CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM BACKGROUND

Summary

This chapter introduces the issues relevant to the project reported in this thesis. It is shown how the communication futures problematique experienced in the study area Ashibetsu--formerly a prosperous coal mining city--should be understood within the greater context of Japan's post-bubble social, political and economic environment. Chapter 1 introduces the argument that Japan as the macro context, and rural communities such as Ashibetsu as the micro contexts, are in need of renewed futures images capable of providing viable alternatives to Japan's dominant post-war 'catch-up and overtake the USA and Europe' image of the future. By implication it is argued that the creation of alternative futures are pivotal to the task of rebuilding community futures. The subgroup informally referred to in Japanese as the *katayaburi*--the non-conventional or idiosyncratic thinker--is also introduced. Theoretical and practical problems that emerge from the critical communication futures method employed in this study are pointed out including the relatively scarcity of literature pertaining to poststructural analyses of futures images, especially within the context of community futures. Causal Layered Analysis is introduced as an emerging epistemological and methodological framework derived from poststructuralism and used in the context of communication futures research in this thesis. Definitions to a number of key terms and concepts--some adopted from the Japanese language--are clarified.

1.1 Purpose of study

The major purpose of this study is to conduct a poststructural critique of futures images generated from data of the post-bubble rural community known as Ashibetsu situated in Japan's northern island of Hokkaido. It is hypothesized from the outset that a poststructural perspective will be instrumental not in the prediction of a certain future, but rather in the deconstructionist process of 'undoing' dominant futures images in order to unmask the un-said, thereby opening up transformative spaces from which authentic futures images may be generated.

The method of analysis employed in this study requires that we have a closer understanding of the 'official' futures images. Consequently, another objective of this study is to juxtapose the 'official' or dominant images in the study area with those of local *katayaburi*--the idiosyncratic thinkers. One question asked is 'Can the seeds of alternative and preferred futures be found in the marginalized voices of the katayaburi?' However, this study does not conclude with a deconstruction analysis. Consistent with the contemporary demand for reconstructive approaches to critical analyses, the final purpose of this investigation is to suggest a new framework for an alternative communicative discourse which potentiates new futures.

1.2   Statement of problem

In this section, a number of key issues and concepts are addressed in order to introduce the reader to the line of argument to be pursued by this critical futures investigation. In the midst of emerging dramatic global structural transformations pointing to massive shifts in identity, economy and governance (Inayatullah, 1997), once seemingly invincible Japan Inc. has not remained unaffected by the imperative of assessing its own futures images portfolio. Since World War Two, Japan's futures image has been characterized by a monolithic 'catch-up and overtake the USA and Europe' model whose implicit objectives were to attain the scientific, technological and economic levels of the World War Two victors.

It is hypothesized in this investigation that Japan's single-minded pursuit and unquestioned acceptance of the authority of the 'catch-up' model has contributed to the marginalization of the female, the young, the non-economic, the outsider and the unconventional. The nation's economic-driven paradigm has impacted upon the ability of the Japanese to think or act 'outside the box' or to recognize as legitimate, alternative ways of thinking, doing and being. Official discourse on Japan's post-bubble 'problem' attributes the source of the impasse to the singular source in the form of 'bad loans', a problem whose solution assumes the need to install in Japan a US-derived ultra competitive society.

Inextricably linked to the issue of Japan's search for new futures images is the notion of development. Inayatullah (1994) has claimed that "development and development theory have become increasingly problematic" (p. 24). As nation-states find it increasingly problematic to act effectively at the macrolevel, micro approaches to development have received greater worldwide attention. Significantly, post-war development has displayed two major shifts: from macro to micro development initiatives; and from quantitative to qualitative, that is from economic-oriented development to human development approaches. Correspondingly, development thinking in the last two decades has seen a global boom in Community Futures (CF), an approach whose task is to "forge an equitable, efficient and appropriate-scaled alternative to global capitalism" (Wildman, 1998, p. 7). The pathologies of post-bubble Japan have left rural communities bereft of guiding futures images. One response to this problematic situation in Japan is witnessed in the proliferation of community futures programs collectively known as *machi-zukuri,* 'town-making' strategies.

As Slaughter (1996a) has noted "Images and imaging processes powerfully affect the ways in which people and organisations look ahead, yet they are seldom studied explicitly." In one of the first major investigations in futures images research Galtung (in Ornauer et al., 1976) defines the import of this genre of research, not by highlighting their predictive capacity but rather preparatory effect upon the area of study. The author notes:

> Are these efforts to speculate about future attitude distributions really important or interesting at all? Certainly not in the sense of being able to foretell - as already pointed out. But they are of importance, and they are interesting, when they are contrasted with unreasonable expectations as to some aspects of the objective future. Unwarranted optimism and unwarranted pessimism will both have their consequences. Thus, if a population seems to feel that science will bring more and more benefits and solutions, and the attitude distribution is such that there are good reasons to expect that the subjective future will look even more optimistic in the years to come, whereas at the same time there are good reasons to believe that more science will bring with it considerable costs and problems, then this finding is important. It is important because disappointments for which a society is unprepared may have paralyzing, and even retrogressive effects (Galtung, in Ornauer et al., 1976, p. 18).

The report also alludes to the importance of understanding the non-official futures images. The social pursuit of dominant visions may in fact be harmful

because they may function as one more factor leading people to focus on that single trajectory of development instead of focussing on the mapping out of new paths of social transformation (Galtung, in Ornauer et al., 1976, p. 19).

Central to the task of reinventing new futures in the face of obselete and limiting social realities, is the study of futures images. Although various techniques derived from images research have been increasingly employed in local futures-creating strategies throughout the world, critical questions that ask 'Whose futures?' and 'Who benefits from the dominant futures discourses?', remain largely under-researched. Seen in the macro-context of Japan and the micro-context of the study area Ashibetsu, the lack of critical approaches to futures images and developmental issues, is especially conspicuous. This investigation can also therefore be understood as a strategy to redress this imbalance.

It is explained in the following chapter that central to the study of futures images is the culture-specific phenomenon of communication. One salient issue concerning Japanese communication modes is the clash of paradigms observed between Japan's ageing post-war generation -- stereotypically typified by the company salaryman -- the derivative of an industrial-modernistic worldview, and the younger generation of Japanese brought up within a superficially americanized postmodern global environment. From this paradigm clash, a question concerning Japan's future can be derived: Has this paradigm clash impaired the communicative ability of this nation, where in terms of Japanese culture, the young are subordinate to elders? And, by extension, has this impairment of communicative ability contributed to the sense of alienation, disempowerment and anomie (Baert, 1998) not only amongst Japan's current youth generation, but amongst the idiosyncratic, and marginalized other? Have the interpersonal relations, naturalized as the 'Japanese character', and subordinated by the nation's dominant corporatist worldview, produced a nation of individuals unable to speak their mind or imagine anything other than the taken-for-granted? And finally, can this problematique be correlated to Japan's communication styles, from which the spaces of potential social transformation through communication, have been crowded out by linguistic formalism, perfunctoriness and a repressive communication climate?

How can the reader unfamiliar with Japanese communication modes and issues visualize this problematic? One useful conceptual tool can be borrowed from Japanese shiatsu therapy based on the medical philosophy that physical and mental pathologies manifest in the human organism due to blockages of energy flow through the body's so-called 'meridians'. This metaphor can be extended to facilitate the visualization of blocked communication channels within Japan's present communication climate. This leads to an obvious question: What is the nature of the crisis of communication the researcher claims is impacting both on Japan and the study area? A partial answer to this can be found in the comments of a Japanese informant currently employed in Japan's banking industry, reporting about planned strategies to make his bank more internationally competitive.

> Our bank is thinking of abolishing the seniority system. Do you know what that means? I could end up being the boss to my own boss now -- the same guy that has put me down for years and harassed me at work. It means I could make lots of money and reap the financial rewards of my own skills -- and if he doesn't 'perform' he won't get anything. It even means I won't have to use honorific Japanese to him any more. In other words, he won't have any kind of control over me. Can you imagine what this means for Japanese business and culture? I don't think it can ever work in actuality. It's too radical for Japan.

Whereas conventional community futures thinking has concentrated on empirical-quantitative dimensions, the poststructuralist approach reinstates the political. According to Inayatullah (1990), "A critical perspective will show the monuments of power before us and thus allow the continuous destruction and reconstruction of alternative futures, 'past', 'present' and 'future'." Accordingly, new and radical theoretical and epistemological perspectives have been applied to the issue of development. On this point, Rabinow and Sullivan (1979) have noted that "Politicians, and our academic experts, find it easier to talk about the standard of living than about what a society might be living for" (Rabinow and Sullivan, 1979, p. 14). Despite perceptions that poststructural perspectives are theory driven and impractical to real-world problematic situations, Inayatullah (1990) vividly highlights how futures researchers ought to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world problematics:

> ...futures studies must not solely be engaged in pure research, but rather the future must actualize itself through praxis. There must be an effort to identify cultures that have been suppressed or that will be suppressed

given various trends, and then aid them in articulating and realizing new visions (Inayatullah, 1990).

Tied to the desired outcome of the poststructural futures agenda to deconstruct the present as one necessary step to opening up the transformative spaces for alternative futures (Inayatullah, 1998a) is the need to investigate the dynamics of transformative change. Based on the research outcomes of previous communication futures research by Stevenson and Simpson (1993), the role of idiosyncratic futures has been cited as an important but largely overlooked source of alternative and authentic futures.

In the context of Japan, the idiosyncrat--is approximated by the individual referred to as *katayaburi*--literally the 'mold-breaker', an informally recognized social subgroup whose opinions have only recently been taken seriously but are yet to impact significantly on Japanese policy. Recognizing the imperative for positive change, how then can social transformation be brought about? Even Japan, labelled by many Japanese experts with the collective credo "nothing ever changes" (Wood, 1992, p. 3) is not without historical precedent for major societal transformaton, as witnessed by the Meiji and post-war reformations. The katayaburi is by nature non-conventional, which implies a frame of mind and way of being-in-the-world that is creative, innovative, experimental, and not always socially accepted. As Boulding (1995) astutely notes: "When a community is close to the margin of survival, the innovator is suspect and discouraged as threatening to the good order of society" (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 66).

In light of the above lines of inquiry, it can be hypothesized that Ashibetsu and other rural communities are the potential sites of qualitative change; the creators of new futures images; and the agents of micro-transformative dynamics that over-populated metropolitan regions including Tokyo, are incapable of achieving

Finally, this poststructural investigation is based upon a number of assumptions and premises formulated from previous research and theory, intuition derived from personal experience and research undertaken in Japan over more than a decade, and on information provided by Ashibetsu informants prior to entering the study area. These organizing assumptions and

premises are:

- Japan is traditionally a hegemonically governed nation, planned centrally from Tokyo by a singular vision of the future which has systematically, marginalized alternative images;

- Although the relative homogeneity of Japan's post-war future image facilitated the nation's rapid rise to economic superpower status, this 'catch- up and overtake' model is obselete in Japan's post-bubble social reality. Despite this, alternative images are rarely articulated in public debate, leaving dominant images unchallenged;

- The dominant futures image promoted by official sources such as local government in Ashibetsu, functions as a structural impediment to the ability of Ashibetsu citizens to imagine, articulate and communicate authentic and alternative post-bubble futures;

- Alternative, non-official images may be the reservoirs of creative ideas more appropriate to the needs of the future than are existing dominant images;

- The Japanese *katayaburi* individual is best conceptualized in Foucauldian terms as the receptacle of subjugated discourses and subjugated knowledges (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 139), and therefore as a potential source of what Foucault calls the "missing discourse" (quoted in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 150), or as an agent of change.

1.3 Ashibetsu: Brief background to the study area

The geographical configuration known as Ashibetsu City covers 869.13 square kilometres, making Ashibetsu Japan's fourth largest city. With a current population of approximately 22,000 inhabitants, Ashibetsu has Japan's lowest population density (Takizawa, 1986, p. 25). Comprised of the adjoining Upper and Lower Ashibetsu, the city is located in the Sorachi region of central Hokkaido, the northern-most of Japan's four major islands.

Although the specifics of Ashibetsu's origins are unclear it has been documented that the first Japanese pioneers headed by Denjiro Sato established hamlets in the region in the year 26 of the Meiji Period (1893). The name Ashibetsu is thought to derive from the language of the indigenous Ainu people meaning "to rise perpendicularly from the river" (from Hoshi no Furusato Ashibetsu: Shiryou-Hen, 1998). As of March 1999, the official population was recorded at 22,009 persons, down 30 from the previous month and down from a maximum population of 75,000 recorded during the coal

mining boom days (Kouhou Ashibetsu, March 1999, p. 16).

Local historical records indicate six general phases in the region's development including the pre-pre-settler period (先先住民); the pre-settler period (先住); the pre-coal period, characterised by an agrarian economy; the Golden Age of coal mining (石炭黄金時代), which peaked in the late 1950s and early 1960s; the post-coal period, during the 1980s when the last of the coalmines was decommissioned; and the post-bubble period from the late 1980s extending to the present (in Ashibetsu Kotohajime, p. 24). Historically, the Ashibetsu economy was characterized by a triad of pillar industries including agriculture, forestry and coal. As coal mining was phased out, city planners and policy makers envisaged the city's future economic base to lie in the new paradigm of tourism, a strategy which had been adopted by a large percentage of Japan's rural communities. Ashibetsu City is currently characterized by a number of festivals including the Local Industries Festival; the furusato Film Festival; the Summer Kenka Festival; an annual Fireworks Festival; the Candle Art Festival held at the defunct theme park Canadian World; and the Ashibetsu Snow Festival.

1.3.1 The macro-context: Post-bubble Japan and impacts on Hokkaido

Japan's post-bubble economy has been discussed in detail elsewhere, and further elaboration would be superfluous here. However, it is important that factors influencing Ashibetsu's present and futures be understood within the macro contexts of Hokkaido and Japan's post-bubble environment. Rabinow and Sullivan (1979) graphically express the importance of contextualization:

> ... the intelligibility of any action requires reference to its larger context, a cultural world. So, to take a powerfully developed example, when Clifford Geertz describes the Balinese cockfight, a text analogue, he progressively incorporates other essential Balinese symbols, institutions, and practices that are necessary to an understanding of the seemingly localized cockfight (Rabinow and Sullivan, 1979, p. 13).

As both economist and futurist, Boulding (1995) has claimed that all advanced economies bring forth their own pathologies. Those that have currently come to characterize post-bubble Japan include increased cases of suicides with male

suicides for 1998 at 23,013 -- up by 40.2% from the previous year. Female suicides totaled 9,850, up 23.5% from the previous year. Reported motivations other than sickness included financial difficulties and problems at home showing a 70.4% increase over 1997 statistics (Hokkaido Shimbun, July 2, 1999, p. 3). In June 1998 a "suicide and death-from- overwork hotline" (自殺・過労死 110 番) was established to offer counseling to the growing numbers of middle-aged men contemplating suicide due to company redundancies and bubble-incurred debt.

Another emerging post-bubble social phenomenon is known as yo-nige--literally 'night escape', in which people escape their homes to leave behind accumulated debts and other intractable problems, once again, often the direct results of the excesses of the bubble economy. A similar social phenomenon currently receiving attention by the mass media is known as iede (家出)--simply 'leaving home'. Here, the 'leaving home' carries the connotation of 'disappearing' from home. Official police records indicate that 89,388 Japanese 'disappeared' from their homes in 1998, signifying an increase of 3.5% from 1997 (Hokkaido Shimbun, July 2, 1999, p. 3). More than 63,000 disappearances were adults. The main motive for escaping was attributed to the "shadow of the economic recession" (不況の影).

Divorce cases have also reportedly increased. The principle reason for divorce currently cited is 'lack of communication' in which some recent divorcees commented they had so little communication that they were not even able to fight. Unemployment statistics reveal post-war highs in excess of 4.9 percent as of July, 1999. Personal and corporate bankruptcies are at post-war peaks. The number of homeless, especially in Osaka, have increased and now includes homeless women with children. Added to these relatively new phenomena are the purported nationwide problems of a rapidly ageing population, decreasing numbers of children, loss of economic dynamism, developmental fatigue, breakdown in 'traditional' values especially among Japan's youth, and an increase in crimes of poverty.

Central-government responses to this post-bubble problematique have been numerous. One recent example is a blueprint published by the Economic Strategy Council entitled "Strategies for Reviving the Japanese Economy". This

report, submitted to Prime Minister Obuchi February 26, 1999 comprised five chapters including a Road Map for Sustainable Fiscal Balance; Building a "Competitive Society with Soundness and Creativity" and Preparing Safety Nets; Settling the Bubble Economy in Real Terms and Establishing a Financial System Designed for the 21st Century; Reviving Vigorous and Competitive Industries; and Strategic Infrastructure Investment Toward the 21st Century and Revival of Local Economies (Japan Times, April 14, 1999). As soon as this strategy was released, it was superceded by a new plan, this time from the Economic Council in the form of a ten year plan consisting of twelve proposals that included the call for a shift to a "society based on knowledge and ideas"; greater options in selecting schools; allowing more skilled foreign workers into the country; promoting employment of elderly workers; establishing a policy to cope with the problem of decreasing child population and an ageing society; and dispatching more information to the world (Japan Times, July 7, 1999).

The impact of Japan's post-bubble environment has impacted heavily on the region of Hokkaido. Unemployment is above the national average; school violence is the highest in the nation; and 10% of Japan's bankruptcies were Hokkaido companies even though the island accounts for only 4.5% of the nation's entire GDP (*The Economist*, May 16, 1998). Many of these failed businesses are from Hokkaido's formerly prosperous tourist industry. Hokkaido's principle financial institution and symbol of Hokkaido's self-proclaimed 'pioneering spirit' -- the Takugin Bank -- declared insolvency and closed its doors to business on the afternoon of Friday, November 13, 1998. Furthermore, to illustrate the severity of Hokkaido's urban-rural divide, it is reported in Hokkaido that even senior citizens are moving from periphery locations to the cities due to the loss of mobility around smaller communities once they are no longer competent to drive their own automobiles. Solution strategies to the urban-rural divide include the need to promote decentralisation by conferring greater autonomy and decision-making powers to local governments.

The systemic crisis in Hokkaido has spurred an industry in distancing the region from Tokyo and for asserting a new and independent spirit in matters of economics, politics and ways of living. Node Forum, a Hokkaido published journal, embodies this new spirit in a special edition devoted to 'redesigning

Hokkaido' with a series of articles and interviews represented by such keywords and catchphrases that include "21st Century Hokkaido: A Place Where Something Is About To Start"; "aiming for a New Society" and "in the face of massive societal change, the present system is no longer useful" (April-May, No. 10).

1.3.2   The micro-context: Ashibetsu's futures problematique

At micro-levels, the pathologies of Japan's post-bubble environment are reproduced in Ashibetsu. Increased suicides; increasing unemployment; population loss, especially of the young and skilled to metropolitan areas, have come to characterize the new post-bubble social fabric of the Ashibetsu community. Government records that the population had fallen by 236 people to 21,742 during the one month between the April and May editions of the Kouhou Ashibetsu newsletter (p. 14). Also reported was mounting frustration and cynicism with politicians; an increased desire to want to opt out of society; and extreme financial stress -- often resulting from over-borrowing and over-spending during the bubble days. Local informants were able to relate several incidents of suicide attributed to unpayable debts incurred during the bubble economy; and breakdown of intra-familiar communication, whose origins were often reportedly due to financial difficulty. One debt repayment strategy involved the family breadwinner, usually the father, committing suicide, whereby the family would receive insurance payouts with which debts could be paid off.

Prior to entering the study area of Ashibetsu, informants had described and outlined a schematic of a distinct problematic situation displaying certain characteristics, played out in a dynamic environment mediated by communication, politics, economics, and other socio-cultural factors. Informants described the following characteristics of Ashibetsu's post-bubble socio-economic and political pathology: a loss of sense of direction, that is, no image of the future to replace the coal mining days and the golden age of the bubble economy; cynicism towards politics and politicians, in that politicians had betrayed the public trust; fear of the future; and loss of perceived control over personal and community futures.

Ashibetsu's present 'crisis of the future' was precipitated in multiple stages. The first was the complete closure of the local coal mining industry resulting in massive unemployment and population loss as former coalmine employees outmigrated to major centres in search of employment. The second stage occured in conjunction with and as a direct consequence of the collapse of Japan's bubble economy. Riding the wave of a national obsession with theme-parks, massive loans financed the construction of a local theme park that came to be called Canadian World. As the economy showed a downturn, loans outstanding remained unpaid and unpayable. The theme park was left like a ghost town, intact but virtually bankrupt, waiting for a viable soution. By the middle of the 1990s, Ashibetsu was for the first time confronted with a mapless future.

Accompanying the prosperity of Japan's bubble economy came the promise of long-term stability and assured continuation. However, with the bursting of the bubble economy, this taken-for-granted stability transformed into its present state of chronic uncertainty at personal and social systems levels. In turn, this uncertainty has manifested political cynicism and mistrust of politicians and local government, to whom past futures had been singularly entrusted.

More significant is Ashibetsu's transition from a mining-oriented economy to a post-mining economy. It was during the search for a new economic basis as mines were closed one by one, that the concept of tourism became a leading contender for the city. It was during this mood that the idea for Canadian World was born. According to one television news special (1998, Hokkaido Broadcasting Corporation), the original Canadian World development project was intended as a stars and space theme park but under the advice of expert planners was changed to the theme of Anne of Green Gables. Also integral to the local government's reconstruction of a post-bubble post-coal mining economy, has been the strategy of attracting of new industries to the region with the objective of offsetting increasing unemployment. In general, however, all local government initiatives and revitalization strategies have met with failure.

1.3.3   Communication climate and futures issues

A brief analysis of existing communication sources revealed a relative scarcity of locally generated content. The most prominent source of information was found to be Kouhou Ashibetsu (広報あしべつ) a sixteen-page monthly newsletter published and distributed free-of-charge by the local government. Content of the newsletter focuses on local events, health issues, government announcements and policy-making decisions, a mayoral column, sporting notices, recipes, health columns, and a regular feature on Ashibetsu's history. Controversial issues or radical opinions do not feature. In fact, analysis of local publication sources indicated that little or no existing alternative textual venues in which citizens are able to openly critique government policy or articulate alternative futures.

Ashibetsu citizens reported that local government had failed to openly consult with the community vis-a-vis plans for the construction of the Canadian World theme park. Despite this non-communicative climate, once the tourism venture was forced into premature closure, local government promptly initiated consultations with Ashibetsu citizens with the aim of finding solutions to the 'Canadian World problem'. In a sudden turnabout, Canadian World had become everyone's problem and everyone's duty to solve in revitalizing the local economy.

Aspects of Ashibetsu's communication climate may be rooted in the community's coal-driven history, in which cartel-like corporations -- the zaibatsu -- wielded major influence over local politics, social constructions of reality, local mythologies and day-to-day affairs. Traditionally, local governments in Japan have exercised high degrees of control and authority over their communities where politics has conventionally been perceived as the responsibility of futures-making elites. Consequently, ordinary citizens have had little influence over policy making in their communities while government power structures have made it possible to minimize public accountability.

1.4   The research questions

Based on the initial problematique outlined in this chapter, a preliminary analysis of communication futures issues in the study area, and theoretical

perspectives discussed in the literature review, three core research questions were formulated. These are the central research questions addressed by this study:

1. How do futures images differ between the official and the katayaburi subgroup and what are the implications of these findings?

2. What communication issues impact upon the potentiation of authentic and alternative futures in Ashibetsu and what 'virtual fractures' can be identified in Ashibetsu's futures images problematique?

3. What communication futures strategies can be deployed to facilitate the opening up of alternative and authentic community futures in the study area?

1.5   Brief description of methodology

In order to formulate critical responses to the preceding research questions, a three-section methodology was selected for this study. The first section posits poststructuralism as an overall theoretical perspective, whereby concepts drawn predominantly from Foucauldian analyses are used as the basis for a critique of the issues presented by Ashibetsu's futures problematique. A new futures method known as Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) is used as a multiple-layered framework wherein the problematique can be positioned as existing in a deep-structured matrix of socially constructed realities. These four layers are the official description of the problematique; social causes layer that contributed to the problem; the worldview and discourses that support the construction of this reality; and an other-than-rational layer consisting of myth and metaphor.

The third section summarizes the data collection procedures used in this investigation. Data were collected using a triangulated strategy comprising observation of local events relevant to communication and futures issues; analyses of local text and documents pertaining to futures images; and questionnaire-interviews administered to *katayaburi* citizens in Ashibetsu in which they were asked to formulate preferred, worst-case and most realistic images for their community twenty years into the future. This triangulated strategy enabled the researcher to interact with the social groups under investigation and to observe and record the dynamic processes of articulating, participating in and communicating futures relevant issues. A detailed

explanation of the data collection methods, questionnaire-interview participant profiles, sampling procedures and limitations encountered in the data collection process are also set out in chapter 3.

1.6   Significance of the investigation

In theory and in praxis, this study promises significant benefits. Theoretically, outcomes of this study will help to illuminate, challenge or advance existing knowledge in the area of communication futures--especially the role of futures images within a Japanese futures specific context. Also, insofar as this study specifically explores the roles of a newly emerging social subgroup known as the katayaburi, this investigation provides insights into the general dynamics of social transformation in post-bubble Japan.

This study also hopes to expand the literature on Causal Layered Analysis as an emerging yet relatively un-researched poststructural futures method, and the link between Foucauldian poststructuralism and futures thinking as applied to a local, real-world problematique.

At another level, this study is an attempt to address localized aspects of Japan's development crisis from a communication futures perspective -- an approach that provides a timely alternative to conventionally framed economic perspectives on Japan. Sadly, the majority of research concerning Japan focusses either on Japan's postwar scientific, technological and economic performance, or on Japan as the exotic and inexplicable other.

On the practical side, outcomes of this study may provide useful insights to community developers, activists, change agents and planners in Ashibetsu and other rural communities in identifying and developing unique conceptual tools for application to local futures including the largely unacknowledged role that communication plays in developmental issues in Japan. As image difference between official and katayaburi futures images is one central theme of this investigation, it is hypothesized that a deconstructionist critique of this difference will provide sectors of the community novel ways of perceiving Ashibetsu's problematique in order to open up authentic and preferred alternative futures.

In the longer term, it is expected that insights and perspectives gained through the poststructural and Causal Layered Analysis will be useful as actionable participatory tools for the community in overcoming the futures-gridlock imposed by the uncontested nature of dominant futures images. Finally, it is hoped that the prototype transformative scenario for Ashibetsu in the form of a new Communicative Age model will serve as a useful conceptual framework for community developers, especially in Japan.

1.7 Definitions of key terms and concepts

The term **official** is used in this investigation in reference to the descriptions of certain social issues and problematic situations presented to the public by Japan's central government and bureaucracies, or by Ashibetsu's local government. The term official is used interchangeably with the term dominant. In the context of this investigation, official futures images are generally presented in contrast to the futures images from the counter-group informally referred to in Japanese as the katayaburi.

The term *katayaburi* is a compound of two kanji characters, *kata* and *yaburi*. The former variously means mold, type, pattern, set form and can be extended to the notion of paradigm. Yaburi is derived from the verb *yaburu*--to destroy, violate, transgress or frustrate. The combined meaning can be interpreted as the transgressing or breaking of a predetermined mold, a set way of doing things or a social construction of reality. Reframing the kanji-compound produces the idea of an individual or collectivity with beliefs, interpretations of social realities, or ways of doing as outside the prevailing dominant paradigm. *Katayaburi* can be similarly described as outside-the-box thinkers, transgressors of social conventions, or counter-dominant thinkers. To Japanese native speakers, the term can have either positive or negative connotations depending on usage and context. The term *katayaburi* received public attention during Japan's 1998 election campaign for a new Liberal Democrat Party (LDP) leader between encumbent Prime Minister Obuchi and the then *katayaburi* candidate, Junichiro Koizumi. Koizumi was presented simultaneously by Japan's mass media as a *katayaburi* and negatively as a *henjin*, or 'strange person'. During the campaign election the label of *katayaburi* was often applied to Koizumi

with the positive connotations of a hopeful, unconventional, close-to-the-people and alternative-to-the-mainstream public image of the conventional Japanese politician, historically dominated by the old boy graduates of Tokyo University's Law Department.

Dictionary definitions for *katayaburi* include "a departure from old custom" [the usual way of doing] or "unconventionality" (1983, Kenkyusha's New Collegiate Japanese-English Dictionary Third Edition); "not fitting into the mold" (1995, The Great Japanese Dictionary Second Edition); and "deviate from the beaten track" or "a break with tradition" (1982, Kenkyusha's New Japanese English Dictionary, eighth impression). The term *katayaburi* is used in this investigation near-synonymously with Stevenson and Simpson's (1993) usage of the term 'idiosyncrat' (see subsection 2.2.4, Chapter 2).

The term **catch-up and overtake model** refers to the dominant guiding image of the future used in Japan since the nation's defeat in World War Two. The objective of the catch-up and overtake model implies surpassing the economic and technological performance of the United States and the advanced European nations.

The concept of **development** is applied to various contexts in this investigation. Firstly, the generic usage of development is derived from Dissanayake (1981) who defines development as "the process of social change which has as its goal the improvement in the quality of life of all or the majority of the people without doing violence to the natural and cultural environment in which they exist and which seeks to involve the generality of the people as closely as possible in this enterprise, making them masters of their own destiny" (Dissanayake, 1981, p. 217).

Community development, derived from Kenny (1994), is a commitment to "improving the lot of ordinary people" and is primarily "concerned with ordinary people's lives, their experiences, their hopes and visions". The aim of community development is to "transform unequal, coercive and oppressive structures in society." To fulfill these aims, community development "challenges, provokes, presents unpalatable information, and even disturbs." Community development also "challenges the presumed inevitability or

naturalness of existing power structures and social systems" (Kenny, 1994, p. 21).

Within the larger contexts of development in general and community development is the dimension of the individual. To describe this dimension, Slaughter's (1996c) notion of human potential is used and is defined as "The view that evolution has not ended and that further stages of human development are possible. Often contrasted with technical development, both of which are seen by different groups as key to the future. [Human potential] takes a positive view of human potentials based on, eg., transpersonal psychology ... One of the springboards for the notion of a wise culture." (Slaughter, 1996c, p. 325). Other notions of development including 'developmental power' (Moss, 1998) and 'opportunity development' (Yazaki, 1996) are considered in chapter 2. A poststructural interpretation of the notion human potential under the term 'capacity' is further considered in subsection 3.1.4 of Chapter 3.

Central to the project of this report is that of the area of research known as the **futures field**. According to Slaughter (1996c), the futures field is a "complex, globally-distributed and broad area of study which takes futures concerns as its main focus. Not all futurists agree that it is a field. However, the identification of core elements suggests that it is not stretching credibility to consider it such" (Slaughter, 1996c, p. 318).

The concept of **image of the future** is defined by Slaughter (1996c) as "representations in words or pictures of possible future states of being. These can act as warnings of futures to avoid, or as 'magnets' which attract people to work for their realisation" (Slaughter, 1996c, p. 325-6). Another definition is suggested by Bell and Mau (1971). For them, "An image of the future is an expectation about the state of things to come at some future time. We may think most usefully of such expectations as a range of differentially probable possibilities rather than as a single point on a continuum" (Bell and Mau, 1971, quoted in Hicks and Holden, 1995, p. 24) Expanded versions of these basic definitions are presented in Chapter 2, subsection 2.1.4.

According to Random House Dictionary a **myth** is "an unproved belief that is

accepted uncritically and is used to justify a social institution" (Hinchcliff, in Slaughter, 1996b, p. 198). Alternative definitions and interpretations for myth and mythology are presented in Chapter 2. Other key concepts and terms are defined as they appear throughout this investigation.

1.8   Brief outline of chapters

Chapter 1 provides an overview of Ashibetsu, the study area, and presents it within the macro-context of Japan's post-bubble social, political and economic environment. Chapter 2 provides the theoretical foundations for subsequent research by focussing on the field of inquiry known as images of the future research, cited as an important new method emerging from the greater field of futures thinking. Also presented are relevant sub-fields including community futures; communication futures; Stevenson and Lennie's (1995) Communicative Age Paradigm; idiosyncratic thinking as it relates to the katayaburi subgroup selected for this study; and a brief section on Japanese communication and futures concepts. The chapter concludes by restating the three core research questions presented in chapter 1.

Chapter 3 details the methodology employed for this thesis consisting of three sections: the theoretical perspective derived from poststructuralist thinking; a new futures method--Causal Layered Analysis; and the data collection strategies which serve as the basis for subsequent critique and discussion. Chapter 4 analyzes data generated from the three data sources: personal observation of selected communication and futures informative events; analysis of texts and documentation collected from the study area; and questionnaire-interviews of *katayaburi* futures images. Each section concludes with a summary of key issues.

Chapter 5 critically discusses the data presented and analyzed in the previous chapter. The discussion is organized around responses to the core three research questions. The discussion brings about a number of "effects" which include the identification of Foucauldian 'virtual fractures' found in the discourse of Ashibetsu's communication futures problematique. Virtual fractures represent the spaces of potential transformative change and are subsequently used for the formulation of a reconstructive futures scenario for

Ashibetsu based on Stevenson and Lennie's (1995) Communicative Age Paradigm. The chapter concludes with a selection of recommended paths for future research.

1.9   Limitations of the investigation

One limitation of this investigation was the relative inaccessibility of information and literature regarding the study area. The little information concerning Ashibetsu found to exist was published by or ultimately associated with local government sources. The under-researched nature of the Ashibetsu locality made access to impartial information on the study area problematic.

Also of influence to the study was the day-to-day problem of gaining direct access to relevant individuals and institutions. Without formal introductions from a common 'go-between', candidate katayaburi respondents were generally reluctant to be involved with the investigation out of fear that published or leaked results may compromise their status in the community. This was especially so for those with public profiles or prominent roles in Ashibetsu.

It must also be pointed out that this investigation is not intended as a Japan study or a community study, each distinct fields of research in themselves. The study area was selected as the result of chance encounters with Ashibetsu citizens who initially suggested the value of an outsider's study of their community.

Similarly, this study does not claim to offer predictions for the future of Japan, Ashibetsu or other rural communities. Rather, the ultimate aim of the poststructural/Causal Layered Analysis approach is to identify and open up the spaces for alternative futures. It is therefore emphasized that this study is an exploratory investigation and any findings or conclusions are not considered generalizable across other community problematiques, Japanese or otherwise. Limitations and problems specific to the methodology are discussed in detail in chapter 3.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter introduced a thesis which reports a critical investigation into futures images in Ashibetsu, a Japanese city negatively impacted by Japan's post-bubble social, political and economic environment. In a program intended to revitalize the Ashibetsu community, the contours of a communication futures problematique were delineated. This problematic situation has forced the community to seek and formulate strategies for community reinvention in the light of new economic and social realities impacted by a system of politics, economics and communication dynamics. The method of analysis derived from poststructural theory--Causal Layered Analysis--was summarized and justification for its deployment in the analysis of futures images established. The following chapters were also briefly summarized. Factors limiting and delimitating the project were described and definitions of key terms and concepts--some of which derive from Japanese social phenomena -were defined and clarified to assist the reader. The scope of the project reported here was delineated and parameters established. The following chapter introduces an overview of the literature pertaining to the broad areas of research relevant to this thesis. These include futures thinking, futures images, a number of related sub-fields including community futures and idiosyncratic thinking in social transformation, and key concepts derived from Japanese communication and futures issues.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Summary

The chapter is structured in three sections. Section I reviews the literature on the futures images research considered to be one of the most important methods to arise from the futures studies literature. The function of the image of the future and its application in various fields is highlighted, along with a brief summary of contemporary techniques used to generate and articulate the results of futures imaging. Following this is a critique of some of the major publications concerning futures images.

In Section II, salient theoretical issues from communication futures are briefly summarised including Chang's deconstructionist analysis of communication; and myth and metaphor. In addition, the role of idiosyncratic thinking in creating futures and social transformation is also explored. The section concludes with a summary of a new Communicative Age paradigm offered as a candidate for a reconstruction of the study area's communication futures model.

The third and fourth sections focus progressively down to micro-aspects of Japanese communication and futures concepts with an outline of Yoshikawa's seven Japanese communication modes. Also presented are critiques of Japanese futures images texts, and deconstructionist analyses of Japanese identity and uniqueness as they impact upon Japan's capacity to articulate new futures images. This section concludes with a cursory summary of localized futures images from the region of Hokkaido, in which the study area Ashibetsu is situated. The end of the chapter restates the three core research questions extracted from the literature and the nature of the problematique experienced in the study area.

2.1   Section I: Futures images research

2.1.1   Introduction: A brief background to futures thinking

The study and understanding of futures images is cited as one of the most important yet under-researched components of the larger field of research known similarly as futures thinking (Slaughter, 1996b, p. xi), 'futures studies', 'the futures field', 'futures research', 'futuristics', 'prospective', and 'prognostics' (Bell, in Slaughter, 1996b, p. 3).

Bell (in Slaughter, 1996b) outlines two general assumptions that constitute the futurist's field of inquiry and shared by members of many other fields, and nine more assumptions specific to futures. The first general assumption is that people are project pursuers who act in purposeful and goal-directed ways. The second assumption states that "society consists of the persistent patterns of repetitive social interaction and the emergent routines of human behaviour that are organized by time, space, memories, expectations, hopes and fears for the future, and decisions" (p. 11).

The nine futures-specific assumptions as outlined by Bell (in Slaughter, 1996b) are as follows:

① Time moves unidirectionally and irreversably -- as witnessed in entropy -- the first law of thermodynamics;

② Not everything that will exist in the future, has existed or currently exists -- by which it is meant that new objects, new ideas, new understandings, are possible;

③ Futures thinking is essential for human action -- images of the future (goals, objectives, intentions, hopes, fears, aspirations) are part of the causes of present action;

④ The future is not pre-determined (Amara, 1981) -- the future is an infinitely 'open' system;

⑤ To some extent, future outcomes can be influenced by individual and collective action;

⑥ The world is comprised of interdependent phenomena which must be understood holistically--no phenomenon or unit of analysis can be viewed as totally isolated;

⑦ Some futures are preferable to others--thus, part of the futurist agenda is to study, explicate, evaluate, and even formulate the criteria people use to make evaluative judgements of alternative futures;

⑧ In making one's way in the world, the only really useful knowledge is knowledge of the future--people must speculate about the future in order to make their way through their daily lives intelligently and effectively; and

⑨ There are no empirical facts about the future. Although there are past facts, present options, and future possibilities, there are no past possibilities and no future facts (Bell, quoted in Slaughter, 1996b, p. 11-14).

For Bell (in Slaughter, 1996b, p. 8), the relative newness of futures thinking renders it too fragmented to be called a 'field' at all, an observation supported by Slaughter who adds that "Futures Studies is not static. It will continue to evolve as its assumptions and practices are explored, challenged and re-formulated" (Slaughter, 1996b, p. 2).

Various definitions of futures thinking can be extracted from the literature. A working definition from Bell (in Slaughter, 1996b) describes futures thinking as a "new field of social inquiry whose purpose is the systematic study of the future and whose aims are to discover or invent, propose, examine and evaluate possible, probable and preferable futures" (Bell, in Slaughter, 1996b, p. 3). Accordingly, the task of the futurist is to "challenge people's thinking by encouraging them to examine critically their current routines of behaviour, to consider alternatives, to search for currently unrecognized alternatives, to analyze their goals and values, to become more conscious of the future and the control they may have over it, and to care about the freedom and well-being of future generations" (p. 23).

More recently, futurists prefer to discuss what futurists ought to be doing. Inayatullah (1990) for example, believes that "futures studies must not solely be engaged in pure research, but rather the future must actualize itself through praxis. There must be an effort to identify cultures that have been suppressed or that will be suppressed given various trends, and then aid them in articulating and realizing new visions." Elsewhere he questions: "should futures studies be primarily concerned with deconstructing hegemonic images of the future held by the powerful and thereby creating the spaces for the emergence of authentic alternative visions and social designs? That is, should futures studies essentially be about decolonizing dominant views of time/space and perspective?" (1998b).

Concluding this brief overview, it must be noted that futures research has been criticized for its ethnocentric biases. Dahle (in Slaughter, 1996, p. 87) for one, has challenged the "Western hegemony of futures studies", while Sardar (1993) has criticized the inability of Western futurists to contribute to post-colonial perspectives on futures issues. He says: "futures studies is increasingly

becoming an instrument for the marginalization of non-Western cultures from the future" (p. 179).

Outlining one ideal model for futures studies, Inayatullah (1993) notes: "In my model, the ideal futures studies would be synthetic, developing on linear, cyclical and transcendental constructions of time, space and evolution, and they would be local, operating at non-universal levels, seeking to articulate specific politics of the possible". In a more radical stance, Inayatullah and Wildman (1996) add that "most current futures research is an attempt to escape this straightjacket (of futures studies as 'predictive') using the future to rethink the present and recreate refuges of thought, not contaminated by modernity" (Inayatullah and Wildman, 1996, p. 730).

2.1.2   Inayatullah's three dimensions of futures studies model

In a pivotal essay, Inayatullah (1990) categorises futures discourse into "three separate but interrelated dimensions": (1) the empirical-predictive; (2) the cultural-interpretive; and (3) the critical-poststructural (p. 115). The predictive-empirical approach considers the perspective of the planner and the corporate scenario-builder. This dimension corresponds approximately to level one of the Causal Layered Analysis method (see subsection 3.2 of Section II for detailed description). Inayatullah (1990) argues that this approach "simply reinscribes the present even while it 'predicts' the future" (p. 115). The goal of this type of futures is to "develop more accurate forecasts of the futures so as to make better decisions today" (p. 116). Hearn and Stevenson (1998) note a similar problem confronting communication research, where the empirical/functional school pursues "generalizable predictive scientific formulae which require the disengagement between the observer and the observed" (p. 117). The problem of this approach in futures is that the politics of meaning privileged by the ideological system underpinning decisions and plans based upon empirical approaches remain largely uncontested, a situation which can lead to identifying "the wrong solutions to the wrong problems" (p. 121). In communication, the empirical approach dissociates meaning from purpose, general data is inapplicable to individualized cases and discovery as a dimension in communication inquiry is excluded (Hearn and Stevenson, 1998, p. 117).

Nietzsche (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 34) pinpoints two fundamental problems in the empirical tradition: "First, it disregards the role that language has in creating and constructing the world, and, second, it assumes that everyone perceives the world in the same way". This second observation is Nietzsche's celebrated notion of 'perspectivism'. According to Irving (in Chambon et al., 1999) "Nietzsche was adamant that science and empiricism offer no more 'objective' explanation of the world and reality than, for example, ancient myths" (p. 34).

The cultural-interpretive dimension prioritises mutual understanding and is the dimension in which the issue of future images arise (Inayatullah, 1990, p. 123). This dimension is the interpretive/cultural -- which approximates layer two of Causal Layered Analysis--the social causes. Instead of future facts, extrapolations and emerging issues, "what is needed here are new, culturally self-aware interpretations of the future". As Inayatullah (1990, p. 122) explains, "the goal here is to discern how other cultures create the future, what they think the future will be like". This approach involves exploring 'alternative images of the future' whose implication is that the notion of 'future' itself is no longer singular but pluralistic and positioned along a continuum or range of potential alternatives. In communication, Hearn and Stevenson's (1998), interpretivists "are no less guilty than functionalists of putting words into the mouths of others" (p. 117). From their viewpoint, the interpretivists bring "us no closer to the doing of communication" because this perspective involves "the construction of a story from the point of view of an observer living in a different phenomenal world to the observed" (in Berger and Luckman, 1966, p. 117).

