Unpacking Japan's 21st Century "National Conversation":
Images of the Future *beyond* the Iron Cage of the "Catch Up" Model

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David Lindsay Wright

(BA, Japanese Studies, University of Waikato, New Zealand; MBusComm, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia)

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ABSTRACT

How does the image of the future operate upon history, and upon national and individual identities? To what extent are possible futures colonized by the image? What are the *un*-said futurecratic discourses that underlie the image of the future? Such questions inspired the examination of Japan's futures images in this thesis. The theoretical point of departure for this examination is Polak's (1973) seminal research into the theory of the 'image of the future' and seven contemporary Japanese texts which offer various alternative images for Japan's futures, selected as representative of a 'national conversation' about the futures of that nation. These seven images of the future are:

1. *Report of the Prime Minister's Commission on Japan's Goals in the 21st Century—The Frontier Within: Individual Empowerment and Better Governance in the New Millennium*, compiled by a committee headed by Japan's preeminent Jungian psychologist Kawai Hayao (1928-2007);
2. *Slow Is Beautiful*—a publication by Tsuji Shinichi, in which he re-images Japan as a culture represented by the metaphor of the sloth, concerned with slow and quality-oriented livingry as a preferred image of the future to Japan's current post-bubble cult of speed and economic efficiency;
3. *MuRatopia* is an image of the future in the form of a microcosmic prototype community and on-going project based on the historically significant island of Awaji, and established by Japanese economist and futures thinker Yamaguchi Kaoru;

4. *F.U.C.K, I Love Japan*, by author Tanja Yujiro provides this seven text image of the future line-up with a youth oriented sub-culture perspective on that nation's futures;
5. *IMAGINATION / CREATION*—a compilation of round table discussions about Japan's futures seen from the point of view of Japan's creative vanguard;
6. *Visionary People in a Visionless Country: 21 Earth Connecting Human Stories* is a collection of twenty one essays compiled by Denmark born Tokyo resident Peter David Pedersen; and,
7. *EXODUS to the Land of Hope*, authored by Murakami Ryū, one of Japan's most prolific and influential writers, this novel suggests a future scenario portraying a massive exodus of Japan's youth, who, literate with state-of-the-art information and communication technologies (ICTs) move *en masse* to Japan's northern island of Hokkaido to launch a cyber-revolution from the peripheries.

The thesis employs a Futures Triangle Analysis (FTA) as the macro organizing framework and as such examines both pushes of the present and weights from the past before moving to focus on the pulls to the future represented by the seven texts mentioned above. Inayatullah's (1999) Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) is the analytical framework used in examining the texts. Poststructuralist concepts derived primarily from the work of Michel Foucault are a particular (but not exclusive) reference point for the analytical approach it encompasses.

The research questions which reflect the triangulated analytic matrix are:

1. What are the pushes—in terms of current trends—that are affecting Japan's futures?
2. What are the historical and cultural weights that influence Japan's futures?

3. What are the emerging transformative Japanese images of the future discourses, as embodied in actual texts, and what potential do they offer for transformative change in Japan?

Research questions one and two are discussed in Chapter five and research question three is discussed in Chapter six.

The first two research questions should be considered preliminary. The weights outlined in Chapter five indicate that the forces working against change in Japan are formidable, structurally deep-rooted, wide-spread, and under-recognized as change-adverse. Findings and analyses of the push dimension reveal strong forces towards a potentially very different type of Japan.

However it is the seven contemporary Japanese images of the future, from which there is hope for transformative potential, which form the analytical heart of the thesis. In analyzing these texts the thesis establishes the richness of Japan's images of the future and, as such, demonstrates the robustness of Japan's stance vis-à-vis the problem of a perceived map-less and model-less future for Japan.

Frontier is a useful image of the future, whose hybrid textuality, consisting of government, business, academia, and creative minority perspectives, demonstrates the earnestness of Japan's leaders in favour of the creation of innovative futures for that nation. *Slow* is powerful in its aim to reconceptualize Japan's philosophies of temporality, and build a new kind of nation founded on the principles of a

human-oriented and expanded vision of economy based around the core metaphor of slowness culture. However its viability in Japan, with its post-Meiji historical pushes to an increasingly speed-obsessed social construction of reality, could render it impotent. *MuRatopia* is compelling in its creative hybridity indicative of an advanced IT society, set in a modern day utopian space based upon principles of a high communicative social paradigm, and sustainability. *IMAGINATION / CREATION* is less the plan than the platform for a new discussion on Japan's transformation from an econo-centric social framework to a new Creative Age. It accords with emerging discourses from the Creative Industries, which would re-conceive of Japan as a leading maker of meaning, rather than as the so-called *guzu*, a term referred to in the book meaning 'laggard'. In total, *Love Japan* is still the most idiosyncratic of all the images of the future discussed. Its communication style, which appeals to Japan's youth cohort, establishes it as a potentially formidable change agent in a competitive market of futures images.

Visionary People is a compelling image for its revolutionary and subversive stance against Japan's vision-less political leadership, showing that it is the people, not the futures-making elite or aristocracy who must take the lead and create a new vanguard for the nation. Finally, Murakami's *Exodus* cannot be ruled out as a compelling image of the future. Sharing the appeal of Tanja's *Love Japan* to an increasingly disenfranchised youth, *Exodus* portrays a near-term future that is achievable in the here and now, by Japan's teenagers, using information and communications technologies (ICTs) to subvert leadership, and create utopianist communities based on alternative social principles.

The principal contribution from this investigation in terms of theory belongs to that of developing the Japanese image of the future. In this respect, the literature reviews represent a significant compilation, specifically about Japanese futures thinking, the Japanese image of the future, and the Japanese utopia. Though not exhaustive, this compilation will hopefully serve as a useful starting point for future research, not only for the Japanese image of the future, but also for all image of the future research. Many of the sources are in Japanese and their English summations are an added reason to respect this achievement.

Secondly, the seven images of the future analysed in Chapter six represent the first time that Japanese image of the future texts have been systematically organized and analysed. Their translation from Japanese to English can be claimed as a significant secondary contribution. What is more, they have been analysed according to current futures methodologies that reveal a layeredness, depth, and overall richness existing in Japanese futures images. Revealing this image-richness has been one of the most significant findings of this investigation, suggesting that there is fertile research to be found from this still under-explored field, whose implications go beyond domestic Japanese concerns, and may offer fertile material for futures thinkers and researchers, Japanologists, social planners, and policy makers.

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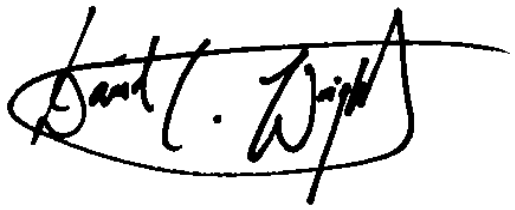
STATEMENT OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person—except where due reference is made.

Signed



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JAPANESE AND ENGLISH LINGUISTIC PRACTICES FOR THIS INVESTIGATION

Regarding the use of Japanese names, as a rule, the family name is introduced first, followed by the given name, except in the case of a Japanese name that is well-known and generally familiar to an English-speaking readership, in which case the names are written according to Western conventions. I have tried to be consistent when referring to Japanese texts by giving the English translation first, followed by the original Japanese writing, followed lastly by the Roman script reading for the Japanese text. Subsequent uses of the same text are expressed in the English translation only. There are what appear to be occasional inconsistencies as a Japanese word is sometimes written in a number of different styles within the same text.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

This chapter introduces the principal themes of this examination of Japan's images of the future. Key concepts that inform the macro framework of the investigation are introduced along with a preliminary introduction to Japan's image of the future 'crisis'. I also introduce the seven key Japanese image of the future 'texts' that constitute a focus for this investigation, and discuss the significance of the study. The research objectives and research questions are also introduced.

Purpose of Investigation

The broad aim of this thesis is to problematize Japan's national conversation about the guiding image of its future. The research seeks to confront the problems of how nations, specifically Japan, socially construct images of the future, how individual citizens are 'produced' by the images within which they live and operate under, and how social effects are produced resulting from those images. In order to do so, I analyse the nature of this national conversation within a sample of seven key *image of the future* texts—produced in various media and genres—between the period 2000 to 2006. The discussion of these texts incorporates reflections up to the year 2010. I will proceed by mapping out the topologies of Japan's competing futures images, ranging from the dominant, hegemonic model, through to alternative and dissenting images, in order to assess their implications for Japan's futures as exemplified in these key texts.

In doing so, I will perform a deconstruction of the implicit and explicit discourses that constitute Japan's image-matrix in order to expose the implicit meanings, juxtapose the *said* with the *unsaid*; and ultimately unpack the circularity of the future-cratic

discourses, which negate the possibility of alternative futures discourses. This will make it possible to identify sites of potential transformative change, as extracted from these largely under-studied textual spaces.

Context and Background

Japan's Crisis of the Future/Interregnum

In *The Foresight Principle*, Slaughter (1995) defines an interregnum as the period in between paradigms—when an image achieves a stage of maturity followed by obsolescence, and then decay. Referring to Donald Schon, he states:

> The problem … is that we are living through the interregnum, or gap, between two eras. Donald Schon understood very clearly what this meant. More than two decades ago he described how social systems tend not to move smoothly from one period to another. He noted how 'the old' comes apart before 'the new' comes together. However, those trapped within the transition process are often unable to grasp the new picture, only the old one that is being lost. Hence there tends to be great anguish and uncertainty for those involved mainly because it was the old system which provided the basis for identity and purpose. (p. 117).

Herein lies a vexing issue for Japan in developing a transformative futures discourse. Its reliance and deep cultural attachment to the now 'decaying' *catch up and overtake model* as guide to the future has led to an era of unending transition, the societal products of which are systemic uncertainty and pessimism towards the future.

All nation states or cultural areas are bound by an official discourse vis-à-vis a given social phenomenon and interpretations of identity, history and politics (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). In contrast to the official discourses it is also recognized that non-

official, alternative, dissident, radical, and idiosyncratic versions of the Real co-exist in an antagonistic dynamic with the former. These constructions of social reality represent one of the most important tasks within futures studies research: the deconstruction of dominant futures and the reconstruction of alternative preferable futures (Stevenson and Inayatullah, 1998, pp. 1-2).

As Shapiro (1992) has noted, "our 'postmodern' condition experiences a density of messages and images, a cacophony of codes, competing for pieces of contemporary consciousness" (p. 122), a notion that resonates with especial relevance for the mature consumerist social paradigm that is Japan, and for that nation's 'cacophony' of images referent to their futures.

Bubble, Post-Bubble and the Post Post-Bubble Pathologies

A studied analysis of Japan's images of the future needs to be contextualized in light of that nation's 'bubble economy'. Now the stuff of legend, Japan's bubble economy, a culmination of Japan's determined pursuit of the 'catch up and overtake the USA and Europe model', and its eventual collapse, brought on a plethora of social pathologies. Anecdotal evidence from Japanese and non-Japanese citizens alike who experienced Japan's bubble days encapsulated the mood of the nation during that period in the metaphor of the war survivor, in which every day life, especially Japan's corporate warrior culture, was allegorized as a form of combat.[1] The battle metaphor resonates

[1] Deploying a linguistic pun, two colleagues—a Japanologist/island researcher and a Japanese trader/banker both referred to Japan as 'Pan'—because living and working in Japan during the bubble-expansion period especially, was experienced as a relentless daily battle. As a trusted member of Tokyo's financial community, the latter colleague had access to information pertaining to Japan's financial system, its inherent flaws,

with Foucault's famous statement:

> 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, 1995, p. 81).

Kenneth Boulding (1995) once claimed that all advanced economies eventually end up producing their own pathologies. Those characterizing the pathologies of Japan's bubble economy are well documented[2] and I do not wish to belabour them here in this investigation[3].

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excesses and systematic cover-ups. He was especially insightful and bold in his remarks regarding the largely unpublicized role of Japan's organized yakuza crime syndicates whose disruptive and destructive activities continue to leave their mark on Japan.

[2] The climate of social pathologies during and after Japan's bubble period is thoroughly documented in numerous researches. To name one, *Years Of Trial: Japan In The 1990s*, edited by former Minister of Welfare [2]Masuzoe Yōichi (2000), is populated by the following chapter titles indicating the perceived seriousness of Japan's post-bubble predicament.: 'The Long and Painful Aftermath of the Bubble' (Masuzoe, pp. 105-6); 'Asset Inflation and the Strained Social Fabric' (Shimada, pp. 133-145); 'Putting Nissan Back on Track' (Ghosn, pp. 191-199); 'The Demise of the Japanese Salaryman' (Kusaka, pp. 200-211); 'Tears in the Traditional Fabric' (Masuzoe, pp. 215-217); 'The Great Hanshin Earthquake and Dysfunctional Japan' (Noda, pp. 218-225); 'Japanese Society and the Psychopath' (Noda, pp. 246-255); 'Problems Among Japan's Young' (Iwao, pp. 256-259); and 'Crisis in the Schools: A Colloquium of the Group of Pro Teachers' (Group of Pro Teachers, pp. 260-267). The collection suggests little optimism for Japan's futures. Added to these relatively new social pathologies are the usual litanies suggestive of a rapidly ageing population, decreasing numbers of children, youth out-migration, loss of economic dynamism, developmental fatigue and breakdown in 'traditional' values, especially with regard to Japan's youth, and an increase in crimes of poverty.

[3] To give the reader a sense of the seriousness of these bubble and post-bubble pathologies, I cite a few key examples. For example, Japan experienced increased cases of suicides with male suicides for 1998 at 23,013, up by 40.2% from the previous year and female suicides at 9,850, up 23.5%. Reported suicide motivations other than sickness included financial difficulties and problems at home, showing a 70.4% increase over 1997 statistics. In 1998 a 'suicide and death-from-overwork hotline' was established to offer counseling to the

Of greater concern to the objectives of this investigation is the relative lack of rigorous critique of that 'catch up' model to which Japan became so thoroughly colonized. It is as if the model and the effects and benefits it brought to the nation were beyond reproach. According to McCormack (1993, p. 48), 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, leaving the question: Where was Japan to go from there? One of the best summaries of the costs and effects of the relentless pursuit of the catch up model is expressed by Patrick Smith (1998):

> Modern Japan has always been obsessed with speed. We can attribute to a fundamental sense of urgency many of the mistakes it has made over the past century, including its decision to erase local identity rather than incorporate it. The frenetic pace set by modern Japanese leaders, to make the matter clear, has never had anything to do with culture, tradition, or innate character traits. It began with the desire to catch up, which reflected anxiety, felt inferiority, and fear (p. 173).

Achieving the goals of the catch up model necessarily involved the creation of a complementary set of new types of Japanese citizen: *homo economicus*, the fabled

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growing numbers of middle-aged men contemplating suicide due to company redundancies and bubble-incurred debt. Another bubble pathology known as *yo-nige* (夜逃げ)—literally, 'night escape'—was used to describe how people escape from their homes—often in the middle of the night to avoid detection – in order to avoid having to pay un-payable accumulated debts. A related phenomenon is known as *iede* (家出). Although a direct translation is simply 'leaving home', the term carries the more socially sinister connotation of escape; escape from one's community. This phenomenon accounted for the disappearance of 89,388 Japanese according to 1998 statistics: a figure up 3.5% from 1997. More than 63,000 such *iede* 'disappearees' were adults. The main motive quoted: the 'shadow of the economic recession' (*Hokkaido Shimbun*, July 2, 1999, p. 3).

salaryman, the OL or 'office lady', and the super-socialized Japanese child and youth rigorously educated in the mold of their workaholic parental models. Despite claims to be original and authentic Japanese-ness, much of what is contemporarily taken-for-granted is no more than a recent fiction. Such social upheaval lies at the centre of the aims and motivations of this research.

From the Bubble Relics: An Emerging 'National Conversation'

The meta-text, the so-called national conversation to which I have referred above, signifies the nation-wide public debate pertaining to the type of guiding futures model the nation of Japan ought to pursue. This national conversation is played out in the newspapers, governmental debates, television programming, schools and universities, public and private conversations and through a complex media environment with multiple, overlapping communication channels. In fact, with the advent of the millennium and the collapse of Japan's bubble economy, Japan in the 21st century appears as a cacophony, a Babel of futurisms and futures images—each, as it were, competing for space, time, and attention in the national psyche, culminating in a vigorous nation-wide search for a new guiding image of the future.

Such a new guiding image of the future must function as a replacement to the long-standing catch up and overtake the USA and Europe model which emerged stronger than ever after World War Two, despite its deeper origins in the Meiji Restoration. Theorists such as Nakano (1989) and McCormack (1993) argue that, historically, Japan has been guided towards the kind of future Sardar (1999) calls a *colonized* future—top-down models authored and imposed upon the population by futures-making elites

whose inertia set the nation off in a trajectory from which re-orientation becomes nearly impossible. The metaphor is "the super-tanker headed for the rocks".

Official Solutions

The obvious solution to Japan's national 'maplessness' is simply to either find or make new maps, that is, images of the future. This management-by-objectives approach legitimizes the act of replacing one map, in the case of Japan in the early 21st century, the post-war catch up model, with another legitimized government produced map. One strategy to fill the mapless vacuum was the production of the government report, *Japan's Goals in the 21st Century*, one of the key texts to be analysed in this investigation. From a preliminary reading of this text a number of questions and issues arose. I asked: Is it effective to talk of a nation's vision or model or does this discourse merely reinstate the past and present disguised in a compelling but ultimately vacuous futuristic language? Do national visions commissioned by government affiliated agencies *dis*-empower ordinary people? Is local and traditional knowledge irretrievably lost and power totally relinquished to the 'futures expert'? Is the latest future vision a convenient strategy for the futures elite to re-colonize Japan's futures and continuously defer meaningful social transformation? Can there be an over-reliance on the misleading discourse of futures images? This suite of questions demands that we interrogate the validity of immediately replacing one map, or image of the future, with another, created and sustained by the same organizational apparatus that caused the crisis in the first place.

Alternative Solutions to Perceived 'Mapless-ness'

There is an alternative discourse to the official litany of Japan's 21st century mapless-ness. Chronic public skepticism vis-à-vis Japan's governmental and bureaucratic agencies has served to produce a new industry based on the creation of *alternative* images of the future. Included in these challenges to the authority of Japan's futures-making elites, we even identify Japan's high profile television celebrities as some of the most prolific organizers and communicators of alternative images of the future for Japan. Even the scandalous and celebrated television personality and Cannes Film Festival *Palme d'Or* accoladed film director Takeshi Kitano (also known as Beat Takeshi) (2000) has written a futures blueprint for Japan. Written from Kitano's comedic point of view, *Nihon-jin kaizō-ron* (日本人改造論)—the *Japanese Improvement Theory*, pokes fun at contemporary Japanese culture ultimately claiming that Japanese need to take a good look at themselves if they want to make a qualitatively different kind of future for the nation.

As a consequence, Japan is caught in the precarious territory somewhere between the all futured-out, the over-planned colonized future, and the Zen concept of the *un*-planning mind—*mu-shin* (無心). This in-between state within binary extremes requires that we understand the dynamics that form futures. If not understood and applied strategically, it is the futures-making elites and the primary definers of meaning who will inevitably colonize the futures of the Japanese people with pre-fabricated images.

As one strategy is facilitating an understanding of the complexities of futures image formation, my modest aim is to show how a futures approach will reveal the subtleties,

the hidden interrelationships, and the actual richness of Japan's futures. I hope to demonstrate that the nation of Japan is a bountiful territory of macro, meso and micro-maps of the future, dispelling the litanies of mapless-ness. The investigation will argue that Japan's catch up guiding image of the future and its downfall in the dysfunctionality of the bubble economy is detrimental to the physical and psychological well being of the Japanese people, carrying far-reaching negative effects. The post war catch up model has outlived its usefulness, and ought to now be understood as a symbol of a competition that has no winners, based on mal-conceived worldviews.

With regard to the above contextualization, I intend to argue for an initial *de*-colonization of Japan's image of the future vacuum. My preference is to explore the tension between 'creative chaos' and 'administered coherence' in the formation of authentically preferable future social arrangements. I support the view that authentic images of the future exist in abundance in 21st century Japan, but that they can only be realized within a new kind of communication ecology. My preference for creative chaos over administered coherence as a necessary prerequisite for re-asserting new forms of national identity goes against the grain of much conventional communication and futures research, characterized by what Chang (1996) calls their 'critical dogmatics', their desire for a 'destinal' communication, a final *telos* and resting place. Instead of the *telos*, I propose an image of the future that allows for what is called *polytely*, multiple outcomes.

Another aspect of this argument is that the static, singular image of the future is no longer tenable in this global age of complexification and accelerating socio-

technological development. Instead, the *polytely*, for which I have stated my preference, requires an evolutionary model for the image of the future. Consider this:

> Complex systems that create public goods need a capacity for constant evolution, adaptation and innovation. Innovation is the public sector's Achilles heel. It swings between bouts of extremely high-risk, system-wide innovation, in which all eggs are thrown in the same, very large but fragile basket, and long periods of stasis when nothing much seems to change. Innovation often comes about only in response to a sense of crisis. Instead we need an evolutionary model of innovation (Leadbeater, 2002, p. 277).

Method in Brief

The methodology in this investigation consists of a three-tiered meta-analysis consisting of a Futures Triangle Analysis (FTA) as the macro-framework, a Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) at the meso-level, and a poststructural tool-box (PSTB) borrowing and adapting five key concepts from Michel Foucault—adapted for the analysis of future issues—as the micro-analytic component.

Developed by Sohail Inayatullah (2003), the FTA is composed of three dimensions: *pushes* of the present, *pulls* of the future, and the *weights* of history and tradition. Collectively these form the overall complex matrix of analysis, within which my aim is to discursively locate Japan's images of the future, Japan's national conversation. From the sites of tension between these three dimensions of the pushes, pulls and weights, plausible futures emerge and make themselves discernible for on-going interpretation, analysis, and shaping for preferred images of the future.

Causal Layered Analysis (CLA), also developed by Inayatullah (1998) was selected, as the most effective and meso-level methodology in light of the fact that the problem presented by the study was complex, multi-layered and dynamic, rendering a singular analytical tool less effective. As well as constituting a methodological window through which a futures issue might be explored, CLA adopts a distinct philosophical and theoretical position to which the investigator should subscribe in order that the methodology can be applied to real-world situations.

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). An underlying premise of a critical futures analysis is that much of what is research-worthy for the critical analysis lies 'beneath the surface' of events and is often un-available directly to the conventional senses. As a radical form of critical analysis, both poststructuralism and CLA adopt non-conventional strategies for the data they seek to critique.

CLA utilizes some ideas from the body of work of Michel Foucault, specifically, five analytic tools of my micro-level methodology: deconstruction; genealogy; distancing and de-familiarization; a reordering of knowledge; and alternative pasts, presents and futures.

Three Research Questions

The research questions (RQ) reflect the FTA approach.

1. What are the pushes—in terms of current trends—that are affecting Japan's futures?

2. What are the historical and cultural weights that influence Japan's futures?
3. What are the emerging transformative Japanese images of the future discourses, as embodied in seven future oriented texts, and what potential do they offer for transformative change in Japan?

Research questions one and two are discussed in Chapter five and research question three is discussed in Chapter six.

Significance of Study

This investigation is significant in a number of ways. Futures images shape the kinds of nations and cultural areas that are formed and evolve over time and space, and affect the relationships in and between peoples, cultures and nations. The quality of futures images is therefore an important area of analysis. More attention must be given to the nature of these images, who makes them and why, who stands to gain and lose, what the implications for people living under the symbolic significances of colonized and imposed images are. This study is also significant because of its holistic approach to Japanese futures thinking, using a three-tiered critical Futures Studies perspective and methodology. As will be demonstrated in later sections, the bulk of futures research on Japan has focused on technological and sensationalized sociological issues which discount serious social critique or reconstructive analysis.

This investigation is also significant for its attempt to give a voice to the theme of Japanese futures in terms other than that nation's scientific and technological performance and the economic imperatives which have dominated images of Japan.

During Japan's bubble period, when the nation seemed unstoppable, Japan was often described as a living example of how a nation can be successfully governed and operated under principles that are not crude replicas of American-derived models. Japan's apparent social, technological and economic successes offered hope to other nations, specifically those from Asian and non-European culture areas resistant to the perceived hegemony of totalizing Americanized futures. In this respect my investigation will explore what went wrong with Japan's image of the future and whether there is hope for Japan's revival of futures images which can in turn inspire other nations.

Significant policy implications can also be derived from this investigation. These include the formulation of a new kind of future-oriented public policy based on re-invigorated perceptions of future-ness. It is also hoped that outcomes from research conducted herein could be directly applied to policy formulation in Japan vis-à-vis the articulation and implementation of preferable futures.

As such, there are also a variety of audiences for this investigation. These include: researchers in the fields of futures studies and images of the future; activists with particular involvement in positive future-oriented social change; policy designers and analysts; and concerned individuals and citizens' groups interested in influencing not only Japan's micro national conversation, but macro-conversations of global futures.

Thesis Structure in Brief

Chapter two introduces the main theoretical dimensions of the study. It introduces the reader to core images of the future theory—starting with the pioneering research of

Dutch scholar Fred Polak (1973). Subsequently, periphery theoretical frameworks such as the alternative image of the future, dissenting futures, and the ways in which images of the future function and/or are dysfunctional within social systems are also introduced.

Chapter three shifts from a macro image of the future perspective to Japan-specific research, with an emphasis on prototypical utopian traditions within Japanese culture. These utopian frameworks are organized in such a way as to suggest a new taxonomy of Japanese utopias. From this emerging taxonomy I am able to identify significant gaps in the research related to Japan's futures images. At this point I forge the three research questions which inform the overall structure and objectives of this doctoral investigation.

Chapter four presents for the reader the methods employed in this thesis. I firstly outline the macro analytical framework of the Futures Triangle Analysis (FTA), a mapping methodology consisting of three dimensions/tensions: the *pushes* of the present; *pulls* of the future; and the *weights* of history and tradition. I next present a summary of the core analytical method, Inayatullah's (1999) Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) which consists of litany, social causes, worldviews and myth/metaphor layers as the meso-framework for this investigation. I then introduce five Foucault derived analytic techniques which form the poststructural tool-box (PSTB). Finally I also address various technical aspects of this investigation including the logic underlying the selection of the seven image of the future texts presented herein; the personal position of the researcher vis-à-vis the research theme; and approaches to the translation of texts used throughout this dissertation.

Chapter five is a combined and condensed analysis of the *pushes* of the present and weights of history. The dynamics of five sets of pushes and how they influence the future are examined. Causal Layered Analysis is used to structure each of the five pushes: new technologies; globalization and internationalization; demographics; values; and; finally, the pushes of Japan's creative vanguard. Three major weights of history are identified as possessing either anchoring, resisting or reacting functions vis-à-vis the machinations of Japan's tensive pulls and pushes.

Chapter six—the *pulls* of the future—provides the focal point of this investigation by concentrating on the analysis of seven Japanese image of the future texts. Within the mapping framework of a Futures Triangle Analysis, each of the seven images undergoes a detailed Causal Layered Analysis. This chapter concludes the CLA by examining the seven texts collectively in terms of the following poststructural tools: deconstruction; genealogy; distancing and defamiliarization; alternative pasts and futures; and re-ordering of knowledge.

Chapter seven concludes the investigation by integrating the findings from the Futures Triangle Analysis structure and responds to the original three research questions. Finally, I summarize the main contributions and implications of the study in terms of theory and method. The thesis finishes with suggestions and recommendations for further research.

After the end of the main text body are four appendices. Appendix I presents an extensive review of the literature pertaining to general Japanese futures research whilst Appendix II introduces various aspects of poststructural research including the roots of

Causal Layered Analysis research. Appendix III includes a summary of Yoshikawa's (1996) Seven Japanese Communication Modes. The final Appendix IV features an in-depth analysis of Japan's pushes of the present as support for Chapter five.

Introducing the Seven Japan-Specific Image of the Future Texts

Japan's national conversation about its futures is played out along a matrix of communication genres, environments and technological interventions including television, newspapers, public forums and debates, as well as casual daily conversations between various kinds of communicators and stakeholders. Situated within this macro context, Japan's images of the future are embodied in multiple and overlapping media including book publications, public campaigns, television programming, newspaper articles, future-oriented projects, citizen campaigns, social networking sites, and creative artworks, to name but a few. Of the hundreds of images (texts) identified over the duration of this investigation, the following seven—published between the years 2000 and 2006—were chosen for inclusion in the analysis:

1. *Report of the Prime Minister's Commission on Japan's Goals in the 21st Century—The Frontier Within: Individual Empowerment and Better Governance in the New Millennium*—a book compiled by a committee headed by the now deceased Jungian scholar Kawai Hayao.
2. *Slow Is Beautiful* is a book by Tsuji Shinichi, in which he re-images Japan as a culture represented by the metaphor of the sloth, concerned with a decelerated, quality-oriented lifestyle in preference to the post-bubble cult of speed and economic efficiency.

