

THE IMPACT OF FORESIGHT ON THE FUTURE (1-ST PART)

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Abstract: *From the beginning of this article, we accept the hypothesis that the future, according to quantum physics, even then we look at it can undergo major and unexpected changes.*

By virtue of this hypothesis, when performing foresight exercises, we must bear in mind that any incursion or attempt to anticipate the future can imprint a more or less favorable trajectory, more or less visible!

At the same time, we must bear in mind that in the past-future interaction, specific to the theory of chaos, it is subject to the butterfly effect, in which little detail in the past and present can generate major changes in the future.

Keywords: *Foresight, Futures Space static approach of the future, dynamic approach of the future*

1. INTRODUCTION

Bezold & Hancock, 1994 [3] presents and develops in the paper names *Possible Futures, Preferable Futures*, a classification of the future, proposed by Canadian futurist, Norman Henchey 1978 [4], whose interaction is represented graphically in figure 1[9]:

1. *The Possible Futures* – which represents *what may happen*, including events with a very low probability of occurrence, but which cause major changes. These futures are visible from the probabilistic point of view.
2. *The Plausible Futures* - it is the one *that could happen* as a natural consequence of what we know today is the multitude of future prospects to achieve. Plausible Futures □ Possible Futures.
3. *Probable Futures* - represents *what will likely happen*. They are usually futures assumed as a result of forecasts and often called *descriptive forecasting*. Probable Future □ Plausible Futures
4. *Preferred Futures* - is what *we want to have happen*. Sometimes they are referred to as *normative forecasting*. These are the imposed futures that did not exist until the foresight exercise started. These can come from any future spaces and are *optimal future*.
5. *The Alternative Futures* - are futures that are probabilistically invisible and remain invisible after the foresight exercise. The area of alternative futures is where the Black Swans come [6].

2. THE ANALYSES OF RELATION BETWEEN FORESIGHT AND THE FUTURES SPACES

Assuming that there is a *space of possible futures*, fig.2, foresight exercises are, by their nature, intended to excite

forces that influence the possibility of futures production, in the sense of increasing the likelihood of producing preferable futures and diminishing the chances of producing the other kind of futures.

Any attempt to interact with the future will change the parameters of its space.

In a *static approach*, named prevision [7], the main philosophical question of this paper is: How do we look/interact in/with the future, without disturb its evolution?

In a static approach, in which we accept that the future is predestined, specific to *foreknowledge* [7], our main concern is not to interact directly with the future, which is why, in most situations, persons endowed with such powers do not regard the future by their own eyes but they are possessed by spirits who most often describe, through a parable, what will happen, leaving the mystery of the future untouched by human gaze and understanding. If we accept that the future is subject to the laws of quantum physics, and that it may be influenced by any observation/ measurement process, this interaction through messengers with the future is as normal as possible, and even more so, the revelation of the future through parables, hermetic approaches, making it often inaccessible, the meaning of the parable revealing itself only as far as the future occurs, the interaction with it being minimized to the maximum. This approach eliminates the possible *butterfly effects*.

In a dynamic approach, specific to foresight [7], the main concern is that, through a collaborative, collaborative effort bringing together the main stakeholders, it is to reach a *Preferred Future*.

Such an approach has important effects on the futures space for all intermediate horizons from the target horizon, from $T + 1$ to $T + k$, where T is the current moment and k represents the horizon for which the foresight exercise is performed.

If initially *the space of the possible futures* for $T + k$ momentum, which corresponds to a k horizon, had a specific distribution, when we focus our attention, through a foresight exercise, on a number of preferable futures, the shape of the future space distribution will change the moment $T + k$ in the sense of increasing the likelihood of producing future prospects and diminishing the likelihood of the other future occurring.

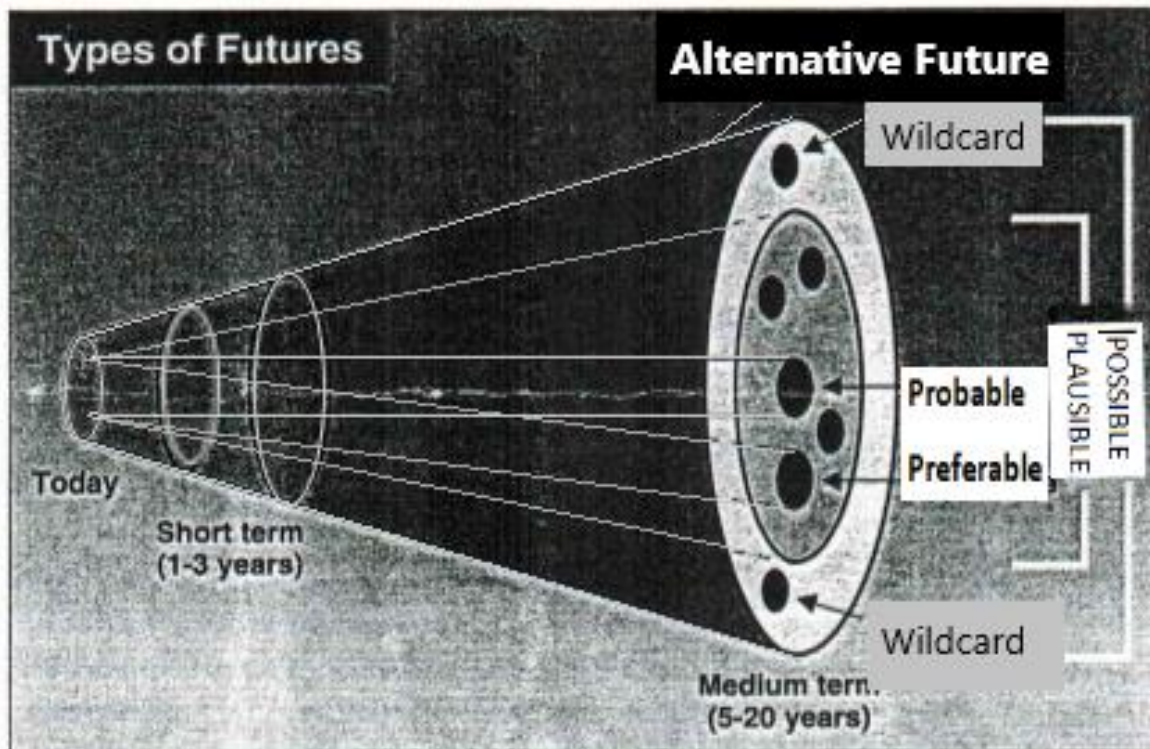
Even more, so since the achievement of a *preferred future* at the time of $T + k$ supposes the passage of the k spaces of the *possible futures*, disturbing their distributions.