Rabinow and Sullivan (1979) on the other hand believe that the "only way to proceed to the future is through the appropriation, the continual reappropriation, of tradition. The goal of the interpretive approach to the human world is to cultivate such habits, to recognize that we are condemned to remain open, both to the past and to the future." (Rabinow and Sullivan, 1979, p. 19).

The third critical-poststructuralist dimension contests the underlying assumptions behind the apparent 'naturalness' of everyday phenomena. It is in

this dimension that poststructuralist and other critical theories are situated, and which gave rise to Causal Layered Analysis as a new futures method. The goal here is not to produce future facts or increase mutual understanding, but more fundamentally, "to make the units of analysis problematic, to undefine the future ... to disturb present power relations through making problematic our categories and evoking other places, scenarios of the future" (Inayatullah, 1998b, p. 128). This is not the same as Slaughter's critical futures approach, derived "brilliantly from Habermas and the hermeneutic tradition" in which he is concerned with "the recovery of a true self, of a true culture", in essence the continuation of the Enlightenment project. For Slaughter rather, "the goal of futures is to recover meanings that are lost in the predicitive statistical approach" (in Inayatullah, 1998b, p. 128). To clarify, the main project of Inayatullah's (1998b) variety of critical futures, is, in his own words:

> Instead of the search for the objective or the grand design of things (transcendental truths that cause events or trends), the real is made political, it is historicized and made peculiar; it is no longer seen as Being itself, as an eternal verity. Moreover, the way language and other ways of knowing create subjects and objects and their relationships is made contentious (Inayatullah, 1998b, p. 128).

Hearn and Stevenson (1998) on the other hand, take a less optimistic position toward poststructural approaches to communication issues by stating that the critical stance in communication "obscures the path to doing" and can "offer no constructive advice for intervention but merely play the game of pointing out the gaps in others' conceptual and behavioural frameworks" (Hearn and Stevenson, 1998, p. 117).

2.1.3 Futures images

For Masini (1996), futures images represent one of the three cornerstone approaches to studying the future in which the image is hypothesized as one "step towards the creation of a project". Along with project building, futures images will play an increasingly important role in the future of futures studies itself (Masini, 1982, 1989, 1980). Similarly, Slaughter (1996a) believes that "futures, and images of futures, play a much greater part in our lives than is commonly realized." He positions futures images as one component of a binary dynamic constituted by the twin forces referred to as the push of the past and

the pull of the future. Demonstrating the latter he quotes from Popper (1988):

> ... the open future is, almost as a promise, as a temptation, as a lure, present; indeed actively present at every moment. The old world picture that puts before us a mechanism operating with causes that are all in the past - the past kicking and driving us with kicks into the future - the past that is gone is no longer adequate to our deterministic world ... It is not the kicks from the back, from the past, that impel us, but the attraction, the lure of the future and its attractive possibilities that entice us: that is what keeps life - and indeed, the world - unfolding (Popper, quoted in Slaughter, 1996a, p. 103).

2.1.4 Definitions of futures images

Markley and Harman (1982) situate futures images within the greater context of what they call 'imagistic thinking' in which there is "a tendency to see whole constellations of information as a picture, a coded symbol, or a series of flowing symbolic forms ... such free inter-space exploration was always blocked by religious dogma on the one hand or by scientific dogma on the other ... Visionary experience does tend to be heretical" (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 153-154).

For Boulding (1995), the image of the future "need not necessarily imply visualization. A significant number of people get along without visual imagery as part of their mental constructs. The important thing is that there is some internal act of constructing a representation of a future state. If the construction is visual, the process seems obvious, but a non-visual construction can also be representational" (Boulding and Boulding, 1995). Boulding (1995) refers to Kelman's (1965, p. 24) definition of the image as "the organized representation of an object in an individual's cognitive system", a definition which encompasses former uses of the term by Kenneth Boulding (1956, The Image) and Polak (1953/1956). "Thus", continues Boulding (1995), "the term image includes conceptions of the represented object in the past and future as well as present: In short, images have associated memories and expectations" (p. 113).

Boulding (1995) also refers to the cognitive phenomena she calls "baseline futures". Based on observations from image-generation workshops, the "recurrence of baseline futures ... regardless of background or setting, suggests

that there may be deep structures at work in the futures-imaging process" (p. 113). The occurrence of baseline futures may be thought of in terms of Jungian archetypes (Jung, 1959) or the deep structures concept used in Chomsky's (1966) analysis of the development of language. Polak (1953/1961), for example, "thought of futures imaging as a basic mental capacity in humans for conceiving the "other and better", for utopianism" (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 113).

As a framework for structuring scenarios of the future, Inayatullah (1993b) cites the particular usefulness of Dator's four archetypal images of the future -- (1) continued growth,   (2) collapse or catastrophe,   (3) reversion to the past, and   (4) transformation.   Paraphrasing from Inayatullah (1993b), the first image refers to a continuation of the scientific and technological revolution. It is the familiar social reality we see around us every day in an economics-driven, industrial society and that we assume will continue. The second is the historical image of catastrophe whose form assumes various identities based on the epoch in which it occurs. The third scenario represents the attempt to avoid the catastrophe by a return to one's societal roots, to origins, to the 'basics' of bygone eras and Golden Ages. The final fourth future scenario is the possibility of transformation, or as Inayatullah (1993b) eloquently puts it, "the vision of the butterfly, the vision of idealism, of perfection, of something else. Again this is the dream, the call by the leader to create something else -- neither to expand nor to collapse or revert back to the past, but to transcend our limitations" (p. 242-243).

2.1.5   Polak's general theory of the image

The first systematic study of the role of futures image is Polak's (1973) seminal The Image of the Future. Polak refers to a general theory of images known as eidetics, a concept derived from the Greek noun for image eidelon. Historically, the term eidelon was used by Plato, Epicurus and Democritus to refer to knowledge and the learning processes (Polak, 1973, p. 11). According to Polak (1973), attention should be given to the dynamics of image formation, both in the private and the public mind, and the function of images in the economy of the individual and the social, national or cutlural group (p. 12). In developing a coherent theory of the image, Polak (1973) outlines six principle dimensions

accounting for the dynamic between images and futures. These include:

① Images of the future are always aristocratic in origin;
② The propogation of images is partly driven by the rational and intellectual; a much larger part is emotional, aesthetic, and spiritual;
③ Image-effect: describes the relationship between the projected future (whether positive or negative) and the actual future as it passes into history;
④ Self-elimination of images: images are eliminated over time in a natural way through the historical process of succession of images, and through the dialectical changes they themselves provoke;
⑤ The periodic adaptation to time-change through self-correction, renewal, and change on the part of images of the future in the continuous interplay of challenge and response; and
⑥ The loss of the capacity for adequate self-correction and timely renewal of images of the future. For the first time in three thousand years of Western civilization there has been a massive loss of capacity, or even will, for renewal of images of the future (Polak, 1973, p. 13-14).

2.1.6 Functions of futures images

How is the image of the future important and what are its applications to concrete, real-world communication futures problematics? One response may be found in Boulding (1995) who explains the primacy of futures images in the elegant phrase, "image precedes action" (p. 113). Here, meaningful action only takes place once an image of a future situation has been cognitively formulated. Boulding (1995) points out the ubiquitous presence and effects produced by images in the construction of social realities:

> Images are at work everywhere, individually and collectively: private and public images, images of ourselves and others, of our own group and of other groups. We hold images of our own nation, race, profession, party, and belief system, and likewise of other nations, races, professions, parties, and ideologies. Images are formed and changed of producers and consumers, capitalists and communists; of artists, bohemians, and scientists; of entrepreneurs and working men; of right and wrong behaviours, good and bad guys, hipsters and squares, organization men and rugged individualists; of husbands, wives, and children; and of fathers and mothers (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 12).

Dator (1996) redresses the common misperception that futures images function predictively by noting that "We do not believe that it is possible to predict the future. What futures studies mainly does is to study ideas people have now about the future, what I call their images of the future. It tries to find out how these images influence the way people act now, and how people's present actions influence the future." This emphasis is reiterated by Slaughter

(1996c) who observes that "Images and imaging processes powerfully affect the ways in which people and organizations look ahead, yet they are seldom studied explicitly."

Hicks and Holden (1995) write that "images of the future play a central role in social and cultural change at both personal and societal levels. It is important to know about peoples hopes and fears for the future because they influence what individuals and groups are prepared to do" (p. 4).

Polak (in Boulding and Boudling, 1995, p. 96) describes the human capacity to create mental images of the 'totally other'--that which has never been experienced or recorded--as the key dynamic of history.

At every level of awareness, from the individual to the macrosocietal, imagery is continuously generated about the "not-yet". Such imagery inspires our intentions, which then move us purposefully forward. Through their daily choices of action, individuals, families, enterprises, communities, and nations move toward what thay imagine to be a desirable tomorrow" (p. 96).

Despite the reported importance of images, many futures researcher report a scarcity of viable futures images. Hicks and Holden (1995, p. 3) believe we "lack guiding visions for the future", an observation reiterated by Boulding (1995) who in discussing the role of futures images in war and peace, claims that

> In international affairs we are used to expecting the worst and then preparing for the worst. ... Because what we imagine for the future guides our action in the present, we are continually increasing the danger of future wars by these practices ... If we had spent more time on best-case scenarios, we would not be floundering now, trying to figure out appropriate and creative responses to rapid changes in Europe and South Africa that will build toward stable peace (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. viii).

Malaska (1995) calls this lack of viable images "nil-perception", which he subsequently defines as "a lack of a mental pattern, a lack of vision". Because of the existence of nil perception in human knowledge, the task of futures studies and research is

... to reveal and work out perceptions and visions founded on the findings

and results of sciences and all other kinds of human experience. Futures alternative must be understandable to common people and decision makers through proper description and communication: this task also includes outlining possible courses of action and generating the will power required to attain the desired outcomes and avoid the unwanted ones (Malaska, 1995, p. 81).

What are the consequences of nil perception or insufficently articulated and/or communicated images? As Boulding (1995) points out from her experiences with workshops imaging for feminist studies: "Women face a truly existential tactical dilemma: there are no maps or models for the deep and all-encompassing revolution we are envisioning and so we must invent them as we go along" (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 189).

Who creates futures images and why? One interpretation from Markley and Harman (1982, p. 155-6) suggest that futures images are the product of future-making elites actively engaging in image manipulation and myth creation, a strategy whose outcome manifests in diverse forms of social control. The existence of future-making elites is corroborated by the first article in Polak's (1973) general theory of futures images, where he refers to images as being "by and for the aristocracy", and by Galtung (in Ornauer et al., p. 581) as the "domain of elites existing within all cultures". Similarly, Jungk (1987) warns us that "the future is colonized by a tiny group of people, with citizens moving into a future shaped by this elite. I believe that we should not go blindly into this future."

2.1.7 Generating futures images

Cognitively competent human individuals continually construct, carry and iteratively reconstruct mental images of futures events in their heads. Boulding (1995) describes this human proclivity in the following words: "The human imagination can be thought of as a problem-solving faculty, continually reworking experience by means of image formation" (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 98). Despite the apparent naturalness of the private futuring activity, she (Boulding) claims that people have to be encouraged to image in a disciplined way in order to transcend the obstacles to imaging. These obstacles are found in our social institutions, including schools--which "discourage imaging because it can lead to imagine alternatives that can challenge existing

social arrangements" (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 98). It can therefore be hypothesized that active image-generation techniques can be deployed to reactivate and reengage those dormant yet poorly-refined imaging capacities innate to human beings.

Existing techniques used to generate futures images are numerous and diverse and generally originate from prototype futures workshops developed by Jungk (1987) whose aims were to assist "small groups of people to dream up and implement creative ideas and projects for a saner society". Jungk's futures workshop are premised on his observation that gaps have appeared in our imperfect democratic system. He says: "More than ever people are being split up into the rulers and the ruled, the active and the passive, the aware and the misled" (Jungk, 1987, p. 9). In effect, futures workshops provide a "new and necessary initiative for the enrichment of democracy and the revival of interest in the community."

Futures workshops based on Jungk's model have been applied by "Austrian TV and Danish radio, by scientists developing alternative research institutes and by miners saving their villages from comprehensive redevelopment" (Jungk, 1987, back cover). Jungk (1987) describes how a village was saved in a case study about a nineteenth century mining village at Eisenheim, Germany. The village was to be torn down and replaced by high-rise buildings by developers acting on behalf of landlords and local authorities. Inhabitants resisted and with the assistance of a socially committed planner named Roland Gunther, a strategy was devised in the form of an unusual counter-proposal. It began "with their cleaning, painting and generally doing up an old delapidated coal wash house as a meeting place for the future workshop". This became the venue from which "dozens of proposals for a modernization programme" was produced seen to be "in keeping with their needs" (Jungk, 1987, p. 27-28).

The Jungkian futures workshop is typically divided into a preparatory phase and a workshop phase. The workshop phase in turn consists of the critique phase--during which "grievances and negative experiences are brought into the open". Second is the fantasy phase -- where participants are invited to "come up with ideas in response to the problems, and with their desires, fantasies and alternative views". The third workshop is the implementation phase--where the

task is to come back down to the present reality with its "power structures and constraints" and to "critically assess the chances of getting their projects implemented, identifying the obstacles and imaginatively seeking ways around them so as to draw up a plan of action" (Jungk, 1987, p. 12).

In contemporary futures, one of the most important and influential of the futurists tool-box is scenario creation. Amara's (1981) division into preferred, possible and probable remains the classic map of futures studies. For Masini (1995), scenarios represent the most important futures method. Masini (1995) describes three basic kinds of scenarios: (1) a trend scenario--the most possible, probable and plausible; (2) a contrast scenario--extreme situation, opposite to trend scenario; and (3) a utopia scenario--the most desirable future.

From all the existing types of images and scenarios, Ogilvy (in Slaughter, 1996b), prioritizes normative futures scenarios where "one's visions of the future must be informed by more than the science of what is or an imagination of what might be; one's visions of the future must also be informed by a sense of what ought to be" (p. 26). The sense of what ought to be illuminates the idea of values, and values are not always consistent across individuals and other human collectivities, nor are values static over time.

Bezold (in Slaughter, 1996c) uses the term vision as a futures method. In this context, the vision is a "compelling, inspiring statement of the preferred future that the authors and those who subscribe to the vision want to create". Whereas scenarios and forecasts are what he calls "futures for the head", visions are "futures for the hearts". Bezold draws from a comparison of the two concepts--strategic plans and visions--from the work of management consultant Michael Doyle (1990, pp. 29-33). Strategic plans are described as generally directional, linear, reactionary to trends and competition, work forward to the future, must be known before they can be achieved, are in completed form, use plain language that is cool, rational, mind-focussed, bureaucratic, and are often kept secret. By contrast, visions are end-state oriented, holistic, desire to create in the world, work backward from the future, are usually unclear as to how to get there, dynamically incomplete, and employ visionary language that is hot, heart/spirit felt, intuitive, poetic. Furthermore, the vision is public (in Slaughter, 1996c, p. 167). Bezold's (in Slaughter, 1996c)

vision building requires five stages: (1) identification of problems, (2) past successes and (3) future desires; (4) identification of measurable goals; and (5) identification of resources to achieve those goals.

Despite variation in imaging techniques, most deploy the strategy that borrows from Polak's (in Boulding and Boulding, 1995) "breach in time", a notion which refers to the imaging of a drastic discontinuity between present and future" and where the imager must "step, in fantasy, into a future very different from the present and report back from that future on their observations of a society, which they must then analyze in terms of the social institutions that could sustain it" (in Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 99-100).

The breach in time strategy is echoed in Riner's (1991) notion of "stretching". In the context of development--community development and revitalization specifically, Riner applies an ethnographic futures method which involves inviting participants of in-depth interviews to elicit images of three alternative futures, in this specific case, for their community of North Manchetser: the most desired, the most feared, and the (residual) most likely alternative futures (Riner, 1991, p. 21). Stretching is explained in more detail in subsection 3.3.5.3.

Boulding (1995) describes the design protocol used in three experimental workshops known as *Imaging a World Without Weapons Workshops*, held between 1981-1982. In these workshops, participants were asked to "discover a viable social order that functions without (conventionally defined) weapons" (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 99). Workshop design involved taking "participants through a series of steps, from an initial "wish list" for the future to a final action plan in the present" (p. 100). The wish list induced an image of what they wished to happen in the future. After the wish-list, a "childhood memory" is recalled. This facilitates the reactivation of an imaginative mindset by the associative act of imagining past experiences as analogous to the processes used in creating mental representations of the not-yet-experienced. The next stage participants "step into the future" to imagine a reconstruction of reality 30 years ahead, by imagining themselves confronted by a high hedge stretching as far as they can see. Participants are urged to "look very carefully to see what makes this world "tick" - to see how people, live, work, play, handle conflict ... and to make notes in their workbooks about what they see". In the

next step, participants "share images"--returning from the previous 30 year future, to describe what they have seen in groups of two or three. This helps consolidate their experiences (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 101).

In the next phase, "world construction, phase 1", groups of two or three analytically reconstruct their imagined futures by making pictorial, diagrammatic or schematized narrative representations while focussing on key themes and salient features of that world. In the following "world construction, phase 2", groups of five with similar theme perceptions develop a common scenario of their experienced future world. This is also depicted diagrammatically on paper. Dialogue and negotiation helps test the validity of the images. The next stage is "remembering history". The imager participants must work their way back from the future in their imagination to the present, thereby tracing back the social processes that initially led to the imaged future. Finally, "action plans for the present" must be outlined based on the context of "action spaces", the existing social realities within which they operate in daily life situations (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 102).

2.1.8   Critiques of images-of-the-future texts

One of the largest and most systematic investigations into futures images, *Images of the World in the Year 2000: A Comparative Ten Nation Study* (Ornauer et al., 1976) involved the collaboration of researchers in Britain, Norway, the Netherlands, Spain, Poland, Czechoslovakia, India and Japan. The questions asked of respondents were wide-ranging as the following examples indicate: Do you think much about the future?; How often would you say that you talk with somebody about the future of your country or the world?; What do you think will be the difference between the year 2000 and today?

From the many findings in the survey it was observed that the tendency to think about the future is poorly developed (Ornauer et al., 1976, p. 53). Of all countries sampled, Japan was the most future conscious, followed by Czechoslovakia. However, whereas Japan's future consciousness was only national, the future consciousness of Czechoslovakia was also international. Visions of pessimistic futures seemed by and large better developed than optimistic visions. In general, the future is perceived as a remote issue by most

respondents. The implication from this finding presents a dilemma. As the authors note: "the future is handled by elites because it is seen as remote, and because it is seen as remote it is left to the elites to handle" (p. 577).

The concluding chapter isolates three main conclusions to the study. Firstly, it was observed that "there is much more variation between than within nations" (p. 574). The second conclusion pointed to an overall "lack of social imagination" on the part of participants. Futures images often focussed on scientific and technological developments rather than in terms of peace and war, human freedom, social equality, human development and other soft social issues. One explanation of this is the division of labour, and futures issues are the domain of an elite. In the researchers own words:

All societies have elites, whose task it is to be concerned with the future, and all societies have non-elites whose task it is to challenge the elites but at only at a superficial level and not on really fundamental levels. The fundamental issues are not presented as something wanted by the elite as a result of their vested interest -- but as dictated by immutable social laws, even by natural laws (in Ornauer at al., 1976, p. 581).

The authors continue to note that

> ... somehow the idea has stuck that the social future is for elites to project and prescribe, except for the very limited aspects of the total dimension of the social future that is channeled through the political process, in for instance, parliamentary democracy. It has been largely accepted that it is for the masses to articulate and to fight for the concrete issues of today and for the elites to respond to the challenge of tomorrow and to map the landscape of the day after tomorrow. Our data seem to indicate that these notions have penetrated deeply in the social consciousness, possibly so deep that they will not yield easily to a more systematic, more democratic distribution of future-consciousness (in Ornauer at al., 1976, p. 581).

The third conclusion is the "old story that capabilities and motivations do not always go hand in hand" (p. 582). Data showed that on the one hand the "topdog" is open-minded but skeptical, that he wields the authority to introduce or accept change but is often unwilling to do, especially if his own position is endangered. On the other hand, the underdog is often less educated and dogmatic, enthusiastically advocates for positive change but usually is without the political authority to bring about change (Ornauer et al., 1976, p.

582).

In a more recent compilation on futures images, Markley and Harman (1982) attempt to discern fundamental and usually unrecognized influences on societal problems -- sourced from images, metaphors, social myths--and how these manifest in current social policy and influence our hopes for the future. The publication starts by surveying the roles of images in contemporary society, especially the dominant images in a culture which "underlie the ways in which society shapes its institutions, educates its young, and goes about whatever it percives to be its business" (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 201). The origins and evolutionary trajectories of guiding images and their effects on societies shed light on the potential of currently held futures images in the construction of social realities. One chapter is devoted to the singular and presently dominant image of the late twentieth century--the image of "economic man". The following section concentrates on the "conceptual-empirical input from scientific research and its influence on our images of humankind". This leads to the formulation of a suggested set of characteristics of an adequate image of humankind, and the feasibility of this "integrative, evolutionary image of humankind" (p. 201).

The closing section of the book discusses the stresses and consequences of changing images as societies move into the "post-industrial" era, and attempt to derive guidelines for actions to "facilitate the emergence of more adequate images of humankind and of a better society" (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 201) predicated on the desirability of the transformations outlined in the book. In concluding, the authors discuss the "difficulty of achieving a non-disruptive transition" towards a better society in which they outline the basic elements of a strategy for a non-catastrophic transition in six parts: (1) the promotion of awareness of the unavoidability of the transformation; (2) the construction of a guiding version of a workable society--based on the new social paradigm; (3) fostering a period of experimentation and tolerance for diverse alternatives--both in lifestyles and institutions; (4) encouraging a politics of righteousness, and a heightened sense of public responsibility in the private sector--in order to increase confidence of the people in both business and government; (5) promoting systematic exploration of, and foster education regarding man's inner life; and (6) accepting the necessity of social controls for

the transition period while safeguarding against longer-term loss of freedom (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 194).

Appendixed to the book, Virginia H. Hine (in Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 239) offers the outline for a Basic Paradigm of a Future Socio-cultural System as a "basic structural form and mode of functioning" for the "powerless in nations around the world to organize themselves to effect social structural change". The new type of structure referred to is called a SP(I)N--or "segmented polycephalous network". As a qualitatively different form of organization, the SP(I)N is characterised by patterns consistent with the visions of "the global village", "debureacratization", "decentralization", and "re-humanization". Research by the author claims that the SP(I)N mode of organization, in practical terms, does several things:

> It encourages full utilization of individual and small-group innovation while minimizing the results of failure; it promotes maximum penetration of ideas across socio-economic and cultural barriers while preserving cultural and sub-cultural diversity; it is flexible enough to adapt quickly to changing conditions; and it puts a structural premium on egalitarian, personalistic relationship skills in contrast to the impersonable mode of interaction suited to the bureaucratic paradigm (quoted in Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 239).

One of the more important major studies of futures images is Hicks and Holden's (1995) *Visions of the future: Why we need to teach for tomorrow*, which focuses on the application of images research in education. Here, it is claimed that preparing children for the future is one of the key roles of education. And yet, claim the authors (Hicks and Holden), the future as a dimension is largely missing from modern classroom curricula. Three concerns organize the content of the book. These include the "central role that images of the future play in social and cultural change; the nature of young people's hopes and fears for the future, and; the need for schools to educate for a future that will be very different from the present". The authors claim that many of the findings from the UK study confirm previous research--for example--that "adult's images of the future are not well developed and are more likely to be pessimistic than optimistic"; "people generally feel they have little control over the future"; that futures are typically perceived in terms of science and technology as opposed to social issues; and that young people are fearful of what the future may bring. However, new findings present here add

significantly to the understanding of these issues.

Young people's current hopes and fears for the future--personal, local and global--have beeen established, and taken account of variations based on age and gender. There seems less dissonance between personal and global expectations than some previous studies reported, possibly because life has become increasingly problematic at all levels of society in the late twentieth century (Hicks and Holden, 1995, p. 136).

The book concludes with a discussion on examples of emerging good futures practice found in the study. Examples included Choices for Britain, a project base in Bristol where older pupils image scenarios for the futures of Britain, and the introduction of a pilot Futures syllabus for senior pupils in Queensland high schools (Hicks and Holden, 1995, p. 124).

The authors (Hicks and Holden) postulate a framework of ideological orientations that characterize most high school curricula: the conservative, which function to mainatin social, economic and political structures; the reformative, where pupils are prepared to participate in the reform of society; and the transformative, offering both the individual pupil and the school the potential roles of challenging social, political and economic inequalities (Hicks and Holden, 1995, p. 8). A framework is also offered for the studying of a specific futures issue and creation of scenarios: (1) What is the issue? (2) How has it come about? (3) Who gains, who loses? (4) What is our vision? (5) What can be done? (6) How will we do it? (Hicks and Holden, 1995, p. 9).

In the conclusion, the importance of vision is reiterated by quoting from Elgin's (1991) observation that

> We cannot build a future we cannot imagine. A first requirement, then, is to create for ourselves a realistic, compelling, and engaging vision of the future that can be simply told. If our collective visualization of the future is weak and fragmented, then our capacity to create a future together will be commensurately diminished. Without a strong sense of the future and meaningful orientation for our lives, we can lose confidence in ourselves, our leaders, and our institutions (quoted in Hicks and Holden, 1995, p. 138).

Boulding and Boulding (1995) research the roles of futures images in applied

areas as diverse as limits to societal growth, power and betterment in the economy, peace research, women's movements, the family as maker of the future, and children's images of futures. In an important essay, *Image and Action in Peace Building*, Boulding (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 93) describes and analyzes one specific technique for creating mental images of a peaceful world and related action scenarios, known as Imaging a World Without Weapons Workshops. This initiative is premissed on the observation of an "absence of clear conceptions (p. 94) of what kind of world would be possible and sustainable under conditions of substantial disarmament" (p. 95). In such a world devoid of alternative futures images, it was found that people "turned to short-term survival strategies rather than focussing on processes of long-range social change" (p. 95). Through the use of workshops--described earlier in this chapter--it was found that "people brought together to image a peaceable future world can do so" (p. 112). Shared backgrounds among participants or common purposes do not, it seems, facilitate the generation of action-inspiring imagery".

Counterintuitively, in groups that were too homogeneous, the variety of imagery produced may be reduced. It is implied that a combination of common purposes and diversity of backgrounds is desirable for enhancing the "image-action connection" (p. 112). An important outcome of the study pointed to the ambiguous nature of the relationship between futures images and "action-readiness". Evidence suggested that a "possible relation between the vividness or concreteness of imagery, intensity of affect, and action-readiness" (p. 113). This outcome makes the understanding of the image-action nexus as a pressing issue for subsequent futures images research. Follow-up studies of workshop participants need to inform the link between imaging and social process in real-world problematic situations. Boulding (1995) also increases our awareness of a potentially harmful side-affect of the "feel-good" aspects of empowerment widely reported in workshop situations, a phenomena in which desirable futures images are generated but remain untranslated into concrete action in the real world (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 114).

In another essay, *Familia Faber: The Family as Maker of the Future*, Boulding (1995) considers the potential of the family in the social construction of reality and imaging of alternative and authentic futures. Here, the family is

reconceptualized in an active role as the "makers of social reality, constructors of the future social order, as doers and shapers" rather than the family as the "products or victim of change". As communities face rapid change from globalisation, the diminution of federal assistance and policy guidance, and a "rhetorical emphasis on localism", the family, as the grassroots of human societies, offer revitalized potential as the sources of new forms of inventiveness in coping with new social realities and imaging alternative ways of doing (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 117).

Inayatullah and Milojevic (1998) explore the colonizing epistemologies of historical male domination and the role of feminist futures images in potentiating equitable male-female relationships. The premise is simple, as the authors claim: "one fact remains almost universal: society always treats its women worse than it treats its men" (p. 35). According to the United Nations future projections, the position of women will improve a bit, "but even by the year 2200, women will be far from reaching gender equality". Even the field of futures studies is "burdened with male-centered bias", that historically, control of the future has been in the charge of men. By citing Huckle (1983), the methodologies employed by futurists such as the Delphi technique and scenario development are male strategies. "Woman would not choose experts but would prefer small groups, working together in an egalitarian environment to solve agreed upon problems" (Inayatullah and Milojevic, 1998, p. 37).

To counter male ideologies, a number of alternative feminist futures images are presented including Boulding's "gentle society" and Eisler's gylany, or partnership model. Boulding articulates the image of the gentle society as an exciting place where "each human being would reach a degree of individuation and creativity such as only a few achieve in our present society". Society in general would be localist where "technology would be used in a more sophisticated and careful way to ensure humanized, interactive, nurturant and nonbureaucratic societies" (Inayatullah and Milojevic, 1998, p. 42).

According to Eisler (in Inayatullah and Milojevic, 1998, p. 42), the transformation towards a partnership society is "absolutely crucial for the survival of our species". The organizing principle in gylany involves "linking" in place of "ranking". Instead of a society where one half of society is ranked over

the other half, both genders will be valued equally. The configuations of human relations will be transformed as they come to be characterised by a

> ... more equal partnership between women and men in both the so-called private and public spheres, a more generally democratic political and economic structure, and (since it is not required to maintain rigid rankings of domination) abuse and violence is here neither idealized nor institutionalized. Moreover, here stereotypically "feminine" values can be fully integrated into the operational system of social guidance (in Inayatullah and Milojevic, 1998, p. 43).

2.1.9 Community futures

Community Futures (CF) is an emerging field of inquiry with transdisciplinary origins rooted in futures research, development, community studies and rural studies. The focus of community studies in recent times has converged on revitalization strategies for depressed communities. The causes of economic hardship have multiple causes, many of which however can be traced back to problems associated with restructuring, globalisation, and centralization-decentralization discourses. Revitalization has been exhaustively researched from any number of theoretical perspectives including communication technologies; diffusion mechanisms; self-development strategies; feminine consciousness; and community image and innovativeness. This gobally felt mood of inventiveness vis-a-vis the necessity to identify, discuss and implement development paradigms other than eurocentric models has given birth to a plethora of renewed interest in alternative developmental paradigms. Since World War Two, Gross National Product (GNP) was generally considered the most reliable and informative indicator of national well-being. However, the admitted failure of euro-centric models of development to benefit non-European peoples and cultures, has contributed to the recognition of the need to reinstate and reevaluate the importance of harnessing the suppressed potential of locally occuring development initiatives. New indicators of development have come to include 'basic human needs', equality and social justice, autonomy and mass participation, and ecological balance. From the overall concern for the need to reinstate the importance of development at the local and community level has arisen the 'new' fields of community development (CD) and community futures, the latter of which goes a step further than CD by incorporating and explicit future- oriented dimension to the new development paradigm.

According to Wade (1997), the world is "making a major transition from an industrial/nation-state paradigm to a dual system global/local world". The statement implies that "the old imagery of the 'three worlds of development' model is an out-dated notion that needs to be thrown away". Wade (1997) continues to observe that community development has "exploded to the forefront as the development philosophy of choice around the world". Some of the principle orientations in community futures refer to:

- De-centralization of development: Notes Tisdell (1997) "A concomitant social change has been the increasing centralization of government … a centralized government may not know or reflect the concerns and values of local communities. Increasing concern is being expressed about the disintegration of local communities and the loss of sense of community" (p. 1361);

- Orientation toward Human Development, focusing on the development of the human as individual and as collectivity, where notions of development as reframed by notions of the Good Life - bringing it closer to a philosophical endeavour rather than simplistic bottom-line economism. The notion of social well-being is reflected in a number of writings. For Choudhury (1997, p. 1357), the measurement and promotion of "social well-being" is primary. Boulding (Boulding and Boulding, 1995) calls for more holistic parameters as representative of development, a notion he calls "betterment", a term suggestive of an expanded notion of human enrichment transcending conventional economic notions of development (p. 61);

- Orientation toward self-development strategies (Green et al., 1990, p. 55) which in non-metropolitan communities generate a wide variety of jobs for local residents; and

- Greater acceptance and integration of postmodern and poststructural perspectives of community futures. This has generally increased interest in the othered unofficial, marginal and unheard voice (Kenny, 1994, p. 92).

Wildman (1998) writes that the main task of communities of the future is to "forge an equitable, efficient and appropriate-scaled alternative to global capitalism". Evocatively, he metaphorizes "late 20th century capitalism" as a "skyscraper" to illustrate the foundations upon which present societal structures are dependant. He says that "Modern society can be likened to a giant skyscraper that is now totally reliant on such inputs as electricity, computer networking, water, sewerage and waste removal, lifts and mechanical support". Community Futures (CF) offers new directions and viable alternatives, not naive utopianism, in order to "change the skyscraper floor by floor" (Wildman, 1998, p. 7).

Key steps towards effective Community Futures involves the concept of "localism" defined by Nadel-Klein (in Wildman, 1998) as "the representation of group identity as defined primarily by a sense of commitment to a particular place and to a set of cultural practices that are self-consciously articulated, and to some degree separated and directed away from the surrounding socio-economic world". Wildman (1998, p. 8) posits the emergence of the "New Learning Community" which actively seeks to use Chaos Theory in community organization. Such an approach, he admits, "requires the ability to embrace diversity and creative disagreement". CF is conceptualized as a new method for generating positive futures for communities through empowering "a belief that alternatives to increasing internationalisation is inevitable". The concrete strategies that CF in action employ include the setting of local finance schemes, starting new businesses, revitalizing existing ones, helping people to find jobs, holding community celebrations and festivals, converting good ideas into practical projects, and conducting study clubs to learn from experience (Wildman, 1998, p. 8).

For Kerr (1997), future communities will have to face "new forms of governance, economy, cross-cultural communication and trans-cultural community". She suggests that cultural diversity and models of "self" provided by "others" will assist communities in creating new future visions. Central to the activities involved in bringing about community transformation will be the essential roles of effective communication (Kerr, 1997, p. 13-15).

Costello (1997) adheres to the notion that "if you wish to change society, you must tell an alternative story. All societies, and more particularly communities, have myths that encapsulate the dominant views of that society. Those myths are essentially social script. If that script can be re-written, then positive change can occur" (p. 19). Costello proceeds to offer us a glimpse his vision in the form of five alternative storylines: citizenship before customership; common good should precede user-pays; values before profit; public before private; and community must pre-exist the individual (Costello, 1997, p. 20).

Pope and Wildman (1997) conceptualize communities as a type of "Complex Adaptive System" (CAS), where the future survival and transformation of communities can be brought about by perceiving them as systems that

"self-organise, exchange information, replicate and learn". Such a reconceptualization of the idea of community itself, could potentially transform conventional functions of communities and the structures that support and maintain their social realities, thereby opening up the latent potential for innovative, less-restrictive and tradition-bound futures images (Pope and Wildman, 1997, p. 21-23).

2.2   Section II: Communication issues

Section II links the futures specific literature from the previous section with selected communication issues into the newly emerging sub-field of communication futures. It is shown how these two areas of research intersect and are mutually enhancing. Also presented is Chang's (1996) deconstructionist analysis of the theoretical perspectives which underpin communication research, considered important, both for the new light in which communication is reconceptualized and for the deconstructionist techniques which Chang (1996) employs to argue his case. The roles of myth and metaphor as powerful conceptual shapers of realities and strategies for shaping futures is outlined, followed by a brief discussion on the roles of idiosyncratic thinking in social transformation and a synopsis of Stevenson and Lennie's (1995) Communicative Age model.

2.2.1   Communication futures

Stevenson and Simpson (1993) bring attention to the connection between communication studies and futures by explaining that "it appears that communication is fundamental to the way we construct visions of alternative futures and share these visions with eachother. The future eventually comes about by acting on our understandings and misunderstandings of such visions in interactions with the world" (Stevenson and Simpson, 1993, p. 319). Inayatullah and Stevenson (1998) apply the term communication to "meaning making as the cognitive activity of constructing images of our futures and other realms of space-time, and thus ourselves and our worlds" (Inayatullah and Stevenson, 1998, p. 107-113). Clearer still, Inayatullah (1995) has written that "the purpose of communication is to begin to create a shared reality" (Inayatullah, 1995, p. 898). Expanding this line of thought, the shared reality is

articulated and brought about in real world situations via the conduit of on-going negotiation and compromise. Elmandjra (1998) echoes the importance of communication in futures by referring to "the need to ground the study of communication in addressing human and social problems, which continue to plague humanity and are amenable to communicative solutions" (Elmandjra, 1998, p. 127).

Middleton (1980) plainly states the communication-futures nexus by explaining: "Communication planners seek to create action that will in some way affect the future nature of society". In turn, by citing Chu (1977), the role of the image as strategy in bringing about new futures is expressed in the following terms: "In other societies, planners will work towards goals established to reflect an image of the ideal man and society, using communication to bring about individual and group psychological and behavioural change so that these goals may be met" (in Middleton, 1980, p. 21). Middleton (1980) also highlights the pivotal role that communication and futures play when applied to development strategies.

It seems obvious that different development theories are based on different images of futures society. Communication of all kinds is instrumental in the achievement of any imagined society, and it follows that the ways in which communication is developed in society will follow from the dominant social image (Middleton, 1980, p. 27).

We are reminded of the relationship between futures images, communication and communication technologies from the findings of Images of Mankind in the Year 2000 (Ornauer et al., 1976) where, it is explained that the superior social position of the "topdog" over the "underdog" is due to the fact that it is the topdog who "is close to the instruments of communication and decision" and will inevitably be the "one who takes initiatives, who does the planning, who appears to be effectively in charge of what is now done to meet the future" (Ornauer et al., 1976, p. 583).

2.2.2   Chang: Deconstructing Communication

With radical and transformative implications for this investigation, Chang

(1996) deconstructs the discipline of communication studies which he claims has been dominated by the semantic core known as 'commonality'--the transcendence of difference--and a tendency of communication theorists to value understanding over misunderstanding, clarity over ambiguity, and order over disorder" (Chang, 1996, p. xi). Put differently, Chang (1996) uses the poststructural deconstructionist technique to cast "doubt on the seeming innocence of the activity of communication", thereby challenging the fundamental epistomological positions taken by most contemporary communication research. According to Chang (1996), the "built-in goal, the telos" of the communicative event has unquestioningly been to "arrive at a better mutual understanding or greater feeling of certainty and security toward one another, in short, the achievement of commonwealth that reflects the triumph of sociality over individuality, of collective identity over individual difference" (p. xi). Chang (1996) contests the implicit conceptualization of communication and the communicative event as the "transendence of difference", and attempts to recast communication as organized exchange in the "inverted image of communication as the occurrence of Babel-like, adestinal sending" (Chang, 1996, p. xii).

Chang (1996) asserts that "we can longer refuse to confront the philosophical foundations of communication theories" (p. xvii) for the way in which one confronts the philosophical foundations upon which contemporary communication theories are built and perpetuated "depends in great measure on where one stands in relation to the past and how one envisions the future" (Chang, 1996, p. xvi). Central to Chang's (1996) thesis is what he calls the "postal paradox of communication", which simply defined, claims that "one cannot not communicate; communication cannot be avoided even when the void of communication, its negativity, is communicated" (Chang, 1996, p. 227). It is implied in the postal paradox that communication should be understood as more than shared and mutual understanding, that communication is most useful when it's inherently chaotic nature, potentially gives birth to transformative situations.

2.2.3   Myth and metaphor

One of the ways in which social constructions of reality are transmitted

through an organization or community is through the application of social myths and metaphors in communication activities and events. The influence of communication theories and perspectives on futures thinking has lead to a vigorous interest in the roles of myth and metaphor in the dynamics of social construction and transformative change.

2.2.3.1　Myth

Campbell (in Flowers, 1988, p. 28) describes two different orders of mythology: the type that relates you to "your nature and to the natural world", and, the mythology that links you to a particular society. The myth is also assigned with four functions: the mystical, the cosmological, the sociological and the pedagogical (p. 38-9). Furthermore, myth serves a practical function for the "myth offers life models" which have to be "appropriate to the time in which you are living, and our time has changed so fast that what was proper 50 years ago is not proper today" (p. 16). Despite the deep-rootedness of myth in everyday life, Campbell (in Flowers, 1988, p. 30) sees the myth as an essentially dynamic communication artifact whose future should root the human experience not in local mythology but in global terms. He says, "We need myths that will identify the individual not with his local group but with his planet". Provocatively, he asks: "What happens when a society no longer embraces a powerful mythology?" (in Flowers, 1988, p. 8).

In a discussion on the feasibility of evolutionary images of Man, Markley and Harman (1982) cite Kinser and Kleinman's astute assertions about the role of myth as they are manifested into the construction of everyday social realities.

> Myths shape perception. Perceptions produce policies, policies cause events and situations. And events require explanation. How can one separate the beginning of the circle from the end, the mythical invention from the archetypal situation, or the fabrication from the candid recognition of a geopolitical fact? The first feeds the last, and the last vindicates--and reinstates--the first. This cycle is what Freud meant by "self-fulfilling prophecy"--the manufactured statement that creates historical reality thereby validating itself (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 155).

In Berger and Luckman (1966) mythology is the most archaic of the four "conceptual machineries" (the others being theology, philosophy and science)

involved in "universe-maintenance", that is, the legitimation of the society it upholds. According to their definition, mythology is a "conception of reality that posits the ongoing penetration of the world of everyday experience by sacred forces" which has the composite effect of ensuring that "all reality appears as made of one cloth" (Berger and Luckman, 1966, p. 128).

One of Barthes's major contributions to the literature on myth are his semiological analyses in Mythologies (Palmer, 1997, p. 55), the objective of which was to reveal the presence of 'mythologies' behind the ordinary everyday things of the world" (Harland, 1989, p. 52). For Barthes, the myth is "a system of communication" (in Mythologies, 1993, p. 109) and "a form of discourse that tries to make cultural norms appear as facts of nature". The myth is a "type of speech chosen by history" that "cannot possibly evolve from the 'nature' of things" (Barthes, 1993, p. 110) and is by no means confined to oral speech. In fact, the myth can consist of "modes of writing or of representations; not only written discourse, but also photography, cinema, reporting, sport, shows, publicity, all these can serve as a support to mythical speech" (Barthes, 1993, p. 110).

One recurring theme for Barthes was his dislike of 'essentialism' (Palmer, 1997), which he saw as "just a bourgeois ideology attempting to squeeze reality into its own mold and freeze it there" (Palmer, 1997, p. 52). Another Barthean constant is his attack on the so-called 'voice of the natural' in cultural phenomena, which Palmer (1997) describes as a tendency for the dominating social forces to generate myth that the rules, mores, and institutions of that society are 'nature's way' (or, in an earlier generation, 'God's way')" (Palmer, 1997, p. 53). Barthes's overarching objective is to demythologize the everday, the mundane and the taken-for-granted by "revealing the semiological codes that myths employ" (p. 56). Barthes illuminates the political dimensions of myth and myth-making by reframing the notion of the myth as "depoliticized speech" (Palmer, 1997, p. 59) and that the only speech that cannot be depoliticized and mythologized is "speech which is the opposite of myth: that which remains political." As Palmer (1997, p. 59) adds: "Basically, only revolutionary language escapes myth."

2.2.3.2 Metaphor

As with the social myth, the metaphor can also function as a conduit via which social constructions of reality are transmitted through individual agents and organizations. Bezold (in Slaughter, 1996c) poetically describes the link between futures images and the metaphor with this description: "A positive vision of the future can emerge out of a reversal of assumptions, out of a metaphor, a poem, a song, a bumper sticker; out of two or three core values (eg. life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness); or out of an individual's image of a perfect life" (Bezold, in Slaughter, 1996c, p. 171).

