

A Challenging Conversation on Integral Futures: Embodied Foresight & Trialogues

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Introduction

At the heart of an integral approach to any sphere of activity and inquiry is inclusion of the greatest possible number of perspectives, and practitioner reflection. Many practitioners associated with the Masters course in Strategic Foresight at Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, Australia have proposed that Integral Futures Studies and Foresight practice represents a revolutionary development in the field, with potential to bring about ground shifts at least as significant as the earlier interpretive and critical waves.

This emergence has been led by Slaughter's call for Integral Methodological Renewal: the development of futures methodologies consistent with and based on the principles of Integral Theory, especially, but not exclusively, as articulated by the philosopher Ken Wilber (Slaughter, 2003; Slaughter, 2004). To date, methodological renewal has focused on expanded and new tools and techniques. Methodology, though, is about more than the tools used: it involves careful attention to the stance taken by the practitioner in the use of tools to enact knowledge and understanding. This is particularly so for Integral Futures methodologies: Richard Slaughter and Joseph Voros have stressed the extent of the demands placed on the Integral Futures practitioner, and have highlighted the need for specific focus on his or her development. We contend in this article that practitioner stance is not simply of equal importance to the tools used, but is the *primary factor* in realising the benefits of Integral Futures methodologies.

Toward Integral Enactment: Trialogues & Embodied Foresight

We argue that integral enactment of Integral Future methodologies is itself a meta-methodology *within* which tools and practices should be enacted. We explore this via a process of 'trialogue'—three-way deep dialogue—through which the outlines of an approach to futures and foresight practice called *Embodied Foresight* emerges. The 'trialogue' process has evolved primarily from David Bohm's dialogue methodology (Bohm, 1996), and the Omega Institute exploratory discussions helmed by the late ethno-botanist Terence McKenna (Abraham, McKenna, & Sheldrake, 1998). Other relevant examples and sources include archetypal psychotherapist James Hillman and author Michael Ventura's debate on contemporary culture (Hillman & Ventura, 1993), the Dialogue Group's methodology for cultural and organisational learning (Ellinor & Gerard, 1998), and the Society for Organizational Learning's work on presence and applied systems thinking (Senge, 1990; Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, & Flowers, 2004).

The catalyst for the 'trialogue' process was our reflections on the 2003, 2004 and 2006 iterations of the Advanced Professional Praxis unit in Swinburne University's Strategic Foresight program. Our 'practitioner conversations' expanded to discuss Futures Studies (FS) as 'shadow' work (in self, teacher, school and tradition), axiology/ethics, practitioner responsibility for published work and repercussions, transcultural transmission and other general problems that arise in embodied practices. Our focus was on general problems and solutions and to advocate reflective processes in the Futures Studies field and Strategic Foresight profession.

Our 'trialogue' below occurred from February to April 2006 as Richard Slaughter, Joseph Voros and Peter Hayward sought contributions for the 'Integral Futures methodologies' special issue of *Futures* (published in March 2008). The resulting 'apocrypha' shows how FS practitioners can have a varied understanding of Integral Futures methodologies and immediate/synchronic responses to the Integral Futures debate—dependent on affiliation, information flow, mindset, power and stance—which can differ from the key participants and that may evolve diachronically or through time as the practitioner actively reflects on these factors (Oshry, 1996). The 'trialogue' process below thus also 'bounds' our responses to April 2006: comparable to the raw messiness of musicians jamming in a garage rather than spending years in a high-tech recording studio (Metallica, 1987).

Embodied Foresight involves the enactment of integral principles in day-to-day living and aims to make our work as practitioners continuous with our being. It incorporates a new approach to understanding ethical practice, based on heightened sensitivity to the specific, local context in which methodology is enacted. At the heart of Embodied Foresight is the development of capacity to sit with uncertainty and not-knowing, to develop tolerance and acceptance of the discomfort that comes with doubt. A healthy relationship with doubt is seen as central to good practice within a conceptual understanding of the future as non-predictable and in-determinant. Through the 'trialogue' reflective process, we look at how an Embodied Foresight capacity is developed and consider a range of approaches to ongoing development, notably practice-oriented research perspectives.

The Trialogue

Alex Burns: To-date the development of Integral Futures has focused on theory development, the creation of transdisciplinary linkages, and the formation of an epistemic community. Slaughter, Voros, Hayward and others have shown how integral theorists—primarily via the models of Jean Gebser, Clare W. Graves, Jane Loevinger and Ken Wilber—can expand the breadth and depth of Futures Studies inquiry.

