order” (De Carlo, 1965, 27).

Anarchy not only includes the loose of political or economic control by the people. The unauthorised, arbitrary and discontrolled use of information data bases affects the right to privacy, which means that affects directly to the individual freedom (Smith, 1994). Here, once again, the liberty of someone affects the liberty of the collective, because the loss of control by social institution is benefit of the economic agents (who create their own laws).

The third “anarchy” way is given by Internet. Pornography pages, guides for constructing bombs, terrorist apology, human rights, violations denouncing, confidential information about Security, the lyrics of Jimi Hendrix... and more and more themes can be founded in the world wide web. All kind of written information, images and sounds can be thrown by the computer to the world, without any control.

Internet, the recent phenomenon that evidences the convergence of technologies and globalization processes, because is a wide and completely free space, is good in the sense of giving a total expression free channel (that permeates communication on-line between individuals), but can also permeate the violation of collective rights, what is not so good. Dilemma is on the air.

3.3.2 Micro-level: More Democracy vs. Less Democracy

3.3.2.1 More Democracy

Telecommunications can have positive effects about democracy in developed countries, because they make easier the communication between the voters and their representatives (Olmedilla, 1995, 57). These new I&C technologies can turn the current “representative

democracy” in to a “participative democracy” or “electronic democracy” (Tortosa, 1991, 8); a new way of understanding the public control of decision making processes.

3.3.2.2 *Less Democracy*

Daniel Bell (Bell, 1981, 46), who also recognizes the possibilities of constructing a “plebeian system”, more participative than the democratic system that we know, jokes about the possible perverse effects of technologies on individual freedom telling an old Russian joke that says “question: Who is Stalin?; answer: Genghis Khan with a telephone”. Through this jokes it is showed a similar vision to the one showed by George Orwell in *1984*: technology like a mass control tool. But, is democracy merely a political issue? Mario Bunge, the philosopher, in a seminar imparted in Alicante (Spain), said that he pleads for a “integral democracy”, not only politic but also cultural, economic and technical democracy. Really, if telecommunications aid to create a “faster” and more participative democracy, but also increase (together with other processes) economic differences and cultural colonization, what kind of democracy is it?

Bibliography

1. ALONSO, M., *Actitudes ante la Sociedad de la Información*. Communication published by FUNDESCO, Madrid, 1986
2. BARAÑANO, A., Historia del Programa Marco de la Unión Europea. *Política Científica*, March, 1996
3. BAS, E., Travel and Tourist Industry and the Future of the World System. *Papers de Prospectiva*, November, 1995
4. BELL, D., *The coming of post-industrial society*. Basic Books, New York, 1973
5. BELL, D., La revolución tecnologica de las comunicaciones y sus consecuencias. *Harvard-Deusto Business Review*, Trimestre, 1981
6. BENJAMIN, R., BLUNT, J., Critical Information Technology issues: the next ten years. *Sloan Management Review*, 4, 1992. Also published in *Harvard-Deusto Bussines Review*, February, 1993
7. BLANC, G.(Dir.), *Le travail au XXIe Siècle: Mutations de l'Economie et de la Société á l'ere des autorutes de l'information*. Editions Dunod, Paris, France, 1995
8. CASTELLS, M., El dilema europeo. *Diario EL PAIS*, 10-04-1996
9. CASTILLA, A., Las Telecomunicaciones y el desarrollo economico: una perspectiva global. *Revista Telos*, March-May, 1989 (1989a)
10. CASTILLA, A., *Telecomunicaciones y el desarrollo económico; una perspectiva global*. FUNDESCO, Madrid, 1989 (1989b)

11. CICYT, *Memoria de Desarrollo del Plan I+D en el periodo 1988-1990 y Revision para 1992-1995*. Madrid, 1996
12. COATES, J., The highly probably future. *The Futurist*, 28(4), July-August, 1994
13. COATES, J., Work and pay in the 21st century: an impending crisis. *Employment Relations Today*, Spring, 1995
14. CORNISH, E., *The Study of the Future*. WFS, Bethesda, 1993
15. DE CARLO, C., Perspectivas sobre la Tecnología. In: GINZBERG, E. (Ed.), *Tecnología y Cambio Social*. UTEHA, México D. F., 1965
16. DEVEZAS, T., The new technoeconomic paradigm. *Papers de Prospectiva*, November, 1995
17. DIEZ, J., YRAOLAGOITIA, J., Internet, red de redes. *PC WORLD*, January, 1995
18. DRUCKER, P., *La sociedad postcapitalista*. Apostrofe, Barcelona, 1993
19. EL PAIS, 18/02/1996. *Bussines Section*, p. 10
20. EL PAIS, 28/01/1996. *Bussines Section*, p. 38
21. FREEMAN, C., The greening of technology. *Futures*, 26(10), 1994
22. GONZALEZ, E., *Nuevas formas de comunicación y cultura: ¿como enfrentar las nuevas tecnologías?* Revista Telos, June-August, 1994
23. HUEY, J., Waking up to the new economy. *Fortune International*, 13, 1994. pp. 18-51.
24. IMAI, K., Information infrastructures and the creation of new markets: Japan's perspective. Paper presented at the *Conference on Employment and Growth in the Knowledge-Based Society held in Copenhagen on 7-8 November*. OECD Paper, 1994
25. INFORMACION de Alicante, 21/02/96, p. 45
26. KATOCHIANOU, D., Telecommunications technology and development policy for the less-favoured regions in Greece. *Workshop: Information Infrastructures and Territorial Development, 7-8 November 1995, Paris*, Ed. by Centre of Planning and Economic Research, OECD, Paris, 1995
27. LASZLO, E., *Evolución; la gran síntesis*. Espasa Calpe, Madrid, 1988
28. LERA, E., TIRADO, C., *Los servicios de telecomunicación ante la futura sociedad de la información: perspectivas actuales*. Communication published by FUNDESCO, Madrid, 1995
29. LERNER, S., The future of work in North America. *Futures*, 26(2), 1994
30. MAKRIDAKIS, S., The forthcoming information revolution. Its impact on Society and Firms. *Futures*, 27(8), 1995
31. MARCHETTI, C., Predicting recessions. Invited Paper for the Conference *The next 25 years*, Copenhagen, November, 1993
32. MILLER, C., Telecommunications/Transportation substitution: some empirical findings, *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences*, 4, 1980
33. NAISBITT, J., ABURDENE, P., *Megatrends 2000*. Plaza & Janés, Barcelona, 1990
34. NAISBITT, J., *Megatrends*. Warner Books, New York, 1982
35. NEFIODOW, L., Informationsgesellschaft-Arbeitsplatzvernichtung oder Arbeitsplatz gewinne? *IFO-Schenelldienst*, 12, 1982
36. OBJIOFOR, L., Sustaining kinship and shifting knowledge: Communication futures in Africa. *WFSF Futures Bulletin*, 4, December, 1994
37. OLMEDILLA, J., El infocosmos; una perspectiva sobre el futuro de las telecomunicaciones. *Harvard-Deusto*

- Bussines Review*, 66, May/June, 1995
38. PEARCE, D., What's happening to our jobs? *The Futurist*, 2, March-April, 1996, p.10.
 39. PEIRO, C., España se sumerge en Internet. *WEB*, 4, March 1996
 40. PETRELLA, R., Techno-apartheid for a global underclass. *The New Federalist*, 5-6, 1993
 41. PIATIER, A., Innovation, Information and Long-Term Growth. *Futures*, 5, October, 1981
 42. REVISTA ESPAÑOLA DE DOCUMENTACION CIENTIFICA, 17, 1994, pp. 277-278.
 43. RIFKIN, J., *The end of work; the decline of the global labor force and the dawn of the post-market era*, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1995
 44. ROSENAU, J., *Turbulence in World Politics*, Princenton University Press, Princeton, 1990
 45. ROSENAU, M., The process of Globalisation: substantive spillovers, elusive exchanges, and subtle symbols", paper presented at the 60th Congress of the Association Canadienne.Française pour l'avancement des Sciences, Montreal, May, 1992
 46. SCHAFF, A., *Que futuro nos aguarda?; la segunda revolución industrial?* UNED, December, 1995
 47. SCHNAARS, S., *Megamistakes; forecasting and the myth of rapid technological change*, The Free Press, London, 1988
 48. SCHUMPETER, J., *Bussines Cycles;a theoretical, historical and statistical analysis of the Capitalis process*. McGraw-Hill, London, 1939
 49. SHOSTAK, A., The nature of work in the twenty-first century: certain uncertainties. *Bussines Horizons*, 36, 1993
 50. SMITH, J., *Managing Privacy; Information Technology and Corporate America*. Chapel Hill NC: University of Carolina Press, Carolina, 1994
 51. STEVENSON, T., Communicating in a shrinking world. *Papers de Prospectiva*, 2, November, 1994
 52. THE ECONOMIST, Storm warnings from the wave theorists. 18-24 April, 1987
 53. TILLY, C., *Coercion, Capital and European States*. AD 990-1990, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1990
 54. TOFFLER, A., *The Third Wave*. Pan, London, 1980
 55. TORTOSA, J., La perplejidad de las sociedades occidentales como contexto de la política social en VVAA, 25 aniversario de la EUTS. Universidad de Alicante, 1991 (1991a)
 56. TORTOSA, J., Sobre el Futuro del Sistema-mundo capitalista. *Sistema*, May, 1994
 57. TORTOSA, J. Mª., *El Impacto Social de las Nuevas Tecnologías*, Informe Presidencia Generalitat Valenciana. Research Report, 1991 (1991b)
 58. TSUDA, Y., The dominance of English and linguistic discrimination. *Media Development*, 1, 1992
 59. VIZIER, E., Ante el desafío de la cultura tecnológica: el camino de los países subdesarrollados. *Revista Telos*, March-May, 1994
 60. WALLERSTEIN, I., América and the world today, yesterday, and tomorrow. *Theory and Society*, 1, 1993
 61. WALLERSTEIN, I., The World-System after the cold war. *Journal of Peace Research*, 1, 1994
 62. WATERS, M., *Globalization*, Routledge, London, 1995

**EMERGING COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES
AND THEIR FUTURE SOCIAL IMPACTS**

Tony Stevenson

World Futures Studies Federation

Summary

Young people today join the general optimism and enthusiasm, often hyperbolic, for the emerging Net – the World Wide Web mediated by the Internet – and the way it will change society. But the nature of such change is still uncertain.

Two keynote questions are critically addressed, mainly from a social perspective: (1) Will people-to-people interactivity be possible with a range of data, text, graphics, animated images, sound and full-colour, full-motion video in order to engage more than one or two of our senses; and (2) What will be the consequences of the Net for people, organisations and communities?

At least two scenarios are possible: the ‘information society’ or the industrialised commodification of information in a glittering technological *cybermarket*, a global *cyberfantasy* video game; and a ‘communicative society’ where the Net empowers collaborative community development, and human creativity and wellbeing. It is still too early to tell which future will emerge. But a third scenario could see some combination of both.

The introduction of new technologies in the past has shown that the uses and value of the new technology can turn out to be different from what was first expected. And new communications technologies, for example printing, have had paradoxical effects, capable of centralising and decentralising at the same time. With Information Technology (IT), the paradox has been that increased investment in new technology has seen productivity, at least until recently, stagnate rather than increase, as expected. It is difficult to fathom the reason

for this, since the relationship between technology and society is complex and one of mutual adjustment. But, it appears that successful early adoption and social acceptance require, at least, unlearning old habits and relearning new ways.

These problems are characterised by the primacy given to the technology (hardware and software) as a tool – the technological infrastructure – over the social and cultural infrastructure. We too often take the technology out of its context – the social infrastructure – which is relatively less visible, since it represents organisational and sense-making processes, and often tacit meaning. Similarly, we prioritise technological invention over social invention – social technologies which again are relatively less visible than hardware.

The emerging Net demands wise, ethical mindsets leading to policy decisions which ensure that it serves future personal, organisational and community wellbeing. The society that decides to focus on cultural and social infrastructure as opportunities for commercial and collaborative community development could distinguish itself from the many others which are still competitively rushing towards some technology-first utopia, sometimes misnamed the ‘knowledge economy’.

Soon after IBM’s Big Blue supercomputer defeated a human chess grandmaster, Garry Kasparov, another colour-coded non-human computing champion, Option Red, made digital history in the United States. It was the world’s first *teraflop* processor, that is, one capable of more than one trillion (10^{12}) operations per second. By the time it had gone online, Option Red actually had achieved a rate of 1.8 trillion operations per second, and at least one newspaper¹ had proclaimed it more powerful than Einstein’s brain.

The same newspaper, writing of the so-called ‘Father of the Web’, Robert Cailliau,² reported him as prophesying why the World Wide Web (Web) ‘will have a greater impact than the printing press’, how it ‘will revolutionise education’ and why ‘non-Interneters will fall behind in the future’. Here we will critically appraise the social and, to a much lesser extent, the cultural nature of this much-publicised impact in terms of the Web and its mediator, the Internet, which together represent the most significant of the new media – the Net. In fact, the Net, taken to its ultimate extension represents not just the Internet and the Web, but everything else connected to it – the biggest artefact yet contrived by humanity.

The Internet, which made the global reach of the Web possible, was the ‘smart’ prodigy of a marriage between computing and telecommunications, an infant electronic network now surely poised to change society locally and globally, in what way we still can not be certain. It is therefore fascinating to speculate on what offspring will issue from any future partnership between developing hypermedia networks within and beyond the Net and the emerging supercomputers, now that the latter have become teraflop processors. The first keynote question, then, is technological, at least it is about hardware (and related software): Will it be possible on the Net to achieve complex interchange of data, text, graphics, animated images, sound and full-colour, full-motion video, interactively?

1. Towards an interactive digital television

Interactivity is the key. While the Web is certainly an impressive information reservoir that can be mined via the Internet and in real time for hyperlinked multimedia information, it is still relatively static and engages one and no more than two of our senses at a time. It is little more than a huge office filing cabinet or virtual library with relatively low user-to-user participation, as opposed to one-way use. It is more passive than active. Admittedly, unlike a filing cabinet, the Web contains more than text and illustrations identified with a simple index; the Web has many pages, in many lands, often enhanced with sound and (relatively slow-moving) images. Unlike a library, these pages can be found in nested layers of cyberspace that can be interrogated by software-driven search engines. In fact, one contemporary use of conventional libraries is for people without easy access to computers at work or home to visit them in order to access the Web via the Internet.

The Web, mediated via the Internet, permits interactivity between a person and information, and in a limited way among multiple media, but the resulting interactivity between and among people is restricted to online, real-time chat ‘rooms’, in text. On the Net it is not yet possible to extensively use full-colour moving images, let alone have people usefully interact with them. The storage and transmission capacities are still relatively low in terms of both memory and capacity (bandwidth), frustrating the potential for teraflop processors. Neither is it possible for a team of producers – or *prosumers*, as Alvin Toffler called them because they both produce and consume – working in different locations, to interactively and collaboratively create and

view, with ease, a full-motion audiovisual presentation. In other words, the notion of Interactive Digital Television – a combined global production studio and viewing room for literature, artwork, music and movies – is not yet a workable medium for widespread public use. It is much more than the new-born Web TV, which again is still not people-to-people interactive.

2. A cybermarket?

If and when such a mammoth *cyber-Hollywood* surrounds much of the planet, and soars beyond two dimensions, then a compelling, even frightening, set of virtual realities will have replaced traditional living with *cyberfantasy*. For that is the hi-tech nirvana that certain of today's determined technocrats have in their sights. While the Net may be one of the most, if not the most, prominent and innovative of human contrivances, restricted primarily to users in the industrialised world, it could be also the most hyperbolic of new media. We will have to wait for the future.

While we are waiting for whatever it may be, the information and communications industries, in league with the entertainment and advertising industries, are seduced by the rhetoric and have their eyes open for business opportunities from the Net, especially as a medium for video games and commercial advertising. There is also business enthusiasm for potential digital commerce: trading globally across the Net and arranging transport and finance electronically. In this form, the Net is engendering a global *cybermarket*.

3. Society and cultural change

Fanning this enthusiasm are terabytes of textual, technological optimism reported in specialist sections dedicated to computers and their networking in traditional media, such as newspapers and magazines, not to mention the audio-visual coverage. The heroes include Microsoft, Sun, Intel, Samsung, NEC and other makers of hardware and software. Too often this digital-marketplace hype may have diverted public curiosity (perhaps mesmerised it)

from the second keynote question, about the social and cultural context in which new medium – the Net – is applied: What will be its consequences for people, communities, organisations, societies and their cultures? Further, will the Net provide creative opportunities for being human and for nurturing human wellbeing?

Of course, it is still too early to answer either of these two keynote questions, technological or sociocultural. But, when envisioning the alternative futures of the Net, at least two alternative scenarios can be anticipated from the informed discussion surrounding it. One is based on the notion of the ‘information society’ where the Web has become what Cailliau calls a top-down structure: ‘There’s one point that puts the data out, and you’re just a consumer.’³ This can be explained by the idea that information has become an economic commodity for commercial exchange, just like pork bellies and company stock. In the West, at least, we are not yet able to leave behind our industrial mindset to embrace post-industrial ways of thinking. We see information as a commodity that we can manufacture, package and sell. This is exactly what we do with our leading industrial mass medium, television.

But information is very different from the typical industrial commodity. Information, when exchanged or sold, remains with both parties, the seller and the buyer. Its value, therefore, can be extended virtually indefinitely. We have yet to fully understand the economic, social and cultural implications of this. Another difference is that information calls out to be given meaning and, in this sense, it is just as fluid a phenomenon as information and even more elusive and complex. Value changes according to the many different ways that many different people give meaning to a given set of information. Similarly, we have yet to fully understand the implications of meaning, particularly in different cultures. For example, information and meaning have different interpretations depending on whether the culture is basically Western, Islamic, Confucian, or whatever.