3. *MuRatopia* by contrast is an image of the future in the form of a microcosmic prototype community located on the historically significant island of Awaji. *MuRatopia* is an on-going project established by Japanese economist and futures thinker Yamaguchi Kaoru and is supported by a Home Page[4] which defines the philosophies of the *MuRatopia* project.
4. *F.U.C.K, I Love Japan* is a book authored by Tanja Yujiro. This image of the future provides my textual line-up with a youth-oriented, sub-culture perspective on that nation's futures.
5. The book *IMAGINATION / CREATION* is a compilation of round table discussions about Japan's futures seen from the point of view of Japan's creative vanguard. It includes discussions with prominent cultural critics, anthropologists, academic philosophers and actively creative types.
6. *Visionary People in a Visionless Country: 21 Earth Connecting Human Stories* is a collection of twenty one essays compiled and edited by Danish born (1967) environmental activist and consultant Peter David Pedersen, a long term resident of Tokyo fluent in the Japanese language.
7. *EXODUS to the Land of Hope*, by Murakami Ryū, further contrasts with the texts presented above. Murakami is one of Japan's most prolific and influential writers. This text is a near-future novel that posits a massive exodus of Japan's youth, literate with state-of-the-art Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), to Japan's northern island of Hokkaido. It is there they launch a creative industries-inspired ICT revolution from the peripheries.

[4] For details of the *MuRatopia* project refer to the URL, http://www.muratopia.org.

Key Concepts and Terms

The units of analysis key to the shaping of this investigation are found in the title: *Unpacking Japan's 21st Century 'National Conversation': Images of the Future beyond the Iron Cage of the Hegemonic 'Catch Up' Model*.

By the term *unpacking* I refer to the critical, deconstructionist and poststructural orientation of this investigation in that my intention is to reveal the layeredness of the social constructions of reality which constitute a futures discourse. This investigation takes as its basic unit the nation referred to as Japan as the study area. Our reference to the *21st Century* delineates our temporal framework: those images of the future whose reference point is Japan's future after the year 2000 through to the final draft of this dissertation submitted in 2010.

By *national conversation* I refer to the total range of possible discursive formations which inform Japan's images of the future, with specific reference to the national debate over the course for that nation's futures into the 21st century—Japan's post-bubble period and post post-bubble period. It is within this national conversation that a total of seven key image of the future texts were selected for analysis.

The *image of the future* is a key concept in Futures Studies and accordingly a range of definitions are currently in usage. Polak's development of this term is discussed in detail in Chapter three. Two contemporary definitions serve us here. The first is from Slaughter (1996a), who defines the term 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 realization" (p. 325-6). A second and complementary definition is suggested by Bell and Mau (1971, in Hicks and Holden, 1995). 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" (p. 24).

Iron cage is a concept borrowed by Max Weber, in which he referred to the increasing rationalization of human life which traps individuals in an 'iron cage' of rule-based, rational control. He once referred to this kind of over-bureaucratized social order as "[the] polar night of icy darkness". The original German term, *stahlhartes Gehäuse* was translated as 'iron cage', an expression made familiar to English language speakers by Talcott Parsons in his 1958 translation of Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iron_cage). In this research it refers to the over-bureaucratized nature of Japan's futures discourses which produce a sense of there being no way out, no escape route from the present.

The next term *hegemony*, on the other hand, is primarily a Marxist term used to "describe the maintenance of power without the use, or direct threat, of physical force; normally by a minority class whose interests are contrary to those over whom power is exercised" (Hawthorn, 1998, p. 9). In this dissertation the principal referent for the use of this term is the social continuation of Japan's catch-up and overtake model as image of the future, which dominates and subsumes alternative futures conceptions.

The term *catch-up and overtake model* (hereafter referred to as the catch up model) refers to the dominant guiding image of the future used in Japan since that nation's defeat in World War Two. The *telos* of this catch up model implies the imperative for surpassing the economic and technological performance of the United States and the developed European nations. It is this very model, once an image of the future deemed worthy of emulation and achievement, that is now obsolete and in need of renewal. It is one of the key concepts for my investigation.

Another key term in this thesis is *maplessness*. To systematize and operationalize this term I include Malsaka's (1995) term *fallacy of nil perception*. By this, Malaska is referring to the non-existence, or a lack of viable, images. Nil-perception is a term he simply defines as "a lack of a mental pattern, a lack of vision" (p. 81). Alternative images of the future must be made comprehensible to the wider community by decision makers through situation-effective decision-making processes and community communication. This task also includes outlining alternative courses of action to achieve the image of the future, and the generation of citizen will power required to attain desired outcomes whilst avoiding undesirable outcomes. A state of social maplessness vis-à-vis a society's futures produces pathologies, 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" (p. 189).

Limitations of Study

The first limitation pertains to the number of images of the future texts selected for this analysis. Although every effort was made to maximize image diversity, many research-worthy future texts were omitted for lack of time or resources. Other images anticipated as providing much needed analytic balance and insight were either not found or available in time for inclusion. There are two especially important omissions that need to be reported: of the seven selected texts, images of the future articulated by Japan's indigenous Ainu people and feminine images of the future formed a limited part of this analysis. This omission is due, not to a conscious decision to focus on male-oriented images of the future, but to the simple fact that indigenous and feminist images of the future within Japan's national conversation are almost non-existent. A truly balanced analysis of Japan's images of the future ought to equitably include and incorporate as broad a spectrum as possible. The identification of this deficit requires attention in future s of Japan's images of the future.

There are also limitations regarding the analytic aspects of this thesis. Firstly, this thesis does not seek to predict the future, but rather, to unpack and *un*-define the future, to make it problematic, by applying the various Futures Studies methodologies I have briefly mentioned. Deconstructionist analysis is considered requisite to social *re*-construction. Furthermore, there is no attempt to offer a definitive or even a personally preferred scenario of a future Japan. Rather, what is offered is a suite of suggestions for re-setting the conditions of possibility to potentiate better futures for that nation.

Another limitation can be located in the macro methodological framework itself, the Futures Triangle Analysis. A complete and detailed analysis of each of the *push*, *pull* and *weight* dimensions was my initial preference. However, for the sake of readability and to keep the thesis manageable, it was eventually decided to include many of the findings in the appendices, whilst concentrating the focus of the study on the *pulls* of the future—the seven texts.

Also worth noting is the gap between the theories that constitute the philosophical orientation of a given practice or movement, and the actual lived day-to-day practices of its active members and the established rules and regulations that regulate its internal human relationship functioning. This analysis is kept tightly to its textual dimensions and formations keeping the micro-politics and dynamics of the futures images *as* lived experiences for further research into Japan's futures.

A final limitation deserves some significant comment. This is the issue of the eruption of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) in 2008 after the bulk of the analytical work of this thesis had been completed. The questions must be asked: How has the GFC affected this enquiry? To what extent are the chose texts and the analytical work still relevant?

In the early period immediately following the GFC, commentary was at times sensationalist and the thesis has benefited from a further two years gestation during which time a more considered view of the GFC has developed. Current assessments of Japan's economic position[5] point to a recovery of sorts on the back of exports to China

[5] Crisis in slow motion. *The Economist*, 00130613, 4/10/2010, Vol. 395, Issue 8677.

despite the fact that Japan, like most countries, was hit hard by the GFC. Indeed, the Japanese downturn post 2008 led to major political change. The collapse in exports helped end the reign of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which had ruled Japan for most of the past 55 years. It was swept from power in September 2009 by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), which promised to promote a more balanced economy. Despite these important changes the cultural superstructure and the challenge to define a national conversation about the future which constituted the core material for the thesis enquiry remain as important as ever. Issues of technological change; the weights of cultural history; the urgency of environmental issues; and the importance of youth culture are still current issues. In short, the GFC has not overturned the urgency and currency of this study.

In light of this, the author has adopted the following responses to the GFC. Firstly the thesis acknowledges that the primary analysis was conducted before the GFC and this constitutes a limitation of the thesis that must be noted. All texts and analyses are bounded by history and in fact it may be many years before a sober assessment of the impact of the GFC on Japan can be conducted. A completely new analysis was therefore considered beyond the scope of the thesis. However, a thorough revision of the whole thesis was conducted during the first half of 2010 and, where possible, important matters pertaining to the GFC were incorporated throughout the thesis.

Conclusion

This chapter set out the purpose of the study and provided a detailed statement of the problematic field of investigation. A brief synopsis delineating the background to

Japan's so-called national conversation in the form of a nation-wide discourse unfolding across multiple media and genres was introduced to familiarize the reader with the details of Japan's futures problematic from a Futures Studies perspective. Within this macro context of a post post-bubble Japan trying to regain control of its futures in spite of more recent blows to national pride in the guise of the Global Financial Crisis—counterbalanced somewhat by the renewed hope derived from the election of a new administration[6] in 2009—I presented seven key image of the future texts and introduced an analytic matrix consisting of the Futures Triangle Analysis, Causal Layered Analysis and a Foucauldian poststructural tool-box. I also delineated the parameters of the argument by pinpointing deficiencies in previous research on Japanese images of the future. This was followed by three research questions which give shape to the thesis as a whole by corresponding to the *pushes*, *pulls* and *weights* dimensions of the Futures Triangle. The significance of the area of investigation along with some of the anticipated outcomes emanating from the research and a suggested audience for this investigation was also introduced. The structure of Chapters two through seven—the literature review of images of the future research; Japan's utopian taxonomy; the methodology; the s of *pushes* of the present in conjunction with the *weights* of history; *pulls* to the future; and the aims of the final concluding chapter—was presented. Key theories, concepts and terms extracted from the title of the thesis were defined and explained. Finally, the limitations of the study were explained.

In the next chapter I shift my focus to key theoretical aspects from the body of literature

[6] For a compacted summary of the hopes and fears presented by the new Hatoyama Democratic Party of Japan (DJP) administration elected August 30, 2009, see a compilation of essays and interviews by leading Japanese political commentators and researchers in *JAPAN ECHO, Volume 36*, Number 6, December 2009.

known as image of the future theory. This chapter leads directly into the following Chapter three and its focus on the Japanese image of the future emphasizing the roles of four Japanese utopian prototypes.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The Image of the Future

This chapter introduces the core general theoretical dimensions that underpin the thesis. I begin by examining the essence of image of the future theory, starting with the contribution and lasting influences of Fred Polak's (1973) classic *The Image of the Future*. Subsequently, related periphery theoretical frameworks such as the alternative image of the future and dissenting futures are introduced. The aim of the chapter is to establish the conceptual bonafides of the thesis—rather than problematising these approaches. This task is addressed in Chapter four and Appendix II.

Introduction: Early Image of the Future Research

> *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 (Elgin, 1991, in Hicks and Holden, 1995, p. 138).*

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 (p. 153-154).

According to Jim Dator (2003) it was Kenneth and Elise Boulding who gave the concept of images of the future conceptual centrality within the field of Futures Studies. Dator (2003) expresses his support for the study of the image in the following statement:

> I believe collecting and studying images, and the consequences of images of the future should be a main focus of futures studies. Even though the concept "images of the future" is widespread in the futures literature, it does not seem to be the central focus of the field that I think it should be… I long ago came to the conclusion that futures studies does not study 'the future' since 'the future' does not exist and therefore cannot be studied, *per se*. What we can study empirically are 'images of the future'—ideas about the future that do exist—in each individual (often several contradictory images), in each culture, differing between men and women, young and old, over one's life, depending on past experiences and current events, and, most importantly, serving as a basic rationale for action in the present (which then helps shape the future) (p. 3).

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 refers to Kelman's definition of the image as the organized representation of an object in an individual's cognitive system, a definition that encompasses former uses of the term by Kenneth Boulding (1956, *The Image*) and Polak (1973). Thus, continues Boulding (1995), "the term 'image' includes conceptions of the represented object in the past and future as well as the 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, 1964) or the deep structures concept used in Chomsky’s (1966) analysis of the development of language. Polak (1953), 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).

For futurist Richard Slaughter (1996a), futures images 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 Karl Popper refers to as the *push of the past* and the *pull of the future*. Quoting 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 (in Slaughter, 1996a, p. 103).

Fred Polak: The Image of the Future as Key History-Producing Dynamic

> *In order to understand the evolution of a people or culture over time, it is first necessary to identify the dominant paradigm which drives that society (Velamoor, 2000, p. 62).*

The first systematic study of the role of future images is generally attributed to Polak's (1973) seminal publication *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 learning processes (1973, p. 18). According to Polak, 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 cultural group.

Inayatullah (2000) pinpoints Polak's theory of the image of the future as focusing specifically on the image of the future itself. Those collectivities with no vision of the future decline; those with a positive image of the future—transcendental and immanent—advance. Humanity, especially now, needs a positive image of the future to create a new tomorrow.

It is precisely this dynamic of *image formation* that is the focus of my first analytic chapter, which employs a Futures Triangle Analysis, highlighting the pushes, pulls and weights, to show the discursive formation that constitutes Japan's 21st century so-called national conversation concerning the perceived crisis of the nation's futures. In developing a coherent theory of the image, Polak (1973, p 13-14) outlines six dimensions accounting for the dynamic between images and futures. These include:

Principle #1: Images of the future are always aristocratic in origin;

Principle #2: The propagation of images is partly driven by the rational and intellectual;

a much larger part is emotional, aesthetic, and spiritual;

Principle #3: *Image-effect*—describes the relationship between the projected future (whether positive or negative) and the actual future as it passes into history;

Principle #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;

Principle #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

Principle #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.

To summarize Polak's thinking, it is this operation of the image of the future within society and through history, and the human capacity to create mental images of the 'totally other'—that which has never been experienced or recorded—that is the key dynamic of history (cited in Boulding & Boulding, 1995, p. 96). At every level of awareness, from the individual to the macro-societal, 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 they imagine to be a desirable tomorrow.

Images of the World in the Year 2000: A Comparative Ten Nation Study

This pioneering and systematic investigation into futures images, *Images of the World in the Year 2000: A Comparative Ten Nation Study* (in 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 findings in the survey it was observed that the tendency to think about the future is poorly developed (in Ornauer et al.). 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 of 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. This is a perception of *future* that inevitably leads to an endless cycle of deferral and frustration.

The concluding chapter of the study isolates three main conclusions. Firstly, it was observed that there is much more variation between than within nations. The second conclusion pointed to an overall lack of social imagination on the part of participants. Futures images often focused 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 the fact that futures issues are the domain of the 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 only at a superficial level and not on 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 (Ornauer et 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 (p. 581).

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

*Dys*functioning of the Image

> *Whenever a new image of the future itself grows old and hardens into infallible orthodoxy, the danger of Hypostasy sets in, and a ball and chain is fastened to the fleeting foot of time (Polak, 1973, p. 226).*

Insofar as we are able to talk in terms of the 'functioning' of futures images, we are also able to discuss their *dys*functioning. Despite the reported importance of images, many futures researchers report a scarcity of viable futures images. Hicks and Holden (1995) believe we lack guiding visions for the future, an observation reiterated by Boulding and Boulding (1995) who in discussing the role of futures images in war and peace, claim 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 (1995, p. viii).

Malaska (1995) calls this lack of viable images 'nil perception', which he defines as a lack of a mental pattern, a lack of vision. Because of the problem of nil perception in human knowledge, one task in futures thinking 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 willpower required to attain the desired outcomes and

> avoid the unwanted ones (Malaska, 1995, p. 81).

What are the consequences of nil perception or insufficiently articulated and/or communicated images? As Boulding and Boulding (1995) point out from their 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 (p. 189).

Alternative Futures

According to Slaughter (1996a), alternative futures are considered by many to be *the* core concept of futures studies. This notion suggests that individuals, groups, cultures are not seen on a deterministic path to a single unitary future but, by using their powers of foresight and decision-making, can select from a wide range of future trajectories and outcomes. Dator (1994) states that it is absolutely essential that all people who have a vested interest in the future be involved in determining it. This means that not only the elite but all marginalized persons should participate fairly, fully, and frequently.

The notion of alternative futures is predicated on the existence of a *dominant* image. Dominant images of the future are, in effect, in constant competition with alternative, change-oriented, subversive, counter-culture, sub-culture images of the future. In this investigation I will be analyzing a range of image-of-the-future texts in order to understand the implications and effects of pursuing certain images of the future at the cost of the non-pursuit of others.

Dissent

The notion of dissenting futures, as one form of alternative image, is a constant theme in the global futures literature. If dominant dysfunctional images of the future are to be replaced with more ethically sustainable images of the future, the articulation, communication, and implementation of dissenting alternatives becomes the only strategic option for conscious social transformation. Alluding to the inevitability of the dissenting image, Polak (1973) has this to say:

> At the moment two promising countercurrents against the prevailing trend stand out. The first might be called the reversal of 'isms'. There is a revolt against the domination of empiricism, mechanism and rationalism. Any culture which finds itself in the condition of our present culture, turning aside from its own heritage of positive visions of the future, or actively at work in changing these positive visions into negative ones, has no future unless strong counter-forces are set in motion soon (p. 257).

Using the term 'responsible dissent', Slaughter (1999) continues the discussion by noting that if futures studies practitioners merely accept the standard presuppositions of conventional politics, governance, economics, wealth-creation, land-use, science policy, technology development and so on, they merely reinforce the grounds of our historical dilemma in which various elites play out their games of dominance, greed, and power within shrinking arenas of freedom.

Within the dissenting alternatives discourse we are able to locate a role for the intellectual. This is more than a perfunctory exercise as the seven image of the future texts featuring in the pulls dimension of the Futures Triangle Analysis (see Chapter

five) may, or may not, be the embodiment of dissenting futures images. What too is the role of the dissenting intellectual who might take on a large number of indispensable, ideological-cultural projects: subverting the illusions of conventional ideologies, introducing and disseminating critical views of social reality, presenting an alternative vision of the future (Inayatullah, 1999, p. 64)?

Inayatullah (1998a) subscribes to dissenting futures, not dissent in the leftist political 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 (p. 637).

Nonetheless, the iterative nature of futures research and processes does not end with a final identification and implementation of an alternative future. Nandy (1987) tempers the enthusiasm of the futurist with the sobering insight that yesterday's dissent is often today's establishment and, unless resisted, becomes tomorrow's terror. Contemporary futures agendas are concerned with the dynamics of positive social transformations.

Utopias as Sources for Alternative Images of the Future

> *Utopias elude definition. The genre merges, at its edges, into related forms—the imaginary voyage, the earthly or heavenly paradise, the political manifesto or constitution. But an average, middle-of-the-road utopia will include transit to some other place, remote in space or time or both, where the*

> *inhabitants are different from us, perhaps recognizable human, perhaps not, and where something can be learned about how life should be lived (Carey, 1999, p. 1).*

Polak (1973) devoted over 70 pages to the roles and functioning of utopias in history and upon the future. Many utopian themes, arising in fantasy, find their way to reality. Scientific management, full employment, and social security were all once figments of a utopia-writer's imagination. So were parliamentary democracy, universal suffrage, planning, and the trade union movement. The tremendous concern for child-rearing and universal education, for eugenics, and for garden cities all emanated from the utopia. The utopia stood for the emancipation of women long before the existence of the feminist movement. All the current concepts concerning labor, from the length of the work week to profit-sharing, are found in the utopia. Thanks to the utopianists, the twentieth century did not catch humankind totally unprepared. For Polak, the utopia as 'image of the future' constitutes one of the most powerful forces in shaping history, and, by implication, futures through the confluence of three possible roles: as buffer for the future, as driving force toward the future, and as a trigger of social progress.

Recognizing the value of utopian thinking, even Bertrand Russell (1952) the self-proclaimed 'passionate skeptic' once wrote:

> The construction of Utopias used to be despised as the foolish refuge of those who could not face the real world. But in our time social change has been so rapid, and so largely inspired by utopian aspirations, that it is more necessary than it used to be to consider the wisdom or unwisdom of dominant aspirations (p. 85).

With a similar sentiment, in his essay 'The Soul of Man Under Socialism', Oscar Wilde

wrote:

> A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realization of Utopias (in Leadbeater, 2002, p. 332).

In discussing William Morris's great utopian novel *News from Nowhere*, Coleman and Sullivan comment:

> Let us imagine that life is not as it is, but as it might one day be. Let us inspect the unknown terrain of the future as if we were about to inhabit it… The imagined future is a subversive force: the more who imagine a different kind of future, and imagine constructively, materially, and determinedly, the more dangerous utopian dreams become. They grow from dreams to aims (1990, p.10).

Although systematic definitions of the utopia are necessarily elusive as pointed out by Carey (1999) above, for my own investigation, utopias and utopian thinking are an indispensable component of my analysis. I distill three main uses for the utopia.

First, at a general level, utopias, utopian thinking and communities, dystopias, and their more contemporary derivatives eutopias and eupsychias are a major concern to the futures researcher. Utopias and the worlds they articulate are a recurring example of alternative societies and futures. Utopias, *qua* images of the future, function as pulls to the future, not in the same way that government white papers and mass media portrayed images function, but at deeper, culturally epistemic, subconscious levels, often beyond the reach of our everyday cognizance.

Recognizing that ‘there is nothing new under the sun’, all our selected Japanese image of the future texts will draw, often unwittingly, from a reservoir of deep cultural utopian prototype traditions. It is these archetypal structures we wish to access: the ‘Dreaming’ of Japanese society hidden from our immediate perception. From this semi-hidden-from-view repertoire of Japanese utopian thinking, we will gain insight into the nature and qualities of ‘the ideal’, glimpsed from the Japanese culturally informed perspective, which in turn can eventually be shaped into contemporary images of the future that faithfully reflect and take into account deep archetypes.

Drawing from Creative Industries discourses, Charles Leadbeater (2002) has put forward an intriguing theory in *Up the Down Escalator*, which succinctly highlights this functioning of the utopia through history to their present manifestations. In this provocative perspective, the Western-driven Information Technology societal image of the future is but a contemporaneous living out, a realization of medieval dreams as evidenced in prototype form in the so-called Cockaigne stories. He notes how modern consumer society in many ways is living out a medieval myth: fantastical stories about pleasures of life in the Land of Cockaigne set out in the *Sterfbeok* (*The Book of Death*) written in 1491. It is from these prototypical utopian stories that much of our modern consumer culture unwittingly seeks to realize the medieval Cockaigne idyll. Cockaigne was replete with a never-ending supply of food, and freedom from disease, bad weather, and other sources of fear and uncertainty. Developing the recurring leitmotifs as found in the Cockaigne stories, Leadbeater draws up a convincing theatre of utopian ingredients currently being realized by a contemporary ‘Technotopia’ society under the utopian sub-categories of ‘Marketopia’, ‘Communitopia’, ‘Politopia’, ‘Ecotopia’, and

‘Genetopia’ (pp. 129-142).

This theory of modern society as medieval utopia made possible through the confluence of new technologies begs the question in reference to my own investigation: is contemporary Japan, and the proliferation of images of the future currently in production in that nation, a reflection of medieval Japanese traditions, or an unconscious mimetic response to European culturally derived traditions?

A second use of utopian thinking is suggested by Inayatullah (2000) who positions utopian imagery as vehicles for distancing, for making the present remarkable, unfamiliar, and strange, in a process of denaturalizing the present. The reader is reminded at this stage that the Foucauldian technique of distancing is one in our Foucault-inspired poststructural toolbox used within the overall framework of the Causal Layered Analysis (see Chapter four).

A third way for putting to good use the utopia is to recast the utopia, not as an impossible ‘no-place’—a subconsciously operating pull of the future—but as a place, a possible state, capable of undergoing purposeful and conscious design of novel images of the future. This is the *eu*topia, the not-perfect but nonetheless achievable human society, a better society, a society mindful of the potential for continuous improvement.

Creative Thinking and Creative Minorities

As far back as 1973, Polak was already familiar with the concept of a ‘creative minority’ (1973, pp. 253, 256, 263) and ‘creative thinking’ (p. 257) and their

implications for the image of the future as agents of change. Like the utopias summarized above, Polak is adamant that art and the products created through artistic behaviors are themselves images of the future. It has been said that art is a highly sensitive culture-barometer. It is not only an indicator for the present, however, but a prognosticator of things to come. The image of the future presented by art is crucial in understanding future developments of a culture; in fact art *is* an image of the future (pp. 155, 173, 269).

Inayatullah (2000b) further interprets the role of the Cultural Creatives for futures thinking. This emerging new demographic believe in environmental sustainability, inner spirituality, gender partnership, and wealth plus health. They create their world through connections and relationships and not through the image of the hero conquering nature and others. For them, it is the web of friendships, of community, that defines the future.

Historian Arnold Toynbee's[7] (in Galtung and Inayatullah, 1999) macro-historical reading of social transformation posits the emergence of a creative minority who are capable of perceiving the challenge and generating an adequate and creative, not merely ritualistic and routine, response. Toynbee's suggested Challenge-Response-Mimesis (CRM) cycle is freely imitated once established, and followed by a mimetic majority. In order to stave off decline, the civilization has to continue growing. This means the challenge-response-mimesis cycles have to be operating all the time. However, there is

[7] For a concise analysis of Toynbee's theory of the creative minority see Johan Galtung's (1999) 'Arnold Toynbee: Challenge and Response' in Johan Galtung and Sohail Inayatullah (eds.) *Macrohistory and macrohistorians: Perspectives on Individual, Social, and Civilizational Change*. PRAEGER, p. 120-127.

a catch: if the CRM cycles are arrested according to whatever mechanism, civilizational decline sets in, and during the decline phase, the once Creative Minority degenerates into a Dominant Minority.

Martha Garrett (1996) articulates the Futures-Creativity nexus: creativity is important in a futures study for many reasons. Imagining something other than the present situation or a straight extrapolation from the present situation requires a creative mind, as does solving dilemmas that have not yielded to logical analysis.

Communication Discourses as Sources for Alternative Images of the Future

Our unit of analysis is a meta-communicative situation—the national conversation; its referent pertains to the design and policy articulation of a 'guiding futures image/vision' to supersede the former catch up model (which culminated in the bubble, and currently the post-bubble era—the first period in Japan's history described as 'map-less' and 'model-less'). It is therefore an important time for Japan and one worthy of documentation, description, deep understanding, and critical analysis beyond the usual superficial critiques that this nation is usually submitted to both inside and out.

Communication aspects include the national conversation as synchronic communicative event; the role(s) of communication processes in the unfolding and development of the national conversation; the role of meaning-making; the sites of the meaning-making—television, press, everyday activity and conversation, government; the communication channels through which the national conversation takes place—who takes part, who is left out; Japanese communication modes and styles and their effectiveness in shaping

and articulating better futures for the on-going betterment of society; and the communicative age paradigm and communication-inclusiveness as meta-language to discuss preferable futures.

Foucault and Transformation

Throughout this investigation into Japan's images of the future, 'transformation' has been a key term; we are primarily concerned with the dynamics of social change as mediated through the potentiality of the image of the future. Despite criticisms that Foucault leaves no room for agency (Chambon et. al., 1999), his work in general, it can be argued, renders possible the transformation of 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 (p. 79). 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 Rabinow, 1984, pp. 350-51).

Furthermore, he acknowledges that change is to be found in counter-forms or alternative forms of knowledge and of practices (in Chambon et al., 1999. p. 70). According to Foote and Frank's (in Chambon et al., 1999) reading of Foucauldian transformation, transformation can come only from those who have come into collision with each other and with themselves, run into dead-ends, problems and impossibilities and go through conflicts and confrontations (in Chambon et al., 1999). Chambon himself 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 advances the idea of developing new hybrid languages of experience and inventing a new accessible language for dealing with change.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the macro image of the future literature with summaries of the leading historical theoreticians, emphasizing Polak's (1973) seminal *The Image of the Future* as a convenient starting point. Core image of the future theories are thereby situated and contextualized against the image as a potential site of *dys*functioning, as producer of possible social pathologies. Concepts such as the alternative image of the future, and images produced and disseminated from the creative minorities were also introduced. Subsections focusing on the roles of historical utopias and emerging utopian discourses as images of the future were then briefly explained in their capacity for explaining the roles of the Japanese utopia prototype. Finally in this chapter, the stance of Michel Foucault vis-à-vis the image and its role in social transformation is brought into the theoretical mix.