However, this theory development phase has raised several problems and pathologies. The fusion of Integral Theory and FS involves the alchemical transformation of the practitioner's consciousness, and moral engagement with possible, probable and preferred futures. On a continuum, this places Integral FS closer to the 'master game' of human evolution (De Ropp, 1968) than other methodological integration. Consequently, the problems and pathologies in this theory development phase include: 'True Believer' advocacy of specific integral theorists (Hoffer, 1957), facile interpretations of other models and theorists, and confrontation with personal *monsters of the Id* (Wilcox, 1956). Authentic initiatory and wisdom traditions have developed strategies to resolve them. Yet the academic emphasis of universities and the legacy of past ethically problematic experiments has made these encounters taboo.

Anticipatory Action Research (AAR) provides a counter-balancing force to Integral Theory and Futures Studies. It situates the theory development phase in a Theory-Action-Review cycle (TAR). Action is necessary to test the epistemological and ontological dimensions of theories, and to foresee the real-world impacts. Wisdom traditions engage with Review via self-reflexive inquiry, contemplative practices and communal/group verification. To-date, although Integral Futures emphasizes the interior dimensions of Review, the problems and pathologies mentioned above may create an aura of pseudo-intellectualism rather than embodied presence. If so, talk about self-transformation occurs rather than active engagement and reflective knowledge sharing.

The theory development phase of Integral Futures focused on creating a new discourse and an epistemic community with shared meaning-making. The combination of Integral Futures and AAR acknowledges this phase's insights, and then transcends institutional forms to include individuals and fluid communities of practice.

Jose Ramos: I would like to make a distinction between Integral Theory as an abstract model, something drawn up, for example, on graph paper, neat and orderly, and on the other hand Integral Theory as transformed by its lived context, as appearing distinct depending on the situation and circumstance that arises. The abstract model is Integral Theory as an intellectual enterprise, and the contextual transformation is Integral Theory as embodied. I have more faith in the latter, a contextual understanding of integral approaches to any domain of knowledge and practice, which is transformed through its visceral and practical marriage with contexts. The former intellectual approach, has the pretension of being a model applicable to nearly all contexts (and perhaps in this way a male energy), while the former allows itself to be revolutionised by the messy and often incoherent circumstances that arise (and perhaps reflects a female energy). I think the latter includes a healthy doubt and flexibility to let go of say, one theorist or one model for another, which is better suited to certain

circumstances. As context is our concrete marriage with the world, Integral Theory in this latter sense means a meaningful and healthy relating, from the personal to the organisational etc. I doubt whether such a meaningful and healthy relating is possible where a 'model monopoly' over-codes a context that is trying desperately to speak to us, if we would only listen. In this sense the latter represents an integral enterprise, as opposed to an Integral theory. Implicit here is a sense that it cannot be integral, if there is only one Integral Theory. One need only to look at the area of Health Promotion or Psychology where bio-psycho-social models have been developed as 'integral theories', or in the area of action research, where first, second and third person frames of reference are used as de facto integral approaches. To this can be added (yet undiscovered) integral theories from cultures other than the US, which will probably reflect the cultural contexts they emerged in. Contexts are myriad and numberless. Thus an Embodied Foresight practice is an on-going enterprise in the application of integral (and evolving) foresight principles, not an end point. To summarise I see an Embodied Foresight as plural and unfolding (expressing great doubt), I see it as something we strive for as an on-going enterprise, not something we already have (expressed through great determination), and I see it as a profoundly open anticipatory consciousness that expresses the future as a principle of present action (expressing great faith), as opposed to a single teleological vision or a version of the future as 'out there' disconnected from the present (which expresses a shallow faith).

Josh Floyd: Jose has picked up here on the three pillars of practice in Zen: great doubt, great faith, great perseverance (Daido Looi, 2002, p. 269). This is very significant in relation to the concept of Embodied Foresight. Zen is strongly grounded in practise; there is a program of training that supports the development of the practitioner rather than development of the practitioner's power to manipulate her or his circumstances. The Zen practitioner learns to see with new eyes, and I think this is something that we strive for as futures practitioners also, to learn the uncovering of new potential futures through making our very way of seeing things transparent to ourselves. I find these three pillars a very powerful point of reference against which to test the perspective that I am taking in any situation: am I able to remain in that open-but-critical space from which good futures might be assisted to emerge?