This leads us to the second scenario, now gaining some critical support, and based on what has been called the *communicative age*⁴. In this case, the Web facilitates empowerment and collaborative community development by allowing the exchange and negotiation of meaning –making sense of one’s life and surroundings. Any move to a communicative age would be a shift away from the industrial age since the first scenario is still framed within an industrial society where information has merely been industrialised; or more accurately, where the manufacture of IT hardware and software has been industrialised. As yet, we hardly have an

information society, let alone a communication society and certainly not a knowledge society.

A third scenario, of course, would be some combination of the two.

Berners-Lee, whom *Time* credits with being the Web's inventor (Cailliau being one of Berners-Lee's earliest 'collaborators')⁵ is not averse to its commercial use; he said it is inevitable and he orders CDs on the Web. He was disappointed, however, that the Web had come to be more passive and less active than hoped for. In the same *Time* story, Cailliau said it was not intended that the Web become 'just another publishing medium'.⁶ Berners-Lee's biggest disappointment was the Web's growing lack of intimacy. It was meant to be a social place. 'The original goal', *Time* reports him to have said, 'was working together with others'. 'The Web was supposed to be a creative tool, an expressive tool'.⁷ In theory, according to Berners-Lee, the Web could make things work smoothly at all social levels and between them as well: families, workplace groups, schools, towns, companies, the nation, the planet. The original idea had been, he said, an organic expanse of collaboration.⁸

So, it remains to be seen what kind of future society the Web, and more generally the Net, will help create: a bigger, competitive marketplace driven by information and communication technology; or a communicative, mutually-supportive community characterised by more concern for a wider, culturally plural society and its planet than simply information and technology, and those who make and own it. Or will we, can we, expect some combination where information and communications technologies are used in the service of people, organisations and communities, as well as for the benefit of those who make and own them? Will the world become one big video game, and if so, what kind of game? One in which aliens must be killed off, or yet more consumer goods acquired? Or one that is based on mutual support in the pursuit of human happiness and creativity? How will it affect people in countries where most of them still have a long walk to the nearest telephone?

4. Adopting new technologies

Spyros Makridakis⁹ reminds us about the imperfect human capacity to predict the use or practical value of new technologies with the example of the economist, Say, writing in 1828 about the possibilities of substitutes for horses. He had declared: ‘... no machine will ever be able to perform what even the worst horses can – the service of carrying people and goods through the bustle and throng of a great city’. Say did underestimate the function of the motorised vehicle, but the question remains whether horses cannot better handle the bustle of a contemporary city made even more of a throng with the advent of the automobile.

The introduction of new communications technologies has brought similar surprises that could not have been anticipated at their time of invention or early adoption. When the telephone was invented, mainly for business purposes, no household purpose could be foreseen, something that would arouse amusement from most parents of young and teenage children. And so it goes for the personal computer which, when hooked to the Internet, can see children of most ages, in the richer countries, quickly hijack the household budget for new processors, software and subscriptions.

Also, the unintended effects of new communications technologies can be paradoxical. The introduction of printing, for example¹⁰, consolidated the authority of the absolutist nation state through the new-found ability to codify, in print, regulations and directives controlling the citizenry. At the same time, in Europe, itinerant printers diffused common knowledge and made possible the printed word for specialised niche markets. Thus, the communication paradox of further centralisation and, simultaneously, increased de-centralisation. We have yet to see whether the increasing economic dominance of the West will use the new technologies to move towards total control.

5. Other contradictions and difficulties

Some examples of difficulties, often incorporating contradictions, are shown follow.

5.1 Increased pace of life

- Bill Gates is promoting business at the speed of thought; everything now becomes more urgent, if not important;
- often, when a new product is announced, other competitors immediately announce a release date for their own product, and then hire people to invent the software;
- not all new products are successful; they are finding a technology and forcing a market; for example Iridium the satellite-linked mobile phone system which is failing financially because the service is too costly and the system does not work well inside buildings;
- software updates make products obsolete quickly, forcing added future expenditure.

5.2 Personal

- the Internet is very private; individuals use it on their own, whereas even with television, a family can share the viewing;
- depression and disorientation are reported by almost half the users in several recent surveys, after surfing the Net for more than an hour;
- loss of identity; hidden identities;
- empowerment is not assured; Microsoft and others take control, indirectly, through software design and marketing policy;
- an information overload results from too many unnecessary e-mails, often unsolicited, and from many often useless Web sites;
- reading off screen is vastly inferior to reading off paper (Bill Gates, quoted in Robert Darnton, *Brought to eBook: Gutenberg Galaxy meets Gates universe*, in *The Australian*, 21 July 1999, pp. 38-39).

5.3 Socio-economic

- information is becoming costly and inaccessible in print, for example a subscription to the journal, *Brain Research*, is US\$15,203 per year;
- there is hardly any knowledge economy; information does not equal knowledge, and certainly not wisdom.

5.4 Educational

- the Net is creating new reality making it harder for teachers who are Net illiterate and cannot converse or keep up with their students, in the new ways Internet users understand their world, and in terms of the new jargon.

6. The IT productivity paradox

Another well-known and nagging paradox is evident with the introduction of IT. Although computing power has increased by more than 200 percent in the United States since 1970, productivity, at least in the service sector, ‘seems to have stagnated’¹¹ until very recently. This paradoxical relationship between investment in IT and productivity was not as expected by politicians and IT experts enthusiastic for the information revolution. At least one critical review of the economic effects of IT¹² has concluded that the visions of massive benefits stemming from IT as the most important motor for growth and economic restructuring have been contrasted by frustration over productivity effects, by uncertainty about impacts on employment, and by enormous concerns about a general ‘information overflow’ in a global network society.

There has been no conclusive explanation to the productivity paradox despite significant research. This is not surprising given the complexity of the relationship between technology and society. Theories that society is determined by technological change are countered by theories that technology is constructed by the society in which it is invented. It seems reasonable to conclude that coevolutionary change is at work. The relationship, the interface, is characterised by a bewildering array of actors and variables in mutual adjustment.

When faced with a new technology, the players in the game are threatened with change. It would be interesting to revisit the mid-seventeenth century as a critical scholar researching the advent of the slide rule. It is not unreasonable to speculate that the mathematicians who earned social respect from their special ability for mental arithmetic must have felt intimidated by the slide rule and enormously threatened by the prospects of change resulting

from the introduction of this new technology. And what about the discovery of the axe so very much earlier?

7. A learning process

Both new tools – the slide rule and the axe – when combined with the rules (the software) for their use, produced two new technologies. Both, it is safe to assume, demanded an unlearning of old habits and the relearning of new ways of doing similar tasks. The appearance of the slide rule surely must have demanded the discarding of certain reiterative and cumbersome processes of manual and mental calculation and the relearning of new ways for applying mechanical manipulations to logarithmic calculation. In present terms, retraining seems essential to shorten the time taken to adapt to new technologies. Of course, this disadvantages poorer countries where retraining, and even training, cannot be afforded at the expense of health and general education.

In what aspects, then, do the relationships between these two inventions (the slide rule and the axe) and the societies of their time differ from that of the Net and global society in the 1990s? Certainly the technologies are very different. But so are their social contexts. It would be fascinating to know whether the proponents of the slide rule and the axe paid more attention to the tools and their related software applications, the technologies, than to the contexts of their use; and the unlearning and relearning. Of course there were no technology sections in the daily press when both the slide rule and the axe were invented. One significant difference in context is the current globalised marketplace that has commoditised information, as well as technology.

8. The nature of technology

Why do we place such prime importance on information and the technologies of microprocessors and telecommunications networks, and the software that drives them? Is it because our industrial mindset tends to commoditise them?

The components of IT are information and technology, and using this as an example, it may be useful to revisit the meaning of the term 'technology'. In using the term 'IT', we refer to both the information that is processed (and stored and retrieved) and the application of this information, the technology. The Concise Oxford Dictionary (1985) defines technology as the: '(science of) practical or industrial art(s); ethnological study of development of such arts; application of science'. The word comes from the Greek, *tekhnologia*, meaning systematic treatment. Yet, how often is the word 'technology' used to refer to the hardware (and software) alone? Technology is the systematic treatment of applying – in this case information – to something. But what is the something? And what are the consequences?

In answering this, let us take the analogy of a tripod. IT represents two legs of a tripod: the information and the systematic technological application (or treatment) of it using a tool, the electronic processor. The third leg, usually missing, represents the context in which it is treated or applied. This context comprises people, organisations and communities. Maybe we should consider replacing the term IT with 'ITS', something like information technology in (or and) society. A tripod without three legs is pretty useless and IT without fully taking into account its social context can be just as useless.

9. Social infrastructure

Generally, IT is seen to provide new technological infrastructure in which information can be applied for the advancement of social, cultural and economic purposes, most usually economic. When we take the technological infrastructure out of its context we ignore the social and cultural infrastructure in which it is embedded, or the sociocultural system on which it impacts, for good and bad. And the social (and cultural) context itself has a wider

biophysical context of planet earth which is encapsulated in yet other layers of space-time, and more. Our new technologies are not environment-free, in any sense, nor bounded by material and economic considerations alone.

Apart from our habit of industrial thinking, why does the current predominant technocratic mindset of our species too often ignore the social infrastructure? Is this because social infrastructure is mainly invisible and tacit, including as it does certain notions such as institutional entities, activities of organising, training, learning, other intangible acts, and human communication in the form of exchanging, comparing and negotiating meaning? (The cultural aspects are sometimes easier to see than the social, and thus susceptible to commodification, as the arts industry demonstrates.) What is the use of new technological infrastructure if it does not fully account for the way we organise and make sense of ourselves and our circumstances by way of visible signs, symbols and icons, as well as tacit understanding? What of the unlearning and relearning needed before a new technology is socially useful and acceptable? And what of the effects of new technologies on the planet's biosphere?

When it comes to the Net, which integrates IT with networking communications, it belongs to a wider class of hardware and applications usually referred to as ICT, information and communication/s technology. In the term ICT, communication/s is usually used in the engineering sense, adding to IT the notion of linking in order to exchange information via such hardware and applications as cameras and screens, and telecommunications systems, rather than by the related human and social activities of organising, learning and sensemaking. Maybe ICT would be more usefully referred to as ICTS, to make allowance for the sociocultural context.

10. Social inventions

The preoccupation with tangible, technological infrastructure over social infrastructure has a parallel when thinking about research and invention. Here is a suggested experiment. Ask a randomly chosen person to list some important inventions. The response is fairly sure to be things such as the electric light bulb, the earth-orbit satellite and maybe the wheel. It is less

likely to be the equally pervasive inventions such as taxation, employment or the stock exchange, which apart from being in a building with some video screens, is largely a social invention.

Australian scientist, Doug Cocks, has argued that the challenge for science and technology is to match scientific innovation or the biophysical technologies, with social innovation or the social technologies, specifically to develop research and development (R&D) facilities. Such facilities would primarily and deliberately search for new inventions and combinations of ideas for solving social problems.¹³ For example, research could usefully study how the Net would increase employee satisfaction, improve quality of commercial products and services, create new forms of socially useful work (new jobs), and alleviate social alienation.

Do we invest in social technologies to the same extent as we do technologies primarily dependent on tangible new tools? It is difficult, if not impossible, to get the statistical evidence to answer such a question. It is not unreasonable, however, to assert that industrialised countries, and those newly industrialising, spend significantly more research and development dollars on inventing new hardware and software for the Net, than on searching for ways to use the Net to enhance social organisation, and human communication and cultural products. It is not that new tools are not important. They are. But so is attention to the solution of our major social ills and the development of new human potentials.

Do we put technology ahead of civilisation and our future generations? Does the nation state collect taxes from people to invest in technology or people; in technological infrastructure or social and cultural infrastructure; or both? And what comes first?

One reason we cannot easily answer the question of what is invested in social technologies is that national collectors of statistics unquestionably concentrate on collecting data for indicators of economic growth ahead of personal, organisational and community wellbeing. The tangible products that can be exchanged in the marketplace now increasingly take precedence in national decision making over human and social intangibles. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP), used internationally as an indicator of national wealth, measures only exchange of goods, and to a lesser extent services, in the marketplace. Personal and social wellbeing is not a significant commodity, yet, and yields no data apparently thought worthy of collection by national statisticians. But, as we have noted, information is fast

being commoditised, perhaps since it is relatively more tangible than human wellbeing. This makes it much more susceptible to trade. Thus IT, in terms of both its components, attracts much more official attention than its social and cultural context, the social (sociocultural) infrastructure.

11. Nation state under threat

But, we face interesting times. The Net ignores the nation state and the people who collect economic statistics about their states, and then use such statistics to make national policy. The Net has helped global commerce bypass the payment of taxation on income to nation states and has weakened the state's ability to collect import duty in certain cases. In fact, the casino in financial currency exchange has held to ransom the productive economies of many nations, as seen in the recent so-called 'Asian crisis'.

At the same time, the Net is a new medium that freely, at least in terms of the signal, crosses national boundaries, as does direct broadcast satellite television. Its potential for interactivity means that it stands far less chance than other mass media of being controlled by the state which can rely only on making direct broadcast satellite transmission and reception illegal without being able to verify illegal use. The Net potentially puts into the hands of people who, under the traditional media are merely receivers, the ability also to be producers.

The characteristic of blurring the distinction between producers and consumers of information makes the Net a very different medium from traditional mass media, such as television. Without the heavy investment needed to produce news for television, for example, individual citizens have been able to receive the news of oppressive events in another country and relay them by e-mail widely to individual citizens in that country, where the news has been suppressed by national authorities.

The Net poses real difficulties for national policy makers who must now contend with a challenge to their own authority on many fronts. But, the Net has the same potential to connect people for education and medical care, and legitimate commerce, just as it can connect young children to purveyors of sex and violence, and link international gangs of

organised criminals. The transactions exist in virtual reality, in cyberspace, and are relatively invisible compared with transactions that take place on land across national boundaries, or across office desks or public service counters.

12. An ethical mindset

In making wise policy, clear and ethical thinking is called for, unfettered by the dominant mindset of industrialism and the imperative of greed which sees the Net as a bonanza for making money in the global marketplace. While commercial exchange of money is necessary and desirable, the Net poses new questions about the nature of such exchange, hidden from public scrutiny.

The previous powerful new medium, television, changed our personal and social lives in terms of how we learn about the world, and particularly about how we eat, what we wear and generally the way we consume; how we shop. The Net holds, it seems, relatively more power than television to change the way we think; to change our culture. In fact the Net is its own culture, potentially a new global digital culture that can easily envelop us in cyberfantasy.

There are technocratic elites, far from the majority of society, who seek to impose a global culture which would entrance the many as consumers, in the cause of short term profit and immediate power for the few. Then there are others, in line with the communication paradox, who see that the Net can simultaneously offer the potential for long term empowerment of the many since it has the potential to dissolve hierarchy while still being susceptible to centralised control.

Can we afford to place, uncritically, the pervasive potential of the Net in the hands of officials and merchants who seek primarily power and profit? Surely the major beneficiaries of this new medium need to be people, and their political and business leaders, who are concerned for the wellbeing of our future societies and our planet.

We need to question our policy mindset, for we can easily and innocently be led into a new Net culture or we can deliberately create society's wider wellbeing. The market model of the future seeks primarily a trade in technology, to profit from building technological

infrastructure in the cause of productivity and economic profit through the commodification of information and knowledge. The wisdom model seeks primarily to create improved personal, organisational and community wellbeing; to 'profit' humanely from a new social and cultural infrastructure through new social technologies – social and cultural inventions – inspired by the Net. It would yield not just material productivity for a consumer-first society, but cultural richness, personal, organisational and social learning and sound community development; in other words, new designs for working, living and learning in a communicative age.

This paper has virtually ignored the cultural consequences of the Net which are, importantly, the subject of more common analysis and critique (for example in media studies) than are social institutions and processes. The society that decides to focus on its cultural and social infrastructure as opportunities for both commercial and community development could distinguish itself from the many others that are still rushing competitively towards some technological utopia and digital marketplace. Surely the futures of a healthy society lie in its social and cultural enrichment, rather than in some myth of a technology-first market place. But, the dominance of the American technological economy could still endanger such opportunities.

References

- ¹ O'NEILL, H., More powerful than Einstein's brain. *The Weekend Australian*, 14-15 June, 1997, Syte 3.
- ² BROWNING, D.: Father of the Web. *The Weekend Australian*, 14-15 June, 1997, Syte 1.
- ³ WRIGHT, R.: The man who invented the Web. *Time*, 19 May, 1997, p. 110.
- ⁴ STEVENSON, T., LENNIE, J.: Emerging Designs for Work, Living and Learning in the Communicative Age'. *Futures Research Quarterly*, Fall 1995, pp. 5-36.
- ⁵ WRIGHT, R.: The Man who Invented the Web. *Time*, op. cit., pp. 108-111.
- ⁶ *ibid*, p. 111.
- ⁷ *ibid*, p. 110.
- ⁸ *ibid*, p. 111.
- ⁹ MAKRIDAKIS, S., The Forthcoming Information Revolution: Its Impact on Society and Firms. *Futures*, 8, 1995, p. 799.

- ¹⁰ ABU-LUGHOD, J., Communication and the Metropolis: Spatial Drift and the Reconciliation of Control. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 3, 1992, p. 12-30.
- ¹¹ BRYNJOLFSSON, E., The Productivity Paradox of Information Technology: Review and Assessment, Centre for Coordination Science, MIT Sloan School of Management, Cambridge, 1994, 2 (<http://ccs.mit.edu/CCSWP130/CCSWP130.html>).
- ¹² PREISSEL, B., Information Technology: A Critical Perspective on its Economic Effects. *Prometheus*, 1, 1997, p. 5-25.
- ¹³ COCKS, D., Use with Care: Managing Australia's Natural resources in the Twenty-First Century, Kensington, New South Wales University Press, 1992, p. 271.

