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This is the taijitu - a symbol in Taoism representing the wholeness of yin and yang. It is rendered here in circuit boards to symbolise the interface of Taoism and science.

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Regenerative Logic

David Lorimer

FUTURE FIT Giles Hutchins (SMN)

Self-published, 2016, 308 pp., £17.99, p/b – ISBN 978-1-530-153435

I met Giles at a conference of the Laszlo Institute in Italy in July, and realised that I had reviewed his earlier book *The Illusion of Separation* a couple of years ago in these pages. This followed on from his 2012 book *The Nature of Business*, and here he brings these two concerns together in a highly practical manner, providing a brilliant handbook for personal and organisational transformation. Giles has synthesised and organised a great deal of essential thinking, some which he summarises in excellent charts and diagrams so that the reader can gain a clear understanding of the transition from old linear ways of thinking to new systems-based ones. In the course of the book, it becomes very clear that 21st-century companies can no longer afford to use 20th-century logic, also a central concern of the International Futures Forum - see my review of Graham Leicester's book below. Theoretical understanding is no longer enough - it needs to be embodied, which is why Giles's practical exercises, tips, reflective questions and case examples are so useful. In addition, he provides a bullet point executive summary at the beginning of each chapter. Current turbulence and uncertainty means that a transformation of mind-set is required both personally and organisationally. The danger is represented by what he calls a complexity gap in our leaders' ability to deal with our volatile times. He comments that 'too many of today's organisations find themselves caught up in a top-down, hierarchical, KPI-obsessed, siloed, control-based, defensive and reactive firefighting mind-set.' Nor do we flourish as human beings in such an environment, which surely puts a damper on creativity and keeps under pressure to focus on the immediate task at hand. His new logic is both regenerative and resilient, aligned to service and a sense of real value and deeper purpose. This leads on to his characterisation of the firm of the future, with a particularly helpful chart and diagram on pp. 34-35. A regenerative firm will also be resilient, optimising, adaptive, systems based, values led and life supporting. Each of these characteristics is explained in greater detail, a particular strength of Giles's book and which he applies in a hands-on chapter overall process in terms of personal and organisational gnosis or inner knowing - this is not a word that one expects to find in a business book, but it is clear that the inner state

of leaders is critical to the way they function. Crucially, leaders need to schedule reflective time into their week if they are going to be able to stand back and regenerate themselves. Too frequently, this is exactly what goes by the board, so things continue on as before. Giles gives exercises for the feelings, breath and body and suggests some significant qualities that we can embody in challenging work environments: gratitude, surrender, trust, courage, humility. Organisational gnosis affects both processes within the firm and its outside relationships. Here again, some of the key attributes and qualities might seem surprising: stillness, self-organisation, small steps, social, synchronicity and soulful, but Giles shows these can be implemented in a practical way using processes such as council, deep listening, open space, appreciative inquiry and circles of trust. At the end of this chapter, he uses the seven levels model of Richard Barrett (see article and review elsewhere in this issue) by mapping seven stages of organisational development towards becoming a firm of the future. This means knowing what organisational actions and needs are at each level, with corresponding developmental tasks. Needless to say, very few companies will be operating consistently at the seventh level, but the firm of the future will be advancing in the direction of Leadership and service. already mentioned, is essential to making this transition of logic, and Giles highlights five important areas for leaders to focus on as well as five qualities of conscious leadership. Such leaders are good listeners, coaches, facilitators and catalysts, operating as convenors and hosts within their organisations and using constructive criticism as a spur to further transformation. The book ends with a reflection on alchemy, showing how the qualities of Yin and Yang need to be finely balanced and embodied in wise action. There is then a series of health check questions for a future-fit organisation as well as details of a corresponding benchmark. Personally and professionally, we are all involved in a transformative process, and this refreshingly straightforward and clearly written book provides an invaluable route map based on the latest thinking in science, psychology, spirituality and business studies.

Strange Attractors

David Lorimer

TRANSFORMATIVE INNOVATION

Graham Leicester

Triarchy Press, 2016, 117 pp., £15, h/b – ISBN 978-1-911193-00-5

This inspiring book was launched in Edinburgh in April at a reception to mark the 15th anniversary of the International Futures Forum (www.internationalfuturesforum.com) and it represents an excellent summary of many of its key insights into social and learning processes over this period. Transformative innovation represents a 'fundamental shift towards new patterns of viability in tune with our aspirations for the future.' This contrasts with sustaining innovation that fixes the existing system and disruptive innovation that shakes it up. Following the introduction, the book consists of six chapters on knowing, imagining, being, doing, enabling and supporting.

It outlines 10 characteristics of transformative innovation derived from IFF praxis: balance, in terms of operating in both the old and the new world; inspiring and hopeful; informed by a longer term perspective; pioneering a process rooted in discovery and learning; grounded; personally committed with our full self; responsible; revealing hidden resources; maintaining integrity and coherence of means and end; and maintaining a pioneering spirit even in the face of success. At this point, the reader will find a useful analysis of the evolution of a more adaptable way of providing care and support to old people. One tension is the need to measure outcomes on a short-term scale when the effects are slightly longer term and the project is not yet ready to be scaled.

Given our world of boundless connectivity, information overload and rapid change, we need flexible approaches to knowing. Here there are five principles: seeing ourselves as subjects and participants in a relational universe, expanding what we consider to be valid knowledge and therefore our context of learning, respecting a dynamic pattern of relationships and the emerging integrity that it brings about, taking a cyclical view of time enabling us to complete and close processes so as to make space for the new, and moving from fragmentation and separation to wholeness and connection - summarised as holism with focus. Then there are the two loops of fear and love, which the reader will find in my account of our Rome meeting.