Markley and Harman (1982) note how social constructions of reality in the form of metaphors enslave individuals and societies to recognized metaphors. The example they cite refers to the notion of contemporary economic man as the servant to industrial metaphors. The image inherent to this image describe 'economic man' as rationalistic -- able to calculate what was in his own self-interest; mechanistic -- a factor of production; individualistic -- with great responsibility to take care of himself; and materialistic -- with economic forces acting as primary if not exclusve reward and control mechanism (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 45-46).

Michael (1993) calls for strategies to deliberately introduce "new metaphors that can encourage the reperception of social reality in ways more useful for engaging in this information overloaded world". This strategy brings our attention to the transformative potential of metaphors in reconstructing social realities. He suggests that there are new "metaphoric potential"s to be "derived from the domain of biological growth and development" and from ecology with its concepts of interdependence, diversity, resilience, competition and collaboration, carrying capacity, vulnerability, cyclicity and continuity (Michael, 1993, p. 81-89). To this we might also add the phenomenon of chaos.

In an article recalling the cognitive functions of the metaphor, Judge (1993) claims that "since the 1970s there has been an explosion in the interest in the role of metaphor in all areas" (Judge, 1993, p. 275). Metaphors are not simply poetical imaginations but fundamental to our conceptions of reality. He notes Doctorow's (1977) extreme argument that "The development of civilizations is

essentially a progression of metaphors", an argument supported by Winter's (1981) belief that "if the present age faces a crisis of root metaphors, a shift in metaphors may open up new vistas of human possibilities". With a sense of irony, Judge (1993) wittily remarks that the "Future itself may be a metaphoric trap because of the way it is tied to time - and especially linear time" (Judge, 1993, p. 287), a statement whose ultimate and most radical implication potentially subverts the value of thinking about the future.

Elsewhere, Judge (1996) offers the hope that "the real breakthroughs will come through metaphor, as a form of 'conceptual scaffolding'". People will feel "empowered to develop new metaphors to frame their own development pathways". Here, Judge, displays his interest in metaphors "for future survival", or "metaphors for psychic 'thrival' and how they engender new forms of psychosocial organization amongst the most disadvantaged" (Judge, 1996, p. 606).

2.2.4   Idiosyncratic thinking in social change

The line of enquiry in this study has so far hypothesized that positive social transformation in Japan is desirable and that futures images as guiding principles in the social construction of reality are primarily aristocratic in origin, that is, are diffused as dominant concepts from a futures-making elite. Transformative change is one of the key objectives and applications of the contemporary futures portfolio. There is an infinite variety of mechanisms for undermining dominant images. Even humour, a strategy Polak (1973) refers to as the "comic mirror", can be deployed as tool for social transformation.

> Humour is the oldest weapon in the arsenal for attacking the social order and appears in many forms ... The main goal of the comic mirror is not amusement but annihilation and, afterwards, reconstruction (though this may not easily be discerned) (Polak, 1973, p. 104).

Here we ask the question: Where is the "challenge to legitimacy" (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 58) vis-a-vis Japan's alternative, competing and dissenting futures images, from which transformation can emerge? One candidate agent of change is the idiosyncratic thinker, the so-called katayaburi, previously defined as the individual who thinks outside-the-box, breaks the molds of convention and what is commonly referred to in Japanese as *joushiki*, or

commonsense. The rationale for investigating the transformative potential of the idiosyncrat-*katayaburi*, is further based on the idea that uncontested continuance of failed paradigms derived from Japan's dominant futures images can lead to a situation in which conformity becomes unacceptably dominant and innovation and creativity become limited (Stevenson and Simpson, 1993, p. 326).

As noted by Markley and Harman (1982), "an image may be appropriate for one phase in the development of a society, but once that stage is accomplished, the use of the image as a continuing guide to action will likely create more problems than it solves" (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 4). It can also be reasoned by extrapolation that the role of the Japanese katayaburi can be instrumental in what Markley and Harman (1982) call "the revitalization cycle" (p. 187)--a process of deliberate change involving five basic strategies: restorative; stimulative; manipulative; persuasive and facilitative, the last of which they identify as the key to fostering "the growth of new images and patterns that are visibly emerging" (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 188).

Stevenson and Simpson (1993, p. 319) explore the role of idiosyncratic ideas and thinking in an Australian investigation of telecommunications futures. Using a participation-oriented approach that recognises the impossibility of predicting futures, a program of search seminars was employed to identify alternative futures under the categories desirable, likely and possible. Findings in the form of detailed narratives documented from diverse participants in seminars showed a general scarcity of idiosyncratic data. The limited idiosyncratic data that was found was attributed to seminars conducted with school children. In attempting to account for the lack of idiosyncratic thinking in adults, the researchers suggest that "perhaps the adults have lost the ability to experiment, take risks, and challenge tradition" (Stevenson and Simpson, 1993, p. 325). The authors believe that the chaotic nature of idiosyncratic thinking is a key dynamic in transforming social systems. Elsewhere, in the context of the solving of social problems, Stevenson (1995, p. 900) asserts the potential merits that can arise from conflict in communication by noting that "even misunderstandings help in solving problems", and, "it is often wild ideas which can end up being beneficial to society."

In another variation of the idea of the idiosyncrat, Baert (1998), in citing Goffman, refers to the role of dramaturgical approaches and the search for idiosyncratic thinking as offering resistance to the "officially accredited values of society".

Goffman also introduces space into analysis, the concept of region referring to any place which indicates the barrier between what is visible to the audience and what is not. Whereas performances take place in the front region, the back regions involve supporting or preparatory activies for the front region (in Baert, 1998, p. 78).

Inayatullah (1998b) makes a plea for "dissenting futures" -- "Not dissent in the leftist sense ... but in the deeper sense--dissent as unofficial knowledge, as truth outside the margins, as truth that cannot easily be comprehended within the gaze of modernity". Resonant with the call for dissenting futures, Nandy (1996) comments that: "Explorations in the future, I passionately believe, have to be specifically statements of dissent from the existing ideas of normality, sanity and objectivity. As in the case of the visions of the great 'seers' of the past, such explorations have to flout or at least stretch the canons of conventionality to be worthwhile" (Nandy, 1996, p. 637).

Berger and Luckman (1966) describe the theory of deviance in which they posit the concepts of nihilation and legitimation. Here, the latter "maintains the reality of the socially constructed universe" and "nihilation denies the reality of whatever phenomena or interpretations of phenomena do not fit into that universe" (p. 132). In more advanced form, nihilation aims to account for all deviant definitions of reality in terms of concepts belonging to one's own universe, a procedure whose final goal is to "incorporate the deviant conceptions within one's own universe, and thereby to liquidate them ultimately. The deviant conceptions must, therefore, be translated into concepts derived from one's own universe" (p. 133).

The ramifications of this construct for futures images is of obvious importance. If the official/dominant image-holders are able to absorb the image of the idiosyncrat, the other, the minority and repurpose it as one's own, the power to bring about transformative change is ultimately denied to the alternative.

Despite this inescapable circularity, Berger and Luckman (1966) concede that change is nonetheless a possibility. They add that "because they [social constructions of reality] are historical products of human activity, all socially constructed universes change, and the change is brought about by the concrete actions of human beings", a conceptual perspective that brings them close to Foucault's notion that power is everywhere.

Boulding (1995) also recognises the importance of looking for the signs of change in the most unlikely and overlooked places: "The change points in society are found on city streets, on school playgrounds, in the privacy of the home, and in all kinds of little-recognized civic spaces, from neighborhoods to global organizations" (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. viii).

Where dominant images are challenged, resistance to change is usually experienced. Markley and Harman (1982) note that "It is a well-known phenomenon in psychotherapy that the client will resist and evade the very knowledge he most needs to resolve his problems. A similar situation probably exists in society and there is suggestive evidence both in anthropology and in history that a society tends to hide from itself knowledge which is deeply threatening to the status quo but may in fact be badly needed for resolution of the society's most fundamental problems" (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 186).

2.2.5   Stevenson and Lennie's Communicative Age Paradigm

In a study that explores emerging designs for working, living and learning, Stevenson and Lennie (1995) propose a new Communicative Age Paradigm. It is argued that in a time when communication and information technologies (C&IT) are impacting upon our social structures and the way we live, "new visions, strategies, and metaphors" must be pursued for the transition to a more desirable future. The paper presents scenarios which aim "to provoke critical public discussion and challenge the current technological optimism that the information superhighway will become a dynamic force for social good, without any changes in social, economic and political systems." The three futures scenarios are presented to demonstrate the possible types of societies that could result from the diffusion of C&ITs. The scenarios are the Conventional Age, the Artifical Age, and the prototype Communicative Age,

posited as an alternative and preferred future paradigm.

The Conventional Age is technology-driven and rational. A socio-technical superstructure leads to alienation and disempowerment of the people. The economic system is driven by consumerism and based on free-market economics. Development is equated with growth. Gender relations remain generally patriarchal and intolerance of cultural diversity exists. Organisations are hierarchical, typified by top-down management systems. Education is teacher and expert-centred. The dominant image of the future is empiricist-positivistic rendering the future as an extension of the present. C&ITs are used in the service of persuasion and hegemonic control (Stevenson and Lennie, 1995, p. 22-23).

In the second scenario--the Artificial Age--the dominant worldview is super-scientific and rational and technology becomes the basis of culture. Nations cease to exist as the world is dominated by global virtual corporations. Economies are driven by inter-corporation competition and jobs are mainly automated. Leisure time is increased. A strong patriarchal structure exists and women become redundant in reproduction as laboratories take over via genetic engineering and cloning. Cultural experience takes place through virtual networks and new on-line subcultures emerge. Learning is delivered by centralised databases. Boredom is alleviated by virtual technologies and pleasures. Space is colonised due to chronic problems on earth. Homo sapiens begin to evolve into new species. The dominant image of the future reworks homo sapiens as machine sapiens (from Dator, 1990, p. 1091). The dominant model of communication involves wiring humans into the control structure of the world order (Stevenson and Lennie, 1995, p. 22-23).

By contrast, the authors (Stevenson and Lennie, 1995) image an alternative to the former scenarios in the form of a Communicative Age paradigm. Here, the dominant worldview is holistic, creative, partnership oriented and caring. Social realities are diverse and equally respected. Technology embodies human values and is used through participative processes. There is a rise in participative democracy and local communities are involved in decision-making. Economies are characterised by ecologically sustainable systems. Under feminist influence, gender relations are restructured to accommodate sexual diversity. Cultural

diversity is encouraged and once endangered subcultures are revitalized. Education is learner-centred and learning is a life-long activity. The environment is protected by sustainable use of resources and product recycling. People live simpler and consume less. The dominant futures images involve foresight to envisage alternative and inclusive futures from critical reflection. The dominant communication model advocates the negotiation of shared meanings and C&ITs facilitate collaboration and empowerment between diverse groups and individuals (Stevenson and Lennie, 1995, p. 22-23).

2.3   Section III: Japanese communication concepts

2.3.1   Introduction

In Section III the focus moves progressively away from general communication futures issues to concepts specific to the cultural context of Japanese communication. Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to undertake a comprehensive review of the literature pertaining to Japanese communication, this section attempts to modestly sketch some of the basic concepts to assist the reader unfamiliar with Japanese communication styles and their implications for futures images. Attention is given to Yoshikawa's seven modes of Japanese communication. Each mode is briefly summarized. Other communication concepts also appear in the following section on Japanese futures images.

Recent communication research has questioned the authority and dominance of Western derived models of communication and led to the "need to pay more attention to concepts of communication formulated by non-Western societies as well" (Dissanayake, 1988, p. 1). As Menon (in Dissanayake, 1988, p. x) notes: "Communication theory is understandably perceived to be culture bound". One of the most pressing needs for Asian perspectives of communications arises from the need for social development. Dissanayake (1988) notes:

> In Asian countries, where the preponderant majority of the people live in misery and poverty, the need for social change is inescapably paramount. Therefore, if we subscribe to the notion, as I certainly do, that social research should have a beneficial impact on society, it is indeed imperative that we pay greater attention to research philosophies that

can profitably handle, and indeed stimulate, social change (Dissanayake, 1988, p. 7).

2.3.2 Yoshikawa's Japanese communication modes

In a comparison of Japanese and American business communication practices, Yoshikawa (1986) isolates seven specific modes of Japanese communication. Yoshikawa begins with a reminder of Hall's (1959, p. 93) insight that "communication is culture, and culture is communication". Thus hypothesized, Yoshikawa (1986) situates the corporate organization as a microcosm of culture in general, and proceeds to compare patterns of communication between Japanese and Americans as the framework for an interpretive discussion on how different patterns are reflected in organizational behaviour.

The first Japanese interpersonal communication pattern Yoshikawa (1986) calls the 'fusion-oriented pattern'. Based on Eastern pantheism, this mode of communication facilitates harmonious relations on the one hand, an end achieved by the avoidance of appearing excessively oppositional, confrontational or frank with others, especially anyone higher in terms of rank and position, and on the other hand, produces a type of communication pattern that utilizes language and social behaviours that are "highly compartmentalized and prescribed as if nothing were left to chance" (Yoshikawa, 1986, p. 158).

Central to this type of communication as a strategy for harmony maintenance, are the concepts of tatemae and honne. The former is a publicly expressed opinion, strategically aligned with the group's thinking, or by extension -- the official description of a problematic situation. Tatemae is therefore the non-controversial opinion which offends no one. The latter--*honne*--on the other hand refers to one's 'true feelings' or 'true mind', that which is privately felt but not necessarily publicly uttered. According to Yoshikawa (1986), the avenues for expression of honne can acceptably take place in informal drinking sessions in bars when the communicators are intoxicated; in a 'death declaration' as an individual is about to die; and thirdly in diary-writing (Yoshikawa, 1986, p. 162-3).

Another mode of communication involves 'affective communication style'.

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Yoshikawa (1986) juxtaposes the American 'Maximum Message Communication' in contrast to Japanese style 'Minimum Message Communication'. The making of public announcements for the Japanese is thus seen as "half the reality, the other half being the action behind the scenes" (Yoshikawa, 1986, p. 162).

The third communication mode borrows from Kato's (1962, p. 71-85) idea involving the apparent Japanese mistrust toward 'verbal language'. Accordingly, Japanese "children are traditionally trained from early childhood not to talk too much" (Yoshikawa, 1986, p. 164).

The fourth mode introduces the cultural necessity in Japan for an 'intermediated communication'. This is manifested in the custom of requiring a "go-between" when arranging marriages; and a proper "letter of introduction" in order to bring together two previously unacquainted business people (Yoshikawa, 1986, p. 164). At this point, Yoshikawa (1986) fails to mention the preferred employment seeking strategy involving the formal introduction--*shoukai* (紹介) by a "go-between" between a candidate employee and employer; and the so-called *kone*--or connection, another type of go-between who is usually instrumental in deal-making decisions behind the scenes.

The fifth mode Yoshikawa (1986) refers to is the "space-oriented" mode of communication. Space is conceptualized less in an aesthetic sense as in a human communication sense. He demonstrates this notion with the Japanese word for human--*ningen*--which involves combining two kanji characters--人 and 間. The first means person and the second 'space' or 'in-betweenness', implying that the human is only human insofar as he stands in a relationship to another human. The notion of space is also expanded to the time dimension. In a typical American context, "time flows in one direction, past to present to the future" (Yoshikawa, 1986, p. 170). Inter-personal communication therefore, is a matter of "coming to the point". This contrasts with the Japanese mode, derived from a Buddhist interpretation of time as a circle with no end and no beginning, the implication of which is that Japanese prefer to "come round to a point" of conversation.

These conceptions of space and time are translated into a communication style Yoshikawa calls the "haiku approach", where creative space is left for all to participate in decision-making processes. Accordingly, "this creative space is room for future adjustment", allowing "the Japanese to be ready for any crisis" (p. 172). Furthermore, once a decision has been made, "if the situation necessitates change, it takes a long time to bring about modification to the original decisions and plans" (Yoshikawa, 1986, p. 172).

A sixth mode of communication is called 'total' or 'holistic communication'. "If in the course of a conversation, a Japanese says that it is no use to talk any further, he may mean that he cannot accept the interlocutor's attitude, his way of thinking or feeling". Effectively, this mode of Japanese communication often leads to either "total understanding" or "no understanding at all" (Yoshikawa, 1986, p. 174).

The seventh mode involves the concept of "ma", used in the sense of inbetweenness or ambiguity of meaning. Yoshikawa refers to this communication style as the 'grey-oriented' mode of communication. The Japanese "tend to see the world in sets of numerous pairs" such as: yin and yang, black and white, tatemae and honne, light and dark. Although these phenomena are paired, they are not separate entities. Rather, reality is paradoxically peceived as the "fusion of opposites" (Yoshikawa, 1986, p. 176).

One important omission from Yoshikawa's modes of communication is the hierarchical nature of the Japanese language which implicitly favours the positions of certain speakers over others, for example, the male speaker over the female, the adult over the child, and the workplace senior over the subordinate. The latter of all these categories is generally obligated to employ honorific Japanese--*keigo* (敬語), a linguistic custom whose effect suppresses the free exchange of one's true feelings especially if that were to entail a challenge to the authority of the former. Despite the obvious inequities inscripted into the Japanese language, notably, there are few references challenging the authority of keigo. A recent NHK televison documentary (21-seiki no nihongo, February 1999) on the future of Japanese language, however, boldly confronted the nature of keigo and the implicit imbalances it creates in human relationships.

Yoshikawa concludes his comparative analysis by presenting a conceptual model for integrating the seemingly antagonistic Japanese and American world views. The proposed 'Double-Swing' model is premised on the recognition that cultural values are not as neatly polarized as the seven modes of communication suggest and that both American and Japanese communication modes have undergone significant transition over the years. The Double-Swing model is diagrammitcally depicted by the symbol for infinity--∞--with the left side representing American culture and the right side Japanese. Both sides are simultaneously separate yet interdependent. Neither side represents the whole of reality. The significance of the Double-Swing model can be found in the dynamic of both sides coming together to "produce unique possibilities" (Yoshikawa, 1986, p. 179).

2.4 Section IV: Japanese futures concepts and issues

2.4.1 Introduction

This section sketches the present state of futures related research particular to Japan and introduces a number of principle concepts and terminologies that appear throughout the remainder of this investigation. A basic understanding of and familiarity with Japanese terms are pivotal to arguments that follow. To demonstrate the gradual emergence of local Japanese futures images, a brief section is dedicated to an alternative community futures journal from the region of Hokkaido whose philosophy is to "design a new Hokkaido for the 21st century". Finally, despite the relative scarcity of qualitative futures research emanating from Japan, presented are two deconstructionist analyses of Japanese identity and uniqueness and how these related social constructs impact upon Japan's capacity to envision alternative and transformative futures.

Japan's postwar futures images have been largely dominated by a singular model, known similarly as the 'catch-up and overtake America and Europe' model (欧米に追い付き追い越せ), the 'catch-up with the West' model or simply the 'catch-up' model (Prestowitz, 1998). The inadequacies of the catch up model are becoming increasingly apparent as Japan finds itself striving to cope

and adjust to shifting global realities (Prestowitz, 1998).

2.4.2   Japanese futures texts

Pioneering research on Japanese futures issues by Inoguchi and Mushakoji (in Ornauer et al., 1976) demonstrated Japan to be the most "future conscious" nation in this ten-nation survey. The economically fastest growing country in the world would necessarily induce in its population a sense of time as something clearly equipped with a forward-pointing arrow. It is however noted in the report that the future consciousness of Japan tended to be more nation-oriented than international. Another finding about Japan was that the "Japanese seem even more than others to see the future in technological terms, both positively and negatively" (Inoguchi and Mushakoji, in Ornauer et al., 1976, p. 53).

Kato (1985) presents not so much the image of a future Japan as a synopsis of the key determinants shaping Japanese society in the year 2000 including: "population structure, education, social change, resources, the shift to an information society, Japan's economic model, and its relationships with neighbouring countries" (Kato, 1985, p. 570). The article is premised on his observation that Japan's post-war guiding image of the future in form of the 'catch-up and overtake' the West model, has outgrown its usefulness. He attributes the success of Japan's miraculous modernization to two factors: Japan's diligent manpower, and the government's decision to "pursue a programme of revolutionary social change known as the Meiji Revolution.

The implications of Japan's "achievement-oriented" society has been that Japanese society has been "very mobile in the last century and that the aspiration level of young people has been and continues to be extremely high". Having caught up with the USA and achieved most that Americans have achieved, Japan now for the first time in its history, has no future model to aspire to, no guiding futures images. According to Kato (1985), "this makes Japan somewhat uneasy". Kato (1985) concludes his analysis by assigning the hopes for Japan's futures on the emergence of the new generation of young, who, not having experienced war, will be better positioned to communicate with businessmen in other countries. The year 2000, will be for Japan, "a

happier period" as the "new worldview of the younger generation comes to prominence". Kato (1985) stops short of suggesting what those new futures images might consist of and the processes of transformation required to bring them about.

Yazaki (1996) presents a meta-image of the future of Japan in which he claims that Japan's goals "should be to search for a new way of living by channelling human desires away from the building of a society motivated only by profit and a longing for ease. To escape from the straightjacket of economics, we must distance ourselves from a lifestyle conditioned and lubricated by money" (Yazaki, in Slaughter, 1996c, p. 37). Through his personal experiences with Zen meditation, Yazaki believes that in order to guarantee the continuity of life for future generations on "mahayana spaceship", the human individual must overcome egoism. Yazaki describes four aspects to conquering egoism:

(1) Conquering 'economism' in society (ie, measuring all results by economic factors);
(2) Conquering scientific rationalism in learning (ie, explaining all phenomena in scientific or technological terms);
(3) Conquering nationalism ('My country, right or wrong'); and
(4) Conquering 'nowism' (ie, pursuing short-term goals) (Yazaki, in Slaughter, 1996c, p. 34).

Once these four aspects of egoism have been overcome, four new viewpoints should emerge including: (1) 'opportunity development'; (2) *zhi xing he yi* through conquering science for science's sake; (3) 'citizens of the Earth'; and (4) a 'future generations' point of view (Yazaki, in Slaughter, 1996c, p. 35).

Herbig and Borstoff (1995) explore the implications of Japan's so-called shinjinrui, or new breed of young people, for the future of Japanese society. Woronoff (1981) has labelled the shinjinrui the "reactionless" generation, who not only show no leftist inclinations but display absolutely no interest in politics. The authors (Herbig and Borstoff) hypothesize that the shinjinrui are the products of the social distortions of Japan's post-war economic boom. The shinjinrui are also derogatorily referred to as the goldfish generation because they have to be hand-fed everything. They are characterised furthermore as giving up easily, not knowing what to do with their lives and incapable of making decisions, the kind of psychological profile that "does not spell well for the future of Japan" (Herbig and Borstoff (1995, p. 50). The shinjinrui are also

depicted as individualistic--*kojin-shugi*--eschewing traditional Confucian values that apparently underlie the "legendary Japanese values of loyalty, hard work and respect for elders" (p. 51). From a communication perspective, *shinjinrui* "create a network of friends in separate non-overlapping groups, so they can express different aspects of their personlaity within each group ..." (p. 51). They also feel that "they do not have the opportunity for active, voluntary and free action to decide their selected goals and objectives; they feel that the goals and objectives they must pursue are only determined by the arbitrary results of school examinations" (p. 52). They have also been characterised as having low future-orientation, are concerned mainly with short-term personal problems, and have only passing awareness of the global crises facing mankind (Herbig and Borstoff, 1995, p. 52).

Despite the apparent low future-orientation of the *shinjinrui*, their impact is having outcomes on Japan's imaging of alternative futures. Firstly, it is noted, a "critical mass of *shinjinrui* are resisting the grip of Japan's corporate lifestyle. This is leading to a new subculture of ageing *shinjinrui* insisting on pursuit of the Good Life, and, companies are being forced to adjust to this new reality. Smaller companies are learning to attract skilled personnel from among shinjinrui, which may in turn lead to the the rise of new entrepreneurs who create their own companies based on new images and life philosophies. Finally, many of the typical submissive interpersonal relationships found in Japan are proving to be ineffective in view of these transformations influenced by the emergence of the *shinjinrui* (Herbig and Borstoff, 1995, p. 54).

Robertson's (1991) ethnographic study of a Japanese *furusato-zukuri*, or "old village"-making programme in Kodaira City, illuminates many of the issues relevant to the project reported in this thesis. The study of Kodaira is organized by a single cogent word, or trope. That trope is *furusato*, "old village", which she claims, is the dominant representation of the Japanese past and present in the Japanese media since the oil shocks of the 1970s. She warns us not to "assume that *furusato-zukuri* is some sort of central-government conspiracy to force a return to a totalitarian past" (p. 4). The case study of Kodaira is primarily a process of remaking the past and imagining the future--"a process of reifying a Kodaira of yesterday to serve as a stable referent of and model for an 'authentic' community today and tomorrow" (Robertson, 1991, p. 5).

As part of her analysis, Robertson (1991) shows how despite a "field of competing and contested representations of the past, certain constructions achieved dominance and centrality while others are marginalized" (p. 5). By making problematic the dominant futures-making image as enshrined in the polity of furusato-zukuri, she simultaneously draws attention to and makes visible the marginal. Appropriated by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) as the means for establishing a "consensual version of the past vis-a-vis the present, and the future vis-a-vis the past" (p. 6), the concept of *furusato-zukuri* is employed by the state as a synonym for "cultural administration" (文化行政) functioning to reorient domestic policy since the oil shocks of the 1970s "from a strictly materialist to a more affective focus" (p. 32). Japan's media depicts the present age as "the age of the heart"--*kokoro no jidai* (心の時代) based on the rationale that "since basic material needs have been more or less met, civil servants and city planners must attend to the emotional needs of the people" (p. 32). Establishing post-postwar Japan in the image of furusato was achieved through former Prime Minister Nakasone's call for adminstrative reform which was characterized by the "culturization of administration"--*gyousei no bunkaka* (行政の文化化). This entailed strategic impression management in transforming the very look of the administration's buildings by

> decorating government offices with works of art; producing colourful pamphlets that explain administrative policy in jargon-free language accessible to the public; making government buildings available on weekends for public use, such as for hobby classes; broadcasting music from government buildings during holidays, to create a festive ambience; and nurturing affective relations between civil servants by promoting the use, in their memos, of the more warmly respectful suffix *sama* over the indifferent *dono* (Robertson, 1991, p. 33).

In concluding, the strategic deployment of the term *furusato* in current futures-building images functions to facilitate "the collective re-membering of a nation dis-membered by defeat in war and, more recently, by the uncertainties of an international, late-capitalist economy, which have rendered the "future" a vexing problem" (Robertson, 1991, p. 37).

Knight (1994) also presents a case study involving "town-making" or *machi-zukuri* strategies used by rural villages of Hongu Town in Wakayama Prefecture. In order to cope with the problem of depopulation as the young

outmigrated to larger centres, town officials declared it "vital that the town 'become one'--*hitotsu ni naru* (ひとつになる): for only by acting as one could the town halt the ongoing decline and survive into the 21st century" (p. 256). In order to revived civic identification among Hongu Town citizens, a number of new official intitiatives were adopted, including a 'Citizens Charter' and other various town symbols. Hongu Town now has a town logo, a town tree, town flower, a town bird and eight designated scenic spots. Hongu was now also represented by the "ichiigashi" oak tree--1000 of which were planted--whose fast growth would symbolize the renaissance of the town (Knight, 1994, p. 257).

Despite the formalistic impression created by creating a plethora of town symbols, more radical social reforms were also introduced. In order to faciliate improved interaction between citizens, an Empty Custom Abolition System was established, which made a plea for citizens to dispense with traditional customs perceived as impeding the social reality of Hongu Town from transforming into a town appropriate for the twenty first century, especially from the point of view of the town's young. The custom of gift-giving as an expression of social solidarity was, for one, discontinued. To replace the troublesome task of purchasing and giving a suitable gift in reciprocating for funeral, birth and wedding gifts, it was agreed that instead a postcard with a simple message of gratitude would suffice as a new social custom (p. 258). Knight concludes his analysis by justifying the the changes associated with *machizukuri* programs as being one of the few options open to depopulating rural locations where the extrapolation of present trends into the future make community survival untenable (Knight, 1994, p. 259).

Nakamae's (1998) *Three Futures for Japan: Long Hollowing or Rebirth--Views from 2020*, is the most thorough study to date on Japanese futures images. In this compilation of future scenarios for Japan, Nakamae (1998) compiles the opinions of more than 100 participants from diverse international backgrounds on three scenarios looking at Japan in the year 2020. Premised on the notion that Japan's postwar system has ossified, urgent problems facing Japan in the form of globalization, ageing of the population, worsening environmental degradation, friction with other Asian nations, increasing americanification of Japan, have led Japan into a bottleneck predicament. Using the futures method

referred to as scenario planning, 120 expert participants from Japan, the USA, and Europe, and based on extensive interviews and thirteen workshops, three scenarios for Japan's futures were formulated. These included: (1) the long hollowing (日本空洞化); (2) crash and rebirth scenario (日本再生); and (3) Hercules departs (安保で自立迫られる日本). The author (Nakamae) explains that scenario planning is more than mere extrapolation of present trends. Rather, the technique functions to nurture an increased ability to cope with change, thus leading to superior decision-making. The first of the scenarios--the long hollowing--images a Japan beset by a financial sector refusing to transform itself for long-term benefit; diminished economic performance; loss of social vitality by an ageing population; pressing environmental problems and conflict with Asia beyond Japan's capacity to cope with. China becomes the seat of Asian power and Japan's skilled youth, unable to use their skills at home travel abroad in search of life fulfillment (Nakamae, 1998).

Crash and rebirth images Japan in a preferred futures scenario where the nation's financial undergoes positive reform, resulting in a structural transformation of society which though painful in the short term, ushers in a new age of economic vitality. The third dystopian scenario images a Japan in which security plays a vital role. America'a reduced military presence in Asia causes domestic political and social confusion. Japan is faced with difficult choices in the areas of self-defence and foreign policy (Nakamae, 1998).

In a concluding section of the scenarios compilation, it is suggested that in order to facilitate the positive image embodied in the crash and rebirth scenario, that "foreign pressure"--*gaiatsu* (外圧) will be a primary influencing factor. It is also suggested that Japan's national characteristics of resilience to crisis situations, the samurai spirit and social solidarity will facilitate transitions to a preferable future society (p. 256). Another factor hypothesizes that without the "shock" of an external influence, and direct experience of a systemic crisis, true social transformation will not come about. In another image, it is claimed that Japan has "lost track" (道標を失った), and is like a giant tanker without a clear sense of direction (p. 259). Elsewhere, it is opined that Japan lacks the ability to transform itself. Notes the author (p. 260), even the changes brought by the Meiji Restoration were the direct result of foreign

pressure in the form of the "black ships". Another respondent claims that although ordinary Japanese people are very flexible and optimistic, bureaucrats and government officials are inflexible and conservative (p. 261). The Japanese are just as capable of social transformation as anyone else, but to do so, new self-images of Japanese identity are required (p. 261). From a communication perspective, one respondent believes that Japanese find it problematic to show their emotions and express themselves, especially in the presence of strangers. In future, it will be necessary to openly declare one's private opinions, and engage in free exchange of ideas (p. 262). Another scenario-author observes that change in Japan will have to be tied to grassroots activities (p. 264). Another suggests that transformation will be achieved through the activities of Japanese women (in Nakamae, 1998, p. 265).

2.4.3   Localised Hokkaido futures images

Post-bubble Japan has given birth to new futures images. The outlines for a number of localist images approriate to Hokkaido in the 21st century are presented by a citizens movement magazine Node Forum. The inside cover spells out the magazine's philosophy and ratonale in the following terms: "Presently, Japan is undergoing major transformation. All that was taken for granted in the state, politics, economics, information, culture, work, family and human relationships is crumbling with a thud. In view of these changes, the present system, is no longer useful" (1999, p. 1). The proclomation similarly calls for "direct participatory political involvement" of citizens in addressing the dilemmas that confront modern society. No longer should problem-solving be left to the so-called "professionals", rather, the people shall be the "main actors". The aims of the magazine transcend mere discussion. From debate will ensue problem solving strategies and plans of action (Node Forum, 1999, p. 1).

One of these new guiding images (1999, p. 28) introduced involves the establishment of the Hokkaido Recycling-Oriented Society (北海道に循環型社会), an environmental group whose fundamental aims are to transform the Hokkaido region into a 'zero-emission' zone. This volunteer group lobbies community leaders to decrease waste products from consumer and industrial goods by promoting Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policies. The group advocates a reconceptualization of individual lifestyles and consumer

market practices as instrumental in realizing the new recycling oriented society.

Similarly, the Hokkaido Green Fund Association (Node Forum, 1999, p. 33) envisages a new societal paradigm to revitalize Hokkaido, based on the concept of the "Natural Energies Big Country" (自然エネルギー大国) in which Hokkaido's plentiful natural resources in wind, light and forests, function as the keys to alternative futures. The implementation of new biomass-exploiting technologies will become the new sources of employment of the young and skilled, thus contributing to the revitalization of the region's economic base. Sustainable practices are in part based on previous research conducted in Sweden. The authors claim that Hokkaido is a technological backwater, with a legacy of coal mining as the pillar energy source. It is claimed that it is up to Hokkaido to lead the nation in legislating for the promotion and diffusion of new sustainable biomass-derived energy sources and technologies appropriate for the 21st century (Node Forum, 1999, p. 35).

In another vision, Takagi (1999, p. 39) outlines a proposal that would usher in a new age of eco-tourism for Hokkaido. Taking advantage of the "pioneering spirit" that typifies the people of Hokkaido, the region would organise "networked" type tours that offer not only spectacular scenery but also interactive situations with "actual local lifestyles, ways of living and thinking" (p. 43). The reconceptualised tourism model would also function to revitalize local communities in both economic and social terms. Takagi (1999) notes his role as a facilitator in workshops to promote the proposal which was attended by government agency officials, educators, ecologists, entrepreneurs, academics, citizen activist groups, farmers, social educators and housewives. The proposal was presented as a "Hokkaido-appropriate tour" model (Takagi, 1999, p. 43).

Other localised images included the making of a "caring society based on the principles of citizen participation" (Node Forum, 1999, p. 44); the introduction of "barrier-free" access to all voting venues (p. 48); a revival of awareness of the Ainu language and culture roots of many place names in Hokkaido (p. 50) as a strategy to promote positive self-images and stimulate local historical interest; an analysis of Hokkaido's recently chosen catchphrase "Hokkaido: the

Big Country to be tried out" (試される大地・北海道) as symbolic of Hokkaido's future role as leader of new lifestyles and ways of doing for all Japan (p. 54), which, amongst other proposals, calls for an abolition of Japan's postwar "company man" driven society to be replaced by "local lifestyles" (p. 58); a proposal for public works schemes to be assessed not on the basis of "time" but for their impact on "people" (p. 60); a plan for empowering Hokkaido's citizens through regional internet communication infrastructures (p. 70); a suggestion to revitalize community interaction by constructing movie theatres in towns which presently have few entertainment facilities (p. 74); and the role of FM community radio in Hokkaido's remoter regions (Node Forum, 1999, p. 90).

2.4.4 Deconstructing Japanese communication and futures issues

MacCormack (1993) sees the historical conception of Japanese identity as the nation's greatest obstacle to constructing new futures images. In this deconstructionist critique he notes that "As Japan struggles now to open itself and define a new role in the world, these ancient myths, and the mentality rooted in them, are a serious impediment" (p. 48). He adds that once the goals of Japan's post-war "catch up and overtake" (the USA) futures image, in the form of "wealth, power, and equality of status with the West" had been realized, "the achievement was experienced as hollow. Where was Japan to go from there?" (p. 48). MacCormack (1993) challenges Japan's "hierarchical structure in which dissidence and difference are negated" (p. 48-9) and where "the pursuit of total monolithicity"--*ichioku isshin*--(一億一心) means that "dissenters and heretics are isolated and marginalized", diversity is suppressed and and standardization enforced (MacCormack, 1993, p. 54).

The search for new self-images, new roles on the world stage, need come through alternative futures images--a process which ultimately casts suspicion on the very essence of Japan's identity as transmitted through history via official mythological structures. He notes his task as an historian: "Official myths only lose their power through the historian's labor of deconstruction and exposure" (p. 49).

MacCormack (1993, p. 52) refers to strategies deployed in the construction of social realities in "control by hidden manipulation"--*naimen shidou*--(内面指導)

during the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, as a reminder that even contemporary Japan is based on historically formulated myths that dominate the unconscious deep structures of present day planners and bureaucrats. Modern day myths exist in the "ideological creations" of "flag, anthem, ceremony" and continue to consistently privilege the most deeply embedded definition of identity (MacCormack, 1993, p. 52).

MacCormack controversially centres notions of post-war Japanese uniqueness in the imperial instutution, whose existence is in theory "merely symbolic", as ironic because it is precisely the symbolic forms of power which are the most profound and unchallengeable because they remain hidden from view (p. 52). In contemporary Japanese society, state of the art technology--C&ITs included -- in the modern state makes it possible to reach the minds and imaginatons of all, so that there is no refuge from the 'symbol'" (p. 54). In constructing new futures images for Japan which recognise that 'Japaneseness' has been an external imposition (p. 57), MacCormack suggests some strategies of radical and profoundly liberating change in the deep structure of Japanese identity (p. 57). Despite an almost complete absence of debate on political reform, he observes that "cartoonists help to focus the imagination on what is involved by engaging in uninhibited and irreverent speculation on the possibilities" (p. 57). Self-analysis of contemporary debates on national identity in other cultures, Australia for one, could facilitate in making what he calls "the future sloughing-off process imaginable ... the process of '*datsu-Nichi*' or sloughing-off of the false, imposed and unnecessary identity could open the way to an archipelago which like the pre-'Japanese' archipelago, was home to multiple different cultures and peoples" (MacCormack, 1993, p. 57).

Dale (1986) deconstructs the belief in the uniqueness of Japanese culture itself, the ramifications of which impact upon Japanese communication and futures issues. The organizing principle of Dale's (1986) argument can be summarized by the following outline. Contemporary research on Japan, referred to under the rubric *nihonjinron*--or "discussions of the Japanese"--perpetuate the mythology of Japanese uniqueness, thus preventing new interpretations of Japanese culture to emerge in the form of alternative futures images. *Nihonjinron* are characterised by three major assumptions or motivations.

Firstly, they implicitly assume that the Japanese constitute a culturally and socially homogeneous racial entity, whose essence is virtually unchanged from prehistorical time down to the present day. Secondly, they implicitly assume that the Japanese differ radically from all other known peoples. Thirdly, they are consciously nationalistic, displaying a conceptual and procedural hostility to any mode of analysis which might be seen to derive from external, non-Japanese sources (Dale, 1986, p. 6).

Dale (1986) comments that the "control over interpretation" vis-a-vis the ideology of national homogeneity when "manipulated for specific social ends" becomes a "key element in successful statecraft" which tends to "fear that when in a nation the mass refuses to be a mass--that is, to follow the directive minority, the nation breaks down, the society is dismembered, and social chaos, historical invertebration supervenes" (see Tsurumi, 1970, p. 103).

The interpretation of 'Japaneseness' necessarily implicates the outside world as witnessed in "the nihonjinron's endless discussions of the differences between Japan and the West", which often "exacerbate the finicky sense of difference", essentially depriving the culture any any power to understand its human predicament (Dale, 1986, p. 39). Where the "trigger-happy gunslinger of the familiar West is neurotic ... his slashing samurai colleague in the Orient is mystically sane" (p. 8). In essence, therefore, Japan's uniqueness as conceptualised in the nihonjinron "consists in nothing more than the retention through modernisation of feudal structures ... and aspects of tenacious medievalism operant in the Japanese version of capitalism" (p. 44). A discussion on the alleged Japanese communication strategy of silence for example will suggest that communication is emotive rather than rational-verbal, and may conjure up associative ideas of unitary race (on the same wavelength), rice-cultivation by communal effort--no talk needed to do the same work among people of the same village (p. 46).

Dale (1986, p. 52) argues that the Japanese national polity (*kokutai*) which conceptualizes Japanese identity and uniqueness, risks compromising and entangling itself with what is essentially a totalitarian world view. It is suggested that the nihonjinron itself may be said to operate within a system of totalitarian thought if Conquest's (1978) four criteria for totalitarian thought

are applied. These criteria are said to include: (a) the complete acceptance of a closed system of ideas; (b) the manipulation of this system as the only intellectual exercise; (c) the treatment of the outsider with a special sort of irritated contempt, which conceals, or sometimes betrays, other emotions; and (d) the subordination of all ordinary autonomous spheres of thought and feeling to the a priori: a lack of humility in the presence of the empirical (Conquest, 1978, p. 32-3).

Dale (1986) destabilizes the mythification of the uniqueness of the Japanese language to by arguing that the Japanese negotiation style known as *haragei*--or 'reading the belly of the other'--does not testify to the oneness and uniqueness of the Japanese mind, but rather, is indicative of the existence of an "atmosphere in which sober compromise via open debate is impossible, where bitter fractional intransigence and mutually distrustful rivalries call for inuendo, ambiguity, tactful and tactical expressions of false sympathy for antagonistic views, in order to get basically hostile views on the same side" (1986, p. 102). The harmony that is suposedly achieved by haragei according to the advocate of *nihonjinron*, is a very tenuous and fragile matter. "The espoused trait of silence therefore appears more an idiom of cautious, defensive reticence between mutually antipathetic groups than an instrument of telepathic exchange between harmonious people" (p. 102). Dale (1986) relates the story of a letter written by Marx in reference to a ruler, who having difficulties in controlling his talkative subjects, pined for a return to the former state wherein, "The slave serves in silence and the owner of the land and the people rules as silently as possible, ... Neither can say what he wishes, the one that he wishes to be human, the other that he has no use for human beings in his territory. Silence is therefore the only means of communication" (Marx, 1975, p. 22).

Nakano (1989) confirms the myth of Japanese uniqueness by pointing out that "The Japanese economy and management since the Second World War have been guided by the influence of Japanese cultural uniqueness" (Nakano, 1989, p. 640). In its cruder everyday manifestation, the myth of Japan's uniqueness sustained beliefs in the superiority of Japanese management styles. This may have in part contributed to bubble days laissez-faire attitude towards the future in Japan. Assumed was that the future would take care of itself under the guidance of Japanese uniqueness and cultural superiority. With laissez-faire

came mass denial. For years, the irreparable plight of Japanese banks and unpayable debts was continually denied, apparently guided by the same notion that Japanese uniqueness and superiority would eventually win out. It was only on June 12th, that the government's Economic Planning Agency at last admitted what private economists and foreign observers had been saying for years, that the country was in its worst recession since the second world war (*The Economist*, June 20, 1998, p. 25).

2.5 The research questions

Analysis of issues emerging from a preliminary analysis of the study area and the literature review presented above on futures images and Japanese communication and futures concepts led to the formulation of three research questions. These were:

(1) How do futures images differ between official and the katayaburi subgroup and what are the implications of these findings?

(2) What communication issues impact upon the potentiation of authentic and alternative futures in Ashibetsu and what 'virtual fractures' can be identified in Ashibetsu's futures images problematique?

(3) What communication futures strategies can be deployed to facilitate the opening up of alternative and authentic community futures in the study area?

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the relevant literature on futures images, concepts from communication futures relevant to the objectives of this investigation, and issues pertaining to Japanese communication and futures. The images literature revealed the intimate relationship between the two disciplines of development and futures and the deeply embedded future orientation of much current thinking to be found in development discourse. Brief summaries of the literature concerning myth and metaphor highlighted their little recognized importance in the social constructions of reality and their potential as transformative agents.