The following chapter progressively brings the focus down from general image of the future literature to the Japan-specific. Japanese utopian thinking and traditional prototypes are introduced as one form of meta-image. The final section reveals the gaps in research related to the Japanese image of the future, from which the three research

questions that inform the overall structure and objectives of this doctoral investigation are extracted and shaped.

CHAPTER THREE: THE JAPAN-SPECIFIC IMAGE OF THE FUTURE

Introduction

In Chapter two, the role of the utopia as one formation of the image of the future was outlined. Notably, it was suggested how seemingly contemporary images of the future, in all their variedness, are, according to Leadbeater's (2002) analysis, mere manifestations and re-workings of thought traveling through time and space. In relation to this continuum of utopian possibilities, where can we situate the Japanese utopian worldview? Is the Japanese utopian meta-project one of creating fantastic new technocratic worlds, retrieving a nostalgic authentic Japanese self within community, spiritual enlightenment, or something else again?

In Appendix I, I present a description of many writers who have discussed Japan's future as background for the main task at hand in this chapter. Literature reviewed in Appendix 1 highlights two major knowledge gaps. Firstly, although it shows a proliferation of Japanese images of the future as texts, authored by both Japanese and non-Japanese, what is clear is the virtual non-existence of any identifiable analyses of Japan's images of the future. I suggest two specific reasons for this; first is the relative inaccessibility of image texts written in the original Japanese for the non-Japanese futures scholar. Secondly, it is revealed that Japan lacks a true futures studies and thinking 'interpretive community' of local scholars with the expert knowledge necessary for such a futures-oriented scholarly analysis.

This knowledge gap in turn points to a subsequent contradiction and/or paradox

residing in Japan's futures images discourses. Despite massive historical national investment in the future as social organizing principle, exemplified by the use of the term future in popular literature and mass media and the numbers of books and articles pertaining to the future, government white papers and local government future blueprints, there is so little systemized futures knowledge, and virtually no systematic studies on Japan's images of the future employing a futures studies approach. A second major and significant knowledge gap contained within the Japanese image of the future research shows that Japanese utopian research remains not only under-researched, but more evidently, under-organized with only scattered works which fail to illustrate the overall richness of this body of literature and its potential application for a deep understanding of contemporary Japan.

Given this background the current chapter maps out Japan's macro, or arche-images of the future using a new utopian tradition prototype structure developed specifically for this purpose. This process will hopefully untangle the deep historicities from which the current images of the future are emerging and the knowledge systems that make them intelligible which have operated and been transmitted through history. The process will implicitly ask whether there is a supra-historical, macro-paradigmatic guiding image of the future for Japan as a whole. It will ask: What is the *telos* of Japan? Is there a tacit Japanese project whose logical outcomes remain to be fulfilled? Is the arche-image fixed in time and space, or is it subject to transformation?

Toward a Taxonomy of Japan-Specific Utopian Worldview Prototypes

The Japanese utopian literature identified during the research phase of this doctoral

investigation was sparse, difficult to obtain, and, on the whole, seemed not to be suited to our purposes. Accordingly, I draw from three key utopian texts, supplemented with a range of smaller ancillary texts, to draw up a preliminary and prototype taxonomy of Japanese utopian traditions, or worldviews. These three key utopian texts are:

1. Iguchi Masatoshi and Iwao Ryutaro's (2001) *Other Worlds, Utopias and Myths* (**「異世界・ユートピア・物語」・***isekai, yūtopia, monogatari*)—is a comprehensive compilation of global historical utopians with a focus on their relation to Japanese utopian thought;
2. Tsuji Takashi's (2000) *The Disappearance of Utopia* (**「ユートピアの消滅」・***yūtopia no shōmetsu*) is a theoretical exploration on the sense of loss experienced by the failures of international utopian experiments; and,
3. Ito Genichiro's *Utopia Plans* website (**ユートピア計画** *yūtopia keikaku*) (2005)—features a comprehensive portfolio and treatise of global and historical Japanese utopian origins, plans, and projects.

From the above texts, I formulate a preliminary taxonomy of three broad prototype Japanese utopian traditions, plus one emerging possible utopian prototype, to serve as our point of reference. These three utopian traditions and one prototype form a complex matrix of competing, complementing, and supplementing constructions of the real. They derive from Japanese folk Shinto traditions and Chinese social thought. Within these I identify two contrasting permutations: the Taoist *Tōgenkyō* (**桃源郷**) or pastoral utopian poem written by the Chinese poet Tō-en Mei, and a Confucian-oriented ideal State. The third utopian cluster derives from the Buddhist paradises, and here I include two

contrasting traditions: the former from Japan's Sōka Gakkai (創価学会), a highly institutionalized religious movement, and a suggested Zen-oriented utopia using the examples of *chadō* (茶道)—The Way of Tea—and the Japanese garden as utopian/heterotopian space. A fourth prototype is forged out of more contemporary contexts. I refer to it as the contemporary utopias, an especially broad clustering of quasi-utopias with sub-utopias including "The American Dream" as representational symbolic ideal way of life derived from post-war Americanism and the cult of 'catch up and overtake the USA and Europe' model of the future; hi-technology-oriented future worlds—the technotopias; virtual communities such as the 'mini-nations of Japan'—(ミニ独立国・ *mini dokuritsu-koku*) as new media utopian manifestations. The four utopia prototypes to be discussed are:

1. Shintopia;
2. Chinese derived utopias;
3. Buddhist Paradises; and
4. Contemporary utopias.

Utopian Prototype I: Shintopia

As Japan's indigenous religion, Shinto, the first of our Japan-specific utopian-worldview prototypes can be expected to provide a rich reservoir of concepts pertaining to the notion of the Ideal. *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan* offers a useful summary of Shinto's main precepts that are indicative of the ideal Shintoist society including: *functionalism*; *life centeredness*; and *community-ism*. These exist under a framework Ishida Ichirō (1978) refers to as Shinto changeableness, a logic reflected in the transformations that Shinto has undergone throughout history. Ishida uses the metaphor

of a doll: although the essential doll remains unchanged, it regularly changes its clothes according to the needs of the times. Ishida suggests that this changeableness of Japanese Shinto and the forms of *kami* worship are "due to the absence of any original or basic doctrine of belief, leaving Japan's religion without sacred scriptures like the Judeo-Christian bible or the Islamic Koran" (p. 24).

Ishida's Three Basic Shinto Qualities

1. *Functionalism*: The first quality of Shinto is what Ishida (1978) calls the logic of disguise and transformation. According to this schematic, it is appropriate to conceptualize Shinto as a "logic of thought formation marked by a free change of form involving a continuous return to a new starting point, not to a single point in history but to a series of starting points—a logic that is a kind of dialectic between rapid change and restorative strength, compromise and preservation, change and continuity" (p. 25).
2. *Life centeredness:* A second ideal feature is life centeredness, referring to the creative or pro-creative power of *kami*. Ishida notes how "*kami* have always been thought of as having an unseen mysterious power (a pro-creative spirit) to propagate and enrich all forms of life" (p. 25). Accordingly, Shinto practices were less concerned with matters of death, leading to a "phenomenon unlike anything else seen in the world: a dividing up of religious functions by which *kami* worship was focused on life and Buddhist worship on death" (p. 25).
3. *Community-ism:* The third basic quality to fulfill the requirements of an ideal Shinto worldview is community-ism, described by Ishida as a "common, deep, and pervasive assumption that the procreative power of a *kami* is effective only within a

clearly defined geographical area, benefiting only the community residing in that area" (p. 26). However, as is later pointed out, a "*kami* could and did extend its occupied area whenever its power, and the power of the worshipping community, extended" (p. 26), offering one theoretical explanation for the usurpation of Shinto mythologies by the military under the slogan *hakko-ichiu*（八紘一宇）or "all corners of the world under one roof" (Oguma, 2002, p. 336).

I add a fourth utopian function to the above taxonomy by borrowing from Shinto theorist Thomas Kasulis (2004), who explains with great insight in his book *Shinto: The Way Home*, that "the etymology of the word 'nostalgia' is the 'ache' (-*algia*) to 'return home' (*nostos*). And this ache to return home is the aspect of spirituality that Shinto so well exemplifies" (p. 170). In this sense, Shinto continually offers the promise of a return to a possible nostalgic 'home' even in the midst of great social change and turmoil: a utopia of nostalgia.

Takemitsu Makoto's Five Shinto Ideal 'Hearts'

Takemitsu (2005) provides another framework for understanding the roles of the Ideal in Shinto. These five ideal ways of being supplement Ishida's former three principles with each including the Japanese term for heart, mind or spirit—*kokoro*—(心). These five formations of *kokoro* include:

1. 清い心: *kiyoi kokoro*—the pure heart;
2. 明るい心: *akarui kokoro*—the lucid or bright heart;
3. 正しい心: *tadashii kokoro*—the correct heart;
4. 直（すなお）な心: *sunao na kokoro*—the straight, direct, accepting heart and its

opposite, the *magatta kokoro* (曲がった心)—bent, distorted, affected heart; and,

5. 赤き心（=熱き心）: *atsuki kokoro*—the warm, passionate heart (p. 7).

Tanaka Takeyuki's Ideal Japan in Shinto Mythology – the Kojiki

The *Kojiki* (古事記) is a principal source of utopian, ideal and other-worldly conceptions including *Yomotsu-kuni*, *Nenokatasu-kuni*, and *Tokoyo-no-kuni*, known collectively and variously as 'the eternally unchanging land', or a 'distant land beyond the sea of longevity and immortality' (*The Kodansha Publishers, Ltd. Archaism Dictionary*, 1969, p. 615). While admitting the utopian intrigues opened up by these various lands in the *Kojiki* and other historical mythologies, the benefits they offer my investigation are limited and I therefore disregard them from consideration, in favour of Tanaka Takeyuki's (2002) *Folk Philosophy Readings of the Kojiki: Lessons from Myth for Contemporary Society.* Tanaka strategically mines the *Kojiki* in search of lessons to be applied to Japan's contemporary social upheavals. Here, he refers to the concept of *Nihon Kenkoku no Risō-Gata* (日本建国の理想型) translated as 'the foundations for an ideal Japan'. This concept emphasizes the literary-metaphoric nature of the *Kojiki* and its historical function of transmitting folk idealism, philosophies, and ethical principles. Yet despite its alleged fictive origins, the *Kojiki* ought to be interpreted as more than mere literary fiction; in fact it can be thought to function as an embodiment of the stories as seeds of an image of the ideal nation-State, the spirit and essence of which inform current generations. From this analysis, one can derive several pertinent points.

1. *The Animate*: The first point concerns the creational aspect of Japan as a physical nation. The Heavenly God *Amatsu-Kami* (天津神) orders the male-female god

couple *Izanagi* (伊弉諾) and *Izanami* (伊弉冉) to fix a 'chaotic soup' into the form of the Japanese archipelago. So ordered, the two gods, *Izanagi* and *Izanami*, through the communion of physical love and the love act, give form to Chaos. For Tanaka, this creation myth can be contrasted with the singularity of a singular God in the Christian bible. *Izanagi* and *Izanami* are conceptualized as capable of physical love, and therefore, like their eventual human offspring, can be conceived of by humans as human-like. Their attributes can be used to embody human and social moral principles to be used in this world (p. 176).

2. *Maintenance of 'correct' relationships*: A second quality describes how from the communion of the sexual act a baby is born, but the baby, *Hiruko* (蛭子), is disfigured. The disfigurement is blamed upon the fact that it is the female *Izanami* who first seduces her male counterpart, rather than the 'correct' male-to-female seduction. This fear, manufactured by the production of an imperfect offspring, contains what is thought of as a traditional moral regarding the 'correct' relationships between male and female and the proper relationships within the family unit. In contemporary identity politics this 'moral' maintains the status quo.
3. *Classless social structure*: The third point informs the deep backdrop for Japanese images of the future, referring to a story within the *Kojiki*, the *ama no iwato-biraki* (天の岩戸開き)—the opening of the stone door to the heavens—from which the roots to Japan's democratic spirit can be derived. In this incident, *Amaterasu-Ōmikami* (天照大御神)—the Sun Goddess—having been ravaged violently by *Susano-O-no-Mikoto* (須佐之男命), takes to hiding herself, out of self-loathing, in the entrance to the heavens in order to make *Susano-O-no-Mikoto* reflect upon his misdeeds. In the process, the Sun Goddess turns the light of day into perpetual

darkness, thus enraging the council of Gods. Meeting in council to discuss how to open the gates, all the Gods speak openly and freely, agreeing to play an equal role, in a gesture that prefigures an authentic spirit of democratic freedom and a classless, non-hierarchical society.

4. *Community consultation*: It is at this stage of the argument that Tanaka introduces a concrete derivation of this council in the form of article five of the Charter Oath by the Meiji Emperor in which he declared—"make one's decision after extensive council and debate on myriad occasion" (「広く会議を興し万機公論に決すべし」・*hiroku kaigi o okoshi banki kōron ni kessu-beshi*).
5. *Playful spirit in adversity*: Determined not to let the Gods forget the positive light prior to the entrance being blocked by *Amaterasu*, the Goddess *Ame-no-Uzume-no-Mikoto* (天宇受売命) entertains the other 80,000 Gods in a lewd display of nudity, dance, song and merriment. Perplexed at the sounds of such merriment *Amaterasu* comes out from her hiding place to see what was happening. As she does so, she is grabbed by one of the Gods and locked away. The moral of this story, we are told, is that in the face of adversity, the best disposition can be found in a defiant joyfulness, a playful spirit.

Another key aspect to locating the Ideal Japan in Shinto mythology comes as Tanaka introduces us to is the four character idiom 物心一如—*busshin-itsunyo*, or material-mind-as-one. In the *Ise-Jingu* Shrine (伊勢神宮) where the Sun Goddess *Amaterasu*, symbol of the creation of the Cosmos through the sun and the spirit that ensues from its expression, is deified within the internal section of the shrine. By contrast, the external shrine houses *Toyōkeno-no-Ōmikami* (豊受大神)—God of the Harvest that feeds all

living things; the God of the material. Both Gods of the spiritual and material are given equal status at the *Ise-Jingu* Shrine, exemplifying the imperative for balance in the relationships between the spiritual and material in indigenous Japanese culture.

It is this purported equality of the spirit and the material that for Tanaka provides the greatest lesson for Japan's futures in the early 21st century. In simple terms, Tanaka suggests that the loss of spiritual orientation prior to the Pacific War led eventually to defeat, whilst, by contrast, the shift to material orientation and the capitalist spirit after the war led to a deterioration of morality, corruption in politics, the bubble economy and its final bursting, and a looming sense of loss of national identity in current times. This quasi-macro-historical perspective resonates with Sorokin's (in Galtung and Inayatullah, 1999) macro-history theory, under what he refers to as "types of culture mentality" (p. 114), oscillating between two principle types, the Ideational and the Sensate.

The last important insight to be garnered from Tanaka's analysis of Shinto mythology brings us closer to the essence of the Japanese utopia as image of the future. Here, he introduces us to the concept of the ideal State as exemplified by the three God Instruments or *jingi* (神器)—these are: the mirror, the sword and the jewel as the symbols of the ideal form of nation-building (日本建国の理想型 translated as 'Foundations for an Ideal Japan'). The Sun Goddess, *Amaterasu,* bestows upon her grandson *Ninigi-no-Mikoto* (瓊瓊杵尊) these three instruments symbolizing Virtue, Justice and Wisdom, respectively. They are shown in a triangle with the mirror (鏡), representing virtue/pureness of heart, at the apex, the sword (剣), a symbol of justice, at the bottom left, and the jewel (玉), a symbol of wisdom, depicted by the Chinese

character showing a king holding a jewel. Taken as one, these three instruments have come to exemplify the ideal character of the nation of Japan. To maintain the true path of the Japanese nation, all three must exit in balance. Once out of balance, the country transgresses from its proper, and therefore ideal, path.

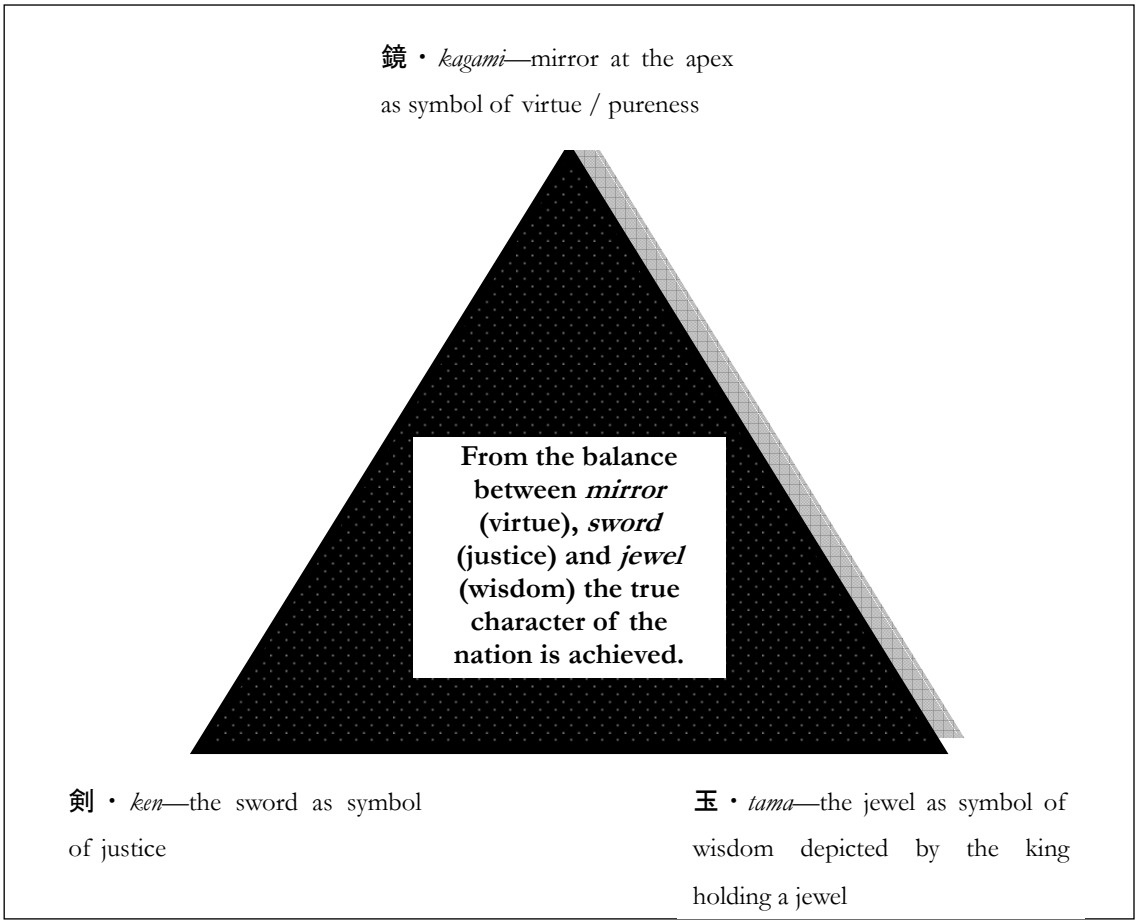

Figure 1: Concept of the ideal State as exemplified by the three God Instruments or *jingi* (神器)— the mirror, the sword and the jewel (Tanaka , 2002, p. 177).

Utopian Prototype II: Three Chinese-Derived Utopias

1. *Tōgenkyō* (桃源郷) by Chinese poet Tō En-Mei (陶淵明, AD 365-427)

The first suggested Japanese utopia prototype is derived from Chinese history: a pastoral utopian tradition referred to in Japanese as *tōgenkyō* and written by one of

China's earliest poets, Tō En-Mei. It is called Tao Qian in its European transliteration by John Carey (1999) and translated in English as 'Account of Peach Blossom Spring' (p. 36). Tō En-Mei's *tōgenkyō* is still recognized as one of "the best loved stories in the Chinese tradition"; one that contrasts with Western utopias "in that the happiness it describes consists in *not* being recognized or reformed, but simply living as you always have" (p. 36).

In brief, the story goes thus: one day during the Reign of the Jin (376-396), a fisherman from Wu-Ling stumbles upon a small opening into a mountain whereupon he finds a clearing. As he walks into the clearing leaving his boat moored outside, he finds a peaceful village with peoples of all ages looking content and perfectly happy. The villagers are shocked to see the fisherman but welcome him into their homes for chicken and beer. All the villagers shower him with questions of the outside world. As it turns out, the villagers had all fled the uprisings of the Qin Dynasty in 221 BC when "the Qin emperor instigated draconian measures to eliminate cultural and regional diversity" (Carey, 1999, p. 36). Hearing of the happenings in the outside world from which they have been cut off, the villagers shake their heads in dismay. After several days the fisherman took his leave, whereupon the villagers said to him, "There's no point telling the people outside about us" (p. 37). The fisherman left the village, found his boat, and returned to the regional capital whereupon he recounted his story to the governor. The governor sent a search expedition but they got lost and never found the village.

According to Tabei Fumio and Ueda Takeshi (2001) in their *Collected Works of Tō En-Mei* (「陶淵明集全釈」・*Tō En-Mei-Shu Zen-Shaku*), the story of *tōgenkyō,* with its

focus on simply living as you always have, and self-sufficient and non-exploitative communities free from competition or progress, have come to form the foundations of an East Asian utopian prototype[8] (p. 331).

Quite different from the European constructions of utopia, the notion of simply living as you always have (Tabei and Ueda, 2001) resonates with Hillman's (1999) "acorn theory … which proposes that each life is formed by a particular image that is the essence of that life and calls it to a destiny, just as the mighty oak's destiny is written in the tiny acorn" (back cover), which concerns the idea of becoming one's true self. If this understanding of the utopian has infected the Japanese range of meaning, this would explain much about the yearning for nostalgia and the longing just 'to be' Japanese. It also says much about past, present, and future connectedness and the roles of authenticity of the self.

Genealogically speaking, we see resemblances and points of commonality between the *tōgenkyō* as construction of the Real and Taoist philosophies. In John C. H. Wu's (1961) translation of Lao Tzu's *Tao Teh Ching*, Chapter 80 specifically, refers to an ideal society type:

> Ah, for a small country with a small population! Though there are highly efficient mechanical contrivances, the people have no use for them. Let them mind death and refrain from migrating to distant places. Boats and carriages,

[8] For the original Japanese reference for Tabei and Ueda (2001) see below:「詩」の主題は、物語の世界を支えている、自給自足し、搾取も抑圧も、また競争や進歩すらない、東アジア的ユートピアとして桃花源の社会の仕組みそのものである」(p. 331).

> weapons and armour there may still be, but there are no occasions for using or displaying them. Let the people revert to communication by knotting cords. See to it that they are contented with their food, pleased with their clothing, satisfied with their houses, and inured to their simple ways of living. Though there may be another country in the neighbourhood so close that they are within sight of each other and the crowing of cocks and barking dogs in one place can be heard in the other, yet there is no traffic between them, and throughout their lives the two peoples have nothing to do with each other (p. 179).

Historical traces of the *tōgenkyō* tradition remain in Japan, as with Hentona Tomokuni's (2001) observation that the *tōgenkyō* 'seems to be a world that could be anywhere, but is in fact nowhere' (「どこにもあるようで、どこにもない世界」・*doko ni mo aru yō de, doko ni mo nai sekai*) (p. 167), in countless utopian inspired writings and projects.

Despite their proliferation I mention three. First is the utopian world portrayed by Japan's legendary myth creator Miyazawa Kenji, in particular his writings on an ideal world he called Ihatov, from the Esperanto for the name of his home prefecture Iwate – suggesting a community based on the principles of selflessness, equality, self-sufficient living, equality and mutual help, self-governance, peace, benevolence and the banishment of a monetary economy (http://www.geocities.com/genitolat/Utopia/012.html). Miyazawa's artistic legacy has in recent time spurned a range of projects based on his Ihatov dreamland philosophies, including the Ihatov Forum, a utopian festival organized by his home town of Hanamaki (http://www.city.hanamaki.iwate.jp/), the Miyazawa Museum and Studies Center, and various town-making programs.

A second example is Takagi Yoshiyuki's (1998) *Ultimate Happiness* specifically the

chapter entitled ‘The Global Village as Ultimate Ideal Society’ (p. 207), in which he sets out his own utopia once again reflecting the main features of the *tōgenkyō* including community sustainability, peace, a non-monetary economy, no private possessions or inheritances, minimal consumption (‘enough-ism’), non-competitiveness, equality of status and wealth, self-sufficiency, and limited interaction with surrounding communities.

As a third example, I refer to Mizuo Hikō’s (1971) *Japan’s Utopias: Empirical Research from Authentic Japanese Communities*, a compilation of six case studies of utopian inspired experimental communities. Mizuo attributes the origins of these communities to the original *tōgenkyō* in the very first sentence of his book: “The term utopia is usually translated into Japanese as *risō-kyō* (理想郷)—ideal town, *tōgenkyō*, or the less common term *mukayukyō* (無何有卿). Taken from the original English term with its nuances of a place that does not exist, we can also use it to mean ‘a place of harmony’, in other words, a ‘place for an ideal lifestyle’” (p. 11). The emphasis of Mizuo’s research focuses on the term ‘authentic’—*nihon-teki*—the identification of utopian traditions that have undergone sufficient cultural transformations in order to come to embody ‘authentic’ Japanese cultural traits. A second research focus is on the ‘empirical’, signifying his own anthropological approach to the communities with the objective of identifying their guiding characteristics and systematically measuring their degrees of success as living, on-going communities.

From the qualities inherent in this utopian tradition, we could anticipate such a *tōgenkyō* as likely leading to idiosyncratic micro-regions with a strong sense of self-governance,

strong tendencies to hybridize with key Folk Shinto attributes such as the animation of environmentally embedded objects, and an orientation for a selective hybridization of appropriate technologies in the form of sustainable, renewable energies accompanied by localized recycling strategies designed for minimal environmental impact. Such a vision of a modern-day *tōgenkyō* may be exemplified by the sparsely populated yet geographically wide town of Niseko[9] in Japan's northernmost island of Hokkaido.

One can derive a sense of refuge in the idea that it is possible to assume a position of "being what one has always been" especially in an age of social upheaval and uncertainty. In this perceived Japanese age of future fatigue, the interregnum between discernable epochs or paradigms, advantages are to be garnered from seeking to re-assert one's true nature—to "just be oneself" as one has "always been". Such is the mentality and the social usefulness of the Chinese derived *tōgenkyō* utopia in contemporary Japan.

2. The Chinese-Confucian Ideal State as Utopia (*Confuciotopia*)

A second inherited Chinese utopian tradition is the nemesis of the pastoral *tōgenkyō* just discussed: the utopia of the Perfect State built upon Confucian principles. For the contemporary reader, a notion of a Confucian State as utopia might signify a misnomer. In fact, it is more dystopian than utopian, according to Hentona's (2001) summary, with its emphasis on an immutable hierarchy of social structures starting with an ideal leader (king or emperor) at the top and lower layers consisting of a clearly segregated class

[9] The town of Niseko became popular in the first decade of the 21st century with a sudden influx of powder snow seeking skier tourists predominantly from Australia.

structure ruled over by a bureaucratic system and demarcations of custom and law, the totality of which amounts to a harmonious and peace-oriented State, possessing the qualities of a strong future-orientation towards expansionist development and an evolutionary approach to civilizational development.

Such a super-structured hierarchical utopia can be interpreted as ultimately leading to a socio-political hegemony whose discretions are at the mercy of the qualities of the incumbent 'ideal' leader. In such a utopia all individuals, except the ideal leader, would remain subservient to all higher ranked individuals and authorities, stripped of self-control and agency. One Japanese interpretation, summarized by Hentona (2001), plots Kiyomatsu's alternative Japanese syncretic Confucian ideal, allowing for the incorporation of Western science and technologies, along with Buddhist worldviews of equality, to span all cultures of the globe into a meta-community of commonly held ideals (p. 153).