Jose, I'd like to return for a moment to your reflection on the relationship between Integral Futures as abstract models and as lived context. I appreciate your perspective on this, and even so, I think it is important to highlight that an Integral Futures methodology will by definition (if it is authentic) always include both stances. It is through the intellectual approach that we can climb out of our present, embodied context in such a way that we can see its limitations. The intellectual stance seems very important for the maintenance of critical reflection, and so I think we should be careful not to swing too far towards the embodied stance such that we become just a body. There seems to be a certain tension between the male and the female approach, as you put it, that is at the heart of Integral Futures: trying to hold just the right tension seems to be important. I would also like to highlight the very important role that abstract models can play in providing the motivation to step onto the integral methodological path. I recall my own first encounter with this perspective, and the way that it helped to make sense of the difficulty I had been having reconciling apparently incommensu-

rate ideas. Of course, the incommensurability didn't just disappear, but it did become less confusing, less of a problem. I found that I had a way to live with it and accept it: I had a glimpse of a transcendent organising principle that allowed the contradictions to be.

There is also an important principle to consider here relating to the enactive view of cognition (Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1991). This enactive cognition can be summed up as "all knowing is doing and all doing is knowing" (Maturana & Varela, 1988, p. 27), and obviously this brings us back strongly to the central role of AAR in an Embodied Foresight perspective. But why I think this is important here is that by giving someone an abstract model or set of tools based on such a model, as is proposed with Integral Futures methodologies, we are introducing a new way of doing that can lead to a new way of knowing. This intellectualisation can be a very important stepping stone towards the embodiment of Integral Futures principles. This always reminds me of the famous quote attributed to Buckminster Fuller: "If you want to teach people a new way of thinking, don't bother teaching them. Instead, give them a tool, the use of which will lead to new ways of thinking" I find that one of the things that seems to unite those with an interest in integral approaches is a desire to help open up new thinking, both our own and that of others. It seems that creating and engaging with these intellectual artefacts can be a very powerful part of this. The trick seems to be to recognise and remember the partiality. Again, this idea of maintaining critical tension seems to be a key.

I wonder if at this point, it would be valuable to reflect briefly on the nature of methodology itself—my understanding is that methodology refers to the science of method, and in this regard, as soon as we propose our Embodied Foresight as a meta-methodology within which to enact Integral Futures methodology, we step into a realm with a strong intellectual focus. And of course, it may pay to be mindful that the creation of this article involves an act of conceptualisation itself.

Alex Burns: Slaughter's initial work on Integral Futures positioned it as a meta-methodology: its criteria include an integrative frame, a re-evaluation of methods and practitioner awareness, cultural transmission between practitioners, and a transformative space for co-creation. Wilber's breadth and scope enabled Slaughter to critically situate FS methodologies, models, tools and artefacts in a more integrative frame (Slaughter, 2003; Slaughter, 2004). This frame potentially highlights the conceptual strengths and limits of each FS methodology and model. Consequently, the practitioner's awareness of context, genealogy and the evolution of these models is important for their cultural transmission to other practitioners. Meta-methodology also opens up a space where new methodologies and models can be created, and as artefacts of enactive cognition will transform their practitioners. Integrative polymaths such as Wilber, Buckminster Fuller, John Lilly and Michael Murphy all exemplify the value of enactive cognition in everyday circumstances, thus revealing that Embodied Foresight can be dialogical and relational to others (Lilly & Lilly, 1976; Murphy, 1992; Wilber, 2000b & 2000c).

Meta-methodology requires a self-reflective dimension. Slaughter's intellectual emphasis on the cultivation of contemplative practice surfaced in Swinburne Foresight program classes via self-reflective diaries (Rainer, 1978) and guided meditative

visioning. It also paralleled the use of auto-ethnography, phenomenology and reflexive embodied research in counselling and the health sciences (Etherington, 2004). Self-reflective practices are a counterbalance against sterile over-intellectualisation and 'book-learning' without experience: two dangers noted in many spiritual paths and traditions. The practitioner inevitably undergoes an 'unmasking psychology' phase where real motivations are surfaced and confronted, similar to the *nigredo* stage in psychological alchemy (Csikzentmihalyi, 1993; Fowles, 1977; Jungk, 1970). Self-reflection also surfaces the ethical and moral lines of development, which Peter Hayward's research contends is vital to FS (Hayward, 2003).