**FUTURE ORIENTATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE
IN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON**

Tamás Kristóf

Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration, Hungary

Introductory thoughts

Future orientation of the youth has been examined in several countries. Excellent publications have been made concerning general future orientation and in frames of different complex researches many wide-ranging surveys have been carried out about future orientation of adults. However, so far experts have shown less attention to young people's future orientation and comparative analyses from different cultures. This study – which sketches the future orientation of young generations from Australia, Finland, Great Britain, Hungary, Spain and the United States in a specific comparative analysis – tries to supply this defect. Although this study does not satisfy the proper criteria of comparison, but as the examinations refer to the same perspectives, all of them reflect young people's attitude and way of thinking about the futures, that is why we consider that comparison can be fulfilled.

Nowadays almost nobody deals with young (and also older) people's images of the future – at personal, local and global level as well –, apart from certainly the public opinion polls before the following elections and the surveys of advertising agencies concerning the market segments of the youth (Hutchinson, 1999). Nevertheless, the visions of young people largely contribute to the forming of their aspirations, that is why it should gain importance that appropriate attention be paid to their views and they should be given the education needed to prepare for the future more efficiently (Hicks, 1996).

1. Studies of countries

Future orientation examinations of young generations from each country are presented in alphabetical order of the chosen representative studies.

1.1 Australia

Australian young people's images of future have been sketched in the doctoral thesis of Frank Hutchinson in 1993. The base of the results was a questionnaire and a follow-up discussion with 650 Australian teenagers. The study has revealed young people's anguish, despondent and helpless negative attitude, when facing the anticipated social and global problems.

Australian young people imagine a kind of depersonalised, uncaring, violent, mechanised and corrupt world, where critical state of environment, degradation of the biosphere, people divided between haves and have-nots can be observed, and where voting seems to be a waste of time.

In the question, what kind of future they would prefer, technocratic dreaming has asserted itself even more than in the USA, in which students uncritically accept that each problem can be solved by techno-fix solutions. At social level they have mentioned demilitarisation, greening of science and technology to meet genuine human needs, intergenerational equity, responsibility for the needs of future generations and human reconciliation. Therefore future orientation of Australian young people is coloured by several confusions and contradictions (Hutchinson, 1999).

1.2 Finland

The survey carried out in Finland in 1994 tried to reveal Finnish young people's images of the future and their ideas to influence the future. The data below has firstly been drawn from this survey with a sample of 346 (from 12 schools), secondly from a series of interviews, thirdly from a two years later performed survey by the Statistics Finland.

We may get a picture of Finnish young people's images of their personal futures based on the interviews. The interviewees were given the task to think themselves into the period 50 years later than 1994, which means their retirement (scenario building). They imagined a conventional nuclear family with harmonious marriage, 2-3 children, who happily live in an own two-storey suburban house with garden. They own two cars, a summer cottage and a boat, they are blessed with good health, retire after a steady job, and at the peak of an up-curving career. They emphasise the importance of high-quality education (also for their children). All these reflect a happy, good life that is actually lived by many of today's Finnish people and families, just as their parents and grandparents hold as visions. Therefore it seems that socially shared future expectations and preferences influence young people's ideas and images of their personal futures. 86% of Finnish young people find their personal futures influencable. In shaping their personal futures industrial society and modernity seem to be premises.

The scenario built about Finland in the future is rather similar to a science fiction disaster movie: decay and overpopulation of cities, high numbers of refugees, pollution of the environment, a certain loss of control in all areas of life, shrinking welfare, famine, poverty, diseases, crime, general drug abuse, nuclear catastrophe near the borders of Finland. Some of them thought that these problems could start to recover after an even longer perspective and the country faces a better future. In the question of influencing Finland's future, most respondents (47%) answered that they want to affect the future of their homeland.

Global images of future are practically similar to the national ones, but on a larger scale: environmental disasters, leaking nuclear plants, wars, refugees, global famine, drought, high level of human migration, diseases, overpopulation. They anticipate a world, where people cannot go out unprotected anymore. They rather want to influence global futures, but here the feeling is stronger than in case of Finland that they cannot affect them. Ideological frames of forming national and global futures are industrial society and post-modern thinking (Rubin, 1999).

1.3 Great Britain

The future orientation examination in Great Britain in 1994 was carried out on purpose to reveal British young people's thinking, hopes and fears for the future and their optimism-pessimism in the examined areas. The children were from four age groups: 7, 11, 14 and 18.

The study has come to the conclusion that under half of pupils from primary schools, three-quarters from secondary schools think often about their personal futures, but only a third and a half of them talks about them with friends, so they are scarcely open-minded towards each other. The reason for the different rates is that in adolescence life becomes more complex and there is more to think and talk about. Young people's hopes relate to education, work, relationships and achieving a good life, whereas their fears reflect the concerns of work, health, money and family.

Scarcely anybody of British young people thinks and talks about the futures of their local community (66% sometimes thinks, 44% sometimes talks about them). Out of the conversations having written by them it has come true that their hopes are about less pollution, better amenities, less crime and greater prosperity. Their fears concern increases in crime, pollution and unemployment.

More than half of British young people often think, nearly a quarter talk about global futures. Most frequent topics concern wars, relationships between countries, state of environment, poverty and the problems of food reserves.

Examining the question of optimism-pessimism we can draw the conclusion that optimism decreases somewhat with age (75% of primary, 70% of secondary students believes that their life becomes better or much better in the future). Hopes and fears are the strongest at the age of fourteen (Hicks, 1996).

1.4 Hungary

Hungary occupies one of the least favourable: 58. place out of the 61 examined countries in the GLOBE-research followed since the 1980s (the sample consisted of 200 top managers+700 university-students) when examining future orientation at national level. Therefore the Hungarians are rather pessimistic (GLOBE, 1998). Under these circumstances

have Erzsébet Nováky and Éva Hideg started to map the future orientation of Hungarian young people in 1992. These examinations have been continuing since then with half-yearly frequency. The aims of these examinations are to reveal the components of future orientation and future orientation attitudes in dimensions of interest in the future, thinking about the future, activities done for the future and expectations to the future. Hungarian young people's thinking about the future is usually unformed, not developed and can be characterised by uncertain attitude (with the only exception of students at university of economics). Least unformed and uncertain relation to the future have the students from vocational schools. In Hungary future shock can be caught in the act, and also fatalism, a healthy but pessimistic relationship to the future. The respondents expressed their hopes for influencing the future in general. Students between the age of 14 and 18 emphasise studying, doing sport, environmental protection and community life, even though most of them answered that they were unable to do anything for their future. Most of the university students mention first studying and working in order to influence their personal and communal futures to a favourable direction (Hideg, Nováky, 1999).

1.5 Spain

Future images of Spanish young people can be demonstrated through the results of the examination-series of the Spanish Research Centre of Sociology (CIS) that tried to reveal the political views and value system of Spanish young people. Political change of system in 1978 and EU-connection in 1982 had a great influence on the value system of Spanish young people. We might draw conclusions to the future values based on actual present. Spanish young people find themselves sincere, responsible, solidary and tolerant. They find friendship and family (99%), education (88%) as important social institution, religion (36%) and politics (22%) as less important. Young people believe in democracy, the majority of them declare left-central value system, at the same time their interest in politics has been decreasing since the 1980s. They find material values more important than post-materialistic ones. Their fears for the future most often relate to unemployment (do not forget that in the European Union there has always been the highest unemployment rate in Spain), usually they are pessimistic about finding a job. They think that qualification and connections could most help to solve these problems (Bas, 1999).

1.6 The United States

The country-wide survey carried out in the United States in 1984 has a great importance from more aspects: firstly from the sample of 140.000, different consequences characteristic to the basic mass can be drawn with high certainty, secondly the 15 passed years gives the opportunity of several subsequent evaluations (have the expectations to the appropriate perspectives proved to be true?).

American young people have a conventional, rather conservative, optimistic visions concerning personal futures. More than 80% of the respondents wishes to get married, to have children, an own house, car and computer. Younger children in the sample have a stronger technocratic future image (they want videophones and robots) than the older ones. 97% of the American youth expect a more favourable or the same financial situation for themselves than their parents, 95% thinks they will be happier or the same in the future.

In relation to the futures of the United States, young people are less optimistic than to their personal futures. More than a half of the students think that drug abuse and crime, according to more than 40% unemployment, national debt and poverty will be more serious in the future. Other answers were divided uniformly between 'same' and 'less serious'. It would be illuminating to ask American young people about these questions today again. It is known that at the end of the 1990s both crime and unemployment shows a shrinking tendency, the most obvious explanation to which seems to be economic growth. The biggest winner of globalisation, which is expecting to be stronger after 2000, is at present and in the future the USA, which could result in continuous and sustainable economic growth for the country. Furthermore the respondents anticipated the fully equity between sexes.

As far as the world's futures are concerned, American young people have quite dim a future image. 60% believes that the danger of nuclear war outbreak increases longer (do not forget that we are in the period of star-wars-imaginations of Reagen just after the Brezhnev-era). They foresee in the same proportion the depletion of natural and energy resources, the pollution of soil, water and air as increasing serious problems. 50% of the questionnaire-completers believes that the imbalance between world population and food reserves is deepening. At the same time they expected a positive improvement in race relations. In

ranking what they mostly like to become real in the future, besides cure for cancer they emphasised the cheapness and quickness of travelling among countries (Johnson, 1987).

2. Conclusions

Examining the studies of countries the dissonance first reported by Toffler in 1970 seems immediately conspicuous between the judgement of personal and environmental futures of young people. In each country several manifestations can be found to it. American young people (and also adults), for instance, find a total nuclear war in few years imaginable, whereas foresee themselves a long-lasting and happy life.

When young people were confronted with the future images of their personal happiness and national-global disasters in frames of personal discussions (in Finland after the interviews), this revealed confusion in their minds. It seems it is very difficult to set the idea of personal future in their homeland and in the world. To these questions the most often given answer was a perplexed “I don’t know, I never thought about it” (Rubin, 1999).

It would be significant that people feel still at younger age the personal consequences of national and international processes, and the marginal utility that they really can contribute to make their environmental future better. It is clear that this is first a matter of education, just like the formation of technocratic future images almost all over the world. Most of young people can only see the future in technical terms, as they prejudge social and global futures unchangeable. According to David Hicks the most probable reason for it is that young people are taught and trained to think technologically and not have any other thoughts to respond to the stimulus future, which will then become self-reinforcing, as nobody is stimulated by the others to express their thoughts concerning social futures (Hicks, 1996). His conviction on that point can be read between the lines: students will not be future oriented, until their teachers are.

Frank Hutchinson does not have a better opinion of today’s educational system – that can in no way be called future oriented –, either. Following discussions with hundreds of students

he found that one of the main reasons for forming negative imaginations of the future is the continually increasing pressure and competition facing them at school (Hutchinson, 1999).

Richard Slaughter in his lecture at Budapest Futures Course has thrown light that education systems of today are really ruled by two forces: politics and economy. Politics are adversarial, past-driven and short termist, whereas economics can be characterised by growth, market ideology, materialism and pragmatic focus on the 'here-and-now'. Redesigning education systems for the 21st century it is vital that education:

- should be closely linked to future studies;
- moves beyond conventional strategic planning to 'the big picture';
- employs environmental scanning techniques;
- develops and applies strategic intelligence, and
- has a nurture educational leadership (Slaughter, 1999).

The closing of this study probably does not mean any special new things for experienced readers in special world's literature of future orientation. The preparedness and responsibility of the teachers cannot be emphasised often enough any more in forming value system (in which future orientation must gain a key role) of future generations. Future concepts must be built into higher, post-graduate and continuative teacher-education.

Primary school teachers must acquire simple future tools and exercises, secondary school teachers should have made acquainted with the knowledge base, discourse and social applications, whereas university and college teachers with advanced discourse, research, discipline-building and social implementations (Slaughter, 1999).

Table 1. Surveys on future orientation of youth in several countries

Finland	England	Australia	Where and Who
<i>Anita Rubin</i>	<i>David Hicks</i>	<i>Frank Hutchinson</i>	
1994-1995	1994	1992	When
to reveal the image of the future; to test and to get an overall picture	to reveal hopes and fears, salience of futures thinking, optimism and pessimism concerning particular issues		Aims
	thinking about the future; judgement of personal, local, global futures		Topics
target sample, pupils (10-15, 16-18, 18-22) representative sample pupils (12-22)	pupils (7, 11, 14, 18)	teenagers	Sample
personal; country level; global level	personal, local, global level	personal, national, global	Space
50 years ahead	10 years		Time
bright, full of hope, happily married, successful carrier; can affect the future (personal level)	education, work, relationships, good life less pollution, better amenities, less crime, greater prosperity good relationships between countries	technocratic dream, demilitarisation and greening of science and technology to meet genuine human needs, intergenerational equity, reconceptualisation of ethics and lifestyles	Hopes
corruption, unemployment, environm. problems, drugs, dirty urban centers, poor people oppressive, full of threats; no possibilities to affect (national, global level)	work, health, money, family crime, pollution, unemployment, worsening environment war, environment, poverty, famine	a strong sense of negativity, helplessness, despondency, anguish, depersonalized, uncaring and violent world, mechanised, environmentally unsustainable world, haves and have-nots, political corruption	Fears
education, work, material welfare			Main findings
new forms in the influencing the society			Acting/would
dichotomic image of the future; differencies in future orientation: active, optimist and passive, pessimist depending on the types schools	hopes and fears are strongest around 14; optimism decreases with age; pessimistic view mostly concerning the planet's future	future orientation with some disturbancies and contradictions	Summary

<i>Erzsébet Nováky, Éva Hideg</i>	<i>Erzsébet Nováky, Éva Hideg</i>	<i>Erzsébet Nováky, Éva Hideg</i>	Hungary <i>Erzsébet Nováky, Éva Hideg & István Kappéter</i>
1992, 1997	1994 - 1999	1997	1992
the same	the same	to reveal the special characters of the attitude and components of future orientation	to reveal the attitude and components of future orientation
the same	the same	the same	interest in the future, thinking about the future, activities for the future, expectations for the future
engineering-economics	university economics students	pupils (14-18)	target sample (incl. econ. students)
1. family 2. own 3. world 4. country 5. place of residence	1. own future 2. family 3. world 4. country 5. place of residence	1. own future 2-3. family 2-3. place of residence 4. country 5. world	1. own future 2. family 3. world 4. country 5. place of residence
1. 1-10-year period	1. 5-10 years 2. 1-2 years 3. 30-40 years 4. over-40 years	1. 1-2 years 2. 5-10 years 3. 30-40 years	1. 5-10 years 2. 1-2 years 3. 30-40 years 4. over-40 years
	to influence the future	better living conditions	to influence the future
uncertainty, pessimistic		unformed and uncertain	
further training and education, investment, enterprise, culture, sport (personal) env.prot., work, tax-paying for the country	study, information collection, relations, foresight, help for their loved ones, study, politi. participation, work, env.prot. for the country and	are not able to do, if yes, then study, sports, environment protection, public life	study and health, work for own fut., nothing for the future of loved ones, env. prot., work, study for the country and world
1. own 2. family 3. country 4. world 5. place of residence, extra work, investment, enterprise, to do more for their loved; more pess. concerning country and	family and/or world, 5-10 years and over-40 years to do something for their loved ones		
problems with future orientation: disturbed future orientation and future shock	most future oriented	unformed and uncertain attitude, underdeveloped attitude to the future	future orientation of human being is an existing category, but future shock is existing in Hungary, too

Where and Who	USA <i>Lynell Johnson</i>	Spain <i>Enric Bas</i>	<i>Éva Hideg, Erzsébet Nováky</i>
When	1984		1995
Aims			to test and to get an overall picture
Topics		values, attitudes, expectations, impact of the change of regime	relations to the future
Sample		representative samples	nationwide representative sample of youth
Space	personal, national, global futures	individual futures, relation to the society	
Time		actual present	1-10 years
Hopes	married with children, own a home and a car, be richer than parents, be happier than now, gender equity, improvement in race relations	belief in democracy and public institutions, mostly leftist, sympathy for social movement, but a low real involvement	personal material welfare and happiness
Fears	increase in drug abuse, crime, danger of nuclear war, depletion of resources, pollution	unemployment, not have money, accidents	50% of respondents about the state of country
Main findings		education, creation, social contacts, seize the possibilities	more work, study, dealing with the family
Acting/would be acting		ideological change, lower interest in politics, more conservative values: from left to center left	
Summary	conventional but optimistic personal futures less optimistic about US and world's futures	personal dimension of the life becomes more and more important; preference of family and friends; future orientation: based on material and postmaterial values	different types of future orientation: future shock, fatalism, healthy but pessimistic relations to the future

© Erzsébet Nováky, Éva Hideg & Tamás Kristóf, 1999

Bibliography

1. BAS, E., *Youth and future values: an overview of the Spanish surveys*. Paper presented at the first Budapest Futures Course, Budapest, August, 1999, See in this volume
2. GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness)-kutatás [GLOBE Research] *Vezetéstudomány*, 1998/2
3. HICKS, D., *Young Peoples' Hopes and Fears for the Future*. The Knowledge Base of Futures Studies, Vol. 2. 1996
4. HIDEG, É., NOVÁKY, E., *Factual and methodological experience probing future orientation in modern and late modern societies, especially the case of Hungary*. Paper presented at the first Budapest Futures Course, Budapest, August, 1999, See in this volume
5. HUTCHINSON, F., *Researching Youth Future Orientations: Methodological and other Critical Issues* (for WFSF - Budapest Futures Course) Faculty of Social Inquiry, University of Western Sydney, 1999
6. JOHNSON, L., Children's Visions of the Future. *The Futurist*, May-June, 1987
7. RUBIN, A., *Young People's Images of the Future* (for WFSF – Budapest Futures Course) Turku School of Economics and Business Administration, Publication Series D:2, Turku, 1999
8. SLAUGHTER, R. A., *The role of education in the future orientation of youth* – oral lecture held at the first Budapest Futures Course in Budapest on 16th August 1999

THE FUTURE ORIENTATION OF THE BUDAPEST FUTURES COURSE PARTICIPANTS

Erzsébet Nováky - Éva Hideg - Judit Pék

Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration, Hungary

1. The Survey

We wished to investigate within the framework of the first Budapest Futures Course what kind of future orientation the participants of the course had and how the young volunteers of the summer course related to the future. Can we detect, we wondered, a notably positive attitude to the future among those who have worked with the theoretical and methodological aspects of futures research for some years and practise this branch of science on a daily basis? With our survey we endeavour to enrich our possible view of future orientation by gaining a general insight into the attitude to the future of both young people from different countries and of those who have delved (or are now beginning to delve) into certain areas of futures research around the world and cultivate (or are now beginning to cultivate) the science of futures research as a profession.

