

Imaginal Visioning for Prophetic Foresight

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Abstract

This article makes the case that:

- a) Rational/analytic methods for futures research, foresight and planning need to be complemented by “imaginal” visioning methods that are based on higher intuition—especially in times involving systemic disruptions and transformative change expected in the next decade and beyond; and*
- b) “Prophetic” foresight, involving a moral or wisdom component, is similarly essential for the evolution of wise futures.*

After tracing the 40 year-long development of imaginal visioning methods by the author, foundational concepts are introduced that support the idea of personal, interpersonal and transpersonal co-creative partnerships in the use and communication of imaginal visioning for prophetic foresight.

Keywords: visioning, imaginal visioning, foresight, prophetic foresight, evolution, conscious evolution, intuition, wise futures

Imaginal Visioning for Prophetic Foresight¹

*The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant.
We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift.*

Albert Einstein

The most remarkable feature of this historical moment on Earth is not that we are on the way to destroying the world — we’ve actually been on the way for quite a while. It is that we are beginning to wake up, as from a millennia-long sleep, to a whole new relationship to our world, to ourselves and each other.

Joanna Macy

1.0 Introduction: The Future Context of Foresight Communication

The likelihood of *epochal* change is increasingly recognized by both professional futurists and citizen activist leaders as essential to prepare for and to influence to the extent feasible. For example consider the following writers who represent different schools of thought about the future:

- *Sociotechnological enthusiasts* such as Ray Kurtzweil (2005) and William Halal (2008)
- *Sociotechnological alarmists* such as Thomas Homer-Dixon (2006), John Michael Greer (2008), Michael Marien (2009), Lester Brown (2011), and Mark Bailey (2011)
- *Evolutionary transformationalists* such as Willis Harman (1998), Barbara Marx Hubbard (1998), Ken Wilber (2001), and Ervin Laszlo (2009)
- *Cosmic transformationalists* such as Ruth Miller (2011) and Sal Rachele (2011). Cutting across such orientations as above, the journal *FUTURES* recently featured a series of articles based on the idea that we are already living in *post-normal times* (Sardar, 2010), e.g., “Toward a new macrohistory: An extension to Sardar’s ‘postnormal times’” (Gary, 2011).

All of these tend to see the present and near-term future as transitional between major historical epochs for humankind, and most of them exemplify the precept known as *Dator’s Law*—that any useful statement about the future should at first seem ridiculous.

“Communication of Foresight” is thus a worthy topic at this time, not only due to the alternative future ways in which a new civilizational epoch may emerge (including the impending MegaCrisis recently focused on by this journal),² but also due to the cascading explosion of new social networking applications through which to communicate—both about such threats, and about evolving visions of a wisely evolving civilization as guidelines for handling those threats. Clearly, deeply creative and visionary thinking is called for.

1.1 From MegaCrisis to wise futures: The need for higher level thinking

As noted in two prior articles in this journal (Markley, 2011b, 2011c), not only is our society headed for a new civilizational epoch, it is likely to get there through the gateway of a cascading series of disruptions (economic, ecological, civic, etc.), leading up to a MegaCrisis/tipping point toward disintegration—after which, hopefully, there will be a recovery with whatever type of reformation can lead to what I would here like to term a *wise future*.

Wise futures may be envisioned as being ecologically sustainable, socioeconomically just, psychospiritually fulfilling, and protective of the needs of future generations—such as are aspired to by citizen activist groups like the Bioneers Conference³ and Pachamama Alliance.⁴ Comparable concepts are “integral futures” (Gidley, 2007; Slaughter, 2008a; Collins & Hines, 2010), or “aspirational futures” (Bezold, Peck & Olson, 1998), and the thrust of Tom Lombardo’s recent writing about wisdom, consciousness and the future (2011a, 2011b, undated).

As also noted in Markley (2011b), the potential run-up to MegaCrisis is increasingly beset with a loss of resilience, and filled with *wicked problems*: challenges that are difficult or impossible to solve for many reasons, often including

complex systemic interdependencies such that the effort to solve one aspect of a wicked problem may reveal or create other problems (Gall, et al, 2010; Ritchey, 2011). If one accepts the well-worn adage attributed to Einstein—*that no problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it*—it follows that any path to wise futures must involve new “higher level” approaches that extend our capacities for foresight, proactive problem solving, design thinking, communication and collective action.⁵ Foresight methods involving “higher” intuition constitute one such approach (Markley & Harman, 1982; Harman & Rheingold, 1984, Markley, 1996).

