

recreational experiencing of a work by the spectator.<sup>21</sup> Works of art provide a *temporary stability of experience*, but they are not the surrogates of something that could ever provide a permanent stability, they are surrogates of a subjective experience, that of the artist. Works of art are human, and temporal; they *are* excellent accomplishments, but just because they are *human* accomplishments they are imperfect, mundane, and transient. They could not otherwise be beautiful.

### Conclusion

I began by saying that Aristotle simply restated Plato's views about works of art. It is instructive to note the context in which the restatement is made. For Plato also held an object-oriented ethics (which must be the subject of another paper). In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle departs from Plato in taking ethics to be about activity, and in the second book he contrasts ethics with art in order to emphasise this departure. For Aristotle, *ethical* excellence is an activity, a kind of living, rather than a static feature of an ethical object (such as "justice itself", and so on). An ethical action doesn't have its excellence in itself. We have to look at the agent, specifically to whether his performance stems from an excellent "decisional state", that is, an *active* habit to decide and live in excellent ways. That Aristotle does not part from Plato in aesthetics in a way similar to his departure in ethics is an indication of the hold that Plato's object-oriented aesthetics was to have over the subsequent history of art theory.

We considered a contrasting view of aesthetics that lay dormant in the Ancient Greek word for beauty, namely the view that beauty is closely associated with excellent activity. Ironically, we saw that although this idea holds promise for a theory of artistic beauty, the Western theories of beauty that sprang from Ancient Greece, through the philosophy of Plato, consistently avoided opportunities to promote this idea. Had the view of artistic beauty as excellent accomplishment been adopted in Western aesthetics, we might then have seen much more attention to the way of art, and the way of life, in creating beauty.

<sup>21</sup> In this sense, "spectator" is a very bad word, since it suggests a passive onlooker, when in fact, whenever he has an experience of *art* the spectator is actively recreating the excellent accomplishment of the artist. Such recreation may be very crude and inexact, or the actual accomplishment may not be very excellent, so the experience of the spectator might seem dull, but only when there is no recreation at all, only when he is "just looking" can we say that the spectator is passive. And in such cases, the experience is not of *art* but of a mere *thing*.

# Memory of the Future: The Foresight Experience of 'Greece 2021'

Demosthenes Agrafiotis

*University of Athens*

## 1. Preliminary remarks

As is indicated in the title here, I am not coming from current Greece, but from 'Greece 2021', that is to say, the Greece of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and two hundred years after the Greek revolution against the Ottoman occupation. I am not only a traveller of space but also a traveller of future time. In this spirit my discourse claims its inspiration from both *utopia* and *uchronia*.

In accordance with the title the conference: Culture and Memory in the Greek World, and the title of this essay, the first question one has to formulate could be the following: why, in this period of the historical trajectory of our humanity, do we ask questions about memory? Some hypotheses-*aporias* may be elaborated:

- The production of computer memory is more and more powerful and extensive. But as communication technologies have destroyed "intense communication" or at least, insofar as a deficit of communication has been created because of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies), have we destroyed the "real", "authentic", "genuine" memory? Or is it too late to discuss the question of "memory"?<sup>1</sup>
- Brain research has uncovered many secrets of cognitive functions and some aspects of memory are under systematic scientific investigation. It is hoped that mental processes and the mechanism of "memory" will be elucidated – will they be transparent as a result?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M. Augé, *Pour une anthropologie des mondes contemporains* (Paris: Aubier, 1994).

<sup>2</sup> *Connecting Brains and Society – The present and future of brain science: what is possible, what is desirable?* Synthesis and Proceedings of European Workshop, 22 and 23 April 2004, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (Amsterdam: Rathenau Instituut, King Baudouin Foundation, 2005).

- Neuroscience researchers and other scientists of biotechnology have spent a lot of energy trying to produce the “memory pill” which will improve the memory troubles of aged members of our society – whose number is increasing. Will there not be a loss of human memory in the future? Will there be a clear chemical manipulation of memory?<sup>3</sup>
- In contemporary societies, as they tend to become more “information” or “knowledge” societies, changes are more frequent and more generalised; action is more oriented towards the future; the future in turn becomes more and more present, and in this sense, memory becomes more and more useless, or at least a deep memory is not necessary as the succession of situations accelerates. Will memory be “obsolete”?<sup>4</sup>

This conference will help to discuss such types of hypotheses and, of course, new ones will be proposed during our discussions.