Whilst Integral FS has opened the gate to self-reflective practices, there are institutional limits within many universities: we are unlikely to return to the Human Potential era of John Lilly's floatation tank experiments at the US-based National Institute of Health (Lilly, 1978) or Timothy Leary's controversial LSD experiments at Harvard University (Lee & Shlain, 1985). Instead, many FS practitioners have sought this self-reflexivity through cross-cultural engagement with European, Indian and other genealogies of alternative futures—a path that recapitulates aspects of the Age of Aquarius subcultures and Esalen-influenced transpersonal psychology (Murphy, 1992; Sardar, 1999). I'd echo Jose's earlier comment that this pluralistic vision—if culturally transmitted or hermeneutically reconstructed from its original sources—has great potential to create deeper social images and teleological futures.

As a meta-methodology, Embodied Foresight also surfaces issues about FS-as-pedagogy and enactive cognition. FS practitioners have followed the Medieval Guild model of novice, journeyman and master—closer to artistic vision and practitioner craft in fields such as management and software engineering than to empirical science (McConnell, 2003; Mintzberg, 2004). The novice encounters and studies canonical texts which provide the intellectual frameworks and foundations for understanding FS (Bell, 1996 & 1997; Slaughter, Inayatullah, & Ramos, 2005; Slaughter, 1999; Slaughter, 2004). Many university FS programs—Swinburne University's Foresight program, the University of Houston at Clear Lake, Sunshine Coast University and the Manoa school at the University of Hawaii—appear to follow the classical European model of studying under a Teacher who *embodies* FS qualities and practices.

This classical model has its challenges: psychological transference between the Teacher and Student that results in over-identification; betrayal as an archetype of the journeyman stage; and institutionalisation of noetic and self-reflective insights that transcend personal idiosyncracies to reflect the practitioner's 'daimonic' genius in the Socratic sense (Aquino, 2002; Ouspensky, 1964; Patterson, 1998; Tamm, 1991). Consequently, the concern about Integral FS as a 'model monopoly' is linked with these challenges because it reflects other 'shadow' interests such as Teacher prestige and social hierarchies of power/knowledge that can develop within academic citation networks and communities of practice (Foucault, 2004a & 2004b). Hermann Hesse (1972) illustrates the extremes of these power/knowledge pathologies in *The Glass Bead Game* in which the Castalia school develops the Glass Bead Game as a transdisciplinary vehicle for enactive cognition and yet its practitioners live in monastic seclusion from real-world engagement. Another is the secrecy imperative for commercial methodologies that hides innovation (Jungk, 1970).

Integral FS and self-reflective practices are usually introduced at the transition from novice to journeyman, once FS foundations are grasped. As Hayward and others have noted, the decision to study FS usually occurs after or during a confrontation with Hazard that triggers existential life changes (Bennett, 1991). In the aftershock, integrative models of human evolution are invaluable to reorient the practitioner's consciousness and to correctly interpret the insights from the altered states of consciousness that the existential life change has triggered (Csikzentmihalyi, 1993 & 1996; Murphy, 1992; Ouspensky, 1964; Tart, 1986; Wilber, 2000a). Intriguingly, one of the major trends in self-reflections by FS practitioners has been a shift from the Medieval Guild and classical European models (Coates & Jarratt, 1989) to cross-cultural and enactive cognition models (Slaughter, Inayatullah, & Ramos, 2005).

Jose Ramos: I will try to clarify first what I originally meant by the distinction between the intellectual and embodied, responding to Josh's comments, before moving on to Alex's comments about meta-methodology.

Josh, your critique is insightful and I generally agree. For example I think that we are, as you say, part of an intellectual enterprise, and that such an enterprise allows us to move beyond the limitations of our contexts, our embodied experiences, and pioneer new ground. And of course abstract models, in the way you mentioned Buckminster Fuller's ideas, provide us with new tools that allow us to see the world differently, open up new paths. In all these respects I could not agree more.