1.2 Imaginal visioning for prophetic foresight⁶

In my own futures research and forecasting work, I have increasingly found it useful to complement rational/analytic methods for conventional foresight with higher intuition methods. In response to the needs developed above, I now propose to use the terms: *imaginal visioning for prophetic foresight*. Although their understanding needs additional information given in the longer preprint of this article, please consider the following keynote definitions for this article:

Imaginal Visioning—the process of intuiting transcendently supra-rational knowledge in a focused receptive mode

Prophetic foresight—proactive knowledge⁷ that includes a moral, ethical or wisdom component; often a vision of wise and unwise futures and ways to manifest or avoid them⁸. [Please consider the two endnotes as part of this definition.]

Imaginal Visioning for Prophetic Foresight is a 15 min. video that can be seen online.⁹

To help navigate the many interdisciplinary concepts brought together in this article, here is the basic outline:

Section 2 – An empirical description of my work developing visioning methods for futures research and foresight

Section 3 – Essential concepts for their further evolution of imaginal visioning methods

Section 4 – Three imaginal channels (personal, interpersonal, and transpersonal) through which to co-creatively seek and communicate prophetic foresight for the evolution of wise futures

Section 5 – Where imaginal visioning is apt to be most useful

Section 6 – Summary conclusion and further work.

2.0 Empirical Foundations of My Imaginal Foresight Methods

My first experience as a professional futurist trying to cope with the methodological challenge of transformative change came in the early 1970s, after I had been hired as a fresh postdoc by Willis Harman to lead methodology development at the new futures research think tank he was forming at the Stanford Research Institute (now SRI International). Soon thereafter, I got my first taste of personal/professional paradigm change.

As if it wasn't hard enough to figure out how to do holistic research on the future of society, the first major results of our modeling methodology¹⁰ indicated that of some fifty of the most highly plausible alternative future histories for society, only a small handful were by any stretch of the imagination desirable. And most of them involved deep seated transformation regarding underlying attitudes, images and policies in response to emerging problems involving over-population, resource depletion, pollution, dangerous weapons build ups, etc.—a Pandora's Box of problems we dubbed, "The World Macroproblem"¹¹ (Harman, 1969; Markley, 1972/1981; Harman, Markley, & Rhyne, 1973).

With my methodological responsibilities in mind, I, in turn, reasoned that foresight methods based on rational/analytic modes of thinking are, in principle, not suitable for creative exploration of transformational alternative futures because such thinking modes are more or less extrapolative of what has gone on before. My knowledge of cognitive psychology pointed toward intuition as the appropriate mental mode to use; and after reviewing many different ways to access one's intuitive faculty, I came to settle on *guided cognitive imagery* as the most "appropriate technology"¹² for helping people tap their intuitive sources of knowledge for purposes of foresight involving transformative change.

So I immediately set about learning the art of guiding interactive visioning sessions in which the guide facilitates the process of relaxing cognitive beliefs and expectations, so as to help participants' focus their intuitive resources on the task at hand with minimal bias.¹³

2.1 A "Visioning Skunk Works" R&D laboratory

After some initial successes indicating that this new approach had promise¹⁴, I took steps to build a solidly empirical R&D base for the further development of these intuitively based visioning processes. Specifically, I enlisted a small group of my closest SRI colleagues to participate in a weekly Friday afternoon visioning lab we called our "Skunk Works" (a term used by aerospace design engineers for creatively advanced work that is kept hidden to avoid administrative obstacles). The sessions were held in the living room of a nearby home and generally involved a sequence of steps more or less like the following:

1. While having light refreshments, we first conferred about the most difficult problems being faced in our rational/analytically-based futures research work, choosing one or two as the focus of work for the afternoon.
2. With the dictum that *the guide should be guided*, I would then relax into a special state of consciousness for enhanced intuition (called "going to level"), so as to intuit a suitable visioning process to be used for the work of the day.
3. To prepare the group for the visioning session to follow, I next led them in a guided induction to "level" that relaxes the habitual rational/analytic state of consciousness and simultaneously opens up the usually hidden reserves of intuition and what might be termed non-local awareness.
4. When a suitable state of consciousness was reached by the group, we did whatever type of process I had intuited as being most suitable for the task at hand.
5. We usually ended with a "debriefing" session in which we talked about what worked, what didn't, and how to integrate our results into the conventional

research methods we would be using in the following week.

