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Interviews

Memories and methods: conversations with Ashis Nandy, Ziauddin Sardar and Richard Slaughter

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Abstract

The history and development of futures studies is explored in interviews with three leading futurists. Ashis Nandy, Ziauddin Sardar and Richard Slaughter provide a personal perspective on their involvement in the field and the World Futures Studies Federation and reflect on future possibilities.

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1. Ashis Nandy

Jose Maria Ramos: what got you involved in future studies? What were the first sources you drew on, where did it all begin for you?

Ashis Nandy: I became interested in future studies, I guess, because I got interested in the way the *past* was used in *present*. People talked of history as if it supplied you with contending accounts of the past, each account trying to reach closer to the truth. That answer did not satisfy me. I had already begun to suspect that most histories, and most constructions of the past for that matter, were a way of talking about the present, in the language of the past. You use the past as an idiom to negotiate the present, and history is only one way of doing so.

Myths, legends, epics, public memory, folk memory if you like—they also perform the same function. They also help us to grapple with the present and, thus, indirectly with the future. That ability to construct the past in diverse ways is very important and I have often written about how myths, epics, legends, and public memories often construct the past for

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the sake of the present, and do so better than history because they are in better touch with human emotions, tacit knowledge, and our less socialized imagination.

This consciousness dawned on me many years ago, and I also gradually became aware that a similar use can be made of fiction and non-fictional imaginations and studies of the future. I came to suspect that the primary function of many studies of the future was actually as critiques of the present. Such studies supplied social criticisms of the present not from the point of view of the past, as history did, but from the point of view of the future. I found that to be a particularly interesting exercise because, unlike in the case of the past, the future is less constrained. You can mount a search for ‘the true past’, the objective past, the real past, but you cannot do so in the case of future studies.

J: Epistemologically, the future is a totally different space.

A: Yes, it offers an open challenge to your imagination about how you would conceive or use the future. Take for instance, the two best known fictional constructions of the future. When George Orwell speaks of the future in 1984, he is talking about contemporary Britain. And once in a while, he more or less admitted it in so many words. Likewise, when Huxley calls his novel *The Brave New World*, he is talking about a less-than-brave, old world. These diverse imaginations and attempts to reach the present through time travel, have interested me tremendously. Especially given the fact that we are living at a time when the present is supposed to be, in some sense, so heavily shaped by the past, by history. Our options in the future are said to be limited by our past, but it is actually limited by our self-constructed past.

J: The weight of history... Sohail Inayatullah talks this...

A: Yes, the weight of history and the responsibility of carrying that weight on one’s shoulders. Well, future studies allow you to lay down that baggage for a while, to think of the present as well as the future without—well not without—but bearing a lesser burden of the past. From such a point of view, the past, even the historical past becomes a resource and help, rather than a burden.

J: A resource or an inspiration?

A: Both a resource and an inspiration, but not a burden in the sense that it becomes in many contemporary utopian social criticisms. So that’s where, I think, the real possibilities of future studies lie.

J: So one opens up these options, when doing future studies, from the past to the future...

A: This is especially important...

J: You are saying that utopianism annihilates the past? Is that part of your critique? Or are you saying that the utopians don’t build on or learn from the past?

A: No, I am saying that they need not be constrained by historical constructions of the past. This is not a criticism. This is *the* source of power of future studies. To the extent that you defy the so-called ‘objective historical’ studies, which implicitly make prognosis about the world of the future, you can afford to be less restrained, as it were, in your imaginations and visions of the future. This is particularly important for third world societies, because 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.

J: A consequence of the development model?

A: Well, that's 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.

J: Okay ...and how do you see the development of future studies in general?

Or who do you look toward for inspiration or innovation in the future studies field?

A: I used to look forward to the works of people like Ivan Illich, E.F. Schumacher, Abraham Maslow, Ali Mazrui, and M.K. Gandhi when I started. Now it is more diffused.

J: Ivan Illich?

A: That's because the likes of Illich never went by a mechanical concept of disciplinary culture. They were open; they didn't see future studies as a discipline that had to be developed like the other social sciences, like for instance, political science, anthropology, or geography. They believed that a trained awareness of the future should inform all disciplines. A similar orientation has coloured the work of a number of us—from Ali Mazrui and Richard Falk to Ziauddin Sardar and Johan Galtung. This non-disciplinary perspective was also a feature of many of those who mentored me, Eleanora Masini and Rajni Kothari, for instance.

