A recipe for making deep, meaningful images of the future
Exploring the trans-cultural images of the future of young adults

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Images of the future are:

• Products of knowledge, taste, values and needs
• Representatives of fears, hopes and anticipations for the future
• Influential on their holders’ decisions and behaviors.
• When the future becomes reality, it includes the elements of the previously held images of the future.

Figure 1, Interaction between images of the future and the societal context
Research methods

In choosing the research methods for picturing the contemporary images of the future, we should consider:

- Complex nature of the images of the future

- The complexity within the societal context

- Access to different levels of the individuals’ understandings and their deeper emotions

Collecting research material

10 interviewees:

- between 18-25 years old
- undergraduate or graduate students
- equal number of males and females
- different cultural and national backgrounds (eight different nationalities)
- different educational backgrounds (social science, medical science, arts, computer science ...)

The interviewees were not representatives of any specific groups.
Collecting research material

• In-depth interview, using ‘grand tour questions’
  - Provides the possibility for deeper and more detailed answers in a comfortable discussion
  - Motivates the interviewees to tell more about their perceptions and feelings

  • Grand tour questions:
    - Designed in a nondirective manner.
    - The perspectives of the answers are not specified in the questions.
    - Do not include the terms of the answers they might solicit.

Location is a remarkable factor for the quality of the results

Collecting research material

• Active imagination process
  - Helps to approach the subconscious
  - Dependent on the procedure of implementation, provides a path to collective unconscious and archetypes

Location is a remarkable factor for the quality of the results

https://morningbridgecenter.com/jungian-active-imagination-in-expressive-arts/
Analysis of the research material

- Deductive Qualitative Content Analysis
- Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) as a framework for analysis

Figure 2, CLA pyramid for creating images of the future (Inayatullah 2004, 543)

Alternative TRANSCULTURAL images of the future of the young adults of this study

They do not reflect the views of a specific national, gender or educational group.
1. Living with the Chill

2. Fear and Hope
3. Life as a Chance for Dedication

4. Imagine...!
Interpretation of the created images of the future:

- Images of the future of young adults of this study picture the future in terms of presence or absence of current sociopolitical concerns and do not exceed this framework.

- Optimism or pessimism towards the future affect the individuals’ perceived locus of control and their understanding of humans’ influence:
  - Extensive negative or positive images ➔ passivity, apathy
  - Images with more moderate the future ➔ Locus of control

Additional Slides
Current societal context

- Late modernity: Advanced phase of modernity
  - more choices & opportunities
  - lower risks & uncertainties
  - Characterized by
    - individualization
    - decline of paid employment
    - environmental crisis

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**Figure 3** The procedure of implementing CLA to create the images of the future.
Table 1 Polak’s categorization for the images of the future

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essence</th>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Optimism</th>
<th>Pessimism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Optimism</td>
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<td>Essence optimistic - influence optimistic</td>
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<td>Pessimism</td>
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Conflicting images of the future

Table 2 Approach of the images of the future towards the essence of the future and humans’ ability to influence it.

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<th>Life as a chance for dedication</th>
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References