We used a questionnaire drawn up by Éva Hideg and Erzsébet Nováky, presented as a supplement to this study, to survey the future orientation of the participants of the Budapest Futures Course. The three components of the questionnaire were:

- interest in the future and thinking about the future;
- activities performed in the interest of the future;
- expectations for the future.

In the first batch of questions we wished to discover the opinion of the respondents on a number of subjects. We investigated why the respondents were interested in the future and why they thought others might be. We asked, furthermore, whether they considered certain pre-worded statements concerning the future to be true or false, and finally we raised

questions about their views on space and time.

With questions related to activities carried out in the interest of the future we wished to size up what the participants usually did or would do for their own future, for that of their families, place of residence, their country and the world. This made both their real activities and their potential desires a subject of analysis.

Among the questions related to their expectations for the future we included economic, social and environmental concerns. What were the respondents' expectations, we asked: would the situation be better, worse or the same as today, and on what time scale? We provided a time scale ranging from the 1-5 to the 20-50-year time span. Among their expectations we also inquired whether the respondents themselves, their parents, partners, children, future grandchildren and friends would have better, happier lives than they had now, and on what time scale they would place their views.

2. The breakdown of the respondents

26 persons participated in the survey conducted among those attending the Budapest Futures Course. The segmentation of the respondents according to *age*, *sex*, *profession*, *schooling* and *working experience*, as well as *country* and *place of residence* resulted in the following findings².

According to *age*, the respondents fell into three categories: 35%, i.e. 9 persons into to 20-24-year-old, 39%, i.e. 10 persons into the 35-30-year-old and 27%, i.e. 7 persons into the over-31-year-old group. According to *sex*, the two categories comprised 65%, i.e. 17 men and 35%, i.e. 9 women. According to *profession*, 27% were students, 12% were post-graduate PhD students and 62% were wage-earners. According to *schooling*, we established four categories: Undergraduate (basic college and university degree), Graduate / M.A. (4th and 5th year university degree), PhD and Others. Their respective proportion and numbers

² The questionnaires were processed by Anu Mikkonen, Blanka Bálint, Judit Pék, Snezana Otasevic, Stanko Blagojevic, Szabolcs Szajp and Tamás Kristóf. For the purposes of the present study we used the paper by Petr and Marta Lebeda: Future Orientation of Individuals, Analysis of the Questionnaire, Budapest, August 1999.

were: 27% – 7 persons, 61% – 16 persons, 8% – 2 persons, and 4% – 1 person. 23% of the group had no *working experience* at all, while 54% had worked for 1 to 5 years and 23% over 5 years. 19 of the respondents (73%) were Hungarians and 7 (27%) were foreigners. They all live in a town, a city or a capital. Their breakdown according to *place of residence* was 15%, i.e. 4 persons, 42%, i.e. 11 persons and 42%, i.e. 11 persons respectively. The numbers surveyed, alas, did not make a reliable analysis possible according to segmentation. Therefore, all we have been able to do is to provide an overview of the future orientation of the group as a whole. For easier reference the tables show significant findings against a shaded background.

3. Interest in the future and thinking about the future

3.1 Why are you interested in the future?

Why do you think other people are interested in the future?

The first batch consisted of 16 questions but only 10 were answered. It seems the members of the group, when thinking about the future, do not really give subjects in the *others* category such as extraterrestrial life, other life, the other world, other, not interested or do not know, serious thought.

The group of questions breaks down the respondents' answers into opinions about themselves and others. A relatively large proportion of the group (over 60%) think that others are interested in the future because they wish to know what will happen, while only a few (30%) think the same about themselves; they (96.2%) would rather influence the future. This high proportion indicates activity related to future orientation as a basic characteristic of the group.

Approximately two-thirds of the respondents think about the future because of their occupation and work, and roughly the same proportion think that the future is a part of life. Thinking about the future of the family and children shows similar proportions both in their own opinion and in that attributed to others as well. The category *fear* highlights an interesting contrast. This category had the lowest proportion put down for oneself, namely the respondents do not fear the future (2 persons, which is less than 10%). Yet the view of

others in the same category (12 persons, which is nearly 50%, six times the previous figure) is significant, if not outstanding. The least characteristic subject of their opinions about others was the future of humankind (15.4%). At the same time the group's own interest in the same was notably higher (42.3%). In general, this group feels quite fearless and empowered to influence the future.

Table 1: Why are you interested in the future and why do you think other people are interested in the future?

Reasons	myself		others	
	answers	%	answers	%
1. the wish to know what will happen	8	30.8	16	61.5
2. influencing the future	25	96.2	8	30.8
3. uncertainty	6	23.1	10	38.5
4. fear	2	7.7	12	46.2
5. trust in future	8	30.8	8	30.8
6. occupation, work	16	61.5	11	42.3
7. future of the family and children	16	61.5	17	65.4
8. overall economic situation of the country	8	30.8	7	26.9
9. the future is the part of human life	15	57.7	7	26.9
10. the future of humankind	11	42.3	4	15.4
11. extraterrestrial life	-		-	
12. other life	-		-	
13. the other world	-		-	
14. other, namely . . .	-		-	
15. not interested	-		-	
16. do not know	-		-	

3.2 Which do you consider to be true of the following statements?

The overwhelming majority of the respondents (53.8% – totally true + 38.5% – partly true = altogether 92.3% – true) look to the future with confidence. They tend to agree with the statement that our future is some kind of consequence of our actions (26.9% – totally + 61.5% partly = altogether 88.4%), which indicates that activity is yet again related to future orientation.

They more or less agree with the statement that they are seized by fear when they think about

the future (42.3% – maybe, 46.2% not). They disagree, however, with the statement “*I do not deal with the future because unexpected events upset my plans.*” (73.1% – absolutely not true). By the same token, they do not agree with the statement “*I can hardly influence my future.*” (34.6% – maybe, 38.5% – not at all, 19.2% partly yes) as regards impotence in the face of the uncertain consequences of unexpected events.

The survey of answers judging the degree of truth contained in the statements of the questionnaire has led to the conclusion that the respondents have faith in the future and do something for it too. They do not accept and even condemn inertia, yet they are fully conscious of the fact that the future on the whole is impossible to control.

Table 2. Which do you consider to be true of the following statements?

Statements	totally true		partly true		false rather than true		absolutely not true		do not know	
	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%
1. I look with confidence to the future	14	53.8	10	38.5	1	3.8	0	0	1	3.8
2. I do not deal with the future because unexpected events upset my plans	0	0	1	3.8	5	19.2	19	73.1	1	3.8
3. I can hardly influence my fate	0	0	5	19.2	9	34.6	10	38.5	2	7.7
4. When I think about the future, I am seized by fear	0	0	2	7.7	11	42.3	12	46.2	1	3.8
5. My future depends mainly on myself	7	26.9	16	61.5	3	11.5	0	0	0	0

3.3 Do you usually think about what will happen to...?

In this batch of questions we wished to find out the opinion of the respondents concerning the following issues on varying time scales. It can be concluded that the respondents think a lot about their own future and that of their families, which holds true for all the time categories. In the category of the *respondent's own future* the highest proportion (over 90%) was registered in the short term (1-5 years), followed by the medium term (5-10 years), showing a gradual decrease in the long term (10-20 years) and the very long term (20-50 years) with a significant drop from almost 60% to 35%, nearly half. In the *family* category the proportions are consistently lower, except in the medium term (80 - 62 - 35 - 27%). The asymmetry between these two questions is remarkable. While in the very short term thinking

about oneself is more prominent, in the medium term thinking about the family takes precedence (57.7% and 61.5% respectively).

In *time and space* it seems that the further away the time is, the wider people's geographical horizons are. There is a gradual broadening from our place of residence through our country to the problems of the world. In the short term the situation of one's *place of residence* and one's *country* are the most vital (both approximately 70%). In the medium term the situation of the *country* is in focus (65.4%). In the long term and the very long term our view of the *world* as a whole gains unequivocal prominence (57.7% and 73.1% respectively).

Table 3. Reasons, do you usually think about what will happen to...

Topics	in 1-5 years		in 5-10 years		in 10-20 years		in 20-50 years	
	answers	%	answers	%	answers	%	answers	%
1. yourself	24	92.3	15	57.7	11	42.3	9	34.6
2. your family	21	80.8	16	61.5	9	34.6	7	26.9
3. the place of your residence	18	69.2	11	42.3	7	26.9	4	15.4
4. your country	18	69.2	17	65.4	10	38.5	7	26.9
5. the world	17	65.4	14	53.8	15	57.7	19	73.1

4. Activities performed in the interest of the future

The following three tables (Table 4/a, 4/b, 4/c) show what our respondents do or would do for their own future and that of their family, place or residence, country and the world. In general we can state that the answers seem to show no correlation with the time span, though there is a slightly decreasing trend as time goes on, but the relative values remain almost unchanged in a given category. In the category *I do not do anything* no significant numbers were registered (except for the family and the country), an indication of the respondents' desire to do things and their action orientation. Two positive answers in the family block (give children an education and bring up children morally) are worth mentioning and commenting: on the one hand, they are both issues that exist on the level of the individual's intentions but one can never be quite sure of the results, as we always want to be better than our predecessors; on the other hand, the high proportion of youngsters among the

respondents makes this all but a possibility.

In the *yourself* category the respondents named studying, preserving their own health, developing their personality and establishing social connections as the key to improving their situation. In the short term, studying, working and establishing social connections registered over 80%. As time goes on the proportions gradually decrease (falling first to 70 and later to 50%). In the very long term, almost half of our respondents opted for work, developing their personality and establishing social connections.

In the *family* category establishing social connections is the master plan. In this option the 50% mark was approached in almost all the time spans, closely followed by bringing up children morally and giving children an education, which scored around 30%. In the latter options the relatively high proportion of *would do* answers, showing intentions, is worth remarking. Although the 50% mark is not reached anywhere, in some cases the *would do* answers are higher than the *do* answers (actual deeds).

In the categories of *place of residence* and *country*, working and studying seem to be the options most favoured by the respondents. From the point of view of place of residence, work continues to be outstanding throughout (with decreasing proportions that stay over 50% in all time spans nevertheless). Studying is the most characteristic in the short term (nearly 70%), then it shows a considerable decline (to 40% and below), which can possibly be explained with the age specifics of the respondents. From the point of view of the country we can make statements similar to the answers about work and study. We may draw a further parallel between these two options too in as much as paying taxes also surfaces as the respondents' obligation in the short term (showing an initial 60%, which gradually decreases to 50% and eventually to below 40%).

In order to improve the situation of the *world*, the respondents saw studying as the principal means (almost 60% in the short term). Hitherto outstanding answers emerged here too but with less prominence. We can observe, therefore, that as time and space expand, uncertainty grows in the answers.

Table 4a. What do you do and what would you do to better the situation of...?

Activities	in 1-5 years				in 5-10 years				in 10-20 years				in 20-50 years			
	do		would do		do		would do		do		would do		do		would do	
	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%
<i>yourself</i>																
1. study	23	88.5	5	19.2	14	69.2	4	15.4	12	46.2	3	11.5	9	34.6	3	11.5
2. work	21	80.8	4	15.4	19	73.1	6	23.1	19	76.9	4	15.4	13	50	3	11.5
3. save money	8	30.8	9	38.5	10	38.5	7	31.9	12	46.2	3	11.5	8	30.8	3	11.5
4. accumulate wealth	7	26.9	4	19.2	8	30.8	4	15.4	6	23.1	2	7.7	7	26.9	0	0
5. take out an insurance policy	8	30.8	5	19.2	4	15.4	4	15.4	7	30.8	3	15.4	6	26.9	4	19.2
6. preserve your own health	14	61.5	7	26.9	14	53.8	7	26.9	13	50	5	23.1	11	42.3	6	23.1
7. develop your personality	20	76.9	8	26.9	13	53.8	6	19.2	12	46.2	5	19.2	10	46.2	5	19.2
8. establish social connections	22	84.6	5	19.2	19	73.1	5	19.2	15	61.5	5	23.1	11	46.2	3	19.2
9. pray, meditate	9	34.6	4	15.3	6	23.1	4	15.3	8	30.8	1	3.8	8	30.8	2	7.6
10. do not do anything	1	3.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>your family</i>																
1. produce funds	4	15.4	6	16.9	3	11.5	7	30.8	5	19.2	4	15.4	5	19.2	4	15.4
2. give children an education	8	30.8	6	23.1	7	30.8	13	53.8	10	38.5	9	38.4	5	19.2	5	19.2
3. bring up children morally	6	23.1	9	34.6	5	23.1	14	53.8	7	30.8	11	42.3	5	19.2	8	30.7
4. take out an insurance policy	5	19.2	4	15.3	2	11.5	3	11.5	3	11.5	4	15.4	2	7.7	3	11.5
5. create social connections	12	50	2	19.2	12	61.5	6	23.1	13	50	7	23.1	8	34.6	3	15.3
6. do not do anything	1	3.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3.8	0	0

Table 4b. What do you do and what would you do to better the situation of ... ?

Activities	in 1-5 years				in 5-10 years				in 10-20 years				in 20-50 years			
	do		would do		do		would do		do		would do		do		would do	
	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%
<i>the place of your residence</i>																
1. work	20	76.9	4	15.3	14	53.8	4	15.3	14	53.8	1	3.8	11	42.3	0	0
2. study	18	69.2	3	11.5	11	42.3	3	15.3	7	30.8	1	7.7	7	26.9	1	7.7
3. help others	11	38.5	5	15.4	10	38.5	7	26.9	10	38.5	6	23.1	10	38.5	5	19.2
4. generate community life	6	26.9	12	42.3	5	19.2	12	42.3	4	15.4	7	26.9	4	15.4	6	23.1
5. protect and save the environment of your residence	9	34.6	11	42.3	8	30.8	9	34.6	10	38.5	6	26.9	11	38.5	7	26.9
6. influence others' value preferences	8	30.8	8	30.7	8	30.7	8	30.7	8	30.7	5	19.2	8	30.7	4	15.3
7. participate in movements	10	38.5	8	26.9	9	30.7	4	19.2	6	23.4	3	11.5	5	19.2	3	15.4
8. pay tax	16	61.5	4	15.3	12	46.2	2	7.6	12	46.2	1	3.8	13	50	0	0
9. contribute to the peaceful coexistence in the place of residence	11	38.5	11	42.3	8	30.7	7	26.9	8	30.7	6	19.2	9	30.7	5	23.1

10. support the welfare aims and their realization	7	30.7	8	30.7	6	26.9	7	26.9	6	26.9	5	19.2	7	26.9	4	19.2
11. do not do anything	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 4c. Reasons, what do you do or what would you do to better the situation of...

Activities	in 1-5 years				in 5-10 years				in 10-20 years				in 20-50 years			
	do		would do		do		would do		do		would do		do		would do	
	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%	answ	%
<i>your country</i>																
1. work	13	50	7	26.9	16	61	3	11.5	15	53.8	2	7.7	14	53.8	1	3.8
2. study	14	57.7	3	7.7	9	38.5	4	11.5	9	34.6	3	11.5	8	30.8	2	7.7
3. help others	10	38.5	6	23.1	10	38.5	4	15.3	10	34.6	3	19.2	8	30.8	3	11.5
4. generate community life	5	15.4	6	26.9	4	11.5	8	34.6	5	15.3	6	26.9	6	19.2	3	15.4
5. protect and save the environment	8	30.8	6	23.1	8	30.7	6	23.1	7	26.9	6	23.1	7	26.9	6	23.1
6. influence others' value preferences	6	23.1	9	34.6	7	26.9	7	26.9	8	26.9	8	34.6	6	23.1	7	26.9
7. participate in movements	9	34.6	6	23.1	10	30.8	2	11.5	8	11.5	2	11.5	5	19.2	2	11.5
8. pay tax	13	50	3	11.5	9	38.5	4	15.4	11	38.5	4	19.2	11	38.5	4	19.2
9. contribute to the social peace	6	19.2	7	19.2	8	26.9	5	19.2	9	26.9	4	15.3	6	23.1	5	15.4
10. support the welfare aims	4	15.4	11	34.6	4	15.4	6	23.1	6	23.1	4	15.3	6	26.9	3	7.7
11. do not do anything	0	0	2	7.7	0	0	1	3.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>the world</i>																
1. work	13	46.1	5	23.1	11	42.3	4	15.4	11	46.2	4	15.4	10	42.3	3	11.5
2. study	16	57.7	4	15.4	11	38.5	2	7.7	7	30.8	4	7.7	8	34.6	3	7.7
3. help others	11	42.3	3	15.4	9	34.6	3	11.5	9	34.6	2	7.7	9	34.6	2	7.7
4. generate community life	4	15.4	5	23.1	4	15.4	3	11.5	5	19.2	3	11.5	5	19.2	4	11.5
5. protect and save the environment	9	26.9	5	30.8	10	38.5	6	26.9	9	34.6	7	26.9	10	38.5	5	19.2
6. influence others' value preferences	4	15.4	8	34.6	4	19.2	6	23.1	5	23.1	6	19.2	4	19.2	5	15.4
7. participate in movements	7	26.9	8	34.6	4	23.1	6	19.2	5	26.9	5	11.5	5	26.9	4	7.7
8. support the peace and the welfare aims	7	23.1	6	23.1	7	26.9	4	11.5	9	30.8	4	7.7	7	23.1	4	3.8
9. do not do anything	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

5. Expectations for the future

5.1 How do you think the following will be in ... years compared to the present?

According to the respondents' economic, social and environmental expectations for the future, the financial and social conditions will improve both in the short term and in the long

term. The only exception is the situation of the world on the whole, in which case improvement is expected only in the very long term (20-50 years).