The third section on Japanese communication highlighted the culturally specific nature of communication modes in that nation and how they impact

upon futures images. In the final section on Japanese futures, it was shown how most indigenous futures research concentrates on economic, corporate, scientific and technological issues, but that fissures in this dominant paradigm, in the form of alternative and softer issues, is also gaining recognition as a legitamate alternative to Japan's catch up and overtake model. Deconstructionist analyses argued that Japan's notions of identity and cultural uniqueness are obsolete and act as structural impediments to the nations ability to transform itself and image new and revitalized futures. The following chapter describes the poststructuralist theoretical perspective which underlines this investigation, Causal Layered Analysis as the method, and the specific data collection procedures employed in this report.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY
Theoretical Approach, Method and Data Collection

Summary

This chapter outlines the overall methodology used during the project being reported consisting of the poststructural theoretical approach, Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) and the triangulated data collection strategy, and justifies their use. A brief background to poststructural thinking is provided along with a summary of deconstructionist analytical techniques and relevant aspects of Foucault's 'worldly' variety of poststructuralism. It is shown that CLA is not only a new futures method derived from poststructuralist thinking, but is also useful as a conceptual tool for creating alternative scenarios of a futures problematic as a means for initiating action in the attempt to solve real-world problems. A brief history of CLA is given and the main attributes are sketched out. The centrality of integrating four levels of analysis to the CLA process--including litany, social causes, worldview, and myth/metaphor--is then highlighted. The model presented here is intended to provide conceptual guidelines for the would-be communicaton futures researcher. To illustrate how CLA has functioned in previous real-world situations, two case studies are briefly summarized. Specific mention is made of the triangulated data collection methods deployed in this study, involving extensive fieldwork in the form of personal observation, text analyses and questionnaire-interviews. Finally, brief mention is made of the styles of writing and Japanese-to-English translation used in this thesis, and the effects it is hoped these stylistic modes will achieve.

3.1   Section I: Theoretical approach: Poststructuralism

3.1.1   Introduction

Poststructuralism is an intellectual movement which started in the 1960s and continues today and is generally understood as a reaction against the limitations imposed by structuralist theories of language and discourse (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 99). Precursors to the poststructural movement include

Saussure's structural linguistics and Levi-Strauss' structural anthropology, whose main concerns were to 'discover' underlying and permanent structures behind or beneath social phenomena, an approach that tends to be synchronic--or ahistorical rather than diachronic--historical (Palmer, 1997, p. 2). As a body of thought, contemporary poststructuralism and its variants have influenced analytical procedures as applied to most areas of human endeavour including the arts, architecture, literature, political science, development, communication and is currently making an impact on futures thinking.

3.1.2 Definitions

Poststructuralism has been similarly defined as a method, an anti-method and as a movement. Although the problematic nature of poststructural thinking renders any attempt to define it difficult, various interpretations and definitions are worthy of mention. *Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies* (O'Sullivan et al., 1994) defines poststructuralism as being,

> ... hard in practice to separate from structuralism. It is more alert to psychoanalytical theories and the role of pleasure in producing and regulating meanings than was the highly rationalist early structuralism. Post-structuralism is also more concerned with the external structures (social processes, class, gender and ethnic divisions, historical changes) that make meaning possible than was the early version, which was mostly concerned with internal or 'immanent' textual structures. Hence structuralism shifted its focus from the text to the reader, but this shouldn't be taken as a radical break - poststructuralism is implicit in structuralism itself (O'Sullivan et al., 1994, p. 304).

Another defintion offered by Palmer (1997), emphasizes the poststructuralist tendency to destabilize meanings, formerly unproblematized. According to Palmer, poststructuralism constitutes

> The name of a loosely-knit intellectual movement that emerged out of structuralism after some of the practicioners of that theory either became dissatisfied with the strictures and confinements of Saussurean linguistics (upon which structuralism was based) or claimed to discover features of those linguistics which, when carried to their logical extremes, were self-defeating and undermined structuralism itself. In post-structuralism, language, meaning, social institutions and the self are destabilized (Palmer, 1997, p. 144).

Harland (1996) positions poststructuralism in symbiotic co-existence alongside

structuralism and other forms of critical analysts including "Semioticians, Althusserian Marixists and Foucaultians, etc" (Harland, 1996, p. 1) within an over-arching meta-field he calls superstructuralism. The importance of superstructuralism is as one of the "new methods of analysis" responding to a time of "rapid and radical social change" in which "modes and categories inherited from the past no longer seem to fit the reality experienced by a new generation" (Harland, 1996, p. ix).

Callinicos describes two principle strands of poststructuralism: Rorty's 'textualism' and Foucault's master category he calls 'worldly post-structuralism', a term borrowed from Said (1991). Foucault's worldy poststructuralism is said to involve "an articulation of the said and the unsaid" (Hawthorn, p. 180). Callinicos argues that whereas the textualists see us as imprisoned in texts, unable to escape the discursive (or unable to see any reality unmediated by discourses), worldly poststructuralism leaves open the possibility of contact with a reality unmediated by or through discourses" (p. 181).

3.1.3   Deconstruction

Attributed to Derrida, the analytical method known as deconstruction is described by Palmer (1997, p. 76) as an "offshoot of poststructuralism," designed to "take meaning apart and show that texts cannot be understood as expressions of particular meanings or truths" (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 99). The definition in A Concise Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory (Hawthorn, 1998, p. 38) also notes that deconstruction "is generally taken to represent an important--even dominant--element in poststructuralism."

According to Appignanesi and Garratt (1995, p. 77), Derrida's central target for deconstructionist analysis is Western philosophy's central assumption of Reason, or 'logocentrism', in which the philosopher's main concern is "the desire for presence and the consequent constructions of philosophical hierarchies based on transparency, identity, and totality" (Chang, 1996, p. xiv). Also for Appignanesi and Garratt, deconstruction is a "strategy for revealing the underlayers of meanings 'in' a text that were suppressed or assumed in order for it to take its actual form" (p. 80). Texts--understood in the "semiological sense of extended discourses" (p. 79) and not limited to

'language'--are "never simply unitary, but include resources that run counter to their assertions and/or their authors' intentions" (p. 80). Meaning is constituted by identity--what it is--and difference--what it isn't--and is therefore continuously being 'deferred' (p. 80). To show this process Derrida invented the word *differance* by combining the terms difference and deferral (p. 80).

Palmer (1997, p. 140) isolates the functions and effects that the deconstructionist approach achieves by noting that: "Deconstruction locates the fissures, fault lines and stress points in texts where rhetoric and authorial intention conflict. Often these vulnerable spots are found in footnotes, margins, or parenthical asides. In fact, then, deconstruction, is not just a method of analysis or a way of reading texts. It is already at work within texts". In a similar vein, *Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies* (1994, p. 304) adds that deconstructionist analysis is "dedicated to teasing out the repressed, marginalized and absent in the chosen discourse." Inayatullah (1998a, pp. 815-829) posits the aim of the deconstructionist critique in simple terms as its "capacity to break apart its components asking what is visible, what is invisible?".

For the New Critics, deconstructionist analysis of texts "necessarily involves a political attitude, one which examines authority in language" (in Hawthorn, 1998, p. 39). Mentioned also is that "Karl Marx was as close to deconstruction as are a lot of deconstructors--particularly by virtue of his bringing to the surface the hidden inscriptions of the economic system, uncovering hidden presuppositions, and showing contradictions (from Salusinsky, 1987, p. 167).

Despite the Derridean roots of deconstruction, Easthope (1988, p. 187) separates deconstruction as carrying five different meanings. Firstly, "A criticism designed to challenge the realist mode in which a text aims to naturalize itself by demonstrating its actual constructedness" whereby the "object of deconstructing it is to examine the process of its production" (from Belsey, 1980, p. 104). Secondly, Foucauldian deconstruction is a "procedure for revealing the inter-discursive dependencies of a discourse" (p. 187). The third usage is 'left deconstruction'--a project which involves "annihilating the category of 'Literature' by uncovering the discursive and institutional practices

which uphold it" (p. 187). The fourth is the American variety of deconstruction, derived mainly from de Man's reading of Derrida "which aims to discover how a text always differs from itself in a critical reading whose own text, through self-reflexive irony, aims towards a similar undecidability and aporia." The final fifth type of deconstruction is Derridean deconstruction, which involves the "critical analysis of binary oppositions" where the aim of the analysis is not to reverse the values of the binary opposition but to "breach or undo them by relativising their relation" (p. 188).

One of the most "recurrent criticisms of the readings or interpretations generated by deconstruction is that they are not subject to falsification" (Hawthorn, p. 39). How can one interpret a text or communicative event if there is nothing 'fixed' in the text? Foucault (Palmer, p. 100) criticized Derrida's deconstruction for reducing "discursive practices to textual traces", a pedagogy which "teaches the pupil that there is nothing outside the text". But for Derrida, the text is no longer defined as a mere "finished corpus of writing, some context enclosed in a book or its margins, but a differential network, a fabric of traces referring endlessly to something other than itself, to other differential traces" (in Young, 1987, p. 29).

Deconstruction does not reduce all 'texts' or social phenomena to mere relativism by claiming that "any interpretation is as good as any other" (Easthope, 1988, p. 168). Rather, the deconstructionist position is that "some interpretations are more powerful than others." This position leaves open both the possibility of including normative perspectives in deconstructing futures images, and the possibility of reconstruction.

Hobson (1998, p. 41) defends the deconstructionist technique by commenting that "Though Derrida is respecting the coherence of a thinker, he is not treating it as a sealed unit, but urging it towards other historically relevant texts, through the unveiling of patterns, through developments of vocabulary; urging it towards some kind of community for discussion, some exploring of communication between these texts."

In defence of the deconstructionist technique, Chang (1996, p. xiii) claims that "despite checkered and varying interpretations of deconstruction as 'playful',

'open-ended', or 'nihilistic,' deconstruction is "unswervingly text specific; its apparent open-ended, ex-orbitant transgression of established textual borders is always relative to and rigorously structured by an unfree target text whose meaning structure delimits the uneasy horizon of all deconstructive activities."

The main implication of the deconstructive approach for futures images research suggest that critical methods of analysis provide the necessary foundation for transformative change by exposing the natural and by destabilizing the meanings behind surface phenomena in social realities. Derrida (in Chang, 1996, p. 137) dramatically refers to the work of the deconstructionist as a 'secret double-agent', working from the inside to mimetically read his or her deconstructive text, while actively engaged in the deconstructive analysis from the outside, from which transformative change can be achieved. Weber notes that, "The future of the humanities may well depend on the capacity of ... society ... to admit and accept the fictionality of what is assumes to be real, as well as the reality of fictions" (Weber, 1987, p. 152).

3.1.4   Foucault's worldly poststructuralism

This cursory review concentrates on selective aspects of Foucault's works with a focus on the key concepts relevant to this investigation. These key concepts are categorized under thirteen main headings: genealogy; power; resistance; virtual fracture; authenticity; self/subjectivity; governmentality; panopticism; docile bodies; Truth, episteme and discourse; transformation; bio-power; normalization; and effects.

Genealogy: The genealogical investigation pertains to Foucault's method of research and mode of analysis. Genealogy matured from Foucault's earlier archaeological investigations which represented a form of "reconstructive work that uncovers the historical layers of implicit rules and assumptions that have come to sustain today's commonly accepted knowledge" in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 270). Re-metaphorized under the Nietzschean inspired genealogy, Foucault's new research method refers more to a "history of the present, which traces the existence of practices and knowledge from the present to the past". Genealogy gives attention to "local struggles" and "discontinuities" that

effectively function as the "turning points in the emergence of new forms of reasoning" (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 274). Foucault (1980, p. 117) himself described the genealogy as a "form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects, etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history."

What makes the genealogical approach to the study of history and social realities important is that it allows for historical change, because Truth is destabilized and shown to be the products of historical forces in the form of the "will to power". Genealogy does not attempt to reveal the roots of our identities, rather it exposes all identities as contentious, as mutable. Genealogy frees the human and society from the singular model of truth as the product of social memory -- thereby acting as a "counter-memory" to social realities.

Both Foucault's archaeological and genealogical investigations involved specific data collection strategies. Foucault achieved the effects of genealogical defamiliarization through finely detailed documentary work focussing not on the vantage points of everyday vision but to the infinitely small and seemingly unimportant. According to Chambon (1999, p. 59) he

> ... pored over archives and quoted at length from legislation, regulations, articles, and manuals for children. He drew upon architectural sketches and diagrams, artistic lithographs, satirical drawings, coins, and other artifacts ... He reproduced the hourly schedules of a prisoner, factory worker, and child in school. He broke down the gestures that constitute acts of "examination", extending his "microphysic" documentation to minute codes of behaviour, including body posture.

Chambon further claims that Foucault's research integrated several methodologies simultaneously. Dreyfus and Rabinow (in Chambon, 1999, p. 62) point to the interpretive aspect of Foucault's work. Veyne (in Chambon, 1999, p. 63) considered Foucault the quintessential empiricist who stays close to detailed descriptions of actions and suspends interpretation. Deleuze (in Chambon, 1999, p. 64) on the other hand called Foucault a cartographer, who did not hesitate to slice laterally across domains of practice, to draw new maps, delimit new boundaries, and define new objects of study. His work is also structuralist in the way he stressed structures and relations among features;

semiotic in his analysis of signs and the systems of difference and complex relation among signs, and poststructuralist in the sense that he deals with open, and not predetermined structures that are inductively arrived at (p. 65). His work has also been likened to that of the entomologist or ethnographer (Chambon et al., 1999, p. 60).

Concerning the importance of Foucault's genealogical approach to interpretation, Shapiro (1992, p. 10) notes that the genealogical imagination employs the strategy of irony in order to distance the reader from his/her own social reality. The effect of this ironic distancing is based on the recognition that "such spatial imaginings are often well-entrenched historical scripts, not imediate acts of meaning-giving perception". The genealogist therefore seeks to describe the "economies of the said and the unsaid" and provide "insight into the power relations existing in the present." For Foucault, the existing power relations become most visible when the historian employs the strategy of "shortening of vision" thereby bringing into focus the previously undisclosed. The notion of shortening of vision is in part constitutive of Foucault's notion of "effective history" (Rabinow, 1984, p. 87-9). From the general notion that "There is no "history" but a multiple overlapping and interactive series of legitimacy-vs.-excluded histories" (Appignanesi and Garrat, 1995, p. 83), "effective history" as conducted by the geneaologist does "not use history to lament the wandering away from a past ideal or the failure to move toward an ideal future, but to point to current dangers" (Shapiro, p. 11).

Power: In Foucauldian terms, power is not only coercive, but must be productive and enabling (Appignanesi and Garrat, 1995, p. 87). Power is not "what some possess and others don't, but a tactical and resourceful narrative. Power is in the texture of our lives -- we live it rather than have" (p. 87). Foucault summarizes the importance of his understanding of the term power as it operates in constructing social realities by commenting that

If power were never anything but repressive, if it never dd anything but say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse (Rabinow, 1984, p. 61).

One of the most useful and appropriate definitions of Foucauldian power is suggested by Allen (in Moss, 1998, p. 177) in which Foucault suggests that

> what really defines a relationship of power is that it is a mode of action not directly immediately upon the body of others, but upon their actions or, more precisely, upon their options for action, governing conduct by modifying people's understanding of the alternatives from which they must choose. An exercise of power is an action designed to govern someone's conduct by modifying their subjective representation of the practically possible future.

According to Wang (in Chambon, 1999, p. 191), this new form of power which Foucault calls disciplinary power, reaches its effect because it produces "truths" for people--not because it hides "the Truth" from people".

Resistance: Resistance is one aspect of power relations, and like power, it takes on local forms. In Foucault's later work on the formation of personhood through "technologies of the self", he started to explore how people develop everyday strategies of resistance to oppressive power relations (Chambon, 1999, p. 278). Foote and Frank (in Chambon, 1999, p. 177) consider the roles of resistance within the context of family therapy. Here, the task is to unmask the various forms of power, thus giving voice to marginalized experienced, whereby the client can go beyond resistance to transformation. As the authors note, "People enter therapy when the gap becomes intolerable between the story they sense they are living and the story that the dominant discourse offers for giving meaning to their lives" (p. 178).

Chambon (1999, p. 77) also notes the use or the refusal to use certain forms of language as a strategy of resistance. Students, when confronted with the language of command found in documents used by social workers, actively resist using this kind of language that distances the social worker from the client through "diagnostic language or the recurrent economic language of restructuring, delocalization, or flexibility" (p. 77).

For Wang (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 213), genealogy itself is framed as a strategy of resistance, whose use is discussed in the context of negative discourses toward old age. Wang systematically destabilize terms such as old age, often used as an instrument of oppressive power relations. Genealogy, in

this case, is not a history for all, but rather, a history from the perspective of a person or group of people. Through genealogical critique,

> we are able to distance ourselves from the discourses in which we participate every day. Through that self-distancing we are able to see more clearly the local practices of power and thus pave the way for a vision of old age as a space of fluid boundaries that provides room for diverse and even conflicting understandings of old age and ageing (p. 213).

Wang's understanding and usage of genealogy enables us to "identify points and patterns of resistance in constructing alternative discourses in our strategies for struggles" (p. 214).

Virtual fracture: From the analysis of social phenomena as constituted in terms of power and resistance, emerges another pivotal concept for this thesis, the virtual fracture. Virtual fractures in a given problematic are the sites of potential transformation (in Chambon et al, 1999, p. 70). Foucault refers to the virtual fracture in the context of discussing what he perceived to be the transformative potential of his work.

> … since these things [forms of rationality] have been made, they can be unmade, as long as we know how it was that they were made … Any description must always be made in accordance with these kinds of virtual fracture which open up the space of freedom understood as a space of concrete freedom, i.e., of possible transformation (Foucault, 1983, p. 206).

Authenticity: Although Foucault generally found the ideal of ever arriving at some final 'authentic' story as suspect (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 179), the mere equation played out by the power/resistance dynamic necessarily implies the desire of the resisting agent to achieve greater degrees of authenticity. In attending to this problem, Patton (in Moss, 1998, p. 70) addresses Macpherson's notion of developmental power which refers to an individual's ability to use and develop his or her 'essentially human capacities'. The notion of developmental power has a normative content. In Macpherson's conception of human capacities, there is no inherent limit to the extent to which these 'capacities' can be extended. He notes that Foucault's conception in terms of bodies "endowed with capacities for action is similarly open-ended" (p. 71). Macpherson suggests that the exercise of one's essential human capacities "must be under one's own conscious control rather than the dictate of another". According to Patton's reading, Foucault's account of the self also implies that

subjects are also free in the sense that their possibilities for action include the capacity to undertake this self-critical activity Foucault refers to as "work carried out by ourselves upon ourselves as free beings" (in Moss, 1998, p. 73).

Self/subjectivity: The constitution of self is an outcome of historical processes rather than an 'essence' (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 278-9). Part of Foucault's project involved exploring the strategies the individual employs to direct the self through 'technologies of the self'.

> Technologies of the self ... permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality (1988a: p. 18).

Patton (1998) describes Foucault's thinking on the self and an individual's power to be or do certain things along an axis consisting of three dimensions which "serve to remind us that a minimal concept of persons should refer to a body that is trained or cultivated in certain ways (subject to 'power'), a set of relations to oneself and one's capacities (an 'ethics'), and a set of relations to modes of interpretation of one's relations to self and others ('truth'). Different powers may result from change along any of these axes, or from changes in the larger networks of social relations within which these personal capacities are exercised" (in Moss, 1998, p. 69).

Governmentality: Governmentality is a Foucauldian neologism combining the notion of government, or the power to direct conduct, with the idea of a peculiar mentality (Moss, 1998, p. 179). For Moss (1998), governmentality refers to the "presumption that everything can, should, must be managed, administered, regulated by authority" (p. 179). For Patton (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 104), governmentality refers to the "ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics, that allow the exercise of this specific albeit complex form of power" (Foucault, 1979, p. 20). One example of governmentality has been the unending concern for the regulation and organization to enhance and maximize the capacities of populations (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 275).

Shapiro (1992) explains Foucault's use of the verbalized term

"governmentalizing of the state", as a textual move which emphasizes the temporal historical processes suggesting that the institutionalized mentality is a reigning discursive practice that has "won out in the process of struggles" (1992, p. 14). The effect of recognizing conditions of govermentality, as Foucault puts it, is to "seek to awaken beneath the form of institutions and legislations the forgotten pasts of real struggles, of masked victories or defeats, the blood that has dried on the codes of the law" (Foucault, 1979, p. 79).

Panopticism: To describe one of the ways in which power is exercised in human societies, Foucault drew on the architectural design of Jeremy Bentham's panopticon. The metaphor of the panopticon, originally the design for a prison in which a centrally positioned guard can see all other prisoners, is applied by Foucault to any type of institution including contemporary schools, banks, government buildings, company offices, and public spaces. The panopticon is a mechanism that ensures the efficient expression of power relations (in Chambon et al, 1999, p. 224) under which the ultimate aim of this form of social control is the internalization of control--"self-discipline can then replace coercion as the method of social control, when, having internalized the gaze, individuals come to monitor themselves" (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 276). The panoptic schema substitutes force or other violent systems of constraint for the "gentle efficiency of total surveilance" (Foucault, 1984, p. 217). The final product of a social system in which panopticism is internalized is known in Foucauldian terms as the "carceral society"--where the prison guard is no longer necessary as the people become the agents of their own subjection (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 181).

Devine (1999) however criticizes the alleged panoptic nature of contemporary Western society in an ethnographic documentation on discipline in American high schools, where Devine in fact shows that the opposite of Foucault's claim is the reality: schools have not too much structure and discipline but too little. For Devine, Foucauldian claims are the products of theory severed from day to day realities (in Chambon, 1999, p. xxiv).

Docile bodies: The notion of the docile body refers to the effects of discipline exercised over human bodies, as opposed to geographical territories, by forms of constant surveillance that involve gentle but tight grids of control including

the time clock and the factory whistle, rather than the violence of the whip (Allen, 1998). The point of producing docile bodies is not

> to force people to do what you want, but to make them into the kind of people you want; not to make people do what you want them to do, but to make them want to do it, and to do it as you want them to, with the desired tools, efficiency and order (Allen, 1998, in Moss, p. 174).

In effect, the docile body is "more powerful yet easier to direct and subjugate, and also more calculable and easier to know, a predictable object for the quasi-scientific knowledge of the social or human sciences, which grow up in the same historical moment as the great growth period in the disciplining of European populations" (Allen, 1998, p. 175).

Truth, episteme and discourse: Foucault claimed that every human individual is captive to what he calls 'regimes of truth'--the prevailing norms of a particular society at a particular historical time (Chambon, 1998, p. 36). In other words:

> Each society has its regime of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and make function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (Palmer, 1997, p. 92).

Truth, then, is relativized and exposed as a product of the episteme in which it occurs. By the episteme of an age Foucault means "not a worldview or ideology but instead a potential system of discourse that underlies bodies of knowledge and allows some statements to be seen as true and others false. This discourse is what Foucault designates as the historical a priori: This a priori is what, in a given period, delimits in the totality of experience a field of knowledge, defines the mode of being of the objects that appear in that field, provides man's everyday perception with theoretical powers and defines the conditions in which he can sustain a discourse about things that is recognized to be true." (in Chambon et al., 1999) ... "In any given culture and at any given moment, there is always only one episteme that defines the conditions of possibility of all knowledge, whether expressed in a theory or silently invested in practice" (p. 36).

Foucault dropped episteme as the dominant principle in history and replaced iit

with the notion of discourse (Horrocks and Jevtic, 1997, p. 87). "To understand how power operates, it is necessary to understand Foucault's conceptions of discourse and discursive formation" (Chambon, 1999, p. 193). "In every society, the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers" (Horrocks and Jevtic, 1997, p. 96). "Foucault conceptualizes discourse as meaning 'the relations between statements' ... A particular discourse not only reflects and sets limits on what can be known and said, it also constitutes knowledge, communication, and practices" (Chambon et al., 1999, p. 133).

Foucault isolates three rules for the formation of discourse in which discourse requires:

(1) *Surfaces of emergence*--the social and cultural areas through which discourse emerges, such as the family, work group, community;
(2) *Authorities of delimitation*--institutions with knowledge and authority. For example, the law, local government, or professions of qualified experts; and
(3) *Grids of specification*--the system by which, say, different kinds of futures images can be related to eachother in futures discourse (Horrocks and Jevtic, 1997, p. 87).

Foucault "sees discourse as embedded in social relations rather than as groups of statements circulating in our daily language. Power is everywhere -- dispersed and tolerable because it is hidden -- and operates through our daily use of language in our every social encounter" (Chambon, 1999, p. 193). In discussing discourse, Foucault brings up the idea of the 'statement' which closely corresponds to Althusser's usage of the term ideology (Horrocks and Jevtic, 1997).

A statement does not consist in analyzing relations between the author and what he says ... but in determining the position any individual can and must occupy in order to be the subject of that statement. I am inserted into a discursive formation out of obligation - as a patient in medical discourse ... in the same way that someone becomes stuck in an imaginary relation to the

material conditions of capitalist society (Horrocks and Jevtic, 1997, p. 89).

Transformation: Despite criticisms that Foucault leaves no room for agency (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 79) -- What potential is there for initiating personal and social change if practices and knowledge constitute the self? -- Foucault's work in general, on the contrary, renders possible transformation in human affairs. Although Foucault stopped short of or declined to offer normative prescriptive programs of action for change, Foucault did offer a host of clues on to how to develop these alternative strategies (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 70). He clearly explains that:

> Among the cultural inventions of mankind there is a treasury of devices, techniques, ideas, procedures, and so on, that cannot exactly be reactivated, but at least constitute, or help to constitute, a certain point of view which can be very useful as a tool for analyzing what's going on now -- and to change it (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 350-1).

Furthermore, he acknowledges that "change is to be found in counterforms or alternative forms of knowledge and of practices" (Chambon, 1999, p. 70). Transformative change is also tied to the notion of an 'event', as the agent of 'discontinuity' in historical processes, for in relation to the occurrence of an event, "a whole generation was long trapped in an impasse ... a dichotomy was established between structures (the thinkable) and the event considered as the site of the irrational, the unthinkable, that which doesn't and cannot enter into the mechanism and play of analysis ..." (Rabinow, 1984, p. 55).

According to Foote and Frank's (1999) reading of Foucauldian transformation, "transformation can come only from those who have come into collision with eachother and with themselves, run into dead-ends, problems and impossibilities, been through conflicts and confrontations" (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 181).

Chambon (1999) furthermore highlights the importance of language in change processes. Foucault makes us aware that "language shapes the reality that we see" and by implication, language necessarily delimits and sets boundaries to the creation of change-generating conditions. From the experience of the social worker in dealing with linguistic issues, Chambon (1999) advances the idea of developing new "hybrid languages of experience" and "inventing a new

accessible language for dealing with change" (p. 77).

Bio-power: Bio-power is a conceptual tool that makes it possible to analyze historically the ways in which power has come to work in relation to the human body. At the macroscale, bio-power manages the biological processes of populations from birth, mortality, life expectancies, physical and mental well-being, and by extrapolation, the economic capacity of individuals and collectivities. Bio-pwer relies on associated forms of knowledge such as surveys, demographic studies, and public health campaigns. Bio-power can also give rise to "infinitesimal surveillances, permanent controls, extremely meticulous orderings of space, indeterminate medical or psychological examinations, to an entire micropower concerned with the body" (Foucault, 1984, p. 267). Furthermore, bio-power is seen as "indispensable to the development of capitalism which compels the state to manage its population without coercive action". A typical political response to this new form of power "is the right to life and one's body, and the right to discover what one is and all that one can be" (Foucault, 1990, p. 145).

Normalization: Normalization refers to "establishing the normal as a standard of judgement and against which to distinguish the pathological or the other. It also implies the existence of linear forms of development of knowledge that sets standards and ideals for human thought and human conduct" against which individuals are "assessed, measured and judged" (Chambon, 1999, p. 276). Foucault notes that

> Normalization becomes one of the great instruments of power at the end of the classical age. For the marks that once indicated status, privilege, and affiliation were increasingly replaced -- or at least supplemented -- by a whole range of degrees of normality indicating membership of a homogeneous social body, but also playing a part in classification, hierarchization, and the distribution of rank (1984, p. 196).

Normalization necessarily leads to an effect Foucault calls "dividing practices"--the technique of establishing categories and partitions that differentiate between the normal and abnormal, the pathological, or the deviant and subversive.

Effects: Foucault's studies do more than delimit patterns of actions. His

approach is process oriented. He did not conduct causal analyses and he did not engage in predictive statements. He believed in multicausality and chance in human affairs and the possibility of interpreting complex circumstances. Trends cannot be predicted but they can be mapped out after the fact (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 65). What characterizes Foucault's type of analyses is his investigation into the 'effects' of certain social phenomena, be it a particular type of rationality, or a system of belief. In a discussion of a community's futures images within a program of revitalization, this means asking the question: What official descriptions of the problematic, social causes, worldviews, social mythologies and metaphors contribute to the formulation of futures images and ways of coping with transformative change?

3.1.5   The importance of Foucault's poststructuralism

How did Foucault regard the importance of his own work? Whereas the organizing principle for many poststructural theorists highlighted the importance of language and linguistic systems, Foucault seeks to go beyond the preeminence of language in preference for meaning as constituted through relations of power. Foucault once summarized what he thought to be the most important aspect of his with the following statement with the metaphor of battle over language systems.

> I believe one's point of reference should not be the great model of language and signs, but that of war and battle. The history which bears and determines us has the form of a war rather than a language: relations of power, not relations of meaning (Callinicos, 1996, p. 81).

Furthermore, Foucault imagined for himself and his work a role he expressed in the following terms:

> For a rather long period, people have asked me to tell them what will happen and to give them a program for the future. We know very well that, even with the best of intentions, those programs become a tool, an instrument of oppression … My role … is to show people that they are much freer than they feel, that people accept as truth, as evidence, some themes which have been built up at a certain moment during history, and that this so-called evidence can be criticized and destroyed. To change something in the minds of the people -- that's the role of the intellectual (Foucault, 1988d: p. 10, in Chambon et al., 1998, p. 184).

For proponents of Foucault, his thinking is considered important for a number

of general reasons. Of these, Chambon (1999, p. 78) distills from the body of Foucault's thinking, five key contributions:

(1) A moving away from pre-established models of scientific enquiry and theory in order to open up new avenues of questioning;
(2) An historicizing of our understanding of reality by retracing how particular practices and forms of knowledge have been created and adopted over time and treating these as results and not truths;
(3) The examining of practices and texts in a detailed manner to reveal hidden patterns;
(4) The linking of subjectivity to actions and knowledge which allows us to perceive forms of knowledge and practice as permissable options with their systems of rules -- and conceiving that those can be modified and transgressed; and
(5) The exploring of new possibilities in the naming of things and complex descriptions and in the effects of our writing and the relation of the author to his or her audience (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 78).

3.2   Section II: Method of Analysis: Causal Layered Analysis

3.2.1   Introduction

The methodology used in this project, Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) constitutes simultaneously the theory and method for the critique of a futures problematic. It is described only briefly in this chapter in view of the fact that detailed summaries of the methodology are outlined elsewhere (see Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 815-829). It has already been pointed out that CLA is a new futures methodology developed from poststructuralist thinking in general and from the work of Foucault in particular. Briefly stated, what distinguishes the poststructural approach to research from other critical theoretical approaches is that

> whereas the general tendency of critical theory is toward a critique of ideology, based on the presumption of an authentic model of intelligibility, the genealogical imagination construes all systems of intelligibility as false arrests, as the arbitrary fixings of the momentary results of struggles among contending forces, struggles that could have produced other possible systems of intelligibility and the orders they support ... Rather than presuming an underlying system of order ... (genealogy and other post-structural modes of enquiry) assume(s) ... that every interpretation of the order is an arbitrary imposition. ... There is no limit surmounting the process of inquiry (Shapiro, in Inayatullah, 1998a).

As the poststructural theoretical perspective which underpins CLA were

discussed in the previous section, this chapter will deal more specifically with CLA as a specific methodological tool, and how and why it was applied to the current project concerning futures images in the Japanese community of Ashibetsu.

3.2.2   Justification of method of analysis

Causal Layered Analysis, developed by Inayatullah (1998a) was identified during initial discussions to identify an appropriate methodology for this project, CLA emerged as the most effective and appropriate candidate in light of the fact that the problematique experienced by the study area was complex, multi-layered and dynamic rendering a singular analytical tool ineffective. It was apparent from the outset that a critical and multi-layered approach would be the most assisitive in identifying 'virtual fractures' or 'fissures' existing in the present, in order to create alternative and authentic transformations for the future. The adoption of a multi-layered framework is echoed in Baert (1998) who notes that the "neo-functionalists are particularly sensitive to the potential conflicts between the different sub-systems ... neo-functionalism explicitly rejects any reductionist or mono-causal argument"   (Baert, 1998, p. 60-61).

As well as constituting a methodological window through which a problematique might be explored, CLA adopts a distinct philosophical and theoretical position to which the investigator should subscribe in order that the methodology can make sense. Broadly, CLA is based on the assumption that the way in which one frames a problem changes the policy solution and the actors responsible for creating transformation (Inayatullah, 1998a).

The process employed in the thesis was intentionally exploratory. From the outset, there was no clear teleological goal towards the investigation naturally projected. The process oriented nature of this investigation was accordingly inherently chaotic which sought to exploit chance events, significant moments during data collection phases, and through the very process of writing. The ultimate aims of this thesis were to produce a number of 'effects' that would function as the sites of potential transformation. This indicated the need for an integrative and multi-layered mode of analysis that transcended conventional

empirical and interpretive methods. CLA's deep-structured framework provided the attributes necessary to fulfill these objectives.

3.2.3   Inayatullah's prototype Causal Layered Analysis model

Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) is a new futures method which deconstructs problematic situations (Ihsan, Inayatullah and Obijiofor, 1995, p. 898) by integrating multiple analytical techniques along four layers or dimensions that collectively constitute the futures problematic. CLA can be seen as "an effort to use poststructuralism, not just as an epistemological framework--as developed by thinkers such as Foucault--but as a research method, as a way to conduct inquiry into the nature of past, present and future" (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 816). CLA was developed in response to perceived weaknesses in singular analytical approaces of inherently complex and chaotic social phenomena.

CLA does not attempt or claim to predict the future. Conversely, the aim is to 'undo' futures already undergoing the processes of colonization by the proponents of the dominant discourse official realities, and to 'unmask' the legitimacy of taken-for-granted futures in order to create transformative spaces for the articulation and realization of alternative and preferable futures (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 817). CLA transcends mere theoretical approaches by opening up "spaces for the articulation of constitutive discourses, which can then be shaped as scenarios" (p. 817) and applied to real-world problematic situations.

The goal of this type of "critical research is thus to disturb present power relations through making problematic our categories and evoking other places or scenarios of the future" (Inayatulah, 1998a, p. 817). Slaughter (In Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 815), for example, understands the CLA approach as "a paradigmatic method that reveals deep worldview commitments behind surface phenomena". Furthermore, communication is intrinsic to the poststructural CLA approach where language is hypothesized not as merely symbolic but constitutive of reality (p. 817).

CLA may be better understood by purposively juxtaposing the method with a metaphor of the Cartesian system which "describes philosophy as being like a

tree: the roots are metaphysics, the trunk physics, and the branches the different sciences. The famous similie illuminates three central characteristics of the Cartesian system." Sticking with his figurative tree, he suggests that its fruits can be gathered "not from the roots or the trunk but from the ends of the branches representing the practical sciences" (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 31). By way of this analogy, it is brought into relief how the CLA as a method of understanding complex systems, privileges no single component of the overall system, as does Descartes' model, but conversely assigns equal status and importance to all subcomponents of the metasystem.

According to Irving (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 32) "Nietzsche, Beckett, and Foucault all depart from these Cartesian principles on which modernity has been constructed, seeing reality instead as contingent and historical, constructed out of language and cultural codes ... Empirical reality does not exist as a universal truth but as an unending collection of 'stories' that we tell. The truth is made, not found. Meaning is acquired through culturally conditioned paradigms" (p. 32) ... In the preface to The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences (1970), Foucault draws this picture: "The fundamental codes of a culture--those governing its language, its schemas of perception, its exchanges, its techniques, its values, the hierarchy of its practices--establish for every man, from the very first, the empirical orders with which he will be dealing and within which he will be at home" (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 32).

3.2.4   Characteristics of Causal Layered Analysis

The prototype CLA is a meta-structure consisting of four layers of analysis: the litany; the social causes; worldview/discourse; and, myth and metaphor layers. The rationale for the multiple-layered approach in the CLA is supported by the argument that futures studies should be layered and deep, not superficial. According to Inayatullah (1998a, p. 820), recursors to this deep approach can be seen in the works of Slaughter, Sarkar and Spengler.

These four layers of analysis are in turn subjected to any number of specific analytical techniques from a poststructural 'tool-box'. The tool-box incorporates a range of techniques and concepts resonant of Levi-Strauss's

"bricolage thinking", in which the tools to be applied to a certain problematic situation are not predetermined and fixed, and are selected in accord with the attributes of the object of analysis.

3.2.5 Multiple layers of analysis

Level 1: The first level is the litany--the quantitaive and empirical analyses; trends; symptomatic of superficial problems; often exaggerated and used for political purposes, usually found in mass communication sources such as the popular press and find expression in daily political discourse. It is at this level that the official description and dominant perspectives of perceived social problems find expression. Also, these expressions of social problems are often the current manifestations of archetypal myths--transferred through deep histories and whose origins remain largely inaccessible to those who promote them--are articulated, repeated, and employed to justify contemporay social 'facts'. As Campbell (1988, p. 45) eloquently puts it: "It's as though the same play were taken from one place to another, and at each place the local players put on local costumes and enact the same old play." Markley and Harman (1982) remind us of the importance of studying the dominant images in a culture because they "underlie the ways in which the society shapes its institutions, educates its young, and goes about whatever it perceives its business to be" (p. 201).

The resulting impact of the events, trends and issues on individuals and societies at the litany level bring about feelings of helplessness--in the face of apparently insurmountable, chronic, and complex problems beyond the influence of any individual; apathy--as the agent/individual feels him or herself disempowered to be able to influence the perceived problematic situation; or projected action--why don't they, usually the State or other powerful individuals and organizations in society, do anything about it? (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 820).

Level 2: The second level is concerned with the analysis of social causes--including economic, cultural, political, historical, and environmental factors. Quantitative data are interpreted and imbued with meaning. This type of analysis is usually employed by policy institutes, think tanks and research

organizations, and found in newspaper editorials, magazines, 'serious' television documentaries, news specials, and quasi-academic journals. Under ideal circumstances, actions precipitating from this level undergo deeper analysis. But often, discussion and debate of the problematic situation stop at this level. The role of the state, stakeholders and other actors are often explored (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 820).

Level 3: The third level delves deeper into worldview / discourse analysis. This is the level that supports and legitimizes the social causes and litany levels. This level remains largely the source of research for marginal and radical academics, thinkers, political activists and grass-roots activists. Discussions of worldview and discourse are usually found in fringe journals, new social movements, and some academic journals--mainly from the humanities. The task at this level is to locate deeper social, linguistic, cultural structures which are actor-invariant. Unmasking deep-rooted assumptions that influence the problematic under investigation is crucial at this stage if the problem is to be revised in a transformative manner. At this stage, one can explore how different discourses (the economic, religious, civilizational) do more than cause or mediate the issue but constitute it and reinforce it (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 820).

To illustrate using a medical metaphor, a critique of smoking would look at the problems of deeply ingrained stereotypes about what it means to smoke cigarettes, despite substantial medical evidence to suggest that smoking carries serious health risks. In a post-bubble Japanese context, marginal thinkers may contest the legitimacy of Japan's post-war 'catch-up and overtake the USA' model on the grounds that such an image of the future has become obselete in light of new global realities and that new models need to be explored, articulated and generated in accord with these new realities. From the discourses unmasked at this level, one can derive alternative scenarios, thereby adding a horizontal dimension to the vertically layered analyses (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 820).

Level 4: The fourth and deepest level of analysis--myth and metaphor--explores the non-rational, the levels of collective unconscious that shape civilizations without our immediate awareness. Inayatullah (1998a, p. 820) describes this level of analysis as consisting of "the deep stories, the

collective archetypes, the unconscious dimensions of the problem or paradox". Previous chapters have pointed out the increasing awareness and importance assigned to myth and metaphor analysis in contemporary qualitative communication futures research. Campbell (1988, p. 244) for example, emotively notes the potential dynamic link between understanding social myths and authenticity of lived social realities: "In a wasteland the surface does not represent the actuality of what it is supposed to be representing, and people are living inauthentic lives". Obselete social myths feed the continuance of uncontested ways of living and doing and block the possibility of actively engaging in other futures, ultimately leading to what Baert (1998, p. 205) refers to as a "symbolic reconstruction of the past". Accordingly, myths and metaphors, as devices for the transference of social realities and as frameworks that function to justify dominant over competing alternative futures, are sustained by the apparent "common-sense rationality" resting "mainly upon the epoch* of the natural attitude, which implies that the social world should be taken for granted unless disruptions or new events occur" (Baert, 1998, p. 84).

Furthermore, the unmasking of social myths and metaphors can also activate renewal of interest and awareness of how myths are subverted and opportunistically reinvented, repurposed and deployed by elites and stakeholders in the message of the myth. One is reminded of the ubiquitous presence of myth in contemporary Japan as demonstrated by the current debate on to two of Japan's major symbols of national identity--the national anthem and flag. On a popular television news program (July 4, 1999, "Sunday Morning", Channel 1) it was noted during a debate about the official instigation of these two symbols that the roots of the Japanese flag the hi no maru were largley unknown, and that at least two versions of the National Anthem kimi ga yo existed, one of which was written by the Englishman Fenton in 1870. Furthermore, colours, dimensions of the flag exist in various intepretations, and, the 'kimi' in *kimi ga yo* is variously interpreted as referring to Japan's Emporer or to the Japanese people themselves.

In concluding, Causal Layered Analysis operates by asking that we bring to the fore and articulate the relationships between underlying social myth and their effects upon the official, social causes and worldview descriptions of social realities that would otherwise remain hidden.

3.2.6   Poststructural "tool-box"

In the analysis of a given problematic situation, the CLA prototype suggests the application of five analytical techniques--collectively referred to as a poststructural tool-box (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 818). Suggested tools include (1) deconstruction; (2) genealogy; (3) distancing; (4) alternative pasts and present; and (5) reordering knowledge.   As detailed descriptions of the literature have been presented in previous sections for both deconstruction and genealogy (see subsections 3.1.3 and 3.1.4 respectively), a summary of the latter three techniques only are included here.

Distancing: The third term in the CLA tool-box--distancing--is conceptualizable in both temporal or spatial terms. Through distancing, claims Inayatullah (1998a, p. 818), the spaces of reality are loosened allowing new possibilities, ideas and structures, to emerge. Distancing is also used to defamiliarize our notions of meaning in Foucauldian analysis in genealogy. By using a geneaological critique, we are able to distance ourselves from the discourses in which we participate every day. Through that self-distancing we are able to see more clearly the local practices of power and thus pave the way for a vision of old age as a space of fluid boundaries that provides room for diverse and even conflicting understandings of old age and ageing (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 213).

Alternative pasts and presents: The fourth term--alternative pasts and futures--seeks to problematize not only the future but also the past. The past is reconceptualized as one particular writing, as one interpretation of history, often by the victors of that history.   Foucauldian genealogies for example, aimed to peculiarize historical processes such as the notion of sexuality in ancient Greece, in order to defamiliarize the present and prepare us for the possibility for imagining futures other than crude extrapolations of the present social realities. A number of questions may be formulated from this perspective: Which interpretation of the past is valorized?; What histories make the present problematic?; Which vision of the future is used to maintain the present, that is, the status quo?; and Which explodes the unity of the present? (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 818).