What I meant through this distinction was not a rejection of intellect, models and abstractions. Rather it was to make a distinction between intellect, models and abstractions that have been blended with contexts and experiences, and intellect, models and abstractions that have not, that have pretensions of universality, and pathological dynamics of power. I would like to draw on three traditions that articulate approximations to this. First is the tradition of action research. Greenwood and Levin (1998) offer an excellent introduction to AR, which I used extensively in originally exploring the dynamics and tensions between futures and action research, and where I drew the notion of a model monopoly. In this first exploration I wrote:

"Academic researchers, because of years of training in 'sense making' and creating frameworks, usually create 'model monopolies' where the intellectual frameworks or models that researchers create envelop and overpower local stakeholders. By contrast, an action researcher's obligation is to combine their action research frameworks with the local stakeholder's understanding of local context into a third 'local theory' that emerges from the co-research. Out of this process local stakeholders learn how to conduct action research on their own, furthering their own empowerment and a democratisation of the research/action praxis. Transcending this 'model monopoly' would seem to be a challenge in futures studies, a field heavily reliant on models and frameworks for explaining the world." (Ramos, 2002, p. 8)

The second tradition is post-colonial studies. This tradition has critiqued the West's construction of universal knowledge and its categories as part and parcel of colonisation, and how it discredits rival knowledges. In an interview I did with him, Ashis Nandy emphasised the importance, for futures studies, of transcending the uni-

versal categories of knowledge constructed from the West. As Nandy emphasises, 18th-19th century Western theorists (such as Smith, Spencer and Marx) established developmentalist and modernist assumptions about the natural unfolding and trajectory of history. These 19th century assumptions were re-hashed in the 20th century as development theories, such that 'rise of the West' conceptions of history (that the history of modernity begins with Western values and achievements) are today default assumptions from which people begin their intellectual work. In fact 'rise of the West' conceptions of history have been totally de-bunked from a whole number of perspectives, in particular from the work of macro-historian Robert B. Marks (2002). As Nandy argued:

"...societies in Africa, Latin America and Asia, they are supposed to be societies on a particular trajectory of history. They are all supposed to be trying to be in the future what Europe and North America are today. So, in that sense, technically there are no options open to them in the future. They are today what Europe was in the past; tomorrow they will be what Europe is today... the social-evolutionist model. Europe and North America will probably become more developed in the future. And we shall be still trying to catch up with them. Future studies give us in the Southern world a chance to break out of this shell of progressivism. Or, if you prefer, developmentalism or modernism. It gives us a chance to think about the future in our own terms, and without the constraints imposed by nineteenth century social theories and the categories popularised by social science disciplines, particularly developmental economics and history." (Ramos, 2005, pp. 434-435)

The other point is the importance of knowledge systems. As de Sousa Santos argues, status quo globalisation relies on the hegemony of techno scientific knowledge (and its way of discrediting rival ways of knowing) by enforcing its own criteria of validity based in efficiency and coherence. He writes that "discrediting, concealing and trivialising counter hegemonic globalisation go largely hand in hand with discrediting, concealing and trivialising the knowledges that inform counter hegemonic practices and agents." This is especially so because the vast majority of literature on globalisation is produced in the wealthy North: "The knowledge we have of globalisation, whether hegemonic or counter hegemonic, is less global than globalisation itself." 'Hegemonic rationality' discredits the social experience of the South, constituting a "waste of social experience, both social experience that is already available, but not yet visible, and social experience that is not yet available but realistically possible." Because of this "there is no global social justice without global cognitive justice." (Santos, 2004, pp. 13-14). Or as Nandy said:

"Unfortunately our basic assumption is that knowledge is one. Others may occasionally have a few things to contribute to that universal knowledge system organised around worldview of modern science and the European Enlightenment's vision of the ends of life. We forget that an entirely different range of experiences lie behind the marginalised systems of knowledge. Experiential knowledge is a crucial component and unless we are open to different and contradictory systems of knowledge, different ways to look at the world, different methods, our understanding of the world remains narrow and misleading." (Ramos, 2003)

Drawing from the tradition of feminism, Susan Hawthorne's (2002) critique of globalisation shares similar themes with Nandy and de Sousa Santos. She links masculinity with universalising economic globalisation, an extreme over-coding of what Shiva terms "local knowledge gone global" (Shiva, 1993, p. 10), embodied in global forces such as "capitalist, masculine, white, western, middle class, heterosexual, urban, and highly mobile" (Hawthorne, 2002, p. 32). This can be corroborated (though not proved) by looking at the gender imbalance at the World Economic Forum at Davos, which was 100% male until 2001, and now approximately 90% male (Anonymous, 2006). She contrasts this with what she considers its anti-thesis, a 'diversity matrix' of knowledge systems and peoples which resist assimilation or acceptance of this mono-culture as dominant and normal.