A sampling of anecdotal examples our work in this informal R&D “Skunk Works” lab are featured in Markley (2007; 2009), both of which can be read online. For example, here is one thing we did when working on the long-range future of transportation-related pollution and its impacts (Elgin, MacMichael & Schwartz, 1975):

After relaxing into the meditative “level” suitable for what I have now come to call *imaginal visioning*, we all imagined being together in a ten-foot diameter eyeball that became our virtual vehicle for space-time travel. In it we “flew” at 20,000 ft. over the greater Los Angeles region in the year 2020, and then shared what each of us saw in the imaginal trance that we used for this “trip.”

Afterwards, we injected the consolidated results into the rational/analytic steps that we reported to our clients regarding our overall methodology. In this and other studies at the time, we didn’t risk our political credibility by disclosing the “consciousness” aspects of our research methodology for business and government clients.¹⁵

Although my grasp of visioning methodology has become much more nuanced since then, an historically useful white paper about my visioning work up to that point is “Visionary Futures: Guided Cognitive Imagery in Teaching and Learning about the Future” (Markley, 1998).

2.2 Visionary development of an evolutionary image of humankind

Two experiences from my ten years at SRI stand out as being turning points—not only for the strengthening of my confidence in visioning as a methodological channel for prophetic foresight involving extra-ordinary transpersonal knowledge, but also for the conceptualization of an evolutionary, transpersonal image humankind that is holistically integrative:

- Leading an interdisciplinary futures research study, “The Societal Consequences of Changing Images of Man” (Campbell, et al., 1974; Markley & Harman, 1982)
- Experiencing an unexpected visionary journey to a virtual “Omniverse Center for Cultural Development” existing in an inner domain of consciousness (Markley, 2009).¹⁶

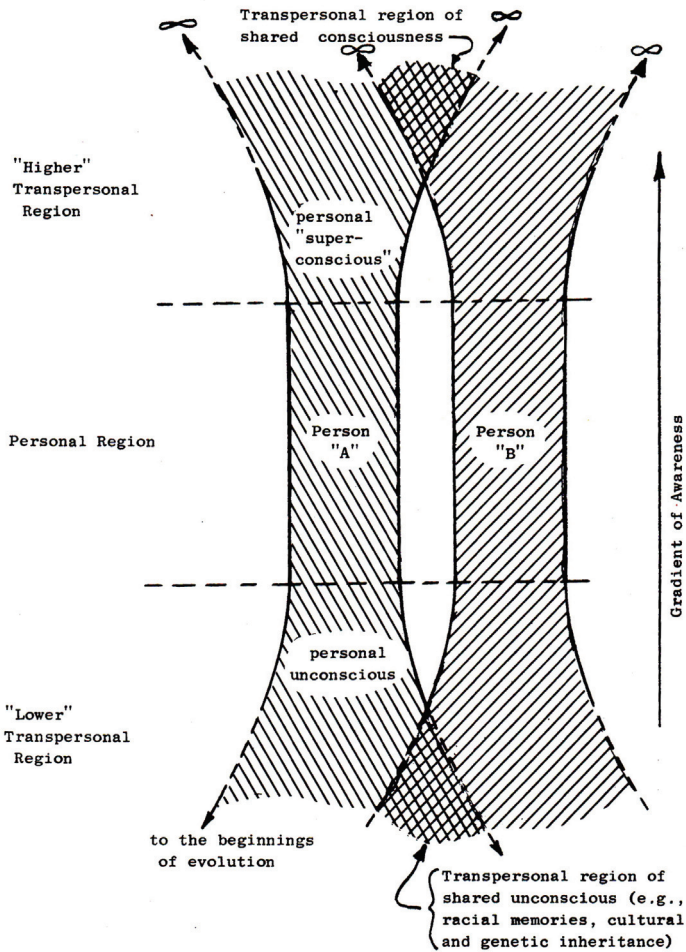


Figure 1. Personal and transpersonal regions in consciousness

Note: From Figure 11 of *Changing Images of Man* (Markley & Harman, 1982, p.134).

