



# FUTURES BULLETIN

The newsletter of the World Futures Studies Federation

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## Editorial

One of the co-founders of the World Futures Studies Federation, Serge ANTOINE died on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2006. Serge was not only a committed futurist, but also a devoted activist in the global environmental movement. In this issue, we feature two articles, written by Samir GHABBOUR and Eleonora MASINI, to pay tribute to Serge ANTOINE's life achievements.

We also publish the continuation of the two articles started in the previous issue. In *Snapshots of futures education from Australian Schools* Debra BATEMAN and Caroline SMITH discuss the experience of teaching futures in the Sacred Heart Primary School in Melbourne. This very interesting and inspiring series will be continued in the next issues.

In the second part of the keynote address to the World Public Forum, *Human Order – Decline of Resurgence*, JC KAPUR calls for the re-examination of the parameters on which the current path of the world is based and explores the role of religious traditions in changing these parameters.

Other articles in the May Futures Bulletin include the introduction of new WFSF members - Barry HUGHES, Patrick CORSI and the Centre for Futures Studies (Egypt); the examination of the links between WFSF and the International Federation of University Women (IFUW); presentation of newly released books and announcements of upcoming events.

Over last few months we have received many words of gratitude, support and encouragement. We appreciate them greatly! From our side we would like to thank all the authors and invite more members to contribute to this publication!

John RATCLIFFE & Ela KRAWCZYK

### Next issues of the Futures Bulletin:

15 July      15 September      15 November 2006      15 January 2007

## SECTION 1 - COMMUNITY HOUSE

### MEMBERS

#### News

#### Ela KRAWCZYK completes her PhD [John RATCLIFFE]



Ela KRAWCZYK, who currently acts as the WFSF Assistant-Secretary General, has successfully defended her PhD thesis in recent weeks. In her research, Ela explored the scope for the application of futures methodologies in urban planning processes, using Dublin as a case study city. The main aims of the study were to gain an understanding of how the future is created in current city planning processes; what the potential role of futures methodologies in these processes is; and to develop a suitable futures methodology that would assist planners and decision-makers in changing their ways of thinking and acting about the future of cities.

Since September 2005, Ela has been working as a Research Fellow at The Futures Academy at the Dublin Institute of Technology. In recent weeks, she has successfully secured a three-year Postdoctoral Scholarship within the Arnold. F. GRAVES Scholar Programme, at the Dublin Institute of Technology. Within this programme, she intends to continue the research into the application of futures methods in urban planning processes and develop a 'methodological knowledge base' for the practitioners working in this field.

#### Welcoming New Members

#### Barry HUGHES [Barry HUGHES]



I am a professor at the Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver. I have been involved in forecasting since the early 1970s, beginning with a computer model in the summer of 1973 that looked at the tightness of the global oil market and the likelihood of price increases (which I find myself doing again today). Throughout the 1970s I participated in the Mesarovic-Pestel world modelling project for the Club of Rome. In the 1980s I was part of the GLOBUS team at the Science Center in Berlin.

I began developing my own International Futures (IFs) simulation in the late 1970s, and it has gone through five generations. The most recent versions of the full model are available without cost for use on the web or download at [www.ifs.du.edu](http://www.ifs.du.edu) and are documented by *Exploring and Shaping International Futures* (Paradigm Publishers 2006) with Evan HILLEBRAND. The U.S. National Intelligence Council supported development of the web-based model as part of its Project 2020. IFs has also been used in the European Commission's TERRA project, in work for the CIA's Strategic Assessment Group on global change in power balances and democratisation, and for input to the Millennium Project's *State of the World* (from the American Council for the United Nations University). Most recently it is being used in support of the United Nations Environmental Programme's *Global Environmental Outlook 4* (due in 2007) and in a new project with RAND and Pardee on global poverty reduction. I am very pleased to join the forecasting and futurist community of the WSFS.

## Patrick CORSI [Patrick CORSI]



Since the late 1970's, Patrick CORSI learned about the corporate methods of introducing R&D into products in Silicon Valley at IBM Corp. (continuous speech recognition research for office use), and then at IBM France in La Gaude (signal processing for first fully digital modems family).

In 1984, Patrick joined an emerging venture in artificial intelligence in Paris (COGNITECH SA), where he launched and managed its Technology Transfer Dept. He became a part of the management team and a special adviser to the President. During these promising times of change, he took over to manage the Advanced Studies Dept. of THOMSON-CSF's subsidiary SYCESA SA in Saint-Cloud, where he was appointed a member of THOMSON's Collège Scientifique et Technique by President A. GOMEZ.

For a long time, Patrick had been involved in European R&D projects. In 1990, he started to work for the European Commission in Brussels, where he supervised a portfolio of 50M Euro projects in industrially applied AI. Ten years later, having resumed links with the venture capital community, and with the aim of accelerating the take-up of promising technology in Europe, he decided to return to entrepreneurship and consultancy. Patrick focused on innovation in engineering and the marketing of advanced technology as a bridge between technology and emerging markets.

A co-author of five books exploring hot innovation issues, Patrick co-wrote "Complexity in management and decision processes" (originally in French, 2006, 420 p.) in order to point out the need to address foresight issues with a "complex view." In his view, foresight needs organic reinterpretation of its means leading to foresight rejuvenation to better prepare for the challenges ahead (adaptivity, co-evolution processes).

An associate professor at the Institut des Sciences et Techniques de l'Ingénieur d'Angers in France, Patrick has lectured at seven European universities since 1977. As a long standing adviser to the EU Commission, amongst others, he acted as animator and rapporteur for *eGovernment 2020*, *Eco-Efficiency Energy* futures workshops.

Patrick holds a Ph.D. in computer science from Institut National Polytechnique de Grenoble (1979) and is an ENSIMAG Engineer in computer science and applied maths from Grenoble 1977. He obtained a Master in mathematics in 1974 in Marseille. He resides in Brussels, Belgium where he can be contacted at [patrick.corsi@skynet.be](mailto:patrick.corsi@skynet.be).

## Centre for Futures Studies [Mohamed SALEH]



Motivated by its pioneering role in the field of information and decision support, the Egyptian Cabinet's Information and Decision Support Centre (IDSC) has adopted the idea of establishing a specialized centre in futures studies, as a necessity emerging from the need to formulate a socially acceptable future vision, and as an indispensable tool to tackle the challenges lying ahead by predicting them and their potential consequences on the future. As a result, the IDSC established the Centre for Future Studies (CFS) which started to function in July 2004.

The CFS vision is to be a distinguished Egyptian "Think Tank" in the field of futures studies, and its mission is to effectively contribute to the Egyptian Cabinet's development plans, and the Egyptian society's welfare via the successful utilisation of futuring methods.

The main objectives of CFS are to:

- formulate alternative scenarios for Egypt in all fields;
- build a public opinion concerned with the future; and
- develop networks and partnerships with local, regional and international futures studies centres and long-term strategy policy centres.