My own personal history as Mexican / American / Chicano, and experiences living in Japan and Taiwan, probably contribute to a weariness of the danger of 'model monopolies', re-hashing development theories, and a token regard for diversity and alternative knowledge systems. I perceive the challenge to be in articulating an Embodied Foresight, inclusive of integral theories, but allowing them to inform (not over-code) local challenges and circumstances, and be transformed by locality and the needs at hand. This is what I meant by "a contextual understanding of integral theory, which is transformed through its visceral and practical marriage with contexts." Just last month [January 2006] at the Caracas World Social Forum I was at a workshop which put forward a *bona fide* integral approach to life and politics, with none of the theorists and influences I knew, reflective of local South American experiences. Thus, for me Embodied Foresight still has the foresight bit, which is a highly intellectual and imaginative endeavour no doubt. But it is *foresight-in-context*, in so far as 1) it is willing to accept the transformation of foresight principles and process based on local / particular conditions, and likewise 2) should acknowledge that all foresight is contextually bound by the practitioner's consciousness (UL), by social norms, ideology, worldviews and assumptions (LL), by practices and structures (R), and by historical circumstances. The former accepts the need to transform futures work based on the needs of local conditions and peoples. The latter is more a statement about the nature of knowledge(s), and the need to heavily qualify our assertions into assumptions. In this spirit integrative learning begins when our integrative models break down.

I thus echo Alex's comments that meta-methodology requires a self-reflective dimension which is also enacted, steering clear of over intellectualising. It requires practical self reflective work, an example being first person action research done on 'whiteness' which is able to 'locate' the researcher (Gallagher, 2004), and which emerges from experience of the world (California Institute of Integral Studies, 2004), in order to improve our relating in the world and surface the knee jerk assumptions culture gives us. Likewise Alex's comments on 'over-identification' with the teacher, which exists not just within pedagogical institutions but also researcher-researchee relationships, relationships between the colonised and coloniser (Friere, 1970), administrative and legal spaces, where people are lost in institutional cultures and their symbolic networks. Meditative, reflective and 'vision quest' traditions grapple with identification, in ways that facilitate purposeful evolution beyond the extremes of the colonisation of the self (by commerce or soft colonialism), and on the other hand a total denial of our present and past ontogenies (pathological dis-identification).

Josh Floyd: Jose's use of the term *foresight-in-context* is very powerful as a pointer towards the practitioner stance that we are suggesting is needed for Integral Futures methodology to reach its full potential without creating its own problems. The term seems to reflect the integral intent. In the first instance, it represents the general domain of foresight practise as the seeking or enactment of future knowledge. We might characterise this drive for seeking or enacting future knowledge as a masculine quality. And in an integral endeavour, we would want to be mindful of balancing this masculine drive with a commensurate feminine drive: this is seen, in the second instance, as the attention to local context, to that which is particular in our shared situation as we implement Integral Futures methodology with the intent of helping better futures to emerge. In this view, the strongly masculine drive, mentioned earlier as being associated with global forces, would not need to be seen as inherently problematic in its own right. Rather than seeing the problem as too much of the masculine, we might reframe it as too little of the feminine, an imbalance of compassion or *Agape* (Wilber, 2000d, pp. 348-349). The masculine drive for future knowledge seems to fit with the corresponding idea of *Eros* as the reaching towards wisdom that lies beyond our present context.

Looking at Embodied Foresight in this way, as foresight-in-context, helps with identifying the potential danger that I mentioned earlier of moving too far towards embodiment and becoming just body, with no capacity for discerning good pathways into the future. While we can see the present problems of *Eros* out of balance, this corresponding danger relates to *Agape* out of balance: too little of the masculine drive relative to the feminine drive.

Alex's consideration of potential pathologies associated with Integral Futures work links in closely here. We are suggesting that Embodied Foresight can be understood as balancing the masculine drive for future knowledge with the feminine drive for seeking and applying that knowledge compassionately, in ways that are sensitive to the local context in which our work is carried out. So Embodied Foresight as a methodology for carrying out Integral Futures work requires that the practitioner actively seeks to balance these commensurate drives of *Eros* and *Agape*.