The dynamic approach to the future raises a number of technical issues, such as choosing and controlling the route to reach the future at the k horizon.

The *static approach to the future*, although not specific to foresight exercises, has the role of drawing attention to the

ethical aspect of interaction with the future and to the possibility of occurring *butterfly effects* that can throw us out of the Space of Possible Futures, visible, on the Space of

Alternative Futures, invisible from a probabilistic point of view [2], [3].



Source: From Clem-Bezold and Trevor Hancock, "An Overview of the Health Futures Field" for the WHO Consultation, July 19-23, 1993.

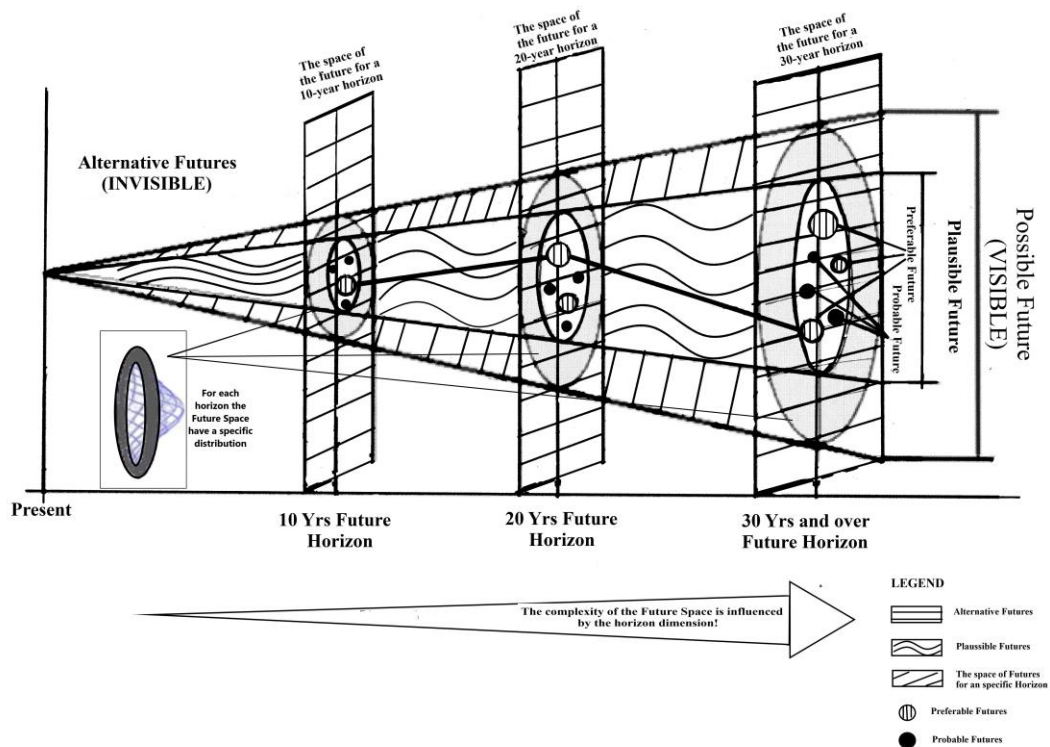
Source: Hancock T. & Bezold C., March/ April 1994

Fig.1: Types of Futures

The complexity of possible futures spaces increases as the horizon of the foresight exercise increases, so the diversity of possible future increases almost exponentially with every year added to the foresight horizon.

The variety of foresight methods and methodologies [5] is intended to create a stable, controllable environment that guarantees, even partially, the achievement of the preferred futures in a carcassed space of complexity and high

uncertainty. Even when the achievement of the preferred future does not carry out, the foresight exercise is not considered a failure. This is due to the high resistance to advance through the intermediate spaces of possible future. Achieving the intermediate futures that lead to the preferred future for a set horizon are themselves the success stories of the foresight process.



Source: Bezold & Hancock (1994) augmented by Turtorean

Fig. 2: Augmented Types of Futures

3. CONCLUSIONS

The interaction of foresight exercises with the *space of the future* is the complex one and almost impossible to control.

The choices we make in future developments are likely to irremediably alter our *possible futures Spaces*, and perhaps we need to place more emphasis on the ethical component.

In the following article, we aim to correlate Foresight, *prospective* or *normative* types [5], [7] and its corresponding methods with the steps to reach the preferred future shown schematically in Figure 2.

4. REFERENCES

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