CFS has conducted several studies in different fields; some of which can be viewed at our website: [www.future.idsc.gov.eg](http://www.future.idsc.gov.eg).

CFS has held its First International Conference, "**Towards Formulating a Future Vision for Egypt**", in June 2005, in co-operation with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS). This conference was under the auspices of the Prime Minister, and was attended by eight ministers and more than 300 local, regional and international experts. One of the main recommendations of the conference was the importance of establishing a unit for futures studies in each ministry in Egypt, where CFS will be the catalyst. Some steps have already been taken.

The centre has organized a number of workshops, forums and TV Programs on the importance of futures studies to create public awareness about this new field of studies in Egypt. The centre is also financing the futures journal published by the future studies centre at Assiut University, in Egypt. The centre also organized several courses in various Egyptian universities.

CFS hopes to establish an Arabic chapter for the WFSF, as Arab countries shared, in the past, a common history, and their futures are interrelated.

The CFS team is also concerned with methodological issues of pushing the frontiers of futures research methods. The CFS team consists of seven researchers from different backgrounds including, economics, engineering, environment, statistics, political sciences and other fields, supported by a number of full and part time consultants, and two secretaries.

## Profiles of Institutional Members

### The Finnish Society for Futures Studies

Everyone is interested in what the future of mankind will be like. Through the choices each of us makes, we determine whether tomorrow's world will be a better place for humans to live. The purpose of futures studies is to investigate the various kinds of futures that are possible. By utilizing the results of futures research to make well-informed choices, humans can exert a positive influence on their own destiny.

The Finnish Society for Futures studies was established in 1980 on the recommendation of the government's Central Board of Research Councils. Fourteen Finnish institutions of higher education were the founding members, and 14 additional institutions and over 700 individuals have since joined the society.

#### Goals

The Finnish Society for Futures Studies aims to influence the long-term development of Finnish society by advancing futures research and its utilization in our country. Our efforts in promoting futures studies focus on the following objectives:

- to develop the material, organizational, and intellectual bases for futures research in Finland;



<http://www.futurasociety.fi/>





- to advance higher education grounded on futures research;
- to foster contacts among futures researchers as well as between the researchers and those who could utilize their work;
- to maintain contacts with research institutes and researchers in foreign countries;
- to communicate the latest results of futures research to the Finnish public and to emphasize the necessity of such research.

### Activities

Since its establishment the society has, as the only body of its kind in Finland, played a unifying role among Finnish researchers connected to the field. It has coordinated futures-related research across a broad range of academic disciplines. The traditional activities of the society have included a major annual seminar in the summer and a regular series of meetings and seminars during the academic year.

As a member of the World Futures Studies Federation and the World Future Society, the Society has encouraged Finnish participation in conferences and other international activities in the field.

### Publications

All members receive the society's journal Futura, four times per year. The magazine contains feature articles, research reports, and seminar presentations and functions as a forum for the exchange of information and opinion. Other publications are also available in Finnish, such as Futurinfo.

More information on the society may be obtained from Iris PENTTILÄ, the Secretary General ([toimisto@futuresociety.fi](mailto:toimisto@futuresociety.fi))

## FEDERATION

### IN

### Serge ANTOINE: A man of multi-level achievements [Samir GHABBOUR, Cairo University]



**Serge ANTOINE**  
(3.X.1927 -  
25.III.2006)

It is with great sorrow that we learned about the passing away of our old dear friend Serge ANTOINE. Member of one of the respected aristocratic families in France (he once told me his uncle was the last Governor-General in Indochina), he was a true humanist with a heart of gold. He never hesitated to offer his services to whoever came to him asking for help. I knew him for more than 30 years including the early years of the global environmental movement. He struggled a lot to make the French, and then people of the Third World, understand what 'environment' means; that it deserves to be taken into consideration in development policies. He succeeded in convincing the French government, as early as 1970-1971, to create the Ministry of Environment, to be the first country in the world to have such a Ministry, before even the Stockholm 1972 Conference on the Human Environment was held. He was content with keeping the post of Under-Secretary of State in that Ministry for 20 years while ministers from left and right came and went. He was preoccupied with laying down plans that the Ministers would proudly speak about in the media. He was particularly keen on providing assistance, through the Ministry, in environmental capacity building for Mediterranean and African countries. His efforts to provide aid for these countries, including Egypt, were made with love and compassion, rare among bureaucrats. But he wasn't one.



In a publication about futurology, I suppose that many have known him in this field better than I. Therefore, I will take the liberty to elaborate on other achievements of his in other fields, particularly the environment.

Serge Antoine contributed to the writing of Agenda 21 and other pertinent documents for the Rio Summit in 1992. He created the "Comité 21" in 1994 for applying Agenda 21 in France and in Africa. Let us not forget his role in the formulation of the "Blue Plan for the Mediterranean" with the late Michel BATISSE. We can confidently say that he was one of the few great architects of the global environmental movement in its early days and all through its first three decades. He managed to put France and francophony in a prominent place on the world map of that movement, and it was he who coined the term "développement durable" to stand for "sustainable development", although the French term (and also the one in Arabic), does not perfectly convey the meaning that is conveyed by the English term. This is perhaps due to a difference in basic perceptions of the Latin and Arab cultures, as opposed to the Anglo-Saxon. In order to clarify the essence of environmental thought in the French culture, he was the senior editor with two colleagues, of two volumes, totalling 610 pages, of collections of sayings about the environment by French and francophone personalities from 1548 AD, up to 1996 (1).

Yet, if we wish to enumerate the multi-level achievements of Serge ANTOINE, we find that his life and work can be an embodiment of "Think globally and act locally". But he acted globally too.

#### **Achievements at the local level:**

The achievements of Serge ANTOINE at the local level are demonstrated by his work at the level of Bièvres, a town of 4100 souls, 15 km southeast of Paris to which he chose to move in 1964. The town that boasts six museums (one related to Victor HUGO), owes him for the fact that he chased away developers proposing inappropriate projects, having prepared as a substitute the Land Use Plan of Bièvres (the first of its kind in France), that retained the human dimension and the town's charm and guaranteed its sustainable development. He founded the association of the Friends of the Bievres Valley and was its Secretary-General till the end, which kept a vigilance that the inhabitants of the town now enjoy. He was also behind the most recent work (May 2005) of the Associations of Environmental Protection in Ile-de-France (Paris and its suburbs), and recently wrote a report on air quality for Paris for the benefit of policy makers in that agglomeration (<http://avb.idf.club.fr/html/Air/lebonair.htm#airparif>).

In addition to his work at Bièvres (2), he had earlier helped rehabilitate and renovate the town of Arc-et-Senans in the east of France, where he established in 1972 and ever since remained its President, the "Centre culturel de rencontre d'Arc et Senans - Institut Claude-Nicolas Ledoux", named after the 18<sup>th</sup> century architect of that region.