Utopian Prototype III: The Buddhist Paradises

> *I would suspect that a Zen utopia would be quite different from a Western one (Bishop, 2001, p. 18).*

Conspicuously, two of Japan's most authoritative contemporary compilations of writings on global and Japanese utopias Iguchi and Iwao's (2001) *Other Worlds, Utopias and Myths*, and Ito's *Utopia Plans* website, strikingly fail to even give mention to Buddhist utopias, an oversight that must be rectified when considering the attention given to the images of the ideal in Buddhist literature. In fact, my problem in attempting to create a Buddhist utopian taxonomy from the imposing scope of available literature

has lead to a simplification of an exceptionally complex phenomenon. I have selected two complementary yet contrasting Buddhist traditions to form the basis of this Buddhist utopian taxonomy: the Sōka Gakkai's vision of realizing the world of *Risshō Ankoku-ron* (立正安国論)—*The Establishment of Righteousness and Security in the Country*, and partly prompted by Peter C. Bishop's (2001) statement—"I would suspect that a Zen utopia would be quite different from a Western one" (p. 18), I explore the possible contours of a Zen Buddhist oriented utopia.

1. *Sōka Gakkai: Risshō Ankoku-ron* as Buddhist Utopia

Sōka Gakkai is a multi-million member religious movement originating in Japan founded on the principles expounded by the doctrines of *Nichiren* (日蓮), a thirteenth century Japanese monk (Metraux, 1985) whose chief claim was that the "practitioners of false religions have led the people and government away from the true teachings and powers of the *Lotus Sutra*" (p. 35). To this problem, *Nichiren* considered the anecdote to be: "if we hurry to stop the alms to heretics and give alms instead to monks and nuns of the true faith, if we cleanse the kingdom of these bandits" (p. 36), Japan will be transformed into a Buddhist utopia. This constitutes one feature of a Sōka Gakkai utopia: the transformation of Japan into a truly Buddhist nation. As to what such a Japanese Buddhist utopia would actually look like, *Nichiren* offers one idea at the end of his main theoretical work *The Establishment of Righteousness and Security in the Country* (*Risshō Ankoku-ron*): "it will be a realm [that] does not suffer from the seven calamities and [that] is guarded by good gods. The country will be safe and peaceful, there will be no natural disasters, and crops will be bountiful. All the people will live together in great happiness and harmony, assured of peace in their present and future

lives" (in Tamura Yoshirō, 1975, pp. 43-44; 60-64). To this end, peace is the ultimate prerequisite for a true Japanese Buddhist utopia, which the Sōka Gakkai (Ikeda, 1984) defines as "a new way of life that is devoid of war, where man can devote all of his attention to positive creative energies and live in harmony with his fellow man" (Metraux, 1985, p. 42). For the establishment of a peaceful society as the way to a Buddhist utopia, the Sōka Gakkai argues that peace education is a crucial ingredient (p. 43). As Metraux (1985) claims: "The premise of the peace education program is that young Japanese have no memories of the terror and suffering of World War II" (p. 44).

2. Zen as Utopian 'Space'

Zen projects a seemingly unsolvable conundrum for how is it possible to speak of or imagine a Zen utopian when Watts (1957) offers these statements: "Zen has no goal; it is traveling without point, with nowhere to go. To travel is to be alive, but to get somewhere is to be dead, for as our own proverb says, 'To travel well is better than to arrive'" (p. 215-6) ... and later "For if we open our eyes and see clearly, it becomes obvious that there is no other time than this instant, and that the past and the future are abstractions without any concrete reality" (p. 218). The garden as embodied metaphor, paradise in sudden enlightenment, and the *Chadō*, Way of Tea, provide three concrete conceptualizations of Zen as utopian possibility.

(a) *The Zen Garden as Buddhist Paradise*

The utopian possibilities of a Zen Buddhist paradise are embodied in the microcosmic form of the Japanese garden according to Kawana Koichi's (2007) *Symbolism and Esthetics in the Traditional Japanese Garden*, in which he describes the traditional

Japanese garden as providing a "means of achieving the peace of mind for which rulers so desperately sought during the periods of strife and conflict, which marked much of Japan's history. In its origin the garden was representative of utopia, or more often, a paradise of Buddha" (p.1). Contained within the microcosmic garden as paradise are the following features.

First, contained within the garden are the islands known as *shumisen-shiyo*[10] a "utopian or sacred place remote from the ordinary human society. In this tradition an island of immortality and everlasting happiness called 'Horaisan' or 'Horijima' became an important element in the garden" (p. 2). Also placed within the garden is the *tokiwa* pine tree, a symbol of longevity and happiness. The esthetics involved in the garden design also contribute to its utopian qualities: "Simplicity, naturalness, refined elegance, subtlety and the use of suggestive rather than descriptive modes of communication" reinforce the utopian aspects of the garden space, expressing the "Way of Zen" (p. 4). An atmosphere of other-worldliness and isolation from the real world is provided in the case of the tea garden created by Zen tea masters. The participants must pass through the separated spaces of the outer garden, middle garden and inner garden to arrive at the tea house in an act of traveling, the effect of which is to transport the participants "into a mood of tranquility which will help them to concentrate on the meaning of the ceremony" (p. 6).

[10] The Japanese terms used in this text were all indicated in *romaji*, not the original Chinese kanji characters and were therefore represented herein as in the reference text.

(b) *Paradise in Sudden Enlightenment*

A second example of the Zen utopia is derived from the possibilities embodied in paradise in sudden enlightenment. For Wang Keping (2007), the emphasis is not on utopia as a possible place, but as a *eupsychia*—the search for the perfect self (Milojevic & Inayatullah, in Shostak, 2001, pp. 25-34). This is the "paradise of supreme happiness", (Wang, p.1) in contrast to "the possibility of a Utopia characterized by a beautiful environment, and happiness born of release from care, worry and social ills" (Wang, p. 1), the paradise portrayed is a "spiritual paradise" that is accessible to all followers through sudden enlightenment. As Wang notes, Zen Buddhism thus "directs the attention to an inner, rather than external paradise" (p. 1). Having once attained enlightenment, "old things are seen from a new perspective, as although the enlightened person may live no differently from previously, they themselves are no longer the same" (p. 2).

(c) *Chadō—The Way of Tea as new type of utopia*

A third variation upon the theme of a Zen utopia is found in Naobumi Hijikata and Kevin O'Duffy (2006). In *Spaces of Utopia 3* (Winter, 2006) the authors, as members of the Utopian Society of Zen Buddhists, present a new perspective on human nature and the present social crisis via the strategy of a medieval utopia characterized by Zen Buddhism in Japan, arguing for a new philosophy as utopian based on the '*chadō*', a "Zen discipline way based around the ritualized preparation and serving of food and tea to guests" (p. 1). Borrowing from Soshitsu Sen (1990), the utopian qualities of the Way of Tea are summarized as possessing the following four tenets:

1. *Harmony*—the oneness of the hosts and guests, which follows the rhythms of nature. The harmonious atmosphere of a tea gathering depends on the union of hosts and guests, a union that must be absolutely sincere and truthful;
2. *Respect*—the sincerity of heart that allows one to have a relationship of one-ness with the other participants, humbly recognizing their dignity;
3. *Purity*—the removal of the dust of the world from one's heart and mind. Cleaning in preparation for a tea gathering, the host also establishes order within himself;
4. *Tranquility*—comes with the constant practice of harmony, respect, and purity in everyday life. In this state of mind, having found peace within oneself, a bowl of tea can be shared with another (1990, pp. 3-4).

Contemporary Utopias

The final category comprises a number of contemporary utopian themes, which provide insights into Japanese utopian thinking.

(1) *The American Dream as Idealized Lifestyle*: Utopian possibilities may reside in the notion of the American Dream, which has functioned as a powerful guiding metaphor in Japan's post-war rebuilding. Sakaiya's (2003) analysis of the American Dream promises that "anybody can be rich and successful. Born in a log cabin, you can still become president; a great entrepreneur can (so to speak) emerge from a single suitcase. The American Dream is born of a highly individualistic way of life" (p. 25). By contrast, according to Sakaiya, the "Japanese dream is something entirely different and runs like this. One goes to preparatory school to study. This leads to a reasonable university, which in turn leads to a reasonably large company (or a government department). One

spends one's life in security, with no worries of being fired. One has a generous entertainment allowance to spend, and one can buy a house; if that house value rises, one can feel reasonably well off. This is not an individual dream, but a dream involving society at large. This dream was created by Matsushita Kōnosuke's post-war Japanese management system of lifetime employment and diffused responsibility (p. 255). Ogawa (1991) also notes the charismatic pull of the American Dream by noting: "The American way of life with electric facilities that the Japanese watched in post-war imported cinema was a dream for the Japanese people" (p. 360). But this is as far as Ogawa goes with his schematic of the American Dream as possible utopian framework, leaving us with no clear definitions to apply.

(2) *Science Fiction*: Japan has a rich history and tradition of utopianist science fiction and speculative literature. One of the most prolific was Murai Gensai (村井弦斎, 1863-1927) who lived through the Meiji Period when Japanese public interest in scientific and technological progress were at a feverish peak. Featured on the NHK production *The Japanese Excitement History Museum: Imaginary Science Stories from the Meiji Era: 20th Century Prognostications from Science Fiction Author Murai Gensai* (2000) In a now famous article「二十世紀の豫測」(*nijūsseiki no yosoku*) translated as *Twentieth Century Predictions*, published in the Kanwa Shimbun of 1901, Murai refers to a 21st century Japan in which schools offer courses in animal languages, the deserts of the world have been re-forested, and the world is connected by a massive rail transit system that makes it possible to travel from New York to Tokyo in two and a half hours, amongst other techno-utopian predictions. Gensai turned his hand to professional science fiction writing after being awarded a trip to the United States on the basis of a

speculative piece he had written for a local newspaper. This journey brought him into direct contact with the then popular science fiction of Jules Verne and other science fiction writers and thinkers of that period.

(3) *Technotopias*: The dreams of technology are strongly represented as one aspect of the pull of the American Dream. In Japan's most contemporary contribution to the global utopian literature, *Other Worlds, Utopias and Story*, Iguchi (2001) argues that the apparently scientifically produced Technopolis utopian projects in Japan, offer little true optimism for the future and are destined to history as mere empty myths (空想物語・ *kūsō mongatari*). Technotopias allow for not only the production of new kinds of worlds but also the new kinds of humans that will occupy them. In a review of Tomino Toshiyuki's (1991) *Mobile Suit Gundam*, Patrick Drazen (2006) explains Tomino's conception of the so-called "Newtype", a human who features in the *Gundam* stories. One of the characters in the story is Zeon Zum Deiken, monarch of the space colonists and founder of the Republic of Zeon, who defines the Newtype as: "ordinary people with an uncommon sense of intuition and a unique sense of humanity … people who, in adapting to a new concept of time and space in an extraterrestrial environment, would be transformed. ... If this experience could ever be shared by all of humanity, then, as his father has predicted, mankind itself could truly undergo a transformation" (p. 176).

Of all Japan's iconic science fictional images, *Astro Boy*[11] is one of the most enduring and alluring. In a *TIME* magazine special—'Gizmo Japan: The gadgets, robots and cool

[11] *Astro Boy*, originally *Tetsuwan atomu* (鉄腕アトム) was made into a fully animated feature film by American Imagi Animation studios in 2009.

machines that drive—and delight—the world' (May 1-8, 2000)—Tim Larimer laments the current boom in *Astro Boy* nostalgia by quoting from Murakami, deputy director of the Astro Boy Museum: "he [*Astro Boy*] has always represented hope for the future. If people believe in him, then maybe their dreams will come true again" (p. 23).

(4) *Independent Mini-Nations Movement*: Another field replete with utopian potential is the so-called Independent Mini-Nations Movement: republics "that have been founded throughout Japan since the late 1970s for a variety of overlapping objectives, including [to attract] tourist both to increase revenues and to counter the adverse effects of the out-migration of young adults. The protection of the environment is another motive, and the mini-nation movement also uses parody to critique dominant cultural practices, conspicuous consumption, and capitalist excesses" (Robertson, 1998). The mini-nations also foreshadow the emerging possibilities of worlds promised by the new and emerging media such as Second Life insofar as most "of the new republics have their own flag, constitution, currency—for example, the *kosumo* of Smiling Republic, equal in value to the yen—and passport, which together with citizenship, can be purchased by 'non-resident aliens'" (p. 122). The mini-nations movement peaked in 1985 with the advent of the Mini-Nations Olympics, but then faded in popularity due to concerns of lack of vision, financial problems, the aging of its members and the amalgamation of many of Japan's regional communities, all combined to throw the movement into turmoil so that by the year 2000 less than 50 such mini-nations were still in operation. Although the mini-nations were originally physical entities, they are now increasingly turning to internet mediated technologies to keep them active, relevant and attractive to up and coming media savvy generations.

The four emerging prototypes suggested here by no means exhaust the possibilities quietly residing in Japanese utopian historical thought. Kawai Eijiro (in DeBary et al, 1958b) suggests another Japanese utopia. As professor in the Faculty of Economics at Tokyo Imperial University, Kawai was responsible for "developing a philosophical basis for humanitarian individualism in the Japanese context" (p. 325), constructive of what he calls "idealistic social democracy" (p. 326). By this he means: "What I call socialist society is the *ideal* society [that] should succeed contemporary capitalism. According to my system of thought, it is the task of social philosophy to discuss the ideal of society. Since it tells us, 'the society [that] is able to develop the personality of every member of society is the ideal society', this is the ultimate social ideal" (p. 326).

Other utopian possibilities can be found in Japan's rich histories of quasi-utopian literature in the forms of folktales. To mention one, the *Taketori Monogatari*[12] (竹取物語)—*Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* (1987)—tells the story of Princess Moonlight who comes to Earth from the moon and is eventually retrieved by moon beings as she is whisked back to the moon in a spaceship.

Then there is Morton's (2003) research on Yanagita Kunio's *The Legends of Tōno*（遠野物語）in *Modern Japanese Culture* in which he observes that "several Western commentators have seen the work as constituting a social imagination, a nostalgic and idealized conception of the countryside as a kind of utopia or lost arcadia" (p. 54).

[12] *Taketori Monogatari* continues to inspired new generations of Japanese children and adults alike as it is continuously renewed, updated, reinterpreted and introduced in various media including a relatively high budget feature film with state-of-the-art special effects.

To illustrate the many Japanese utopian possibilities that need to be examined for future research, I lastly refer to that nation's myriad theme parks as exemplified by the Dutch Huis Ten Bosch for their utopian as well as heterotopian significance, not to mention the possibilities in the religious utopias of Kagawa Toyohiko (in Schildgen, 1988) and the sexual utopias of Takahashi Tetsu (1991). In sum, producing even a cursory taxonomy of the utopian possibilities to be explored and extrapolated within Japanese cultural representations reveals the richness of their potential for the futures of Japan but also adds a new dimension for this analysis of contemporary Japanese images of the future.

Summary of Japanese Utopian Taxonomies

Grouping this cluster of possible utopian sub-themes into a meaningful taxonomy is no easy task and more research is required to assess their eligibility as either utopias, dystopias, or as something more ambiguous possessing attributes of both. Neither is it the core objective of this doctoral investigation to produce a comprehensive and methodical taxonomy; this would be an altogether new research program. This preliminary taxonomy of Japanese utopian representations and constructions of the Real does however perform two useful functions. It is firstly suggestive of a Japan yearning for authentic Japanese utopias appropriate to twenty-first century needs and sensibilities based on where Japan perceives itself to be situated during the early years of the 21st century. Another function is that a rudimentary taxonomy provides a backdrop, a macro context from which to analyse the images of the future texts found in Japan, some of which are discussed in Chapter six of this thesis. This allows us to discern the genealogical connections between the image now, how it has come to be, and the connections between the various independently produced images. The taxonomy gives

tangible shape to some of the Japanese utopian traditions by focusing as much as possible on key characteristics selected from scattered utopian literature base. They serve us well as guidelines, not as definitive paradigms, but as porous, shifting, blending, and overlapping worldviews, with enough distinctive features for us to be able to recognize and differentiate one utopian tradition from another. The chapter is an important backdrop to the enquiry that follows, sensitizing us to important currents in Japanese thought.

It helps us understand the connections and disconnections between the currently emerging proliferation of Japan's images of the future and the reservoir of historically formed utopian traditions. Arising from these connections/disconnections, it points to the day to day subconscious operating of the utopian worldviews as sources of 'cognitive dissonance' or what Bruno Latour calls "iconoclash", (2006, p. 309) and Fred Polak calls "split man" (1973, p. 84), the individual caught between the options presented by overlapping and clashing images of the future.

As such the chapter sets up the rest of the enquiry. In the next chapter, holistic considerations of Japanese utopian lines of thought are translated into three pragmatic research questions of the thesis.

1. What are the pushes—in terms of current trends—that are affecting Japan's futures?
2. What are the historical and cultural weights that influence Japan's futures?

3. What are the emerging transformative Japanese images of the future discourses, as embodied in actual images and texts, and what potential do they offer for transformative change in Japan?

CHAPTER FOUR: METHOD

Futures Triangle Analysis, Causal Layered Analysis and the Poststructural Tool-box

Introduction

This chapter introduces the analytic methods consisting of a two-tiered structure: the Futures Triangle Analysis (FTA) which gives the overarching design and Inayatullah's[13] Causal Layered Analysis (CLA). I first outline the structure and goals of the analytical framework of the FTA which posits three dimensions and tensions in constitution of the future, namely: *pushes* of the present, the *pulls* of the future, and *weights* of history and tradition. The FTA provides an overall map to guide the analytical process. The pushes and weights are presented in Chapter five. The culmination of the thesis is on the transformative pulls to the future, which form the basis of Chapter six.

I then describe and critique the focal analytical method employed in the thesis, namely Inayatullah's (1999) Causal Layered Analysis (CLA). CLA is a structured analytical approach, which assists theoretical exploration and is informed by poststructuralist considerations. Foucauldian ideas are a particular (but not exclusive) point of departure for the analytical approach it encompasses. The methods used in this thesis are all conceptual-analytical tools. Therefore they can in principle be applied to various kinds of 'texts'; for example, a conversation, a movie, a festival, or a bumper sticker, and so

[13] For more on Inayatullah's Causal Layered Analysis I recommend the publication Inayatullah, Sohail (Ed.) (2004) *The Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) Reader: Theory and Case Studies of an Integrative and Transformative Methodology.*

on.

Finally in this chapter I address the operational methodological issues including the selection of the Japanese image of the future texts; the personal position of the researcher vis-à-vis the research theme; notes on approaches to translation of Japanese texts used herein; and notes on the general use of the Japanese language.

Macro-Analytical Framework: Futures Triangle Analysis (FTA)

The FTA is an applied futures tool with useful applications in mapping out the principal dynamics that collectively and dynamically constitute a given futures issue (Inayatullah, 2003; Slaughter, 2005). As Figure 2 below shows, the apex of the triangle represents the pulls of the future, including a matrix of images of the future, from dominant images to periphery and alternative/radical images. These images of the future can in turn be construed as competing and complementing futures discourses with their own tensions. The bottom left angle represents the pushes—the drivers of change or trends that shape and define what people and organizations think and do in the present. The bottom right angle represents the weight—factors resistant to change and transformation. Weights are not necessarily interpreted in negative terms. They can also function as anchors to tradition and cultural prototypes in the face of turbulent change.

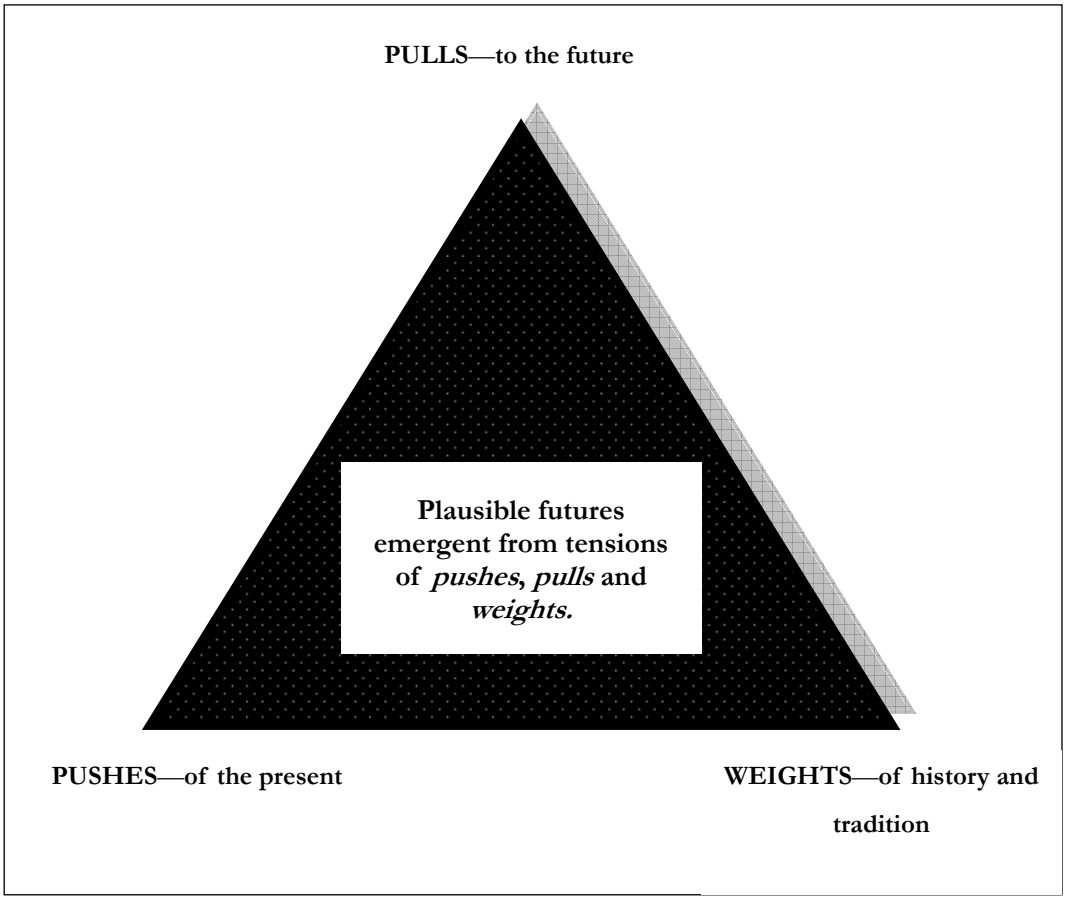

Figure 2: Inayatullah's Futures Triangle Analysis (FTA) diagram.

Using this triangular mapping arrangement, the task for the futures researcher is to first engage in the deconstruction of the overall dynamics of a futures issue in order to *re*construct preferable futures. As Inayatullah (2003) said: "Taken together the triangle of the future presents a way to map the competing dimensions of the future (p. 37)".

Slaughter (2005) also points to the usefulness of the FTA methodology in noting:

> Sohail Inayatullah has developed the futures triangle as a simple way to illustrate the constructed nature of the moment. It is a fine example of a simple tool that lays bare features that constitute reality (p. 62).

As a relatively new and emerging Futures Studies methodology the FTA is only now starting to appear in the Futures Studies literature. As far as the author is aware this doctoral dissertation is not only the first time the FTA has been applied to an analysis of Japan, but also the first time it has been applied to a study of this scale, one major contribution of the thesis.

Four Functions of the Futures Triangle Analysis

Although the FTA is referred to as a mapping tool, a thoughtful analysis of the FTA indicates at least four overlapping and complementary functions. These could include:

1. *Dynamic-Mapping Function*: Applicable as either a synchronic and/or diachronic tool, the Dynamic-Mapping Function of the FTA tracks the workings of futures image over history—assisting to establish a Foucauldian "what we are now", or how it is that we became what we are today. The FTA achieves this by searching for and identifying the "boundaries of culture, history, and the knowledge that gives us these particular boundaries" (Shapiro, 1992, p. 3).

2. *Critiquing Function*: A second function of the FTA is its capacity to allow for a more informed and dynamic critiquing of a given futures issue. This is consistent with Inayatullah's Causal Layered Analysis and its Foucauldian emphases. Critiquing is facilitated primarily insofar as mapping the dynamics of the pushes, pulls and weights brings to the surface relationships between factors exposing hitherto hidden dynamics.

3. *Predictive Function*: This third function—the predictive—arises from the sites of tension between the pushes, pulls and weights to reveal their emergent properties, synergies and contradictions, so that we are able to locate the boundaries of possibility,

the ‘plausible’ futures of a given issue. Although the FTA should not be relied upon specifically as a predictive technology, the fact that it reveals tensions between the three dimensions affords this tool a definite prediction function, allowing for more creative futures s and decision-making capacity.

4. *Prescriptive-Normative Function*: A fourth suggested function of the FTA involves a prescriptive-normative application. From the outcomes of the above three functions, the futures analyst is equipped with sufficient information and insight into the macro-dynamics of the futures issue in order to proceed with the grounded facilitation necessary for prescriptive and normative futures-oriented policy-making. In this sense a critical mapping using the FTA in the above mentioned ways can be usefully applied to complex problem solving.

DIMENSION I: Pushes of the Present

I now briefly discuss the three dimensions of the Futures Triangle starting with the pushes of the present. In analyzing these, I apply Inayatullah’s prototype model (2003), which includes five basic pushes:

1. ***New technologies***: In the case of Japan, technological developments have played an especially important role in the development of culture in general (Sakaiya, 2003, p. 263). The first dimension—the pushes of the present—contains the multiple propulsive forces that are often associated with new technological developments and the novel social dynamics they produce. Nonetheless, this thesis does not seek to over-emphasize the roles of technologies as the primary push of the present, but rather, hopes to keep a balanced perspective of the various pushes. For as Aleksander mindfully states “the first rule is to remember that technological detail

only plays a minor part in the evolutionary process. Human needs, desires, aspirations and, alas, greed and vanity are the true driving forces" (1994, p. 61).

2. ***Globalization***: According to Leadbeater (2002), globalization "is one of the most ubiquitous, controversial and least understood forces" (p. 290), for "no account of the future, whether optimistic or pessimistic, can be complete without an account of globalization: what it is, how it developed and what its effects are" (p. 290). A micro-dimension to generic globalization is Judge's (2001) notion of "personal globalization"—the emergence of the external production and the self-production of a new type of human individual, sense of self, and identity. To localize the generic push concept of globalization I also use this in combination with the term 'internationalization', for Japan continues to struggle with its position vis-à-vis the introduction of imported labour, its relationships with the 'outside' world, and the increasing numbers of non-Japanese now living in that nation.
3. ***Emerging Values***: Here I investigate Japan's emerging values and conflicting values shifts of inter-generational cohorts, the tensions they produce, and the new possible futures images that are able to emerge from such new values. Literature which follows this overview will make explicit the extent to which Japan's new generations embody and live by distinctively new types of values vis-à-vis work, family, marriage, and so on.
4. ***Demographic Shifts***: Demographic shifts in the case of Japan include the binary forces of centralization versus localization; an increasingly multi-cultural and pluralism-oriented Japanese population makeup; consumer and activist movements; Japan's aging population; and youth out-migrations. Demographic shifts are variously influenced by and exert influence upon all other push dimensions

included in this FTA model. Analyses to follow in this thesis will attempt to highlight and clarify the complex relationships that exist between demographic changes and the other dimensions.

5. ***Creative Minorities***: The fifth and final push to be used in my matrix focuses on Japan's new creative minorities. Who are they? What is it they seek? How do they achieve desired outcomes? What are the potential implications for Japan's images of the future as these various minorities increase their power and influence bases?

To summarize this section on pushes of the present, I quote from Dator (1996) who describes their roles in the following terms: "Without some consideration of the major forces creating the environment of tomorrow, and of truly alternative, holistic responses to it, any plan or call for action, no matter how clearly stated and broadly supported, is likely to lead to failure and disappointment" (p. 165).

DIMENSION II: Pulls to the Future

The second dimension of the FTA, the apex of the triangle, represent the pulls of, and towards, various futures, the attractant and magnetic forces to which people are drawn and what Fourier refers to as "l'attraction passionelle" (in Polak, 1973, p. 115). These pulls are the overlapping, interacting images of the future, from dominant to periphery and alternative/radical images, competing for physical and psychological space in a world seemingly drowning in images. By mapping out the matrix of pulls of the future, that is, images of the future, such images can also be thematically categorized into dominant to peripheral and alternative images of the future. The act of mapping these images of the future also clarifies how they relate to one another, how they are related

to and affected by the five pushes. In doing so, further analysis of the images can be conducted using an array of alternative futures tools and methodologies depending on the desired outcomes of the futures analyst. Finally, forming an understanding of the extant images facilitates the next analytic stage: namely, the creation of original and novel futures images which transcend the limitations of those already mapped. Novel images and scenarios can subsequently be articulated, and communicated with the more ambitious aims of consciously bringing about social transformation through multiple strategy implementation.