J: Eleanora Masini?

A: I worked with her on a largish project on visions of a desirable society which is the type of exploration that came naturally to me.

J: So you tried not to create a new discipline, strict disciplinary boundaries, but a more open awareness of the future.

A: Yes, the idea was not to have another discipline like anthropology or history but to ensure that these disciplines developed futuristic perspectives.

J: Was it not a critique of existing ideas of future?

A: Yes, that's also true. We also tried to critique of the tacit futures implicit in standard disciplinary works. They are the kinds of approach by negating which we sought to find a new base for future studies in the tacit explorations of the future implicit in many approaches that would not call themselves future studies and many scholars who would not call them specialists in future studies.

J: Now on to more political issues. What do you make of the dominance, or so-called dominance, of the United States today, and the different traditions of future studies, such as the critical future studies, the empirical US tradition, or the cultural focus of the European tradition? And what do you think of the underlying politics of knowledge within future studies, given these different traditions?

A: Personally, I don't think there is much scope for politics here. All three traditions are important. None of them can really survive without the others. If we are concerned with the future of the environmental crisis, I cannot imagine how a critical tradition can survive

without an awareness of hard, empirical data on the way the world is going, say for instance, the available data on the state of environment today.

J: Sure, there is a lot of vital empirical data on environmental changes.

A: Yes, and on the nature of ecological change over time and on possible future trends. So it is just not possible to disown the empirical altogether. Also, how can you speak of a critical tradition without some awareness of cultures? Culture is deeply implicated in most social and political hierarchies, not only in terms of things like race or religion, but also in terms of the way we create hierarchies or stratify cultures themselves, as advanced and backward, developed and underdeveloped, modern and ‘nonmodern’, and so on. How can we understand a country like Australia today without trying to develop a critical awareness of how some cultures have been marginalised and others destroyed? Likewise, the history of North American whites—and, for that matter, the white history of North America—has as its underside a history of ethnocides and genocides. Contemporary North America bears the scars of that past as contemporary India bears the scar of untouchability. Indians cannot afford to forget untouchability when reflecting on the country’s future.

That’s why I don’t think you can really pursue any of the strands we have mentioned individually, unless you have some exposure to the other strands. Within each stream you might be able to do useful work, but it can’t be something profound. Because at the highest level, you have to grapple with the future at many levels and your understanding of the future has to develop a certain unity. That does not mean that if you collect, say, statistics on child mortality for fifty years and project the data in a linear fashion it will be an useless exercise. It would be deeply relevant. But that kind of study has been done outside future studies for many decades; economists do it all the time. It is not future studies at its best.

J: That’s a kind of forecasting...

A: That’s right, and forecasting has power. It sometimes has moral power. But you don’t need futurists for that; it is a rather simple and, if I may add, philosophically raw concern. It doesn’t interest me beyond a point. On the other hand, you can also do extremely innovative work in economics with your sensitivity to futures studies, such as on costs of a war, not only in terms of money but also in terms of the long-term economic consequences of traumata, loss of skills, persistence of a death machine after the war is over, alteration in research priorities at institutions of higher learning, and so on.

J: It becomes then an economic, emotional and spiritual study of war?

A: Yes. Even if you leave out the emotional and the spiritual, you may still produce something worthwhile when trying to grapple with the cost of future wars, not only in terms of loss of life, but also in terms of things like costs of medical services, technological/ecological devastation.

J: There are links here with, for example, Richard Slaughter’s idea of critical futures using Habermas’ notion of cognitive interests, Inayatullah’s use of Michael Foucault Johan Galtung and PR Sarkar, the spiritual leader. Is there any particular theoretical background that influences your futures thinking?

A: Nobody can work *without* a theoretical frame. Mine is probably a crude mix of a partly modified critical theory that takes into account alternative critical traditions derived from other civilisational traditions, an adaptation of Gandhian theories of violence and non-violence and the remnants of my long, unending affair with psychoanalysis. It is an approach that has the ability to [take into account] individual emotions, feeling, suffering,

that are mainly psychological and not purely cultural. In that sense, my frame is psycho-cultural. I am interested in the load that human nature will have to carry in the future and the political psychological changes our public life is undergoing at present.

J: That is, the demands on the human psyche.

A: Yes, there is a persistent concern with human personality in my work.

J: So here in Melbourne you gave a lecture on humiliation that touched on this aspect.