Reordering knowledge: The final conceptual tool involves reordering knowledge. Similar to deconstruction and genealogy, in that it undoes particular categories, the notion of reordering knowledge also introduces an additional civilizational dimension to the analysis (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 819). Adding to the prototype description of this tool, the word 'reordering' itself suggests alternative interpretations as to how this technique might be applied. Knowledge structures, paradigms, become prioritised through historical forces. Purposive reordering of knowledge can lead to surprising and creative discoveries disturbing the very foundations of knowledge often taken for granted.

A civilizational perspective to futures problematics recognizes that different cultures, subcultures and historical periods, employ different guiding myths and metaphors in order to envision the future (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 819). Believing that futures can be created through the expression of one's true feelings (honne) in conversation, debate, discussion, dispute, conflict and the dialectics of communication--as in the West--produces different concepts of future possibilities than does the mythical Japanese communication mode of maintaining social harmony through submission of ones' true feelings (tatemae). As Inayatullah (1998a) notes:

> Deconstructing conventional metaphors and then articulating alternative metaphors becomes a powerful way to critique the present and create the possibility of alternative futures. Metaphors and myths not only reveal the deeper civilizational bases for particular futures but they remove the creation/understanding of the future beyond rational/design efforts (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 819).

Questions that arise from reordering knowledge include: How does the ordering of knowledge differ across civilization, gender and episteme? What or Who is othered? How does it denaturalize current orderings, making them peculiar or universal? (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 819). Taken further, one can also ask: Who orders knowledge in the first place and how is this legitimized? Is it possible for non-dominant futures-making elites to re/prioritize knowledge paradigms and how can this be achieved? How can non-performing, obselete or negative cultural myths and metaphors be de-valorized to make way for the new and futures-enhancing myth and metaphor?

3.2.7   Benefits of Causal Layered Analysis

How does a CLA strategy achieves its ultimate goals of providing futures scenarios as potential solutions to real-world problematic situations? Inayatullah (1998a) suggests eight benefits, in which the CLA

1. Expands the range and richness of scenarios;
2. When used in a workshop setting, it leads to the inclusion of different ways of knowing among participants;
3. Appeals to and can be used by a wider range of individuals as it incorporates non-textual and poetic/artistic expression in the futures process;
4. Layers participant's positions (conflicting and harmonious ones);
5. Moves the debate/discussion beyond the superficial and obvious to the deeper and marginal;
6. Allows for a range of transformative actions;
7. Leads to policy actions that can be informed by alternative layers of analysis: policy formation becomes more integrative that merely crude expressions of statistical data and apparent "facts" beyond dispute and contention;
8. Reinstates the vertical in social analysis, ie, from postmodern relativism to global ethics (p. 816).

As an extension of these reported benefits derived from CLA, it was also hypothesized that in the specific case of Ashibetsu's futures images, that the CLA approach offered potential benefits by: (1) breaking the "spiral of silence" phenomenon often reported in social problems; (2) promoting the articulation and communication of new paradigms to break "paradigm-lock"; (3) producing not immediate benefits and superficial solutions to deep-structured problematic situations, but for what Foucault would call its "effects", or byproducts; (4) raising awareness of the fact that "radical questioning and fearless thinking at the extremities can lead to an understanding of the world at a deeper level" (in Chambon et al, 1999, p. 29) and therefore be catalytic in identifying transformative spaces; and (5) promoting awareness of the possibility of integrating conflict as a device for new knowledge creation.

3.2.8   CLA case studies

The relative newness of CLA precludes the possibility of a vast literature dedicated to the methodology. In a brief history, CLA is reported to have been successfully used in a variety of workshops and futures courses between 1992

and 1998 (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 821). Of the several CLA projects already undertaken two examples are paraphrased below.

3.2.8.1 The Futures of the United Nations

The futures of the United Nations is a theoretical case study which--at the litany level--concerns news of the failure of the United Nations in Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda (and by extension the more current problem of the former Yugoslavia) and the UN's financial problems. At the second level--social causes--it was revealed that the UN lacked supranational authority; had no united military and was perceived as being only as good as its member nations. Solutions that arose from this level indicated that the UN was in need of greater funding and more centralised power. Inayatullah (1998a, p. 821) also cites the deeper historical reasons impeding structural change due to the fact that the organization was created by the victors of World War II.

At the worldview layer, "the analysis of current UN problems then shifts from the unequal structure of power between UN member states to the fact that eligibility for membership in the UN is based on acquiring national status. An NGO, an individual, a culture cannot join the National Assembly or the Security Council" (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 821). Extended further, memberships exlude subcultures, specific minority groups and all other non-nation based affiliations. Solutions emerging at this level involve reconceptualizing the values and structures that support the existence of the United Nations. Is there a need for a superordinate authority or are worldwide market mechanisms enough to manage our global commons? Theoretically, one could develop at this level horizontal discursive dimensions investigating how different paradigms or worldviews frame the problem or issue. How, for example, would a pre-modern, a feminist, a postmodern, a cyberpunk, or a stateless political refugee, approach the issue of global governance? (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 822).

At the fourth layer of myth and metaphor, various factors can be isolated as leading to an exploration of alternative metaphors and myths. Inayatullah (1998a, p. 822) cites the issues of "control versus freedom" (or extrapolated to anarchy), "the role of individual and the collective", "family and self", of "overall governance of evolution, of humanity's place on the Earth". Are we

meant to exist as separate races, nations or can a united humanity be envisaged and attained? Finally, Inayatullah (1998a, p. 822) suggests the possibility of reconceptualizing the United Nations logo and the line of flags presently outside UN Headquarters.

3.2.8.2   Bangkok's traffic problem

This study concerns the findings from an actual futures-visioning workshop conducted in 1993 at a UNESCO/World Futures Studies Federation workshop in Thailand, on the futures of ecology, specifically Bangkok's chronic traffic problem. At the litany level, the problematic was perceived simply as a traffic problem and the pollution it caused. The solution at this level was "to hire consultants, particularly transportation planners, at local and international levels" (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 822).

At level 2, analysis revealed that Bangkok's traffic problem was perceived as caused by a lack of roads, or too few lanes on existing roading, which produced the conventional solution of building more roads or expanding the numbers of lanes. As an interim solution, more mobile communications devices could temporarily compensate. Formulating scenarios at this stage might involve planning to construct more roads, where to build in order to maximize traffic flow, how to minimize pollution outputs, how to finance their construction, and how to optimize construction processes by deploying economically viable 3D modelling software and traffic flow simulations (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 822).

Worldview analysis unmasked that the problem could be perceived as being more complex than just insufficient roading. Rather, the model upon which Thailand's industrial growth policy had been founded, was problematized. It was argued that a history of colonial domination had transferred through the generations, a legacy that valorized the urban over the rural. This reframing of the problem produces the possibility of alternative solutions. Instead of a systematic construction of more roads, solution to the traffic problem could be found by a committment to decentralize the economy, thereby creating a new localism, in which rural people and communities can retain and revitalize the rural lifestyle without being forced to move to urban locations in search of superior opportunity (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 822).

As Inayatullah (1998a) points out, such a reconceptualization of the original problematic involves a concomitant psychological shift. Local traditions can be reassessed, redeployed if perceived as beneficial, and a blind following of the industrialization ideology can be subverted and bypassed. Other solutions at this level could call for the promotion and active diffusion of new communications technologies in which telecommuting is preferred to physical commuting by road, and virtual telecottage communities could flourish in rural locations.

Myth and metaphor analysis opened up new questions on what it means to be Thai. Potential solutions at this level included valuing local self-reliance, Thailand's traditional agriculture-based economy and lifestyle, and that nations pluralistic cultural traditions (Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 822). A revival of interest in indigenous thinking and a heightened awareness of the need to be more critical of indiscriminately implanted industrial paradigms could potentiate innovative hybrid solutions to apparently chronic problems.

3.2.9   Application of CLA in this project

As the above case studies show, CLA can be applied in a variety of contexts and ways, from the 'logically derived' to actual face-to-face workshops involving large numbers of participants, in which a facilitator coordinates and directs the flow of events and discussions. Ideally, the nature of the problematic situation reported in this thesis called for a futures-visioning workshop approach, but due to logistic constraints a more modest approach was adopted.

CLA is applied in this investigation as a layered framework to make sense of and structure data and is deployed in a flexible style without over-emphasizing the four layeredness. Empirical, interpretive, critical and the post-rational mythic dimesnions are used when when considered appropriate to the aims of the investigation. CLA is used in conjunction with Foucauldian poststructural concepts.

3.3   Section III: Data collection specifics

3.3.1   Introduction

Section III presents descriptions of the triangulated data collection techniques employed for this study characterised by extensive fieldwork. The boundaries and practices for data collecting strategies with CLA are undelineated. For this investigation, a triangulated data collection strategy was adopted in order to maximize data reliability and richness. Data was collected from three principle sources including personal observations, texts and questionnaire-interviews.

Previous CLA studies have adopted a variety of data collection strategies. As mentioned in the section on case studies, some were based on theoretically-derived data; others based on actual futures visioning workshops with participants involved in the object of investigation. This study commenced with the intention of conducting a futures-visioning workshops strategy, but as the result of practical operational and logistic constraints, the original strategy had to be abandoned in favour of more viable strategies. As a radical form of critical analysis, poststructural and CLA adopt non-conventional strategies for the data they seek to critique. Therefore, an approach was adopted which involved the integration of techniques borrowing from the data collection procedures and detailed documentation employed by Foucault (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 59), from Levi-Strauss's, "bricolage" (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. xx1) strategies and also from Riner's (1991) ethnographic futures research (EFR) methodology. Such a 'bricolage' strategy to data collection values a "more 'anarchic' approach in which anecdotal, literary, survey and other forms of evidence culled from whatever sources are mobilised, not so much to build a 'big picture' full of order and causation, as to describe and evoke the situations of particular peoples in particular places" (Philo, 1992, p. 204).

3.3.2   Research setting

Data sets were collected through extensive fieldwork from the study area known as Ashibetsu City. The reseacher lived for the 12 month duration of the investigation period in Sapporo, Hokkaido's most populous city, during which periodic visits--more than twenty in total--were paid to the study area for the

purpose of making personal observations, identifying and collecting local texts and distributing questionnaires and conducting interviews with local citizens. Questionnaire and interview participants were selected from the *katayaburi* subgroups. *Katayaburi* participants were identified and contacted through local interpersonal networks using the social science technique known as 'snowballing' (Kenny, 1994, p. 163) in which a previously identified *katayaburi* participant was asked to introduce other potential *katayaburi*.

The notion of the katayaburi as a sub-group is relatively new and therefore undocumented in Japan. Approximations in English may be found from related terms such as the idiosyncratic voice, the creative minority (Change Agents) & so-called SP(I)N (segmented polycephalous networks). The latter group has historically emerged not as a result of rational planning but like "any other evolutionary novelty, they emerge out of functional necessity." (Hine, quoted in Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 247). Parallels to the katayaburi may also be recognized in Yasutomi's (in Inayatullah, 1990, p. 119) research in scientific anomaly analysis which investigates the "the visions of shamans, street people and other outside institutional vortices" because of their value "for they speak not from conformity but from dissent" (p. 119).

The katayaburi were selected because it is hypothesized in the futures literature that one of the best methods for studying change is, according to Burrows (1997) quoting from futurist Graham May, to study "weak signals" which will "either dissappear, remain constant for a period or become stronger. When the latter happens it could have a major influence on the future" (Burrows, 1997, p. 192).

Furthermore, it was previously noted that the katayaburi in Ashibetsu hold an apparently antagonistic and alternative set of attitudes towards present/futures issues held by the local government. Although it may be intuitively consistent to assume that controversy--in the form of 'image-difference' or more radically 'images-dissonance', other futurists such as Todt (1997) highlight the productive potential of controversy and opposing points of views, as valuable mechanisms in generating alternatives, clarifying defintions or pointing out problems. The task of the futurist researcher consequently becomes to organize the existing controversy in order to capture

its potential (p. 182).

3.3.3   Researcher positioning

The researcher has lived in Japan for thirteen years since 1983, is fluent in Japanese speech and has advanced Japanese reading and writing skills. All translations from Japanese to English were conducted by the author, at times under the guidance of a native Japanese speaker assistant where Japanese texts were ambiguous or difficult to interpret. During the course of this investigation, a glossary of communication and futures technical terms was compiled to facilitate data collection procedures and explaining of technical terms to Japanese unfamiliar with the nature of the project. The author also has an undergraduate degree in Japanese studies, has taught Japanese at universities in New Zealand and Australia, and has worked as a technical translator from Japanese to English and English to Japanese for fifteen years. The author has also been in the employ of several major Japanese organizations, primarily in the communications and media industry.

3.3.4   Data Collection Phases

Phase 1: Pre-Japan Field Analysis: This preliminary phase was conducted prior to entering the study from Brisbane through information provided from a number of informants living in Ashibetsu. The nature of information received included a brief compilation of Ashibetsu citizens comments about the community's revitalization strategy; sample documents related to Ashibetsu's revitalization strategy--especially concerning the plight of failed theme park Canadian World. This phase led to a tentative set of emerging issues. From these were derived an initial schema of emerging issues (see subsection 4.1) and preliminary research questions.

Phase 2: In the Field: Before futures interviews could be conducted in Ashibetsu it was necessary to formulate a workable composite image of the present of the community. This was achieved by two principle methods. Firstly, informants resident in the community provided the researcher with information pertaining to Ashibetsu's problematique. Secondly, once entering the study area, the investigator was able to make a preliminary assessment of

the 'mood' of the community that would give a sense of direction as to the most appropriate method(s) for obtaining the desired information about the town, namely, the best approach to formulating images of the future as held by local *katayaburi*. Resulting from these two phases, a triangulated data collection strategy was finally adopted.

3.3.5   Triangulated data collection strategy

Triangulation, as an analytic tool, involves the combination of different methods for purposes of verification, or, as Fetterman (1989) describes it, "testing one source of information against another to strip away alternative explanantions" (p. 92) and enhance the quality and accuracy of the findings. Burns (1994, p. 309) defines triangulation as "the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour" and explains the usefulness of the triangulation technique in the following terms: "If, for example, the outcomes of a questionnaire survey correspond to those of an observational study of the same phenomena, the more the researcher will be confident about the findings … In its original and literal sense, triangulation is a technique of physical measurement: Maritime navigators, military strategists and surveyors, for example, use (or used to use) several location markers in their endeavours to pinpoint a single spot" (p. 272). Furthermore, notes Burns, "triangulation prevents the investigator from accepting too readily the validity of intial impressions" (p. 273). "Exclusive reliance on one method may bias or distort the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality he is investigating" (p. 272). According to Burns's model, triangulated data contributes to verification and validation of qualitative analysis by:

(a)   Checking out the consistency of findings generated by different data-collection methods; and

(b)   Checking out the consistency of different data sources within the same method.

In this study, there is a justification for the use of at least three different viewpoints of analysis. Each point of the triangle stands in a unique position with respect to access to relevant data about a futures images situation. With field observation, the researcher is able to witness and partially particpate in authentic real-life experiences in everyday situations. By contrast, the analysis

of texts and documents facilitates access to social realities committed to paper and the public gaze; and questionnaires and interviews allow the researcher to enter the psychological and private spaces of the participant through his or her own words. According to Lincoln and Guba (in Lindlof, 1995, p. 239), "a committment to multiple modes of data generation leads to thickly described cases, which allows users to compare them to the known attributes of other sites of social life--the qualitative analogue of generalizing findings to other populations".

3.3.5.1   Personal observations

The first data collection strategy involved personal observations. Personal observations are a frequently used source of data in ethnographic type studies. Personal observations in this project were carried out the researcher throughout the duration of the 12 months taken for the completion of the project. It was the ethical standpoint of the researcher to openly inform those with whom he came in contact as to the nature of the research being undertaken about Ashibetsu.

In observing aspects of life in Ashibetsu, the strategy of 'focussed observation' was adopted. This entailed conscious attention towards certain aspects of community activity and phenomena while editing out others subjectively perceived by the author as of low relevance to the communication futures issues under investigation in this critique. In order to keep track of relevant events, a computerized diary was kept recording focussed details.

3.3.5.2   Text analyses

The second data collection strategy involved reliance on texts concerning Ashibetsu's futures. A number of futures images informative texts were collected from local sources during the period from July 1998 to July 1999. Texts were obtained directly from stakeholders in the Ashibetsu community such as the encumbent Mayor, informants involved in the project from the outset, and from questionnaire/interview participants who willingly offered texts to the researcher they felt would be useful to the goals of the project. The primary informative texts included in this analysis were:

Text 1:   Ashibetsu Citizens Charter - 芦別市民憲章

Text 2:   City Emblem - 芦別市章

Text 3:   "Future Ashibetsu: Images from Local Youth" - 「未来の芦別」

Text 4:   Selected articles from Kouhou Ashibetsu Council Monthly - 広報芦別

Text 5:   Citizens Town-Making Survey - 芦別市町作り市民アンケート

Text 6:   The 4th Ashibetsu Comprehensive Plan - 第４次芦別市総合計画

Supplementary, supporting and background information was also collected from other sources including the Sorachi Times newspaper; publications on Ashibetsu from the Ashibetsu Public library; and local pamphlets.

3.3.5.3   Questionnaires and interviews

The third and final data collection strategy involved conducting questionnaires and interviews with local *katayaburi* thinkers. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were conducted over a six-month period (January 1999 - June 1999) amongst *katayaburi* thinkers from Ashibetsu.

In the interests of methodological clarity, it must be noted that it was initially the intention of the researcher to collect data of futures images by conducting futures workshops. However, a preliminary scan of the study area suggested this participatory approach--especially as a non-Japanese researcher--as highly problematic. Accordingly, it was decided to conduct interviews on a person-to-person basis that would ask the same problems as the workshop approach. However, discussions with local informants further revealed that interviews involving the types of questioning and opinion forming on images of the future--being unfamiliar in a Japanese context--would be more effective after an initial pre-interview questionnaire.

Under this informant advice, it was decided to first send out pre-interview questionnaires to candidate *katayaburi* citizens with a view to conducting follow-up interviews as an extension of the paper surveys. The formulation of

questions to be included in the initial send-out questionnaire borrowed heavily from the kinds of questions and exercises employed in futures workshops. All questionnaires and interviews were prepared and conducted entirely in Japanese. Questions were initially sketched in English and subsequently translated to the Japanese. To assist with unfamiliar communication and futures derived concepts, a glossary of technical terms was prepared and compiled by the author over the duration of the thesis.

A phenomenological approach was adopted to the task of interviewing local katayaburi citizens in which they were asked to 'tell their stories'. These stories were subsequently formulated into Foucauldian 'narratives' and analysed in the next chapter. It was the initial intention to follow-up each questionnaire received with an interview in order to take the futures imaging process to deeper and more creative levels. However, it was decided to terminate the continuation of questionnaire follow-up interviews due to the already unmanageable amount of information.

As pointed out in the literature review, there are numerous variations of futures images generation techniques. The technique that seemed to most fulfill the needs of this report were eventually found borrowing from Textor's (1995, pp. 461-471) ethnographic futures research (EFR) technique. Textor sums up the rationale underlying the strategy of stretching used in the EFR:

> To summarize in simplest terms: the overall strategy of the EFR interview is to 'stretch' the interviewee first in an optimistic direction, and then in a pessimistic direction -- where 'optimistic' and 'pessimistic' are defined strictly and solely in terms of the interviewee's personal value standards. This stretching however, should not exceed the realm of the possible. Only after this does the interviewee build his/her most probable scenario. Much of the educational value for the interviewee is realized at this point, as the individual is stimulated to confront the gap between what he/she wants for his/her people, and what is most likely to be realized. This in turn causes the interviewee to think creatively about short-run policies and practices that could help reduce this gap (Textor, 1995, pp. 461-471).

3.3.6   The questionnaire-interview questions

Questions were formulated after initial fieldwork consisting of observations; scanning of the overall environment; analysis of emerging issues; and consultations with local Ashibetsu informants. The feedback from local

informants was crucial in formulating questions that were relatively un-complex, to-the-point, and linguistically feasible. The three-part paper-based questionnaire, written in Japanese, was introduced to the candidate respondent with a one-page preface explaining the background and nature of the project and the researcher's objectives and affiliations. The three parts that comprised the questionnaire included: Part I: Preparatory questions; Part II: CLA-structured questions; and Part III: Images of the future-informative questions.

Part I: Preparatory questions: Preparatory questions were general but considered essential to the researcher grasping basic components that reflected the background of the problematique of Ashibetsu's futures images while simultaneously situating the participant's relationship within the problematic.

Part II: CLA-structured questions: CLA informative questions were incorporated in order ascertain guidance as to how local katayaburi individuals perceived Ashibetsu's futures problematic along the four layered Causal Layered Analysis. As an integral component of the CLA protocol it was vital to have some idea of how katayaburi perceived the official description of Ashibetsu's futures images; to see how the katayaburi perceived the social causes of the problematic situation; to understand if and how katayaburi and official worldviews corresponded or differed; and to extract clues as to how myth and metaphors could be used to understand the assumptions underlying the futures problematic.

Part III: Images of the future-informative questions: Futures images questions asked participants to respond to three types of scenario: (1) ideal but realistic futures images, given initial conditions and real-world constraints; (2) realistic and plausible worst-case futures images; and (3) most-likely futures images. Images were to be stretched approximately 20 years into the future. It was hypothesized that a stretching of 20 years into the future would be near enough to imaginable and yet distant enough to imagine the not-yet. A complete table of the questions employed in the questionnaire and interviews are presented in Appendix II for Japanese and Appendix III for English translations.

3.3.7 Writing and translation style as strategy

Narrative writing style: Writing is often perceived as a neutral act. In a Foucauldian analysis however, writing style itself constitutes "a discursive practice" (in Chambon et al., 1998, p. 71). In accord with this perspective, this thesis strategically adopts a style based partly on Foucault's conception of "mixed genres" (p. 72), the inevitable by-product of analysing different types of data, which necessitate a reconciliation of empirical, interpretive, critical and the "other-than-rational language" of myth and metaphor. In his analyses, Foucault "alternates between detailed descriptions and reasoning, images and ideas" (in Chambon et al., p. 74). Where social work often uses the strategy of the vignette to illustrate the dynamics of a case, Foucault uses the vignette more as an interpretive tool (p. 75). This thesis employs a Foucauldian derived narrative approach (p. 74) when recounting and interpreting data collected from either observations, texts or questionnaire-interviews. As Chambon (1999, p. 74) notes: "Students who become socialized to professional and academic writing styles often lose the stronger challenging voice they expressed when they entered the field". On the other hand, Foucault uses a descriptive style -- similar to the way the vignette is used in much sociological work -- but more than being a mere illustrative tool, the Foucauldian vignette becomes an interpretive tool which unlike much rational language, mobilizes the reader for change as the the accumulation of details builds a compelling picture (p. 75).

Translation style: The translation of Japanese texts to English is a major feature of this investigation. From a poststructural perspective, Benjamin (in Diprose and Ferrell, 1991, p. 30) argues that translation is a 'mode', a term he invokes to "remind us that translation is no passive act; to warn us against assuming its secondary status as a translucent screen over what remains the primary, original" (p. 30). It is the task of the translator to "give life to the original", for which Benjamin employs a "striking image to illustrate this task of translation to language" (p. 31). He speaks of a "shattered vessel", the fragments of which need to 'match' each other in order to be reglued together (p. 31). He concludes:

> So instead of making itself similar to the meaning, to the Sinn of the original, the translation must, rather, lovingly and in detail, in its own

language, form itself according to the manner of the meaning of the original, to make both recognisable as the broken parts of a greater language, just as fragments are the broken part of a vessel." (Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 1969, p. 78)

3.4   Limitations of study

According to the protoptype CLA model, the process is most effective when used in futuring workshop contexts. For reasons already explained above, logistic restraints precluded the feasibility of staging workshop formats.

One limitation encountered in the data collection procedure concerns the verifiability of the *katayaburi* sub-group. As pointed out earlier, the *katayaburi* do not comprise a recognised study group in Japan, and guidelines for determining the degree of radicalness of the katayaburi individual is unclear. Another limitation was that potentially important data sources such as the Ashibetsu Mayor's monthly--the 'Welcome to the Mayor's Office' open forum could not be attended by the investigator due to logistic constraints. Also experienced was the problem presented by the difficulty of disentangling the Japanese communication modes of tatemae from *honne*--expression of a publicly acceptable point of view as opposed to one's true feelings. This situation potentially subverts the verifiability of findings garnered from this social sub-group as the researcher can never be certain if a participant's response is an honest or a guarded point of view.

The limited response from administration officials vis-a-vis their images of the future for Ashibetsu may influence the balance between official and katayaburi. Informants explained to the researcher that government officials would be guarded in their willingness to provide frank opinions (honne) as these might be leaked to the public and compromise their professional positions. Consequently, futures images derived from local government sources -- other than an interview with the Mayor of Ashibetsu -- relied upon available and accessible written publications which may or may not not reflect the opinions of individuals under the employ of the local government. Lastly, many futures images that did not come under either the official or *katayaburi* categories were excluded from this discussion. In reality, futures-building is considerably richer and more complex than the simplified duality of the official-unofficial dialectic presented here.

3.5   Conclusion

This chapter outlined the poststructural theoretical approach from which Causal Layered Analysis is derived as both a method and theory for futures issues, and the data collection processes employed in this report. It was explained that CLA is more than a mere epistemological position derived from critical poststructural thinking, but also a vehicle for formulating alternative futures scenarios from which problem solving strategies can be identified and applied to real-world problematic situations. Mention was made of the style of writing employed especially in the final chapter of this study--which borrows from Foucault's strategic 'narrative' technique. Finally, a brief description of the mode of translation from Benjamin's metaphor of the 'shattered vessel' was presented. A schematic diagram depicting the CLA process is presented in Appendix I. Chapter 4 proceeds to present and analyse the 'narratives' and katayaburi futures images that give meaningful contours to the project, and which precipitate findings and critical observations which are further critiqued in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS AND ANALYSES

Summary

This chapter summarizes findings derived from data collected from the study area during the project being reported. Ideographic findings emerge from a more or less chronological account of the project as it evolved, and included summaries pertaining to futures images in the study area of Ashibetsu collected from a triangulated strategy involving observations, locally produced texts, and questionnaire-interviews completed by local katayaburi.

This chapter is organized in three sections. The first section presents descriptive, qualitative interpretations of real-world events and situations observed by the author in the form of Foucauldian "narratives". Observational data analyzed in this chapter refer to micro-events found in vicarious conversations and chance happenings and reflect social realities that constitute communication and futures issues found in the study area. The second section presents rich findings collected from text-based artifacts collected from a variety of sources from the Ashibetsu community. As mentioned in the previous chapter, analysis of documents involves a mix of description and interpretation of contents presented in the text artifacts. Section III covers responses to questionnaire and interview data administered to local *katayaburi* citizens. The focus of this analysis is on the social world as perceived and experienced by local citizens and how this world is reflected in notions pertaining to the ways in which thoughts about futures are socially constructed, articulated, communicated and concretized in real-world situations. It is important to point out that the analysis in this section is qualitative and no attempt was made from the outcome to provide quantitative accounts or follow statistical formats. Cumulatively, data presented and interpreted in this chapter constitute a platform for a more critically-oriented analysis that integrates all four layers of the Causal Layered Analysis to be pursued deploying a deconstructionist strategy in Chapter 5.

4.1   Introduction

To re-emphasize the process-oriented nature of this study, it is recalled that prior to entering the study area, the parameters of a communication futures problematique had, under the guidance of information received from on-site informants, already started to take shape. This led to the identification of three issues which it was hoped would provide a platform with which to distill increasingly focussed issues for this study. The three issues initially identified included:

(a)   A chronic rift between official and unofficial images for Ashibetsu's future, resulting in a stalemate conflict which in turn led to a state of imaging paralysis and an escalating tension at the boundaries of dominant versus alternative community subgroups;

(b)   A diminished sense of control over personal/local futures leading to chronic fatalism and fear of the future as the only guiding principles to cope with the tasks of articulating, communicating and creating alternative futures; and

(c)   The emergence of a broad consensus throughout the community that only external intervention (ie: the government, experts, consultants, etc), can effectively 'solve' the present crisis.

In a reiterative process, it was observed once having entered the study area, that the situation was even more complex than the above emergent issues initially suggested. Accordingly, a triangulated data collection strategy was posited as being the most appropriate to ground the Causal Layered Analysis critique. Below, are recorded and presented a number of narratives that illustrate and interpret where appropriate observed events; six futures informative texts from Ashibetsu; and 26 questionnaire and interviews administered to Ashibetsu katayaburi citizens on futures images. The data collected for this study was based in part on strategies used in previous Causal Layered Analyses and in part on Foucauldian-derived data collection strategies (see Chapter 3 for details) such as micro-practices and micro-interactions, whose cumulative significance is realized once taken together.

4.2   Section I: Personal observations

Genres of observations recorded from the Ashibetsu community are categorised under three sub-headings: (1) vicarious/significant moments; (2)

organized events; and (3) miscellaneous. Where possible, observations are reported in chronological order in the form of an unfolding narrative. The narratives presented in this chapter are abbreviated versions adapted from field notes recorded by the author between July 1998 and July 1999.

4.2.1 Vicarious/significant moments

Meeting the Mayor of Ashibetsu: (August 7, 1998) An interview/discussion was held with the mayor of Ashibetsu at city office in order to introduce myself--in accordance with Japanese custom; to collect initial insights into the 'mood' of Ashibetsu; and to ascertain the position of the local government vis-a-vis Ashibetsu's futures 'problem'. The Mayor perceived Ashibetsu's problematic situation as a stalemate confrontation between the local government--*gyousei* (行政) and 'ordinary' people--*minkan* (民間). Local government had tried to 'persuade' and encourage the people to change, but the people had failed to mobilize effectively against the national and local recession. Ultimately, according to the Mayor, it is up to the 'will of the people' to bring about change.

One specific facet of Ashibetsu's problematic was the outmigration of the young and skilled to urban localities, firstly to Sapporo, and the more skilled and ambitious to Tokyo. The Mayor imagined that a continuation of this outmigration trend and concentration of the nation's skilled in Tokyo would in the long term, contribute to Japan's 'downfall'. Periphery communities such as Ashibetsu, are caught in the battle between population outflow to major centres and the need for greater transferance of power to local governments -- chihou-bunken (地方分権), in which it was hypothesized that increased local government power would improve indigenous conditions and partly prevent continued outmigration.

The Mayor gave the example of one micro-phenomenon experienced in Ashibetsu concerning medical staff. Doctors working in Ashibetsu generally commuted from Sapporo during the week while leaving their families 'back home' in the city where education standards were superior. Although Ashibetsu was perceived as 'comfortable' by outside experts, education levels were too low to justify moving entire families to the community. Poor education results

would mean poor opportunity in life.

On the topic of Ashibetsu's strategies for 'revitalization', the Mayor claimed that every conceivable strategy had already been attempted and met with failure. The Mayor had resigned Ashibetsu to the 'too-hard-basket'. Nothing it seemed could be done to stimulate and revitalize the local economy. Abandoning the industrial-push approach to community revitalization, the preferred future was to see Ashibetsu redesigned in the image of the furusato (故郷)--the 'hometown'--the nostalgic place where outmigrants return on symbolic and festive occasions.

Observing Ashibetsu's industrial landscape: The surface of Ashibetsu's industrial and commercial landscape is characterised by a largeness of scale incommensurate with a population of 22,000 residents. Discourse on economic revitalization centres on the 'attraction of large industries' to replace the former coalmines. An observer is reminded of the excess of Japan's booming bubble-days by the 88 metre Buddhist statue--Daikanon (大観音) towering above the cityscape decorated lavishly at every floor with Buddhist figurines, gold ornamenation and red carpets, candles, trinkets, effigies, shops stocked with European antiques, and cafés. Canadian World is a sprawling outdoor theme park that seems out of place in rural Ashibetsu. The hot spring facilities are extensive and under-used. Planners imagined that post-coal Ashibetsu would swiftly adopt tourism as the new pillar industry to guide the community's futures and ensure economic stability. But tourism itself has transformed into an increasingly niche-oriented industry--with eco-tourism as one example. Few are the signs of Trainer's (1993) appropriate development in Ashibetsu, the new telecottage industries, Schumacher's 'Buddhist economics' or a 'smaller is better' development philosophy in Ashibetsu.

Discussion with local researcher: (January 3, 1999) Through an informant, a meeting was arranged to meet with a former elementary school principle, who had reputedly attended every session of 'Hello Mayor', and was known as an outspoken critic of local government policy making. Over several years, the informant had compiled massive documentation on local government and Ashibetsu's revitalization and futures. It was originally intended to administer the futures images questionnaire and interview, but the

informant preferred to proceed with a general discussion in an unstructured style. In so doing, the informant expressed his concern for the confrontation between local government and the people. His comments included:

Local officials are useless--there's no point talking to any of them. They cannot be trusted. They all have low levels of education. They don't do their homework. The local government keeps itself alive by giving jobs to the 'boys' [that is, 'introductions' from go-betweens with contacts in local government] despite newly drafted laws to prevent this negative and obselete custom.

In effect, the local government was duping the people they claimed to want to work with in creating Ashibetsu's futures. The investigator was advised as a futures researcher to have 'little to do with Ashibetsu officials'.

Interpersonal communication stress: (April 10, 1999) In a chance encounter, a middle-aged hospital worker complained of the stress she felt from not being able to express her true feelings at her workplace (言いたいけど言えないのストレス). She noted that this was a commonplace phenomenon in Ashibetsu and Japan, and impacted strongly on human interactions in local working environments. On a separate occasion, another conversation with local residents involved a discussion of a recently seen television news item regarding Japan's recession. Reported was a new social phenomenon linked directly with the recession referred to as 'human relationships fatigue syndrome' – *ningen-kankei-tsukare* (人間関係疲れ). Everybody present at this setting signalled having experienced this phenomenon. At the same setting, another young woman local--speaking about a new job that had been especially difficult to come by--commented on work interpersonal relations at their workplace: "Relations at work are so *yayakoshii* (complicated). It's not so bad right now because everyone is new, but after a while, once everybody knows your age and your personal circumstances, everything will get complicated."

Ageism in employment seeking contexts: A young mother of two, former bridge designer, and present part-time worker at Ashibetsu library reported to the investigator of the community's obsession with people's ages, manifested in the inforcement of arbitrary age restrictions in employment

situations. The example she referred to was a 25 year old age limit on so-called 'desk work'. "After you're twenty five, it's all over for getting meaningful employment" she lamented. She perceived this as an ironic gesture in a community that sees itself as a leader of Japan's 'greying population'. She also reported the necessity of contacts and introductions when seeking employment. "If you have *kone*--(contacts) then it doesn't matter how old you are."   Noted at this dinner time discussion was the elaborate interpersonal system known of contacts needed in order to gain access to work, especially local government related work.

Ashibetsu's midday siren: Every day at twelve midday, as a legacy of Ashibetsu's coal mining days, a siren rings throughout the town functioning like a panoptic remnant of bygone days. Gently, the citizen is subject to the ubiquitous reminder of the former industrialist, inflexible schedule of the factory time-card. No one thinks to complain and it is surprising to the Ashibetsu citizen that an observer should even notice the midday siren.

A loans story: This is the story of a 31 year old male bus driver, and former employee of a men's clothing store in Ashibetsu during the peak of the bubble economy. It was reported how the informant was required to meet a monthly sales quota. As the recession worsened, the quota was made even tighter by the store's manager. The quota, impossible to achieve by actual sales, forced the informant into the position of having to buy clothes he did not want or need from the store himself. Forced into unreasonable debt by the middle-aged male manager, eventually he resigned and took a new job as a bus driver to pay back the debt. After leaving the menswear retailer, he promised himself to take a job where he did could 'go into his own world', not having to worry about 'complicated human relations'.

Rumours of political corruption: At an informal gathering, the matter of alleged vote-rigging in local government elections in Ashibetsu was raised. It was claimed by an informant that local institutions and organizations, hospitals and schools included, feared falling out of favour with local government officials and being deprived of access to continued financial support by local government, if it is found that members of these organizations did not vote for them. Therefore, it was customary, according to rumours, that

votes would be equally divided prior to election between all candidates. This allowed the voting organization to maintain favour with the local government officials regardless of the eventual election winner. In such a political climate, the individual's capacity to exercise the democratic right to vote for the candidate of his or her choice is undermined by this social custom. It should be kept in mind that verification of this report is beyond the scope of this study. Regardless of verifiability, comments from a number of citizens suggest the very possibility of this vote-rigging custom influences peoples' perception of politicians and political processes, and the degree of control individual agents have over democratic processes.

4.2.2 Organized events

Ashibetsu "furusato" Film Festival: (November 21-22, 1998) The Ashibetsu 'furusato' Film Festival is an annual event organized by the Ashibetsu Film School in conjunction with local government and private industry. The theme is furusato (see Chapter 2, subsection 2.4.2, "Japanese futures texts") or 'hometown', which as mentioned above, has become, for the Mayor of Ashibetsu at least, an organizing image for the community. Centred on the theme of furusato; the festival's MC--one of Japan's most renowned film directors Katsuhiko Kobayashi--delivered a speech on the future of education, children and Japanese mythology. Kobayashi addressed the largely local audience about the importance of furusato, and educating for the future--especially children. He related a parable about a Holy Man (聖者と子供) who asks four young boys what they desire most from life. The first boy asks for candy (お菓子), the second boy money (金), with which to buy candy. The third boy wants the power (力) with which the candy can be bought. Finally, the fourth and youngest boy declares his desire to have the 'dream' (夢). During difficult times the people of Japan and Ashibetsu should not forget their dreams, for that is where the future is able to happen.

Continuing the address, in direct reference to Japan and Ashibetsu's recession, Kobayashi emphasizes the significance of a return to one's 'origins' (原点) during difficult times to find solutions. He relates the etymology of the term '*itadakimasu*', an expression uttered before the taking of food. The term literally means 'I receive'. He reminds the audience what is omitted from the

contemporay usage of *itadakimasu*. It is, he claims, an abbreviated form for the phrase '*inochi o itadakimasu*'--'I receive a life', from which 'inochi' is dropped. Symbolically, the taking of food involves the inevitable taking of a life. It is a daily linguistic custom whose original meaning and importance has been lost over history.

Mention is made of the significance of the concept *furusato*--the festival's theme and a key term in Ashibetsu's self-image. The audience is reminded that the word can be read to carry a different meaning. In place of reading the whole word as one, read as '*furusa-to*', the first three syllables--'*furusa*' mean 'oldness', the 'to' means 'and'. The linguistic pun produces the meaning 'oldness and ...'. This reminds us that the *furusato*--the home-town--symbolically invokes the notions of 'oldness' along with something else. The 'something else' remains fundamentally open-ended, it is a matter for the future, for the individual to create him of herself.

Town Meeting to express opinions on future of Canadian World: Informants recounted a town meeting held in July 1998, prior to this investigator entering the study area. Organised by the local government as a public forum, the town meeting was designed to invite ordinary citizens to voice their opinions and ideas on the futures of Ashibetsu, and in particular, what to do about the Canadian World 'problem'. According to attendees of the 'public forum', the flow of events was controlled by organizing officials. Effectively no-one was able to discuss their opinions openly or honestly. Speaking time and speakers were carefully allotted. The hoped-for communicative event was organized into a controlled non-communicative event, in which informants claim nothing was learnt and community frustration became even more intense than prior to the meeting. It was implied that similar event organized outside of officialdom, by and for the people, may have produced significantly different outcomes. In reality, no alternative town meetings were arranged or held.

The Town Song Contest (のど自慢の集い):   On December 13, 1998, The 19th Town Song Contest -- subtitledsaimatsu-tasekeai (歳末たすけあい) -- the 'end of year helping eachother out' -- was held. Three main communicative functions could be extracted from this event. First, to *genki-zukeru*--'reinvigorate' or 'revitalize' the local audience population in

order to stimulate Ashibetsu's economy. A second function was the promotion of local businesses and organisations. Thirdly, the event functioned to reconfirm the paternalistic and benevolent role of local government officials in the day to day administering of community affairs. The event also had the infantilizing effect of reminding this predominantly adult audience to 'behave' themselves during the holidays and while driving because 'people [the police] were watching' and 'the roads are dangerous'. Although promoted outwardly as an entertainment event, the entertainment content functioned secondarily to the above communicative functions.

One president of a prominent department store sang the obligatory karaoke song, and subsequently took the stage for several minutes to promote forthcoming Christmas specials. Chairman of Ashibetsu Aruku Ski--a local ski organization--sported full ski regalia and carried skis on stage to sing 'yama' (山)--'the mountain', all the while backdropped by an entourage of banner carriers embossed with road safety messages--'don't hurry', 'don't get anxious', 'don't speed' (急ぐな！あわてるな！飛びだすな！), warnings grammatically articulated in the imperative from local road safety authorities. The Chief of Ashibetsu Post Office, dressed in kimono-drag, sang '*yume-shibai*' (夢芝居)--'the dream stage'. In self-reference to his drag costume he humoured the event with the comment: "Times are changing, even at the Post Office".

Prior to the Mayor's final speech, in a surreal gesture, the 34 all-male members of Ashibetsu Council (市議会議員会) came on stage dressed in school boy costumes while pulling boyish pranks on stage as they stood one by one to announce their names, weight, and other amusing impromptu comments. This was the friendly face of Ashibetsu's new style of local government. In local government elections held in June 1999, the demographic composition of the council's members was significantly altered with the successful election of two women and one apparent *katayaburi*--a former professional wrestler and recognized face throughout Japan.

The finale by Mayor Hayashi called for the usual reinvigoration of the economy and pulling together of all human resources to combat the recession.

The 28th Ashibetsu Snow Festival: (February 20-21) The 28th Snow

Festival was launched officially with Mayor Hayashi's speech delivered in the customary booming voice calling for 'genki-zuke' (元気付け)--energy and vitality--from the people of Ashibetsu and especially the young in attendance, to revitalise the town. The style of the speech functioned to reinforce the male, economic-oriented paradigm of pre-bubble days through the deployment of individual genki (vitality). With more genki, all, that is the economy and inflated confidence, will revert to the way things used to be. His speech repeated former pledges to revitalise the town through the strategy of festivals, the employing historical signs and rituals in order to create the future as the past relived.

Following the Mayor's speech was the Ultraman Performance for children--the battle of the all-powerful super-human characters subduing the evil dragon with martial arts. The performance for pre-schoolers climaxes with a call for 'more effort' to revitalise the town. The Ashibetsu young are thus socialized into the discourse of economic vitality, male power, life as battle, economy as modern combat.

One attendee of the festival expressed surprise at the strict control and officiousness of the festival officials and carparking attendants overzealous to control chance and chaotic events. These observations point to the socially controlling, panoptic nature of even organized events in Ashibetsu.

Mayoral Election: The Ashibetsu mayoral election was held on April 25, 1999 featuring three candidates including encumbent Mayor Hayashi, newcomers Takasago, a company director, and Watanabe, an unemployed male in his early forties. Election strategies were played out around the single issue of what to do with the failed third sector   business enterprise Canadian World and how to handle the massive $80 million debt to be absorbed by the 22,000 citizens of Ashibetsu. Mayor Hayashi, who was promoting the continuation of Canadian World was eventually reelected by a narrow margin of 1,000 votes. Takasago's campaign promised to close Canadian World permanently and find innovative strategies to payback the debt. Watanabe, who ran third with less than 100 votes, had vowed to hold a referendum and let the people decided democratically how to handle the future of Candian World.