DIMENSION III: The Weights of History

Completing the triad of the Futures Triangle Analysis are the weights. These are the collective forces that on the one hand resist, impede, subvert or even defy change, and on the other hand counterbalance the ideology of change for change's sake. The weights can also be construed in the terminology of Berger and Luckmann (1966) who use the term 'universe-maintenance mechanism' (pp. 110-146). Residing beneath the superficial discourses in the Japanese national conversation, whose appeal to the change imperative appear as dominant and as the only truth worthy of pursuit, exist deeper social systems whose historical inertia render them resistant to change. As such, weights are able to function with both positive and negative features.

Depending on the futures issues to be analysed, a hypothetical weights matrix could be made up of the following constituents, presented here not in any consistent ordering or taxonomy. Here I suggest twelve weights including:

1. *Macro-historical patterns*—in which social change is located at a certain stage of an identifiable historical pattern[14];
2. *History*—in which history exerts the inertia of tradition upon social and civilizational change. History however ought not to be construed as negative weight only, for as German utopian theorist Ernst Bloch points out in *The Principle of Hope*, history is equally a repository of possibilities, that is, options for future action (in Leadbeater, 2002, p. 339). Steve Fuller, on the other hand, more radically claims that the weight of the past is 'illusion' (p. 186), an illusion which nonetheless exerts influence on the present and the future;
3. *Identity politics*—identity politics function as weights insofar as they construct notions of the Self and the Real, dictating what is possible, what is mutable and what is not, and the tensions between these as they are played out in everyday social life and politics. Here we need ask to what extent and how does identity weigh upon the future. For example, while in the "Buddhist analysis of identity, there is no individual, only a stream" (Goonatilake, 1996, p. 236), poststructural readings of identity encompass discourses of Foucault's "monolithic identity" and "multiple identities" (in Rabinow, 1984, p. 95). These identity moments compete with the weight of culturally inscribed identity;
4. *Fear of the future*—this kind of future-directed fear, what Polak (1973) refers to as 'future neurosis' (p. 191), is another possible weight in which people's perceptions of self-control over their futures are diminished to a point of inability to act with

[14] For a comprehensive analysis of documented macrohistories see Galtung, Johann & Inayatullah, Sohail (1999) (eds.) *Macrohistory and macrohistorians: Perspectives on Individual, Social and Civilizational Change.* PRAEGER, Westport, CT: USA.

appropriate futures-orientation. If the future is a space characterized by fear, acting creatively and effectively with a better future in mind can only be impaired to the detriment of individual and social transformation;

5. *Pessimism*—although closely associated with fear of the future, social pessimism is cited by Leadbeater (2002) as a negatively functioning weight to futures action (p. 6);
6. *Dominant images of the future*—stakeholders and the futures-making, futures-maintaining elites exert powerful forces to ensure that their own social advantages are not compromised due to the introduction of alternative and competing images of the future, thus making the overly dominant image of the future a weight in itself at the same time as being one of many futures images.
7. *Communication modes*—in previous sections I have considered the roles of communication as facilitator of meaning and future possibilities.[15] But the communication of futures issues can also be weighted as received meanings—resistant to meaningful change—function to dominate over alternative futures images.
8. *Human nature*—as a weight, human nature may appear to be a truism. Nonetheless, I identify two specific weigh functions of human nature. Firstly, I quote from Polak (1973): "Human nature has been made the scapegoat for many a program of exploitation. A martial instinct has been invented by those who wanted war.

[15] The roles of communication have become a key issue in Futures Studies with the advent of a publication by Jose Maria Ramos (2006) suggestive of a new sub-field with in FS, namely, 'foresight communication'. See Ramos (2006), 'Consciousness, culture and the communication of foresight', *Futures*, Vol. 38, Elsevier, pp. 1119-1124.

Competition and the profit motive have been declared inescapable human traits by the interested advocates of a cutthroat economy" (p. 159). Apart from this human nature as excuse attribute, an advanced technological civilization may present the illusion/delusion of grandeur suggesting that humans are capable of more than reality.

9. *Geography*—human hubris tends to overlook the mundane fact that human communities exist within and as part of their naturally occurring environments. Despite Herculean efforts from time immemorial to subvert and control the natural environment, geography imposes ultimate limitations over the possible and impossible.
10. *Non-negotiable authoritative texts*—many cultures possess authoritative texts—the American Constitution, the Koran, and the Holy Bible. We could even include Japan's Constitution. Such texts are often perceived as immutable—as not subject to negotiation, thereby functioning to weigh change if such change is thwarted according to the authoritative text. In the case of Japan and the indigenous religion of Shinto, there exists no such authoritative voice/text from which to speak, leaving the future permanently open to negotiation and change.
11. *Failure-intolerance*—Japan commentators have referred to Japan as a failure-intolerant culture. If failure is negatively perceived, there is minimum social benefit to be gained by trying novel behaviours, thus promoting behaviours consistent with the status quo. In this sense, a failure-intolerant society conspires against innovation and creativity from which new futures might transpire. Japan's alleged failure-intolerant society has led in part to a conscious political initiative to address this problem; the Liberal Democratic Party's Ministry of Re-challenging, whose goal it

is to create a social climate more tolerant towards failure as a platform for a creative nation (Retrieved from http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/saityarenzi/plan_gaiyou.html).

12. *Nostalgia*—a nostalgic driven, as opposed to a futures-oriented cultural paradigm, constructs the Real as one of longing for bygones and ultimate origins, functioning strongly against the production of new futures and the transcending of nostalgic futures to which a safe return is desired.

Of the above twelve candidate weight categories, in consideration of the limitations of this investigation, for parsimony I have selected three macro weights to form the focus of my analysis of Japan's national conversation. These are:

1. Japan's 'Moment in History': *The Moods of the Nation*
2. Self-Image: *Beyond the Myth of Japanese Uniqueness*
3. The *Wa* Obsession of Harmony and 'Dividing Practices'.

Weight Functions

As previously mentioned, weights should not be understood as functioning negatively. In fact, like gravity, with no weight, there can be no order, no shape, no pattern, indeed no discernible culture, only chaos. Accordingly, we need a more sophisticated method to systematize the weights matrix. For simplicity sake, I suggest two main varieties of weights:

1. The *negative weight*—in which the weight functions primarily as obstacle or impediment to preferable futures possibilities; and
2. the *positive weight*—in which the weight functions as possessing a social or

civilizational anchor by preventing of social chaos, that is, as a beneficial force that stabilizes and maintains social equilibrium.

Given the Futures Triangle Analysis as my preferred macro analytical framework for this investigation, I now discuss the main meso methodology, namely Causal Layered Analysis.

Causal Layered Analysis: Introduction

Inayatullah's Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) has gained considerable academic currency since the publication of *The Causal Layered Analysis Reader* (2004), a compilation of methodological comparisons, case studies, and discussions totaling more than thirty chapters devoted to the theme of CLA. Authors and articles in this reader include Johan Galtung's 'On the Social Costs of Modernisation: Social disintegration, atomie/anomie, and social development' (p. 84-118); Michael Shapiro's 'Politicizing Ulysses: Rationalistic, critical and genealogical commentaries' (p. 119-136); and Richard A. Slaughter's 'Beyond the Mundane: Reconciling breadth and depth in futures enquiry' (p. 147-161), amongst others.

In this section I introduce the basics and some of the key developments in the on-going evolution of the CLA methodology and emphasize how it will be used in this study.

As applied in this study, CLA constitutes both the theory and method for the critique of a futures problematic; in this case, the national conversation pertaining to the futures of Japan. CLA is a relatively new futures methodology which emerged and developed

from poststructuralist thinking, especially from the work of Michel Foucault. 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, cited in Inayatullah, 1992, p.2).

To clarify what CLA is and is not capable of achieving, it must be said, the method is not designed for the purposes of predicting a certain future. Rather, the aim is to 'undo' futures already undergoing the processes of colonization by the proponents of the dominant discourse, and to 'unmask' the legitimacy of taken-for-granted futures in order that transformative spaces for the articulation and realization of alternative and preferable futures can be created (Inayatullah, 1998). 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" (p. 817). Slaughter, for example, understands the CLA approach as "a

paradigmatic method that reveals deep worldview commitments behind surface phenomena" (p. 815).

Layer 1: The Litany

The *first* level of the CLA—the litany—focuses on the public presentation of the perceived problematique and is conventionally derived from quantitative and empirical s and trends symptomatic of superficial problems. These are often exaggerated and used for political purposes—they are usually found in mass communication sources and find expression in daily political discourse by society's 'primary definers'. 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—the origins of which remain largely inaccessible to those who promote them. They are articulated, repeated, and employed to justify contemporary social "facts". 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).

Layer 2: Social Causes

The *second* CLA level is concerned with social causes (Inayatullah, 1999) including "economic, cultural, political and historical factors (rising birthrates, lack of family planning, etc)" (p. 820). At this stage, the litany is taken to a deeper level and "interpretation is given to quantitative data" (p. 820). By analogy, this second level corresponds to the cultural/interpretive mode of analysis where useful and perspective-

providing insights can be extracted from the strategic juxtaposition of different cultural spheres or different historical epochs. 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 stops at this level. The role of the state, stakeholders and other actors are often un-explored (Inayatullah, 1998).

Layer 3: Worldview

The *third* level of analysis is concerned with the worldviews and discourses that legitimate the problematic. All humans are born into and encultured within certain worldviews that reflect these immediate cultural spheres. Worldviews are usually plural and overlap. At these sites of intersection, dynamic conflict and dialectic processes can occur. Heuristically, new discourses in turn emerge. 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. 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, 1998, p. 820).

Level 4: Myth & Metaphor

The *fourth* level—social myth and metaphor—is concerned with of the suite of stories we are collectively brought up and encultured with, for example, Australia as the 'lucky country'. According to Inayatullah (1999) "the operating myth is that of the in-group/out-group" (p. 110). Metaphors serve as useful interpretive tools for the analysis of how we frame certain phenomena. They also have a diagnostic function. Nietzsche once claimed "truth is nothing more than a mobile army of metaphors" (in Chang, 1996, p. 53).

This deepest level of analysis explores the non-rational, the levels of collective unconscious that shape civilizations without our immediate awareness. Inayatullah (1998) describes this level of analysis as consisting of "the deep stories, the collective archetypes, the unconscious dimensions of the problem or paradox" (p. 820). Causal Layered Analysis operates by asking that we bring these to the fore. CLA articulates the relationships between underlying social myths and their effects upon the official, social causes and worldview descriptions of social realities that would otherwise remain hidden.

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, 1996d) poetically describes the link between futures images and the metaphor thus: "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" (p. 171).

Value of Causal Layered Analysis Applied to a Japanese Context

How does the CLA strategy achieve its ultimate goal of providing futures scenarios as potential solutions to real-world problematic situations? Inayatullah (1998) suggests eight benefits of the CLA namely that it:

1. expands the range and richness of scenarios; leads to the inclusion of different ways of knowing among participants, when used in a workshop setting;
2. 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;
3. layers participant's positions (conflicting and harmonious ones);
4. moves the debate/discussion beyond the superficial and obvious to the deeper and marginal;
5. allows for a range of transformative actions;
6. leads to policy actions that can be informed by alternative layers of analysis;
7. policy formation becomes more integrative than merely crude expressions of statistical data and apparent 'facts' beyond dispute and contention; and
8. reinstates the vertical in social analysis from postmodern relativism to global ethics.

As an extension of these reported benefits derived from CLA, it is also hypothesized that in the specific case of Japan's futures images the CLA approach also:

1. offers potential benefits by promoting the articulation and communication of new paradigms to break Japan's 'paradigm-lock';
2. produces not immediate benefits and superficial solutions to deep-structured

problematic situations, but does facilitate understanding of what Foucault would call the 'effects' or *by*products of such deep problems;

3. raises 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" (Foucault, cited in Chambon et al, 1999, p. 29) and therefore be catalytic in identifying transformative spaces; and
4. promotes awareness of the possibility of integrating conflict as a device for new knowledge creation.

CLA's Poststructuralist Analytical Position and the Foucauldian Poststructural Toolbox

In the analysis of any given problematic situation, CLA may utilize a number of analytical techniques, (Inayatullah, 1998) which include deconstruction, genealogy, distancing, alternative pasts and present, and *re*-ordering knowledge(s) [see Appendix II for a further discussion of CLA and its poststructuralist position]. I refer to this collection of analytical techniques as the Foucauldian poststructural toolbox.

For example, to grasp the overall objective identifying Japan's discursive formations vis-à-vis its images of the future, I employ two key terms, both derived from Michel Foucault: *episteme* and *discourse* or *discursive formation*.

The term *episteme* was coined by Foucault based on the Greek word for knowledge and defined by Foucault as:

> By *episteme*, we mean, in fact, the total set of relations that unite, at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures, sciences, and possibly formalized systems; the way in which, in each of these discursive formations, the transition to epistemologization, scientificity, and formulization are situated and operate; the distribution of these thresholds, which may coincide, be subordinated to one another, or be separated by shifts in time; the lateral relations that may exist between epistemological figures or sciences in so far as they belong to neighbouring, but distinct, discursive practices (Foucault, 1972, in Chambon, 1999, p. 191).

According to Hawthorn (1998), the term *episteme* has been widely used by others, including Derrida, and has points of contact with Marx's *ruling ideas* and with the Marxist sense of ideology, but also "has a more all-embracing, totalizing sense: an episteme leaves no room—or attempts to exclude the space—for any ways of producing or arranging knowledge apart from its own" (p. 69).

The second term, *discourse* or *discursive formation*, on the other hand, was used by Foucault after dropping episteme as the dominant principle in history (Horrocks & Jevtic, 1997). To understand how power operates, it is necessary to understand Foucault's conceptions of discourse and discursive formation (in Chambon et al., 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 & 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 factors in the formation of a discourse:

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, for example, in the case of images of the future, different kinds of images can be related to each other in futures discourse (Horrocks & Jevtic, 1997).

The combination of these three dimensions are summed up as follows:

> He [Foucault] had developed for this purpose an analysis of 'discourses,' identifiable collections of utterances governed by rules of construction and evaluation which determine within some thematic area what may be said, by whom, in what context, and with what effect (Faubion, 1994, p. xvi).

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*:

> 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 & Jetvic, 1997, p. 89).

I now briefly discuss the five main components derived from Foucault which make up the poststructural toolbox employed in the analytical process.

1. Deconstruction and Images of the Future

As a key tool in the Foucauldian poststructural toolbox, deconstruction of futures images is treated in detail in Appendix II, p. 259.

2. Genealogical Imagination and Futures Analysis

The genealogical investigation pertains to one of Foucault's key methods of research and modes 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, 1999, p. 270).

3. Distance and Defamiliarization

The notion of *distancing* is useful both for its temporal and spatial qualities. Through such poststructural distancing, claims Inayatullah (1998), the spaces of reality are loosened allowing new possibilities, ideas and structures, to emerge. Parton puts the case that:

> Foucault always attempted to introduce an 'untimely' ethos to the present, thereby adding a sense of its fragility and contingency and demonstrating it does not

necessarily have to be like this. In this process we can think about the present differently and act in new and creative ways (in Bell, 1999, p. 24).

4. Alternative Pasts, Presents and Futures

The idea of *alternative pasts, presents and futures* problematizes not only the future but also the past. The past is reconceptualized as one particular writing amongst many possible writings and re-writings, as one interpretation of history, usually scribed by the victors. A number of questions may be formulated from this perspective. For instance, 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? Which explodes the unity of the present? (Inayatullah, 1998).

5. 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, 1998). 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 prioritized through historical forces. Purposive reordering of knowledge can lead to surprising and creative discoveries disturbing the very foundations of knowledge often taken for granted. By re-ordering we disturb conventional prioritizations of knowledge (p. 819).

CLA: Towards Transformations, Transition Formulas, Sources of Renewal and Metaphoric Potentials

The ultimate focus of this thesis is on "the transformative": the possibilities of identifying creative and communicative transition formulas, to borrow from Galtung (1999), the ways out and the sources/resources of renewal. A pivotal transformative concept for this thesis is the idea of the 'virtual fracture'. Virtual fractures in a given problematic are the sites of potential transformation (Foucault, cited in Chambon et al, 1999). 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).

Our usage of the virtual fracture can be applied for analysis in two ways. The first suggests the "leading contradictions" that compromise the integrity of the image and its potential in real-world contexts; the second meaning considers the fracture as a space of contradiction, as also potentially a new opening for transformative change. Jerome Ravetz describes leading contradictions as the "problems that the system cannot solve in its own terms, and are sufficiently critical that if they are not 'resolved' somehow or other they could destroy the system" (in Sardar, 1999, p. 224).

The latter meaning is illustrated by Masini (1996) in her story of women as practical utopianists who build the new society in the cracks of the old. The famous 'Frying Pan

March' of Japanese women down the main streets of Tokyo, as the 1950s turned into the 1960s, when they announced to an astonished male public that there were serious problems in terms of goods and services to households, was one of the more dramatic examples. The women followed up the march with the creation of a whole new set of monitoring institutions to ensure safe food and safe production processes. Bit by bit Japanese women tackled the problems that men left unsolved: sewage and garbage disposal, and the safety of children walking to school on narrow streets crowded with speeding cars were among the items they took into their own hands. Because they were creating institutions that had not existed before, and were needed in the new society growing inside the shell of old Japan, this is utopia created from "in the cracks" (Masini, p.19).

Given these descriptions of method I now move on to discuss the selection of primary texts—the seven images of the future.

Selection of the Seven Japanese Image of the Future Texts as Pulls to the Future

The key feature of this doctoral investigation is the Causal Layered Analysis of seven Japanese image of the future texts (listed previously in Chapter two and also in this chapter) as the *pulls* of the future, situated within the macro framework of the Futures Triangle Analysis. As stated previously, in my selection of Japanese images of the future, I made a conscious and explicit strategic move to cast the net over as many differing and diverse discourses as possible including the idiosyncratic, the outsider, and even the subculture futures image. I also include the realms of creativity studies and the arts in general as sources of informative futures images, for as Polak (1973) observed:

> It has been said that art is a highly sensitive culture-barometer. It is not only an indicator for the present, however, but a prognosticator of things to come. The image of the future presented by art is crucial in understanding future developments of a culture; in fact art *is* an image of the future (p. 270).

It must be noted that Japan's national conversation unfolds along a broad matrix of communication and media environments including television, newspapers, public forums and debates, the Internet, and casual conversations. Although the images identified over the duration of this investigation may not fully reflect this multifarious portfolio of media environments, nonetheless, the following seven image of the future texts were chosen for inclusion in our analysis:

1. *Report of the Prime Minister's Commission on Japan's Goals in the 21st Century—The Frontier Within: Individual Empowerment and Better Governance in the New Millennium* is a book compiled by a committee headed by Japan's preeminent Jungian psychologist, the now deceased Kawai Hayao.
2. *Slow Is Beautiful* is a book by Tsuji Shinichi, in which he re-images Japan as a culture represented by the metaphor of the sloth, concerned with a decelerated, quality-oriented lifestyle in preferences to the post-bubble cult of speed and economic efficiency.
3. *MuRatopia* by contrast is an image of the future in the form of a microcosmic prototype community on the mythic island of Awaji. *MuRatopia* is an on-going project established by Japanese economist and futures thinker Yamaguchi Kaoru and is supported by a Home Page [16] which defines the philosophies of the

[16] For details of the *MuRatopia* project refer to the URL, http://www.muratopia.org.

MuRatopia project.

4. *F.U.C.K, I Love Japan* is a book authored by Tanja Yujiro. This image of the future provides the textual line-up with a youth-oriented sub-culture perspective on that nation's futures.
5. The book *IMAGINATION / CREATION* is a compilation of round table discussions about Japan's futures seen from the point of view of Japan's creative vanguard including cultural critics, cultural anthropologists, academic philosophers and actively creative types.
6. *Visionary People in a Visionless Country: 21 Earth Connecting Human Stories* is a collection of twenty one essays compiled and edited by Peter David Pedersen a long term resident of Tokyo and eco-activist.
7. *EXODUS to the Land of Hope* further contrasts with the texts presented above. Authored by Murakami Ryū, one of Japan's most prolific and influential writers, this text is a novel that posits a massive exodus of Japan's youth literate with state-of-the-art Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to Japan's northern island of Hokkaido with the aim of launching a creative industries inspired ICT revolution from the peripheries.

The seven image of the future texts were selected via a preliminary analysis of their respective *transformative* potential. Images oriented towards business as usual, collapse-breakdown, or nostalgia scenarios were edited out of our sphere of consideration. Furthermore, I attempted to strategically maximize the inter/intra-image balance and variety, with an intention to locate radical, surprising, and cross-epistemological futures that take us beyond the official descriptions and mundane

futures discourses, the abundant negative or 'naïve' futures, and overly-simplistic techno-utopias.

Japanese and English Linguistic Practices for this Investigation

Many of the texts used as either the theoretical foundation of this investigation and some of the analysed image of the future texts were analysed from original Japanese language sources. In certain circumstances, English texts may be used for comparison against original Japanese documentation if considered appropriate to a deeper or more insightful understanding of the original Japanese texts. Regarding the use of Japanese names, as a rule, the family name is introduced first, followed by the given name, except in the case of a Japanese name that is well-known and generally familiar to an English-speaking readership, in which case the names are written in Western style. I have tried to be consistent when referring to Japanese texts by giving the English translation first, followed by the original Japanese writing, followed lastly by the Roman script reading for the Japanese text. Subsequent uses of the same text are expressed in the English translation only. There are what appear to be occasional inconsistencies as a Japanese word is sometimes written in a number of different styles within the same text.

Translation Style: Benjamin's Metaphor of the 'Shattered Vessel'

The translation of Japanese texts to English is a major feature of this investigation. From a poststructural perspective, Benjamin (cited in Diprose and Ferrell, 1991) 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 re-glued 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 recognizable as the broken parts of a greater language, just as fragments are the broken part of a vessel (1969, p. 30).

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the overarching analytical framework—the Futures Triangle Analysis—and its four main functions applied to map out the discursive location of Japan's images of the future in the early years of the 21st century. The core analytical method—Causal Layered Analysis—and its Foucauldian roots are discussed in terms of the identification of "plausible futures" potentially emerging from the complex portrait of Japan's national conversation, and its prescriptive-normative function, from which I intend to suggest ways out and beyond the current futures crisis.

I re-introduce the seven Japanese image of the future texts and the selection procedure for their inclusion in this investigation. I finally briefly outline the technical considerations including the roles and conventions used for accurately rendering Japanese-English textual analyses, and notes on translation style and objectives.

The next chapter commences the analytic chapters with an in-depth and combined

analysis of Japan's futures potential manifested in the *pushes* and *weights* dimensions of the Futures Triangle.

CHAPTER FIVE: PUSHES OF THE PRESENT AND THE WEIGHTS OF HISTORY

Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the outcomes of my analysis of the pushes of the present and weights of history as contending 'forces' for the futures of Japan. These are discussed to set the context for the main analytical chapter (Chapter six), which concerns the potentially transformative pulls to the future in the form of seven image of the future texts.

Five sets of pushes of the present were examined. (See Appendix III for more detail on the pushes.) Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) was used to structure each of the five pushes around: 1) new technologies; 2) shifting Japanese values; 3) globalization and internationalization; 4) the demographic complex; and finally 5) the pushes of Japan's multiple and diverse creative minorities—the vanguard. Under the macro-structure of the CLA, I also sought to identify more complex dynamics. For example, what are the grids of specification of each of the pushes? What futures scenarios emerge from each of the push dynamics? What strategies for transformative/alternative futures can be gleaned? In the end I opted for a discussion of synergistic tensions and creative dialogue in and in-between the five push dynamics in which I present brief specific *push-effects scenarios*.

I also analysed the characteristics of Japan's national conversation which weigh down, anchor, or resist movement towards the future—again using concepts from the CLA. I distil from the enormity of the literature the most salient points and how these weights

influence Japan's national conversation and the individual micro image of the future texts that emerge from this conversation. Finally I show how these weights collectively resist the future and, paradoxically, also hold the greatest potential for unleashing creativity for change in Japan's futures.

Overarching Analytical Approach

> *In a general theory, attention must 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 personality and the social, national, or cultural group (Polak, 1973, p. 12).*

The aim of the approach taken here is to reveal the layeredness and the complexities of Japan's futures image discourses and the kind of episteme that is the present day of Japan. Then we can ask what this implies for the futures of that nation. Japan's episteme revealed in the national conversation is composed of a range of proto-conversations or discourses. One goal is to ascertain the nature and the contours of this conversation. To do so I ask: How did the various proto-conversations and discourses come about? Who talks to whom, about what, via which channels, for and to whom, within what kinds of contexts and with what kinds of effects upon the futures for Japan.

That is, this chapter establishes the historicities and the contours of Japan's historical images of the future and lays bare Japan's underlying central images. In effect, this highlights the social constructions of reality and the historical factors that rendered possible the current discourse on Japan's apparently 'map-less' future. This chapter is a necessary step in the historical and cultural contextualization of the current field of

enquiry. We hope to comprehensively map out the contours of Japanese futures images in order that we, to borrow from William Van Dusen Wishard, "understand our moment in history" (2003, p. 77).

The approach could be said to be a genealogical one. For Inayatullah, the genealogy is:

> history; not a continuous history of events and trends, but more a history of paradigms, if you will, of discerning which discourses have been hegemonic and how the term under study has travelled through these various discourses. In the case of Nietzsche, it was not so much an issue of what is the moral, but a genealogy of the moral: how and when the moral becomes contentious and through which discourses (1998, p. 815).

Questions emerging from the genealogy we wish to try to answer include: Which discourses have been victorious in constituting the present? How have they traveled through history? What have been the points in which the issue has become present, important or contentious? What might be the genealogies of the future?

Further, with the Futures Triangle Analysis, we ask what is *specific* to Japan? For example, from the 'problem' of globalization, what is specific to the Japanese experience and discourses of globalization? How do current globalization and internationalization discourses affect perspectives on Japanese history? What are its possible 'logical' outcomes?

SECTION I

Pushes of the Present

Though far from an exhaustive pushes database, I now consider the dynamics of five key pushes (and reactions) of the present identified during the course of this investigation:

1. New technologies;
2. Globalization and internationalization;
3. Shifting Japanese values;
4. The demographics complex; and
5. The vanguard and creative minorities.

To address these, I use a basic scenarios framework selectively building simple scenario maps from a matrix of business as usual, nostalgic, dystopia-collapse, and transformative scenarios. These are derived from the detailed CLA analyses presented in Appendix III.

Push Effects Scenarios for New Technologies

Business-as-usual: A 'business as usual' scenario is no option for Japan in the 21st century after the rampant technological drive of the 20th century, characterized by massiveness of scale and impacts upon that nation's fragile environmental. However if Japan's creative impulses are over-directed for the production of new generations of large-scale technological mega-projects, we could see the gradual unfolding and accumulation of technologization prototypes such as the science-fictional O-Daiba artificial island situated in Tokyo Bay whose various sub-projects include the proposed

Tokyo Bay Pyramid City. A continued growth futures push is adequately portrayed in a RICOH company television commercial on the theme of environmental management (環境経営 *kankyō keiei*). The commercial depicts a family from the year 2050, dressed in casual comfortable pastel colours. It is reminiscent of traditional family values of the 1970s; the family of father, mother, and daughter stand on their balcony enjoying the vista of a super high-tech metropolis wonderland straight from the Jetsons made-for-TV cartoon. However, committed to environmental management, the daughter's concluding words point to the 'blueness of the skyline', despite the surface hi-tech cityscape vista; hi-tech driven communities without environmental impact.

Another extrapolation of the present business as usual scenario could envision Japan as maker of *irrelevant* technologies. Sliding into trivia, Japan's technologies are perceived as being out of touch with new global developments and imperatives. This is the *tamagotchi* [17] and *bow-lingual*-ization [18] of Japan's once admired and emulated technological base.

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[17] The **Tamagotchi** (**たまごっち** is a handheld digital pet created in Japan by Akihiro Yokoi of WiZ Co. Ltd., and Aki Maita of Bandai Co. Ltd. It was first sold by Bandai in 1996 in Japan. Over 70,000,000 Tamagotchis have been sold world-wide as of 2008. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamagotchi. Retrieved May 7, 2010).