A: Well, it was basically a lecture on the psychological compact between the persons who humiliate and the persons they try to humiliate, successfully or unsuccessfully.

J: Is your work influenced by an Indian perspective and the traditions of India?

A: It is. But I have learned that there are many critical traditions. If you have seen the work of Ziauddin Sardar, you will see that there is a great critical tradition in Islam as well. He has worked out of that tradition with great skill. I've learned much from such friends. In fact, I have also found some of the less formal theoretical frameworks grounded in local traditions (such as that of the Pratec group, Frederique Marglin's work in Peru and Gustavo Esteva's in Mexico) fascinating, and learnt a lot from them.

J: These are local critical traditions?

A: Well yes. You may call them so. All critical traditions are local. Some admit it, some do not.

J: Yes, they are bound by their traditions and their cultural contexts. Where do you think future studies as a whole is going?

A: I'm afraid many people feel that future studies should be made more scientific and more professional; it should be turned into a formal discipline. And future studies, as an area of scholarly interest, *is* moving towards that. I find this disturbing. I think it'll spell the death of future studies; it will become another aspect of the management sciences.

J: Perhaps organisational development...

A: Mostly corporations are seriously using future studies with these tendencies. I think future studies should have wider scope and reach and should be concerned with nothing less than the fate of the humankind, the biosphere or the changing contours of knowledge.

J: The global problematic.

A: If future studies don't have anything to say about the global issues, about the future of humankind, if such studies cannot open up more alternatives for human beings than other disciplines do, I would feel that they have betrayed their mandate. This should be the main emphasis: opening alternative possibilities and options for the future of humankind. To maximise and enrich dissent, decentralised, imaginative, risky, experimental modes of thinking are absolutely vital.

J: 'Decentralised modes of thinking'. What do you mean by that?

A: I mean that we should move toward developing methods, tools and perspectives that would allow future studies to strengthen pluralism in the 'global cultures' and dialogues among local cultures.

J: So future studies should have the methods and the capacity to strengthen pluralism and alternatives.

A: Yes, and this requires that the methods themselves be plural. The methods that are employed outside to study social and political phenomenon should also be employed inside, within the discipline to make it intrinsically plural. For instance, I find the work of

Linda Tuhiwai Smith very relevant to our concerns, though she may not have even heard of future studies.

J: Richard Slaughter in particular has tried to pioneer a kind of methodological pluralism.

A: Yes, I'm fond of his work.

J: Here at AFI we are working on it. You've made it clear that futures studies has to have a role far beyond organisational and management sciences; beyond organisational development. It must create the capacity for pluralism in the future of mankind. What strategies would you recommend to reinvigorate or reconceptualise futures studies along these lines?

A: I've emphasised civilizational possibilities within future studies. This is because the way you look at the future in, say for instance, the Confucian world, is not the way you look at the future, say, in the Arab traditions. In the Confucian worldview the future can be in the future as well as the past, so can it be in the Hindu and Buddhist worlds. The concept of time in these cultures is such that you can look at the future in the past. Some would call it a cyclical conception of time. So, when you take seriously their ideas of the future, to the moderns it may look as if you were going back to the past. I believe that we need comparative analyses on different civilisations from the point of view of the future. Second, I think we need to give careful attention to some aspects of the future of technology that we have not touched, to the future of ideas about how technology will determine the future, to what kinds of technologists and scientists we should have. Can we explore, for instance, the future of technological consciousness? We need good studies of possible blurring of the borders between technology and science and of the limits of technological choices.

J: Critical perspectives on technology?

A: Especially, critical assessments of limits to technology. I consider such assessments absolutely crucial. The Club of Rome's Limits to Growth is now dated. We need a similar but more ambitious assessment of technology. We have banned human cloning, but there are many other things that require scrutiny, including technologies that cannot be so easily banned.

J: One last question. What has it meant to you to be associated with the World Futures Studies Federation?

A: The WFSF opened my eyes to the real possibilities of futures studies. I had read the work of some futurists and had been taken aback by their rather mechanical conceptions of both human society and future studies, Herman Kahn for example. I was a little wary of that kind of future studies and uncomfortable with them. A majority people who led the WFSF during its initial years were not given to such mechanical constructions of the future. They were trying to bring into future studies a different kind of social and political awareness. I found that very attractive. It allowed me to rethink many issues. Also, I found these sensitivities more compatible with the dignity of non-western cultures and their systems of knowledge. Some of the younger persons we have mentioned during this conversation like Ziauddin Sardar, Richard Slaughter and Sohail Inayatullah have inherited these sensitivities.