In all societies of the world (and in all the societies of the Greek world) practices exist concerning the future as a whole, but also the destiny of their particular members. Foreseeing the future, preventing evil, being proactive and vigilant are some of the issues to which answers are needed urgently; the answers being given by individuals or groups through practices, ceremonies and rituals which are mixtures of the rational and the mythical. In the Greek world, Apollo was the God for the exploration of the future, Delphi his sacred place, Pythia his instrument and the “technical bureaucracy” of the Delphi sanctuary his speaker. Oracles, prophecies and narratives were used to answer the questions of persons, cities and empires about the favourable signs to take or not to take initiatives, to make or not make decisions. The books of Syvilla were encyclopaedias about the possible pathways to human activities. Sacrifices and interpretations were used to help governors and citizens to choose strategies and objectives (see images 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5).

The above rather heterogeneous elements form the socio-cultural background against which a more concrete *problematique* could be elaborated concerning the future of Greek society for the next 20-50 years and the emergence of a new form of memory whose origin is not only the past but the future.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Agrafiotis, “Statement on Brain and Society” in *Connecting Brains and Society*.

<sup>4</sup> Agrafiotis, ITSAFE project: “North/South” perspective: aspects and questions”, Internal Report ITSAFE, October, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Agrafiotis, “Information society and Greek society: Socio-cultural and political incompatibilities”, in J. Berleur and D. Whitehouse (eds), *The Ethical Global Information Society. Culture and democracy revisited* (London/Tokyo: Chapman and Hall, 1997).



Image 1: Apollo, Attican Kylix (Museum of Delphi)

## 2. From forecasting to foresight: the Greek case

The main difference between forecasting and foresight is that the first aims at prediction for the next five or ten years of the evolution of a situation (based very often on models), whereas the latter aims at inventing possible worlds for the future based on hypotheses, data, theories and imaginative creativity.

Foresight is a multifaceted-multidimensional object, and different approaches cast light on it in different ways. So, Foresight could be conceived as:

- an instrument for management and policy decision making;
- a mechanism for social control of science and technology;
- a social process for institutional adaptation;
- a new form of governance of STI (Science and Technology Innovation) activities and also an arena for the incubation new relations between science, technology and society; or
- a catalyst for a new socio-cultural pattern for facing the challenges of the future.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Summary of the 1<sup>st</sup> Report on *Greek Foresight* (Athens, 12/2002).

In this spirit, different typologies have been proposed to classify the different exercises implemented “in the name and in the spirit” of Foresight in different countries of Europe.<sup>7</sup>

In Europe over the last 30 years, a number of Foresight exercises have been organised in order to master the uncertainties provoked by the rapid changes in contemporary societies. Similar initiatives have been completed in the U.S.A. and in Japan, where they have elaborated seven reports in the last thirty years.<sup>8</sup> Very often, the science/technology factor is considered fundamental and there is an “inflation” of possible scenarios on international, national and regional levels.

Greece is only recently experimenting in this field, and in the last three years a national structure and process have been established and funded by the European Commission and the Greek Government. The overall methodology is based on the structure of scenarios, social participation and public debate concerning the evolution of Greek society in the horizon of 2021, on the hypothesis that science, research technology and innovation will be the driving forces of the future.

Foresight, as a multifaceted-multidimensional object, might be conceived as the cultural analogon of the practices modern societies use to face the challenges of their future. This approach brings to light essential questions about time (past-present-future); about the meaning attributed to social and technological changes (i.e. the status of “progress”); about patterns of action (i.e. collective versus personal); and about forms of social interactions. From this perspective, the operation of Foresight has produced a number of scenarios (in which science and technology have a dominant role) and therefore a future “history” of different versions of “possible histories” have been formulated, that is to say a form of memory of the future.

The following structure is proposed to analyse this new memory: first, a brief presentation of Greek Foresight, that is, the possible forms and modes of socio-cultural existence for the Greek version of knowledge; then an assessment of this “story/narrative” as memory, and finally the formulation of some new *apories* for the destiny of the “memory of the Greek world”.

<sup>7</sup> M. Godet, *Manuel de perspective strategique* Vols 1 (*Une indisciplinée intellectuelle*) & 2 (*L'art et la méthode*), 2nd edition (Paris: Dunod, 2004).