[18] **Bowlingual** (**バウリンガル**), or "Bow-Lingual" as the North American version is spelled, is a computer-based dog-to-human language translation device developed by Japanese toy company Takara and first sold in Japan in 2002. Versions for South Korea and the United States were launched in 2003. The device was honored by Time Magazine as a "Best Invention of 2002." Additionally, in 2002, Bowlingual's credited inventors Keita Satoh, then President of Takara; Dr. Matsumi Suzuki, President of Japan Acoustic Lab; and Dr. Norio Kogure, Executive Director, Kogure Veterinary Hospital, were awarded the humorous Ig Nobel Prize for "promoting peace and harmony between the species." (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bow-Lingual. Retrieved May 7, 2010).

Techno-Nostalgia: In the case of Japan's technologization we can discern three distinct forms of nostalgia. The first is a return to pre-Meiji, pre-industrial age. The second is nostalgia for the days of maximum techno-utopianism, in which technology is framed in Shintoist terms. In the third, Japan reverts to its pre-bubble technological dreams in an attempt to revive this perceived Golden Age despite the fact that the world has moved on, and despite a Japanese generation uninterested in reviving yesteryear's techno-utopias or reliving the 'lost futures' of Okada Toshio (2000) as organizing principle and resuscitating the graveyard of unfulfilled promised technological utopias.

Techno-Dystopias: With Japan's past record of environmental destruction caused by rapid technological progress, it is possible to speculate on varying degrees of dystopian technologization futures scenarios. If left un-resisted one conceivable outcome of an overly-technologized Japan leads to a scenario of unchecked runaway technologization, a dystopian science-fictional Japan. The endism-oriented dystopia discussed below in my analysis of the film *Vexille 2077: Japan's Hi-Tech Isolation* (also see pages 115, 144, 289)—a future world of Japanese humans transformed into androids—a genre of extreme dystopia—is indicative of deeply held fears of the Japanese techno-skeptics. A more realistic and near-term dystopia could be embodied in the promotion film *AURA* (see Appendix IV, pp. 285-288 for analysis) the ultimate outcome of which leads Japan into a ubiquitous techno-dystopian society of perfect *surveillance*, a virtual Panoptic utopia.

Alternative Conceptions of Technology

For Japan to approach positive images of the future, new and alternative conceptions of

technology are needed. I suggest two such alternative technological conceptions as ways of transcending the scenarios above.

1. *Local technology initiatives*: The first requires a new politics of the technological economy in which new prioritization strategies are designed and implemented. These should not be crafted solely at the national level of government and bureaucracy, but forged spatially and conceptually with local regional needs in mind. Such an appropriate social technological design is exemplified by the regional town of Yubari in Hokkaido, who recently launched a local initiative in the form of Metabolic Health Tours (*Hokkaido Shimbun*, 2007). Subverting federally produced technological discourses, the Yubari initiative promotes local knowledge and technologies for local purposes, the benefits of which circulate at the regional level of economic revitalization.

This kind of approach could be termed as technologies of 'healing', or under a Buddhist schema 'suffering-alleviating technologies', 'environmental healing technologies', or the technologies for healing fragmented human relations and communication, an idea exemplified by Nishimuro Taizō (2000) in which he attempts to peacefully amalgamate Japan's electronics consumerism with what he calls the 'wise network society' (p. 353). To achieve this uneasy amalgamation, he suggests a number of ways to render more compatible the simultaneous trends of individualism and individual responsibility. Having said this, ultimately we must be skeptical of Nishimuro's seemingly beneficial thesis, for in his role as General Managing Director of the electronics giant Toshiba, his vision is essentially tied to the on-going profitability of the corporation he heads. Though Nishimuro claims to be mindful of the need to recycle the products Toshiba

manufactures and the laws that support this "natural resource recycling society based on wisdom" (p. 354).

How can runaway technological development be kept in check? I refer to the Japanese aesthetic concept of *yūgen*; "love for the old and unobtrusive may be the best defense the Japanese have against the harsher aspects of mechanization which are otherwise all too apparent today" (de Bary et al, 1964a, p. 282). To supplement this concept of *yūgen* and offset the preeminence of econocentric ways of knowing, I posit one alternative by referring to James Hillman's (1998) elegant and compelling thesis in *Uncontrollable Beauty* in which he suggests that contrary to popular opinion:

> [the] practice of beauty *is* economic … ugliness costs more. What are the economics of ugliness: what is the cost to physical well-being and psychological balance of careless design, of cheap dyes, inane sounds, structures, and spaces? To pass a day in an office under direct glaring light, in bad chairs, victim of the constant monotonous hum of machine noise, looking down at a worn, splotched floor cover, among artificial plants, making motions that are unidirectional, push-button, sagittal in and out that repress the gestures of the body—and then, at day's end, to enter the traffic system or the public transportation system, fast food, project housing—what does this cost? What does it cost in absenteeism; in sexual obsession, school drop-out, overeating and short attention span; in pharmaceutical remedies and the gigantic escapism industries of wasteful shopping, chemical dependency, sports violence, and the disguised colonialism of tourism? Could the causes of major social, political, and economic issues of our time also be found in the repression of beauty? (p. 265).

Such questions about modern urban living are seldom approached with any purposeful or long term solutions in either Japan or the West, despite attention to discourses of healthy workspaces or the beautification of city suburbs (which in any case are mostly

only realized in existing ‘sort-after’ suburbs where class boundaries drive who gets to live and work in less attractive environments).

2. *Technologies as technologies of the self*: Another alternative conception is that of technology as ‘technology of the self’. Moving beyond these 20th century modernist dreams into a new paradigm organized around new stories such as the environment and healing are those suggested by Moritani Masanori (1999) in *Twenty-First Century Technology and Society*. The text imagines the 21st century as a time when Japan’s technologies are used for the purpose of self-expressivity, a form of social technology or what Foucault refers to as a ‘technology of the self’ which:

> 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’ (in Chambon et al., 1999, p. 18).

The second push to the future I consider are Japan’s globalization and internationalization.

Push Effects Scenarios for Globalization and Internationalization

In a business as usual scenario, Japan would continue to find itself frustrated by international events, whose complexities require constant study, tracking and analysis. Unable to keep pace, Japan becomes alienated from international discourses. The nation’s leaders continue to fail to communicate well with international leaders sustaining the perception of Japan as a poor communicator, as the stereotyped

"inscrutable Asian". Another business as usual scenario in Patrick Smith's (1998) *Japan: A Reinterpretation* foretells of a Japan whose bold efforts at creating a first authentic future for itself could "easily be subsumed by globalization, which arrives everywhere with the force of a great wave", in which the Japanese, like everyone else, have no alternative but to experience the "loss of autonomy at every level, from the individual to the social level" (p. 317). This is a potentially negative future image of Japan as destined for systemic colonization by the Other.

In a dystopian scenario the world comes to be increasingly perceived as an overly complicated and dangerous place whereby Japan retreats back into itself, with communities recreating the isolationist policies of the Edo Period.[19] In such a scenario, the nation would close its doors, shut itself off from the outside world, reinforce the myth of Japanese racial purity and the imperative to maintain this purity in the face of new threats of racial contamination. Japan would fail to communicative effectively with its closest geographical neighbouring nations and fall short of achieving mutual understandings of their connected histories, and ultimately fail to transcend past traumas and cooperatively seek new futures, culminating in a regression to a hegemonic state and a revival of the Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

The possibilities of such a dystopian, anti-internationalist and isolationist Japan are

[19] The **Edo period** or **Tokugawa period** lasted from 1603 to 1868, a period which marks the governance of the Edo or Tokugawa shogunate, officially established in 1603 by the first Edo shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu. The period ended with the Meiji Restoration, the restoration of imperial rule by the 15th and last shogun Tokugawa Yoshinobu. The Closed Country Edict of 1635 prohibited any Japanese from traveling outside Japan or, if someone left, from ever returning. This seclusionist policy lasted until March 1854, when the Treaty of Peace and Amity (or Treaty of Kanagawa) opened two ports to American ships seeking provisions.

explored in the 3D computer graphics animé film *Vexille 2077: Japan's Hi-Tech Isolation* which:

> … [in] an alternate 21st century, Japan's scientists … perfected the art of biotechnology and robotics, its benefits extending the life spans of all humans. However, the United Nations deemed the advanced technology a dangerous threat and started strict surveillance on Japan. The government of Japan refused to abide by UN's demands to halt research, the year 2067 left the UN and isolated itself. Ten years later, an American Special Forces unit by the name of SWORD, led by its female commander named Vexille, are sent to uncover the current status of the isolated Japan, after the country begins its plan to move. The shocking secrets they find will shock the rest of the world. (http://www.animenetwork.com/encyclopedia/anime.ph?id=7812).

In a movie such as *Vexille*, the five pushes of technologies, globalization, demographics, values, and creative minorities discussed in this investigation of pushes of the present are portrayed as collapsing into a single national event.

One nostalgic scenario would signify a return to false histories and the perceived consolations of myth. Instead of a "third opening", this scenario would involve a "new closing" of the Japanese mind and Japanese archipelago, in other words, a 21st century reenactment of Tokugawa Shogunate isolationist policy of the Edo Period. A second nostalgia scenario is possible: here, Japan would re-image itself as the impenetrable culture, which at the one level of *tatemae*, the public representation of itself as open to the world, while at the other pole of *honne*, the mode indicating what people actually do, the nation of Japan quietly shuts itself out to the rest of world, retreating psychologically—a form of en-masse *hiki-komori*[20] cultural retreat.

[20] *Hiki-komori* refers to a type of acute social withdrawal, a Japanese term to refer to the phenomenon of

But there is also a scenario of transformation—the future of a multicultural Japan that has finally transcended the discourses of cultural uniqueness and homogeneity, a phenomenon for which McCormack (1996) uses the terms sloughing off from Asia (*datsu-Ajia*) and *datsu-Nichi*, by which he means transcending Japanese-ness, the

> contrived identity imposed on the people of the Japanese islands as a unique, blood-ordained and racial essence, concentrated in its purist form in the imperial family, which sets the Japanese people apart from and superior to other peoples (p. 176).

For, as McCormack wisely reminds us: "In ancient times, the Japanese archipelago was the home to many different peoples and the center of complex networks of regional trade and cultural communication" (p. 176). This transformation scenario of Japan's globalization/internationalization would transcend the discourses grounded in ethno-centrism to a transcendent purpose, a higher mentality, a 'holistic' phase of human consciousness. This scenario would transcend Americanism and go beyond a pursuant mentality, with internationalization as a new story of Japan feeling at home in the world, transcending self-guilt, which until recently, along with post-war trauma, has thwarted Japanese attempts to feel comfortable with their place in the global context.

This transformative scenario resonates with Inoue Hisashi's (in Napier, 1996) politics of an 'alternative internationalization' proposed in his utopian novel *The People of Kirikiri* in which he describes a very different kind of internationalization "from what the Meiji

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reclusive people who have chosen to withdraw from social life, often seeking extreme degrees of isolation and confinement because of various personal and social factors in their lives. (Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hikikomori. Retrieved May 8, 2010).

leaders might have dreamed of, or what post-war Japan's political leaders are calling for today" (p. 166). To illustrate with one episode, in this internationalized utopian Japan, the town of Kirikiri hosts "the Kirikiri International Table Tennis World Cup to which representatives of all alternative communities around the world are invited such as the members of the Quebec Liberation Front, the American Indian Movement, and the founders of the Republic of Frestonia, a squatters town in London" (p. 166), portraying a subversive re-working of Japan's globalization/internationalization discourses.

Push Effects Scenarios for Japan's Demographics

In a business as usual scenario, Japan's shifting population age structures will lead to an increasingly pathological view of that nation's perceived imbalances, portrayed as unnatural and disruptive of the social harmony and stability that constitutes the core of Japan's demographic self-myth. A collapse scenario would see foreigners barred from adopting Japanese citizenship and finding it increasingly difficult to be awarded permanent residency, and the envisioned partnership society[21] would be thwarted by re-establishing conservative gender relations. If the problem of a lack of successors (as discussed further in Appendix IV, p. 308-310) is left unresolved, either through the use of foreign labour, advanced robotics, restructuring of industrial imperatives, and/or successor promotion campaigns and policies, certain corporate sectors will have to be decommissioned.

[21] Japan's so-called gender equality law was passed in June 23, 1999, under the name 男女共同参画社会基本法 *danjo-kyōdō-sankaku-shakai-kihon-hō*, with the aim of promoting a more just gender balanced society with equal opportunity for both sexes.

Do we have an image of transformation, a way out for Japan's demographic "time bomb", as Kingston's (2001, p. 39) preferred metaphor to describe this situation? One scenario might mean the recognition of and welcoming in to Japan of a more mobile and diverse population comprised of multi-ethnicities possessing equal rights, accompanied by a nation-wide re-negotiation of the meanings for what it means to be 'Japanese' and what it means to be old. This would involve a loosening or an untying of Japan's traditional and litany-systemic bound constructions of population as a unit of analysis to be kept in control for the maintenance of a social harmony and stability. It would be replaced by an image that is more dynamic, fluid, less subject to control by governmental or socially mediated means, but at the same time replete with creative possibilities. In conclusion, the complex nature of Japan's multiple demographic shifts and challenges as summarized in some detail in Appendix IV, are pushing Japan to not only readjust to the possibility of an aged population, but to find new meanings in the emerging demographic realities.

Push Effects Scenarios for Shifting Values

Kawai Hayao (2005) summarizes the collective role of shifting values as they contribute to the formation of novel Japanese futures with the observation that Japanese culture is being continuously transformed by the collision of different value types with the effect of producing new meaning formations, new value systems, and new futures. To revisit our core scenarios in relation to values: a nostalgia scenario evokes clear images in the form of back-to-basic core Japanese values. The prospects for such a reversal of Japan's rapid values-evolution seem improbable, though not impossible. In August 2007, Abe Shinzō's (2007) administration reversed thirty years of inertia in Japan's education

system by increasing the number of compulsory hours for Japan's school children. This was a shift away from the *yutori* or 'relaxed' educational policies of the early 21st century, a move that indicated a possible reversal of values for the new generation. It was an initiative calling for an 'authentic' and truly Japanese values system (p. 1).

A dystopian-collapse scenario would see the dissolution of core values left un-replaced by new values systems—in effect, a values vacuum, chaos, a value *tabula rasa*, which leaves the individual in society as maker of his/her own values, subject to constantly mutable values improvised according to the exigencies of the perceived moment, set adrift from referential value systems. The question that arises here is: at worst, would a total values collapse lead to the inoperability of society? Would Japan slip into a values-anarchy in which radical and unchecked individualism is adopted to the extreme as a guiding social force, ultimately overriding all principles of social cohesion and the public good?

For one *transformation* scenario, at the macro-societal, macro-historical level, I refer to Mushakōji Kinhide's (1993) prediction of a swing from Japan's current Confucian mentality typified by strict social order, to its other extreme pole, the Daoist, which values the characteristics of flow and tolerance and is informed by the Chinese utopian tradition of *tōgenkyō*. This would signify a major transformation in values for Japan as a whole. But even beyond these micro-transformative values futures, we can suggest a unifying values system that transcends Japanese-ness, and even human-centricity, into a planetary and cosmic values realm.[22]

[22] One example is Taki Hisao's (2008) *Homo Contribuens: the need to give and the search for fulfillment*, in which Taki

Another way out of the conceptual gridlock of shifting Japanese values is the notion of transcendent global values. In *Global Values 101,* Kate Holbrook (2006) presents a set of sixteen conversations addressing the themes that follow: "How are we to live in a world of gaping inequalities? What are we to do when other people are being hurt? What are the obligations of those who are comfortable to those who suffer?" (p. 1x). These themes are used as the framework for formulating a design for universal values, and showing their applicability to and compatibility with locally derived community values.

Push Effects Scenarios for the Creative Vanguard

In a business-as-usual scenario on the push of creativity, the public discourses call for the need to improve Japan's creative capacities in order for Japan to be able to compete in an increasingly globalized world with pressing competition from neighbouring countries. However, a business as usual future is unlikely to eventuate in view of Japan's push to re-imagine itself as a cultural nation under organizing metaphors such as the Cool Japan movement[23]. This more of the same type scenario of continued perceptions of creativity is embodied famously in the Innovation 25 Council's story of the Inobee family, a future that fits with Michi Kaku's (1998) vision of a non-spiritual, wholly techno-centric life, of which there is *no* creativity imperative (p. 66).

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as a successful entrepreneur suggests a new image of man-kind, Japanese included, as 'man the giver'.

[23] The catchphrase 'cool Japan' became popular around 2005 and was even used by the Foreign Ministry to portray Japan as a creative land of *manga* cartoons, anime films, playful Japanese design, J-pop music and Japanese style cooking ready for export around the world (Linhart, 2009, p. 217).

A nostalgic scenario of the future constitutes a contradiction for a truly creative minority concerned with making newness and innovation. But there is one variation of the nostalgia theme that does present possibilities that is partly nostalgic but simultaneously forward-looking: that is, the resurrection of the social role of Japan's artisan as signifying a way of life with distinct and socially admirable philosophical inclinations. Such orientations would manifest in the striving for perfection in creating functional objects with attention to detail and design aesthetics such as *wabi*, *sabi*, *yūgen*, and even *iki*.

A collapse future on the other hand would occur when the newly emerging creativity boom dies a still-birth; being appropriated by a dominant majority before the creative minority can exert influence and assume power over the former. In effect, the creative minority never actually becomes an organized and effective force, remaining just that, a minority, subjugated by the appropriating class. The question that arises here is whether Japan's creative minorities are truly creative enough to take the nation through the nation's interregnum, take the lead of the national conversation with innovative discourses, and into a more creative phase of national development, or whether, as Toynbee (in Galtung and Inayatullah, 1999) warns, a creative minority quickly degenerates into the dominant majority of an imitative culture (p. 122).

Transformative scenarios on the other hand indicate a revival of deep creativity in Japan, first, through the renewed recognition and awareness of Japan's global contribution to creativity. Evidence suggests there is much scope for Japan's creative vanguard to contribute significantly to the nation's transformative futures. Many of Japan's creative

types have ventured beyond their specific creative niches and into actual futures images production. Among them are Academy Award winning composer Sakamoto Ryuichi's theory of 'Elephantism' (2002), in which he posits a future Japan based on the principles of elephant communities; film director and television personality Beat Takeshi's (1995) *Japanese Remodeling Theory* (日本人改造論・ *nihon-jin kaizō-ron*); and television commentator and popular culture critic Terry Ito's (1999) *Japan's Revitalization Plan* (日本再生計画・ *nihon saisei keikaku*), to name but a few. In the field of Japanese *manga* and animé Anne Allison (2006) observes how "the global market in Japanese youth products has skyrocketed". Called the country's GNC, or "gross national cool", according to McGray (2002), these exports now exceed what had been the leading industries in Japan's postwar economy—automobiles and steel—a fact that points not only to an increasingly prominent role for Japan's creative types and creative industries but also suggests these exports may act as producers of new messages of hope for the futures of Japan with an attractive international appeal (p. 12).

McGray has keenly observed how this emergent Gross National Cool[24] movement was, somewhat perversely, the product of Japan's prolonged post-bubble economic recession, which helped in "discrediting Japan's rigid social hierarchy and empowering young entrepreneurs" (p. 50). This served to suggest that a near-future reinvention of Japan as a cultural superpower is an attainable image of the future.

[24] The term 'gross national cool' was coined by journalist Douglas McGray in a May/June 2002 article in *Foreign Policy*, in which he argued that as Japan's economic juggernaut took a wrong turn into a ten-year slump, and with military power made impossible by a pacifist constitution, the nation had quietly emerged as a cultural powerhouse.

I now turn form this brief discussion of five pushes of the present within Japan's national conversation, to a specific weights analysis.

SECTION II

Weights of History and Tradition

Numerous thinkers have given consideration to the forces that conspire against transformation in Japan. For example, Sakaiya Taichi (2003) suggests that:

> The great changes we are facing cannot be overcome by altering systems, organizational structure, or by fine-tuning economic figures or official procedures. What is required is to overhaul the bureaucratic culture that has built up since the Meiji period, and instead create a culture of the people (p. 269).

Gyohten Toyō (2000) desires to see a dismantling of what he calls Japan's so-called 'convoy system' of regulation followed by the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Japan. Fukuda Kazuya's (2000) claim is that Japan lacks a philosophical mindset, which keeps that nation from finding ways to transcend the limitations imposed by the present.

Many other weights at macro, meso, and micro levels could have been suggested and in fact were used in preliminary s but for simplicity's sake I have chosen to focus on the persistence of three deep structures as weights. These include:

1. Japan's 'moment in history';
2. Japan's self-image & the weight of perceived cultural uniqueness;
3. Japan's harmony obsession of *wa* (和) and its culture of 'dividing practices'.

Weight 1. Japan's 'Moment in History': *The Moods of the Nation*

The first weight I suggest is Japan's moment in history. If every age is said to be governed by a zeitgeist, then the litany of the current times is the relative absence of a zeitgeist, few defining features and "unifying narratives of transcendent origin and power" (Postman, 1992, p. 172). It is an age in which Japan's modernistic, postwar, rapid development, the bubble, post-bubble and the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) periods have given rise to a social construction typified by what I hereafter refer to as an age of *accumulated traumas*. These are I suggest the deeply structured systemic problems left unrecognized, un-acknowledged, and until recently, under-communicated by the Japanese peoples. This has been in the hope that their denial would see them either dissolve in Japanese invincibility with the advent of a new saviour-hero, or with new top-down government led policies for economic and cultural recovery.

The Age of Accumulated Traumas

The moods of a nation, as manifest in their negative mode, can function as a powerful weight on a nation's creative resources and resolve. This moment in history—the where, what, who, when and how the Japanese came to be where they are now—is typified by a suite of accumulated and unresolved traumas including post-bubble failure syndrome[25]; an apparent absence of a unifying principle; the politics of future fear; and the rise of pessimism in a seemingly chaotic world. I briefly address each of these broad four sets of weights.

[25] Within this broad period defined as Japan's being 'post-bubble', I also include the portfolio of on-going and associated national problems of Japan's responses to the Global Financial Crisis, and more recently and culturally specific to Japan, the pride suffered as a result of damage to the reputation of one of Japan's most internationally respected corporations, namely, Toyota.

1. *Post-bubble failure syndrome*: Such failures have been partly purged by transforming the bubble days into the realms of nostalgia. One example is the feature film *Bubble Fiction: Boom or Bust* (2007)[26], which attempts to purge the lingering legacies of Japan's national trauma of the bubble era using comic relief. More recent attempts to overcome the protracted trauma of the now fabled bubble economy, have been partly thwarted due to the Global Financial Crisis. Although Japan has been less hard hit by the United States and some European nations, its effects have nonetheless impacted Japan. More personally and culture-specific to Japan is the matter of the Toyota recalls of 2009-10, which have strongly impacted upon that nation's corporate pride.
2. *Absence of a unifying principle*: A second identified trauma indicates Japan's absence of a clear unifying principle. This is what Khaldun (in Galtung and Inayatullah, 1999, p. 28) refers to as the *asabiya*[27], literally the "fiber or sinew by which a group is held together" (p. 28). *Asabiya* type unifying principles are a key dynamic permeating Japanese history.[28] Each stage of Japan's macro-history is a new phase, a new experiment, a new image of the future for unifying the goals and directions of that nation. Japanese aggression in World War Two, for all its

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[26] *Bubble Fiction: Boom or Bust* (バブルへ GO!!〜タイムマシンはドラム式 *Baburu e go!! Taimu mashin wa doramu-shiki*) is a 2007 Japanese science fiction comedy film directed by Yasuo Baba. The plot centers on traveling in time from 2007 to 1990 and in the process compares some everyday things between 1990 and 2007—with the early 1990s signifying the end period of Japan's 'bubble economy'.

[27] For a concise definition and analysis of Khaldun's term '*asabiya*' see Inayatullah's (1997) 'Ibn Khaldun: The Strengthening and Weakening of *Asabiya*' in Galtung and Inayatullah (eds.) *Macrohistory and macrohistorians: Perspectives on Individual, Social, and Civilizational Change*. PRAEGER, p. 25-32.

[28] In Japanese Macrohistory, Jien suggested that each period was governed by a zeitgeist. For details of Jien's Macrohistory theory of Japan see Souyri (2002, p. 68-70). Similarly, Postman (1993) uses the term 'unifying narrative' in an analogous way.

destruction, unified the nation under an umbrella philosophy misappropriated under the name of State Shinto, with the Emperor as divine descendent of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. Japan's bubble economic period tried to unify the nation under an over-arching 'catch-up and surpass the USA and Europe' model, supported by a matrix of social policies that saw the formation of Japan as a uniquely Asian technocracy with the national foresight, energy and will to compete with the dominating nations of the West. But as the bubble economy burst, the unifying principle dissipated with it. It is this unifying principle, Khaldun's *asabiya* or Jien's zeitgeist that remains to be reforged and replaced.

3. *The Politics of Future Fear*: For the trauma weight suggested under the category the 'politics of fear', an NHK production *Farewell Godzilla: King of Beasts and Japan's Half Century*（2005) offers us insights. *Farewell Godzilla*, as I read it, explored the history of *Godzilla* and the trajectories through which this Japanese cultural icon—as symbolic of Japan's fear of the Other—has traveled through space and time since Japan's defeat in World War Two. As the program points out, Japanese culture and historiography can be mapped out as an "evolution of fears", in which the representations of *Godzilla* reflect the episteme in which the character inhabits. In the latest *Godzilla* feature—incidentally, a box office flop—skyscraping towers, like those on the techno-utopia reclaimed island of O-Daiba and the iconic tower of Roppongi Hills, dwarf the once fearsome figure of *Godzilla*, stripping it of its ability to engender the fear it once evoked. To these physical fears of a contemporary Tokyo cityscape, we can now add new psychological dimensions including the fear of being 'left behind' the rest of the world and the fear of the future itself with a 2003 poll indicating that 70% of Japanese fear for the future

(*Japan Times*, 2003). The strategic effects of creating such a panoptic politics of fear that blanks an entire nation encourages a corrupt leadership to manipulate and control its subjects in the grip of fear; the nation-wide making of "docile bodies"[29] or what Polak (1973) terms "future-neurosis" (p. 191).

4. *Pessimism*: A fourth trauma manifests in the form of futures pessimism. Molitor (2003) describes the severity of pessimism functioning as weight:

> Pessimistic perspectives, intemperate doom-saying, and tales of woe have confronted humanity throughout recorded history. Pessimism has a dark and foreboding cant to it. Negative attitudes ranging from alienation, cynicism, disillusionment, helplessness, resignation, despair to passivity and apathy, are among those that creep into confrontations accompanying many aspects of progress (p. 72).

Such systemic pessimism may be rooted in unrealistic expectations of what is possible; in this case, what the Japanese people perceive—erroneously or otherwise—is possible for the Japanese people. A central argument of Alain de Botton's (2001) *Consolations of Philosophy,* is that unrealistic expectations ultimately lead to disappointment and pathology.

Naturally, the above types of accumulated traumas have elicited countless individual

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[29] Michel Foucault's 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, in Moss, 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 (p. 174).

and collective responses intended to thwart or subvert the perceived moods of the nation. Firstly, the very proliferation of futures images production is itself an empowering response to a perceived lack of post-bubble futures images. Secondly, there is the post-bubble *iyashi* (癒し) or "healing" boom, which has spurned an industry of its own, with on-going innovations in the arts and sciences geared to healing a nation. A third response is organized around the metaphor of *genki* (元気)[30], literally "the original spirit" or "force", but more mundanely "wellness" or "feeling fine", a word that has become synonymous with virtually all Japan's community revitalization programs. The aim is to restore the *genki*, the original spirit and vitality.

Scenarios

In the business as usual scenario we can expect that Japan will continue to muddle on with the mentality of unresolved, accumulated traumas, which, in the absence of strategic counter-trauma therapeutic responses, will lead to un-resolvable social pathologies, and a systemic disintegration of the social mechanisms that bind Japanese society. A nostalgic response to Japan's moment in history, and the failure to identify ways out of Japan's macro-historical trappings appropriate for a 21st century world community, could see a revisionist response demanding a return to a fictitious Japanese Golden Age. A collapse scenario is embodied in embryonic form in the business as usual scenario, where Japan's current accumulated traumas progressively spiral downward into a state of un-resolvable chronic traumas. Such a scenario would see a systemic, psychologically debilitating, pathological mentality take hold of the nation,

[30] The term is explained on pages 129 and 146 of this thesis in the context of Itsuki Hiroyuki's (2004) book of the same name, an in-depth genealogy of the meanings and operation of *genki* as social construction of reality throughout Japanese history.

with Japan retreating into itself and away from emerging 21st century global realities and possibilities.