4.2.3 Miscellaneous

Ashibetsu self-images and image-promotion: Official planners envisioned for Ashibetsu the new toursim-led paradigm as successor to the decommissioned coal mining industry. To promote Ashibetsu as a new tourist destination, various symbolic references had been employed to increase awareness and heighten the attractiveness of Ashibetsu for the would-be tourist. Considerable planning time had been invested in attempting to represent Ashibetsu as anything but Ashibetsu. Sought was identity with the 'elsewhere', the 'other place'. The example of Canadian World and its appeal to the world of Anne of Green Gables has been cited previously. Ashibetsu's hot spring and hotel leisure complex, for example, is named The Kyoto of the North (北のみやこ). The hot spring facility is divided in two sections: the Japanese gardens and the Greek Baths, decorated generoulsy with white marble statues and other Greek figures and symbols in a display of surreal kitsch. Ashibetsu is symbolically presented as 'starry' Ashibetsu -- home to a view of the cosmos that cannot be found elsewhere in Japan. The effect of projecting local identity through the other produces a sense of dislocation from indigenous identities, including that of the Ainu culture, virtually invisible, and depotentiates authentic and self-generated identities.

Tourist Promotion poster: Throughout the course of this investigation, many local informants had commented that local government and planners had produced strategies and identities of Ashibetsu that were chuuto-hanpa (中途半端) -- a useful Japanese term that approximates variously with the English notions of 'ambiguity', 'neither-here-nor-there', 'lacking in consistency', or 'half-baked'. One example cited referred to a tourism poster for Ashibetsu entitled 'beppin shimashou Ashibetsu' (ベッピンしましょう芦別) or 'Let's do the beautiful girl Ashibetsu'. The poster depicts three female figures: a young freckle-faced Canadian adolescent, supposedly a character from Anne of Green Gables; Daikanon (大観音) the 88 metre female Buddhist statue towering watchfully over the city; and a young Japanese female model. The result is a cryptic mix of messages appealing simultaneously to 'foreignness', 'spirituality' and 'sexual availability'.

A metaphor about Japanese communicability: At an informal

gathering of Ashibetsu citizens, a conversation spontaneously developed regarding the apparent poor ability of the Japanese people to communicate freely. It was reported by attendees of this occasion, that Japanese-style fusuma rooms, partitioned by paper-thin walls in which private conversations are easily overheard, had attributed to the Japanese national character of communicative reticence and underdeveloped articulation skills, resonant of Foucault's notion of the contemporary panoptic (Rabinow, 1984, p. 206; Moffat, in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 224) effect of office and school layouts where the gaze of surveillance is successfully internalized.

Canadian World Visit Report: (July 11) For the first time, the researcher was able to   enter into the failed theme park Canadian World after it was finally opened in July 1999 to the public free of charge after being locked up for several years. The decision to re-open Canadian World, on an experimental 'wait-and-see what would happen' basis, followed soon after the election in which Mayor Hayashi vowed to try and salvage the disgraced symbol of Ashibetsu's new post-coal, post-bubble, tourism-led economy.

At the time of observing Canadian World, thousands of local residents had already filed their way through the vast Canadian World ghost-town like landscape, with its shops locked shut, fun-rides dismantled and unmanned, and reconstructions of houses used in the movie Anne of Green Gables falling into disrepair through lack of maintenance. Visitors commented on the process of events that had led to the closing down of Canadian World. It was reported that, as the numbers of paying visitors to the park had decreased below profitable levels, conflict between planners, financiers, local government and Ashibetsu citizens had resulted in a stand-off situation on how to proceed with the business venture. During this period of conflict and indeciveness, a decision was passed to close down the operation entirely.

This, informants commented, was the typical oyaji, or 'old man' response to business management. "The oyaji just clammed up and stopped everything", they reported. Observing for themselves the throngs of visitors on that day, it was remarked that the new mood of 'openness' -- kaihouteki (開放的) was like a breath of fresh air. When Canadian World was first opened to the public on an entry fee basis, the rules had been very strict. Food and drink were not

permitted onto the premises and the restaurants that were available on-site were artificially expensive and the food quality poor. Visitors had also complained about the failure of the designers to incorporate a barrier-free access policy into Canadian World's design, an oversight which effectively isolated much of Ashibetsu's local population of disabled and elderly from partaking in Canadian World, a contradictory stance for a local government who claims to recognize the importance of people with special needs. While open to the public, Canadian World earned a reputation from its patrons embodied in the phrase 'once is enough'. Repeat visitors were few.

4.2.4   Summary of section I

The observation component in this section of the report reveals a communication futures climate characterised by restrictive communication practices. False harmony is preferred to open debate and the possibility of conflict. The communicating of the already-known is preferred to open expression of honne. This manifests in the 'chuuto-hanpa' -- neither-here-nor-there environment in which individuals feel incapable of speaking their true minds. Decisions based on the illusion of maintaining social harmony -- while claiming to satisfy all -- effectively satisfy none. Also found was a mood of skepticism toward the local government; the identification of an oyaji-biased social paradigm pointing to the necessity for socially reconstructive input from the historically othered female, young, entrepreneurial, creative minority and katayaburi. A final observation points to a form of panoptic social control. Ashibetsu is highly regulated, even in the micro-interactions that collectively constitute every day life.

4.3   Section II: Texts and documents

This section analyses texts informative of Ashibetsu's futures. The main purpose for analysis of documents is to determine the nature of futures images from written public texts in various sources.

4.3.1   City Emblem

Ashibetsu City declared the city emblem an official symbol on July 3, 1948. The overall star-shape structure -- as Foucault reminds us, reminiscent of Bentham's Panopticon -- according to official accounts, represents Ashibetsu's cosmological location, the starry skies of Hokkaido. The five points of the structure symbolize a black diamond -- a direct reference to the city's Golden Age of coal mining. Five lines intersecting the black diamond outwards are symbolic of expanding development. The kanji for the 'Ashi' in Ashibetsu is compacted into a mathematical configuration that symbolizes organized town planning. The second kanji -- 'betsu' -- is configured in a circle around the former kanji and represents the dual notions of citizen solidarity and peace. The components are derived from the founding fathers of Ashibetsu's coal mining Golden Age.

As Barthes (1993, p. 148) reminds us, "statistically, myth is on the right". The myth, embodied in the City Emblem, symbolizes the coalmines and the zaibatsu polity. Mitsubishi Mining Corporation commenced mining operations in Ashibetsu in 1914. The word Mitsubishi literally means three diamonds' and employs the same kanji for diamond as the City Emblem. Recalling Inayatullah's (1998a) causal layered analysis suggesting a new visual design of the United Nations logo, the legitimacy and future-appropriateness of Ashibetsu's City Emblem in a post-coalmine, post-bubble, postmodern social reality becomes problematic.

4.3.2 Ashibetsu Citizen Charter

The Ashibetsu's citizen charter was recognized as an official city symbol on September 20, 1968. Organized in two sections consisting of prose and lyrics, the charter is meant to enshrine the spirit of the Ashibetsu community. Submitting the charter to brief analysis, one finds on the one hand the positive committments to future generations; and a respect for nature (despite the violence committed upon the geographic location under an economy based on agriculture, forestry and coal mining) and other benign elements involving 'throughtfulness and kindness'. Other components are more susceptible to critical scrutiny. In the line 'Let us maintain the social norms' (社会のきまりを守りましょう) -- the noun, translated here for norm is kimari, the noun derivative of its verbal form kimaru, which means 'decided' or 'determined'.

One asks: By whom is the norm in this case decided and pre-determined and for whose benefit? From a poststructural view, the message is a message of exclusion in which norms are constituted by the proponents of the dominant discourse of the historical period.

Read according to Campbell's (in Flowers, 1988, p. 39) four functions of the myth, the sociological and pedagogical functions to promote the perpetuation of the social order as it existed during the coal mining days when large corporations -- the zaibatsu cartels such as Mitusbishi and Mitsui -- wielded far-reaching influence over the day to day operation of the city in all aspects. Etymologically, the double kanji compound for 'society' -- shakai (社会) is the reverse of the kanji compound for a 'company' -- kaisha (会社). Here, the company is the ideographic reflection of society at large.

The original Japanese complete version and an English translation is reproduced below.

芦別市民憲章

明治の代、今の常磐町に第一くわ音が立ちました。芦別誕生のうぶ声でした。
それから代々の人たちが努力を重ね、美しい故郷をつくりました。
それをたたえ感謝するとともに、さらに立派にして次代へ渡したいものです。
私たちは、この憲章をかかげて、日常生活の心がまえといたしましょう。

In the Meiji Period, in the part of Ashibetsu now known as Jouban, the sounds of the first hoe rang out. These sounds were the birth pangs of Ashibetsu. The collective efforts of the generations transformed this land into a beautiful hometown. Whilst paying our respects to former generations, it is our hope to pass on this land to future generations. United by this citizen's charter, may we continue to strive in our every day life. (Translated by the author)

Making a bright family
Let us give the children dreams and pride
Let us know the respect of humans
Let us maintain the norms of society
Loving the nature of the hometown

Let us build up a plentiful town
With thoughtfulness and kindness
Let us make this town liveable
Deepening our learning and nurturing our bodies
We shall make a town that shines with culture.

4.3.3 Future Ashibetsu: Images from Local Youth

Published in 1993 under the guidance of former Ashibetsu Mayor Higashida as part of the of Ashibetsu's 100th anniversary celebrations, the publication "Future Ashibetsu: Images from Local Youth" -- Mirai no Ashibetsu: Jidou Seito Sakuhin-Shuu (未来の芦別：児童生徒作品集), demonstrates a commitment to and depth of concern for the future of the Ashibetsu community. Included in the 198 page glossy colour publication are 146 essays, 222 illustrations and 134 calligraphic paintings, submitted by students from Ashibetsu's 13 elementary and junior high schools.

The themes are personal and community futures involving time spans of up to 50 years into the future. The contents and structures of the majority of the essays adhere to a similar pattern of recurring themes which express one's love for the starry hometown Ashibetsu. Children ultimately desire to pursue career trajectories that will help revitalize Ashibetsu. Ashibetsu's relaxed lifestyle and bountiful natural resources are emphasized, and qualified often by expressions of concern for environmental destruction. Nearly all essays, including those of the youngest hope that Ashibetsu's problem of population los can be reversed and Ashibetsu's former economic vitality restored. Visions of an Ashibetsu bristling with futuristic technological devices are popular. Robots reconfigure to become automobiles (p. 64), and milk can be drunk straight from the taps. One 3rd year student from Ougon Elementary calims he is researching 'youth rejuvenation medicines'. Japanese technology will elevate the town to an internationally recognised community attracting visitors from around the world, but especially the United States and Canada. Ashibetsu in future will give prominence to sporting activities and facilities will be plentiful. Ashibetsu is no longer self-imaged as a former coal mining town that didn't make it, but as a hi-tech tourist haven.

Diagrammatic renditions of a future Ashibetsu depict a nature and technology oriented wonderland while ink calligraphy paintings depict predetermined themes represented with the kanji characters for 'future' -- mirai (未来); 'dream' -- yume (夢); 'starry hometown' -- hoshi no furusato (星のふるさと); 'hope' -- kibou (希望); 'starry skies' -- hoshizora (星空). Also featured but less commonly found were 'the path of the future' -- mirai no michi (未来の道); 'future city' -- mirai-toshi (未来都市); 'beauty of Nature' -- shizen-bi (自然美), hiyaku o kisu (飛躍を期す) variously translatable as 'expecting rapid progress' or 'hoping for flight of the imagination'; and 'outer space' -- uchuu (宇宙).

Evident from these futures images by young children amounted to an unnatural awareness of Ashibetsu's futurtre problematique in terms of population loss (due to the closing of the final Mitsui Mining Corporation mine) and decline of economic vitality. Already, the young are socialized into the adult discourses that construct and perpetuate the social realities of Ashibetsu. Ashibetsu as the former coal town turned tourist spot where nature is 'big' and everywhere and must be protected from rampant industrialization. On the one hand, many present realities and future possibilities have been pre-constructed and colonized by images available from the social environment. Already, there is no space for the conception of alternative and other futures. Population loss is linked directly to loss of economic vitality, so, population must be increased. On the other hand, futures describe optimistic, hopeful and occasionally idiosyncratic images. The environment is conceptualized as something to protect -- not plunder; the future is enjoyable -- not the toil of the former coal mining days; present day low-tech Ashibetsu is reconceived as functionally improved through technologies including communications devices; the future is perceived as a process of making at both the individual and collective level of community. Personal aspirations are not only beneficial to oneself, but equally for others.

4.3.4 Articles from *Kouhou Ashibetsu* newsletter

Kouhou Ashibetsu is the principle source of information on community affairs. Articles were selected from editions spanning from April 1997 to June 1999. Presented here are brief analyses from futures-relevant articles from Kouhou Ashibetsu a monthly newsletter published by the local government and

distributed to citizens free of charge. Where possible articles are summarized and analysed in chronological sequence.

April 1997 Edition: The opening article "Towards a town where people can realize the joy of living" (住む人が暮らす喜びを実感できるまちに) introduces the notion of "town-making" -- machi-zukuri (町作り) for the 21st century and the intended response by the local government to the challenges faced by Ashibetsu in the financial recession. It is claimed that the mission of local government is to guarantee for the next generation of Ashibetsu's young, to pass on an attractive hometown Ashibetsu. To do so, a new type of 'town-making' in which 'faces are visible', must proceed. Citizen particpation is vital to the process.   Local government recognizes this period of transformation, where individual values and lifestyles must be respected for their differences. Previous concepts and structures may be inept in this age of complexification and diversification of social realities. New ways of doing are sought. Previous hard, quantity-driven perspectives should give way to the soft and qualitative-driven. Furthermore, as legislation promoting the empowerment of local government progresses, there will be greater to need to exploit local human resources. Such a system will be citizen-driven, and integrate individualistic and community needs.

In a regular column written by the Mayor of Ashibetsu (市長だより), a new government/citizen communication strategy is introduced.   "Welcome to the Mayor's Office" (ようこそ市長室) invites Ashibetsu citizens to meet the Mayor on the 28th of each month. Significant of a more transparent form of leadership and partnership between government and the people,   the meeting offers an occasion for the Mayor to collect ideas from concerned citizens relating to local issues and Ashibetsu's futures. Of note, the "Welcome to the Mayor's Office" as a government/people communication strategy was dismantled in July 1999 soon after the encumbent's reelection.

March 1998 Edition: Featured in this edition is a summary of results collected from the   Citizens Town-Making Survey (芦別市町作り市民アンケート) conducted by local government. Citizen input was meant to provide the basis for the formulation of the 4th Ashibetsu Comprehensive Plan (see section below for separate summary). The complete report upon which this article was

based, is a four-part 118 page report taken from a sample of approximately 2,000 respondents. Based on the premise that the opinions of ordinary Ashibetsu residents should be reflected in the formulation of the 4th Ashibetsu Comprehensive Plan, the survey was administered to four sample categories: (1) 'Ashibetsu citizens'; (2) 'Ashibetsu Villagers System Members', individuals living outside of Ashibetsu with the status of paying members of the Villagers System;   (3) 'Local Government Employees' (excluding physicians and nurses); and (4) 'High School Students'.

Questions attempt to elicit YES/NO or multiple choice responses to issues in six main areas: Ashibetsu images; insurance, medical care and welfare; education, cultural activites and sport; promotion of industry; directions for town-making policy; and citizen participation in local politics. Under 'directions for town-making policy', section two confronts the issue of Ashibetsu's image(s) of the future.

The survey participant is asked to indicate up to two responses closest to his/her opinion about Ashibetsu's futures. The seven possible responses given to the participant include: (1) a city surrounded by a beautiful natural environment 「美しい自然環境に包まれたまち」 (2) a dynamic industrial town 「活力ある産業のまち」 (3) a popular tourist destination and meeting place for people 「多くの人が訪れる観光・交流のまち」 (4) a convenient and pleasant town to live in 「便利で快適に暮らせるまち」 (5) a healthy and safe town to live in「健康で安心して暮らせるまち」 (6) a town with high levels of education and cultural activities「教育文化水準の高いまち」, and (7) a town where people interact a lot 「市民がふれあい豊かに暮らせるまち」. According to official tabulations, the three cornerstones for Ashibetsu's new futures generalized across the sample were in order of preference: a healthy and safe town to live in; a city surrounded by a beautiful natural environment; and thirdly a dynamic industrial town.

What does the survey attempt to find out and how does it achieve these purported goals? Quantitative data is readily collectable, easy to tabulate and gives the appearance of legitimacy to decisions and policy formulated on the basis of empirical findings. The questions asked are polite, unprovocative, de-politicized and emptied of meaning, which simplistically reconfirm what is

already known about most people in most places in most ages. The paradigm that allows the making of such questions is uncontested and reiterated for an expectant public.

By asking What is said and what is unsaid we find that there is no space allocated for the creative, the radical, the transformative. The physical configurations of the questions themselves are clearly demarcated. From a design protocol point of view, the quantitative emphasis of the survey demonstrates the local government's fixation with collecting and tabulating data, to be presented to the public in the form of graphs, statistics and opinion polls as a persuasive strategy upon which strategies can be planned and executed. Administering qualitative surveys would be too chaotic and complex to make immediate sense of. The questions themselves are by nature ambiguous to which only pre-determined responses can be given.

Furthermore, carefully tabulated data, decorated with infallible graphs and every possible statistical configuration, offer the target reader -- the Ashibetsu citizen -- no qualitative interpretation of the implications of this massive deployment of data. Ashibetsu's image of the future, involves teleologically inspired management-by-objective type goals, most of which have already been achieved, all of which are beyond dispute or disagreement. Conflict is ruled out. What is offered as possible, is more harmony and more of the same of the already-known and already agreed-upon.

Absent is the call for a new consciousness, a resetting of the conditions of possibility, no surprise, no contraversy, no admission that solutions might be sought beyond the framework of the seven pre-determined questions. Social transformation does not feature as a legitimized candidate for Ashibetsu futures.

A poststructural view must consider the wording of the question itself. Translating close to the literal Japanese original renders: "As far as Ashibetsu's image of the future is concerned, what kind of form do you hope for?". Here, the qualifying verb, 'hope for' is itself problematic. It is implied that the futures is something that must be hoped for. Futures are not to be negotiated and created with the individual as agent of transformational processes, but as

passive and submissive observer. The future happens independently, robbing the individual of any sense of control, or at best, the future is conceptualized as a product, to be produced for a public that has given its market preference for a certain type of future. The survey is the public expression of tatemae (a publicly acceptable opinion), from which the possibility of expressing one's true feelings -- honne -- has been ex-communicated.

September 1998 Edition:　Based on the findings of the above mentioned citizens survey, the local government published in the September issue of Kouhou Ashibetsu a summary of the survey findings accompanied with a Five Point Plan blueprint vision for Ashibetsu's future. Featuring in this edition is an outline for The 4th Ashibetsu Comprehensive Plan (第４次芦別市総合計画). The Five Point Plan constitutes one component of a macro-strategy known as The 4th Ashibetsu Comprehensive Plan and consists of five symbolic categories around which the city's future is to be organized. The five categories are (1) Eco-Town (エコタウン); (2) Powerful Town (パワフルタウン); (3) Human Town (ヒューマンタウン): (4) Culture Town (カルチャータウン); and (5) Challenge Town (チャレンジタウン).

The communicative strategy expressed in the linguistic design of the article's title is worthy of note. Phonetically, the title is read as minna de tsukuru machi (みなでつくるまち) -- "the town to be made by all". Here, the kanji for town is wittily transformed into a pun by using the kanji compound 舞台 meaning "stage". The notion of "town" is re-imaged as a "stage". A translation into English could be doubly read as "the stage/town to be made by all". With a postmodern touch, a subtitle reads: ２１世紀の台本作り, or "the making of a script for the 21st century". The issue of Ashibtsu's approaches to the 21st century are imbued with the calligraphic and visual imagery of television, cinema and stage performance. The future is presented as a fiction to be written by all. The term for script -- daihon -- reads with the appeal of an interactive drama, and the charisma of a Hollywood movie deal, but in reality is closer to a paint-by-numbers picture. The outlines -- in this case those responsible for formulating the very questions from which the conditions of possibility are set -- are decided not by citizen participation but by government decree from above, the futures-making elite. This strategy of persuading the people to 'colour in the blanks' effectively excludes the option of dissent, or

resistance, other than by refusal to hold the brush or by painting a picture of one's own. By this mechanism, the responsibility of executing the blue print is deferred to the people -- who, as it can be publicly recalled -- were compliant participants. If in future reality the plan fails, the people can be held responsible.

An observer might recall the case of a previous failed plan, Canadian World. Planned and constructed without the consultation of Ashibetsu's ordinary people, its economic performance led a debt so massive it is considered the single greatest threat to Ashibetsu's future. Having failed beyond the possibility of denial by the local government, local government then went to the people and asked for their participation in solving "the problem of all Ashibetsu citizens". One senses in the apparent attempt to write the script of Ashibetsu's future, a repitition of the same dynamics, the identical mindset, that underlined the making/unmaking of Canadian World.

As visual supplement to the textual article there is an over-the-shoulder photograph of two people. A man is holding a pen, and appears to be writing into a notebook with the title "the 4th Ashibetsu Comprehensive Plan". A woman, to his right, attentive and passive, with hands at rest on the desk, not quite clasped, appears to not know what to do next. His arm is powerful and middle-aged. She looks younger. He is wearing casual clothing, probably his own, she is wearing what looks to be a uniform.
Further into the article, the reader is reminded of the problematic of Ashibetsu's future: a continuing of the recession; a population base that is outmigrating, rapidly ageing and in need of more young people. The young and employable youthful sub-population outmigrate. A scarcity of successors to take over from present industry positions emphasizes the possibility of social collapse.

At this stage of the article, the catchphrase that symbolizes the vision of a future Ashibetsu city is introduced. The visionary catchphrase is:

> **Colours of the Four Seasons   A Stage for Connecting People**
> **friendly ...   lively ...   starry hometown Ashibetsu**

The catchphrase enshrines the new spirit of the times. Surrounded by bountiful nature and spectacular scenery, locals and visitors alike will connect and interact. Assuming lead roles -- like the caste of a movie -- Ashibetsu citizens will build up the stage/town. The catchphrases encapsulates the new policy of citizen participation in town-making for the 21st century (p. 5).

As an umbrella plan, the 4th Ashibetsu Comprehensive Plan, comprises three phases. First is the Basic Concept (基本構想), from which direction for town-making policy and future images will emerge. The second phase is further refined to formulate a Basic Plan (基本計画) which will form the basis for a number of Plans of Action (実施計画). It is the second and third phases -- which culminate in a Five Point Plan -- to which our attention is now drawn. As mentioned above, the Five Point Plan consists of strategies for the conceptual development of a future Ashibetsu organized around the principles of: (1) Eco-Town; (2) Powerful Town; (3) Human Town; (4) Culture Town; and (5) Challenge Town.

The first -- Eco Town -- conceptualizes a "comfortable environment-making" appropriate to Ashibetsu. Progressively focussed action plans suggest a symbiotic relationship between human and nature; a comfortable residential environment, with specific mention of orderly land use and town planning; the guarantee of safe living, with the assurance of safeguards against natural disaster, and a reduction in crime and accident; and, a functional transportation and information network infrastructure.

The second image -- Powerful Town -- describes the "making of a dynamic city replete with original ideas". This image promotes the development of forestry, agriculture and tourism as Ashibetsu's pillar industries of the future. Consumer's needs will be satisfied, management will be modernized, and the manufacture of local products prioritized. Furthermore, tourist facilities will be developed or updated. Employment for the young and old will be guaranteed through job-creation policy. Outmigrated Ashibetsu residents will make a "u-turn" (U-ターンする) back to the hometown. The population problem will be rebalanced.

Human Town suggests the ideas of "making happiness and lots of smiling

faces" as the third organizing futures image. Ashibetsu is conceived as a "long-life society" where "life will be meaningful". Welfare services will be reinforced to ensure a "mutually-supportive caring society", "children's smiling faces", "stable living conditions" and a "safe consumer lifestyle". Lastly, healthcare facilities will be improved and Ashibetsu will provide for a "healthy Ashibetsu citizenry".

The fourth image -- Culture Town -- promises, we are informed, to make a "heart-warming, learning society". The image of Culture Town comprises three parts: a continuing education societal framework, where the individual takes responsibility for the task of learning and "appealing" educational courses and situations will be made available.

The fifth point -- subtitled "making a hometown where people join hands to open up tomorrow" -- images Ashibetsu as Challenge Town. From this image, five action plans are generated. Firstly, Ashibetsu will have more interaction with Japan and the world. The second action plan calls for "equitable male-female societal participation", education for "todays youth who will bear the burden of tomorrow" and for the production of "lively, shining women" (生き生きとかがやく女性). In the third action plan we find the need for citizens to feel proud of their hometown, a close community in which people "speak with their hearts" and where it is the citizens who play the leading role in building the community. The fourth plan is attentive to the need to create "mutual understanding between local government and the people" and a more "transparent local government". Reinforced in the last action plan for the total Five Point Plan is the leadership role of the local government. The new local government will be trustable, creative with financial resources and effective in cementing ties with Ashibetsu's satellite communities.

From a communication futures perspective this nexus is especially informative. Read poststructurally, what effects does the Five Point Plan produce in the reader? We encounter strategic mystification through language, inappropriate to a community with a citizenry brought up in a generation when English was not prevalent and the attendant valorization of ideas and concepts derived from English. The reader senses the valorization of the maker of grand narratives, the planner, the tabulator of graphs, tables and irreproachable

statistics, the measurers and exectioners of the people's will. We find a plan so comprehensive, so tightly outlined, that individual agency is excluded from participation in the processes of change. Ashibetsu's futures, by way of the Five Point Plan, in effect colonizes the future to conform to local government. The past is reproduced and reconfirmed for future generations to adhere to. We find a plan of action to produce "lively and shining women", but no allowance for the women to produce herself, no mention of the "lively and shining" man, no possibility of an alternative role to the willingly passive, submissive woman. In essence, the Ashibetsu reader is framed as the consumer of a vision, that while appearing to offer the future in the form of "equitable participation" and other fashionable slogans, upon closer reading, what is unmasked are the tell-tale signs of histories regurgitated. In sum, the reader is given the script for a play which is already written, that offers no way out.

A poststructural view would enquire as to whether citizens have the will to contest the official Five Point Plan and subvert it by introducing their own futures-creating program which offers alternative points of view, or, has the authoritarian role of local government become internalized beyond the point of contestation?

4.3.5   Summary of section II

Key issues to emerge from text analysis included shared social symbols which prioritise the continuation of the zaibatsu/corporate-driven coal mining paradigm. Spatial orderliness, acceptance and maintenance of social harmony, and peacefulness are valorized in local texts. Futures images from children are inclined to reflect adults wishes. Technology is imaged primarily as cure-all, while nature is mythologised. The proposed Five Point Plan functions to pre-colonize the future in accord with the continued dominance of the local government perspective. Past failures remain unacknowledged. The types of questions in the government designed and administered survey are worded and packaged tighly enough to disallow resistance other than refusal to participate or silence. The publicly presented tabulation of results does not give space to dissenters, nor is space allocated for those respondents with radical opinions.

4.4 Section III: Questionnaire and interview data

This section presents and analyses data collected from paper questionnaires and interviews containing questions formulated in three phases: Preparatory questions; CLA informative questions; and, images of the future informative questions. Questionnaires and interviews were conducted with katayaburi members of the community.

4.4.1 Phase I: Preparatory questions

Preparatory questioning served two main purposes: to provide the researcher with general background information as to the position of the particpant in relation to issues relevant to communication and futures within the Ashibetsu-Japan context. The second purpose was to conceptually prepare the would-be respondent for the more complex line of questioning involving considerable creative cognitive input. As noted previously, the types of questions posed in Phases II and III presented a challenge to Ashibetsu respondents. During the compilation of the final version of this investigation, it was decided not to include summaries of these ten questions in this chapter. See Appendix IV for the English translation of questions and responses.

4.4.2 Phase II: Causal Layered Analysis questions

Level 1: Litany analysis: Respondents were invited to describe what they believed was the official public description of Ashibetsu's futures problematic and whether they agreed with the officially reported assessment. To summarize, there was a generally shared mood that living in Ashibetsu would become increasingly problematic as the economic base became untenable. It was conceived that eventually, Ashibetsu could degenerate into a ghost-town in the near future. The offical problematic of Ashibetsu's future asks the question: Does Ashibetsu have any kind of future?

Level 2: Social causes analysis: At the social causes level, responses were clustered around three sets of identifiable causes: (1) population loss; (2) the failure of Canadian World theme park and ¥6 billion debt; and (3) an ageing population. Specifically, the debt incurred by Canadian World was

mentioned and what to do with the failed theme park in future; educational and social welfare facilities; the declining population; outflow of younger population to larger centres; employment policies; loss of pillar industries; loss of general economic vitality; lack of citizen awareness regarding the community's futures; increasing financial burden from medical costs of a rapidly ageing population; failure to replace the former coal mining-centred economy with a viable tourist industry; lack of accessible major highways causing commercial and social isolation from major centres.

Invited to agree or disagree with the official description, the majority agreed but qualified their responses by adding that Ashibetsu's principle impediment to creating new futures was a conservative local government, perceived to be stuck in their old ways that were obselete to new global and local realities. It was also mentioned that local government not only lacked vision but had failed to mobilise support and cooperation from its citizens in creating visions. Furthermore, local government had reportedly acted upon plans without the consultation of citizens. This was the case with Canadian World which went ahead without consulting citizens, and once failed, it was local government asked citizens for help and advice, and suddenly expected citizens to share the financial burden of repaying the debt of ¥6 billion. It was also pointed out that Ashibetsu's problem went beyond Ashibetsu -- the entire Hokkaido region was immersed in the same problematic. Reports of local interference from the federal government and over-regulation by local government was also cited.

Other reported causes included a greedy and incompetent local government whose employees were overpaid, underworked, and abused taxpayer's money; a political structure which favoured the priorities of an elite minority to the exclusion of the majority; a chronic lack of communication (between who and what kind of communication was left ambiguous); cynicism towards local government; collapse of the local agricultural economy due to trade liberalisation policies; the legacy of Japan's bubble economy; a tightening of budgets that had made entrepreneurialism all but impossible, thus aggravating existing problems; a decrease of consumer purchasing power, which favoured the major conglomerates in larger regional centres and diminshed the economic viability of Ashibetsu's commercial district.

General sources of solutions emerging at this level called for an increase in the political activity of local katayaburi - and well-known outmigrating Ashibetsu citizens, as the potential change agents; greater political participation from ordinary citizens; greater diffusion of information from local government and an increase in awareness of citizen morals; and a more communicative environment in which adults and children can openly debate futures options, and ultimtately influence local government decision-making practices. A minority of respondents stated that if 'experts' could not solve Ashibetsu's problem, that there would be no solutions. One opined that Ashibetsu could be restored by individuals with technical skills in ecology -- shizen-kougaku (自然工学). For one respondent, the future itself did not pose a problem to be solved, but was rather a path that each individual must traverse and create. One political response suggested a revison of public servant legislation, as a way to curb corruption, hiring new employess through interpersonal networks rather than those who are qualified but do not have access to connections.

Concrete solutions reported were few, but the most common called for an economic revitalization plan focussing on the deployment and participation of younger citizens via a "Three Major Events Strategy". The events cited were the (1) Ashibetsu Summer Health Festival -- Kenka Matusri (健夏祭り); (2) the Candle Art Festival; and (3) the Ashibetsu Film Festival. One respondent believed solutions would spring from shifting the discourse away from a "lack of facilities and things" to "matters of the heart", or put differently, a transfomation from "the hard to the soft".

Level 3: Discourse and worldview analysis: At the worldview level of analysis, responses indicated widespread difficulty with understanding or responding to the question effectively. The few responses that were elicited here cited that it was up to Ashibetsu citizens to develop "new ways of doing" and that without building something new, transformation would be impossible; a matter of making effective use of Ashibetsu's natural geographic features including land and mountains. Another response recognised the futility of trying to revive the former golden age of the coal mining economy in the form of a new tourism-propelled paradigm as unproductive and unrealistic. True social transformation should be achieved from small-scale changes. One response stated that Ashibetsu's future should be reconceptualized in terms of

humanism, rather than conventional economism, that human happiness should be realized through cultural activities and education. On a similar note, one respondent called for a life based on the pursuit of individual happiness -- koufuku-kan (幸福観). Continuing the economic theme, it was noted that life in general -- not specifically Ashibetsu -- would become more econo-centric unless global problems of population increase, resource depletion and food scarcity were resolved. One provocative response considered Ashibetsu citizens incapable of social transformation without an externally impacted catastrophe. Although Ashibetsu citizens generally felt the necessity "to do something" -- nani ka o shinakute wa ... (何かをしなくては、、、), they had become "overly pacified from too much peacefulness" -- heiwa boke (平和ボケ) and from a "lifestyle which lacked a sense or urgency" -- seikatsu ni wa komaranai (生活には困らない) -- ultimately rendering them paralysed in adversity.

On the theme of Japan's postwar economic paradigm, one respondent excluded the possibility of an alternative worldview, stating that Japan had become irreversibly entrenched in an authoritarian state fixated by personal status and hierarchy. For another respondent, the issue of Japan's "national character" -- *nihonjin no kokuminsei* -- was given as an impediment for major social transformation. Japan had developed on the principle of maintaining social cohesion, a trait which negated the possibility of radical change. Another respondent recognised a degeneration in Japan's national worldview -- which could only be challenged and overturned by exercising one's individual right to vote. A final respondent believed there would be major changes in Japan's dominant paradigm -- leading to a new ethic that involved "valuing things, nature and the countryside" -- *mono o taisetsu ni suru, shizen o taisetsu ni suru, inaka o taisetsu ni suru*.

Level 4: Myth and Metaphor analysis: The most common symbol or myth used to describe Ashibetsu referred to the community as a "Great Nature City" -- *nihon no daishizen no machi*. Still on the theme of nature, other oft-cited imagery was of Ashibetsu as "starry Ashibetsu" or "starry furusato Ashibetsu", "the beautiful environment Ashibetsu", and the "treasure trove of mountain vegetables". Several responses reported of Ashibetsu as a peaceful town, where the stars were visible, the weather settled, and climatic disasters were few, affording its inhabitants a place in which one could leave in peace.

Another response expressed the following:

Image-wise, I feel that day by day, poor human relations is becoming the main pillar of this community. Throughout the town, one comes across the pecularity of small community life with its 'connections' and 'own way of doing things'. As for a guiding social myth -- I'd like Ashibetsu to become the kind of place that makes a future for its young. Ashibetsu's focussing economic base is still unclear -- will it be agriculture, tourism, forestry, or attracting new industry to the region? Ultimately, failing to catch 'neither the snake nor the bee' [neither here nor there], the people are fumbling for a way to consolidate, to image and think about a new future.

Other imagery frequently referred to a community that offers a future to its young; an independent Ashibetsu; Ashibetsu as "a land place to be born, to work, to die"; and Ashibetsu as a "health-enhancing town" -- kenkou-zukuri no machi (健康作りの街).

Various metaphors were produced by katayaburi respondents. For one respondent, Ashibetsu's futures were framed using a weather forecasting metaphor: "Noone knows when the weather will clear up, the fog is getting even worse" -- itsu hareru ka wakaranai, kiri ga tachikomete iru (いつ晴れるかわからない、霧がたちこめている). Another respondent stopped short of offering his/her own metaphor but circled one of the examples indicated in the question "The future is like driving blindfolded" -- mirai wa marude mekakushi unten no you na mono (未来はまるで目隠し運転のようなもの) as the most appropriate metaphor for Ashibetsu. Another metaphor expanded the driving blindfolded theme depicting the future as "a blindfolded donkey pulling a heavily loaded cart" -- mekakushi o sareta omoi ni-guruma-hiki no roba (目隠しをされた重い荷車ひきのロバ). Here, the donkey -- not the stubborn character found in western mythology, but rather the dim-witted human similie, represents the local government, blindfolded, rendered incapable of seeing the roads ahead, with a heavily loaded cart -- the burden of Canadian World debt, and other failed enterprises. A third metaphor described the future as "like a water-pine tree spreading its roots deep into the earth" -- mirai wa daichi ni ne o orosu mizu-matsu no you da (未来は大地に根をおろす水松のようだ). The future is a space penetrated by the roots of the tree, signifying present growth,

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into the earth -- the physical topology in which the tree is rooted. For the Japanese, the water-pine tree symbolizes ancient history -- the historical forces and meanings transmitted through generations, whose origins are largely forgotten yet whose presence is taken for granted. Another metaphor resembles a proverb: resisting easy translation, the saying iki-atari, ba-atari (行き当たり場当たり) resonates with the English expression, "cross the bridge when you come to it", or "one step at a time". The future is not pre-planned, but requires a constant negotiation and renegotiation of chance events. This 'take life as it comes' imagery is extended further in another metaphor: naru you ni shika naranai (なるようにしかならない), an idiomatic expression which can be rendered to mean the future "will become, nothing other than what it will become", or more crudely, the future "will be what will be". With an individualistic turn, one metaphor declared that "your future is the future of Ashibetsu" -- anata no mirai ga ashibetsu no mirai (あなたの未来が芦別の未来). For this respondent, the future of Ashibetsu depends upon individuals making what they will of their own lives. The future is less a collectively produced phenomena as one made from individual effort.

Other respondents bypassed the essence of the question by offering solutions. These took the form of creating "citizen networks that put to effective use Ashibetsu's past experiences" in order to reconstruct a future built upon "a symbiotic relationship with nature, and a new system in which educators themselves had to keep learning". The same respondent also designed a triangulated matrix as a formula for a new Ashibetsu: "Promotion of sport leading to improved citizen health, leading to positive economic effects". Another solution saw Ashibetsu re-mythologized as a contemporary refuge for the "tired city-dweller" where the human -- body and spirit -- could be "rejuvenated". One katayaburi found little positive to say about Ashibetsu's futures, likening it to "a person stopped still in the dark" -- mirai wa kurayami no naka de tachtomatte iru hito (未来は暗ヤミの中で立ち止まっている人). In an even more morbid metaphor, the future is imaged as being "like a human vegetable" -- mirai wa shokubutsu ningen no you na mono (未来は植物人間のようなもの) -- incapable of movement, voiceless, incapable of sight let alone foresight. In a constructive metaphor, the future is compared to the task of "building a house, in which everybody lends a hand, and little by little, the house is complete" -- mirai wa, ikko no ie o tateru you na mono (未来は一戸の

家を立てる様なものーコツコツ、皆で力を合わせて作り上げるもの).

One final response merits mention. According to this respondent "Ashibetsu has no social myths! Historically Ashibetsu has always little sense of 'community' or 'hometown' due to the fact that the population came from other places to benefit from the mining industry. Furthermore, Ashibetsu has historically had little sense of helping eachother out. This can be attributed to the fact that there have been absolutely no natural disasters here, something which usually produces a keen awareness of crisis."

4.4.3   Phase III: Generating futures images

Phase 3 of the questionnaire focussed on engaging respondents in the creative activity of imaging three sets of futures images for Ashibetsu -- approximately twenty years into the future. The first involved 'stretching' (see chapter 3, subsection 3.3.5.3   Questionnaires and interviews for details on 'stretching' strategy) to imagine preferred futures images. This was followed by 'stretching' to envision worst-case futures images. The third involved bringing the respondent back to the most likely futures image from the dramatic and provocative act of confronting the preferred with worst-case futures.

4.4.3.1   Preferred futures

In sketching normative futures images for Ashibetsu projected 20 years into the future, Ashibetsu has become a model town to other regions decimated by post-bubble and post-coal-mining realities, there is sufficient employment for the young, negating the need to outmigrate to larger metropolitan centres, a new social system replaces the obsolete present, and local government officials, perceived as behind-the-times are replaced.

One katayaburi, a middle-aged psychiatric male nurse, imagines a future in which the economy is restructured by employing the natural geographic and physical attributes of the area, especially snow. Expenditure for removing snow off city streets runs to several million dollars annually. Snow removal techniques never seem to progress with the times like other technologies. Increased road heating would alleviate the problem. Natural inclinations in the

city topology could be repurposed as a potential energy-generating resource. Captured energy could be sold to other regions. New employment and new technologies would be generated from this technological initiative, it is claimed.

For another respondent, an ideal future Ashibetsu would have put the Canadian World debt behind it, and resources would be redirected towards welfare and environmental issues. Ashibetsu's efforts in ecology would become recognized globally. Visitors would feel the desire to live in this model ecological 'clean' town. The new clean paradigm would be similarly reflected in a new 'clean' politics.

A local high school English teacher, imaged a future with a stronger agriculture-based industry. Although this did not need to make the city wealthy, it should at the least diminish the outmigration of the young in search of employment, and create the foundations for a society in which both young and ageing could live together happily. For a high school teacher of political economy, Ashibetsu's futures should be framed in terms of "a community brought together through thoughtful human relations".

A member of Ashibetsu's Film School, imaged a future where the futures of children are prioritised. To ensure their futures, a vast network mediates community-integrating cultural activities, economics and sport. The community is characterised by a high sense of awareness of environmental issues, welfare -- especially care of the elderly and disadvantaged, and in which volunteerism is commonplace. Self-sufficiency in food production is high, as locally manufactured food products have achieved 'brand' status and are therefore sought after in other regions. Ashibetsu is now accessible by road and other transport routes -- diminshing the sense of isolation perceived as an impediment in the late 20th century.

With an economy of words, a middle-aged entrepreneur and business-owner summarized a preferred Ashibetsu future as one founded on the desire of the individual, not the desires of the local government or a political system -- taisei no ishi denaku, kojin no ishi ga ikasareru (体制の意志でなく、個人の意志が生かされる). The verb used here -- ikasareru -- means 'to give life to', 'to give

expression to', 'to realize' or 'to give full play to'. The present day reader may interpret that the present social realities of Ashibetsu are the embodiment of the desires produced of a present-making elite of local government officials. The individual is subordinated to dominant desires based on obselete ways of doing. The future imaged here potentiates the individual as an agent of positive, life-enhancing transformation.

With a sense of pragmatism, a 30 year old politically-active jeweller envisions a future grounded in an annual economic growth of 2%, balanced emotionally by a town with a community-making spirit. Environmentally, Ashibetsu is advanced: known as a 'zero-refuse' town, everything is recycled, energy is reusable. A middle-aged female owner and chef at a local Japanese style restaurant envisions a preferred future where the former city has become a smaller township with a more mature population, but with the surrounding nature still intact and undisturbed. Urbanites, worn out from city life, come to Ashibetsu to restore their vigour. Another pragmatic future imaged Ashibetsu as more conveniently connected to surrounding areas in an expanded economic zone. Goods could be distributed directly to close-by Asahikawa Airport, people could be transported by improved road networks. Ashibetsu would also become one part of a greater tourism zone along with the Furano District. The economy would be driven by agricultural and forestry production, and state-of-the-art industries attracted to the new Industrial Park would expand the employment sector.

A local librarian imaged a future that promised to realize the "dreams" -- yume (夢) held by children. Work was meaningful, lifestyles fulfilling, regardless of age one could live peacefully, and there was a special "bond" -- kizuna (絆) uniting the spirit of the community. As prerequisite to this future, a new form of local government would have to prioritise the desires of individuals. A fellow librarian conceptualized a future where people "recognized their true selves and worth" -- toushin-dai no jibin o ninshiki suru (等身大の自分を認識する) as a starting block for understanding what is really important for oneself as an individual and for the community as a whole. Resulting from this new concept of self, interpersonal communication would be revived. The economic ramifications would involve a decrease in wasteful practices, thereby protecting environmental resources. Regardless of whether the community had

pulled through the economic recession, life should be rethought of, first and foremost, as something to be enjoyed.