If these are not balanced, two archetypal pathologies can arise: one in the absence of *Agape* and one in the absence of *Eros*. The absence of *Agape* produces *Phobos*, or fear, characterised by flight into "otherworldliness" (Wilber, 2000d, pp. 349-351). And I would suggest that we can identify this in some of the techno-escapist visions associated with the Transhumanist branch of futures thinking and practise. These seem to be associated with an extreme creative urge charging towards a universal view for humanity that doesn't actually account for how those of us who will actually have to inhabit such a future (or worse, who will be written out of such a future altogether) might actually want to live.

On the other hand, the absence of *Eros* produces *Thanatos*, or fixation, characterised by regression to a state in which all pathways into the future are seen as merely relative. In this state, we lose the capacity to discern between visions or to choose ones that might lead to better futures. This is seen in extreme postmodernism and cultural relativism: with rejection of all universals, we can no longer decide what is good. This path leads to nihilism and stagnation.

Jose has highlighted the danger associated with model monopolies leading to colonisation of the future by narrow interests, which seems to be a manifestation of *Phobos*. I think a real problem here could be the use of Integral Futures methodologies without corresponding integral intent on the part of the practitioner. So the deeper purpose of Embodied Foresight as Integral Futures methodology is to develop that intent, to foster in the practitioner a genuine desire to facilitate the health of the whole. Integral Futures methodologies provide the practitioner with significantly increased instrumental power in carrying out futures work. But how and to what ends will this power be applied? The methodologies, methods and tools don't themselves determine this, which places great responsibility on the practitioner to use them with wisdom and discretion.

Alex has highlighted the danger associated with fixation on a particular teacher or theorist, which seems to be associated with *Thanatos*: with no means of discriminating between theories or methodologies derived from these theories, we lose the capacity to determine the most appropriate way of intervening in a given, local situation. We effectively lose our critical capacity as practitioners to make sound value judgements. All paths forward seem the same, and so we run the danger of misapplying methodologies, methods and tools.

The danger that Jose highlighted relates to the problem of practitioner intent and hence to matters of ethical conduct: in particular, what is the extent of the practitioner's moral embrace? Is it extended to all of his or her ethnic, cultural or national group only? Or does it extend to all of humanity? To all of life? And the danger identified by Alex is also one that must be addressed through the ethical conduct of the practitioner. But now it is not only the practitioner's moral development that is of greatest importance as his or her cognitive development: the practitioner needs to develop the capacity to make sound judgements about relative merits of various methodologies, methods and tools. This requires that the practitioner can see his or her own blind spots: reflexive self-awareness, and truthfulness with oneself, is required.

If I could just recap for a moment: I think that we are united in the view that, for the three of us, futures and foresight work is about helping better futures to emerge, and that when we think of better futures, we have in mind better futures for all life. I think we are also guided by the view that what constitutes "better futures" is best determined by as many as possible of those affected by the futures that we are helping to emerge. I used the phrase "the health of the whole" a little earlier to try to capture this shared interest, and the idea of health ties to our discussion of pathology: health relates not only to the capacity to fix problems (pathologies) when they arise, it also relates to ways of being in which the problems do not arise in the first place. This is related to the concept of *apithology* (Varey, 2004). So what we are saying is that in order to best prevent problems arising in the first place, we need to understand the potential of our own roles as practitioners in the creation of problems. Embodied Foresight is the pathway that we are suggesting for minimising practitioner-created problems, and beyond this, to maximise the benefits of intervention by the futures practitioner.

I would just like to finish here by considering Jose's earlier discussion of problems associated with universalisation of knowledge. I'd like to propose that we differ-

entiate here between partiality of knowledge and universality of knowledge. There is a danger of losing something very important if the two ideas are conflated. My understanding is that the problems to which Jose draws attention relate to partial knowledge (Western scientific knowledge, for instance) that is claimed to be complete knowledge. The problem is not in the claim of universality per se. For example, if Western scientific knowledge tells us that mixing hydrogen and oxygen in appropriate quantities and introducing a heat source will result in a reaction that produces water vapour and more heat, then I think we could agree that this will be universally true, regardless of the cultural context in which the reaction occurs. The problem occurs when we say that this is the only type of knowledge that is of any relevance.