#### **Achievements at the national level:**

Serge ANTOINE inherited from his father architect the notion that territorial organization cements people together. He said it was the guideline of his life. He had the chance of his life to apply this notion when at the age of 29, when he was Consultant to the President of Euratom in Brussels, he was charged by the French Prime Minister with the mission of re-designing the French departments (90 at that time), which he did with creation of DATAR (Délégation à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'action régionale, or, Delegation for territorial management and regional action). The idea of industrial parks and nature reserves included side by side in a national land use plan was truly innovative (though inspired from Germany), and

perhaps not repeated later elsewhere. These "Parcs naturels régionaux" were established in 1966. He invented the "poles of development", large cities away from Paris, to lessen the influence of the capital on the regions, another notion that went counter to the Government but finally accepted. His plan of 22 consolidated departments of the French territory was accepted by the Prime Minister in 1958, against the latter's own plan, which had 47 departments. It is in this period that he became interested and enthusiastic about "prospective studies" and "possible futures", and accepted the notion that it is anxiety that creates futures, not certainty. His integrity and honesty obliged him to confess later in an interview published by *l'Express* in 2004 that his only mistake was that he naively thought he was establishing an evolving plan, so that little by little these departments would grow and fuse together. But this did not happen, and many in France think that larger departments are more suitable for harmonising with a larger EU territory; a notion that he himself shared in 2004. One prominent example is the militant movement of some Normandians who want to see the Haute and Basse Normandie fused together.

#### **Achievement at the regional level:**

Serge ANTOINE was the architect of the 1975-1976 Barcelona Conventions for the Protection of the Mediterranean environment, which established the Blue Plan (a French institution for "prospective" studies in the Mediterranean), of which he became Vice-President, with his friend Michel BATISSE, the President. They both chose a new town in southern France designed for science and technology, named Sophia Antipolis (= the wisdom opposite the city) for its HQ. He was member of the Mediterranean Sustainable Development Commission. It was an agreement about environmental protection of a common resource, that Serge ANTOINE considered a distinct and well delineated "eco-region". The Barcelona Conventions will go down in history as the first ever international agreement signed simultaneously by Mediterranean countries that were technically at war with each other. It was due to his extraordinary vision that it was proved once and for all that such countries can agree on mutual cooperation when the issue at stake concerns common well-being and survival of them all. It is during the tours of Serge ANTOINE in Mediterranean countries to inform about the Blue Plan, and later my direct involvement in the Blue Plan "prospective" studies, that we became intimate friends. It is in this way that I came to know him and to admire him.

#### **Achievements at the international level:**

In an interview with Corinne MARTIN and Thierry PAQUOT, in Paris, 29 March 2004, published in *Revue Urbanisme*, Serge ANTOINE said that he came to know 'environment', when he had gone on a visit to the US. He came back to France and with parallel support from other intellectuals, the first ever Ministry of Environment was created in 1971. He joined it immediately and worked under 18 Ministers for 20 years. He instilled in the Ministry openness towards the Third World matched by no other French ministry. He joined the Club of Rome in 1969, and went to the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment in 1972, with a large French Delegation. At the end of the Conference, STRONG asked him what France can offer. This inspired him with the idea of bringing Mediterranean countries together, and so the Convention was signed in Barcelona three years later. In this achievement, his idea of territory was again his guideline. He helped Maurice STRONG again in the preparation of the Rio "Earth Summit" in 1992 and edited Chapter 28 of *Agenda 21*. He organized in Curitiba two days before the Summit a gathering of 300 Mayors and created the French Federation of United Cities, which merged in Paris in

2004 with its "rival" the Anglo-Saxon Federation, created in 1906, and commented that "history is slow".

Commenting on the world's environmental situation between 1972 and 2004, he said that he always believed that 30 years is the useful time to obtain results. He admitted that in 1970, he thought that 30 years later the world would have mastered its environmental problems. But he realized that the problem is primarily societal. The environment is everyone's concern and the task of all ministries together. Cooperation among ministries was wanting. He expressed his worry, and without trying to act as a prophet, he surmised that within two or three centuries there would be no humans left on earth. Sustainable development, the UN, and also State-governments, are of a fearsome slowness.

Serge ANTOINE contributed to the Founex meeting in Switzerland that brought together economists from North and South to discuss "eco-development", coined by Ignacy SACHS. It did not ring bells with mainstream economists. Then Prof. M. TOLBA coined in 1974 the term "development without destruction". It met the same disregard from mainstream economists. When SD was coined by the World Conservation Strategy of IUCN, UNEP, and WWF in 1980, and this one stuck. Mrs. BRUNDTLAND adopted it in "Our Common Future" in 1987. But many still see SD either as ambiguous, or as ineffective, or even no different from conventional development theories. Some even (deliberately?) misuse it and speak of "sustainable growth" (*sic*), as if growth can continue indefinitely.

Serge ANTOINE, however, did not worry about the ambiguous definition of "sustainable development", saying that it was the third enigmatic notion that he had tackled in his life, after "territorial management" and "environment". If people think it is enigmatic, so much the better. The real challenge is to concretise that notion, which he tried to do in Comité 21, in the "Conseil national du développement durable", and in the "Commission méditerranéenne du développement durable". It meant to him doing more "prospective" on the long term, affirming societal choices, reaffirming solidarity between North and South, and being very watchful of change: geophysical, climatic, and environmental. As early as 1967, the Scientific Consultant of the US President confided to him his worries about snow melting in the Poles, global warming, and sea level rise. When back in France he conveyed these worries to French politicians; they couldn't care less. In spite of his kind tolerance, he kept an inimical attitude towards politicians. If action is late, it is because they are late.

He thought that SD policies can be defined and refined, in the same way the invisible man can be seen when wrapped in bands. Sceptics must know that it needs a veritable cultural revolution, in behaviour, especially political behaviour, to which our habitual analysis schemes are strangers. We must go deep into the roots of economics, culture, society, and even ecology, for which the far horizons of "prospective" are indispensable. People must be transformed into "actors", and if possible, establish multi-actor operations. Indicators to measure progress are indispensable. But SD is moving on for some years in corporations, in local communities in France. Many sectors are beginning to adopt it: farmers, water industries, forestry, etc.

In 1976, Serge ANTOINE coordinated the French Delegation to Habitat I in Vancouver. The results were deceptive. Housing Ministers didn't understand why the talk was about poverty, and so the impact was almost nil. It was necessary to talk to Mayors, and that is why he proposed a meeting for them before Rio. In Istanbul Habitat II, mutual understanding was only a little better, but still ineffective. The same disappointment was



met in Johannesburg in 2002. Maturation is a long process, he concluded. His judgement was that it is necessary to bring States together in order to convince them of making commitments. The label of "la haute qualité environnementale (HQE)" for application of SD principles to buildings is important, but there is nothing equivalent for urban planning. Cities must be analyzed as ecosystems, like what was done for Rome and 2 other cities under the UNESCO MAB Programme, with flows of material, people, information, energy, and ideas. He pointed out that Al-Farabi had already said in the 10<sup>th</sup> century that cities must be regarded as organic beings, as an animal. He pleaded for a reconsideration of the manner whereby the city is conceived, built, and managed, with more emphasis on compatibility of resources, energy, space, and time. This is beyond the exercise of tracing streets. That is what he called for in the case of Arc-et-Senans.