2.3 Visionary futures work after SRI

In 1978 both Harman and I left SRI—he to become President of the Institute of Noetic Sciences, and me to chair the University of Houston-Clear Lake’s new graduate program in Studies of the Future. Being rather burned out from the demands of “grantsmanship” at SRI, the teaching of a graduate course in “Visionary Futures” at UHCL proved an ideal way to continue my visioning R&D without the need for external funding.¹⁷ In it I was able to explore how best to teach visioning skills to all manner of students, ranging:

- From *fundamentalist believers*, whose prior ideological indoctrination was often quite hostile to the use of suggestively induced states of consciousness for “higher” intuition, but who usually welcomed these methods once explained in a way both scientifically and spiritually compatible;
- To *corporate staff professionals and executives*, who usually found these

methods useful and effective, but often felt it unwise to use them openly in their corporate settings due to concerns about political credibility.¹⁸

In 1995 an executive at the NASA Johnson Space Center commissioned me to write a visionary white paper on the long-range future of “Spaceship Earth.”¹⁹ In it, my combined use of both rational forecasting methods and the visioning tools put forward here, led me to envision an early version of the schematic shown below as Figure 2.

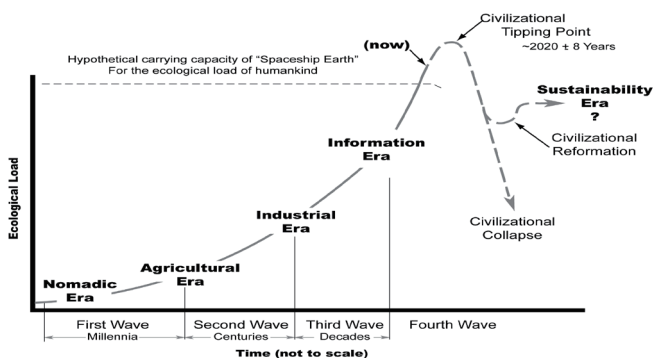


Figure 2. Idealized worst-and best-case scenarios involving epochal change
 Note: From Markley & Porter, 2010, Markley, 2011a,b,c; after Markley, 1995.

After early retirement in 2000 from university teaching, I turned my attention to the deepening of my own psychospiritual capacities with a year of meditation and study in Kauai. This extended retreat and my research since then have done much to give me an experiential frame of reference about the long term future evolutionary ascension potential for humanity, and of the need for the types of personal, interpersonal and transpersonal of visioning that will be developed below in Section 4.

Then in 2010, when it became apparent that the prophetic forecast shown on Figure 2 is dangerously close to coming true if major STEEP²⁰ trends continue unabated, I undertook additional research and related writing on “wild cards” having high estimated probability but low credibility (Markley, 2011 a,b,c).

3.0 Essential Concepts for the Further Evolution of Imaginal Foresight Methods

In addition to the empirical foundations described above are several important conceptual foundations.²¹

- *Primary Mental Functions*
- *Evolutionary Emergence*
- *Integral Thinking and Activism*
- *Imaginal Visioning*
- *Stress Reduction and Deep Resilience*
- *Co-Creative Partnership*

4.0 Co-Creative Channels for Imaginal Visioning and Prophetic Foresight

Ervin Laszlo, in his brief, but exceptionally learned essay, “Human Evolution in the Third Millennium” (2001), contrasts:

- *Extensive* sociocultural evolution marked by *conquest, colonization and consumption*; with
- *Intensive* sociocultural evolution marked by *connection, communication and consciousness*.

The first set of “3 C’s” have characterized the 10,000 year historical ascent portrayed by the left hand side of Figure 2. The second set must now predominate if humanity is to achieve “the upside of down” toward sustainably wise futures, schematically diagrammed by the right side of Figure 2.