The *financial situation* is expected to improve in all the categories (yourself, your family, your friends, place of your residence, your country) and in all the time spans, though the trend shows a slow decline, which correlates with people's growing sense of uncertainty. In the *short term*, 80% of the respondents thought that their own situation and that of their friends would become better, and according to 60% the situation of their family will also improve. While half of the respondents thought that the situation of the place of their residence would show an upward trend, roughly the same proportion forecast no change in the situation of the country and the world. In the *medium term*, people see their own situation in a very positive light (over 90%). Like in the short term, 80% expect to see an improvement in the situation of their family, and 65% believe that the situation of their friends will also improve. In the *long term*, the positive trend expected in the situation of the individual (almost 80%) is still remarkable, and 60-70% of the respondents expect to see improvements in the future of their family and friends. In the medium and long term a change unfolds concerning the situation of the place of residence and of the country: people see the improvement of the situation of the country more probable than that of the place of their residence. In the *very long term*, the most outstanding figures relate to the country (67%) and the family (58%) as opposed to the individual and friends (50-50%).

The last category, the *world*, seems to be an exception from the positive trend. There an unchanging or declining trend can be observed in the short and medium term, while a slight improvement is registered in the long and very long term (40% and 60% respectively), which indicates the time needed for actions to bear fruit.

Expectations are quite optimistic as regards the *social situation* too. The respondents expect their own situation as well as that of their family and friends to conform to an upward trend, though to a decreasing extent. The expected improvement in *one's own* social situation falls from 65% in the short term to 57.7% in the very long term. The situation of the *family* and *friends* displays a nearly identical picture. In both cases the answers indicate growing improvement (40% to 50%) in the short and medium term, followed by lesser improvement (a gradual fall from 53.8% to 46.2%). The roots of this may possibly lie in people's growing uncertainty. Interesting indications can be observed in relation to *place of residence*. The

respondents foresee considerable improvement as regards the place of their residence, though not on a large scale, and this improvement goes beyond the 50% mark only in the very long term. As far as the situation of the *country* and the *world* is concerned, there are two clearly distinguishable periods. While the respondents see the situation as the same and even worse in the short term, they expect improvement in the long term. At least that is what nearly half of the respondents believed.

Expectations concerning the *state of the natural environment* clearly indicate a worsening of the situation in the short term, and a chance of improvement only in the medium and long term. Probable changes expected in *one's own* situation are as follows: after an initial worsening some improvement can be observed in the medium term, which is expected to surpass 50% only in the very long term (65.7%). Views on the situation of the environment of the *family* and *friends* follows suit: there is considerable uncertainty in the short and medium term and the categories *better*, *worse* and *the same* get a roughly equal share of the answers. Yet the situation tends to be worse at first. In the longer terms the chances of improvement gradually grow (slowly passing 50%). In the *geographical sense* the situation is expected to worsen both in the short term and in the medium term. Improvement is foreseen in the long term for the place of residence and the country but only in the very long term for the world: 65-70% of the respondents expect to see an improvement in the situation of the environment in the 20-50-year span.

Table 5a. How do you think the following will be in ... years compared to the present?

Fields	in 1-5 years						in 5-10 years						in 10-20 years						in 20-50 years					
	answers			%			answers			%			answers			%			answers			%		
	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s
<i>the financial situation of</i>																								
1. yourself	22	0	4	80.8	0	19.2	24	1	1	92.3	3.8	3.8	23	0	2	88.5	0	7.7	13	2	9	50	7.7	30.8
2. your family	15	2	8	57.7	7.7	30.8	17	2	6	65.4	7.7	23.1	17	1	6	65.4	3.8	23.1	15	1	7	57.7	3.8	26.9
3. your friends	21	2	3	80.8	7.7	11.5	21	0	3	80.8	0	11.5	17	0	7	65.4	0	26.9	13	0	10	50	0	38.5
4. the place of your residence	13	6	5	50	23.1	19.2	12	3	8	46.2	11.5	30.8	13	1	7	50	3.8	26.9	11	1	7	42.3	3.8	26.9
5. your country	8	5	12	30.8	19.2	46.2	14	4	7	53.8	15.4	26.9	18	1	5	69.2	3.8	19.2	17	0	7	65.4	0	26.9
6. the world	3	8	13	11.5	30.8	50	5	8	9	19.2	30.8	34.6	10	5	8	38.5	19.2	30.8	15	2	4	57.7	7.7	15.4
<i>the social situation of</i>																								
1. yourself	17	0	7	65.4	0	26.9	17	1	5	65.4	3.8	19.2	15	0	7	57.7	0	26.9	15	0	7	57.7	0	26.9
2. your family	12	2	9	46.2	7.7	34.6	14	0	9	53.8	0	34.6	13	0	8	50	0	30.8	12	0	8	46.2	0	30.8
3. your friends	10	0	13	38.5	0	50	14	2	7	53.8	7.7	26.9	9	1	11	34.6	3.8	42.3	12	0	9	46.2	0	34.6
4. the place of your residence	6	7	11	23.1	26.9	42.3	11	5	7	42.3	19.2	26.9	12	2	8	46.2	7.7	30.8	15	0	6	57.7	0	23.1

5. your country	4	6	13	15.4	23.1	50	9	3	11	34.6	11.5	42.3	13	3	5	50	11.5	19.2	16	2	3	61.5	7.7	11.5
6. the world	2	13	9	7.7	50	34.6	6	11	7	23.1	42.3	26.9	6	7	9	23.1	26.9	34.6	13	4	5	50	15.4	19.2

Table 5b. How do you think the following will be in ... years compared to the present?

Fields	in 1-5 years						in 5-10 years						in 10-20 years						in 20-50 years					
	answers			%			answers			%			answers			%			answers			%		
	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s
<i>the state of the natural environment of</i>																								
1. yourself	7	10	8	26.9	38.5	30.8	12	7	6	46.2	26.9	23.1	12	6	5	46.2	23.1	19.2	17	4	2	65.4	15.4	7.7
2. your family	8	9	8	30.8	34.6	30.8	11	8	6	42.3	30.8	23.1	12	6	5	46.2	23.1	19.2	16	4	3	61.5	15.4	11.5
3. your friends	7	9	9	26.9	34.6	34.6	12	7	6	46.2	26.9	23.1	14	7	2	53.8	26.9	7.7	15	5	3	57.7	19.2	11.5
4. the place of your residence	6	13	7	23.1	50	26.9	10	7	9	38.5	26.9	34.6	13	7	4	50	26.9	15.4	16	4	4	61.5	15.4	15.4
5. your country	4	12	10	15.4	46.2	38.5	7	9	10	26.9	34.6	38.5	13	5	6	50	19.2	23.1	18	3	3	69.2	11.5	11.5
6. the world	3	19	4	11.5	73.1	15.4	3	17	6	11.5	65.4	23.1	8	11	5	30.8	42.3	19.2	18	4	2	69.2	15.4	7.7

5.2 Do you think ... will be happier compared to the present?

The members of the group are more or less optimistic about future happiness too. On the whole the respondents were optimistic concerning *their own* happiness (the proportion was around 50% all the way except in the very long term when a degree of uncertainty crept in). The same goes for their *partners* and *friends*, though in the latter case there was more uncertainty. (The proportion of improving trends prevails throughout. Only in the last case is it surpassed by the proportion of no change expected.)

In connection with the situation of *parents*, on the contrary, the findings show pessimistic expectations. The happiness of the respondents' parents shows a slight decline in the medium term (first 46%, then 38%), possible improvement in the long term (30%) and is questionable in the very long term (nearly 40% as opposed to 15-19%). This may be put down to age and generation-specific differences.

Respondents showed less interest towards the happiness of their *children* and *grandchildren*. On the whole a high proportion of uncertain answers characterised these questions in all time spans. These trends may be attributed to the age specifics of the respondents, as such questions do not affect as yet quite a lot of the respondents who participated in the survey.

Table 6. Do you think . . . will be happier compared to the present?

Stakeholder	in 1-5 years						in 5-10 years						in 10-20 years						in 20-50 years					
	answers			%			answers			%			answers			%			answers			%		
	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s	b	w	s
1. you	16	2	7	61.5	7.7	26.9	17	2	5	65.4	7.7	19.2	13	3	6	50	11.5	23.1	11	3	8	42.3	11.5	30.8
2. your parents	9	12	4	34.5	46.2	15.4	9	10	5	34.6	38.5	19.2	8	7	6	30.8	26.9	23.1	4	5	10	15.4	19.2	38.5
3. your partner	16	3	5	61.5	11.5	19.2	14	3	6	53.8	11.5	23.1	11	4	7	42.3	15.4	26.9	9	3	9	34.6	11.5	34.6
4. your family	12	2	7	46.2	7.7	26.9	14	2	6	53.8	7.7	23.1	11	2	8	42.3	7.7	30.8	9	1	11	34.6	3.8	42.3
5. your child(ren)	6	2	10	23.1	7.7	38.5	10	2	9	38.5	7.7	34.6	10	2	8	38.5	7.7	30.8	10	1	9	38.5	3.8	34.6
6. your grandchild(ren)	5	1	9	19.2	3.8	34.6	4	2	9	15.4	7.7	34.6	5	2	9	19.2	7.7	34.6	8	1	9	30.8	3.8	34.6
7. your friends	13	3	9	50	11.5	34.6	10	5	9	38.5	19.2	34.6	11	3	9	42.3	11.5	34.6	7	3	13	26.9	11.5	50

6. Summary

The (minute) size of the sampling does not allow the statistical generalisation of conclusions without reservations, and the sampling cannot be considered as representative either, as the respondents were more future-oriented in their way of thinking than the average. These two characteristics exerted considerable and notable influence on the whole survey and its findings. The questionnaire proved to contain both very interesting and unclear questions that deserve further exploration. However, it requires a bigger sample to allow for a more thorough analysis of and possibility to prove the significance of the trends that seem to emerge.

The data show that the group of Budapest Futures Course participants is a quite homogeneous group of people with confidence in, an active attitude and no fear towards the future. They believe they can influence the future more than other people. Those who are older with some working experience have more real hopes, less fears and more confidence in steering their life and influencing the future.

The respondents did not only have a future-oriented way of thinking but were also action-oriented. Success in the future is, for them, a goal to be reached, and they seem to draw up a plan of action in order to achieve it. This is indicated more by the predominance of positive, future-oriented answers (significant majority of *Do* answers as opposed to *Would Do*) than by the negation of negative statements. Other characteristics are age-related. The majority of

the respondents were under 30, and their main features comprised defining objectives to be accomplished and tasks ahead before anything else. Planning to have a family, studying and realising the importance of work as a force building and shaping the future were such examples.

The most ambitious answers emerged in the *yourself* category. This phenomenon can be regarded as quite natural to a certain extent, as everybody views the world around himself through his own personality and considers his own future the most important. By the same token, it may also be the source of the egoism that hallmarks their attitude to the future.

SUPPLEMENT
QUESTIONNAIRE

FUTURE ORIENTATION OF INDIVIDUALS

Budapest Futures Course

August 1999

The respondent's

age:

sex:

profession:

schooling:

working experience (in years):

country:

place of residence (village/small town/city/capital) *Underline where appropriate.*

1. Interest in the future and thinking about the future

1. Why are you interested in the future?

Why do you think other people are interested in the future?

Tick where appropriate. Multiple answers are acceptable.

Reasons	myself	others
1. the wish to know what will happen		
2. influencing the future		
3. uncertainty		
4. fear		
5. trust in future		
6. occupation, work		
7. future of the family and children		
8. overall economic situation of the country		
9. future is the part of human life		
10.the future of humankind		
11.extraterrestrial life		
12.other life		
13.the other world		
14.other, namely . . .		
15.not interested		
16.do not know		

2. Which do you consider to be true of the following statements?

Tick where appropriate.

Statements	totally true	partly true	false rather than true	absolutely not true	do not know
1. I look with confidence into the future					
2. I do not deal with the future because the unexpected events upset my plans					
3. I can hardly influence my fate					
4. When I think about the future, I am seized by fear					
5. My future depends mainly on myself					

3. Do you usually think about what will happen to . . .

Tick where appropriate. Multiple answers are acceptable.

Topics	in 1-5 years	in 5-10 years	in 10-20 years	in 20-50 years
1. yourself				
2. your family				
3. the place of your residence				
4. your country				
5. the world				

II. Activities performed in the interest of the future

1. What do you do or what would you do to better the situation of . . .

Tick where appropriate. Multiple answers are acceptable.

Activities	in 1-5 years		in 5-10 years		in 10-20 years		in 20-50 years	
	do	would do	do	would do	do	would do	do	would do
<i>yourself</i>								
1. study								
2. work								
3. save money								
4. accumulate wealth								
5. take out an insurance policy								
6. preserve your own health								
7. develop your personality								
8. create social connections								
9. pray, meditate								
10.do not do anything								
<i>your family</i>								
1. produce funds								
2. give children an education								
3. bring up children morally								
4. take out an insurance policy								
5. create social connections								
6. do not do anything								

Activities	in 1-5 years		in 5-10 years		in 10-20 years		in 20-50 years	
	do	would do	do	would do	do	would do	do	would do
<i>the place of your residence</i>								
1. work								
2. study								
3. help others								
4. generate community life								
5. protect and save the environment of your residence								
6. influence others' value preferences								
7. participate in movements								
8. pay tax								
9. contribute to the peaceful coexistence in the place of residence								
10.support the welfare aims and their realization								
11.do not do anything								

Activities	in 1-5 years		in 5-10 years		in 10-20 years		in 20-50 years	
	do	would do	do	would do	do	would do	do	would do
<i>your country</i>								
1. work								
2. study								
3. help others								
4. generate community life								
5. protect and save the environment								
6. influence others' value preferences								
7. participate in movements								
8. pay tax								
9. contribute to the social peace								
10. support the welfare aims								
11. do not do anything								

Activities	in 1-5 years		in 5-10 years		in 10-20 years		in 20-50 years	
	<i>do</i>	<i>would do</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>would do</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>would do</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>would do</i>
<i>the world</i>								
1. work								
2. study								
3. help others								
4. generate community life								
5. protect and save the environment								
6. influence others' value preferences								
7. participate in movements								
8. support the peace and the welfare aims								
9. do not do anything								

III. Expectations for the future

1. How do you think the following will be in . . . years compared to the present?

Tick where appropriate.

Fields	in 1-5 years			in 5-10 years			in 10-20 years			in 20-50 years		
	<i>better</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>better</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>better</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>better</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>same</i>
<i>the financial situation of</i>												
1. yourself												
2. your family												
3. your friends												
4. the place of your residence												
5. your country												
6. the world												

Fields	in 1-5 years			in 5-10 years			in 10-20 years			in 20-50 years		
	<i>better</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>better</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>better</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>better</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>same</i>
<i>the social situation of</i>												
1. yourself												
2. your family												
3. your friends												
4. the place of your residence												
5. your country												
6. the world												

Fields	in 1-5 years			in 5-10 years			in 10-20 years			in 20-50 years		
	<i>better</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>better</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>better</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>same</i>	<i>better</i>	<i>worse</i>	<i>same</i>
<i>the state of the natural environment of</i>												
1. yourself												
2. your family												
3. your friends												
4. the place of your residence												
5. your country												
6. the world												

2. Do you think . . . will be happier compared to the present?

Tick where appropriate.

Stakeholders	in 1-5 years			in 5-10 years			in 10-20 years			in 20-50 years		
	yes	no	do not know	yes	no	do not know	yes	no	do not know	yes	no	do not know
1. you												
2. your parents												
3. your partner												
4. your family												
5. your child(ren)												
6. your grandchild(ren)												
7. your friends												

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

© Hideg, Nováky, 1999

CULTURE AND FUTURE ORIENTATION

AN ORGANISATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Simone Arnaldi

Jacques Maritain International Institute, Italy

Introduction

Future Orientation (FO) is closely linked to foresight, the latter defined by literature as the universal capacity of human beings to look forward into the future. In a sense, FO enables human beings' thinking of the future (Hideg, Nováky, 1999) and, as a consequence, it is as universal as foresight. However, its characteristics are not universal, but influenced by specific cultures and by individual perspectives onto cultural patterns of a given society (Hannerz, 1992). Culture is here defined very broadly as the organised set of meanings (symbols and values) of a given social system. Thus, it is necessary to analyse these influences and their effects on FO of individuals and social groups.

1. Definition and cultural dimensions of FO

FO is defined as “the characteristic and the capacity, unique to human beings, which enable thinking to be regulated not only by the past and the present but also to reflect continuously assumptions and expectations about regarding the future”. It expresses the human attitude to the future (Hideg, Nováky, 1999, 17).

The usefulness of this concept in futures research is the measurability of its dimensions. These can be defined both in terms of quantity and quality. From the quantitative point of view, people thinks about the future in terms of both spatial and temporal dimensions and consequently people's FO can be detected in terms of time span (how far people looks into

the future) and space (how wide is people's area of interest for the future: local, regional, national, global level). From the qualitative one, future can be represented in term of alternatives with respect to the present or to different possible futures (the basic level is the capacity of considering the futures as better, worse than or the same as the present), depending on individual expectations and assumptions.

The mix of qualitative and quantitative characteristics that is FO, is a "person- and culture-specific phenomenon" (Hideg, Nováky, 1999). It is hence necessary an investigation on the driving forces shaping a given form of FO, which don't rely only on culture, but also on different individual factors (biological, physical, psychological) and which are not only passively accepted by people, but are reprocessed by them. It is important to state that these influences have consequences both on the passive dimension of FO (thinking of the future) and the active one (acting in the interest of the future).

2. Influencing factors of FO. Individual and social perspectives

The effort of this paragraph is to identify these factors by using future concepts. On the one hand, we cannot avoid to consider Fred Polak's paradigm of Image of the Future (Polak, 1973). Images are related to historical situations, beliefs and desires and they are created by a the "dynamic process of continuous interaction" (Polak, 1973, 235) between culture and society. Therefore, we can assume that images are culturally produced and individuals have a mainly passive role in receiving them, as far as they propose, and impose, pre-determined models of behaviour and thinking. One remark is necessary: even if images are passively determined, they are still images of the future. In other words, they are future oriented and they influence FO both in quantitative and qualitative terms (e.g. images are inventories of the expectations shared by a culture and the social system and related to or by the codified set of values and symbols about the future of a society).