To end up in a personal note, I must say that Serge ANTOINE was a friend indeed, and I made it a point every time I came to France to visit him and enjoy his company and his wisdom, and his home hospitality with his charming wife Aline. As an illustration of his humane nature, and on a purely personal basis, I must recall that when my daughter had a grant to study in France, he considered her one of his family and always asked how she was doing.

*May God the Almighty grant his family condolence and peace of heart.*

(1) *Ecrits francophones et environnement 1548 - 1900*, Serge ANTOINE, Jean-Baptiste de VILMORIN, André YANA, Entente 342 p. (1991), and *Ecrits francophones et environnement 1900 - 1996*, Serge ANTOINE, Jean-Baptiste de VILMORIN, André YANA, Entente, 268 p. (1996).

(2) *La Bièvre redécouverte*, Serge ANTOINE, Florence PIZZORNI-ITIE, 108 p., (2000), *Almanach de la Bièvre 2005*, Florence PIZZORNI et Serge ANTOINE, Ed. Exposition Bièvre Rivière Vivante, Col. non renseignée, 96 p. (2004) *Almanach de la Bièvre 2006*, Serge ANTOINE, Florence PIZZORNI, Ed. association exposition Bièvre, Col. non renseignée. (2006).

## In remembrance of Serge ANTOINE [Eleonora MASINI]

I wish to add, to the very good and deep recollections by our common friend Samir GHABBOUR, my remembrances of Serge ANTOINE in the area of futures studies in which I mostly knew him. His future orientation was ample and clear and it expressed his early interest about environmental issues in a time where such interest was not so strong. Before the Stockholm meeting in 1972, in fact, ANTOINE's actions in this direction were very important in France although he never looked for visibility, as Samir GHABBOUR has rightly noted. At the same time, his interest in the future was expressed by his great endeavours to bring "prospective" to the fore front both at the academic and political level.

I met him in the early 70's when I had come to understand the importance of futures studies or "prospective" as I had been studying the writings by Bertrand de JOUVENEL where, as a sociologist, I found a response to my search in the field of social change in the long term.

Serge ANTOINE at that time was involved both in futures thinking and environmental issues. I met him the first time in Arc-et-Senans, a location in France, not far from Switzerland, where the members of Futuribles and other people in France interested in prospective used to meet. He had been one of the founders of Futuribles.

Serge ANTOINE was the key person in the foundation of the WFSF which took place at UNESCO in June 1973, thanks to the support of Mahdi



ELMANDJRA, at the time Deputy Director of UNESCO for information and communication.

Serge ANTOINE had been responsible for the statutes of WFSF from the legal point of view which was basic for its approval under French law. I was one of the founding members with Pavel APOSTOL, André-Clément DECOUFLÉ, Paul HANAPPE, Bertrand de JOUVENEL, Peter MENKE-GLUECKERT, Pierre PIGANIOL and Serge ANTOINE, who followed up with his great competence the legal standing of WFSF. The first President of WFSF was Bertrand de JOUVENEL who was shortly followed by Johan GALTUNG. ANTOINE's support of WFSF went on through the years from a legal and content point of view and was of unique value and his commitment to futures studies was his driving force and that of WFSF.

In the same year, September 1973, the Rome conference of WFSF took place and all the legal part prepared by Serge ANTOINE was discussed. Bertrand de JOUVENEL was present and very balanced in all the difficult discussions, especially on legal matters, related to the just born Federation which had an international intention and view.

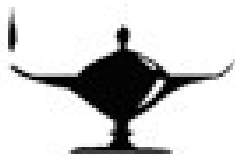
One specific moment was in Cairo in 1978, where also Samir GHABBOUR was active and where the world conference of WFSF took place. I was Secretary General and Mahdi ELMANDJRA President and the need for by-laws was clear to complement the statutes. His point definitely supported by most of the members was that WFSF had the need to clarify the statutes in relation to institutional arrangements. It was important to go on being connected to French law. All documentation of the founding period was care of Futuribles and was so through the years until 1993.

ANTOINE's idea that "prospective" or futures studies needed an institutional backing as an international NGO was confirmed by the fact that WFSF was accepted by UNESCO with status B and also accepted in ECOSOC. The acceptance of these institutions has been of great support for WFSF throughout the years and now.

I would also like to underline his important contribution as member of the Club of Rome and to the very influential Plan Bleu in 1978 which had a great impact on the policies of the countries around the Mediterranean.

In conclusion beyond Serge ANTOINE's great contributions to "prospective" and its diffusion at the European and world level, WFSF owes him great gratitude and for this I wish to give my testimony in this sad time.

OUT



[www.ifuw.org](http://www.ifuw.org)

### WFSF and IFUW links [Yvonne CURTIS]

The International Federation of University Women (IFUW) is introduced on its web-page ([www.ifuw.org](http://www.ifuw.org)) as "an international, non-profit organization of women graduates working to promote lifelong education, to improve the status of women and girls and to enable women to effect positive change for a peaceful world."

The IFUW helps its 79 national affiliates and members in more than 120 countries to address their concerns for the future of the planet by providing an international platform and resources for common concerns to be shared, understood and when necessary, appropriate action taken at the highest levels. Women's voices are still rarely heard in most international and national governance and business forums.

It provides unique opportunities for graduate women to network, to share research, to share experiences that can be life-changing, often not only for the individuals, but for whole communities. The IFUW Council has the task of arranging international conferences, administering the funds for a



variety of scholarships and development aid programmes and has the status to participate in many UN deliberations for healthy communities and hopefully for a healthier planet in the future.

I have belonged to the IFUW, for over 40 years, through my membership of the Wellington Branch of the New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women, and have come to appreciate the work it does and the importance of its international scope.

My experience as a futurist over the last 25 years has perhaps made me more certain that if humanity is going to have a prosperous and peaceful long-term future on this planet then there is a vital need for such bodies as the IFUW to provide fora for people to meet and discuss issues in meaningful dialogue.

Although the World Futures Study Federation (WFSF) appears to be quite a different body from the IFUW, I realise now there are many parallels between the two organisations, particularly their aims, personnel and ways of operating, that might explain why I have found being involved with them both has been so rewarding.

I see the ultimate aim of both organisations as being "to seek to help build a peaceful, plentiful, enjoyable world for all people for many generations to come".