Ways Out: Beyond Future-Neurosis

But what of the ways out? Evidently what is needed most is a re-invention or re-enchantment of Japan's so-called zeitgeist. Fear of the future, future-neurosis, need not be perceived in negative terms alone. The Inuit communities live by and use their socially constructed fear as a strategy for survival (Inayatullah, 2003, p. 68). If used strategically, fear produces its own futures-facilitating responses. At this stage, I suggest three transition proposals as ways out and beyond fear of the future:

1. *Genki*: I refer to the non-fiction work *Genki*（元気）from prolific Japanese author, thinker, public speaker, and traveler, Itsuki Hiroyuki (2004). In his book *Genki*, Itsuki builds a compelling theory around the lack of vitality or well-being of contemporary Japan. Itsuki's analysis is based upon an etymological deconstruction of the semiotically significant term '*genki*'—a term that resonates with William Van Dusen Wishard's (2003) interpretation:

> Some eternal, infinite power is at work in each of us, as well as in the universe. This power is the source of all man's most vital and creative energies. With all our problems and possibilities, the future depends on how we—each in his or her own unique way—tap into that eternal renewing dynamic that dwells in the deepest reaches of the human soul (p. 85).

2. *Interregnum and Nō Moments of 'No-Action'*: As a second strategy for locating a way out, I refer to de Bary (1964b) who relates how the spectators of the Japanese

theatrical genre known as Nō believe "it is the moments of 'no-action' to be the most enjoyable" (p. 285). It is in these moments in between different types of action that the "underlying spiritual strength of the actor unremittingly holds the attention" (p. 285) of the spectator. A revived perspective on Japan's alleged interregnum as one moment of "no-action" in the overall trajectory of that nation could offer fresh interpretations of Japan's futures dilemma. In this moment in history, a chaotic transitional phase between the catch-up model and the post-bubble (non)-model serves as a useful juncture for the nation to re-invent itself in a creative and self-futurizing manner. During the bubble period, with the world's attention focused on Japan, there were pressures for the nation to perform and Japan's economic might seemed to assume a performative stance vis-à-vis its self-presentation to the rest of the world. At such a time, Japan may find innovative social and cultural resources for self-re-construction from the academic discipline of Futures Studies.

3. *Towards a Vision Community*: A third way out is based on the work of Joel Barker's (1990) corporate futures in which he claims the most powerful antidote for dispelling the mood of the times is to have a clear vision for the future which is articulated, communicated and shared by the community. He uses the metaphor of crossing a river of dangerous waters using a rope, an image that aptly fits Japan's age of accumulated traumas, with a clear and positive image of the future as the forward-propelling dynamic. In this sense, the various images of the future we will explore in brief in Chapter six demonstrate the robustness and variety of Japanese responses to Barker's "dangerous waters".

Summary: 'Social Energy' and the Lessons from Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*

In summation, considering the complex of weights characterising Japan's moment in history, the question we ask is does Japan have the requisite "social energy" to achieve a vision community? In his Academy Award winning film *An Inconvenient Truth*, Al Gore (2006) points out how he had thought his compelling message on the environment would be enough to persuade congress towards the path of an environmentally friendly policy. But the 'compelling' image alone did not carry the persuasive capacity he personally had envisaged. The lesson for Gore was that for an image of the future to be transformed into policy and reality, more than just a compelling image of the future was necessary. Social willpower and energy were also needed to fuel the compelling image.

Futures-oriented research on this theme of requisite social energy needed to drive compelling images of the future indicates the necessity for applying a macro-historical approach to Japan's images of the future to see how social energy functioned as a futures-producing dynamic. Karl Marx, whose ideas owe a great deal to Enlightenment thought, put the notion very simply: "we have to understand history … in order to make history" (in Giddens, 1998, p. 2). An understanding of macro-historicity provides the analyst of futures images with the resources and conceptual tools required to design one's way out of negatively directed macro-historical positions.

Weight 2. Self-Image: *Beyond the Myth of Japanese Uniqueness*

The second weight that resists positive transformation to preferable images of the future is the deep socially constructed problem concerning Japan's self-image. A key question in this section is: without a developed self-image, is it possible to develop images that

exist beyond the realm of the self, that is, images of the future?

There is an extensive body of literature pointing to how Japanese conceptions of identity and self-image function as weights. Nakano (1989) asserts the power of 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” (p. 640). In its mundane everyday manifestation, this myth of Japan's uniqueness sustained beliefs in the superiority of Japanese management styles. McCormack (1993) saw the historical conception of Japanese identity as the nation's greatest weight 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). The search for new self-images, new roles on the world stage, needs to 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 myth-supporting social constructions of reality.

Dale (1986) is another Japanese culture analyst who has systematically deconstructed the Japanese belief in the uniqueness of their culture. The organizing principle of Dale’s argument can be summarized by the following outline. Contemporary research on Japan, referred to under the rubric *nihonjin-ron* (日本人論) 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. *Nihonjin-ron* are characterized 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 pre-historical time down to the present day. Secondly, they implicitly assume that the Japanese differ radically from all other known peoples. And thirdly, they are consciously nationalistic, displaying a conceptual and procedural hostility to any mode of analysis that might be seen to derive from external, non-Japanese sources (p. 6).

Dale (1986) furthermore comments that the "control over interpretation" vis-à-vis the ideology of national homogeneity when "manipulated for specific social ends" becomes a "key element in successful statecraft" which tends to promote fear "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" (in Tsurumi, 1970, p. 103).

The interpretation of "Japanese-ness" necessarily implicates the outside world as witnessed in "the *nihonjin-ron*'s endless discussions of the differences between Japan and the West", which often "exacerbate the finicky sense of difference" (Dale, p. 39), essentially depriving the culture any power to understand its human predicament. 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 conceptualized in the *nihonjin-ron* "consists in nothing more than the retention through modernization of feudal structures ... and aspects of tenacious medievalism operant in the Japanese version of capitalism" (p. 44). The theorized Japanese communication strategy of silence, for example, will suggest that Japanese

inter-personal communication is emotive rather than rational-verbal, and may conjure up associative ideas of a unitary race operating as it were "on the same wavelength", for in a culture of rice-cultivation by communal effort—there is no talk needed to do the same work among people of the same village (p. 46).

Ways Out

How can the weights of self-image be transcended? One way out is a Foucauldian reconstruction using his notion of "technologies of the self". According to Foucault:

> 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' (in Chambon, 1999, p. 18).

Self-Image as Story

This technology of the self application—as a Foucauldian reconstruction of self-image—is illustrated by Foote and Frank's (1999) 'Foucault and Therapy: The Disciplining of Grief', in which they assert the merits of a genre of psychological therapy which seeks to have patients re-create their own self-images and identities in the form of stories. The authors refer to Australian social worker and family therapist Michael White, who following Foucault suggestion 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" (p. 177). From such a futures perspective, Japan's self-images and identities could be about the narrative of the Japanese peoples, at the macro, meso and micro levels; to have tellable stories that

expand and enrich the story of Japan and the Japanese sense of multiple identities, and how these stories have traveled through time and space in constituting the social constructions of self in a context of the now. It is from these stories, functioning both to unify and diversify simultaneously, that novel patterns of possible future images emerge.

The stories of Japan have all the necessary components to be re-formed into increasingly complex storylines befitting of Japan's 21st century situation as a multicultural society.[31] Perhaps this can be explained by a nation lacking the confidence or skills to integrate the complexities of its self-identities into a coherent and communicable 'meta' story. This poor communicative stance could be explained in a number of ways. One possible explanation asserts that postwar Japan created a social environment antagonistic towards the production of images as grand narratives. It was after all an image of Japan as overthrower of the West's domination of East Asia that gave impetus to the Pacific war, ending in destruction of the nation and loss of face with Japan's neighbour countries. The final outcome was a devastated Japan occupied by its conquerors. The failed image of Japan as global leader and hegemon gave birth to the modern day distrust of national images. In postwar Japan, images as political icons and symbols, were mediated and censured via the gaze of America and Europe—Japan's conquerors. Only through the mediation of the victor could socially constructed images be legitimatized. Accordingly, for Japan in the 21st century, the creation of novel self-images is an unfamiliar concept and behaviour that involves first a process of re-integration of fragmented and un-reconciled self-image fragments.

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[31] For an informative analysis of Japan construed as either a monocultural or multicultural model, see Sugimoto Yoshio's (2009) *Modern Japanese Culture*, especially pages 2-5.

Self-images are composed of historical fragments arranged and assembled so as to form a coherent story. The more comprehensive and developed these components, or proto-stories, the more full and satisfying the self-images. But if the historical components, the ingredients of those histories are denied, obfuscated, unknown, or outright deceptive, the result can culminate in what McCormack (1993) calls "faked history" (p. 48-57). Could a self-image composed of faked histories ever add up to an authentic self-image for the present or an authentic image of the future for the stories of a nation?

Weight 3: The *Wa* Obsession of Harmony and 'Dividing Practices'

For the third and final weight in this chapter, I posit that the Japanese notion of *wa* (social harmony) functions as what Foucault would call a "dividing practice" (in Chambon, 1999, p. 273), the cumulative effects of which coalesce in the form of a weight against the production of innovative and creative images of the future. Images of the future function antagonistically and even subversively against the *wa*—the social harmony. And yet, it is this very social construction of *wa* that functions, according to Ito (1998), throughout Japan as a "ubiquitous signifier of Japanese collectivism" (p. 37), as a "basic spirit regulating the way of life in a community", permeating "our families and our workplaces, not to mention our villages, cities, states, and today, the whole world" (p. 38).

The all-pervasiveness of this social construction of *wa*, the maintenance of social harmony at all costs—carries a social cost. To maintain *wa* necessitates un-ambiguous categorizations and demarcations between objects and ideas belonging to the social world that disrupt harmony. Simply put, *wa* promotes Foucauldian type "dividing

practices", which "lie at the heart of the techniques of power by establishing partitions and creating categories" (in Chambon, 1999, p. 273). They differentiate between the normal and the abnormal, or the pathological. Dividing practices are implemented through procedures that distinguish, separate and categorize populations as deviant, criminal, vagabond, or nonproductive in the prison system, healthy/sick in medicine, sane/mad in psychiatry, and heterosexual/homosexual in sexuality. The logic of differentiation and exclusion tends to locate individuals within expanding systems of classifications (p. 274).

Dale (1986) is a persuasive deconstructionist of this Japanese social construction known as *wa.* This is demonstrated in his destabilizing analysis of the myth pertaining to the uniqueness of the Japanese language, in which he argues that the Japanese negotiation style known as *haragei*—or "reading the belly of the other"—does not, as is claimed, 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 innuendo, ambiguity, tactful and tactical expressions of false sympathy for antagonistic views, in order to get basically hostile views on the same side (p. 102).

The harmony supposedly achieved by *haragei,* according to advocates of *nihonjin-ron*, is subverted by Dale. As his assertion claims: "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).

Haragei as an instrument of *wa*, in this radical re-reading by Dale, transforms the given meaning of *haragei* into an obstacle of innovation and creativity.

Nakane Chie's (1967) analyses of Japan's social arrangement known as *tateshakai no ningen-kankei* (タテ社会の人間関係)—human relations in a vertical society—clearly highlight Japan's social constructions of reality deeply rooted in Confucian social ethics. Nakane points to the divisive nature of such a vertically arranged social matrix which classifies all peoples into the neat categories of senior-junior (*senpai-kōhai*), boss and subordinate (*oyabun-kobun*) and other variations upon the theme of dividing practices which permeate Japanese society (p. 191A).

There are other systems for maintaining *wa* through such dividing practices. These also encompass Japan's gender classifications with the superior male/inferior female binary; and the insider/outsider division of Japanese versus non-Japanese, the foreigner as alien. Furthermore we must pay attention to Japan's communicative hierarchy which privileges male over female, and elder over younger. To complete this provisionary tableau of *wa* practices, it is common in post-bubble Japan to refer to two groups of emerging peoples as either winners or losers (*kachi-gumi/make-gumi*), negating the possibility of standing outside of either of these extreme poles, or of creating categories beyond the dichotomy. More abstractly, the *wa* metaphor can be extended to a privileging of social control over chance, non-predictability and harmony over innovation and creativity.

It is easy to see how a finicky national obsession with harmonious *wa*, and the dividing

practices it produces, can serve to maintain a superficially constructed social harmony, which primarily privileges the stakeholders of extant power relations, rather than a communicatively produced meta-*wa*—which would recognize the possibility of harmony and *dis*-harmony as co-existent in a rapidly changing world. This variety of *wa* also privileges the makers of meaning, that futures-making elite who possess the power to define the parameters of a given period.

In these mechanisms described above, *wa* works to maintain the socially constructed frameworks of various dividing practices whose far-reaching affects prevent innovative, disruptive "social technologies" from wider societal dissemination and acceptance. And yet it is such social technologies which possess the potential for facilitating cultural renewal in the form of creative ways of being and doing. If emerging social technologies are perceived by politically powerful elites, and the owners and makers of 'meaning', their hegemony is perceived as under threat. It is to the advantage of these futures-making elites that *wa* is maintained of dividing practices catalyzed by a certain type of individual in society: what Foucault would refer to as a society constituted of "docile bodies" (in Chambon, 1999, p. 63), governmentalized individuals deprived of the requisite "social energy" to creatively confront the stakeholders of *wa*. In the final analysis, a society of dividing practices and docile bodies is under-equipped to engage meaningfully in a true national conversation about the future.

Continuing this line of enquiry, the obsession of maintaining *wa* necessarily results in societies typified by communication-poor environments. 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).

Although I make no claims to a Marxist critique of Japan's images of the future, and the communication environment in which the national conversation purportedly unfolds, my point is simply that in a social arrangement whereby *wa* is the preferred social construction, sites of dissonance inevitably emerge, calling into question the legitimacy of a nation's past and tradition, and ultimately causing resentment amongst individuals and organizations who perceive themselves to be marginalized from an authentic national conversation.

Ways Out: Alternative Conceptions of *Wa*

At this point two core questions emerge: to what extent is Japan stuck with current social constructions of *wa* in Japan's perceived chaotic post post-bubble environment, the Global Financial Crisis, and the damage caused to Japan's premier corporate icon, Toyota? Secondly, how is it possible to transcend the hegemonic harmony as a dividing practice in a culture whose metaphor of 'the nail that sticks out gets hammered down' (*deru kugi wa utareru*) is thoroughly encultured? Ito Kimio (1998) has insightfully shown how "the spirit of *wa*," institutionalized by the Seventeen Article Constitution of Prince Shōtoku in the year 604:

> became a newly created tradition in a time of national crisis—the turbulent decade of the 1930s and the Pacific War. It performed an ideological function by

> addressing the need for unification. The artificiality of this invention is pointed up by its variability; not only was Prince Shōtoku's reputation revised profoundly during Japan's modern period, but both the definition of *wa* and its place in the Constitution fluctuated wildly, depending on the ideological needs of the moment (p. 47).

An appropriate poststructural reading of *wa*, therefore, would suggest that the fissures of hegemonic harmony are in the throes of being wrenched open, revealing the seeds of alternative re-interpretations and transformations for the nation of Japan.

However, to the extent that Japan's dividing practices, as discussed above, have been subject to systemic normalization through a complex apparatus of social constructions, how can they be transcended to produce innovative derivations of *wa* without leading to a dissolution of social cohesion?

The first step, as Itsuki Hiroyuki (2007) suggests, is the initial act of recognition. To find an antidote to Japan's entrenched "dividing practices", Japan's creative vanguard will need to invent new kinds of languages and discourses, such as "uniting practices" or "transcending practices", which can be openly communicated throughout society. We can also adapt the notion known as "barrier free", a term normally applied to the idea of barrier free technologies, popular in Japan since the 1990s, and apply this to the subversion of Japan's dividing practices as a new discourse: "barrier free practices". Such inclusive and participatory practices would facilitate in a transformed Japan, capable of confronting the socially taken-for-granted, in order to forge new futures from the traumas of history and tradition.

Another approach is to re-invent the notion of "one", not as a singular totalizing grand narrative, but as a multi-epistemological construction which can be viewed and understood from an infinite tableau of perspectives. For example, let us survey the continuum of meanings inherent in *wa* when viewed from a ecological systems approach, as in ecological balance, or what David Suzuki (in Lang, 2003) calls the 'sacred balance', a system transcendent of purely human material desires and needs. Viewed thus, human *wa* presents itself as mean-spirited, petty, and ultimately destructive of the ecosystem in which humans must reside—a much greater form of *wa*.

Although *wa* is often framed as a concept derived from Buddhism, Buddhist systems of thought also subscribe to the impermanency of all things, with change the only constant. All human attempts to sustain harmony are mere hubris and posturing in the face of a constantly changing cosmos.

I conclude this brief section on *wa* and its functioning in Japanese society as a dividing and therefore futures-detrimental practice with a topical example about a startup venture company, a manufacturer of made-for-home wind turbines. Company president Ito Ryōsuke arranges in-company seating in the shape of a circle, also expressed in Japanese by the homophone *wa* (輪). The corporate strategy that underlies Ito's thinking is that a circle seating arrangement facilitates younger members of the organization to participate creatively in company discussions. Conventionally, Japanese company seating would follow a hierarchical arrangement in which every member knew his or her designated place within the company. Ito's re-writing of this corporate convention nonetheless reflects his philosophy whose imperative is the production of goods

designed for an international audience attuned to the democratic shift of the times (*mirai-jin*, 2007).

Summary of Pushes

This chapter presented a combined analysis of five prototypical pushes of the present and three selected weights of history and tradition, as two sets of dynamic factors within the Futures Triangle Analysis (FTA). From the first dimension of the overall FTA analysis above, it is now possible to make some conclusive statements about the identified pushes and their possible effects upon Japan's futures. Appendix IV presents detailed analyses of each of the five pushes under a Causal Layered Analysis framework consisting of litanies, social causes, worldviews, concluding with myth and metaphors. The main findings we can extract from the five pushes as briefly discussed in this chapter include:

New technologies represent a major and ubiquitous push in 21st century Japan, whose combined effects exert wide and deep influences on Japan's futures, some of which I explored in four briefly constructed 'push effects scenarios'. Hope for transformation was identified as residing latently within a portfolio of alternative conceptions of technology, especially those emerging from local needs, such as healing the environment, and healing an aging population. The terms of "healing" and "wise network society" emerged as the operative terms. A second comprehensive alternative was suggested in the form of social technologies and a Foucauldian derivation of "technologies of the self", in which technologies are deemed worthy insofar as they contribute to human well-being and self-expressivity.

The push effects scenarios for Japan's *globalization and internationalization* are equally diverse, deep-rooted and often mutually antagonistic upon Japan's futures. Despite the dystopian possibilities presented by the science fiction anime *Vexille* (2007), McCormack (1996) reminds us that "in ancient times, the Japanese archipelago was the home to many different peoples and the center of complex networks of regional trade and cultural communication" (p. 176). This transformation globalization scenario would transcend the globalization discourses grounded in ethno-centrism to a transcendent purpose, a higher mentality, a holistic phase of human consciousness. The television documentary *Shinjuku District: School of the Future* (2005) exemplifies the transformational possibilities of a globalizing space in microcosmic form. This documentary depicts in detail how the Shinjuku school struggles to cope with a multicultural population of young students from diverse cultural backgrounds, demonstrating that in Japan, a pluralistic, inclusive, and culturally tolerant society is an achievable image of the future.

The push effects scenarios underlying Japan's *demographics* has been shown to be more complex and multi-faceted than the litany of concerns overly focused on perceived negative impacts of Japan's aging population. Increasing numbers of foreigners and foreigners adopting Japanese citizenship, a steady downshifting from center to periphery, the lack of business successors, reluctance to marry, and a Japanese diaspora migrating to more individuality oriented destinations, all point to a future of great upheavals, which cumulatively will force a re-conceptualization of a stable and docile population worldview derived largely from Confucianism. The made-for-television film *Where to Japan?* (2003) highlighted this complex of demographic shifts including the

possibilities of a partnership society.

Do the push effects of Japan's shifting *values* represent another "time bomb" for the future for Japan? While a collapse scenario pushes towards a form of values anarchy in which social cohesion is compromised thereby leading to a deeply volatile and unpredictable society, a nostalgic future suggests a return to "core" traditional Japanese values, though we remain suspicious of their authenticity and relevance for a technologized and developed nation of the 21st century. Neither of these futures represents a satisfactory future and therefore transformative potential resides however in a revived recognition of the diversity of thought systems collectively constituting contemporary Japan, such as Confucianism and Buddhism, in conjunction with a renewed look at how these relate to Japanese Shinto thought, especially in its utopian or *tōgenkyō* configurations, and how these can be reconciled into a non-destructive, non-divisive new values system. Such a system must be able to successfully incorporate human-centric universal values compatible with values conducive to the stewardship of a compromised global environment.

Finally for this suite of five pushes to Japan's future, what can we say about Japan's *creative vanguard* and the other future-oriented social groups dissatisfied with the status quo? Despite the reported systemic problems such as Japan's creativity-stifling education system and a corporate culture that reflects conservative Confucian worldviews, Japan's creative minorities are impacting not only on local cultures but also international cultures, with relevant future-oriented messages. Examples include: creative types such as Academy Award accoladed composer Sakamoto Ryuichi; the

numerous films from the genre of Japanese animé; and, more importantly, the myriad of possibilities found in Japan's maturing Gross National Cool movement, which has emerged as a vicarious byproduct of Japan's prolonged recession, pushed predominantly by a creative youth disenchanted with the society built by predecessor generations, and unburdened by negative self-images depicting Japan as a nation of copy-cats.

Summary of Weights

In this chapter I have shown how Japan's multiple weights of history, tradition and social constructions of reality, of which I focused on the effects of three specifically, exert pressures resistant to change and the realization of preferred images of the future. Other candidate weights were also identified in earlier phases of this research including those concerning leadership and Japan's communication modes. Due to constraints of time, space and readability, I focused on three whose preeminence and escape routes, or ways out, I summarize below.

For the first weight, pointing to the *accumulated traumas of Japan's moment in history* three transformative strategies were suggested:

1. a re-conceptualization of the term '*genki*', mundanely used as a discourse to encourage individual economic activity, using Itsuki's Buddhist-inspired notion of an expanded version of *genki* reflecting a transcendent cosmic wellness;
2. a rethinking of Japan's interregnum, using a concept from Nō theatre, that refers to the aesthetic and psychologically gratifying qualities concerning the moments of so-called "no-action". Such moments that occur between "action" hold the key to creatively traversing from one social paradigm to another, and are replete with the

creative of in-between-ness; and

3. a final strategy that prescribes a healthy requisite of new and positive images of the future in the form of a 'vision community', as the best antidote to the national depression and futures neuroses.

For the second weight—*self-image*—I have shown the extent to which this social construction has been vigorously deconstructed by both Japanese and non-Japanese cultural researchers, commonly revealing its detrimental function in Japan's move forward to create new stories of the nation which transcend the self-image emphasizing the perceived uniqueness and separateness of the Japanese people. As one strategy of transcendence, I once again referred to the Foucauldian re-construction of self, employing his notions of "technologies of the self" as a way to create new narratives and expand the repertoire of "tellable" stories of the Japanese.

The third weight of *wa*—that fastidious obsession with social harmony and producer of socially dividing practices—proved the most conceptually difficult of the three selected weights. Here, especially via the analyses of Dale and Ito, it was shown how the social construction of *wa* sustained and indeed promoted dividing practices, the cumulative effects of which were to thwart Japan's creative impulses and the possibility of a future-oriented, inclusive and participatory society befitting of the 21st century zeitgeist. It was also shown how *wa* had been re-interpreted and reconceived throughout Japan's history to uphold the legitimacy of the stakeholders of that episteme. With the social harmony revealed as basically fraudulent, we are able to open the ways to transformation and future-oriented dynamic conceptions of *wa* such as "inclusive practices", "transcending

practices", and "barrier free practices" based on a more Buddhist approach that emphasizes impermanence in a continuously changing world. Hopefully the seven images of the future presented in the following chapter embody a bountiful repertoire of new harmonies for subverting and transcending Japan's culture of dividing practices.

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the dynamics of five pushes to the future: new technologies, globalization and internationalization, shifting values, multiple demographic dynamics, and Japan's creative vanguard, each, with its own matrix of reactions, resistances, and futures-producing effects. This chapter also focused on three weights of history and tradition: accumulated traumas, self-image, and *wa* as a type of social harmony. Though not exhaustive, these five pushes and three weights provide us with a useful and insightful platform for an exploration of the next dimension: the pulls to the future, as told through an in-depth analysis of seven Japanese image of the future texts.

CHAPTER SIX: PULLS TO THE FUTURE
Seven Japanese Images of the Future Texts

> *Our first challenge is to examine the basic foundations of our existing visions, to analyse their contents, scope and direction (Polak, 1973, p. 304).*

The main task for this chapter is to investigate Japan's pulls to the future by focusing the analysis on seven image of the future texts. Whereas the previous chapter maps and analyses five key pushes of the present and three generic weights of the past and tradition from Japan's national conversation, this chapter moves to the meso level of analysis with a focused application of Causal Layered Analysis and the poststructural tool-box. In choosing the texts, I have consciously rejected futures images that belong predominantly to the domain of *collapse* type scenarios, in preference for futures images possessing characteristics indicative of *transformational* futures. Accordingly, in this chapter I intend to conduct:

Section I—*A Causal Layered Analysis of seven Japanese image of the future texts*. This section uses Inayatullah's prototype structure, which covers the four layers of litany, social causes, worldview/discourse, and myth/metaphor.

Section II—*A Synthesized Poststructural Tool-box Analysis*. This section applies a poststructural tool-box consisting of deconstruction; genealogy; distancing; alternative pasts and futures; and reordering knowledge dimensions, to those texts offering the most insight and transformative potential to Japan's futures national conversation.

This chapter represents the focus of this investigation and as such considerable space is allotted to a thorough analysis of each of these texts. In reading these texts, I include what Gérard Genette (in Hawthorn, 1998) refers to as the "outermost peritext", which theoretically includes, in the case of a book, the book cover, title page and the actual book's material construction (p. 168), as meaningful aspects of the messages contained within the texts as documents about the future.

The images of the future contained in these texts also constitute mappings of future possibilities. By comparing and contrasting these various mappings through deep and layered analyses we are able to attain greater insight into both their shared aspects and their points of departure and tension. Finally, upon entering this phase, although it is my objective to analyse these images critically, I do so whilst mindful of Polak's (1973) sober words which gently remind us that: "images of the future are not easily constructed" (pp. 300-301).

As discussed earlier, Japan's national conversation takes place within a matrix of communication technologies, media and environments which include television, national and local newspapers, popular interest magazines, artworks, public forums and debates, casual conversations, the Internet, Blogs, and an increasingly diverse and complex interaction between all the above. Of the images identified, catalogued, scanned and categorized over the duration of this investigation, the following seven futures texts were chosen for inclusion in our analysis. These texts are almost exclusively in Japanese, have limited English bibliographic details and were translated by the author. They are:

1. *Report of the Prime Minister's Commission on Japan's Goals in the 21st Century—The Frontier Within: Individual Empowerment and Better Governance in the New Millennium*, edited by Kawai Hayao (2000);
2. *Slow Is Beautiful: Culture as Slowness*, by Tsuji Shinichi (2001);
3. *MuRatopia*, a futures 'project' on the island of Awaji, by Professor Yamaguchi Kaoru (on-going);
4. *IMAGINATION/CREATION: Towards the Century of Creative Imagination*, edited by Haga Tōru (2001);
5. *F.U.C.K, I Love Japan*, by Tanja Yujiro (2003);
6. *Visionary People in a Visionless Country: 21 Earth Connecting Human Stories*, edited by Peter David Pedersen (2003); and
7. *Exodus from a Country of Hope,* by Murakami Ryū (2002).

The selection of these futures texts is intended to be eclectic and representative of a diversity of sources.

SECTION I

Causal Layered Analysis of Seven Image of the Future Texts

1. *Report of the Prime Minister's Commission on Japan's Goals in the 21st Century—The Frontier Within: Individual Empowerment and Better Governance in the New Millennium*, Kawai Hayao (ed.) (2000)

This text constitutes a core component of my analysis. This image of the future, in the form of a report, was published by the Commission on Japan's Goals for the 21st Century and espouses a five-point vision for the nation of Japan. It was in 1999 that the

Obuchi Keizo [32] administration formed a roundtable commission comprising 16 distinguished Japanese persons from a variety of areas, including NASDA astronaut Mukai Chiaki, charged with the responsibility of compiling a comprehensive vision for Japan's futures. The English summary of the report explains:

> On January 18, 2000, members of the Prime Minister's Commission on Japan's Goals in the 21st Century submitted its final report titled *The Frontier Within: Individual Empowerment and Better Governance in the New Millennium* to Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi after approximately ten months of intense deliberation and consultation was conducted by sixteen leading private citizens from diverse fields of expertise (p. 230).