J: Is there anything else that you'd like to add?

A: I'd add that many like to look at the future the way they look at the past. They want to find out what is realistic and what is possible, and then move from there. I think future

studies is a constant invitation to be more adventurous. All our speculations about the future in the past have been very conservative. There was no scientist at the beginning of the twentieth century who predicted that humans would travel at speeds higher than 250 miles an hour. That barrier was broken in the 1940s, 60 years before the century ended. I can give you many examples of that kind. Even great discoverers like Edison or Marconi didn't believe that radios or electrical bulbs would be household objects. They were wrong, often by many decades. So we need, despite all I've said, people who are adventurous in their thinking. That's the way to approach the future, through our imagination.

One thing future studies teaches is that humanity is not obliged to follow the footprints of either its prophets or its professional knowledge purveyors. It reacts to all blueprints and either transcend or bypass them. The novel *1984* didn't go the way George Orwell imagined it would. Possibly that is why *1984* was written. The novel shaped the course of events; it ensured that *1984* would pass by tamely. So, some of the possible scenarios generated by future studies may not come to pass; perhaps future studies will prove its relevance by making its prognoses irrelevant.

J: Thank you very much Ashis Nandy. It has been a pleasure.

2. Ziauddin Sardar and Richard Slaughter

Jose Ramos: I wonder if we can start with the WFSF conference in Beijing?

Zia Sardar: That was the first conference for us both, right?

Richard Slaughter: Yes, that's right. I was bowled over at first. Being in China... what a country... what a culture... One of the things I most remember from that conference was the incredible amount of effort some of the Chinese people put in to communicate to us... One of them had actually written in phonetic symbols underneath English words, so that they could speak to us in our language... it was a tremendous amount of effort... commitment...

Z: But you see this almost everywhere, for example, the tremendous effort put in, in Turku, the organization, the sheer level of communication and so on and so forth, and that's respect. The Federation has actually been very lucky to find local hosts who give so much to the organization...

R: Exactly. The heart of the Federation to me is this constant striving to cross cultural barriers, to enable inter-cultural communication. At lunch time at a Federation conference we might well be sitting with six different people, and they might all be from different continents...

Z: And different disciplines as well!

R: And different disciplines. So tremendous diversity, brought together by the passion that Zia was talking about before... Three of my strong memories of Beijing are, first of all seeing the effort that these people put in to communicate with us, secondly, walking on the Great Wall of China with Robert Jungk

And the other thing was going to my first board meeting of Futures and looking around this group of people, and seeing... some of the legends of the field: Eleanora, Jim, various

people, and thinking ‘I’m sitting down with these people’. So a sense of actually coming home in this family, that Zia was talking about, actually having a role in that environment.

Z: I think in a sense, Beijing was for me a coming home, it was like ‘this is where I belong’, so why have I been away for so long? That kind of thinking.

R: Very much so.

J: That’s the experience of a lot of students in the field, I felt like I found home...when I found futures...when I found Sohail and Chen Kuo Hua in Taiwan, when I found the folks in Houston, when I found Richard and AFI.

Z: This has to do with the fact that one finds other people who are just as disturbed by the state of the world, in that sense. And that causes empathy... All the people you mentioned are passionate about changing the world. They see futures as one way of changing the world perhaps...the most, disciplined, systematic, structured way of trying to change the world, in a positive direction. So it’s very easy to have empathy with them, and you do feel as though you’ve found long lost friends...

J: Many people at AFI have said similar things. I also know people in Houston who had that coming home sense...it was very profound...

I want to ask particularly about the challenges the World Future Studies Federation is facing. It’s had challenges in the past, as we all know, and great triumphs as well. What do you both think are some of those key challenges?

R: Well, there is much in terms of riches, of achievements, of ideas, of educational processes that it’s already been achieved, it’s already been achieved, and I think one of our challenges is to not lose sight of that. To actually value what’s already been done.

J: To communicate that...

R: To communicate it, to make it accessible. Hence our project to begin a bit of archiving so we can actually locate the material we have. At the same time the Federation is full of fire, full of passion, yet so far it has been unable to organize itself as an effective force in the world... Symbolically, maybe, intellectually, but organizationally, not yet. So our big challenge is to find resources to take it to another stage of development where it can really begin to be influential. For example, to have a paid, professional secretariat somewhere. The tasks that are considered routine in other disciplines, need to be handled automatically: standards, publications, conference organizations, communications, agreements about research, running courses, organizing an international Masters, all these things are things we want to do, and we really have to move to a new phase of development to make happen.