On the other, individual thoughts and actions don't repeat continuously the socio-cultural routines identified by images. There is room for differences and distinctions. As a matter of fact, people can act accordingly to their own visions of the future. Vision reintroduces the active polarity in determining FO and represents the futures people envisage on the basis of

an internalised, which means actively reprocessed, system of values (Masini, 1999, 1983) characterising any existential project. However, values in vision do not play an unconditioned role, they are evaluated critically in respect to the real world (Masini, 1993). Therefore, in the visioning approach, there is firstly of all the awareness of the influence of culture on individual normative and cognitive structures.

This awareness is the base for the existence of a feedback from individual vision to collective images. In different words, individuals learn from their existential projects and modify images proposed by culture and society and behavioural routines, ideas, symbols, values represented in them. Through conscious and unconscious learning, individuals can develop their own FO that can be considered eventually as person-specific.

3. Organisations as socio-cultural actors: do they have a FO?

FO, as a characteristic of human beings, is both of individuals and social groups. Sociology defines organisations as social groups. Therefore, at a first glance, they can be assumed to have a FO as a collective entity. Furthermore, by definition, organisations are future oriented, as far as they have strategic orientation, because “strategy and strategic decisions are temporally implicit – a strategy is, after all, a plan which is designed to affect the future” (Brown, Herring, 1998).

This definition is correct and organisations can easily be seen as having a specific FO. However, it is important to apply the considerations developed in the previous paragraphs to this new perspective: both FO and organisations are culturally determined in their forms (Griswold, 1997; Crane, 1994; Alvesson, Berg, 1993; Hofstede, 1991); organisations are, in this perspective, not only social, but also cultural actors. Therefore, we can extend the processes characterising the individual level (imaging, visioning, learning) to the organisational one.

As a matter of fact, organisations have their own images of the future, which is developed through the organisational culture. However, it is more correct to consider organisations as the *locus* not of one shared culture, but of the interaction of different cultures. In Hofstede’s

words, the two interacting dimensions are national and organisational cultures (Hofstede, 1991); from a wider point of view, Alvesson and Berg speak of several organisational cultures interacting among them and with national cultures (Alvesson, Berg, 1993); Holstius and Törnroos highlights the role of the cultural environment of business operations, focusing on business culture (Holstius, Törnroos, 1994) interpreted as the rules of the game for companies. The plurality of cultural systems involved interacts with the particular nature of the organisations which are not simply communities (*Gemeinschaft*), but also enterprises or a different type of activity aiming to success (*Gesellschaft*) with specific missions and specific structural settings to accomplish to these mission (Alvesson, Berg, 1993). In conclusion, organisations' attitude to the future, their FO, is influenced both in terms of time (Brown, Herring, 1998; Hardaker, Sweeny, 1994), space (Scott, 1994) but also alternative representations of the future and alternative actions and positions.

Nevertheless, organisations undertake also complex strategic management processes, which involve a conscious and active effort to reshape their position and form in the future. In so far, they do not only receive images of the future, but they do create visions. To a certain extent, strategy itself can be considered as a vision implemented through long-term policies (the “existential projects” of organisations).

As for individuals, here images and visions interact: routines are changed and they are replaced by different ones. It is a learning process, where the visualised perceptions of the environment and its challenges are proactively modified and adapted to the new strategic perspective. In conclusion, FO is modified by learning in organisations too.

4. Organisations, FO and educational system

Finally, we will briefly explore here the consequences of this model on the FO of members and clients of organisations, the latter being the person or organisation as well that receives advices or services from them. This relation is particularly important in organisations in general and, in particular, those involved in cultural production and transmission or education, both at formal and informal level.

The starting point is the characterisation of organisations as cultural actors. We focussed on how they are culturally shaped, but we omitted how they can produce and transmit cultures.

Implicitly, we recognise the capacity of producing culture introducing the concept of learning. Concerning transmission, Hannerz proposes an institutional model based on four dimensions: forms of life, regime, market, movements (Hannerz, 1992). Respectively, they represent individual interaction; the management of meanings undertaken by organisational forms on the basis of concentrated, acknowledged power; the *locus* where cultural commodities are moved; the bottom-up social activities aiming to a change in commonly shared culture.

It is easy to detect how organisations deal directly with the three former dimensions. Firstly, unequal distribution of power in the organisational structure permits the transmission of a particular perspective on culture as a matter for general consumption (top-down transmission). Secondly, organisations produce goods and services that are culturally relevant as far as “in complex societies, the functioning of commodities leaves increasingly room to their meaning” (Scannagatta, 1992). Thirdly, forms of life can profoundly be influenced by organisational environment and climate (e.g. hierarchy can be reinforced through reducing the chances of meeting between managers and employees). The conclusion is that organisations are powerful culture-shapers and culturally determined characteristics of members and clients’ FO can be altered.

These categories are affected at different degrees, depending on the different dimensions of cultural transmission involved in the process. In the educational system, clients of educational organisation are interested by the three together and at a high degree. Firstly, products *do not carry* a cultural meaning, but *they are* cultural meanings. Secondly, organised social interaction in schools and educational organisations is particularly important as far as it takes place in the key years of the building of individual worldviews. Thirdly, regime is applied to students-clients in so far they are very similar to a sort of internal client and then more strictly subject to the rules governing organisational behaviour. Being FO homogeneous in quality to the other cultural patterns of a given social groups, it is affected by this situation too.

As a consequence, especially in the educational field, it is not enough that organisations move future-oriented products (e.g. future-oriented courses) but they have to establish a future-oriented “regime”, in Hannerz’s words, which means a set of rules stimulating FO (e.g. modifying learning processes and tools). However, the latter is not sufficient without the former. Both are influenced and influence the forms of life in the educational organisations.

5. Conclusion

This last paragraph does not propose a conclusion to an analysis that needs a much deeper level of investigation, but, on the contrary, the aim is suggesting a possible consequence of what has been briefly explained.

If the FO of individuals is influenced by that of organisations they are members or clients, then it seems plausible that a higher degree in individual FO is reachable only in respect to comparable degree of organisational FO.

The provisional proposal seems to be that organisations have to be considered globally, not only as a social set for secondary socialisation, but also with specific reference to their role in cultural production and transmission. FO can be improved only if individuals are considered interacting with the organisational environment and their relation with organisations as a constituent factor of the making of a person- and culture-specific future orientation.

References

1. ALVESSON, M., BERG, P. O., *L'organizzazione e i suoi simboli*. Milano, Cortina, 1993 [*Corporate Culture and Organizational Symbolism*, Berlin, Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1992]
2. MASINI, B. E., Rethinking Futures Studies. In: Sardar Z. (ed.) *Rescuing all our futures*, Twickenham, Adamantine Press Limited, 1999
3. MASINI, B. E., *Why futures studies?* Gray Seal Books, London, 1993

4. MASINI, B. E., *Introduction* in Barbieri Masini E. (ed.) *Visions of desirable societies*. Pergamon Press, London, 1983
5. BROWN, B. R., HERRING R., The circles of time. An exploratory study in measuring temporal perceptions within organizations. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 13 (8), August, 1998
6. CRANE, D. (ed), *The sociology of culture. Emerging theoretical perspectives*. Basil Blackwell, Cambridge, 1994
7. GRISWOLD W., *Sociologia della cultura*. Bologna, Il Mulino, 1997 [*Cultures and Societies in a Changing World*] Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, 1994]
8. HANNERZ, U., *Cultural Complexity*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1992
9. HIDEG, É., NOVÁKY, E., *Factual and methodological experience probing future orientation in modern and late modern societies, especially the case of Hungary*. Paper presented at the first Budapest Futures Course, Budapest, August, 1999. See in this volume, p. 17.
10. HOFSTEDE , G., *Cultures and organizations. Software of the mind*. McGraw-Hill, London, 1991
11. HOLSTIUS, K., TÖRNROOS, J.-å., *Cultural issues in international business operations: business culture and industry culture*. Research Report (30), Lappeenranta University of Technology, Department of Industrial Engineering and Management, 1990
12. POLAK , F., *The Image of the Future*. Elsevier, Amsterdam, 1973
13. SCANNAGATTA, S., *Plurality and subjective territories*. In: Crespi F. (ed.), *Social Action and cultural plurality*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 1992 [In Italian: Scannagatta S., *Pluralità e territori soggettivi* in Crespi F. (ed.), *Azione sociale e pluralità culturale*. Milano, Franco Angeli]
14. SCOTT, R. W., *Le organizzazioni*. Bologna, Il Mulino, 1994 [*Organizations. Rational, Natural and Open Systems*, Englewood Cliffs, Sage Publications, London, 1992]
15. SWEENEY, E. P., HARDAKER, G., The Importance of Organizational and National Culture. *European Business Review*, 1994 (5), pp. 3-14.

THE YOUTH AND THEIR RESPONSIBLES FOR THE FUTURE

Mária Kalas Kőszegi

World Futures Studies Federation

*Systematic preparing, responsible life leads to
a less selfish society – through generations.*

Each society comprises generations, however, the shaping of future *in co-operation with* the more experienced generations is in the hand of youth. This also means, that *it is always the youth*, who will *primarily* be responsible for the society of the future.

What makes a difference between the youth of today and the youth of the past centuries is that in our present technically and socially accelerated world the youth have an opportunity to take part in the formation of their future at an earlier stage and on wider grounds. This earlier joining in requires increasingly early *preparedness*, owing to the fact that this unique opportunity must be accompanied by *responsibility*.

Responsibility is a very important thing: it is always above and around us, even if written down, verbally expressed or unexpressed. People cannot be without responsibility the difference between individuals is only that the extent of the sense of responsibility varies depending on age and social position.

Further on, due to the lack of time, this paper is going to discuss only one segment of this huge topic, and namely that *how an intellectual young woman or man should prepare* for a responsible life to create a *less selfish society* than today. And this aim, in this turbulent, competing and information-ruled world is becoming even more complex.

Preparation on the other hand requires increasingly great speed from youngsters of today, ever wider and more thorough knowledge and ability. Patient learning and attention are inevitable to the acquisition of above, however, the *acceptance of the experience of preceding generations also plays an essential role*.

This lecture addresses such young people, who are although adults, start real adulthood only now, and have already become responsible for themselves and for their future. For the earliest successful attainment of the above, this study endeavours to detail some experience-based advice and thoughts – for thinking over.

Every person is responsible – in accordance with his age and social position:

- for himself (for the bodily and mental health, for his conduct etc.);
- for his erudition (to meet self- and life-set expectancies);
- for own decisions (for the small or important decisions brought in the narrower or broader milieu, or for nation-wide decisions);
- for the family (to perform everyday tasks in a harmonic family circle);
- for the children (for own children and in general for the upcoming generations);
- and so on.

This may seem to be a great burden, but it will become a routine task, if the youngster, heading for life, gradually prepares for it.

How can a young man prepare for a happy and a responsible person to become?

First of all good health is unavoidable. Be:

- physically trained;
- mentally balanced;
- free from deleterious passions;
- rational in conduct and time-scheduling;
- as much as possible: vital and youthful.

It is quite a sad thing, that in our “modern” world we have to devote special attention to the health condition of the youth. The requirement of “*mens sana in corpore sano*” takes a first place all over the world.

1. Mens sana in corpore sano

In our days it is an increasing requirement on behalf of employers, and business partners that their employee or partner or the internationally mobile persons should be healthy, good looking and vital. This is true for men and women, too. But, at the same time, our lives, and especially those of the young, of the studying youth are lacking physical training. They sit by books or by the screen 6-8 hours a day regularly. They live quite unhealthily, especially if we take into consideration the unaided discotheques.

Those who have undergone a selection for a job at a larger company or perhaps at a foreign-controlled (or multinational) company, not mentioning international organisations, is already aware, how thorough pre-employment medical examination is carried out before admission. At several companies those persons are not admitted who smoke, or are visibly ill, or on whom the sign of drug addiction can be detected (it is visible even in case of a little dose), employers do not even continue interviewing if they experience such a case. The situation is similar if sending on a mission abroad is in question. Heavy drinking will generally come about later, but even in young ages one has to prepare for being able to say no when offered a drink, in a way that nobody should be hurt.

Physical training does not necessarily require a sports ground, although it is more effective and enjoyable working out in a group. The United States of America can be set as an example, where everything is taken more seriously, if it is related to health. Campaigns are also effective, if they are convincing, so the number of smokers dropped; or just consider the great number of joggers of all ages in the streets and parks at any hour. It would be worth to popularise this habit everywhere. Even for the African runners it is not the tracks of stadiums where they run for the first time, and it is obligatory for the American students to pursue a sport as well.

We have to speak about the recent killer of youth, which has been spreading these days: the drugs, which gradually destroy mental ability of the youth. By the time a young person would start “proving”, he will have already been ruined mentally. It is inexplicable, why several talented young men allow themselves to be killed. It will be a tragedy, if the body will not be able to keep pace with the efforts of the learned spirit, however, the speeding up

pace must be “endured” physically, too. *Do not forget:* everybody should bear responsibility for himself! Do not start using drugs!

It is a universal truth: if you are healthy, everything is possible, the world is open to you – just do not miss your chance!

2. First steps

2.1 Get to know all situations that are important FOR YOU, learn the expectations, and evolving opportunities

Every youngster has a notion about becoming an adult, which may change with the passing of time, and in fact, changes for the several impacts of the environment. The optimum case will be that, however, if he can realise childhood dreams in his adulthood, and can prepare for it with the help of his parents and teachers.

A successful and happy person considers his work also a hobby, because he is doing what he likes. But if it is not so: *we must like* what we are doing, furthermore: *we must like what we have to do*. The negative feeling due to “I have to” will sooner disappear this way, and we can finish our work sooner, with less efforts. If you gain information about your possibilities in due time and thoroughly, you will face less difficulties at the start of your “adulthood”. First try to find out everything about your environment: about the domestic labour demand and the domestic and foreign working opportunities, and within it, the requirements and expectations. For instance: find out what professional targets; what requirements are set towards special knowledge, general intelligence, languages, health condition and outlook. In the course of gathering information *do not miss any details, that are important for you*. Collect your questions beforehand, be logic and clear.

The most important for a youngster is not to start on a narrow professional path, but on a wider field of interest and abilities. In such a manner not only greater knowledge will be acquired by the young person, but his mobility will also be assured. And if it comes to

changing the field and place of work, it would cause less difficulty, than in case of an extremely specialised knowledge or field of activity. E.g. if somebody would like to work on international grounds (which is occurring increasingly frequently) he should be familiar with the international law, external trade, international finances, world economy analysis etc. These skills may come handy in his work. But we could find several other good examples for technical-, agrarian-, natural scientific, cultural and health care fields, too. *To make a good decision, you have to know yourself and your abilities well.*

2.2 *Get to know yourself*

In order to be able to avoid disappointments in life – which threatens everybody – you have to be capable of looking honestly in yourself: what is it that you know, what is it that you are capable of – and what *will you be capable* of in life with constant learning, uninterrupted taking part in education? To this you will have to know what expectations you will have to face in the family and in the society in your youth and later, and how these conditions may change in the course of time.

“Perfectness” does not exist, but to *strive for perfectness* is not only the commitment, but it goes in the interest of all young people. Expectations towards the youth of today and of the near future are multiplying, of which I mention only some. *The youth of future should be:* educated, scholarly, well-informed, curious, clever, innovative, target-oriented, creative, ambitious, good contact-creator, healthy, good looking, but we might as well mention humbleness, good manners, sense of humour and what should never be left out of consideration: honesty and sense of responsibility. These qualities, especially in case of distinguished work places, or other working connections are vital. The more a young person would acquire from these, the more successful his life will become. To become capable of meeting the requirements mentioned above, a young person ought to prepare regularly, starting from the early teen years.

Some methods how to start preparation, without regard to importance. It is advisable:

- *to organise time-schedule well;*
- *to spend leisure time rationally* for learning, further-studying, self-education, sports (moving);

- *to prepare for duties*, which shall have to be faced at the first appointment for employment;
- *to select a sensible company*, where youngsters cultivate each-other thus increasing the ability to express themselves more sophisticatedly;
- *to join special clubs, self-training clubs* according to their fields of interest;
- *to attend theatres, concerts*, where it is necessary to *dress to the event*;
- to enter into connection with *specialists of his own field of interest, if possible*, with older, more experienced adults (eventually from the workplace, where the school compulsory practice took place);
- *to practice the foreign language*, as much as possible, even when “relaxing”, to listen to texts, songs from nicely articulating singers etc. It is also useful, whenever they have an opportunity to think in a foreign language. You can expect ENORMOUS RESULTS.

You have to know also what you are not capable of doing and what you are not going to be ready to do, out of those capacities you would normally need to your profession, and also what you miss from your own plans. You have to think out a definite notion, how to make up for what has been missed, to eliminate its pressing you.

One more remark to add here. You inevitably have to detect from yourself what you are most suitable for through your giftedness: becoming a (public service) civilian employee (in an office, in a bank etc.) or becoming an entrepreneur. In between these two fields there stands the “creative” employee, who has independent ideas, and can realise them successfully, because of having the rights to make own decisions. This way he can implement his ideas and may become happy in life, who is also honoured.

Nevertheless, the *researcher-type of person* has also to be mentioned. There is an ever-increasing demand for this type, but research work requires obsession and endurance, owing to the fact that it does not belong to the best-paid employment – in numerous countries.

If you are aware of all the abovesaid, you can avoid many disappointments. Not everybody was born a genius, but everybody can be clever, hard-working and skilled, and everybody has to be good at or preferably the best in what he has chosen and is capable of. Making use of the expanding learning possibilities and enlarging knowledge lifelong will make one

remain the useful member of his profession.

To become successful and capable to carry out responsible work within your profession, you need to have a wide range of knowledge *besides* your specialisation.