<sup>8</sup> NISTEP, *The 7th Technology Foresight. Future technology in Japan toward the Year 2030* (NISTEP, Tokyo, 2001).



Image 2: *Pythia*, Michelangelo (1475-1564). Capela Sixtina, Vatican, Rome

### 3. Memory: first indications

In order to assess the virtual memory produced from the Foresight experience, it is necessary to give indications concerning the content of the term/concept of “memory”, given the fact that “memory” is used and defined differently by different disciplines. In our case, we consider memory as a flux of information and their crystallisations in and by objects, situations, places, moments, events, issues, themes and subjects. These flux and their crystallisations “irrigate” spaces in different time scales of the past, present and future, as it is conceived in the cultural history of the Western world. (It is evident that in a cyclical conception of time, for example in Eastern cultural history, “memory” has a different meaning.)

If this first definition is accepted, then one must identify an *agora*, or a marketplace, of different forms and modes of existence of “memory”. Some examples may indicate the vast fields that memories cover: collective versus individual, official versus sentimental, troubled versus normal, cognitive versus sentimental, dispersed versus structured and so on. The same field may be analysed by using the criterion of the process of production of the memory: collective, conscious, unconscious, by the aid of history and social sciences, by high culture (literature and arts), by popular

culture (songs), by cultural industry (cinema, video), by the manufacture of material objects (tools), by construction of buildings (cities), orally, based on archives. and so on. Finally, the same field may be observed by using the criterion of the social actor who takes the initiative for the production of “memory”: one may distinguish story-tellers, researchers, associations, journalists, artists, writers, poets, performing arts professionals and so on.

Finally, if one tries to combine the three “typologies”, the result is thousands of poles of memory(ies). The objective here is not to register all these memories but only to show their multiplicity, heterogeneity and variety. In the case of the Greek world, the above mapping of memories becomes even more complicated: if one takes into consideration the different strata of Greek civilisation/culture and the Greek diaspora over the planet, it would be impossible to give a complete image of memories of the Greek world.



Image 3: *Sivylla*, Michelangelo (1475-1564). Capela Sixtina, Vatican, Rome

#### 4. The identity of Greek foresight

##### (i) *The scenarios methodology*

The first Greek Foresight exercise has used the “scenario” tool, that is, building scenarios based on public discussion.<sup>9</sup> The scenario tool allows

<sup>9</sup> Agrafiotis et al., Reference text for *Greek foresight* (Athens: <http://www.foresight-gsrt.gr>, 2002a).

“possible worlds” to be formulated, in which specific actors and activities are identified. The question is: how to create these worlds? The basic assumptions are:

- The burden of the past (until 2001) does not determine what will happen in the year 2021, so creative imagination is unlocked to capture this new situation in 2021.<sup>10</sup>
- The triptych of “research – science – technology” constitutes at the same time a field of action, a resource and a variable in order to draw the picture of the year 2021.<sup>11</sup>
- The second scenarios are hybrid formations, since they are set out in scientific and narrative discourse constituting at the same time estimate and fiction.
- Because of the complexity and range of the subjects that are dealt with, the project should take place at both a macro-level (the whole project) and a micro-level (the thematic areas) (see also Figure 1).<sup>12</sup>

The Coordination Unit (CU) drafts the macro-scenarios based on the dynamics of group work and interactions between participants. During the project, these scenarios will be constructively discussed and supplemented. Therefore, they constitute “quasi” backgrounds in progress. These scenarios are the result of a top-down approach but are to be finalised through a bottom-up approach.<sup>13</sup>

At the micro-level, this analysis focuses on particular thematic areas corresponding to different sectors and technologies. At this level, new (micro-)scenarios are developed, adding detail and specification to the macro-scenarios, examining the strategies and policies for the development of science, technology and innovation in each thematic area. At the same time, these micro-scenarios validate the possibility of materialising the macro-scenarios as well as the possible alternative futures due to progress in the specific areas.

##### (ii) *Working Groups and Sectors*

The Working Groups (WG) are responsible for the drafting of scenarios at the level of thematic areas (the micro-level). WG members are from business, academia, research, professional institutions, government,

<sup>10</sup> L. Valadares Tavares, M. Heitor, L. Lapão, *From technology foresight to technology foreaction: A methodological overview*, IST/ET 2000, Lisbon, 2001.