J: Zia?

Z: One of our challenges is to not keep making the same mistakes. Part of the reason that we do is that we need a dynamic secretariat structure. A secretariat might move from Honolulu, to Turku, to yet another location. Each time we have to re-learn the whole process. You can see that in the Bulletin. Every time there is a new process to learn, which can be seen as counter productive. The model was very open (that’s probably why it was developed in the first place) and people want the Federation to be everywhere, not just associated with a single country, or a single outlook. But I think that point has been made. On the whole, if you look at the history of the Federation, the membership, it’s evident that we are a heterogeneous group, that we are not associated with any single country or any single community, or any single discipline, for that matter. So we don’t have to keep

apologizing for that any more. We do need to have, some kind of permanent secretariat. So the secretariat is free, to do other things, instead of repeating the same mistakes, and we learn. We also need a single place from where the bulletin comes out, and comes out regularly, and looks the same. At the moment when we look at all the bulletins from the last twenty years, each has a distinct format, shape and colour.

R: And that's probably the charm and the beauty of the Federation. It takes a different form in a different context. But there are two particular strategies that can carry us forward. One is the notion of a virtual secretariat. Now that we have the internet, a lot of the software and knowledge that it takes to run the Federation doesn't have to be in one place. It can be spread across a number of places. So we're beginning to work with the notion of a virtual secretariat that can easily be in a number of places. Linked with that, is the idea of actually building up more of the regional centres. So, should something happen to the secretary general, or should there be real problems in one place. There are two or three other places where this work could be done.

J: To take up some of the slack...

R: Yes and also to generalize that capacity around the world. If we are serious about having an International Masters of Futures, which a lot of us are, then we have to have this organizational capability reflected in a number of places.

J: Can I ask you both about that international Masters? What that might look like?

R: Of course, it's a great dream, and a wonderful vision. But the devil is in the detail. A number of us have seen it for years: that we can have a set of core modules that everyone would take, all around the world, that would give a certain sense of unity to the offerings. But then some of the other modules would be offered in student's own language and own areas. So there would be a specific grounding in particular cultures, and specific shared material that we could judge was more universal, and places were that can be done. When it comes to organizing that, scheduling it, paying for it and coordinating it, the Federation just, at this stage, hasn't got the capacity. So that the race that we are in is 'can we get our act together quickly enough to get to that stage where we've got the secretariat in place, we're running a consistent operation around the world, we can support that, or does some entrepreneur, 'out of left field' as we say in Australia, come and take the whole thing away from us, and just make it another product in a whole series of other products?

J: So there is a sense of racing against time...

R: There is a sense of an opportunity here which we've not yet been able to grasp, which is really frustrating, because a lot of us would like to do it.

J: But do you think the conditions are there...to actually have that emerge? Changes in education, technology?

R: I've always felt that there is huge, latent demand for futures work, generally in education across the board, and more specifically as with the Masters. That has to be drawn out and made real, so that people have to find out about that and know it's out there, publicity, getting the word out, making it visible. When people have the option to take it, a lot of people take it just because they intuit or feel that this is something valuable,

Z: You have been talking about an International Masters. But now I think we have the possibility, the opportunity, with the technology that we can actually create the modules and make them available. But also, because the membership of the Federation is actually heterogeneous, it could produce modules that are related to, or make sense to certain

cultures. The knowledge base is wide enough for us to do that, which wasn't the case ten years ago. So intellectually and also with regard to technology, we are in a position to actually do that.

J: So the conditions are there?

Z: Absolutely.

R: It really challenges us to put the organization in place because obviously much of this is going to be on-line. Yet we all know that on-line on its own, is not always successful. So online work has to be supported by a certain amount of face to face contact. Therefore you need a set of regular regional conferences in co-ordination with these courses, so it's a big organizational challenge that faces us to get this right.

J: Is this vision shared by quite a few people in the organization?

R: I think so. There was a session about it at Tamkang late 2002, where about 15 or 20 people, Jim Dator, Chris Jones, Sohail, myself, a number of other people who had all had some experience of this got together. I get the impression that the Federation is full of visionaries, but there aren't enough organizational people...