Imagination comes next, and here the reader is introduced to what I consider a crucial conceptual tool, the three horizons framework. The first horizon – H1 - represents current dominant

systems and business as usual; the second – H2- is a pattern of transition activities and innovations, some of which may prop up H1, while others enable the transition to the third horizon – H3 - embodying our deeper aspirations for the future. These are represented respectively by the manager, the entrepreneur and the visionary. The beauty of this framework is that it can be used to set up a creative conversation of potential scenarios and patterns without people becoming too attached to a single perspective. H3 provides some imaginative space and may help resolve dilemmas in the present as we seek to attain the best of both worlds. The whole process is encapsulated in one of the 'prompt cards' encouraging us to 'develop a future consciousness to inform the present' (attractors pull from the future).

Being involves the human system and its patterns as we seek to embody a transformative response by bringing together what the IFF calls a creative integrity configured around personal commitment and expressing wholeness and relationship. Its principal axes are being and doing and it moves between autonomy and integration, focus and holism, creating a distinctive culture. Social learning is an iterative process involving action and reflection. Importantly, this is not just an abstract technique, but is embodied in learning from experience – hence the learning journey as an essential component of the IFF process. The chapter on doing also explains Jim Ewing's strategies of Impacto and Implemento, which have been used successfully in a schools' project. This involves a sequence of steps to consider purpose, urgency, destination, success path and commitment, with an emphasis on clarity of purpose that can then be reflected in clarity of communication.

Enabling entails a compelling vision of the third horizon while supporting pioneers trying to implement the process. This also involves a realistic view of policy landscape and new forms of evaluation - how does one flourish in the presence of the old? Finance has its own challenges due to the nature and timing of transformative innovation and the ever present fact of continuous change and evolving contexts. If these insights resonate with your own challenges, then you might like to consult a further set of resources at www.iffpraxis.com.

Finally, we can give ourselves permission to get going, and Graham provides a nice framework for this based originally on Al Gore's reinventing government programme. The permission slip gives us authority and responsibility to help shift our systems towards an aspirational third horizon vision of the future after we have asked ourselves a series of pertinent questions. If we are able to answer yes, then we don't need

to ask for permission, we just need to do it. Pioneers in every field will find this book a rich resource

general

A Musician's Journey through Life and Death

David Lorimer

SOUNDSCAPES

Paul Robertson (SMN), foreword by Dr Peter Fenwick

Faber, 2016, 266 pp., £15.99, h/b
– ISBN 978-0-571-33188-8



Many readers will remember Paul at one or more of his appearances on Network platforms. While he had a NESTA Fellowship, he came to Oxford and performed Bach's partita in D minor while a Eurhythmist improvised dancing movements to accompany him - the music was in fact written as dance music. He then played the piece again in a church at a conference in Bath, where he also interviewed Sir John Tavener about the creative process in music. This encounter led to the creation of one of his final works, *Towards Silence*, which Paul was eventually able to perform. However, in the interim, the main artery in his heart ruptured and he nearly died. Meantime, Sir John was also in hospital with a serious heart condition.

Paul describes all this in the book, and the incredibly hard and long road to recovery, literally inch by inch. He was told he would never play the violin again; he did. And most beautifully and poignantly at two more Mystics and Scientists conferences, the last one in 2015. He explained how life had been reduced to its essentials, describing

what he called a second simplicity, which TS Eliot said cost not less than everything; true in Paul's case. In a recent piece from the Sunday Times News Review, shortly after Paul had died, the journalist describes how he had asked his daughter to provide him with a piece of paper on which he wrote down a few words, which were: morality, kindness, simplicity, compassion, forgiveness, empathy, gratitude, patience, understanding, equality. What a list! In common with the message from other near death experiences, we have a recipe for a true and deeply human life, something to which we can all aspire. There is also a tragic element, reflected in the conversation he reports as a young man with one of his mentors Sir Clifford Curzon. He asked him about the significance of music: 'consolation', he said. For consolation for what? 'Masked for life', he replied. He was brought up in a caravan in Oxford, and his father was a radical Marxist. He encountered the violin at the age of eight, when some free lessons were offered at his school. As soon as he picked the instrument up, he had a strange feeling of familiarity (he later had flashbacks of being on stage as a violinist at a different time and place) and knew immediately that he wanted to become a violinist, which he duly announced to his parents on returning home. He recognised the vast amount of work involved, and devoted himself single-mindedly to perfecting his technique. When it came to the time that he needed a proper instrument that was going to cost £80, his father told him that they did not have that kind of money, but he could try the pools. He filled out card using the fingering of a Mozart piece he was currently working on, and duly won £80! Later, it seems, they had a much more substantial win and were able to move house and buy another ~~where the rental property~~ his first important teacher, Manoug Parikian, he is asked if he wants to become an amateur or professional – 'a professional of course', he replies. He sketches some wonderfully amusing vignettes involving Manoug, who spared no effort and expense in trying to become an English gentleman - some of these incidents literally made me laugh out loud. There are some equally entertaining episodes connected with learning how to take tea with Curzon. Paul has a wonderful eye for the absurd. The reader also learns about his encounters with other musicians such as Heifetz, Brendel, Marriner and Menuhin. His parting from Manoug around the time that he established the Medici Quartet was acrimonious, but it was extraordinary that he suddenly had an impulse, years later, to visit him. It was a happy reunion, and he heard on the radio that Manoug died the next day.