<sup>11</sup> Agrafiotis, *Science, Technology, Society* (in Greek) (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 2000); R. E. Sclove, *Democracy and Technology*, (London/New York: The Guilford Press, 1995); M. Toubiana, C. Vrousos, C. Carde, J. P. Pages (eds), *Risque et Société* (Paris: Nucleon, 1999).

<sup>12</sup> Summary of the 1<sup>st</sup> Report on *Greek Foresight* (Athens, <http://www.foresight-gsrt.gr>, 12/2002); Godet, *Manuel de perspective stratégique*.

<sup>13</sup> NISTEP *The 7th Technology Foresight*.

chambers, NGOs etc. The Chairperson of each WG who co-ordinates the meetings and workshops is an eminent figure in the field of each WG. The *rapporteur* of each WG is responsible for drafting the reports and conducting the workshops, as he or she is the key person for the smooth workings of the WG. The selection of the members for each WG, apart from chairpersons and speakers/facilitators, was based on a public invitation, issued by the General Secretariat for Research and Technology with the cooperation of the Coordination Unit. Overall, 11 thematic areas were set, each having 10-15 members. These WG are:

- Agrarian Development and Fishery
- Industrial Production and Manufacturing
- Energy
- Information Technologies, Communications / e-business
- Transport
- Environment
- Health and Quality of Life
- Tourism and Culture
- Government and e-government
- Materials
- Biotechnology

Each WG is supported by a larger group, the Support Group (SG), the participants of which are representatives of social groups, professional associations and eminent figures in the field of each WG. The list of participants in the SG is based on the same public invitation feedback. The SGs will be the first to receive regularly the WG conclusions, bulletins, reports, as well as information material of any kind, as they will act as the first target for systematic communication and information dissemination.

In addition, WGs and SGs will be supported by an even larger group, the “Commentators”, the participants of which will be people who expressed their interest in participating, but for practical reasons this was not possible as WG/SG members.

The exercise also includes five horizontal sectors. These sectors (in fact actions or processes) have as their main objective to link and assist the WGs, so that they are able to develop their state-of-the-art activities in the sectors of: finance, human resources/training, space planning, and innovation and social acceptance of science and technology innovation (STI).

The main tool for interaction between WGs and the horizontal sectors is the drafting of two reports. The first report is the “starting point report”,

including instructions and guidelines, and the second the “synthesis report”, which will include the more important prerequisites and the necessary conditions for the development of the scientific and technological advances in our country in view of 2021; this second report should be finalised by the end of the project.

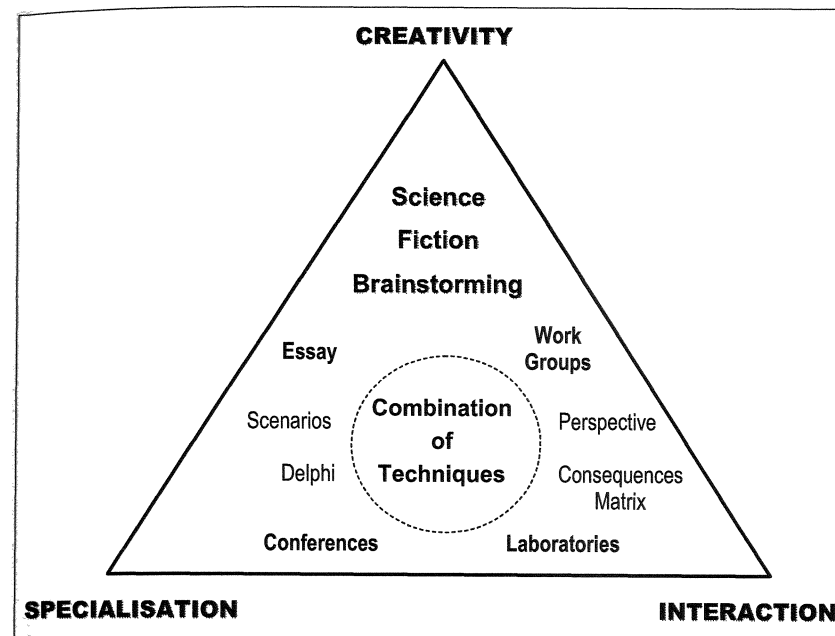


Figure 1: Basic methodological scheme

### (iii) 2021 scenarios

#### (A) 2021 Scenarios for Europe

##### *Scenario I: The United States of Europe*

Europe moves towards a political union and a federation such as the United States of America or Germany. Every member-state is a federal state. A single currency is used, domestic policy on fiscal issues is converging, as is also the case in social welfare, foreign policy and defence. Local authority powers are transferred to central authorities, so that the political and economic body is more robust and flexible. Among the goals achieved are development, low inflation rates, and a large common market with free movement of persons, goods, services and capital.