Z: That is probably true. I think that we do need to increase the organizational and administrative competence of the Federation, and we are actually lacking in that competence. It's actually not surprising that that occurs, because initially the Federation attracted many people, as I said, who were disturbed, who really wanted to change the world. But now we need also need to attract people with organizational skills, and people with administrative backgrounds.

J: What are some other criticisms you have of the WFSF? As an organization...fly on the wall kind of thing...if you compare it with other organizations...?

R: From my point of view it just doesn't have enough organizational capacity, to do the things that are needed. I remember going to a school somewhere that hosted a professional organization. There was a sign on the door saying 'ethics committee'. Well I'm not saying that we necessarily need a professional ethics committee, but we haven't even the door, we haven't got the room...

Z: We haven't got the sign-

R: or a place where we can discuss professional standards, or support for young people. It's a distributed network, and we haven't yet reached that stage.

Z: One of my main criticisms would be that we have not reached a critical mass in our membership. Our membership always hovers around 400, 500, 600, and I think we really do need about 2,000. We haven't expanded.

J: So there is an issue of engaging with people, in some respects.

Z: Absolutely. We haven't been very active in recruiting members. We always look at ourselves as a family. And that has advantages and disadvantages. Family members don't like outsiders coming in, and in a sense there we have that. It's very interesting when you go to a Federation conference, immediately, it's almost like an extended family coming together...

J: So it's very heterogeneous but not so inclusive...

Z: Yes, so I think we also do need to look outside, we need to constantly be reinventing ourselves, constantly bringing in new blood, constantly extending boundaries...

J: So in that sense, how can the WFSF engage with more people and serve more?

R: Well it's doing so by, for example, running a course in Budapest, by opening the doors for young people...

Z: But all the people who train in these courses, do they automatically become members of the Federation?

R: Not necessarily

Z: Yes, I think that there ought to be some sort of effort to help them become members of the Federation.

R: And also link that with fellows, who will mentor them.

J: Would they do research together?

R: Well, when a student joins the Federation, somebody (presumably the president or the secretary general or someone, members of the executive council) could co-ordinate a search for a couple of fellows, who wouldn't even have to be in the same country, but in some way could reflect that student's interest and focus. Get in touch with them and say 'how is it going, is there anything you need, can I help you?' That surely could be one of the things that fellows could do.

Z: I do think that the fellows are not as active in the Federation as they should be, or they're not as actively involved. Fellows are just happy to be fellows, but I think they also need to, kind of, give more back to the Federation. That includes questioning the Federation, giving it new direction, bringing in new members. All of these things need to be done. For example, if each fellow brought in four or five new members per year, we would soon be at stage of critical mass. But I don't think that the fellows see this as a their role.

R: Jim Dator tried to do something like that quite a few years ago, and he himself introduced quite a few new members, but I don't think it was taken up widely-

J: How about the idea of going on campuses and talking to people, setting up during open house days.

Z: You can do that in those institutions where they actually teach Futures, so for example you can do that at Swinburne, you can do that in Houston, you can do that in a number of Universities in Turku, where there is a huge interest in Future Studies. The number who are currently members does not actually reflect the extent of Future Studies. So we ought to be recruiting. And also we should identify 'what are the hot spots of Future Studies at the moment'.

J: Last thoughts...

R: To complement that, we started, as you know, to collect information about who teaches Future Studies in the world, as a basis. The next step is to go to some of those organizations and say, well 'how about being institutional members?' of the Federation. That immediately starts to tie together the communication lines. Beyond that, there is a real possibility, a real need to start integrating the different research programs, so that there is some sort of sense of shared sense of what we're all doing. Not a blueprint, never a top-down blue print, but just sense of shared - they're doing that, we're doing this, they're doing that, just, really covering the territory, and maybe spotting some opportunities. So we really have to get our act together organizationally in terms of research. Then as that critical mass of organization develops, then we've got access to the, to greater numbers of students, who right now might not even know about our Federation.

J: Any last thoughts Zia?

Z: Many people who are in Future Studies are disturbed and inspired...experiencing some kind of crisis. I don't see that as a bad thing. I think in one way or another, we have always been in crisis, but, then, we have always been reinventing ourselves, so it's not a bad thing to reinvent ourselves yet again, but this time let's learn from all the past lessons and move on in a positive direction.

R: Can I also say that if the Federation didn't exist, we'd certainly have to invent it?

Z: Absolutely.

These interviews were generously transcribed by De Chantal Hillis.