Laszlo’s “3-Cs” suggest how the the further development of the above visioning methods can contribute directly toward the evolution of wise futures: by proactive connection, communication and consciousness in ways that are holistically integrative.

Thus we turn to three types of co-creative partnership for participatory knowing through which imaginal wisdom needs to emerge and flow:

- *Intrapersonal* partnership—between egoic self and Higher Self
- *Interpersonal* partnership—between individuals, teams and organizations, especially those that are in alignment with higher guidance
- *Transpersonal* partnership—between representatives of various system elements in the “ecology of all that is”—both physical and non-physical.

4.1 Intrapersonal partnership

Common to success with virtually all prophetic disciplines is the necessity to bring the self-active egocentric mind into alignment with higher aspects of the Self (such as those listed above), which for convenience, we summarize with terms such as Higher Self, or Essence—the source of imaginal intuition. Thus the call is to move beyond merely cognitive visualization of future possibilities involving the egocentric level of consciousness, to the use of higher intuition, involving a true co-creative partnership between the ego-self and the Higher Self.²²

Although this is difficult for people to do on their own without experience in meditation or related esoteric disciplines, this can be facilitated by the use of suggestively induced physical and mental relaxation followed by guided imagery. This makes feasible the visioning of possible, probable and preferable futures in ways that transcend one’s customary beliefs and biases.

The ability to do all this can be learned on your own but is much easier when taught by a skilled teacher.²³

4.2 Interpersonal partnerships

It is productive to extend this type of intrapersonal relationship to include co-creative partnerships with others doing so as well. The seeking of higher guidance for prophetic foresight in groups can take many forms. Perhaps the most traditional way is how indigenous tribal leaders sit in council, or the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) meet. In both of these traditional forms, all participants sit in

silence as they strive to bring through the Spirit of Guidance for wise decision making—only speaking when there is a felt call to share a message received from the Source of inner wisdom. When a consensus emerges such that the whole group feels it, the decision is made. In the language suggested above, we might say that they are individually and collectively integrating the supra-mental Higher Self mind with their individual intuitions and normal, rational thought processes to solve problems by sensing the response that is most resonant with the morphogenetic field for the evolution of the group.

There are also a number of technical approaches for co-creative interpersonal visioning. In addition to the types of group visioning exercises described in the Empirical Foundations section above, Otto Scharmer’s (2007a,b) “Theory U” approach involving “presencing” – learning from the emerging future – is an increasingly recognized contemporary methodology through which higher intelligence is manifested through group process (Senge, Scharmer, Jawarski & Flowers, 2004).²⁴ The *Visioning Workbook* (United Church of Religious Science, 2005), Is a useful introduction and set of guidelines for such work. Other sources, including the previously cited works by Barbara Marx Hubbard and Ervin Laszlo, also exist and are too numerous to detail. One more example is useful to cite here, however, due to the way in which it so clearly overlaps with the transpersonal level to be discussed next: the demonstration of group consciousness in the classroom by Christopher Bache (2008, 2009).

4.3 Transpersonal Partnerships

Although phenomena involving conscious communication with different life forms are not part of the dominant paradigm of western culture, the literature contains many examples, including learning from nonphysical beings in the “ecology of consciousness,” whose roles involve teaching and guidance for the furthering of human wisdom and evolution (Maclean, 1994, 2010²⁵ ; Perkins, 1997; Narby, 1999; Harner, 1980/1991, Markley 2009). “The Council of All Beings” is a group process which voice is ritually given to all types of ecological entities so as to quicken the ecological awareness, ethical sensitivity and activist zeal of participants (Seed & Macy,1998). Although well beyond the scope of this brief article to develop, ecological sustainability may ultimately depend on the development of transpersonal consciousness as a well-established paradigm of knowledge.

5.0 Where Imaginal Visioning is Apt to be Most Useful

Imaginal visioning methods are useful in all stages and phases of futures research, forecasting and strategic planning—both as a source of new ideas and as a useful source of wisdom for vetting proposed policy choices before they are implemented. Case examples of proactive policy vetting (“plausible impact assessment”), are featured in “Mental Time Travel: A Practical Business and Personal Research Tool for Looking Ahead” (Markley, 2007).