Central government and federal governments share the priority of supporting research, technology and innovation as well as developing the European knowledge society. Several European research institutions are established and research infrastructure is to a large extent integrated at European level. Hence, Europe is a strong competitor to USA and Japan in new and emerging research and technology fields. It becomes possible to attract important European or other researchers from USA or elsewhere.

Free movement of goods within a unified system favours entrepreneurship, technology diffusion and innovation promotion. Companies become more competitive for reasons of survival, modernising their technologies and adopting innovation. New powerful and productive companies are established, making their presence felt in Europe and internationally. The increase of foreign and long-term investment leads to lower unemployment rates and companies are able to meet local and international demands. E-commerce expands, and trade and consumers receive legal protection.

#### *Scenario II: Fragmented Europe*

Low interdependency between member-states of the EU. Mostly regional or cross-regional mechanism and policies. A large number of EU mechanisms become national again. Rare instances of common and cross-state policies. Only some general principles and rules apply at EU level. Economic and fiscal policy is set nationally. Many national currencies, many markets, different cultures.

Governments and the EU do not consider research and innovation their common priority. Institutions for cooperation and common research policy (e.g. Framework Programme, Eureka, European Science Foundation) become weaker. Research and Innovation programmes are being developed at regional and cross-regional levels, answering local needs. If this scenario comes true, Europe will not be able to position itself on international issues, to acquire research infrastructure and compete with USA and Japan in new and emerging research and technology fields. Because of lack of funding and cooperation among the national programmes, significant inequalities will surface among the various regions of Europe, especially among countries of Western and Eastern Europe. This is a Europe of inequalities, a "multi-speed" Europe.

#### *Scenario III: Competitive – Liberal Europe*

The principles of liberal economy dominate, competitiveness peaks, private companies flourish, the public sector shrinks as well as central government

(issuing regulations only), social welfare weakens, taxation drops, privatisation and the Stock Exchange Market dominate, the elimination of trade tax and tariffs takes place, local and social inequalities increase, trade unions weaken, so does citizen participation, insurance and health services are also privatised. Economic inequalities augment. Non-economic issues such as the environment and crime prevention are neglected.

The American model of research-technology-innovation is adopted as well as of company structures (shareholder model). Research-technology-innovation structures are formed on the basis of supply and demand principles. Research institutions are industry-funded and industry-dependent. Research is promoted inside the companies themselves.

Entrepreneurship flourishes. Flexible small and medium enterprises play a key role in creating attractive investment opportunities. Strong technology networks are created. Flexible employment provisions based on mutual trust and market needs. Companies are capable of dealing with pressure. Activity is concentrated in specific fields. Activity in low priority areas is discouraged.

#### *Scenario IV: Social – Ecological Europe*

State policies are formulated on the basis of social and ecological principles. The public sector is restructured and restored according to decentralisation, transparency, responsibility, social welfare and contribution. Citizen participation in social and political life increases and their consensus is ensured for the restructuring of the public sector and social organisations. Evaluation and control mechanisms are reinforced. Numerous public functions are carried out by cooperative and private organisations. Trade is protected. Citizens in numerous EU member-states become active against possible cutbacks to the welfare state. Pan-European discussion on the future of the European society. Limited flexibility of the labour market, employee protection, protection of children, youth and women. Taxpayer and environment friendly tax system. Social economy motivation. Restricted defence policy. Globalisation turns society-friendly. International cooperation in various fields is reinforced (e.g. in development and environment of issues).