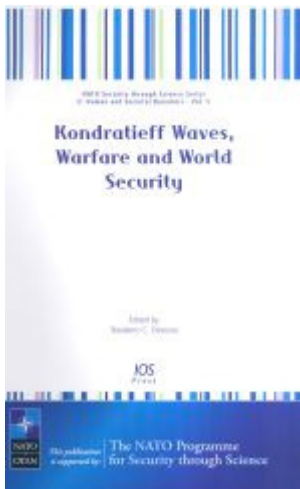
Both are federations in the truest sense in that the members are very diverse, deep thinking, come from many different parts of the world, speak different languages, work in different ways but are all passionate about the ultimate aims of the organisation. The members meet at conferences, network in many different ways and enjoy each other's company. The IFUW has a rather more formal operational structure than the WFSF, but both rely heavily on volunteers and decisions are made together by the membership as much as possible.

Being involved in both organisations has enabled me better to understand the complexities of learning to live together, to meet and work with wonderful people on projects that have the potential to make life good for many people. It has also been great to find that there are others around the world that also belong to both organisations and see how they can support each other in realising our dreams.

### Magna Charta Observatory [Fabienne GOUX-BAUDIMENT]



The Magna Charta Observatory brought its Task Force to a 2,5-day meeting held in Luxemburg (EU) on 11-13 May 2006. Our colleague, Sohail INAYATULLAH [*The University in Transformation*, 1999] was invited to moderate this group. Being not available, he kindly invited me to replace him there. It was a very sounding experience to lead some 20 Rectors, Vice-Chancellors (and even a former Minister of Education) through a two-day foresight process... Beyond that, this meeting gave me the opportunity to meet (see the photo from left to right): Josef HUBER, administrator of the Higher Education and Research division of the Council of Europe with whom we talked in-depth of the Federation and the need to introduce and maintain futures studies in Higher Education; Abdul Razak DZULKIFLI, Vice-Chancellor of the Universiti Sains in Malaysia, which begun last year a foresight process about the future of university in Malaysia, with Sohail (see the FB n°31 about Malaysia 2025), and made an excellent presentation of this scenario planning exercise; and George HADDAD, Director of the division Higher Education in UNESCO, with whom I got the opportunity to promote our request for the Participation Program.

**NEW RELEASES**


Edited by Tesselano C. Devezas

**Kondratieff Waves, Warfare and World Security [Ela KRAWCZYK]**

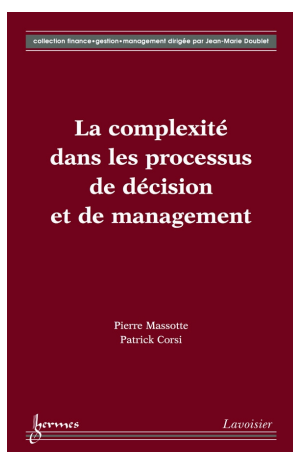
Over past decades, considerable progress has been made in understanding the underlying mechanisms driving the long-term behaviour of the world socio-economic development. However, it is recognised that many aspects related to these underlying driving sources are still to be uncovered. One of these aspects, possibly the most controversial one, is the close relationship between K-waves and the outbreak of major wars. The book attempts to give readers a modern overview of the still debatable long waves concept, explore the relation of K-waves with military conflicts, and explore the future in regard to warfare and world security.

The book is composed of 38 chapters, which are formed into three parts: *Kondratieff Waves Revisited: New Concepts on the Interpretation of Long-Term Fluctuations in Economic Growth, Kondratieff Waves and Warfare*, and *Looking into the Future*. Among the contributing authors are the WFSF members: Jim DATOR, Harold A. LINSTONE, Jordi Serra, and Alexander AGEEV.

**Russian Prospects - Political and Economic Scenarios [Ela Krawczyk]**


**The Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies** has published the research report "Russian Prospects - Political and Economic Scenarios". The report explores the political and economic development of Russia over the next 15 years. The first part of the paper presents the background for the development of scenarios – a portrait of Russia's current situation and the major developmental tendencies that can be expected in the next 15 years. The second part includes two sets of scenarios. The four political scenarios were developed upon the two uncertainty axes: Democracy/Autocracy and Centralised/Decentralised political power, and the four economic scenarios upon the Market/Planned Economy and Raw material based/Differentiated production and service economy.

The report is for free distribution and free of charge and it can be downloaded from: <http://www.cifs.dk/doc/temp/russia.pdf>.



By Pierre MASSOTTE and Patrick CORSI

**La complexité dans les processus de décision et de management (Complexity in management and decision processes)**

This book, published in French, analyses the problem of complexity in the industrial, economic and social systems, in a range of diverse areas, such as manufacturing, production, financial management, administration and the organisational structure of company. Using case studies, it explores and explains the concepts of complexity and simplicity of systems. It also reveals the mechanisms and characteristics applicable to all areas of industry and our environment. Recognition that the complexity is embedded in the decision-making and management processes and employment of innovative ideas and approaches enables a company or an organization to better understand its complex behaviour and the environment within it operates. It helps to tackle the problems related to management, improve the quality and the performance of its organisational system.



## SECTION 2 - FUTURES RIDE (PAPERS)

### Snapshots of Futures Education from Australian Schools: Part II

**Debra BATEMAN (Deakin University) & Caroline SMITH (Australian Catholic University)**

*"Students' conceptions of the future have a real and significant influence on their beliefs and motivation to learn that, in turn, influences their achievement positively" (Kauffman & Husman, 2004, p. 4)*

In the previous WFSF bulletin, we described Futures Education (FE) as it was practised at Kimberley Park Primary School, Brisbane and St Johns Grammar, South Australia. These opportunities to engage with futures practitioners in schools arose from our involvement in the development of AFI's 5<sup>th</sup> monograph, with Jennifer GIDLEY (Gidley, Bateman, & Smith, 2004). As a result, we have spent time in schools, both auditing and reflecting upon futures practices with learners in both primary and secondary settings. What has become apparent from our research is the range of ways in which schools do, and do not, engage with futures thinking within the curriculum. Even when they have knowledge of the field, it is all too common for teachers to report that in an already overcrowded curriculum, the futures dimension is 'just another thing' to contend with, to plan for, and to learn about. Teachers we have collaborated with also bemoan the lack of Futures resources available for use in the classroom as well as the lack of professional development available.

The case studies that follow reflect the futures dimension developed with a primary school (5 – 12 years of age), and a secondary school (12 – 18 years of age). Sacred Heart Primary School (presented in this issue) is located in Melbourne, and Woodridge State High School (will be presented in Vol. 34, July issue), in Brisbane. Both of these schools are in early stages of developing the futures dimension in their planning for learning and teaching. At Sacred Heart, one of us (Debra BATEMAN) taught and initiated the process. At Woodridge State High School, the program is facilitated by a history teacher (Tony CUPITT), in liaison with Carmen STEWART, a consultant in community development. Along with the case studies described in our previous article, these two case studies reflect more of the diversity through which Futures Education is being integrated into innovative school practice.