However, as noted earlier, there needs to be an organizationally receptive climate for such methods to be considered credible. Thus, preliminary work often needs to be done to create a hospitable political climate for using what are sometimes disparaged as “high wu-wu” ways of thinking outside the box of the currently dominant paradigm— even though that same paradigm greatly limits the creativity

and wisdom that is so urgently needed in times of disruption and radical change. Courageously pioneering work along these lines is definitely needed!

Positioning the use of guided imagery for futures visioning as *entertaining education*—as in keynote speeches and workshops for specific interest groups—is a remarkably easy way to get around the problem of credibility, and can be a very welcome alternative to “talking head” types of presentations about the future. The “Experiencing the Needs of Future Generations” visioning exercise (Markley, 1994; Markley & Burstead, 1997), has proven very useful in this way.

6.0 Summary Conclusion and Further Work²⁶

This article brings a whole new way of thinking about Ervin Laszlo’s two sets of “3 Cs”—*connection, communication and consciousness* that need to replace *conquest, colonization and consumption*—and how the three types of co-creative partnership (personal, interpersonal and transpersonal) involving higher sources of wisdom can contribute significantly to prophetic foresight and the achievement of wise futures.²⁷

Anticipated directions for further work include:

- Public training in imaginal visioning, prophetic foresight and resilience enhancement—both face to face and online, where people can gain entry-level skills and further develop their proficiency
- Developmental facilitation of client-specific “skunk works” communities of practice in visioning and related tools for prophetic foresight and proactive resilience
- Peer-to-peer networking on visioning of wise futures.²⁸

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Notes

- 1 Length constraints on the published version of this article necessitated the cutting of several essential sections. A longer preprint version containing this material is posted online at www.imaginalvisioning.com
- 2 Retrieved May 15, 2012 from <http://www.jfs.tku.edu.tw/16-2/S01.pdf>
- 3 Retrieved December 25, 2011 from <http://www.bioneers.org/>
- 4 Retrieved December 13, 2011 from <http://www.pachamama.org/>
- 5 Illustrative of recently developed approaches that appear to meet the above criteria are:
 - The “Theory U” approach currently being put forward by Otto Sharmer

(2007a, 2007b) that involves “Presencing” – learning from the emerging future (Senge, Scharmer, Jawarski, & Flowers, 2004).

- The synthesis proposed by Nicholas Gall and his colleagues at Gartner Research (2010), which they dubbed “Hybrid Learning”—itself an expansion of the concept of “design thinking.”

Both are relevant for the design proposals of this article, described in a later section below.

- 6 As suggested by the peer review process, this section is written in the first person as the best way to communicate the empirical foundations of my R&D on what I am now defining as imaginal visioning for prophetic foresight.
- 7 Defining prophetic foresight as proactive means that it is relevant for the choosing of wise paths to the future, not that it is predictive of the future expected to occur. Although this distinction is of fundamental importance for futurists, it should not deny the relevance of “remote viewing” (Lee, 2008) as a futures research method.
- 8 As I use the term, *prophetic foresight* is less about predictive aspects than about a deeper level of truth than is customarily recognized about wise versus unwise consequences of following particular actions; as in the Biblical story of *the handwriting on the wall* which warned what would happen if people wouldn’t change their unwise ways. Futurists traditionally call this type of foresight a “self-denying prophecy”—i.e., one that does not come to pass if its warning is heeded. A well-known recent example of such self-denying prophecy is Al Gore warning about global warming.

Self-fulfilling prophecies, on the other hand, come about because people act to fulfill that which is prophesized. Recent examples include Eric Drexler (1987) forecasting the nanotechnology revolution that is now well underway; Ray Kurtzweil (2005) forecasting a technological “singularity” involving computers becoming conscious—perhaps by 2030; and Barbara Marx Hubbard (1998) forecasting an epochal evolutionary advance in the level of consciousness of humanity, based on spiritual rather than technological maturation. An example of both self-defeating and self-fulfilling prophecies packed together is what Thomas Homer-Dixon (2006), in a book with this name, terms “the upside of down. (More on this in the next endnote.)