User-needs customised technology. Cooperation and co-existence of public and private agencies. Stakeholder model for companies. Cooperation between education and research agents. Information and communication technology promotion. Development of green technologies and education technologies, private investment in specific industries is discouraged (e.g. biotechnology). Companies are structured on the basis of

democracy and equality. Informal networks and tele-working flourish. Establishment of companies and networks on socio-ecological criteria in Europe. Co-existence of public and private non-profit, non-governmental agencies and organisations in the fields of social services (education, training, social help to disadvantaged citizens, etc).

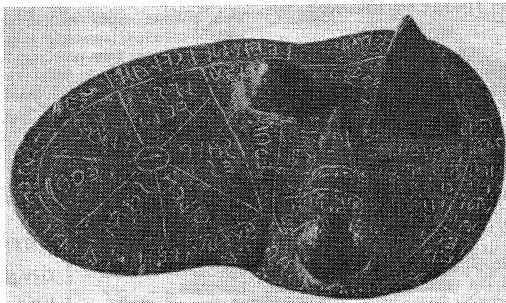


Image 4: Simulation of lamplever for the training of young priests. Bronze, 2nd century B.C, North Italy. We can read *usils* (sun and *tiurs* (moon) and names of deities

## (B) 2021 Scenarios for Greece

### *Scenario V: Garden*

Within Unified Europe, Greece and the other member-states follow a development course adjusted to their special features (environment, climate, natural resources, cultural ideals and values, economic situation, population etc).

The Greek-regional government in cooperation with the central-European government sets the principles and goals as well as the key-areas on which research and innovation in Greece should focus. European and national funding are exploited and Greece participates in numerous research, development and innovation networks and organisations. Research is effectuated in the traditional research centres and universities (funded by both central and regional government, Greek and European private companies and by citizen networks who wish to make use of the research output), in private large or medium size enterprises and in special centres, which various agencies and citizen networks co-operate to establish. At the European level, research fields are being distributed to each regional state so as to meet in the best possible way the development model of each one. In Greece, research, development and innovation focuses on the best possible use of domestic/local natural resources, informatics, health and quality of life and social sciences.

Democratic production and knowledge redistribution constitutes a constant preoccupation and discussion topic of the interested parties.

Innovation promotion is also a national policy target through making use of the federal state benefits, creating motives and national funding to the companies.

### *Scenario VI: Two-speed scenario or niches of differentiation*

Greece is a member of federal Europe. Powers are transferred at central-European authorities. The Greek government should apply all policies decided upon at the central level either on economic, fiscal and monetary issues, or on education, employment and welfare issues. New institutions and a new organisational model are established. However, they cannot keep old institutions isolated, resulting in a dual reality, two different worlds. Politics depends on these two worlds by reinforcing the new institutions while protecting the old ones. Customer relations are still vigorous between politicians and aggregates of different interest groups demand state support. Immigration is under control, mainly towards industries and areas of low demands, skills and qualifications.

The Greek government adopts and follows the centrally-made research and technology policy. The Greek economic structure is not able to absorb and integrate fully all new data and a duality emerges. Some fields present important progress regarding research, technology and innovation, while some others lag behind. Some companies are dynamic, using new technologies, promoting research and innovation, while some others are traditionally structured, make no use of new technologies, and so on.

### *Scenario VII: Competitive – liberal model*

Greece is a member of federal Europe. Powers are transferred at the level of the central-European authorities and the regional government applies centrally decided-upon policies. Principles of liberal economy dominate at European and regional levels. In practice, the market is the policy maker, as it is the main decision maker, wealth-producer and distributor. At the central level, some policy guidelines are set and institutions adjust to these so that the market model operates smoothly. Administrative activities are either weakened or eliminated as is the case with other institutional activities (social organisations, citizen groups, etc.). Urban modernisation is being promoted in some areas, so that obstacles are lifted for market expansion. The government intervenes where it is necessary, aiming at ensuring the stability of this economic model. Existing wealth production mechanisms give birth to social classes and groups that are capable of ensuring their operation. A consumer and investment society emerges. Economic and social inequalities expand.

Adopting the American model of research, technology and innovation, research institutions are company funded and dependent. Research is promoted through industry and submitted to the interests of the private sector. The state allocates funding to market tailor-made research activities.