#### **Sacred Heart Primary School, Melbourne (Prep- Year 6)**

Sacred Heart primary school is a systemic Catholic school located in the inner northern suburbs of Melbourne. The area is working to lower middle class, and the students come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Many are migrants. Debra BATEMAN taught at the school and introduced FE after completing a unit on FE in a Master of Education program. Debra discussed implementation of FE with the Principal, Mary O'DONOHUE, and the Curriculum Coordinator, Rosa SIRIANNI. Rosa agreed to address the staff about FE, and during the meeting, Debra introduced some basic futures tools and techniques (as outlined by Hicks, 1994, and; Slaughter, 1996). The staff considered samples of work from other schools who had implemented FE within their curriculum. In addition, teachers were given professional reading. While to date not many teachers have included FE perspectives in their teaching, Debra believes that a shift towards FE is now taking place within the school community.

As a Primary school, Sacred Heart uses an integrated curriculum approach and staff considers themselves adept in planning curriculum based on SOSE (Studies of Society and Environment), Science and Technology. Certainly the school is becoming 'greener' through introduction of recycling

and composting, and the natural environment is a key focus for a number of integrated units of work. The literacy program draws its content from these areas, and they are now providing the vehicle for the incorporation of FE.

In 2004, the school incorporated assessment of the integrated units based upon a matrix (graphic organiser) developed by students that indicated their understanding of culture in the past, present and for the next 25 years. They engaged in temporal scanning of the extended present, in regards to lifestyle, beliefs, language, rituals and celebrations. The students presented images of the future in the matrix and in artwork to the class. The probability of any one of these futures occurring was explored via research and surveying of local community perceptions. Students were asked to reflect upon their present personal preferences and for the future, and to consider preferable futures of others. This resulted in a rich forum where students engaged in critical discourse in these learning areas.

### **Futures Education with Performing Arts and Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE)**

In 2003, Sacred Heart, under Debra BATEMAN's leadership in the performing arts, won a Music Room (Victorian College of the Arts) award for futures curriculum implementation within their school production *The Wonder of Water through Time*. Debra used the performance as a vehicle for introducing a range of FE concepts to staff and students within the integrated curriculum approach mentioned above. It also served to bring FE to the wider school community in a very accessible way through a public performance. For many teachers, involvement in the school production is not something they always welcome due to amount of time they have to devote to the Key Learning Areas (KLAs). They also believe they have limited ability in Dance, Drama and Music. To introduce the concept at the first staff meeting, Debra planned a variety of activities for the teachers to participate in to raise their confidence in these areas, as well as to build empathy for the students involved in the production.

The themes for the school production were *Water* and *Change through Time*. The 'big idea' to be developed within each level of the school was the notion of *Changing Community – Past, Present and Future*. At junior levels (5- 7 years of age), the staff focussed on the local environment. They investigated the nearby Merri Creek, with its rich indigenous history, and white settlement in the area. They represented the industrialisation of the area, and the impact this had had on the natural and indigenous environment and traditions. They considered how the land is now used, and went on to consider what students thought might happen to the local environment into the future. In presenting their preferable future to the audience, the students showed how each person is able to take action to maintain the health of the creek and adopt a more ecologically aware lifestyle.

In the middle years of the school (8 – 10 years), the learning community reflected upon weather, its impact on people and the earth, and how communities have changed globally as a result of climate change. These learners made observations of the many natural patterns in our world, and began to understand that each is somehow connected to water. They reflected upon the cycles of life, and how these can be used to understand shaping sustainable approaches to living on, in and for the natural and social world. The students were able to suggest that while in the past, natural disasters were more infrequent, through the present and increasingly in the future, such events will become more frequent, extreme and 'taken-for-granted'. One child suggested that such events were the earth's responses to people's misuse of the earth's resources throughout history.

Focussing on that 'big idea' of *Changing Community*, the senior classes (10 – 12 years) were developing understanding of a changing world, and human shaping of futures, through the context of the Snowy River Hydroelectricity Scheme. Water (the Snowy River) was central to the way in which this community has changed and continues to evolve. Here, the key learning foci included the ideas that:

- energy can be harnessed to provide for the needs of a community;
- energy can be transferred and transformed;
- a community changes as a result of its energy needs;
- changes in the natural and built environment take place as a result of community actions.

Work in the classroom and the content of the performance were shaped around these same ideas. Through this, students came to an understanding of lifestyles and environment throughout different

periods of time from past to future. Throughout the production, voices of the past, present and future acted as narrators of the changes to the river which have occurred over time. In class, students considered possible and probable futures for the river, and in the production the narrator expressed these. The production ended with the powerful message to the audience is that the development of the future depends on choices made in the past and present.

In the production itself, the first acts were set in the time before the Snowy River was dammed. Aboriginal children play and dance around the freely running water; people are fishing and washing clothes in the river. Later, Europeans arrive and build villages along the river. The second act portrays the impacts of the introduction of electricity to the local community through damming of the river. Folk dancing is replaced by line dancing, symbolising the movement to a highly structured, mechanical society. Machinery replaces human labour to keep up with consumer demand. A town appears and electricity pylons spring up. The river runs more slowly and litter builds up. Children do not play here, it has become unsafe.

The final act represents the present. The river has come to a standstill; the surrounding plant life is dead. Small and deformed fish are caught then thrown back. Houses fill the spaces where children had once played and vegetable gardens had grown. The dancers now dance alone with their Walkmans. The disconnected community hums with the sounds of machinery and the busyness of life. Into this scene step protesters with placards demanding that people stop and think about their actions and how they impact on the future.

This remarkable production was performed to a full house of the school community in the Community Arts centre, an estimated 500 people. It was exciting and thought provoking, and clearly included an explicit future theme.

### **Futures in Mathematics**

An exemplar of the way in which FE metalanguage (language specific to disciplinary or conceptual understandings) is developed at Sacred Heart, is through a senior Mathematics unit of work, connected to Chance and Data skills. Like the schools described in the previous article, at Sacred Heart in FE, we commonly refer to possible, preferable and probable futures as the '3Ps'. These terms are also developed in the chance dimension of Mathematics. The goal of this unit was to develop a critical understanding of how students could judge and describe the likelihood of any outcome. Further, students are encouraged to reflect metacognitively upon the process undertaken to develop criteria upon which to judge the likelihoods of events.

In the early stages of this unit of work, information was problematised and connected to issues in their life-worlds. In particular, the class focussed on gambling, and the increase in observable and documented habits in the local community. Through mathematical concepts, the Grade 5/6 classroom considered expressions of probability, using the preferable outcome as numerator, and number of possible outcomes as denominator. Arising from their investigations of a number of casino games, and following an address from a member of the Gaming Commission, the students were able to realise that the likelihood of success at gambling was highly improbable due to a number of factors that were discussed.