Additionally, please note that this use of *prophetic* needs to be carefully distinguished from the ways in which practitioners of Evangelical and/or Pentecostal religious sects use the term. Jay Gary’s learned (2007) blog, “Do You Hear Voices in Your Head?” does much to clarify this issue. More clarification on this is provided by the expanded preprint introducing the concept of “cornucopia causality,” which I consider to be the ontological foundation of prophetic foresight.

- 9 The link is: <http://youtu.be/SPVz8vz0fe8>
- 10 The qualitative modeling methodology we used was the Field Anomaly Relaxation (FAR), brought to us from Johnson Research Associates by Russell Rhyne. Please see Rhyne (1981) for a later and more complete write up of this method. A graphic portrayal of the tree of alternative future histories we produced using the FAR method—originally carried in “The Forecasting of Plausible Alternative Future Histories: Methods, Results and Educational Policy Implications” (Harman, Markley & Rhyne, 1973 and now out of print)—is reproduced as Figures 3 and 4 of Markley (2011b), available online at <http://www.jfs.tku.edu.tw/15-3/E01.pdf>
- 11 The Club of Rome used the term *le Problématique Humaine* to denote essentially

the same cluster of problems our group at SRI called the World Macroproblem.

- 12 *Appropriate technology* is a term that was popularly used by futurists beginning in the early 1970s to denote technologies that were considered to be safe, economical and relatively free of undesirable side effects (“cross impacts”) (Porter, et al, 1980). As compared with other methods for tapping intuition in professional settings, guided cognitive imagery is effective, inexpensive, teachable, and relatively free of undesirable side effects.

One side effect that I discovered when teaching a graduate course in “Visionary Futures” from 1980-2000, was that students can become quite alarmed and sometimes a bit depressed as a result of doing repeated mental time travel (described later in this article) as a visionary research tool, and viscerally experiencing undesirable futures as highly probable if current trends continue (e.g., what is portrayed by Figure 1). For this reason, I created a “Transformative ReVisioning” process as a “self-therapy” for resilience and sustainable well-being that is useful when facing really scary futures, as well as to handle other types of projective phenomena, such as regret. You can read about this process at <http://www.inwardboundvisioning.com/Docs/TransformativeReVisioningCS.htm>

More limited visioning experiences, however, have proven quite safe with all manner of audiences over the years.

- 13 The method I found most useful for putting myself “to level” was discovered almost by accident when I took a course in self-hypnosis for speed reading. It involved using a special type of deep relaxation that turns out also to open one’s intuitive capacities. Books that I later found useful in teaching this and related skills are *Silva Mind Control* (Silva, 1977), *Mind Games* (Masters & Houston, 1973) and *Awakening Intuition* (Vaughan, 1979).
- 14 After this article was submitted for publication, I discovered that Skunk Works® is a registered trademark of Lockheed Martin, Inc., to be used only with permission (which is being requested for this use).
- 15 Art Kleiner’s seminal book, *The Age of Heretics: Heros, Outlaws and the Forerunners of Corporate Change* (1996), discusses all aspects of our futures research methods at SRI in some detail.
- 16 Both of these formative experiences are described in Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 of the expanded expanded preprint version of this article, including a number of schematic diagrams visually clarifying the relationship between conscious, subconscious, and superconscious phenomena (both personal and transpersonal). For example, diagrams such as Figure 1 can be a great aid for assessing the credibility of claims and recommendations made here.
- 17 This Visionary Futures class was something of a “Skunk Works” experiential research setting for the students and myself in the use of altered states of consciousness for purposes of learning and using higher intuition-based visioning. To avoid any ethical difficulties, however, I cleared all this beforehand with both the students involved and with relevant authorities in the university.
- 18 This problem is illustrated by case example 3.1 (Markley, 2007, p. 21) in which the use of “mental time travel” by a team from a corporate conglomerate highlighted the fact that while the use of such visionary foresight methods can (and did) reveal why current strategic policy directions must be transformed if wise futures are to be obtained, the team saw no politically acceptable way to communicate this to top-level executive management—both the research result and the method through

which it was obtained were expected to have no credibility for top executives at this time.