A young female bank employee hoped that large corporations would prevent outmigration and promote revitalization of Ashibetsu's commercial district. Former public servant and outspoken critic of the local government called for a future whose social welfare infrastructure made it possible for the needy to lead normal and happy lives. Children would be allowed to "be children" and not be made to experience Japan's fabled "examination hell". The young would work alongside the elderly whose experience and knowledge would be valued and put to effective use. For another respondent, Ashibetsu presented the alternative for a future away from hurried city-life. The former urbanite could live "like a human-being" in a relaxed environment where self-sufficiency was possible, and an optimistic old-age could be looked forward to in a nature-oriented setting.

Another respondent appealed for a thoughtful community where people of all generations could live peacefully, and against a totalitarian or dictatorial political system. A final image hoped for a bottoming out of the population at approximately 10,000. There would be few remaining former coalminers receiving retirement pensions. Ashibetsu would have formed a strong economic base founded on home-grown technologies and manufactured goods. Local government scholarships and financial assistance would be allocated for citizens to study and research in needed areas of expertise -- either in Japan or overseas -- fostering an environment in which entrepreneurs would prosper. Laws would be passed to beautify the streets of Ashibetsu, transforming the city into a "tourism resource". Considered an eyesore, the Kyoto of the North -- Kita ni Miyako (北の京) resort complex would no longer exist.

4.4.3.2   Worst-case futures

Stretching the imagination to envision worse-case futures tended to produce scenarios that were more or less reversals of preferred images. As expressed by one respondent: "Just turn the preferred scenarios upside!". To illustrate, some sample worst-case futures images are reproduced here:

Repayments of the Canadian World debt meant that local facilities and amenities went unmaintained. Our children and grandchildren were burdened with a debt whose origins they did not know nor understand. Ashibetsu became an unattractive place to live, the young outmigrated in masses to larger cities, rendering Ashibetsu a ghost town. Scary!

The ¥6 billion plus debt from Canadian World is still being repaid after more than 20 years. Frustrated by the debt, the young have abandoned Ashibetsu for other cities. The community rapidly declines. Finally, the burden of debt repayment becomes unsupportable for the remaining citizens, and the city declares itself insolvent. Taken under the jurisdiction of state authorities, Ashibetsu citizens form city restructuring organizations, but even this is hopeless.

The unpayable debt problem has become a chronic drain on community resources. Taxes are drastically raised. Company bankruptcies skyrocket. Why should I and my children have to sacrifice ourselves for this debt! We have no choice but to leave! Soon, the population plummets, unemployment climbs, and resentment leads to crime. Neigbouring communities start to gossip that Ashibetsu is a dangerous town and warn eachother not to go out there at night alone.

Ashibetsu has become increasingly dependent on the state government. Independence has become untenable.

Ashibetsu citizens have lost the battle against the three evils: indifference, inactivity, and unawareness. Incapable of negotiating and consolidating cooperative ties with surrounding communities, Ashibetsu gains a reputation as 'the good-for-nothing town'. Private enterprises go bankrupt and the local government is paralysed into inaction.

Ashibetsu has become the place that can't support itself anymore.

The citizens of Ashibetsu failed to envision a new future and mobilize themselves towards its creation. People left, businesses went bust, companies pulled out of the area, employment opportunities dropped and the town

degenerated.

A mood of despair has gripped the town. Local facilities including education and welfare have been sacrificed in the face of unpayable debts. Citizens have become increasingly skeptical and mistrusting of government officials and have lost pride in being Ashibetsu citizens. Nonetheless, I believe this scenario will not come about because Ashibetsu people will be mobilized by their love of the hometown to prevent this worst-case scenario.

Local government drafted plans to boost tourism, but tourists found the attractions boring and never came back. Everything the council tried their hands at failed. The town slipped back into its old ways -- "pacified from the peaceful lifestyle" -- *heiwa-boke* (平和ボケ) and "selfishness" -- *riko-shugi* (利己主義).

Changing the town's catchphrase from "Ashibetsu the mining town" to "Ashibetsu the tourist spot" did not work. Instead Ashibetsu became known as "the town that failed at mining ... and tourism". The only thing to be seen in Ashibetsu now are the weeds and old people. Ashibetsu is like a cowboy western where prairie grass rolls through the town and you can hear the wind howling mercilessly. Chilly!

Ashibetsu becomes absorbed by surrounding communities. Ashibetsu as such, no longer exists.

The idea of a worst-case scenario future for Ashibetsu is too terrible to even contemplate.

From the sample of worst-case scenarios, the emergent pattern points to a mood of pessimism, expected to manifest in the future in loss of population -- especially the young and skilled; and loss of employment opportunities, ridicule from neighbouring communities, and eventual degeneration into a ghost-town.

4.4.3.3   Most realistic futures

For approximately 40% of respondents, the most likely future was the same as the worst-case images. Below is a selection of most realistic futures images as described by katayaburi respondents.

I think the probability is relatively small, but I can imagine the rise of a new leader in Ashibetsu who inspires citizens with a revived sense of hope. The Canadian World debt has not dissappeared, but improved policy prevents the once unstoppable outmigration and a reconceptualization of the debt problem means that people are less intimidated by it. It no longer constitutes an irretractable problem. According to another scenario, the local government will be much the same as it is now. Ashibetsu will become a small town of the elderly only and then eventually decline into a ghost town. A less pessimistic likely scenario imagined an Ashibetsu that would still be livable a long as the surrounding natural environment was still intact and cared for.

The future is a crude extrapolation of present trends. The most likely future reality for Ashibetsu would see the Canadian World debt still being paid for by future generations who would continue complaining about how hard it was to live in Ashibetsu now. Life would be reduced to the level of day-to-day subsistence. The possibility of social transformation seems improbable. Life in general however has settled down in Ashibetsu. Living continues to be relatively carefree thanks to the town's natural environment.

Sports will be a prominent feature of life in the future Ashibetsu. Independently operated sales distribution routes for local produced agricultural goods will have been established. Medical facilities will be provided for more than the 1990s. The new generation of workers will be better skilled and highly motivated for continuing education. A greater spirit of community cooperation will contribute to the revitalization of Ashibetsu.

Population continued to dwindle to 15,000 or 16,000. The name of Ashibetsu would still exist despite having amalgamated with the closest two or three neighbouring towns. Survival is seen in sticking together and forming inter-community alliances. Eventually, Ashibetsu would be demoted from city to town status, and finally to a village.

Another imagined a likely future after all former coal mining related workers had died off, leaving fortunes to the next generation who would unlock and use inherited money to benefit the community. For another, an ageing population would no longer be perceived as a 'problem', but become the natural state of affairs for Ashibetsu. Another envisioned a future 'already made by the children of Ashibetsu'. The future is conceived teleologically as a final destination in time, not as an on-going process. Ultimately, the respondent reported "a future which repeats the past", and a future beyond his/her imagination -- making a realistic assessment out of reach. In another optimistic vision, Ashibetsu has matured with its own "unique characteristics" -- *dokujisei* (独自性), no longer the slave to other people's images and philosophies.

4.4.4 Summary of section III

Several key issues emerged from the images of the future questionnaires and interviews. Both local government and katayaburi perceive Ashibetsu's futures problematic in essentially similar terms. Although *katayaburi*-generated futures images displayed relatively low levels of perceptual-richness, especially with preferred futures images, it was indicated that better futures can be imaged and that the possibility of social transformation to a different type of societal paradigm is not to be feared but embraced and creatively produced. It also became apparent that optimistic futures images are particularly well-developed in Ashibetsu, even among the *katayburi*, originally hypothesized as potential change agents.

4.5 Inadequacies of methodology

The first problem with data collection was the difficulty of the questions themselves -- especially the terms which had to be 'invented' from English derived futures terminologies into their nearest Japanese counterparts. Conceptually, many of these were unfamiliar to Ashibetsu respondents. Many respondents reported to have found the questions too difficult especially the section on myth and metaphor.

In retrospect, the questionnaire was longer than it should have been.

Qualitative questioning is relatively unfamiliar to Japan and Ashibetsu, where most surveys involve YES/NO, or multiple-choice responses. The degrees of abstractedness and imagination required for an honest attempt at this questionnaire was, in retrospect, unrealistically ambitious. As a follow up to this investigation it is recommended that priority be given to personal interviews.

Mention must also be made of the katayaburi social subgroup. In retrospect, it is difficult to know how unconventional, idiosyncratic or radical the *katayaburi* respondents in this investigation were in actuality. Was this a case of mistaken identity, does the true *katayaburi* not exist in small-town Japan, or has even the katayaburi internalized the dominant discourses?

Conducting interviews was also problematic. On the one hand, the Japanese can be guarded when sharing private opinions and experiences with strangers, especially with a non-Japanese. On the other hand, it has also been the experience of this researcher, that many Japanese find it easier to share intimate details with a non-Japanese than with somebody 'too close to home. However, reaching this level of honesty and frankness can be a time-consuming process not achieved with a single meeting.

Lastly, it was felt that futures-imaging workshops involving multiple participants from the Ashibetsu community, taken through several stages of one of a number of possible futures imaging techniques, would have provided vastly richer material in the forms of scenarios and action plans (Boulding and Boulding, 1995, p. 100). However, due to logistical constraints workshops were beyond the scope of this Masters project.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented the results from a triangulated data collection which included illustrative and interpreted Foucauldian narratives from field observations conducted in the study area over a twelve month period, several texts and 26 questionnaire/interviews administered to *katayaburi* Ashibetsu residents. From the data compiled, a limited number of focused issues became evident. Evident were an oppressive communication climate ruled over by past

communication modes tied to the coal mining days; a panoptic social environment where order, conformity and safety are valorized and internalized by citizens in general; a relationship of antagonism between local government and many katayaburi whose causes remain ambiguous and/or unarticulated; a local government tied to past corporatist-oriented strategies and reluctance to acknowledge past failures; a generally pessimistic outlook for the futures of the Ashibetsu community, in which the worst-case "collapse" scenario would see the once prosperous city degenerate into a virtual ghost-town. Also, to assist the efforts of future researchers, a number of limitations encountered in the data collection methodologies were presented. The data complied at this point also form the basis for critical responses to the three core research questions which entail exploring the difference between official and katayaburi futures images, the identification of 'virtual fractures' in Ashibetsu's futures problematique, from which a prototype transformative communicative age model specific to Ashibetsu can be reconstructed.

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

This concluding chapter presents a critical analysis of the issues raised in this thesis as based on the findings from chapter 4. The discussion submits significant findings from the previous chapter to a poststructural analysis using Foucauldian concepts integrated within the framework of the four layers of the Causal Layered Analysis method. In-depth and critical responses to the central three research questions are presented while also attending to some of their main implications. Of particular importance to this chapter is the task of isolating Foucauldian virtual fractures in Ashibetsu's communication/futures images problematique. These virtual fractures subsequently form the foundations for a prototype reconstructive futures scenario, based in part on Stevenson and Lennie's (1995) prototype Communicative Age model and from the transformative potential recognized in the Causal Layered Analysis method. The prospects for the realization of this aternative scenario is briefly discussed. A final objective of this chapter is to identify and highlight further areas of potentially valuable research heuristically generated from this study.

5.1   Introduction

The three central research questions around which this investigation was originally organized were:

1. How do futures images differ between official and the katayaburi subgroup and what are the implications of these findings?

2. What communication issues impact upon the potentiation of authentic and alternative futures in Ashibetsu and what 'virtual fractures' can be identified in Ashibetsu's futures images problematique?

3. What communication futures strategies can be deployed to facilitate the opening up of alternative and authentic community futures in the study area?

Critical responses are provided in the following sections. However, before answering the questions, a restatement of the key issues from the previous chapters follows. As a preamble to other chapters, chapter 1 introduced the problematique under investigation, a brief background to the study area and the context of Japan's post-bubble social, political and economic environment; the central research questions that arose from a preliminary analysis of the study area; and an outline of Causal Layered Analysis, the poststructural-derived methodology adopted in this study.

Chapter 2 reviewed and analysed the research on futures images -- shown as an important new method and field of research emerging from futures thinking -- including Polak's general theory of the image and its role as a key dynamic in historical processes. Also reviewed were the general elements that collectively constitute the Causal Layered Analysis including Inayatullah's (1990) three dimensions model of futures research: the empirical-predictive, cultural-interpretive, and the critical-poststructural. Principle concepts from Foucault's 'worldly poststructuralism' were summarized as were relevant concepts from the literature on myth and metaphor as useful conceptual tools in understanding social realities and the conceptualization of futures images.

In Chapter 3, the poststructuralist theoretical perspective, the method of analysis -- Causal Layered Analysis (CLA), and data collection procedures were outlined in detail. It was originally explained that the prototype CLA method is derived from the poststructural movement, that its primary emphasis is not the prediction of futures but to open up transformative spaces to alternative, authentic futures which can subsequently be shaped into scenarios and plans of concrete action. It was also pointed out that CLA offers a range of analytical techniques from the 'poststructural tool-box'. Moreover, effective use of the CLA requires that one not overemphasize or become trapped by its four-layered structure, but rather, to use the method flexibly. Briefly restated, the empirical, the interpretive, the critical and the other-than-rational mythic/metaphoric dimensions should be used when deemed appropriate. Chapter 3 also described the triangulated data collection strategy employed by the author in order to investigate and identify those salient issues pertaining to Ashibetsu's futures images problematique.

Chapter 4 presented and analyzed data collected from the Ashibetsu community deriving from focussed observations; futures-relevant texts; and questionnaire and interviews. Data from observations and texts were presented in the form of Foucauldian 'narratives' and data from questionnaire and interviews summarized the personal futures images of Ashibetsu katayaburi idiosyncratic thinkers. Chapter 5 discusses significant issues emerging from the findings of the previous chapter, responds to the central research questions, and offers suggestions for further research. Stylistically, this chapter distances itself from descriptive and interpretive modes of analysis in preference for a critical, mixed-genres, exploratory narrative style.

5.2 Discussion: Integrating Ashibetsu's futures images along four layers

The overall findings from this investigation produced four discrete effects. The first effect is that we are now able to understand much of the dynamics between the four layers of the Causal Layered Analysis -- the litany, social causes, worldview, and myth and metaphor -- that collectively make up the futures discourse in Ashibetsu. Secondly, we are able to discern much about the relationship between official and katayaburi futures images and the implications of their similarities and the tensions which occur at the points of confrontation between these points of view. The third effect derives from the deployment of Foucauldian poststructural concepts in conjunction with the CLA framework which have facilitated the opening up and unmasking of multiple virtual fractures, 'fissures' or 'lines of fault' in Ashibetsu's futures problematique. The identification of virtual fractures, gives rise to the fourth effect of this investigation, that is, it is now possible to mobilize these fractures and shape them into a prototype alternative communication futures model specific to the study area.

It is recalled that the original problematique confronting Ashibetsu concerns the community's revitalization program in the face of Japan's post-bubble environment, which in the local case of the study area, has seen the demise of the town's core coal-mining industry; a loss of population from more than 70,000 to nearly 20,000 within two decades; the burden of a ￥6 billion debt

from the failure of third sector financed theme park Canadian World, considered a pivotal strategy in the transformation of Ashibetsu from a coal town to a tourist destination paradigm; and a range of other negatively impacting social pathologies.

Before the investigator entered the study area local informants had reported a crisis between the local government, ordinary people, and the less conventional katayaburi, vis-a-vis strategies for revitalizing the community's futures. This problematic situation necessarily involved the role of futures images in and for the community. The following sub-section attempts to briefly integrate findings pertaining to Ashibetsu's futures images/revitalization problematique into the four-layered structure outlined in the Inayatullah's (1998a) Causal Layered Analysis prototype.

5.2.1   The official perspective

Official descriptions of Ashibetsu's problem centered on the meta-theme of Ashibetsu's survival and continuation as a community. Local government, ordinary citizens and even young children, were found to express the very real fear that life in Ashibetsu was at best, rapidly declining into untenability, and at worst, was degenerating into a 'ghost-town' from which the majority of the young and the skilled had outmigrated. The official solution at this level was to implement a series of community revitalization programs based on thorough and ingenious citizen surveys.

5.2.2   Social causes

The threat of Ashibetsu's degeneration into a ghost-town and eventual extinction as a viable human community, had given rise to a range of social causes which tended to cluster around a grid of specific issues that included the failure of Canadian World; the more general issue of Ashibetsu's lack of economic vitality; and outmigration of population. Notably, Ashibetsu's localized problematique was generally perceived as inextricably linked to the nation's post-bubble economic recession. This, at least, was the line of argument promoted by the local government via the conduit of its influential publication, Kouhou Ashibetsu. Consistently, the plight of Ashibetsu's future

was contextualized as a microcosm of a nationwide economic recession, presented to the Japanese public by the national Diet as a problem of 'bad debts' (*furyou-saiken*). Local government offcials had also framed the problem of Ashibetsu as a failure of the people to accept and adopt persuasive messages to 'try harder' -- ganbaru, and 'to work together with government'. Local government promoted itself as knowing the answers to the problems and claimed to have responsibly disseminated a variety of strategies to re-vitalize the economy. However, according to government officials the people had failed to mobilize in accordance with government prescribed recommendations. At both macro and micro-geographic levels, Japan's problem had been neatly framed solely in terms of economics. Unsaid was the possibility that national and local crises as manifested in the superficial symptoms of poor economic indicators, were rooted in deeper structural crises. This point of view, necessarily gave rise to solutions in the form of stimulatory incentives to save less and resume consuming at pre-bubble economy rates.

5.2.3   Problems and solutions

It is at the social causes level that most solutions to perceived problems are articulated, most of which emanate from Ashibetsu's local government initiatives. Ingeniously and industrially, Ashibetsu planners had administered extensive quantitative surveys to the local population which in turn were used to substantiate the formulation of an umbrella vision for Ashibetsu's future. This future consisted of five organizing sub-plans embodied in slogans conspicuously worded in the English language: Eco-Town, Powerful Town, Human Town, Culture Town, and Challenge Town. From these, concrete plans of action were to be generated (see subsection 4.3.4, "September 1998 Edition"). The previous chapter (see subsection 4.3.4, "March 1998 Edition") had shown local government surveys to be fixated with statistical configurations that support existing structures, perpetuate the paradigms of the past, and failed to incorporate alternative futures images or open up any transformative spaces from which new futures could develop. This Five Point Plan as prescribed by Ashibetsu's local government presents to the Ashibetsu public, the image of a caring government, deeply commited to planning the future in accordance with the community's wishes and needs.

From a poststructuralist view, a closer reading of the plan exposes it as a form of propaganda, whose willing deployment of the empty and mystifying slogans of Eco- Powerful-Human-Culture and Challenge Town, fails despite its apparent seriousness to reflect the concerns of the citizens, much less the katayaburi and marginalized, who variously see their personal and community futures differently. Noticably, planners fail to deal with past failures involving the attempted transition from a coal to a tourism-led paradigm, and the conspicuous failure of local government to communicate and consult with Ashibetsu citizens vis-a-vis the planning and construction of the theme park Canadian World, upon which the future economic viability of the community was perceived to rest. At the same, there is scant commitment to acknowledging the serious and systemic failures of communication before the public. Implied in the communicative vacuum is that past failures are the result of collective failure, not local government. The effect is that the authority of official planners and the legitimacy of the plans they produce and execute, remains unquestioned and the the planner remains as always, unaccountable. The task for the future, as local government would have it, is for everybody to 'try better next time'. The fundament of trying within a renewed framework of power relations, in which communcation is truly participatory, equitable, and de-regulated from officialdom, remains unsaid and unresolved.

5.2.4   *Furusato* and a return to origins strategy

A prominent solution in Ashibetsu's revitalization discourse included the strategy of promoting Ashibetsu as *furusato* -- (town-making) whose dubious history is unmasked by Robertson (1991, see subsection 2.4.2) as the empty slogan to fill the hole in Japan's postwar identity, which, with the collapse of the bubble economy has achieved even greater momentum, yet, though promising much, delivers little for the future. Lifetime education has also been posited as a solution. The aim here is to revitalize the economy by ensuring an educated, or 'skilled' population at all age levels in an approximation of Foucault's 'bio-power', the form of power the local government, invisibly but ubiquitously, holds over populations of docile bodies, a community's individuals subject to constant surveillance (Allen, 1998), "more powerful yet easier to direct and subjugate, and also more calculable and easier to know, a predictable object for the quasi-scientific knowledge of the social or human sciences"

(Allen, in Moss, 1998, p. 175).

In this strategy appealing to a return to origins (原点), cultural beginnings -- or in Dator's (in Inayatullah, 1993b, p. 242) terminology a "reversion to the past", inconsistencies can be observed. Firstly, from a poststructural point of view, the notion that origins exist in the first place is problematic. Even if originary points can be recalled and retrieved, archaic ways of knowing and doing romanticize oppressive past realities and afford limited practical utility to communication of the here-and-now and future. Furthermore, we observe in the furusato-zukuri home-town making strategy (see chapter 2, subsection 2.4.2) and its implicit reversion to past realities that the use of the term "town-making" presents us with a misnomer. It is the propaganda that functions by deflecting attention away from the possibility of making a new kind of future. It's cosiness appeals to the dependence-orientedness nature of the Japanese psyche as constructed by past dominant elites, to the sense that a business-as-usual stance towards making the future will suffice, and that a redeployment of the true Japanese character is the preferred future path.

5.2.5   Population

Analyses of Ashibetsu's futures highlighted the centrality of population as a problem. Notions of population were perceived by all but a minority of katayaburi as a primary problem in Ashibetsu's future. Population as statistical entity is strictly monitored on a month-by-month basis in the local government's monthly newsletter Kouhou Ashibetsu. Population is variously represented to a concerned public as outmigrating and ageing. Outmigration of Ashibetsu's population, especially the young and skilled to metropolitan centres, can be reframed as the inevitable outcome of new macro and micro realities and transformed from problem to natural cyclic phenomenon. Does population need to be grown or even be stable?

A major premise of the Causal Layered Analysis hypothesizes that how one frames the problem creates the solution (Inayatullah, 1998a). We borrow from Boulding's (1995) concept of the familia faber, in which the family is reconceptualized not as the victim of externalities and shifting global forces, but as maker of the future. The family is reconstituted as the site from which

new concepts about futures-making can be generated. Similarly, conceptions of Ashibetsu's population as a problem, when viewed alternatively, assume different meanings.

Notably, Ashibetsu's population loss is an inevitable consequence of two phenomena. The first is that Ashibetsu's population attained a maximum of 70,000 in the first place as a direct consequence of the then prosperous coal industry. Take away the coal, and the employment that first brought population in the first place, and what one is left with is a natural social phenomenon. Functionally, historical Ashibetsu was constructed upon a functionalist paradigm -- in which the function, in the form of mining, has become obsolete as the consequence of new global energy imperatives. The loss of population masks a hidden perception of a loss of capacity to repay outstanding loans through citizens taxes for insurmountable debts amassed by the excesses of the bubble economy, in particular of Canadian World.

The second 'cause' reflects the particular problematic experienced by the young in Ashibetsu -- the so-called shinjinrui included. Ashibetsu's current institutions, prioritise the social needs of the generation and gender who built them up from the defeat of World War Two. The needs of young Japanese youth are sophisticated, postmodern, mediated through technological infrastructure, largely left unsatisfied in Ashibetsu. Entertainment venues are few. What does exist caters for the *oyaji* -- the traditional 'old man' of a bygone era. For the contemporary Japanese youth to feel satisfied in a holistic sense involves positioning him or herself close to the 'where the action is'. Meaningful employment can be accessed through same or similar aged networks where interpersonal communication is less problematic than between larger age differences.

The ageing of Ashibetsu's population is also perceived as a social problem, and a symptom of degeneration. According to one informant in this investigation, there is a social myth in Japan that the aged revert to a second childhood. This social myth seems to be particularly strong in Japan as compared to other nations and cultures. Perhaps this is one example of a social myth that becomes social reality as the aged fulfill the lowest expectation of them.

5.2.6 Deconstructing Canadian World

The problem of Canadian World warrants special attention in view of its impact upon how Ashibetsu is perceived by its people and local government and the unique micro-problematique this theme park presents to the community. Especially relevant with respect to the Canadian World problem are the comments made earlier by Inayatullah and Stevenson (1998) who spoke of the "tension caused by the pervasive tendency to colonise our minds through the mainly Western (but not exclusively) owners of capitol who bankroll the likes of the Disney Corporation and, on the other, the search for clear, truthful thinking detached from oppressive, artifical ideologies and other insistent myths which masquerade as realities" (Inayatullah and Stevenson, 1998, p. 108). Based on the above observations, we find in Canadian World the result of the ideology of corporatism parasitic upon the community of Ashibetsu who were kept out of the consultation process about the theme of the park, its implications for the community, and contingency plans in case the venture failed.

We are also reminded of Lonsdale's (1991) critique of Japan's 'heterotopian' technological super-project, the Multi Function Polis (MFP) planned for construction Adelaide, Australia. For in Ashibetsu's Canadian World super-project, financed by both private industry and local government in collusion, we find the same vagueness of the conceptual schema that went into the planning and conceptualization of the MFP, which according to Lonsdale (1991),

Like other post-modernist projects the Multi-function Polis has no centre or essence. In its indeterminacy, fluidity and multiplicity of forms, the MFP concept is inherently ungraspable. As an Age editorial suggested, the MFP resembles a 'wandering will-o-the-wisp': glowingly enticing to some, spookily scary to others, tanatalizingly elusive and perhaps ultimately delusive (Lonsdale, 1991, p. 86).

Similarly, in the current discourses pertaining to Canadian World, couched in terms of what shall we do with it now and how can we still make it profitable?'-- the question of how the theme park came about in the first place

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and who was it really intended for, remains noticeably unasked. Yet, without asking these awkward questions, offensive to the proponents of Canadian World and other projects like it, the initial conditions that led to its possibility will never be acknowledged. In future, other Canadian Worlds can be justified, despite past failures.

Take the example of Osaka in 1999. Japan's post-bubble recession has impacted heavily on Osaka over the last decade. Despite well-documented knowledge that most of Japan's theme parks have suffered enormous and irretrievable financial losses, Osaka is presently building a multi-billion dollar Universal Studios theme park in the outskirts of the city, equipped with skyrise hotels, shopping centres, multimedia studios, and virtually every other entertainment strategy.

Let us retrace some of the initial conditions that led to the eventuality of Canadian World. In the interests of clarity, Canadian World is not so much Canadian World as it is the recreation of the setting of the movie Anne of Green Gables, with red-haired Annie as the central character from Charlottestown. During the height of Japan's bubble economy when fashions and fads came and went too quickly to reflect on their origins -- other than from the imaginings of Japan's corporatist trend planners like Dentsu -- the real-life setting for Anne of Green Gables in Charlottestown emerged as a significant tourist fashion among Japan's fabled office ladies (OLs) and young couples. Anne is red-haired, feisty and a role model for young Japanese women who feel repressed in Japanese society. But above all for the Japanese consumer, she is cute (kawaii). Despite the nebulous roots of the theme park that is now Canadian World, it appears as a taboo to ask the question: How did we stake the financial and social future of an entire community with a small population of 22,000, on a tourist fad involving an adolescent girl in a distant country and time, and amplify this into a massive theme park? Speculatively, this is a project premised on the unrecognised collusion between Japan's oyaji -- the 'old men' that direct multinational corporations, head think tanks, effectively steer the nation's economy -- with Japan's young women.

To illustrate how this collusion operates in the day-to-day realities of Japan's corporate world, I introduce a personal recollection. During the early 1990s,

while in the employ of a major Japanese media and communications corporation, the impact of the collapsing bubble had just started to affect the corporate world. The affiliated organization to which I was attached decided that to cope with difficult times, employee redundancies would soon become inevitable. Ingeniously, management levels decided to lay off most of the young males and females with skills and expertise in the emerging multimedia and communications technologies of 3-dimensional computer graphics, CD-ROM and digital video. What remained was a staff of middle-aged male employees and young females. The males were mostly computer illiterate and struggled to keep abreast with the impact of multimedia technologies in their industry, whilst the young females operated the telephones, received company clients, served drinks, and took care of 'the little things'.

There is also another condition that made Canadian World possible. It is the myth that Japan's bubble-economy, was not in fact a bubble, but the authentic manifestation of a superior culture, in which, once the financial and technology superstructure had been fixed in place, the future would be found in leisure. Denied is the reality that today's superstructures are tomorrow's un-dismantable burdens. Denied is the reality that the future is not achieved in a single moment, it must be continually and iteratively rethought, reconceptualised, rebuilt to conform with the chaotic nature of life. In microcosm, this teleological paradigm is reflected in the very nature of Canadian World. Canadian World today, cannot be arbitrarily dismantled and transformed into Space World, or Pokemon World tomorrow. Names and the infrastructures that accompany the names, carry a weight and momentum that are not conducive to coping through difficult times.

5.2.7 Worldviews

Slaughter (1996c) defines and illustrates the nature of a worldview as:

> the basic orientation of a culture as expressed in its values, assumptions, ways of knowing etc ... When take naturalistically the worldview appears authoritative. However, when approached with the tools of modern scholarship, the constitution of world views is laid open. While this may lead to an initial loss of respect for authority and precedence, there are also new opportunities to put aside dysfunctional aspects and to begin to 'design' a worldview that may be more appropriate for post-modern conditions. 'The future'

may be the ultimate design problem   (Slaughter, 1996c, p. 346).

In the case of Ashibetsu, regardless of the imager, the basic orientation generally corresponded closley to the the dominant discourse of economics and Japan Inc.'s postwar 'catch-up' and overtake model. Growth of any kind was good; a bigger population was better than a smaller population; outwardly genki humans are preferred over the wise or compassionate because the more genki, the more economically productive, the more pliable to the dictates of economic reason; more social control is better than less because control contributes to productivity. However, the emergent signs of a new type of consciousness were also present. A singular and dominant corporatist worldview is experienced as fragmenting to alternative micro-worldviews. Recalled here is the movement in Hokkaido for an abolition of Japan's postwar 'company man' driven society. This radical proposal suggests that corporatist motivated lifestyles should be replaced by "local lifestyles" (Node Forum, 1999, p. 58), which interpreted in their wider sense need not mean provincial and rural, but merely beyond Japan's materialist-consumerist worldview.

Building upon Slaughter's (1996c) framework of the worldview, we understand how the normalized Ashibetsu worldview has drawn from the nation's basic orientation of corporatism in which Canadian World is the ultimate symbol of Ashibetsu's local government and big industry's collusion with the nation's postmodern obsession with theme parks sporting exotic and foreign identities such as Spain Village and the Holland inspired Huis von Bosch.

A brief listing of alternative worldviews identified during the course of this investigation are however not entirely unproblematic. Ashibetsu was also perceived as an international town; Ashibetsu as the representative of Japanese style Big Nature; and Ashibetsu as the promise of a lifestyle unobtainable in urban Japan, the kind of place where the overworked salaryman in the service of the nation's economic performance comes to recharge his batteries before going back to the inevitable corporatist lifestyle. In this instance, it is though there is a realization that communities like Ashibetsu can never be a part of the super-industrial worldview that Tokyo has come to represent to the world, and therefore, as consolation to the impossibility of partaking in the 'true' Japanese reality, a second best, a not-quite-authentic reality will suffice. Inevitably, it is an admission that Tokyo reality is worthy, that Ashibetsu reality is less so.

Largely unacknowledged is the legitimacy of other kinds of realities outside of the singular modernistic version that is valorized in and by Tokyo.

The worldview that Japan seems to be has modelled its futures -- albeit in pastiche form -- on an image rooted in America's Golden Age experiment in modernity (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 30), itself an extension of enlightenment ideals. As Chambon (1999) notes, the "Enlightenment was and is a highly gendered term", where "Only men were in fact envisioned as ideal knowers" (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 31). Japan's postwar ultra-corporatist, industrialist, consumerist worldview too, is a product of elite male planners, bureaucrats, politicians, corporatists and technologists. In contemporary terms, it is necessary to imagine how Japan's postwar futures images might have been framed if the designers had been other than the male successors of Japan's defeated war elite.

5.2.8   Mythic and metaphoric perspectives

In a previous section (see subsection 2.2.3.2), Bezold's (1996) poetic description of the role of the pre-rational in futures images was noted. He said: "A positive vision of the future can emerge out of a reversal of assumptions, out of a metaphor, a poem, a song, a bumper sticker; out of two or three core values (eg. life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness); or out of an individual's image of a perfect life" (Bezold, in Slaughter, 1996c, p. 171). Markley and Harman (1982) note how the social constructions of reality in the form of myth and metaphor can enslave individuals and societies to recognized metaphors, especially contemporary economic man as servant to industrial metaphors (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 45-46).

Specific to Ashibetsu's futures images, other-than-rational social mythologies found to support images of the above reported official, social cause and worldiew perspectives reveal the existence of a binary social mythology. On the one hand, Ashibetsu's social mythology is supported by the national matrix of macro-myths including the vestigial ideologies of Japanese identity and uniqueness, in which it is implied that to be Japanese means to be fixed in the immutable core characteristic of Japaneseness; and by Japan's postwar corporatist, company man national mythology. Here, Ashibetsu is servant to

the both ancient notions of Japaneseness and to industrial metaphors.

At the level of local myth it was found that Ashibetsu was tied to and sustained by a matrix of myths ranging from the legacy of Ashibetsu's coal mining days, in part enshrined in the local symbols of the citizen charter and the city emblem in which the vestigial remnants of a modernistic, industrial, male-dominated, inflexible, growth means bigger, catch up with the US outlook in which social orderliness, discipline of the self and conformity to social norms are valorized. Finally, local mythologies that delineate social realities are in turn supported by a middle range of mythologies in which Ashibetsu is contextualized within Japan's northern region of Hokkaido, variously mythologized as the "Big Land" that offers the promise of the challenge, the pioneering spirit -- kaitaku seishin (開拓精神) of Hokkaido's predecessors.

The message from these findings points to the imperative of imaging and articulating new social myths and metaphors more conducive to postmodern social realities. Judge (1996) confidently opines that the real breakthroughs in social transformations will be mediated through new metaphors, giving rise to what he (Judge) calls the "conceptual scaffolding" necessary for empowering ordinary people "to frame their own development pathways" (Judge, 1996, p. 606). The act of imaging and articulating releases the newly empowered individual away from the enslavement of officially sanctioned myth and metaphor, promulgated and perpetuated in the interests of universe-maintainence.

Instead of the metaphors that refer to community degeneration; future-blindness; and the burden of dominant interpretations of history, newly articulated metaphors will be for what Judge (1996) calls "future survival", or "psychic thrival" and function catalystically to engender new forms of psychosocial organization" not only amongst the "most disadvantaged" but amongst those whose social philosophies are concerned with better futures for all peoples over business-as-usual futures that continue to favour dominant futures elites (Judge, 1996, p. 606).

We conclude this section with a question: Can Ashibetsu, other peripheral

communities and indeed Japan, slough-off the shackles of past paradigms or are they chronically captive of atavistic mythologies and metaphors? Are they indeed willing accomplices in the belief of a unique Japanese spirit, essence, identity, self-image, an idealized past that -- even if a constructed and known as an illusion -- is the preferred option as the building block to a singular future based on the biased histories? As radically suggested by MacCormack (1993), the mere recognition by the Japanese that their history is founded upon the illusions of racial homogeneity, a pure Japanese essence and that the unfolding of Japanese historical processes is the mere playing out and gradual unfolding of inevitable Japanese uniqueness will itself open up future potential for other ways of being Japanese.

5.3   Responses to core research questions

5.3.1   Research question 1: *How do futures images differ between official and the katayaburi subgroup and what are the implications of these findings?*

It was hypothesized from the outset of this investigation, that the katayaburi sub-group constituted an emergent group of change agents with the potential to introduce social transformation into Japan's obselete 'catch-up and overtake' futures image. Prior to entering the study area of Ashibetsu, local informants reported high degrees of dissonance between the ordinary people and local government regarding the community's futures images and strategies for revitalization.

In response to this research question, it was found that differences in futures images do exist between the official and the katayaburi. However, rather than maintaining an antagonistic binary relationship as initially hypothesized, findings from this study indicated rather, that official and katayaburi futures images concur as much as they differentiate. On the whole, the assumptions that underlined the non-conventional *katayaburi* futures images were characterised by high degrees of concurrence with dominant and official futures images. However, significance is recognised even in minor differences.

One of the main differences was that whereas the local government promoted the ideology that it was the role of local government to pre-determine certain

kinds of futures, local *katayaburi* tended to report that Ashibetsu's futures problematique had been precipitated by local government. Local government then, were reframed as part of the problem. Finding solutions then, implied that it would be ordinary citizens, not local government, who should have the responsibility of creating futures alternative to those promoted by local government.

Another significant difference was that whereas the local government tended to perceive the future as the extension of past paradigms and the revitalization of the community in economic terms where economic vitality is achieved through individual genki (health; vitality; wellness; dynamism); a reversion to the status of furusato and the revival of ancient festivals; planning through statistical rigour, societal orderliness and other industrial-modernistic images; a minority of katayaburi were able to image significantly 'other' futures. These images, although of low radicalness, represent embryonic forms of a new dissenting voice, from which transformation to alternative and authentic futures can be achieved.

How should the concept of genki be understood from a poststructural perspective as it applies to the fundamental notions underlying this project of revitalization? The poststructural perspective also asks 'What is revitalization?' *Genki* is a surface attribute of the human body that is expressed outwardly, genki is to be seen -- not quietly held within oneself. To be genki is to be outwardly genki. *Genki* is explicitly tied to sub-textual notions of being vital, beholding potential earning and consuming potential, displayative to other individuals the charismatic value of being genki. Genki is used in the current fiscal recession for its quantitative dimensions, rather than its qualitative. Also implied is that Japan and Ashibetsu's former bubble days genki serviced the excesses of the bubble economy and that the unique characteristic of Japanese genki has been rendered dysfunctional by external influences.

Yet, present circumstances have unmasked the pre-bubble genki as a fake, an illusion, that never was. It has been revealed as an economic paradigm that was pathologically money-making oriented, to the detriment of the human's true physical and mental well-being. Take epiphenomena such as sudden-death syndrome (過労死), and the loans story as examples. It should be recognised

that bubble Japan was chronically unhealthy, rotting in fact, from within. Therefore, what is needed is not more genki and more re-vitalization, but the recognition for the need of a new species of vitality, a new and authentic understanding of vitality. This entails first deconstruction, followed by reconfiguration of the concept of genki/vitalization. In everyday communicative behaviour, genki is outwardly expressed by smiling and embodied in the contemporary catchphrase "the power of the smiling face" (笑顔のチカラ). One no longer smiles as natural inclination, but because to do so increases one's chances of making 35% plus more money than the non-smiler.

According to katayaburi, Ashibetsu's futures did not have to be solidified within the growth ideology of the power elite where the community is conceptualized as what Logan and Molotch (1987, in Williams and Bloomquist, 1997) call a "growth machine" -- a local power structure oriented towards the accumulation of profit" whereby "wealth is extracted and transferred from the general public to those in power" (p. 297).

One reason is for relatively low images-difference may be that futures images have already undergone partial appropriation by official discourses. Berger and Luckman (1966) note in their theory of deviance (see chapter 2, subsection 2.2.4) in which they posit the concepts of annihilation and legitimation. Here, the latter "maintains the reality of the socially constructed universe" and "nihilation denies the reality of whatever phenomena or interpretations of phenomena do not fit into that universe" (p. 132). In more advanced form, nihilation aims to account for all deviant definitions of reality in terms of concepts belonging to one's own universe, a procedure whose final goal is to "incorporate the deviant conceptions within one's own universe, and thereby to liquidate them ultimately. The deviant conceptions must, therefore, be translated into concepts derived from one's own universe" (p. 133).

Another reason can be found in the nature of Japan's social paradigm. The nation's power and futures-controlling elites have created a societal framework which normalizes harmony at the cost of chaos and conflict. This notion will be expanded in the response to the next research question.

Another obstacle to alternative images-generation is the availability of

non-official and radical futures images. The constricting nature of extant social institutions including an educational system that priortizes rote-learning; the all-encompassing and enveloping nature of Japan's apparently paternalistic, benevolent and ultimately infantilizing political system, in which the individual is effectively stripped of political awareness and knowhow, and lacks the conceptual tools with which to effectively participate in political matters; and the panoptic umbrella of a society that promotes the illusion of perpetual social harmony -- *wa* (和) over conflict, difference, open debate and compromise.

Perhaps one can account for this as symbolic of a situation in which the difference is yet to be articulated (due to lack of futures images sources, lack of communication with others in which to 'work through' images in embryonic form) and rather than image-dissonance, what is observed is a manifestation of resistance against the dominator model.

The initial conditions of possibility -- including the community as "growth machine" ideology of the futures-making elite -- are so entrenched into the fabric of everyday life and socialized into every aspect of the individual's life, including the young child as was shown in the text depicting images of the future from Ashibetsu youth, that there is no escape. The only 'story' to be told, derives from the dominant story. Foote and Frank (1999) note that "most people's stories draw on the dominant discourse. People have their stories set in place for them by a society that is structured through the availability of 'tellable' stories" (Foote and Frank, in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 177). Stated in stronger terms, "Dominant discourses tell people what to do ..." (p. 183). It is only when the individual is placed outside the dominant discourses and no longer knows "what is to be done" that the person reaches a position of strength and possibility that Foucault calls "no longer kowing what to do" (p. 183). But this position of "no longer knowing what to do" contravenes the Japanese sense of identity which demands the individual do things 'the Japanese way'. Cognitively placing oneself into the destabilizing situation also cuts across the localized mythology found in Ashibetsu that pertains to safety, stability, order and conformity to socially prescribed norms of what is acceptable and what is not.

Another obstacle to alternative futures images generation and systemic "nil

perception" (Malaska, 1995) can be derived from the first tenet of Polak's (1973) general theory of the image in which it is claimed that futures images are aristocratic in origin. We must interpret Polak's notion of 'aristocratic' in the widest sense and trace it back from its immediate historical location -- that of the cartel-like zaibatsu who as controllers of Ashibetsu's coal mining-driven industrial paradigm -- operated at ideological levels close to the centres of corporate and political power in Tokyo.

What are the implications of the generally low dominant/katayaburi image-dissonance and how can we make sense of this in light of a poststructural/Causal Layered Analysis framework? Taken compositely, Ashibetsu's futures images display what Malaska (1995) refers to as "nil perception" -- wherein societies lack guiding images for the future. Relevant also is Popper's (1988) "pull of the future" because rather than a community pulled by positive futures, Ashibetsu is subsumed by the burden of obselete pasts. Profoundly conspicuous was a systemic paucity of alternative images and a limited capacity to imagine and articulate truly other futures -- other than as extrapolations from immediate fears perceived in the present. New images are born of the continual processes of communicating in and between communicative environments, in which it is permissable to think, to articulate, to express, to exchange ideas challenging to the dominant for social configurations that have been articulated before. At this juncture, we need ask if there is in the micro-context of Ashibetsu, the capacity, or the will, to achieve this new dynamic social paradigm suggested above. Well known is that historically, the Japanese have boldly appropriated from other cultures and freely applied them to local needs and contexts. Nakamae's (1998) future scenarios also inform us the Japanese people have both the motivation and capacity to change, but that the nation's power structures impede the will of the people (p. 261). We also know from the findings in this investigation that the desire to introduce social transformation is strong, that dissatisfaction with dominant images is high, but that Ashibetsu citizens are generally unskilled in the operational procedures for creating futures beyond the already colonized futures of the power elites. The emergence of a new social paradigm therefore points to two candidate vectors of change. The one is catastrophe -- brought about by foreign pressure (*gai-atsu*) or irreversible and undeniable social collapse; the second is the community recognition of the necessity to

implement strategic, future-oriented plans for social transformation -- brought about by the initiatives of radical intra-community change agents.