The class also considered the concept of probability which, whilst able to be expressed numerically, could be influenced by a number of factors. Specifically, weather forecasting and horse racing were examined. The students studied the ways in which meteorologists forecast weather patterns, and investigated the way in which human and natural influences have affected weather patterns through recent history. Students suggested ways in which these might continue to occur.

For their study of horse racing, students considered all available information about a horse's racing history, then predicted winners and losers in a series of races. As well as the usual factors listed in racing guides that affect the outcome of a race such as track conditions, the students reflected on others that had not been taken into account by probability figures. These included illness, injury and horse fatigue as well as the motivation of the horse. Once again, students were able to see that events such as horse racing are clearly unpredictable and uncertain. As Bell (1996) and others suggest, this is very much how we would describe the future – uncertain and unpredictable.

At this stage, the class was introduced to a number of scales (eg. catastrophe scales), and futures tools such as backcasting, forecasting, and incasting, as a means for discussing probable futures, and for refining both possible and preferable futures. The students scanned their local school community, and were asked to scale the likelihood of any event occurring (eg. that the principal would run assembly on a specified day). They were then asked to reflect upon what could change the outcome, and explore what might happen in the event of an outcome which was different from that forecasted. As different strategies were used and considered, they were 'labelled' with foresight metalanguage, such as the 'foresight principle'. These students, then, were beginning to able to develop an explicit futures language.

### **The Teachers' Voice**

The four teachers involved in the introduction of FE at Sacred Heart reflected that the shift between knowing the theory, and implementing the practice represented a steep learning curve on which they are still travelling. For the teachers, the integration of futures dimensions within their teaching highlighted how implicit the notion of the future is within education, and how much is taken for granted and unproblematised about the future. All the teachers were enthusiastic about continuing developing FE in their classrooms, but were unaware of how to go about ongoing professional development.

The teachers also reflected upon their students' engagement with FE. One teacher commented that it had appealed to all of her students, as it was open-ended in the way that students could self-direct in order to engage in futures pedagogy. She described her previous difficulty in keeping a gifted child engaged and challenged, and how use of futures tools was able to provide challenging, creative, problematised learning for these and other students. It enabled students to envisage alternatives, and invoke higher-order thinking skills which developed as learners enrolled in ongoing futures projects. Another teacher commented that even for less able students, the first level of FE, i.e. identifying and exploring possible futures, allowed 'entry for all', where all students were able to develop a more critical approach. One teacher noted that students often suggested alternatives that he as the teacher was unable to 'come up with'.

Since this project in 2004, each of the teachers has moved on to a new educational setting, but still uses FE in a more explicit way than before.

## **HUMAN ORDER- DECLINE AND RESURGENCE – Part II**

**Keynote address by Co-Chairperson J C KAPUR**

WORLD PUBLIC FORUM, "Dialogue of Civilizations"

5-9 OCTOBER, 2005, RHODES, GREECE

**[...continued from FB Vol. 32, March 2006]**

### **Where do we go from here?**

First of all, we have to drop the baggage of the past. We cannot approach new horizons while still continuing to move in the same direction. We are already approaching the end of the road on this path. Therefore, we need to dismantle the premises and re-examine the parameters on which the present paradigm of 'armament protected consumerism' rests. This itself will be a major task because all the large economies are structured on this paradigm and through the process of imperial globalisation, the same are now being projected on the less developed and under developed economies. Therefore, as a first step, the endless media projection of consumerist life styles and their support structures must be re-examined. This means that media is not only projecting economies of consumerism, but are trying to connect the aspirations, interests and the



needs of the young people, even children, to this promotion and disconnecting them from their own cultural mores. In other words, violence, materialism and uni-lateralism must be replaced by a new world order based on principles of peace, cooperation and inter-dependence.

One such model is proposed in Panchsheel between the two largest countries- India and China. The five principles of Panchsheel are as follows:

1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty;
2. Mutual non-aggression;
3. Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs;
4. Equality and mutual benefit: and
5. Peaceful coexistence

We must therefore, support a path of peace, cooperation and inter-dependence.

Steps have to be initiated to place community interest over the individual interest. As progress quite often depends on the contributions made by the individual, we will, therefore, have to define where the human interest or community interest should prevail.

The entire structure of 'armament protected consumerism' is structured on the arms race, on continuously increasing violence. This, therefore, would call for non-violent non-cooperation with the governments of countries which are encouraging and fuelling these processes.

Before we can take such action, we have to cast aside the symbols on which such structures exist:

- That the meaning and purpose of life is to consume.
- That the entire success of the people and society is judged in terms of its contributions and position in the material development. In other words, taking humans on paths of monetary acquisitions and continuously promoting material success as a symbol of life. A more fundamental basis for the meaning and purpose of life has to be established.

Instead of creating a coalition for war, the world today needs a coalition for peace and to isolate war-mongering nations which at the slightest pretext use weapons to settle issues instead of peaceful dialogue. Therefore, an action plan; for the government, the political parties, moral leaders, business leaders, NGOs and educational institutions has to necessarily create a charter which will fit into the larger human future and this vision will have to be based on certain guiding principles of peace, cooperation and inter-dependence. The media should not be for the promotion of conspicuous consumption and low culture but for the transmission of new values and higher cultural mores.

Science in many ways is a search for truth. Guided by intuition it follows the intellectual path in search of the physical reality. Its success is judged by its creativity and its performance. Religion is also a search for truth. But all eternal values are a reference to being and not to performance. And performance can only be significant in so far as it substantiates being.

We are living under an illusion that the desired future of human dignity and harmony can be achieved through an endless struggle for material acquisition and aggressive economic growth, exploitation and continuing strife between the internal (i.e. metaphysical and spiritual) and external that is material. Billions of people around the world are getting tired and sick of the limitless polymorphous barbarism and the material psychic and spiritual excesses being injected into human affairs. This is deadening that portion of the subconscious mind from which everything profound and enduring emanates. This abdication of life in favour of means to it is the cause of the separation of the material and the spiritual man. The widening disharmony between creative potential of science and technology and the human spiritual resources negate its moral and ethical direction. This separation is also sapping the intuitive factors in the progress of new sciences. The means are overwhelming the intuitive being, and the evolutionary pathways to human progress, and making the entire process uncertain. As political and religious fundamentalism tightens its grip, it begins to sap the intellectual vitality of nations.

The battle over evolution and genesis is one aspect of this separation. Inability of some religious traditions to harmonise with the human creativity because these are unable to integrate within the fold of their commercialising religious traditions, because there is an unspoken conflict of interest. We have gone through many such eras of political and religious fundamentalism.

Roman annihilation of Christianity in their Empire led to five centuries of dark ages. It was restored by the rediscovery of Aristotle in the twelfth century.