### *Scenario VIII: Instability Scenario*

External danger such as conflict with a neighbour country, war in the Balkans, earthquake or other environmental hazards or even the fragmentation of Europe creates a sense of insecurity and hence power becomes centralised and authoritarian by “consensus”, and there is a trend towards the dominance of a single rationality. The Greek state is distanced from the European Federation. Economic policy is exercised under the pressure of exceptional situations. Significant resources are devoted to the military. State interventionism is obvious in military activities. Economic and social inequalities expand. Defence and security institutions are reinforced (the army, the police, antiterrorist and secret services). Urban modernisation remains unfinished. Strict immigration control.

Research and technology focuses on the military sector and natural disasters policies, absorbing huge state funding while other sectors undergo important funding cuts. In this field, there is total autonomy as far as EU policy is concerned.



Image 5 Greek foresight's sign

### **5. A new articulation of memories?**

In the modern Greek landscape of memories, a new memory has been elaborated and proposed by the Foresight exercise. What is the nature of the “newcomer”?

This new (Foresight) memory (according to the abovementioned “typologies” in §3) contains a mixture of social and personal life, because it refers both to the everyday life of citizens and social engineering in the horizon of 2021. It is evident that the emphasis is put on the basic structures and functions of a “knowledge” society. The images of the future

are shaped by the mobilisation of desire and imagination and tested using rationalities and criteria of feasibility. It is also supposed that the “ends/means” equation has been assessed and a “balanced sheet” has been obtained. The “possible worlds” of 2021, after a period of preparation by committees and experts, were presented in different fora, and corrections, clarifications and additions have been produced – in this sense, a “dissemination” has been achieved through social participation and public debate. For the participants in the overall procedure, a dilemma was always present: when speaking and expressing ideas, suggestions, expectations, certainties and uncertainties, do I speak in the name of their own existence or in the name of the institutions to which I belong? The situation was apparently hybrid, but the general rule was that each person speaks “in their own name”. As a consequence of this rule, the concept of “expert” was generalised, by assuming that an “expert” is not only an expert according to a strict scientific definition, but somebody who is a shareholder and stakeholder in the future of his society and his own personal destiny; which is to say that all citizens are “experts” on the future, because they all work together to construct this future.

These features of Foresight memory are very distinctive in relation to other types of memories, but the main difference remains the fact that this particular memory is a “virtual” one, a possible, pre-experienced and imaginary memory. The main issue here is not the essence of this memory but how this “new memory” – the nostalgia of the future – will be articulated with existing forms of memory. It is evident that this new memory is fragile and weak, it is not capable of confronting the *agora* of the other memories. Nevertheless, and in spite of the fact that contemporary societies are not passing through a period of strong (participative) democracy,<sup>14</sup> this new memory could find a place in the complex field of memories with the aid of the “new”, “innovative”, “crucial” and “generic” character of this new type of memory.

Another factor could also play a role in the Greek case, namely the influence and the dynamics of the Foresight exercise in Europe and on an international level (for example, Japan, Australia). Very often, European guidelines and models have initiated profound socio-cultural changes in Greece.

In Greece, after the revolution of 1821, the dominant memory was the memory of the ancient Greek world, and its “mythical” character has prevailed over a more critical and systematic approach to the Greek cultural heritage. The Foresight-memory exercise proposes a more rationalistic and

<sup>14</sup> Sclove, *Democracy and Technology*.



future-oriented perspective and as a result we could expect a probable conflict (which could – hopefully – be extremely productive).<sup>15</sup>

This probable conflict is extremely important culturally speaking, because the Foresight exercise leads us to assess and to evaluate the importance of the past and the degrees of freedom related to future. Of course, the past could always be a resource, a source of successful or unsuccessful efforts, and that means Foresight privileges a more selective and critical view of the past. In other terms, the determinism and the burden of the past (memories) is not considered as given but has to be validated in the context of the future context(s) and risks.

It is an open issue here as to which social groups and/or networks of institutions could assure a seamless articulation of the different forms of memories, and particularly the new Foresight memory, with the others? This issue goes beyond the question of memory – the most favourable conditions could be a movement such as “Technical Democracy”,<sup>16</sup> in which a new form of collective action and decision-making is proposed, based on a variety of poles and initiatives for the production of knowledge. In this spirit, action could be conceived and implemented not only by scientists, scholars and engineers, but also other actors, for example handicapped people, third-age persons, interest groups, and so on, in a more multi-polar and polyvalent spirit. If this picture has a meaning, one could expect the memory of the future to be present and active in a substantial way.