- 19 The Fourth Wave: A Normative Forecast for the Future of SpaceShip Earth. Retrieved April 5, 2012 from <http://www.inwardboundvisioning.com/Docs/SpaceShipEarth.htm>
- 20 STEEP is a well known acronym used by futurists denoting Social/demographic, Technological, Economic, Ecological and Political/governance trends, emerging issues and interactions among them.
- 21 Due to space limitations, they are only listed here, with the suggestion to consult the expanded expanded preprint for their exposition.
- 22 Interestingly, a series of some eight formal experiments soon to be reported by Pham, Lee & Steven (2012, forthcoming), show that individuals who have higher trust in their feelings can predict the outcomes of future events better than individuals with lower trust in their feelings.
- 23 Of the many good sources for how to meditate and/or become psychically sensitive in ways helpful for “in alignment” imaginal visioning, here are several that I personally recommend for futurists wanting to “tune in.”
 - *The Book of Meditation: The Complete Guide to Modern Meditation*, by Patricia Carrington (revised edition, 1998a); and the *Learn to Meditate Kit: The Complete Course in Modern Meditation* (1998b)
 - *The Silva Mind Control Method*, the book by Jose Silva (1977); and the course (<http://www.silvamethod.com/>)
 - *Integral Life Practice Starter Kit*, particularly the Spirit Module, by the Integral Life Practice Team (2005)
 - *Emergence: The Shift from Ego to Essence*, by Barbara Marx Hubbard (2001; revision forthcoming); and the course (<http://theacetaining.com/FromEgoToEssence>)
 - *The practical visionary: A New World Guide to Spiritual Growth and Social Change*, by Corrine McLaughlin with Gordon Davidson (2010).
- 24 Scharmer and colleagues are producing a series of “Global Presencing Forums” the goal of which is “to form a global action research community and platform that uses awareness based social technologies like presencing and is committed to reflecting and sharing these experiences with colleagues across sectors and cultures. Our guiding intention is to pioneer practices and pathways for a society that is more sustainable, inclusive, and aware (Society 4.0)... We believe that we live in a time where emerging global communities like ours may have a big impact if we can rise to the occasion. This is our time to act in a more intentional, collective and conscious way!” Retrieved January 13, 2011 from <http://www.worldischanging.org/WIC/en/contentview.wp?contentId=EVN508>
- 25 Appendix One: “Attuning to the God Within” in Maclean’s *Memoirs* contains a simple and direct way of opening to one’s divine sourcing.
- 26 A recommendation in line with the “Communicating Foresight” theme of this special issue of the *JFS*. based on Senior Editor Jose Ramos’ insightful suggestion that I post an expanded version of this article on my own personal website so as to enable access to critical foundational material exceeding the length restrictions of the journal: That the *Journal of Futures Studies* enable its authors to post an expanded version of the material they publish in the hard copy of the journal on the [JFS website](#). For both authors and readers, one of the most endearing things about

the *Journal of Futures Studies* is the promptness with which it makes access to its contents online free of charge. Such a change in policy could do much to further extend this most valuable competitive advantage offered by the *JFS*, and would enable a much richer and deeper discourse, at no appreciable additional cost to the journal.

27 The credibility of above conclusion is supported by some astonishing anthropological evidence I found after this article went to peer review: “Preconquest Consciousness” (Sorenson (1998). E. Richard Sorenson is a pioneering “observational” anthropologist, whose use of photography and other media recording enable him to study pre-literate cultures in ways that transcend verbal language. Through multiple visits to various indigenous tribes whose traditional ways had not yet been “uncultured” from contact with conquest-oriented civilization, Sorenson showed that “preconquest consciousness” has properties that are in amazing alignment with both the three types of co-creative partnership developed in this article, as well as with the co-creatively participatory vision of transpersonal knowing developed by Jorge N. Ferrer in his seminal *Revisioning Transpersonal Theory: A Participatory Vision of Human Spirituality* (2002).

The idea of high-trust *neo*-preconquest consciousness and culture seems especially promising as a guiding image for further work. And methods such as those described in *Transforming Self and Others through Research: Transpersonal Research Methods and Skills for the Human Sciences and Humanities* (Anderson and Braud, 2011), may be particularly appropriate for so doing.

28 More information on these will be posted online at www.imaginalvisioning.com

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