I think there are very important universals that we need in order for the futures and foresight enterprise to get off the ground in the first place. For instance: the universal capacity for language—that allows us to share our knowledge from local context to local context. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) have shown how metaphors based on the way that we are embodied in the world structure the ways that we think in universal ways, that is, in ways that are common to all those who share a particular form of embodiment. This doesn't mean that there are no local variations, or that these variations are not important, but it does give us part of a basis for shared understanding. We all have bodies and minds, we all interact with physical environments that share common characteristics, we all interact in social environments with other people.

We are saying here that we think Embodied Foresight, the practice of foresight-in-context, would be a universally good way to implement Integral Futures methodologies. But we also recognize this view to be partial: it is not complete on its own, it should be open to input from others, and it should never be imposed on them.

Conclusion

The catalyst for this reflective article was a series of discussions about our respective experiences in the 2003, 2004 and 2006 iterations of the Advanced Professional Praxis unit in Swinburne University's Strategic Foresight program. The 'high velocity' environment of a consulting engagement created the space to reflect on professional development issues: individual sensitization to Hazard, the experiential gap between Futures Studies theories and experiential praxis, and the phenomenological dimensions of Foresight work using an Integral Operating System framework. This self-reflective process suggests that a 'practitioner conversation' may complement the 'strategic conversation' used in scenario development and strategy formulation.

Since 2003 *Embodied Foresight* has evolved from multiple sources and practitioner insights as a new framework for Applied Foresight. Embodied Foresight's syncretic body of knowledge includes anticipatory action learning, self-reflexive research methods from the arts and health sciences, holonomic models of human psychology, and experience with various initiatory and wisdom traditions. It is both a meta-methodology on the UL dimensions of Futures Studies work and has UL/LL methods: Bohmian dialogue, enactive cognition, the 'trialogue' process, theory-action-review cycles and self-reflective practices. Consequently, the sociology of knowledge in Embodied Foresight continues the post-Kuhnian debate raised in Critical Future Studies

(Slaughter, 1999), critical realism (Bell, 1996 & 1997) and discourse analysis in axiological, phenomenological and reflective dimensions. This process creates generative spaces, poses new reflexive 'problems' and emphasises the UL 'meta' perspective on LL methodologies, which are paramount to refreshing the sociology and body of the Futures Studies knowledge base (Ashmore, 1989; Bell, 1996; Bell, 1997).

As one generative space, the Futures Studies community has benefited from Ken Wilber's Integral framework, which provides a broad and deep scanning frame that honours self-inquiry and wisdom traditions. Embodied Foresight thus re-situates UL/LL methods that were implicit within Integral Futures into a new framework. The work to-date on Integral Futures has had transpersonal, integrative and pluralistic knowledge interests and an 'extended Now' timeframe. In this context Embodied Foresight has anticipatory, enactive and self-reflective knowledge interests, and a cyclical/spiral timeframe that honours the dyad between the practitioner's subjective universe (aion) and how it manifests via enactive cognition in the objective environment (aeon) (Jung, 1966).

Embodied Foresight offers some emergent solutions for the individual practitioner to the challenges and difficulties of Integral Futures practice. These reflexive 'problems' are part of diffusion, initiation and knowledge transfer in many wisdom traditions. Our 'trialogue' has raised several 'reflexive' problems—from Teacher-Student relationships and pedagogical barriers to the archetypal dangers of *Phobos* and *Thanatos*—that each of us has personally experienced within the Futures Studies community and in other initiatory and wisdom traditions.

Futures Studies methods equip practitioners with the power to have real-world impacts with unforeseeable second- and third-order systemic effects. Integral Futures frameworks and models have the potential to 'amplify this tenfold', and add transformative dimensions that can be potentially dangerous to the practitioner's psyche if misapplied. (Fowles, 1977; Hoffer, 1951; Morris, 2003; Wilcox, 1956). Truly 'integral' communities create awareness amongst their practitioners of this perilous terrain as a necessary and never-ending guardianship function (Gurdjieff, 1963; Jung & von Franz, 1998). Embodied Foresight frameworks therefore encompass the ethical and normative injunctive which practitioners must heed when creating and renewing Futures Studies methodologies. For the FS scholar and Foresight practitioner these frameworks provide the self-reflexivity and presence demanded for the effective and ethical application of Applied Foresight.

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