Islamic fundamentalism in Baghdad around 1067 led to a millennium of backwardness which still prevails in many Islamic countries.

European victory of rationalism and science over dogmatism in the 12-13<sup>th</sup> century, created a rival form of authority, accuracy and efficiency on which the modern technological world is founded. But in this process it lost its soul and pathways to higher consciousness, the fountain of all innovative and creative activity.

Humanism flowers from the belief in the interconnectedness of all phenomenon. Therefore, it creates harmony in all its manifestations, physical and metaphysical, real and abstract. It is also the external expression of our inner search for peace and quietude.

### **The Role of Religious Tradition**

The civilizations which in their ultimate formulation get divorced or separated from the intuitive or the spiritual restraints create more problems than they can solve. It also saps the vitality for any creative advancement. A process of retrogression sets in and cannot revert to an earlier stage and often cataclysmic process of disintegration begins to take root. Faster movement towards more science and technologies, more articles of consumption accelerate and then nothing is left of the spiritual, the soul of man – his/her true being. A process of heartless moronization of the humans sets in and there is little difference between man and machine, a bicycle, an automobile, a television or a computer, depending upon the state of individual evolution, and the level of separation of his physical self from its being.

Most religious traditions have rituals and mythology and these could relate to the earlier elementary and classical sciences but the idiom of new sciences has undergone a major transformation. Commercialised rituals and mythologies without a message and a philosophy are unable to relate to the new sciences or cannot harmoniously connect.

On the other hand in some religious traditions, the centre point of the spiritual tradition is the human being itself and can consciously relate to both the machine and the metaphysical reality. It can harmonize the material with the spiritual. Thus orderliness of the human society remains sustainable. It begins to discover the true aim of progress away from the path of increasing complexity of the social economy. The continuous increase of scale without substance, stultifies self renewal and pathways towards greater subjectivity. The understanding that truth is in his being and the inward expansion.

Religion is a means of human salvation and perfection. But the inability of many faiths to interact and harmonise with the expanding and shifting idiom of new sciences, has left the individual and societies free to move towards uncontrolled mechanisation and has shackled the being with all kinds of dogmas and creeds, and priestly watchdogs to keep them in line with their expanding commercial interests. This is to save them from the final judgement on their earthly conduct. This false socialization of religion has always been the chief cause of failure to regenerate humankind. The place of faith in human affairs is being transformed into extreme forms of fundamentalism. This arises out of the failure of the humans to relate to the emerging knowledge and human evolution on one side, and seek divinity for their actions. This division between the life from its spirit conditioned ethical and moral directions, and the societies stagnate. Unless these societies through diverse theological paths are led towards spiritualisation of life or towards the lights of an ideal they are overwhelmed by external materiality.

It is now important that new links relevant to our fast changing rationalism be established. And an attempt be made to restate those eternal spiritual truths from diverse theological streams and harmonise these into a widely acceptable ethical and moral stream with a set of values around which nations can structure a way of life relevant within their own cultural continuity. And for a search and fulfilment of their own meaning and purpose of life; divine in its essence. This would need the shaking of both material and metaphysical hurdles outside of the unchangeable eternal laws. Neither science or philosophy can be bound by the pressures to condition their understanding and conclusion with current religious dogmas, or ethical or aesthetic prejudices, because all these

open the doors of perceptions and human spirit. It should all flow from the laws of their own being. Then alone the physical vitality and divinity will function together in individuals, societies or nations and the world at large. Therefore to keep life in balance we cannot deny science or philosophy, aesthetics or spirituality to make humans aware of their own eternal divinity. A theocentric and techno-centric environment has to be transformed into a homocentric situation where every human is guided by his own being to a higher and constantly rising level of consciousness.

Orderliness based on social justice and an ethical order based on values higher than human in the human consciousness catalyse balances within a community, a nation or any social organism. Such a balance can only be created if there is a wide diversity—bio-diversity, theo-diversity, and freely expressed diversity of ideas. All these diversities arrive at a common centre and add to the expansion of physical, mental and spiritual life on our planet and connects it to the orderliness of the cosmos. So long as there is an evolution of the human species from the physical to the mental, supramental and spiritual, societies advance and imbalance within the system get continuously reflected and corrected. But if the corrective or innovative capacities of the citizens of a society are stifled, systems become imbalanced and a state of disorderliness begins to creep in. Such an unidirectional movement in the world system often leads to diseased bodies, minds, conflicts, wars and terrorism. There are many examples in history where societal imbalances were corrected by the emerging new forces within the system. We stand at the threshold of such a potential and we must act.

### **What then must we do?**

1. Recognize that our planet earth is an insignificant part of the larger cosmic reality which is supreme and as such must condition our lives. The attempted misconceived preemption of that cosmic supremacy by creating our own values devoid of spiritual constraints to serve our own limited interests has distorted the ethical and moral frame of societies. Instead of a search for harmony and orderliness through dialogue there is a unilateral projection of interests through ever intensifying and widening circle of violence and terrorism.
2. Any reconnection with the cosmic orderliness can only be at the higher cultural and spiritual plane, beyond individual and societal interests—which are largely material. So these must remain outside the purview of a dialogue of civilisations in the quest for a new human direction. The latter should be conducted at the fundamental, cultural and spiritual level, where all religions and cultural manifestations tend to converge, beyond consumerism providing the potential for evolving a universal ethical and moral code and values.
3. Nations can then integrate these within the common parameters of needs, resources and psyche and evolve their own civilisational frames- the base instinct to dominate other nations will thus be curbed. Each one will follow his own path within a larger universal value frame imbibing the best of all cultures and in tune with the cosmic orderliness and perpetuity. Thus a more stable and humane value structure will once again begin to take shape. A state of withdrawal from the death-wish conditioning human affairs, when they are based on greed and lust for power. With such a common ethical and moral code and value structure, human beings and nations can renew themselves, reinventing and evolving their own socially responsible communities at the centre point of this new order.

All major confessions and cultures must participate in such an exercise and be represented by the wisest of the wise within their communities. We have to guide and transform our conflict-centric world into the one where theo-centricity will begin to harmonise with other centricities in the larger human interest to arrive at a homocentric point. An act of human apotheosis.

## **SECTION 3 - FUTURES STUDIES IN THE WORLD**

[This section will be back in the next issue. New submissions very welcome!!](#)

**SECTION 4 - CALLS FOR PAPERS AND EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS****UPCOMING EVENTS****ERRATA**

A typing error was made in the March '06 issue of the FB. Page 2, first paragraph, third line instead of "In September/October 1994..." should be "In September/October 2004...". We apologise for the mistake.

**The World Future Society's Annual Conference  
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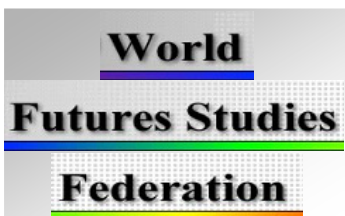


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