2.3 To learn your own country

In line with the increasingly strict professional requirements, you have to respond to ever more questions concerning your native country. If you want to become an acknowledged member of the society, you have to know your country well. Foreign partners expect it increasingly. They will accept you in proportion to your knowing the past, present and future of your country.

Studies to be made are the following *in outlines*:

Economy	Society	Culture
Structure	Structure	Education
Economic policy	Employment	History
Finance	Income	Famous scientist
External economic relations	Health care	Famous citizens
•	Politics	Touristics sights
•	•	Folk culture
•	•	•

What is worth to know about the above topics: present state, the trend, antecedents, difficulties, opportunities, prospects etc.

It is necessary to be well informed *in general*, but in your specific areas *especially*. A remark

should be added hereto: it is a fatal mistake, if somebody would play being “well informed” or would wish to gain advantage through the revelation of misinterpretable information. If it left only the person in question in shame, it was not such a great problem, but it may cause a great problem, if the misinterpretable or ungrounded statement is made by a high positioned person or in international environment.

2.4 Get to know the world

In our world of widening horizon increasingly broad knowledge of the international background is required from us on almost all territories of life. This is even so, if our specialisation does not require comprehensive international knowledge, but whenever speaking to a foreign partner, the level of being informed always comes to surface. A discussion will take a turn immediately, if there arises a topic of common interest to debate. And it is all the more successful, the more we know about each other’s country and about the world.

The initial steps of orientation must be followed by *deliberate acquisition of knowledge*.

The main areas in short:

- tendencies in the world economy;
- interaction of world market tendencies;
- world market competition (primarily: USA-Europe-{EU}-Asia);
- regions and their features;
- the specific analysis of ”little tigers” and other “outstanding countries”;
- the situation, outlooks and future of the developing world;
- the impact of short and long-term world market tendencies on the economy of your own country;
- the comprehensive knowledge of major countries etc.

In our days it is bearing an increasing importance along with the economic one, to acquire broad knowledge on the achievements and *phenomena of the society, culture and science* as well. In whatever profession we may be engaged, we cannot dispense with the acquisition of

new results, however, it may come very handy if we strengthen our knowledge with other fields, too. Familiarity with politics belongs here as well.

To acquire all this information is not difficult in our days, it is not even necessary to list the innumerable opportunities, and one should only make good use of them. Today the only task is to classify the already possessed information and to find those ones, which are important for me in the sequence I need.

3. Information, information base

To say and write the truth – is valid not only for our work but for all territories of life, and this is facilitated by the use of *overall acceptable sources*. Besides officially published (statistical) yearbooks and journals containing *basic information*, today controlled information bases on the electronic worldwide web are also available for us. To carry out *thorough research work* it is advisable to use the publications of the respective country, but in case of regions or international comparisons, they are the compilations of international organisations that are good to use.

If the information derives from a secondary source, it is *indispensable* for me to indicate it in my work, to avoid an eventual inconvenience, which may be due to my being misinformed. In our information-ruled society it is of secondary importance what the type of my computer is, but *the quality of information* that I am using is important, and that whether my work-base comprises all information, necessary for a comprehensive *reliable* analysis, indispensable to back-up a decision or *only* to argue successfully. It is strongly advised – in some cases it is mandatory – to mention or to mark the source(s) of the information applied in your work.

A reliable database, completed with non-numerical information base is becoming the A to Z of a successful operation.

3.1 Characteristics of reliable information

Updated information is indispensable especially on those areas, where “mobility” is present, or “movement” can be expected. An extremely extraordinary mistake can be made by using an “expired” data as a fresh one. It is also an irresponsible attitude to replace an actual data with preestimated figures. If the expected latest information is not available, or if estimation is made, it should *inevitably* be indicated to which period the respective information relates, and what is the reliability of my estimation. If we fail to do so, it may lead not only to grave economic consequences, but also to losing creditability, or becoming ridiculous.

Serious scientific research, just like business and company activities cannot be without the possibly latest information.

The comparability of information is a basic requirement at making any comparisons. Even if a single (data) information is used, I have to know its methodology and contents. But if two or more figures are compared, or just lined up, special attention has to be devoted to their comparability *by contents*. A fault may be fatal, causing considerable financial and moral loss, if somebody uses figures or information without knowing its real contents. The fault will be multiplied if the same is done in international comparison. To know the contents of the information is excessively important in those cases when data are revealed or published in press from a higher position or exposed place.

3.2 The advantage of knowing reliable sources

Those who know the sources of new and reliable data or of other non-numerical information may acquire great advantages. In research works, as well as in the preparation of decisions and for policy makers it is becoming ever more necessary to “possess” sources which communicate the most authentic and up-to-date information. It is advisable, however, – if we have the opportunity – to *make logical control*, too, owing to the fact that information deriving from different sources may diverge, and the *user will not be relieved from responsibility*. The increasing number of data-banks, naturally, reduce our problems concerning data-storage, however, it is necessary to classify them according to reliability in methodological respect and whether these data are comparable with “identical” data of other

sources.

Summing it up: always that one is the winner, who has the *proper* information in hand *in due time*.

4. Geographical knowledge

Today the geographical knowledge is expected from even persons of average cultural level, but it is excessively valid for exposed jobs, i.e. professorships, high positions or jobs with international relations. Successful international economic work, diplomacy or any negotiations cannot do without thorough knowledge of economic geography. Should any international issue arise, verbally or in writing, we have to be capable of placing it in space. It is not necessary, however, it could be lengthily detailed, how relieving it could be, if we ourselves are able to control the new information immediately. It is not worth mentioning the situation, when “proof is given” to our discussing partner about geographical ignorance. Several thousand examples could be listed here about ignorance, which may occur primarily with “learned” men of other continents, too.

If it is about the meeting of business partners, the success of concluding business may depend on whether we know the geography of our partner country, and our chances there, to use the comparative advantages of the two countries, our competitors’ activity there, that is the past, present and prognosable future of our discussing partner’s external relations.

Summing it up in brief: geographical knowledge will be only an asset to all researchers, businessmen, or even politicians, on the reverse: its lack may cause extraordinary financial and moral failure. The latter can regularly be witnessed by the sensitive ear, and it is sad to experience how utterly neglected the once so much honoured branch of knowledge became. The computer cannot replace it, it is good only for learning, *since the most important geographical knowledge must be kept permanently in mind*. This statement relates both to the relatively constant and to the variable factors. (New name of a country, of a capital city, or even the new constitutional form etc.)

Especially firm knowledge can be acquired by travelling. For thousand years the irreplaceable way of information acquisition has been the *personal impression gaining*. Its practicability stands for both to domestic and to international relations. Everybody can verify it that want to see and not to look only. In order to gather the deepest possible knowledge, *one has to prepare for the journey*. If the preparation embraces climate, economy, culture and everyday life, including lifestyle of different social classes, their traditions, religious and ethic habits (perhaps negative phenomena as well) we shall gain abundant knowledge, which nobody can take away.

It would be worth for all youngsters to save money while young and healthy (if scholarship or other financial backing is not available) and travel around the country and the world as long as health and work facilitate. This is the most pleasant way of acquiring knowledge, and if possible it is advisable to visit countries of *different cultures*. It is going to be splendid! It should not be added how great results can be achieved in learning and practising languages in course of travelling.

5. Command of languages

In recent days the greatest drawback of intelligentsia may be the lack of knowing languages. Especially in the case of such little countries, whose mother tongue is not a universal language, great efforts have to be made by both the politicians of education and the students – even in the postgradual stage to make up for the deficiency. It is well known, that learning languages is the most successful if studying begins in the early childhood. In several, farsighted countries teaching of languages starts already in kindergarten age, in a playful manner, and then followed by the high level education of several languages. This is a most characteristic of those countries, which are rich, but whose languages are spoken only on ex-colonies in a slackening number. To know other foreign languages is necessary even there, where the population's mother tongue is a universal language; the only advantage is that they do not need to learn it, like in other countries, and in the international life this language can come in handy.

Nevertheless the world has opened up, and expectations towards languages are becoming

manifold. Even in our private lives it is becoming increasingly important to know “other” languages, but considerable employers, multinational companies and international organisations require the high command of *several foreign languages* or at least the medium stage good command of a foreign language. Manifold command of languages does not only increase our prestige, but it may be very useful at private informal chats, and bring experience. Important things may have a positive outcome in course of such discussions, or we may find friends.

If we do not want to get into an awkward situation not only abroad, but also during international discussions at home, it is very important to be cautious with the “misinterpreted” words. Such a fault may have serious economic and/or political consequences. If necessary an interpreter should also be at hand. This causes less inconvenience, than an irreparable mistake. It should be set as TARGET for a youngster to become able to carry on negotiations on his own in *command of a foreign language* and the field of specialisation as soon as possible.

6. Responsibility for the social environment

The young intelligentsia of today, who are the subject of this short paper, will get to mostly such positions, where as a beginner employee will become a chief within short. The youth of today – in general – can come up to the modern requirements sooner, than their conservative predecessors. This young person bears extremely high responsibility. However clever and skilled he may be, he will not be capable of retaining his career, when becoming conceited. Even at the stage of being a “colleague” he has to learn how to treat people, to get to know them, and to learn how to become a boss, to create an example to follow.

It must not be left out of consideration, that competition is growing for jobs. There will come new colleagues, who may be even better than him. Only those can preserve their attained position who can meet professional and human requirements simultaneously.

6.1 Responsibility for the family

Time flies, the young man marries, establishes a family, i.e. becomes a “real adult”. With this act the circle of responsibility of the young couple widens with a not easy but marvellous field, the “Responsibility *for the own family*”.

The formation of a harmonic family life depends on the common will of a young girl and boy, for which both have to prepare for years. The *real* family life is not ‘living together’ but the common decision about the most personal future, i.e. to establish an own independent HOME, and to live together till the end of times for better for worse, to bring up their children together. It is a lucky situation, if there is a “good example” before them taken from home, because they have had the chance to learn all what is necessary in life, almost unperceived in adolescence. To solve family tasks will primarily be eased by selecting their partner for life in a way, that they should rely on that they will be able to tackle the forthcoming (any kind of) difficulties *together* in understanding and love. The couples ‘living together’ are less suitable for these tasks. Several famous people have announced the importance of a balanced family background, and this is what can grant safe progress in the career and assures (worldwide) success and nice, long life.

If we consider responsibility of families by age groups, then two main age-groups can be distinguished, i.e. the responsibility of *Adults* and that of the growing *Youth*, which is naturally different in the same era.

6.2 Responsibility of adults

6.2.1 The responsibility of parents

Out of the manifold responsibilities existing in the world, the greatest and most versatile is the responsibility of parents, and first of all of the mother. Naturally the father’s responsibility is not less, but it is different.

The responsibility of the mother. The role of the mother will be decisive for the whole life of the child, for his physical and mental development, from several aspects. A child’s life starts with conception, but the role of a real mother starts already then, when agreeing with her husband to bear a child. In the period of “expectancy” a responsible mother does not drink

alcohol, does not smoke, and drugs should not even come in question here. But, unfortunately, such cases frequently occur, and malformations in new-born infants are high in number. It is not good either for the child or for the family, not mentioning the society. And if the child has been born, the baby should be breast-fed for as long as possible, owing to the fact that no kind of substitute can replace mother's milk. The sensibly fed child from the start will be more resistant all over his life, will not suffer from illnesses and will be happy.

The responsibility of the father exists already during pregnancy, because the mother's rest has to be assured. She is yearning for tenderness, for making common preparations, even though the newcomer is not the first child in the family.

The responsibility of parents will not be reduced even later, the child has to be accompanied as long as not becoming an adult. In this period their responsibility is common, that is they have to bring up their child in harmony, and that is how they can become a "Real Mother" and a "Real Father".

Paternal home plays an important role in a person's life. The everyday life at home may become an example for his own family life; the behaviour of parents with each other, taking care of grand-parents, opinions on values, and the general ethic concept of the parents, nevertheless, how material or non-material difficulties are treated.

The '*big family*' is unfortunately becoming a rare phenomenon in our recent society, although here the child can see manifold examples, normally good examples, but even if some bad ones, he will be able to draw consequences earlier. In big families the practical distribution of responsibility can be formed, tasks have to be organised, and this is an excellent example for the youth in the organisation of his school-life and work.

To learn the capabilities of a child is one of the most important areas of parental responsibility, that is the recognition of a child's abilities from physical and mental point of view as well. That is what time has to be devoted for! If the home atmosphere is good, this happens unperceived, and not through "sitting down" with him. Recognition requires high sensibility, because a parent has to be able to decide when to MAKE ADJUSTMENTS in his child's behaviour, or in distorting inclinations. The aim has to be to recognise in time the

arousing interest and abilities of the child and to pave the way for him to perform them successfully.

A friend, the circle of friends, exercise increasingly great (good or bad) influence on the adolescent youth in our fashionable world of “single child” and busy parents. Although a child can select his friend on his own, but – opinions may vary – parents still have the responsibility to back up their children even in this important ‘taking a direction’, but no way in a direct form. A *good friendship* lasting lifetime is a real wealth!

Brothers. The advantages of having a brother or sister is indescribable, and especially if there are more. It has already been proved, and also everybody can experience it, that *somebody may become much more selfish if growing up in a family without brothers*, where he was always in the middle, and he did not need to share his toys, and later his properties with anybody, and the love of parents, which he was receiving alone. It can grant a great strength for life if having brothers or sisters (disregarding from some bad examples). It is good to know, that if anything could happen, there is somebody to rely on.

That is incomprehensible that exactly in those families, where the material background is assured, the number of children drastically drops. This shows, that childbearing is not a question of money. The medical reason of course can always be accepted.

Atomic families. In our days regrettably “co-habiting partnership” is getting more widespread instead of conclusion of a marriage, that is splitting for atoms. In such families either there is no child, or if there is, he will finally – very often – grow up in a broken family or in children’s homes. This is by all means against nature, causing spiritual wound to children, coupled with the feeling of missing for a whole life – not going into details about the behavioural deformations. Such parents have ENORMOUS responsibility!

Desertion, divorce is what should not be left out of consideration, owing to the fact that the number of divorces alarmingly increases. The young or middle-aged parents are increasingly impatient towards each other, which is not good for the child. Greater awareness of responsibility should prevail in marriages with a child in the case of growing number of careless divorces and “separations”.

Undesired child will be the result of the common irresponsibility of girls and boys. Today a great number of modern protective instruments are available for the youth, and yet the number of induced abortions is very high. There are different habits and opinions by social groups about the starting of sexual life in young ages. Induced abortion causes mental and bodily harm, and in several cases the later desired child will be bodily and/or mentally malformed. Regrettably the number of such cases increases within slackening total birth. This is not good for anyone.

6.2.2 *The role of the pedagogue*

The role of a pedagogue in a child's life is not less than that of parents, his responsibility in the mental and physical development of the child is almost equivalent, from kindergarten to the university. The pedagogue and parents have to *co-operate* – this is of vital importance. *Permanent contact* to discuss questions concerning the child is important, because that is the way that unfavourable influences can be eliminated and favourable ones encouraged.

Pedagogues not only transmit knowledge, but also transmit experience, since they are personally present in the teaching and giving example. Excellent pedagogues as examples have brought several youngsters for success in life, becoming also famous. “Good schools” are becoming world famous thanks to the “devoted work” of their excellent teachers. It should be attained that even students with bad marks or who does not want to learn be occupied in the community under surveillance during the day. Illiteracy and street bumming are to be avoided!

SKILLED MASTERS ARE NEEDED. There is a growing demand for reaching the minimum qualification level, however if a child is not able to acquire certain knowledge, his capability through which he could become an honoured, good master *has to be discovered*. It would be basically important to retain the honour of trades, since the lack of good experts is increasingly urging in the developed countries, or rather: everywhere.

THE COMMON TASK, for all of us is *to arouse the desire for knowledge of the youth*, to let them see the sense of more knowledge. *The future oriented thinking* increasingly proves, that if somebody sets high standards towards himself in order to live better and would like to

get higher on the chosen area, he has to learn permanently – but not only in his profession. The cultural level of each youth has to be increased not less should they be aware of the Eveready's behaviour in any case of life.

7. The responsibility of the youth

Taking into account age, naturally, the “real responsibility” of youth starts later – however, depending on societies and ethnic groups, it may begin at a very early age. One has to grow up to the sense of responsibility, on the other hand: *awareness of responsibility has to be taught*. In the interest of *reducing the pressure of the sense of responsibility*, the preparation *for it has to be started at the earliest possible age. This way the practising of responsibility will become an internal will and it will be natural towards ourselves and others, too.*

Parents with more children unanimously say, that the child has to be taught even from the first day of life. Naturally, each infant and child requires different attention, but there exist standard requirements towards parents. The parent has to take care of that the child could tell good from bad, should learn to like nice things, and that *he is responsible* for certain things, e.g. for keeping order in their room and later paying attention to the smaller brothers etc. Till the age of 10 several characters form within a child, which should be welcome or perhaps cut down. If this period is treated by parents with responsibility towards future, they can avoid several disappointments both for themselves and for the child.

Time comes and the little child is growing up, he is over 10.

The age between 11 and 14 is very decisive for both the youth and the responsible parent as well as for the pedagogue. This is the age when the character and inclination of a youngster will mostly be determined. Unfortunately an ever-increasing attention has to be devoted to this age group. They are the most endangered ones, they can be influenced the easiest, since in the widening crime wave ever-younger people take part as accomplices or victims. Those children who were brought up in stable families, can resist the temptation better, however, the danger threatens them, too. Even if a child can turn down the clandestine offender, the bad impression may remain in him for lifetime.

The responsible adult does not even know what to take care of to “preserve for posterity” his child or apprentice. Alcohol, drug, criminal offences towards others of minor then major character, galleries etc. The parent and the adult, who deals with the rearing of the child can be very satisfied if the child could enter the age, when he can make his own decisions, through the help of his beloved. It is a marvellous age, when the youngster becomes and “adult”, when he can make own decisions to *his own responsibility*, however, still there comes another threatened period, the challenges of which have yet to be faced.