## Epilogue

Is the challenge of the “knowledge society” an illusion? A poor ideological artefact like the “information society”? In this case, the “Foresight memory” exercise risks being an impossible memory, or an unstable memory, and its socio-cultural trajectory will be rather short.

Already in contemporary societies, one can observe a paradox: on the one hand changes have accelerated and memory tends to be an instant memory, even a “hot-short” erased memory. On the other hand, people are looking for some “exotic”/primitive memory (see the Harry Potter books, and films where magic forces are connected with technological

sophistication) of a non-specific past. Members of contemporary societies use more and more scientific knowledge and technological know-how, and at the same time they tend to explore lost memories. From within this socio-cultural horizon, the work of Foresight and the Foresight-memory, at least, allow us to ask fundamental questions about the cultural dilemmas of modern societies.

## REFERENCES

- Summary of the 1<sup>st</sup> Report on *Greek Foresight* (Athens, <http://www.foresight-gsrt.gr>, 12/2002)
- 7 days – *Epta imeres, Kathimerini*: (in Greek) Special Issue on “The agony of forecasting. Oracles and prophecies in the ancient world”, 31/10/2004.
- D. Agrafiotis, “Information society and Greek society: Socio-cultural and political incompatibilities”, in J. Berleur and D. Whitehouse (eds), *The Ethical Global Information Society Culture and democracy revisited* (London/Tokyo: Chapman and Hall, 1997).
- (in Greek) *Cultural uncertainties* (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 1999).
- (in Greek) *Science, Technology, Society* (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 2000).
- (et al) (in Greek) Reference text for *Greek foresight* (Athens: <http://www.foresight-gsrt.gr>, 2002a).
- ITSAFE project: “North/South” perspective: aspects and questions”, Internal Report ITSAFE, October, 2002b, 15p.
- “Knowledge and Interdisciplinarity as Sociocultural Uncertainties”, *Ekstics*, 412-4, (2002) pp. 10-18.
- “Statement on Brain and Society” in *Connecting Brains and Society – The present and future of brain science: what is possible, what is desirable?* Synthesis and Proceedings of European Workshop, 22 and 23 April 2004, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (Amsterdam: Rathenau Instituut, King Baudouin Foundation, 2005).
- M. Augé, *Pour une anthropologie des mondes contemporains* (Paris: Aubier, 1994).
- M. Callon, P. Lascoumes, Y. Barthe, *Agir dans un monde incertain Essai sur la démocratie technique* (Paris: Seuil, 2001).
- Connecting Brains and Society – The present and future of brain science: what is possible, what is desirable?* Synthesis and Proceedings of European Workshop, 22 and 23 April 2004, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (Amsterdam: Rathenau Instituut, King Baudouin Foundation, 2005).
- J. C. Delvainquière, “Diversité culturelle et cohésion sociale”, *Circular*, CIRCLE Newsletter, no 14 (2002), p.31.
- (La) Documentation Française: *Le risque technologique et la démocratie: rapport du Collège de la prévention des risques technologiques* (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1992).
- M. Godet, *Manuel de perspective stratégique Vols 1 (Une indiscipline intellectuelle) & 2 (L'art et la méthode)*, 2nd edition (Paris: Dunod, 2004).
- NISTEP, *The 7th Technology Foresight. Future technology in Japan toward the Year 2030* (NISTEP, Tokyo, 2001).
- R. E. Sclove, *Democracy and Technology*, (London/New York: The Guilford Press, 1995).
- M. Toubiana, C. Vrousos, C. Carde, J. P. Pages (eds), *Risque et Société* (Paris: Nucleon, 1999).
- L. Valadares Tavares, M. Heitor, L. Lapão, *From technology foresight to technology foreaction: A methodological overview*, IST/ET 2000, Lisbon, 2001.

<sup>15</sup> Agrafiotis (in Greek) *Cultural uncertainties* (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 1999); J. C. Delvainquière, “Diversité culturelle et cohésion sociale”, *Circular*, CIRCLE Newsletter, no 14 (2002), p.31; *Le risque technologique et la démocratie: rapport du Collège de la prévention des risques technologiques* (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1992).

<sup>16</sup> M. Callon, P. Lascoumes, Y. Barthe, *Agir dans un monde incertain. Essai sur la démocratie technique* (Paris: Seuil, 2001).