As has been pointed out in this investigation, the Japanese sense of identity, what it means to be a Japanese, is, like the bonsai tree, continuously undergoing the acts of bondage, clipping, pruning, such that the growth of the actual tree may not exceed that of a pre-conceived notion of the bonsai tree as a prototype. Only one configuration of the human spirit is permissable to the Japanese individual, that which corresponds to the uniqueness -- nebulous as it is -- of the Japanese spirit. To be Japanese is to be dominated by singular stereotypes of self. If an individual feels him or herself to be qualitatively at odds with one's psycho-social environment, the options are self-denial, silence, pretence at normality, illusions of selfhood that can only be infringed under intoxification or social ostracization, by making friends in the form of sympathising 'outsiders', or by leaving the country.

This view is not reconfirm the Orientalist school of thought in which it is believed that the Japanese are all one and the same. On the contrary, empirical and interpretive research on Japan has shown, for one, that the shinjinrui -- the new breed of young Japanese despised and feared by the salaryman for their unJapaneseness, demonstrably lead lives and adhere to patterns of social interaction that are quantitatively and qualitatively non-conforming (Herbig and Borstoff, 1995). Young males refuse to submissively deploy honorific keigo Japanese to elders and authoritarian figures. Young Japanese females shun using the submissive female forms for the pronoun "I" by brazenly referring to their female selves as boku or ore -- explicitly male forms for "I".

Another implication is that, Ashibetsu will continue to follow the dominant guiding futures images, those very images which contributed to the bubble economy, have been exposed as currently obselete. Ashibetsu's futures will be determined as much by external forces as by internal community dynamics. In effect, Ashibetsu individuals will lead de-futurized lives imposed from without. Social realities will not be reflective of the authentic aspirations of locally-produced knowledges.

Perhaps, the only factor that could shift Ashibetsu's present trajectory, as was

suggested in Nakamae (1998), is catastrophe, or the emergence of change agents, be these from katayaburi, a new generation of radical shinjinrui, from feminism, or as one Ashibetsu katayaburi responded: "the rise of a new leader in Ashibetsu who inspires citizens with a revived sense of hope."

5.3.2 Research question 2: *What communication issues impact upon the potentiation of authentic / alternative futures in Ashibetsu and what 'virtual fractures' can be identified in Ashibetsu's futures images?*

The impossibility of communication

It is hypothesized from the findings that multifarious aspects of Ashibetsu's communication climate structurally impede the generation of alternative and authentic futures images and their realization in real-world situations. The first virtual fracture is located in Ashibetsu's meta-communication climate by using a term Irving (1999) refers to as "the impossibility of communication" (in Chambon et al, 1999, p. 29). Irving (1999) uses the term in reference to the influence of Samuel Beckett's literature on Foucault. In this context, Irving eloquently expresses the idea of the impossibility of communication in the following words: "because there is nothing to express, nothing with which to express, nothing from which to express, no power to express, no desire to express, together with the obligation to express", for the ultimate fear is the "fear of destroying an illusion of unanimity" (p. 29).

Harmony and *Wa*

With regard to Ashibetsu, the illusion of unanimity is found in the maintenance of harmony through the term *wa* (和). Unanimity, as noted previously, is strongly associated with the idea of a 'true' and original Japanese character, in which harmony and solidarity of opinion are promoted by the dominant Japanese ideology as fundaments to Japanese culture. However, from a poststructural perspective, the operation of this harmony-maintaining ideology via wa functions as a strategy of social control. Human to human communication is restricted to communication modes, styles and practices which maintain harmony, minimize chaos, conflict and open discussion, and ultimately the possibility of articulating images which function detrimentally

to carefully manipulated dominant ideologies.

Etymologically, the term *wa*, is the ancient name for the land of Japan itself -- Japan, the Land of *Wa* -- as it was formerly known. This deep myth is manifested in contemporary Japanese society in the form of supericial and perfunctory interpersonal relationships which, in social and poitical and economic terms, privileges existing power and futures-making elites and reinforces and perpetuates the initial conditions that presuppose the necessity of harmony. In effect, the strategy of *wa* precludes and ex-communicates the non-univocal voice of dissent. Social change, even when recognised as imperative, is rendered impossible because communication as the vector of change is itself impossible (Chang, 1996, p. x-xv).

Pantopic-oriented environment

From the impossibility of communication emerge inevitable by-products. The first major virtual fracture pertains to the social apparatuses of surveillance and the harmony-maintaining structures in Ashibetsu -- in a quasi-panoptic environment. Found in Ashibetsu are the attributes of the kind of societal framework that Markley and Harman (1982) refer to as "friendly facism" -- a term they define as "a managed society which rules by faceless and widely dispersed complex of warfare-welfare-industrial-communications-police bureaucracies with a technocratic ideology" (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 202). In Ashibetsu, one witnesses the constant overseeing of the population by the fear, not of the big things but of the little everyday occurences, as an unconsciously deployed, invisible, ubiquitous strategy for keeping vigilance. The watchful gaze of the local government remains entrenched in the modernist-industrialist roots of a pre-war coal-producing growth machine, embedded within Japan's catch-up and overtake the US model. In effect, the cumulative results of the three data collection strategies form a composite picture of Ashibetsu as a community with the modernistic fixation for categorization of ages; interpersonal hierarchies; a superstructure of social control; avoidance of the unplanned, unanticipated, uncontrollable, unpoliceable forces of chance and natural chaos.

Emanating from the extreme desire for social safety, promoted by local

government via danger consciousness-raising practices in the form of ubiquitous safety campaigns, where everything is potentially dangerous and hazardous. The result is a social paradigm that excludes the possibility of danger of any kind including the kinds involved in social risk-taking. All is benevolently taken care of by the futures-making elite, or what Chang (1996, p. xiv), calls the "guardians of original truths" -- as represented by the Japanese planner, bureaucrat and technocrat since the defeat of World War Two.

Honorific language and futures communication

Accomplice to the panoptic social and communication environment in Ashibetsu is the usage of contemporary Japanese language and its impacts upon interpersonal communication and the creation of alternative futures. Existing societal frameworks and hierarchies are effectively maintained by the invisible and apparently natural structure of language, in particular, those communication practices which set inherently inequitable relations through language. The most virulent because it is the most invisible and naturalized are the effects of honorific Japanese (keigo). From keigo, the social human is fixed in a readily identifiable and knowable social position. Tradition is revered over the novel, the male is favoured over the female; the senior over the insubordinate at the workplace; the veteran over the newcomer; the economically viable and productive over the non-economic; the statistician over the creative. Discussion between these binaries is ruled out because chaos and conflict would be the products. The possibility of futures-creating communication between binaries is demoted to the status of perfunctoriness, politenesses and sameness. The infinite potential of communication becomes mere information.

5.3.3   Research question 3: *What communication futures strategies can be deployed to facilitate the opening up of alternative and authentic community futures in the study area?*

This section suggests solutions in response to the sites of potential transformative futures as revealed by the isolated virtual fractures. Solutions are not offered as strategies to specific problem areas such as the Canadian World problem, but rather, in the form of a new communicative paradigm,

whose effect is the generation of a new social reality conducive to opening up pluralistic, authentic, alternative futures less characterised by economic imperatives and less submissive to dominant images. The alternative futures scenario presented in response to the above research question is based in part on Stevenson and Lennie's (1995) prototype Communicative Age model in which they note:

Social scientists, policy makers, futurists and, many others are increasingly rejecting the technology-driven view of the world based on the dominator model (Eisler, 1994) in favour of a range of alternative holistic, critical, and postmodern perspectives, and participative ways of living and organizing. This philosophical stance is part of a new world view which "is emerging through systems thinking, ecological concerns and awareness, feminism, education, as well as in the philosophy of human inquiry" (Reason, 1988, p. 3). This perspective, variously labelled empowerment (Lather, 1991), action learning (Morgan and Ramirez, 1983), or the partnership model (Eisler, 1994) is a common theme in the merging designs we will outline (Stevenson and Lennie, 1995, p. 10).

As reconceptualized in Stevenson and Lennie's (1995) new Communicative Age model, the prevailing worldview is holistic, creative, partnership oriented and caring. Social realities are diverse and equally respected. Technology embodies human values and is used through participative processes. There is a rise in participative democracy and local communities are involved in decision-making. Economies are characterised by ecologically sustainable systems. Under feminist influence, gender relations are restructured to accommodate sexual diversity. Cultural diversity is encouraged and once endangered subcultures are revitalized. Education is learner-centred and learning is a life-long activity. The environment is protected by sustainable use of resources and product recycling. People live simpler and consume less. The dominant futures images involve foresight to envisage alternative and inclusive futures from critical reflection. The dominant communication model advocates the negotiation of shared meanings and C&ITs facilitate collaboration and empowerment between diverse groups and individuals   (from Stevenson and Lennie, 1995, p. 22-23).

Also deployed in the reconfiguration of an Ashibetsu-specific communicative

age model are Markley and Harman's (1982, p. 194) notions of non-disruptive and non-catastrophic transitions embodied in the blueprint for a Basic Paradigm of a Future Socio-Cultural System (p. 239); and concepts derived from Foucauldian notions of reconstruction (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 157) in which the task is to "destabilize the established knowledge and to reconstruct the subjugated voices" (in Chambon et al., p. 213) which "enable us to identify points and patterns of resistance in constructing alternative discourses in our strategies for struggles" (p. 214). Foucauldian reconstruction "encourages us not to become lost in a theoretical maze of our own creation. It is the reality of possibile struggles that I wish to bring to light," he says, referring to "points of resistance and the possible points of attack" (1989, p. 189).

At this point it may be useful to re-deploy Dator's (in Inayatullah, 1993b, p. 242) four archetypal images of the future. These were: continued growth; collapse or catastrophe; reversion to the past; and transformation. Within this conceptual framework it is possible to see in the case of Ashibetsu the attributes of continued growth; fears of possible collapse or catastrophe and the signaling elements of a reversion to past practices (festivals, the town-making strategy of furusato, etc). Largely missing are the images of transformation. It is because the transformative is absent, that here, a preferred and transformative futures image for Ashibetsu is presented as a prototype.

5.3.3.1   Outline of a prototype Communicative Age Paradigm

It is first premissed that the Communicative Age reconstruction goes beyond the idea of a local government/the people partnership model with its inherently inequitable distribution of power and communications infrastructure. Rather, an Ashibetsu-specific reconstruction undoes the taken for grantedness which suggests that it is the responsibility of local government of be in charge of futures-making discourses. Instead, futures and images thereof are open to all and can be transformed into new configurations of social realities in a participative approach. Key strategies for creating a Communicative Age potentially lie in:

(1) systematic abandoning of panoptic social and communication practices and

implementing new interpersonal communication modes;

(2) actively involving *katayaburi*, the eccentric, women, creative minorities, the outspoken, the non-conformist, and the shinjinrui in creating alternative futures images for Ashibetsu; and

(3) active engagement in social learning.

(1) Systematic abandonment of panoptic cultural social practices and new communication modes

For transformation to occur, it is hypothesized that communication modes must undergo qualitative change. The communication climate in Ashibetsu is characterised as inflexible, incapable of adapting to unfamiliar circumstances, and oppressive. Proposed for Ashibetsu is the re-potentiation of communicativeness. What is called for is new kind of communicator for whom revitalizing the "art of converstion" (Stevenson and Lennie, 1995) is an organizing principle in the realization of the individual's human potential. By conversation, Stevenson and Lennie (1995) mean "the ability to sit and patiently explore the formation of a workable relationship with each other, by sharing ideas, exploring, challenging, negotiating, confirming and reconfirming. This is an interactive process, not a direct emission of information" (p. 26).

Several components for a new communication mode can be postulated here. Firstly, the new communicator will understand life as an inherently chaotic phenomenon. Chaos however, even when its outcome is conflict, can be embraced as regenerative and revitalizing. Conflict is socially possibile. The young employee is able to confront his or her superiors at the workplace without fear of retribution or demotion (*madogiwa-zoku*). The legal rights of individuals can be upheld and deployed in worst-case situations in which out of court settlements of disputes is impossible. It is no longer necessary to suffer in silence and simply put up with (gaman suru) infringements and injustices in the workplace. As Hinchcliff (in Slaughter, 1996b) puts the advantage of embracing chaos as social metaphor: "In other words, by ignoring the total infatuation with order, specialization and reductionism, and by exploring and accepting the vast richness of structural complexity, we can see that chaos is an

essential aspect of reality and that we participate in and affect this complexity" (Hinchcliff, in Slaughter, 1996b, p. 203).

The new communicator also integrates pluralism into the social fabric. The revived notion that there is more than one way to do something, would release the latent creative potential in individuals and collectivities. No longer is it necessary to fear the failure of doing something different or differently. Experimentation and boldness to life are able to flourish. The pluralism-embracing outlook will catalyse the acceptability of new notions about power. Power will become Foucauldian because it will be felt to be present everywhere, not as a form of property owned by a dominant elite. The recognition of new kinds of power will empower the other, the unheard voice, the marginalized, the radical and unconventional, and the latent change agent.

The emergence of the new communicator will increase awareness of the need to articulate and disseminate new forms of resistance in alternative publications and meetings held outside of local government premises. Speculatively, resistance to the dominator model might emerge in the form of the word "challenge" -- the very word the local government deploys in its Five Point vision, the Challenge Town. This would signal the ultimate irony if the citizens of Ashibetsu took it upon themselves to interpret the 'challenge' in Challenge Town as a challenge to authority, the dominator model, instead of the meaning the local government intended it as, that is, challenge in its pure economic sense.

Furthermore, integral to the new communication mode is a reconceptualization of language. Dismantling obolete and oppressive honorific Japanese linguistic practices (keigo) with an equality-enhancing, communicativeness-enabling linguistic paradigm will release the communicative potential between presently inequitable male/female, superior/subordinate, official/non-official, and teacher/student relationships. From the experience of the social worker in dealing with linguistic issues, Chambon (1999) advances the idea of developing new "hybrid languages of experience" and "inventing a new accessible language for dealing with change" (p. 77). Change is repotentiated through the conduit of de-heirarchified language. A new type of language would dissolve the necessity for the

Japanese communication modes of 'expressing one's true feelings' (*honne*) and 'expressing a publicly acceptable opinion' (*tatemae*). The tatemae is that Japan is a concensus society; the honne, as related by the insider, will tell you that behind the facade of concensus lies threat, coercion and ostracization. The dissolution of the antagonistic honne/tatemae dichotomy will allow the eradication of the false consciousness which has fueled the catch-up hegemonic image of the future and thus open up spaces for recreating authentic and alternative images of the future. The meta-affect will be the undoing of interpersonal relationships characterised by binary, excluding, hierarchical communication patterns that maintain the status quo in social configurations.

This new communication mode will assist in the process of de-infantilizating Japanese human relations, often manifest in paternalistic relations where the superior looks after the subordinate; the *oyaji* (the old man) looks after his family or workplace subordinates; the male after the female in financial terms but the reverse in daily practicalities of getting through life. Simultaneously, dismantling and reconstructing currently restrictive linguistic practices will potentiate a re-politicization of ordinary people. As language itself is perceived as communicative rather than socially restrictive, participation in political processes will become possible for the previously de-politicized. Traditionally, a de-politicized citizenry has facilitated the dominance of the paternalistic and benevolent power/futures-making elites who have transmitted the social discourse promoting the popular ideology -- 'Don't you worry about politics, we'll take care of that'.

(2) Involving and embracing the other

The second component of the new communicative age paradigm involves the necessary active engagement of the eccentric, women, creative minorities, the outspoken, the non-conformist, and the shinjinrui in creating alternative futures images for Ashibetsu. Both Japanese and Ashibetsu guiding futures images have been shown inadequate under the uncontested dominance of futures-making elites. Dator (1996) notes the importance of embracing the potential positive social transformative found in 'other' futures including images from the young:

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It is absolutely essential that all people who have a stake in a future be involved in determining it. Obviously that means that young people -- even the youngest of people -- should be deeply involved in ways that make sense to them. That also means that not only the elite but all marginalized persons should participate fairly, fully, and frequently (Dator, in Slaughter, 1996b, p. 111).

Non-dominant subgroups of society bring different values and experiences to alternative futures images and to innovative strategies in community revitalization more appropriate to future needs and less burdened by paradigms of the past. Involving and taking seriously the other also opens up new metaphoric potentials found in the new non-corporatist metaphors. The aim here is not perpetuate idolized mythologies of the past but to actively create new mythologies around which preferred futures can be imaged, articulated and applied. We have seen before how a myth is "an unproved belief that is accepted uncritically and is used to justify a social institution" (Hinchcliff, 1996b, p. 198). New mythologies, therefore, will emerge from the critical reflection brought upon those mythologies which uphold and maintain current social realities and beliefs, which are transmitted throughout the community and society at large, via what Polak (1973) refers to in his general theory of the image as the "aristocratic".

Recognition of other conceptions of knowledge and action will revitalize Milbraith's (1996) notion that: "When a society has no other choice than to change, we get little guidance from the past; we cannot predict the future from the past in those circumstances" (Milbraith, in Slaughter, 1996b, p. 188). Nonetheless, there is more to the case of Ashibetsu than is revealed by this statement of Milbraith's. The very social act of collectively exploring one's historical roots need not necessarily imply what Dator (in Inayatullah, 1993b, p. 242) calls a "reversion to the past" scenario. One effect is that of a Foucauldian distancing (Inayatullah, 1990, p. 132). The imager is actively reminded that things were not always the same, that postwar Japanese history is not necessarily the gradual unfolding of the one Japanese essence. It is here at this nexus where the past's modernistic chase to realize the all-consuming 'catch-up and overtake' futures model, undergoes the process of defamiliarization and confronts the perceived crisis of the present, that past/present dissonances

reveal what was previously hidden below the surface of current social realities, and previously unthinkable futures can emerge.

Involving and embracing the other and the possibility of the other will destabilize the apparent Japanese national characteristic of "*akirame*" (諦め) -- the "Buddhist virtue of resignation" (Dale, 1986, p. 70), a strategic component of what Dale (1986) calls the "warp of language" manifested in daily expressions such as shikata ga nai (仕方がない主義). Shikata ga nai is the clich* that holds "there's nothing I/we can do about it". Recognition of the knowledge that there is an 'other' way of being and doing, will dissolve this perceived lack of control. It will be legitimate to ask oneself 'How would an Ainu or a postmodern or a cyberpunk approach the issue of community revitalization?' Would community revitalization be perceived as a problem in the first place? The negativity of the expression shikata ga nai will be rephrased to read shikata ga aru -- control over future events is possible, and there is something I as an individual can do about it.

(3) Social learning

In Ashibetsu, we have experienced a community whose very communication practices function negatively in the creation of alternative futures, in effect, a societal framework which impedes social learning beyond the taken-for-granted and business-as-usual social constructions of reality. Implied in the new communicative age model therefore is the imperative for a new type of social learning, or, what Hinchcliff (in Slaughter, 1996b, p. 198) calls "metanoia", the mindset alteration required for transformative social change. For Hinchcliff (1996), social learning is no less than the key dynamic of social change. He notes that:

Even though a society cannot be said to have a mind, societies, as social entities, can be said to know or believe something. Social learning is embodied in societal memory, conventional terms of discourse, social norms, laws, institutional patterns, institutional memories, shared perceptions, and so forth ... Meaningful and permanent social change occurs when nearly everyone learns the necessity and wisdom of accepting the change. Therefore, a society hoping to survive and thrive would emphasize swift social learning as its best

strategy for evolving sustainable modes of behaviour that also lead to quality in living   (Milbraith, in Slaughter, 1996b, p. 193).

Under the umbrella of a new communicative age model, the shift away from rote-learning, where knowledge structures are transferred from the 'expert' teacher to the student, in favour of a chaotic/active type of learning. Wildman (1998) for example, posits the emergence of the "New Learning Community" which actively seeks to use Chaos Theory in community organization. Such an approach, he admits, "requires the ability to embrace diversity and creative disagreement" (Wildman, 1998, p. 8). It is precisely these attributes of diversity and creative disagreement that are denied and suppressed within the Japanese community of Ashibetsu. Guided by the social philosophy of a learning society, the current dominance of power elites will yield to multiple realities, ways of doing and new futures, with ultimately revitalizing social effects for the community.

We have found that learning in Ashibetsu is rote. Learning implies socialization into the beliefs of not only the adult world but the adult world of elites. Young children are socialized into the beliefs that outmigration is a 'problem' and that Ashibetsu's revitalization is economic. We know that even children are socialized into the matrix of mythologies that draw a solid line around the boundary of social possibilities in the form of non-chaotic orderliness; obedience to social norms; the social importance of wa (harmony-manitenance); the imperative of individual and collective genki because it is economically advantageous; and the myth of Ashibetsu as a former coal mining community turned tourist destination. Learning in its current configurations is uni-directional and Confucian derived in which the 'owner' of special knowledge types, the teacher, the official, the medical expert, the corporatist and economic expert, transfer their knowledge to those without. This uni-directionality of knowledge transferrance between the Have and Have-nots effectively sustains that which is already known.

Social learning on the other hand seeks to redfine what is knowable, who knows, how it is known and how it is operationalized in real world situations. Social learning does not seek to regurgitate and imitate singular, permanent and infallible models of the past -- such as the hegemony of Japan's 'catch-up

and overtake' guiding future image -- but rather, by its inherently chaotic nature, seeks to create its own new models. It therefore subverts universe-maintaining social realities and is perceived as dangerous by those with the most to lose. Consequently, social learning of the hypothesized type cannot operate independently of the suggested new communicative age paradigm because those in charge of language will forfeit their historical authority. Ultimately, social learning will promote Foucault's important and guiding role to show people that "they are much freer than they feel" (Foucault, 1988d: p. 10, in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 184).

5.4   Prospects for Reconstruction

While the Communicative Age model is one suggestion for a preferred future for Ashibetsu, its emergence under present circumstances of the community has to be in doubt given the Japanese proclivity to shun chaotic and harmony-disturbing situations from which transformative ways of doing and thinking can emerge. As Stevenson and Lennie (1995) note: "there are strong pressures on people to conform to current social and cultural practices and this has the effect of maintaining conventional ways of thinking and operating". This is particularly so in the case of Japan and our specific study area where futures-making elites have so much to loose. The dominant party to any Japanese relationship, that is, the male over the female, older over younger, the government official over the ordinary citizen; the teacher over the student, all profit socialy and financially from inequitable relationships. Much of Japan's past scientific, technological and economic success can be attributed to fixed, unchallengeable and inflexibile interpersonal relationships. Take male/female relationships for example. The male goes belongs to the company and earns the money while the woman maintains the household and services the man's needs. This male/female relationship is socially normalized as the natural and only way for things to be. Conflict is minimalized because everybody knows his or her place and transgression without serious social consequences is impossible. Unemployment is officially low because the woman is supposed to be at home. The man must keep his job at all cost by suppressing thoughts of conflict against his workplace superiors because de-employed man becomes unemployable.

Where dominant images are challenged, resistance to change is usually experienced. Markley and Harman (1982) note that "It is a well-known phenomenon in psychotherapy that the client will resist and evade the very knowledge he most needs to resolve his problems. A similar situation probably exists in society and there is suggestive evidence both in anthropolgy and in history that a society tends to hide from itself knowledge which is deeply threatening to the status quo but may in fact be badly needed for resolution of the society's most fundamental problems" (Markley and Harman, 1982, p. 186). Nevertheless, Japan has known change, even radical transformation, before. Contemporary social experiments in small communities are also not unknown. As demonstrated previously in Wakayama Prefecture (see subsection 2.4.2), local councils adopted the radical measure of prohibiting the ancient custom of gift-giving because it perpetuated favoritism in social and political life, perceived as an impediment to social evolution.

As pointed out in Nakamae (1998), short of catastrophe or foreign pressure (gai-atsu), Japan is unlikely to undergo transformation. Ashibetsu is, it would seem, at the brink of a micro-catastrophe, the kind and scale of which is much more impacting than any catastrophe that could hit Japan as a whole. Such a catastrophe is potentially precipitated by Canadian World and the massive debt incurred upon the citizens. The problem with gai-atsu is that it operates between power elites of different culture areas and tend to prioritise the needs and political preferences of the pressuring culture.

Can one redesign or rebuild a public philosophy in a communication environment in which the only accepted and legitimate strategy for 'speaking one's mind' (honne) to anyone other than a same aged intimate friend, is under the influence of alcohol? This is a crude simplification of Japanese communication realities, but a simplification that is nonetheless grounded in both the literature and in the fieldwork experience of this investigator, harbouring many truths about the communication climate in contemporary Japan.

5.5   Conclusions to the research problem

It has been shown that Ashibetsu's communication futures problematique

shares much in common with Japan's national post-bubble environment. It has also been shown that although dominant futures images differentiate minimally from unconventional katayaburi futures images, that transformation, in a Japanese context is nonetheless possible as well as desirable in light of Ashibetsu's post-coal mining, post-bubble disorientation and atrophy of futures images. The investigation also highlighted the pivotal roles of communication in the generation of futures images which theoretically function to pull the imager -- individual or collective -- towards the imaged social reality.

The critical aspect of this investigation has also attempted to address the question of what is the problem with Ashibetsu? -- from an alternative perspective. It is not for local government alone to unilaterally frame problems, set the initial conditions that lead to problematic situations, act as sole charg 仔 for 'fixing' problems, and requesting the 'help' of 'ordinary people' when their un-consulted projects do not behave as planned. When addressing the problem of Ashibetsu's futures from this other perspective, it is found that the problem is less clear cut than official versions suggest. To katayaburi and other citizens, the future is more than economics and statistics.

Keeping in mind that this investigation is bracketed by the academic duo of business communication and futures, as concluding remarks for Ashibetsu, it would appear that a closed communication (or minimally-communicative climate) of Ashibetsu that structurally impedes the generation of futures images that push the boundaries of the socially acceptable, and indeed, break through those boundaries into new paradigms and discourses, works against the capacities of both individuals and collectivities to identify and realize transformative and therefore ultimately revitalized futures.

The triadic problematique of Ashibetsu's communication, futures images and revitalization, requires closure by way of a new recognition of new identities that are multiple, pluralistic, multivocal, inclusive and conflict-embracing, chaotic, need to be set free in order to unleash the bonded potential of the bonsai tree. Revitalization implies a new kind of vitality that transcends mere economic performance and the need to search for and identify new symbols of the community that express the liberating qualities of a new communicative

age.

Finally, I wish to preempt the criticism that this investigation has been an attempt to replace legitimate Japanese communication modes and styles with an imperialist Western communication paradigm. Although Stevenson and Lennie's (1995) Communicative Age paradigm derives from a European cultural perspective, its tenets should not be read as imperialist. On the contrary, the appeal of the new paradigm is to the fulfilment of supra-cultural universal human values. Nonetheless, we know that communication, as a social construction of reality is culture specific. Chang's (1996) deconstruction of communication highlights the contentious nature and inherent incompleteness of communicative events in human affairs. This social constructedness of communication modes itself points to the design-capacity of new communication modes. At the micro level of Ashibetsu, observed was widespread dissatisfaction with existing restrictive communication practices because they were perceived as impediments to the creation of self-articulated futures images. The prototype opens the present to allow ordinary peoples to create their own future via the conduits of self articulated, self-organized communicative practices.

5.6   Suggestions for further research

Firstly, it is apparent from this investigation that further work needs to be done on how to most effectively employ Causal Layered Analysis as an analytical technique. Although CLA proved extremely beneficial in revealing the layeredness of social realities and in generating insights, in subsequent studies, it is especially important to understand how to make sense of the data, ideas and insights generated at each of the four levels, and how to integrate these in the generation of alternative futures scenarios and the formulation of real-world plans of action.

Also highlighted is the need for follow-up investigations to this type of study which suggest the need to explore mechanisms for designing, articulating and implementing communication strategies to bring about transformative change; explore the roles of change agents and diffusion of innovations in local, specific contexts such as Ashibetsu and other small community revitalization contexts.

Another avenue for further investigation involves the role of the katayaburi, or, other potential catalytic change agents. A questions that arises here is: How is it possible to take advantage of the latent transformative potential of the idiosyncrat or other change agents and make his or her role more inclusive to the creation of alternative social constructions of reality and community futures? In the specific case of Ashibetsu, this would require subsequent studies employing indepth personal interviews. The katayaburi subgroup was only identified vicariously during the preliminary research phase of this investigation. This study also has brought to the fore the need for systematic inquiry into the processes for actively promoting idiosyncratic thinking. Subsequent studies may show that transformative ideas need to be nurtured in the young and rebellious as adults are irretrievably socialised into pre-existing cognitive structures.

Also, this study has highlighted the specific need in the case of Ashibetsu and similarly depressed communities, to follow-up exploratory and theoretical data with futures workshops. Futuring workshops are a new form of social research and action in a Japanese context, but literature reviewed in this thesis suggests that Japan, especially peripheral regions whose post-bubble environments are severely and chronically impacted, may not be ready to take on such a challenge that confronts the very essence of their socially constructed realities and notions of Japanese identity and the Good Life. As outlined in Inayatullah's (1998a) prototype model, Causal Layered Analysis is thought to be most effective when used in workshop situations. The new environment of the futures workshop would embrace the new policies of participative democracy, multivocality and impress upon its participants that conflict need not necessarily lead to the dissolution of interpersonal relationships or dissolution of what is means to be an Ashibetsu citizen in Japan, but is rather, embracing, liberating, life-enhancing and ultimately good for the business of life. From the active and participative approach to collectively imaging alternative futures under the communicative spirit of honne -- speaking one's true mind -- by practising what Stevenson and Lennie (1995) call "revitalising the art of conversation". Actively engaging in futures workshops along the dimensions of the CLA would unmask the social myths that have constituted social constructions of reality, and release what Michael (1993) calls the "metaphoric

potential" of newly imaged metaphors.

More research is also need on the role of communication and information technologies as the agents of social transformation. As a vicarious outcome of observations in this study, it was noted that Ashibetsu's principle sources of local information derive from local government publishing sources. Textual information that challenged the local government's dominator model was virtually non-existant. The community itself could benefit with greater communication(s) with the outside world as sources of new and provocative futures images. It was found in this study that the pool of alternative futures images produced a self-limiting closed system.

This investigation highlighted the lack of recognition awarded to the role that honorific Japanese (keigo) plays in communication futures. Imagined is an experimental community in which keigo was systematically abandoned as a legitimate linguistic framework for conducting human relations. Furthermore, it was felt duration the progression of the study that more room and time was needed to develop the ideas and relevant components, and that justice was not done to many of the issues such as the Japanese communication modes tatemae and honne. Finally, the particular case of Canadian World emerged as in need of separate and specific attention. Although a critical analysis unmasks the conditions that led to it's possibility, only innovative plans of action are able to alleviate the real and chronic burden of a ¤ 6 billion debt for the Ashibetsu community.

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APPENDIX I - Causal Layered Analysis Map

Context

· How one frames the problem, creates the solution
· Language is not neutral but part of the analysis
· Wisest inquiry goes up and down levels of analysis and across constitutive discourses

Horizontal Levels

· Identification of Problem (what is the problem)
· Associated Solution (what is the solution)
· Associated Problem-Solver (who can solve it)
· Source of Information of problem (where is the problem/solution contextualised)

Vertical Levels

(1) The 'Litany' - official public description of issue
· problem seems insolvable or it is up to the government or power to solve it
· little personal responsibility
· often appears as News: Mediated by interstate system and conventional accounts of reality. Short term approaches. Government solves the problem.

(2) Social Causes - social science analysis
· short term historical factors uncovered
· attempts to articulate causal variables (correlation, causation, theory and critique of other theories)
· often state or monopolistic interest group has ownership
· solution often in civil society in interaction with other institutions (values and structure) - partnerships
· often appearing as op-ed piece or in conservative journal

(3) Discourse analysis and Worldview
· Problem constituted by frame of analysis
· strong focus on geneology of problem
· many frames: paradigms, mindscapes, discourses
· solution often in consciousness transformation, in changing worldview, in rethinking politics of reality
· solution long term action based on the interaction of many variables
· often appearing in fringe/peripheral journals

(4) Myth/Metaphor analysis
· problem constituted by core myth (unconscious structures of difference, basic binary patterns)
· solution is to uncover myth and imagine alternative metaphors
· often appearing in the work of artists and visions of mystics
· solution can rarely be rationally designed

(from Inayatullah, 1998a, p. 828-829)

APPENDIX II – Questionnaire and Interview Questions (Japanese Original)

PART 1　準備のディスカッション

YES / NO で書かれている質問にはどちらか一方に○をして下さい。
また、それについて御意見がありましたら空欄にお書き下さい。

(1) あなたは、芦別市の未来に興味、関心をもっていますか？.................. YES / NO

(2) 芦別市に対し、市民はどういうイメージをもっていると思いますか？いくつかの例をあげてください。

(3) 今の芦別では、市の未来に対する考え方がかつてより団結性に欠け、分裂してきたと感じますか？.. YES / NO

(4) 芦別市の「未来作り」は、だれの責任で、だれが作っていくべきと考えてますか？

(5) これからの芦別市をよりよくするために、芦別市の歴史を振り返り、どういう事柄を復活させればいいと思いますか？（例　炭鉱の黄金時代が戻ればいいと思うなど）

(6) あなたは、芦別市の未来に影響を与える、または、貢献できると思いますか？.. YES / NO

(7) 芦別市の未来について、自由に誰かと話し合うことができますか? YES / NO

(8) 現在の芦別は「本当」の芦別の姿だと思いますか？または、歴史的な要因の影響で、本当の芦別のあり方からそれてきたと思いますか？.. YES / NO

(9) 現在、芦別市の未来について、新しい考え方（型破りな考え）が充分に取り入れられていると思いますか？.. YES / NO

(10) あなたの芦別の未来に関する情報源は何ですか？（例　広報あしべつ、空知タイムズ、友人、職場、井戸端会議、情報源は特に無い、など）

PART 2 「CLA 未来分析法」
LEVEL 1: 芦別の未来について、行政が掲げている問題

(1) 芦別市の未来について、行政は、何が問題だと考えていると思いますか？（例 景気の低迷、人口減、若年層の都市への流出、教育施設不足、など）

(2) あなたは、以上の問題は本当に芦別市にとって重大な問題だと思いますか？

LEVEL 2: 問題をおこす社会的な原因

(1) 芦別市の未来を脅かしている問題の原因は何だと思いますか？（例 不良債権、バブル経済、国の政府が悪い、輸入の自由化、少子化問題、カナディアンワールド, 芦別には魅力がない、行政対市民の対立、コミュニケーション不足、わからない）

(2) 誰が芦別市の未来問題を解決出来る力を持っていると思いますか？（例 国の政府、市の行政、あなた自身、市民の皆一人一人、専門家、だれも解決出来ない、など）

LEVEL 3: 世界観、パラダイム、方法論

(1) 過去の「社会・経済・政治的な体制」と現在のそれが同じような方法論だったと思いますか？将来的には、当体制に対して革命をおこし、一変することが現実にありえると思いますか？（例 映画監督によると将来的には経済中心ではなく、美を中心とした社会など）

LEVEL 4: コミュニティを代表する「社会の神話」／比喩

(1) 芦別を代表し、町を結び付ける根本である「社会の神話」は何だと思いますか？（例 芦別は日本の大自然の町だ、芦別は子供の未来を考える町だ、芦別はきずなが軸となっている社会だ、など）

(2) 芦別の未来を描くには、どういう「比喩」が適切と思いますか？（例 異国文化においてよく耳にする例は、「我が国の未来はサイコロのようだ」「未来はバクチみたいに、まったく運によるものだ」「未来はまるで目隠し運転のようなもの」など）

PART 3 　芦別市の三つの未来像を創る

前ページの未来分析の４レベルを振り返り、次のパート３では、なるべく想像力を活かしてください。

シナリオ 1 　ー　理想像

現実的に、起こりえる範囲以内で、理想では２０年後、芦別にどうなってほしいかを考えてください。（例　経済、人々の精神、体制と世界観の面でなど）

シナリオ 2 　ー　最悪像

最悪の場合、２０年後の芦別市はどうなっていると考えられますか？

シナリオ 3 　ー　もっとも現実像

現実的に、２０年後、芦別市はどういう未来を迎えていると思いますか？

APPENDIX III – Questionnaire and Interview Questions (English translation)

PHASE 1: PREPARATORY DISCUSSION

1. Are you interested in and concerned about the future of Ashibetsu?

2. In your opinion, what are the self-images of Ashibetsu? Give some examples.

3. Do you think there is more fragmentation between the citizens of Ashibetsu vis-a-vis the future of the community than before?

4. Whose responsibility is it to create the future in Ashibetsu?

5. Are there some aspects of Ashibetsu's past you would like to reconstruct for a better future? (For example: the Golden Age of coal mining)

6. Do you feel you can influence or contribute to the future of Ashibetsu?

7. Are you able to freely discuss your views about the future of Ashibetsu with others? With whom and where do you communicate these?

8. Do you think the present way of life in Ashibetsu is authentic or has it been distorted by historical forces?

9. Do you think there is enough attention given to alternative images of the future for Ashibetsu or is all the rhetoric just a repitition and repackaging of the same ideas?

10. What are your sources of information about issues pertaining to the future of Ashibetsu? (For example: Kouhou Ashibetsu newsletter; Sorachi Times; friends; workplace; informal gatherings; none of the above; etc)

PHASE 2: CLA DISCUSSION

LEVEL 1: LITANY

1. What do you think is the official "problem" regarding the community's future?

2. Do you think there is a problem in Ashibetsu?

LEVEL 2: SOCIAL CAUSES

1. What do you think are the causes of Ashibetsu's problem(s)?

2. How can the problem be solved and who can solve it? (the administration, you, every citizen, outside experts, the national government, nobody?)

LEVEL 3: WORLDVIEW

1. Can you imagine an alternative paradigm and socio-econo-political system for Ashibetsu in the future? Could it be made different in the future from another point of view, for example, what would a society based on aesthetics be like?

LEVEL 4: MYTH & METAPHOR

1. Do you have some favorite "myths" (local, national, international) that give you guidance about the future?

2. What metaphors would you use to describe your views of the future and the future of Ashbetsu? For example, metaphors from other cultures include: (1) dice, (2) gambling, (3) drivinga a car blindfolded.

PHASE 3: GENERATING IMAGES OF THE FUTURE

(3 x Dimensions, 20 years into the future)

(1) economics   (2) spiritual/mental life   (3) community philosophy

(Based on the above four levels of analysis, I would like you to integrate these ideas and try to use your creativity to imagine some alternative scenarios for the future of Ashibetsu 20 years from now)

SCENARIO 1: Ideal Futures Images

Ideally and realistically, how would you like to see Ashibetsu evolve over the next 20 years or so?

SCENARIO 2: Worst-Case Futures Images

What is the worst-case scenario you can imagine for the Ashibetsu community?

SCENARIO 3: Most Probable Futures Images

In all honesty, which do you think is the most likely to come about over the next 20 years or so?

APPENDIX IV - Ashibetsu Futures Questionnaire: Preparatory Questions and Responses

(1) Are you interested in and concerned about the future of Ashibetsu?

All katayaburi responded 'Yes'.

(2) In your opinion, what are the self-images of Ashibetsu? Give some examples.

The most frequently reported negative responses to Ashibetsu's image were that the city had a reputation for failed business ventures, especially cited was the debt from failed Third Sector theme park Canadian World; few opportunities for employment; rapidly ageing population with the young outflowing to larger centres; an city anxious for the future; a city held back because of the old-fashioned thinking of the local administration and public officials. Positive city images were less frequent and included: a town that prospered thanks to the coal mining days; a town in which many young people try hard to generate interesting events such as the film festival and Candle Art Festival; and that food is easy to grow and therefore Ashibetsu provides an easy lifestyle.

(3) Do you think there is more fragmentation between the citizens of Ashibetsu vis-a-vis the future of the community than before?

Asking if a loss of community solidarity in Ashibetsu had been experienced in Ashibetsu, most respondents reported yes. As the younger population had continued to outmigrate, many had become indifferent to the community's needs. Others reported that the spacious configuration of Ashibetsu made solidarity more difficult to maintain. Also, significant events in recent local history -- for example the construction of a ⊥ 1,000,000 public toilet had caused resentment between citizens.

(4) Whose responsibility is it to create the future in Ashibetsu?

Responses were firm and unanimous. Responsibility was that of each and every

ordinary citizen. Notably, one respondent boldly replied that he felt questionnaire respondents would feel the obligation -- tatemae -- to say that it was the responsibility of all citizens - as opposed to that of local officials - but that in all honesty -- honne -- most believed it was the job of local government officials and especially the mayor to set future direction(s).

(5) Are there some aspects of Ashibetsu's past you would like to reconstruct for a better future? (For example: the Golden Age of coal mining)

Responses were diverse. Common responses called for a restoration of individual vitality and an energetic population; increasing educational venues for the young; and restoration of nature as pivot for social cohesion. Others bypassed nostalgia by appealing to Ashibetsu to forgo the trend in Hokkaido of transforming rural towns into tourist locations in favour of becoming a model town for senior citizens by providing menaingful employment to the ageing population. Others still felt the question was irrelevant for them: they were young and dynamic, Ashibetsu's coal mining days were long gone and of no concern, what was important was the need to create the new.

(6) Do you feel you can influence or contribute to the future of Ashibetsu?

To this question, responses were equally divided. Of the few responses that provided explanations beyond a simple YES/NO, two are reproduced below:

I'm not sure how I can influence or contribute but believe I can do more than simply being an Ashibetsu citizen.

In realistic terms, being able to influence Ashibetsu futures is problematic ... although I do believe that regardless of age and sex, their do exist venues for contribution. Having said this, I also believe it is the responsibility of the local administration to provide such places and chances to contribute.

(7) Are you able to freely discuss your views about the future of Ashibetsu with others? With whom and where do you communicate these?

To question 7 the majority of responses were in the affirmative. Few offered

detailed explanations as to with whom specifically it was that they could discuss freely. Those cited were primarily family; close friends; and drinking partners. Others lamented that talk alone wouldn't mean they could do anything about it in real-world situations. One respondent although she was willing to discuss the matter, there was no public venue in which to do so.

(8)   Do you think the present way of life in Ashibetsu is authentic or has it been distorted by historical forces?

Question 8 posed a conceptually difficult question. In retrospect, the question itself is inadequately framed and in consequence responses elicited offer limited informative value in light of the direction this project took after completion of the questionnaires.

(9)   Do you think there is enough attention given to alternative images of the future for Ashibetsu or is all the rhetoric just a repitition and repackaging of the same ideas?

Responses to Question 9 were virtually anonymous. 25 of 26 received responses answered 'No'. Of the few comments attached to this question, one respondent (No. 18) claimed: "I never get to see any new ways of thinking. Everything is about maintaining the status quo -- which I feel in future will deteriorate more and more".

(10)   What are your sources of information about issues pertaining to the future of Ashibetsu? (For example: Kouhou Ashibetsu newsletter; Sorachi Times; friends; workplace; informal gatherings; none of the above; etc)

The 10th and final question tried to ascertain the sources of information of direct concern to Ashibestu's futures -- What are your sources of information concerning the problematic of Ashibetsu's futures? Most frequently reported responses were: close friends; workplace; via volunteer organizations; newspaper; Kouhou Ashibetsu newsletter; televison; and informal gatherings with friends. Others reported that they had no specific sources of information on Ashibetsu's futures. The lack of pattern and qualitative responses to the question rendered it of limited significance to the study.