Juveniles aged 15-18, since they mature earlier, than their predecessors *are responsible for themselves almost like an adult*. This period is the preparation for adulthood. The parents’ help is reduced to assisting to the youngsters to lay basis to their own lives. Here special attention must be devoted to that whether the youngster proceeds well to acquire all knowledge, necessary for him to become a well-trained and morally strong person to step out to LIFE successfully on his own.

The ‘attention’ of parents and adults cannot decrease even in this period, but at this stage they are not facing, but *standing by* a grown up child. This period may be very difficult, however, the child’s hand should be still kept, because – despite the appearance – they still need it.

When a youngster further studies, he usually relies on his parents, who will last as long as the child will become an *independent adult*. Following this period it will only depends on the goodwill of the child, how much he intends to return to his parents of what has been given. How much he will be able to return does not entirely depend on him, but it is worth to think about his responsibility.

LOVE AND GRATITUDE IS NEVER THE QUESTION OF MONEY, TODAY’S YOUTH WILL ALSO GROW OLD – AND LIFE’S WHEEL IS TURNING AROUND ON AND ON...

**FINAL REPORT OF THE FIRST BUDAPEST FUTURES COURSE
OF THE WORLD FUTURES STUDIES FEDERATION**

Erzsébet Nováky – Tamás Gáspár

Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration, Hungary

Introductory thoughts

The first Budapest Futures Course (BFC) of the World Futures Studies Federation (WFSF) – ‘*The Youth for a Less Selfish Future*’ – was organised at the Budapest University of Economic Sciences between the 7th and 19th August 1999. The BFC, sponsored by the UNESCO – according to present challenges in a renewed form – aimed at continuing the traditions created by the Dubrovnik Inter-University which organised summer courses between 1975 and 1991.

The summer course was organised for young, post-graduate futurists and offered several opportunities for discussions and workshops. The lecturers and facilitators were experts of futures studies from Finland, Spain, Australia, from the WFSF and, of course, from Hungary as well. Almost 30, mainly 20-30 year old, active and cheerful students coming from different countries (Czech Republic, Finland, France, the Philippines, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Slovenia, and Taiwan) visited the BFC which was concluded by handing the certificates proving successful participation of the BFC. This did not mean, however, the end of the work we began at the BFC. All students were asked to make a follow-up activity in their home-countries. This task is directed and coordinated by the Department of Futures Studies, Budapest as well.

The course was enriched by several cultural events – a cultural-historical excursion to Szentendre, viewing the total solar eclipse in Balatonlelle, evening discussions in pubs, playing basketball, a farewell-party – in order to create and strengthen informal relationships among the participants.

1. Aims and principles

The BFS consciously aims at being an international centre of futures studies in its renewal process. The main principle of its concept is to study critically the different values of the eastern and western part of the world and to seek for the renewal in the critical synthesis. Budapest tends to symbolise this concept.

‘The Youth for a Less Selfish Future’-course is the main principle of the programme planned for the long-range. The expression ‘for a Less Selfish Future’ points out that the leading principle of finding the way out is future-orientation. This is even more important, because one of UNESCO’s basic programmes is future-orientation and the fact that cultural, experimental and educational development cannot be created any more by using only the values of the past. This was described in ‘future talks’ and ‘future discussions’ programmes produced by the UNESCO, as Jerome Bindè, Director of the Analysis and Forecasting Unit, UNESCO emphasised.

The programme points out that it is not *the* less selfish future but *a* less selfish future which is being discussed in the course. This highlights our conviction, according to which the future consists of alternatives and we have the choice to choose from among them. On the other hand our programme defends a less selfish future, which means that it denies that this choice would not affect any values.

In the title of the BFC-Programme the expression ‘youth’ was emphasised. Our aim was to study the future orientation of youth and to compare the results internationally. We consciously invited lecturers and workshop-leaders who made surveys about the future orientation of a nation’s youth. That is the reason why we succeeded in comparing the results in several countries.

The point of the course originates from linking the two aspects mentioned above. The expression ‘for the future’ stands not only for the methods about choosing different kind of values, but for the fact that we deal with those people, who are actually able to affect the future, particularly with positive feedback. That means these people work for institutes, which enable them to increase their influence in the future.

According to the above mentioned principles, our effort to study the future orientation of youth does not mean that we studied the orientation of people aged between 10 and 30 years, but that we dealt with the participants of the BFC. That is why we presented the future orientation analysis among the BFC-students and, in fact, we completed it with them. The participants of the BFC were consciously selected from the generation that already possesses practical experiences, which means they do their work in a professional way, so they can share their experiences with the others in discussions. They know exactly what they want to find out about the theoretical and practical aspects of the future orientation and how they will use this knowledge later.

Discussing the selfishness of the future was not the main topic at the BFC. Thus the participants agreed on the meaning of the expression 'selfish': in their opinion 'selfishness' should not always be used in a pejorative way, but rather in cases where the role and the possibilities of the individual are emphasised. The expression 'less' refers to the fact that a society based on emphasising the individuals' actions is not the most desirable future for us. According to the present conclusions about the BFC we claim that the most desirable future is society based on common values that does not suppress unique individuals or their self-determination but incorporates the common values with the value-system of each individual. The explanation of these claims is the task of the next courses.

Although the summer course focussed on the cognition and comparative analysis of the relationship to the future in different countries, dealing with influential factors of future orientation – philosophical thinking, perception of technical improvement, educational and cultural differences – played an important role, too. As postmodern thinking places the future in the present, this way of looking may give a new dimension to examine the future. Technical improvement is most felt in the evolving of the information society, burdening the individual in many areas. It is encouraging that the different societies are preparing themselves for the information society more consciously than ever for a possible future society in world's history. It is possible that the dangers accompanying an information society are avoidable. Education all over the world is usually not future orientated, it hardly prepares oneself to think about alternatives, handle the fears for the future, however, it would be reinforcing by applying foresight principles.

2. Is youth future-oriented?

The BFC focussed on studying the future orientation of youth. How can we describe the relation of youth to its future, what characteristics are typical of this relation: hopes or fears, actions or inactivity, long term responsibility or short-term thinking, selfishness or altruism? Or are all of these characteristics typical but their proportion varies, which makes the difference? The discussions at the BFC are based on surveys focusing on such questions and which were carried out in different countries. The conclusions of the discussions can be summarised as follows:

1. Future orientation – which was already rooted in socio-psychology in the 1930's – came up in futures studies in the 1960s. Realising the phenomena of 'future-shock' led to the conceptualizing of future orientation at that time. Future orientation can be used to describe how people think about future, what are they willing to do about it, and what kind of expectations they have.
2. The relation to the future becomes stronger in social-economic transitions, especially in late-industrial or pre-postindustrial societies.
3. Future orientation shows different characteristics depending on which country we study.
4. Surveys carried out among *Australian teenagers* suggest that the future orientation of the youth in Australia is affected by many disorders and contradictions. Teenagers dream about a technocratic world, expect demilitarisation and think that technology and science will get 'greener' to meet social requirements. They believe that our approach towards ethics and our lifestyle should be thought over. They feel hopeless and helpless more and more often, worry about an impersonal, careless, aggressive, uniformed and environmentally unsustainable world and about a society divided into two parts: the haves and the have nots. They worry about the corruption occurring in the political life as well.
5. It is education, job possibilities, relations and a high standard of living which make the 7-18 year old *English* think about the future hopefully. They hope there will be less pollution and crime, they think international relations will develop and our life will be generally better. On the other hand they worry about not getting the required job, being short of money and they are anxious about their health as well. A scary view of unemployment, crime, wars, poverty and the increasing environmental pollution appears as well. Hopes and fears about the future occur among 14-year-olds the most. As they get

- older, their optimism decreases. Their future-view about the world is pessimistic.
6. The future-view of *Finnish youth* is dual. On the one hand the individual future-view is positive and hopeful, they have confidence in a happy life, a family, and a successful career. On the other hand their concept about the world and their country is different. They are scared that increasing corruption, poverty, pollution, unemployment and drug-abuse. Although they think future can be influenced, they are worried about that certain limits may prevent them from reaching their aims. It is education and work that can successfully be done for the future. There are huge differences among the future orientation of young Finnish people. Depending on what kind of school they attend, there is an active and optimistic or a passive and pessimistic attitude towards the future.
 7. According to surveys university students possess the most mature future orientation among *young Hungarian people*. They want to influence the future and that is the reason they are willing to study and work. Young people who attend a secondary school and specialise for vocational training have the most unsettled view about the future. They have a passive future-view rather than an active one. Those students who go on to retraining in order to get a second degree do not have a clear future-view. They complete two graduate programs: first their engineering/technical studies, then economic studies. They became disappointed in the Hungarian transition period because as engineers they were unable to make ends meet in the new social-economic environment. That is the reason why they show a future-shock effect. According to the surveys there are different types of future orientation among Hungarian youth: future-shock, fatalism and pessimistic attitudes towards the future occur.
 8. The aim of the survey that was carried out among *Spanish youth* was to show the effects of the political transition on values, expectations and attitudes. Between 1978 and 1996 several changes occurred. Nowadays Spanish youth shows less interest in politics. More conservative elements appear and they prefer the middle-left wing of politics to the left political parties. The individual dimension of their lives gets more significant: they evaluate their family and their friends as very important. Their future orientation is based on material and post-material values. They believe in democracy and in the power of public institutions. They sympathize with social movements, although they do not really participate in them in an active way. They are afraid of being short of money, losing their jobs and they are anxious about unexpected accidents. They consider education, social relations and taking full advantage of possibilities as important.

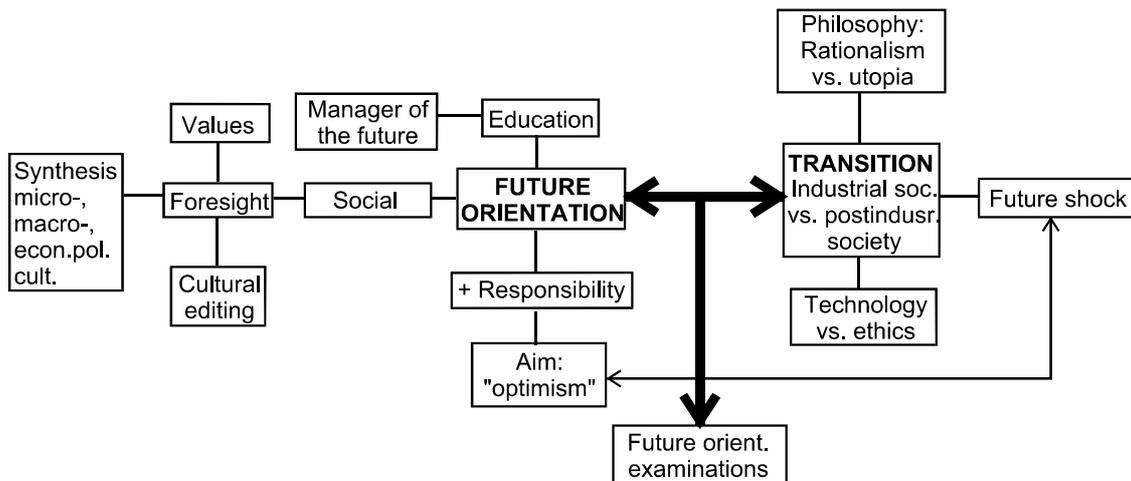
9. *The youth of the USA* imagine a conventional and optimistic individual future-view (marriage with children, house, car, being happier and richer than their parents or than they are now). On the other hand they are not so optimistic when they think of the future of the USA and the world. They worry about increasing drug-abuse, crime and the danger of a nuclear war. They are anxious about the exhaustion of energy-sources and the increase in pollution. We can observe that their selfishness has risen since the 1960s.
10. The survey, which was carried out *during the Budapest Futures Course among the participants*, shows a bit more positive than average future orientation: the participants hardly have fears for the future, it seems, they have the power to influence the future. Above all, the future is important for them because of their families and children. Thinking that the future is a part of human's life also reinforces their future orientation. They look with confidence into the future and hardly accept the statement that because unexpected events disrupt the plans, we do not need to deal with future. They think in a shorter (1-5 years) perspective concerning themselves, and in a longer (20-50 years) perspective concerning the world's future. The group has quite a homogeneous future orientation.

Even based on the overall picture of the surveys from different countries, it is difficult to answer, whether our young people imagine a more selfish or less selfish future. There are arguments and statements for each perspective. It seems probable that for the time being the world does not seem to becoming a less selfish world; but there is still much to be done on both personal and communal level to realise a more favourable world.

3. Linking points and comprehensive evaluation

We may look over the professional summary of BFC with the help of this illustration.

Figure 1. The interconnection of future orientation and transition



The summer course examined the future orientation of young people. That is why it is vital to determine future orientation to interpret the surveys (Éva Hideg, Erzsébet Nováky). Future orientation is rather interpreted at the social level, the future orientation of individuals gains meaning by being settled into social conditions. In this case the social frames of the 1990s are determinant, which we may consider as *transition*, including not only the political transition of countries, but also the social changes in the developed world. The surveys showed that one of the most significant characteristics of the transition period is future shock. For some groups of social individuals, an uncertain and risky future causes a shock, so they either hold on to the past with conservative values, have a passive relation to the future, or abandon the future. So future orientation in this approach is a kind of composition of transition to the new world-economic period, the attempt to place the contradictions arising in the period of transition and the commitment to it.

In the summer course scenario-building played a key role (Anita Rubin) from the aspect, what kind of role it fills in the future orientation of young people in the late-industrial societies under the circumstances of transition. The task was to build up the four following possible scenarios:

1. a scenario built upon the continuation of unchanging tendencies;
2. a catastrophe-scenario;
3. a back-to-the-past scenario and
4. a transformation-scenario.

The elaborated scenarios showed the participants' intuitive thinking, sense of reality, and how well they were methodologically prepared.

The lectures and the talks discussed several aspects of transition. Above all it was emphasised that transition is not only a shift from one social status to another but it is the reputation of values of the industrial society framing former societies, and of alternative social forms pointing beyond industrial society (Anita Rubin). Transition is the period where old values are challenged, new values are not yet significant, and the two together carry uncertainties and conflicts.

From a philosophical point of view it comes true in the contradiction of rationality and utopia (Endre Kiss). The currently widely popular postmodern philosophical movement emphasises the interpretation and the present of the future instead of the knowledge (of the future): it prefers the individually influencable and achievable future to collective utopia.

In another approach future orientation was discussed through the problem of technology and ethics (Enric Bas). The problem appeared, whether technological improvement had moral restrictions, and what kind of dangers the contradiction of them to the future society meant. The main argument was that future orientation appearing in technology without ethics was dangerous to society, so it must subordinate itself to the values of community. At the same time any undertaken scales of values are material power and only wishful thinking without technical-technological basis.

The surveys of future orientation – carried out among young people – can be interpreted in the contradiction of transition characterised by future shock and future orientation (Anita Rubin, Enric Bas, Erzsébet Nováky, Éva Hideg, David Hicks, Frank Hutchinson, Lynell Johnson – the last three in the presentation of Tamás Kristóf). From these it first turned out that the examinations formed two groups: from some aspects system changing countries (Spain, Hungary and – to some extent – Finland) and the English speaking examples, in all cases at the end of a determinant era (English, American, Australian examples). In all groups it is provable that young people put their individual values to the front in everyday activities, but they usually lay emphasis on values of community.

From this contradiction it follows that among others the purpose of future orientation

examinations is to find a path to an optimistic way of looking, where optimism means not only a state of mind, but also a way of thinking, which continually envisages values and determined purposes. This has some significance beyond the society based on the aggregation of individual values in a narrow sense. From this it follows that the idea and the purpose of future orientation can only be interpreted with responsibility included. Undertaking values and the purposes built upon them must contain the responsibility felt towards them. These two cannot be separated from each other.

Future orientation interpreted at the social level led to the '*foresight*'-analysis (Rick Slaughter). In this sense the opportunity and frames of social foresight became interesting, which were discussed in three aspects. First, from the aspect of the continuation and conflict of values belonging to certain eras. Second, from the aspect of the differences and opportunities of the synthesis of macro- and micro level analyses of economic, political and cultural subsystems (Enric Bas). Third, from the aspect of the determinant role of culture among social subsystems, the changing of values and the ways of adaptation (Tony Stevenson).

The lectures and workshops of the summer course emphasised the role of education in achieving the purpose of future orientation and foresighting from several aspects. From this point of view the aim is to bring up the *manager of the future* instead of the *engineer of the future*, where a manager means the specialist, who – besides doing daily business – thinks about the shaping of his profession with responsibility (see also Maria Kalas Kőszegi) and from a long-term perspective. In this sense a manager is future oriented, tries to integrate other social groups in work and represents a mobilization model.

Based on the comprehension above (Tamás Gáspár) the participants put the most important keywords around the 'creative futures network', which – being organised into a system of co-ordinates – can be summarised in the following diagram (Petr Lebeda).

Figure 2. The creative futures network

	Process vs. State	Time and spatial dimension	Change vs. Stagnation
Technology Information		CREATIVE FUTURES NETWORK	Culture Sense
	Challenge vs. Indifference	Alternatives	Responsibility vs. Selfishness

4. Main conclusions

The main conclusions composed together with the participants can be summarised in the followings:

1. The future is a cultural challenge, futures are multidimensional entities.
2. The visions of the future influence the way we look at the past.
3. Visions of the future must reflect the sense of responsibility.
4. Everybody is responsible for his or her personal futures and partly for the futures of larger communities.
5. The present is the future's past, the past was the future for some youth's present, the future will be present for another youth's past.
6. Being aware of cultural patterns means not being imprisoned by implicit cultural assumptions about the future.
7. For a less selfish world it is vital that networks and serving organisations of future oriented people come into existence.
8. Do not ask what your future can do for you but *what you can do for your future*.

As the final conclusion the participants agreed that futures are multidimensional entities, the understanding of which is a never-ending process. Without futures' discourses the future is the continuation of past. As futures are ours, here and now, the challenges should be taken into account, which happen to our direct and wider surroundings.