This 246 page report with an attached 18 page English abridged version at the rear of the book was designed with its aim of stimulating a nation-wide public discussion over Japan's mid to long term future prospects for the 21st century.

The report is structured in five sections: (1) Realizing Japan's Potential, (2) Global Trends and Their Implications, (3) Central Elements of Reform, (4) Japan's Twenty-first century Frontier, and (5) In Pursuit of Enlightened National Interest. The report was chaired and edited by Hayao Kawai, the then 71 year old Jungian psycho-analyst, public figure, and director general of the Education Ministry affiliated International Research Center for Japanese Studies located in Kyoto.

According to the report, Japan is facing a major turning point, a crisis in fact,

[32] Keizo Obuchi (小渕恵三) (June 25, 1937—May 14, 2000) was a Japanese politician who served in the House of Representatives for twelve terms, and ultimately as the 84th Prime Minister of Japan from July 30, 1998 to April 5, 2000. His political career ended when he suffered a serious and ultimately fatal stroke.

recognized by Japanese people "from all walks of life" (p. 1). This is where we locate the focus of the perceived litany: Japan's problem of "image-less-ness", echoing the biblical prophecy "where there is no vision, the people perish". As Polak has formerly suggested, "those collectivities with no vision of the future decline; those with a positive image of the future—transcendental and immanent—advance" (in Galtung & Inayatullah, 1999, p. 196).

The causes of this state of affairs can, according to the report, be attributed to the result of a confluence of forces. In the original words of the report:

> The vested interests and social conventions that have grown up since the Meiji era (1868-1912) in accordance with the 'catch up and overtake' model have ossified society and the economy and leached Japan's vitality. The world no longer offers ready-made models. Japan's own latent strengths, talent and potential are the key to Japan's future. In this sense, Japan's frontier lies within Japan (p. 246).

Solutions at this level, the report claims, can be found in two core transformation strategies which involve:

> changing the systems whereby citizens interact with the state, and redefining and rebuilding the relationship between the individual and the public domain. This calls for fostering the spirit of self-reliance and the spirit of tolerance, neither of which has been given sufficient latitude so far (p. 246).

The consensual nature of this report, as a cooperative compilation that satisfies the thinking of several dozen individuals, belongs to the worldview of those already subscribing to the litany, that is, the need for a different kind of future for Japan. A

report involving this degree of cooperation and level of consensual agreement to commit words in the spirit of compromise, would suggest minimum space for dissent and resistance. The writers, or at least the final words committed to the printed form of the report, speak from the unified worldview of Japan as a nation in search of the limits of the possible, in terms of science, technology, and the monetary economy, mediated through "conciliatory international relations" with Japan's geographic neighbours—a stance crystallized in a neologism of their own invention they call *rinkō* (隣交) (p. 60). This notion of improving *rinkō* is to be invigorated through a revived sense of post-American national autonomy, the construction of a new type of Japanese citizen, who, whilst still ultimately tied to the State as the final arbiter of authority, is also prescribed as the possessor of a new kind of "global civilian power" (p. 57).

At the mythic level—that of the *frontier*—we locate this as encapsulated in the very titling strategy of the report and as a recurrent leitmotif of unlimited possibility along with the motivating pull of the future towards new creative possibilities. This mythic stance positing the possibility of Japan's frontier-ness, however, is not without contradiction. Turner (2000), as an analyst of such frontier theories and their associated myths, suggests the American pioneering origins of frontierism:

> [It is] to the frontier that the American intellect owes its striking characteristics. That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and acquisitiveness; that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients; that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends; that restless nervous energy; that dominant individualism, working for good and evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance which comes from freedom—these are the traits called out elsewhere because of the existence of the frontier (p. 1).

The implication is that, depending on the nature of the frontier the Japanese report authors intended, one possible reading suggest that Japan's futures now lie in adopting what can be construed as a very American tradition, a very condition to which Japan has already been subjected since its defeat in the Pacific War.

The myth of the frontier, with its implications of a conceptual space suggestive of physical limitations, also functions within this futures image as a metaphor: knowledge, politics, and social transformation are bounded, and therefore have frontiers that can be transcended. Going one step further than predecessor Japanese foreign missions in mining the globe for hints on the future, such as the legendary Iwakura Mission[33], one of the key members of the report's commission is not only experienced in foreign lands but a traveler into outer space. As Japan's first woman in space, the inclusion of astronaut Mukai Chiaki[34] in the commission stretches the conceptual boundaries of the notion of "frontier" in extreme form. This metaphoric use of the frontier icon echoes Carl Sagan's use of the concept of 'the vision effect' (1996), from his best-seller *Pale Blue Dot,* in which he refers to the psychological effect on space travelers as they gaze

[33] The Iwakura Mission or Iwakura Embassy (岩倉使節団, *Iwakura Shisetsudan*) was a Japanese diplomatic journey around the world, initiated in 1871 by the oligarchs of the Meiji era. Although it was not the only such "mission", it is the most well-known and possibly most important for the modernization of Japan after a long period of isolation from the West. The Iwakura mission followed several such missions previously sent by the Shogunate, such as the Japanese Embassy to the United States (1860), the First Japanese Embassy to Europe (1862), and the Second Japanese Embassy to Europe (1863). These misssions claimed several aims but the one that concerns my own investigation was the imperative to search for hints to be applied to Japan's own future course as a nation.

[34] Mukai Chiaki (born 1952) is a doctor, a NASDA astronaut, lecturer at International Space University, and played a pivotal role in the 'Frontier' book d in this thesis.

back at the blue earth from the vantage point of space, engendering a new perspective that highlights the remoteness and fragility of planet earth.

I now extract four key problematic aspects identified in this future text. Firstly, the report refers to the situation of Japan's youth cohort, but does not seem to address youth directly, nor are they spoken to in the vernacular using the language and the communication strategies familiar to Japan's contemporary youth. In effect, the intended message is destined for a mistaken audience. A second problem: perhaps the scope of the suggested future is too distant. For an image of the future to be effective, compelling and perceived as useful, it must be neither too far in the distance of too close to the present.[35] Thirdly, two attributes of the report, namely, the very thoroughness with which it is written and the perceived social authority from such a formidable line-up of broad-based and well-known Japanese scholars and public figures, can have the negative consequence of *overwhelming* the reader, of squeezing out the possibility of negotiation for the reader to bring his or her own interpretations. A fourth problem I extract suggests that the "Frontier" image of the future lacks the poetry, the emotional design, the appeal to a more expansive sense of wonder, for the image to function as an attractant towards the kinds of futures it recommends to its audience. This problem is especially relevant to Japan's youth cohort, raised in a media rich environment saturated with competing and attractive images from the arts and advertising. This clinical and non-emotive authoring style of the "Frontier" model renders the text aesthetically sterile,

[35] This idea is taken from Inayatullah's *Questioning the Future* (2002) in which he outlines seven fundamental criteria for a vision of the future. Number five states: It [the image] must be neither TOO FAR into the future (and thus appear utopian, unreachable) nor TOO NEAR term (and thus be fraught with emotional ego-politics, with cynicism towards transformative change" (p. 219).

devoid of conceptual social 'dirt'. Ultimately, for all the positive contributions this image of the future potentially could have brought about, it alienates the potential reader in its scope, its reliance on technocratic language, and in its lack of appeal to the creative and aesthetic—the mythical.

2. *Slow Is Beautiful: Culture as Slowness*, by Tsuji Shinichi (2001)

Slow is Beautiful: Culture as Slowness is written by Tsuji Shinichi, cultural anthropologist at the Meiji Gakuin University's International Studies Faculty, in Tokyo. Tsuji's research includes fieldwork with indigenous communities in Canada and with various environmental activist organizations in Ecuador. In 1999, as the transformative action component of his living philosophy of slow living, Tsuji established the Sloth Club[36] and more recently has been involved with a number of environmental and sustainability-friendly organizations such as the company Slow, and the Slow Café. Tsuji's groundbreaking work in slow living has inspired multiple spin-off ventures such as the Slow Life Café in Hakodate City, a campaign by the Hokkaido Prefecture Government: *A Message from the North: Slow Life Techniques for Reducing CO_2* (「北からの発信（メッセージ）スローライフで減らす CO_2（コツ)・*kita kara no hasshin (messeeji) surō raifu de herasu CO_2* [*kotsu*]) and a slow architecture movement.

In terms of *litany*, viewed from Tsuji's *Slow is Beautiful*, Japan's problematic is straightforward: Japanese contemporary life is not only *too fast* but threatens to get even faster. Life lived at unnatural speed is simply un-natural and detrimental to the interests of the natural world. *Slow is Beautiful* is a powerfully subversive critique of

[36] For details on The Sloth Club's activities see their web site at http://www.sloth.gr.jp.

contemporary Japanese constructions of time, investigating how the politics of temporality have impinged upon all areas of Japanese life leaving no escape routes. As the exterior book jacket declares: "Contemporary society, symbolized by speed and destructive of the environment, is a difficult place for all people to live in." Tsuji is not the first person to recognize Japan's modern speed obsession. As noted by Patrick Smith (1998):

> Modern Japan has always been obsessed with speed. We can attribute to a fundamental sense of urgency many of the mistakes it has made over the past century, including its decision to erase local identity rather than incorporate it. The frenetic pace set by modern Japanese leaders, to make the matter clear, has never had anything to do with culture, tradition, or innate character traits. It began with the desire to *catch up*, which reflected anxiety, felt inferiority, and fear [my italics] (p. 173).

The *social causes* of this de-humanized and accelerated pace of life can be traced back to Japan's pursuit of the "catch-up and overtake the USA and Europe" image of the future that has dominated Japan's national life since the Meiji Period. To this society-wide problematic, the solution, according to Tsuji, lies in demonstrating how slow life is in the long term not only a more human way to live, but simultaneously advantageous to environment; a realizable strategy with applicability, albeit counter-intuitively, to the proponents of a fast life philosophy, across all fields of human activity including business.

The *worldview* from which Tsuji speaks is that of the radical, dissenting intellectual activist, who, while securing his own livelihood from the establishment of academia,

simultaneously aims to subvert Japanese contemporary life while promoting for Japan a transformative lifestyle. Tsuji's image of the future deconstructs Japan's normalized notions of time and its organization while also subverting the legitimacy of the owners of time and space dominated by the factory driven 'just-in-time' efficiencies, and the individual in society as subject to micro-managed machineries. By way of example, one of Tsuji's linguistic deconstructive strategies is to show how the Japanese people have been co-opted, unknowingly and over time, into the discourses of "time as money", in a reference to an un-questioned turn of phrase, that is, the various declensions of the verb known as *ganbaru* (頑張る). The word *ganbaru* is one of the most often heard words in daily Japanese life and conversation applied frequently in mundane greetings such as *ganbatte kudasai* (頑張ってください)—meaning "good luck", "do your best", "go for it"—and other expressions signifying encouragement of effort to achieve a goal.

The term *ganbaru* is worth some discussion. It's genealogy is all but lost to modern Japanese. Tsuji reminds the reader of the term's military beginnings, when in times of war it was used to unite the people in the face of a common enemy and subsistence difficulties sustained during the war effort. *Ganbaru* is ostensibly a term that implies the image of competitive "Man"—life as a race to be fought and won, society composed of winners and losers—which, in contemporary sensibilities, is overtly discriminatory against society's poor, disadvantaged and dispossessed. In its place, Tsuji suggests the usage of its linguistic opposite: "*gan-bara-nai yo!*"—"I will *not* 'go for it' or I will not 'give it my last inch'" (p. 171)—a seemingly trivial linguistic subversion that carries far-reaching implications for Japanese social constructions of time, space, competitive-ness, and the modes in which society is managed and manipulated.

At the final level of our Causal Layered Analysis of Tsuji's *Slow is Beautiful* is the question of the underlying myths and metaphors of his image. The core *myth* that Tsuji deconstructs is the myth of "time is money". That is, he questions the social construction that time equates with power and efficiency via control and manipulation as key to competitive advantage and a prosperous Japan of the future. To counteract, Tsuji suggests a replacement myth of his own: the deep myth of *natural* time. This involves a return to simpler times when time itself was simple. According to Tsuji, this will give Japanese control over their lives, their bodies, and give time back to the natural world/environment. This is the macro-mythological positioning of nature over nurture, according to nature's natural time, not forced material production time.

As for the driving, creative, re-constructive *metaphor* Tsuji deploys, it is the slow moving sloth, the South American jungle animal, whose name, in English, is associated in everyday conversation with laziness, idleness, and non-productive activity. Japanese share this association of the sloth with laziness. The sloth, or *namake-mono* (ナマケモノ) in Japanese, has become the term used for naming the environmental-cultural activist organization Tsuji established in 1999 and the notion of natural time of all things in nature. As for the politics of time, Tsuji refers to the Japanese modern preoccupation with speed as a disease or 'speed sickness' (スピード病・ *supiido-byō*) (p. 108), evocative of Shapiro's (1992, p. 16) metaphor of the 'cancerous' society.

But is Tsuji's *Slow* a naïve utopian metaphor for a man whose own life is slowing down with age or who himself has become cynical and unable to keep pace with his environment? To consider this I draw from a creative industries discourse, in which

Leadbeater (2002) insightfully observes how "innovation-driven societies constantly supply greener grass for the other side of the valley. And yet, this constant orientation toward the future, what is coming next, can be unsettling" (p. 168). This view is also supported in earlier futures literature by Polak (1973), who observed that:

> a sufficient measure of freedom and leisure time is a *sine qua non* for the existence both of a creative minority and of a culture as such. The phenomenon of massification leaves society without the possibility of the development of a new minority able to do creative thinking (p. 257).

And yet, perhaps these s neglect the fact that new generations have constructed their own space and time conceptions for which the slow-fast temporal binary has already been transcended into a temporal construction of increasing mobility, which, in effect subvert Tsuji and Polak's modernistic notions as quaint and obsolete. Despite this, in an age of increasing concern for environmental sustainability including the long-term survival prospects for humans, the pace of life and the pace of consumption are important sites of debate and should not let be controlled and defined by the "owners of time", for to do so, would leave time and space un-checked, running out of control.

3. *MuRatopia*, Awaji Future Island Project, by Yamaguchi Kaoru (on-going)

This image of the future as text adds a new media dimension to our textual line-up as it takes the form of an actual geographic location. *MuRatopia* is an existing experimental community situated on the historically significant island of Awaji. Integral to *MuRatopia* as the meta-text are its constituent sub-texts including the *MuRatopia* Institute Home Page (see http://muratopia.org), and three articles written by the 'author' of *MuRatopia* as a futures text, Yamaguchi Kaoru, professor of environmental

economics at Doshisha University, and renowned Japanese futures-oriented thinker and activist.

The litany of *MuRatopia* is based on the position that Japan's economic system is an essentially dysfunctional one. *MuRatopia* creator Yamaguchi Kaoru perceives the need to create novel economic systems transcending or synthesizing the three classical paradigms of neoclassical, Keynesian and Marxist schools, whose mutual antagonism seemed to be "a main cause of world conflicts between the East communist and West Capitalist countries" (in Slaughter, 1996e). The solution at this litany level is to deploy future-oriented theoretical knowledge, combined with Yamaguchi's hybrid conceptions of economy as derived from the multiple sources indicated above, into an experimental community that faithfully translates such theory into lived everyday praxis. In as much, *MuRatopia* is an embodiment of these combined positions; social problem-solving through utopian experimentation.

MuRatopian solutions are neatly embodied in three philosophical stances:

1. *Thinking Holistically*: This involves thinking in terms beyond simplistic globalism but with an emphasis on combining the various levels of planet earth including whole nations, regions, organizations, groups, homes as units, the human body, forests, rivers and so on, as the units of analysis.
2. *Acting Partially*: This second aspect requires that individual parts of any system are subject to the laws of complexity. If the micro is changed, responses at the macro systems level become unpredictable.
3. *Live Ecologically*: This third philosophy invokes the theory of Gaia and human-

nature symbiotic living styles. Here, the main concern is the health of the whole Earth as a single interconnected organic entity.

Yamaguchi also stresses the role of the creative praxis-oriented individual in creating new worlds that must be lived. For Yamaguchi, MuRatopian principles are embodied and realized in the form of his own home environment; one microcosmic solution to Japan's systemic problems. The stage beyond developing one's own living style and home technologies must be followed by extending such principles to increasingly larger units—a small community, a region, an eco-conscious organization—to empirically demonstrate that better futures can be achieved through practical and viable experimentations and manageable projects.

MuRatopia espouses an underlying worldview whose aim is to transcend pure economism and move beyond singular models and interpretations of economy. The preferred stance evokes hybridity and the synthesis of difference as a resource for innovative ideas for application to real world situations. This worldview, though appearing to outwardly privilege the discourses of economy, actually contextualizes economy within a larger epistemological space that includes the environment, living styles, community, social design, and the preeminence of a creative communications infrastructure. This is a worldview rooted in the here and now but with an eye to long term futures possibilities—the utopian spirit embodied in praxis. Furthermore, *MuRatopia* refers to Japan's traumatized past failures by introducing the discourses of healing; *MuRatopia* demonstrates practicable ways out.

MuRatopia as an experimental futures project also conceptualizes the 'future' and human communities as inherently complex, self-organizing, self-adapting systems, forming the basis for a renewed conception of the natural world and the relationships between objects existing in the natural world. As a proponent of Complex Systems Theory, Yamaguchi shares the definition originally penned by Steven Levy (1993) in his book *Artificial Life*, which states:

> A complex system is one whose component parts interact with sufficient intricacy that they cannot be predicted by standard linear equations; so many variables are at work in the system that its overall behaviour can only be understood as an emergent consequence of the holistic sum of all the myriad behaviours embedded within ... the whole is more than the sum of its parts (p. 8).

I turn now to the myth that informs and underlies Yamaguchi's vision and praxis of *MuRatopia* as an experiment in new social design which indicates the possibility of making a better world through action; a utopia that *is* possible in this world. Yamaguchi declares: "I believe that futurists are obliged to influence the world for a better future through their visions and practices" (in Slaughter, 1996e). In other words, the futures theorist turned practitioner is him/herself transformed into the role of the maker of new stories, myths and social constructions which in turn function as powerful agents of influence and change.

There is more we can say about the myth in *MuRatopia*. In *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (Vol. 1, p. 26) we find reference to Awaji no Shima, the island of the "foam-way" in its mythological role as the first island birthed by the original male and female

deities of Japan—Izanagi and Izanami[37]. Hence, *MuRatopia* becomes mythologized as a living embodiment of "a new social design for the information age" rising from the creative potential latent in the metaphor of foam, *awa*. *Awa* are the frothy foam-like structures that ensue from collected bubbles, thence bestowing upon the site of this utopian experiment a rich montage of mythical and metaphoric symbolism.

In sum, Yamaguchi's *MuRatopia* can be analysed as a powerful "image" of the future for Japan for three main reasons, which I outline briefly. Firstly, he taps into a rich reservoir of Japan's historical myths, metaphors and associated images—in what collectively amounts to form of transmedia story-telling. Secondly, through novel and hybrid worldviews Yamaguchi is able to forge compelling images of the future that capture the imagination of a universal utopian impulse, through achievable micro-futurizing practices, which facilitate individual and community empowerment vis-à-vis a problematic future. Thirdly, as an image of the future, it transcends the mere image. Perhaps we could re-name the "image" as a "praxis of the future". As a living futures-oriented project, its futures possibilities are communicable by a range of allied texts and media, including its home page, but also *MuRatopia*'s geographical linkages with local communities, and its plans and proposals for extending the MuRatopian philosophies beyond the space of a single prototype home for a wider application across Japan, and beyond.

[37] For an English introduction to the creation of Awaji Island in the chronicles of the *Kojiki*, see *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, Volume 1, p. 26.

4. *F.U.C.K, I Love Japan!*, by Tanja Yujiro (2003)

Of my seven selected Japanese image of the future texts, Tanja Yujiro's is the most idiosyncratic, if not eccentric. His *F.U.C.K, I Love Japan!* reflects a genre of journalism known as "parody journalism"; which I interpret as a deliberate communication strategy targeting Japan's cynical youth. We can describe Tanja by a number of identities: he is simultaneously a youth visionary, musician, video producer, and economics major and graduate, not to mention scriber of futures images. Tanja has travelled internationally and as far as we can ascertain from this book, he has enough English language ability to be able to 'play' with his use of words.

As for his book title, the expletive capitalized "F.U.C.K" is an acronym constructed as a double-meaning pun with one meaning to be read as: Freedom from the United States' Cold Knife, and the second meaning: Future with the United Nations Challenging Kiss. Tanja claims the main motivations for writing this popular culture critique of Japan's futures emerged from his own idiosyncratic "critical thinking" and his personal "anger" at modern Japan, standing at the time of publication, at the turn of the 21st century. With no consideration for "conventions" or "correct form", Tanja felt compelled to express his anxiety and doubts for the age into his own image of the future (p. 14).

For the reader, this image of the future self-presents as a challenging text because of its eclectic, disjointed structure and jazz-like style, and its juxtapositioning of critique, humour, parody, statistics, and its broad international and historical scope. *F.U.C.K, I Love Japan!* defies a conventional and easy analysis. To make my own analysis more accessible for the reader, I focus on key pages 159-167, and Chapter 14 entitled 'Fuckin'

Revolution by the Fuck Generation'. These segments embody Tanja's key elements of his image for the futures of Japan into the 21st century.

For Tanja, Japan is a culture of complacency and the Japanese people have lost their innate human abilities to express a healthy anger and passionate sense of justice; making the entire populace "irresponsible" (p. 11). In a reference to the hypocritical stance of Japanese culture, in which he condemns the chimerical image of Japan's so-called Self Defense Forces (SDF), whose military personnel, he claims, are required to spinelessly refer to their weapons as "equipment". Furthermore, the Japanese continue to fail facing the reality of Japan's situation, choosing instead to hide behind their public visage—the *tatemae* (p. 47)—and the misleading, dishonest "naming of things" which masks political truths. Although Tanja's intent is to create an un-popular reading of Japan's futures litany, ultimately his sub/youth culture image of the future reflects other popular litanies which underlie much of the anxiety for Japan's future—including the legacy of "bad loans" (不良債権・ *furyō saiken*)—in response to which Tanja calls for a consumer tax of 23% (p. 33).

Tanja creates his own shopping list of contradictions and anomalies that have come to characterize contemporary Japanese culture, claiming that Japan has:

- the second lowest English language TOEFL ranking score out of 23 Asian nations—despite the strength of its economy and the pride held in its national education levels;
- a birth rate of 1.32 despite the world's highest rates of pornographic video rentals;
- a national debt compounding at the rate of 890,000 Yen per second (that is

approximately $9,000 AUD per second);

- military bases occupying the space equivalent to 1,200 Tokyo Domes despite Article Nine of its Constitution, which denies Japan's right to use military force;
- a dislike of being called by the derogatory "Jap" whilst traveling outside their own country but indifferent to discrimination of foreigners in their own country; and
- despite a domestic food self-sufficiency of only 40%, most Japanese, indifferent to global realities and sensitivities, casually leave food on their plates after dining (p. 3-4).

According to Tanja's analysis, three causes underlie these litanies. First is the claim that Japanese people lack critical thinking skills, which encourages complacency, a cultural trait that will lead to the eventual downfall of Japanese culture, a fate Japan could share with the downfall of Roman civilization (p. 13). The second cause he identifies suggests that Japan's predominantly imitative culture fails to self-create in accord with its own cultural rules, and is therefore continuously at the mercy of the next model to imitate, and yet, in the absence of a model worthy of imitation, ultimately chooses to do nothing (p. 161). Thirdly, Japan lacks a "dream spirit and culture", for despite the fact that Japan's present "moment in history" is ripe for formulating and achieving new personal dreams, many young Japanese use the prolonged economic recession as a convenient excuse for not trying (p. 12). These three combined factors leave Japanese people in a state of "existing", not "true living"; a cultural mentality which threatens to choke the life even further out of the next generation (p. 13).

So what would it take to reinvent Japan according to Tanja's image of the future? The

ways out lie in authentic social transformations embodied in a range of twelve generic meso-strategies, emerging from his deconstructionist analysis of Japan's current crisis. These categories include transformative strategies for the concepts of: Reality; War; Economy; Constitution; Politics; Education; English in Japan; Fashion; Love; Beautiful Love and Sex; Korean relations (Cool Next Door Neighbor); Save the Environment; Revolution by the F.U.C.K. Generation; and lastly, Power Politics.

In the first of these transformative strategies—*Reality*—Tanja posits this reality check as a starting point for all strategies: the re-inventing of current Japan-USA relations. I respect his humour and unabashed borrowing from popular culture iconography as he quotes from the character Yoda in Star Wars, "Do one's best, or do nothing." Though seemingly mundane, he advances this philosophy in a spirit of respect, advocating that Japan separate from its post-war colonization of the "American embrace", employing the metaphor of an "amicable divorce" between two partners who realize they are no longer compatible to occupy the same space and life philosophies. Using yet another popular bubble and post-bubble social phenomenon known as *iede*（家出）or leaving the 'nest', he suggests Japan must leave the "comfort of home" and the maternal security of this homely Japan-USA life (p. 19-20).

At the macro-level of social reconstruction Tanja outlines multiple images of the future as his personal contribution to Japan's 21st century project. This includes a new Constitution with eight sets of reforms, such as having the Constitution document re-written directly by Japanese people alive here and now, and in an *authentic* Japanese language. This authentically authored Constitution would include a new clause for

establishing the rights of the environment; and the rights for the people to hold a referendum on what to amend in the present Constitution, rather than leaving Constitutional re-construction solely to the usual bureaucrats, lawmakers, and politicians.

Another Japan futures reform project is Tanja's proposal for a new Communicative Age with the following characteristics: a Japan that allows for and encourages individual expression of independent opinions formed without the consent and approval of seniors or peers; a Japan that advocates "dynamic public discussion and debate"（ぶっ飛んだ議論・*buttonda giron*）which helps to subvert and dismantle the self-delusion of Japan as One People - One Voice（単一民族幻想の村社会・*tanitsu minzoku gensō no mura-shakai*）and finally, a Japan that supports a compulsory double overseas education experience of at least two months for all 6th year primary school students, followed by a second similar experience for all 3rd year junior college students in a pedagogical strategy designed to develop an international outlook and worldview for Japanese youth (p. 96).

Of all Tanja's proposal for a better Japan of the future, perhaps the most striking and radical is his United States of Japan (USJ) "Dreams Come True Plan" (p. 164), in which he envisages a future Japan divided into a federation of eight separate and independently operating states, each accorded its own constitution, laws, tax systems, budgeting systems, official languages—including English or other languages if that state so desires—and organizational arrangements designed to come into operation throughout Japan by 2010. In this plan, independent states will self-revitalize through

the development of international collaborations and alliances. The current Japanese anti-creative worldview, embodied in the commonly uttered proverb *deru kugi wa utareru* ("the nail that sticks out gets hammered down", 出る杭は打たれる), will become a relic of Japan's past.

And what can we know of the personal worldview Tanja brings to his image of the future? For one, Tanja self-declares his own political worldview as neither left nor right wing. Tanja's worldview, unlike those of our other image of the future texts, is informed by observations at the level of street life, popular culture and lived experience. This is especially evident in his vignette about a company meeting in which company employees appear to interact on amicable terms, smiling throughout, but once the meeting disbands, there is a ceremonious stabbing of each other in the back, indicative to Tanja of a deceptive "façade society" (p. 95). Tanja's worldviews are also strongly influenced by American youth culture, despite his rhetoric of a Japanese-American divorce. This is particularly evident in his emphasis on the super-individualist, "the One and the Only" culture, in which the individual human is a self-constructed entity who find expression through outward displays of personal fashion statements and working styles, and avoids imitating other peoples similarly expressed "One and Only-ness" (p. 14).

Similarly, Tanja speaks from a Complexity informed worldview; of a world undergoing continuous change. A complexity metaphor is expressed in a culinary reference to Japan's *rāmen* noodles in which he opines that "even the tastes of *rāmen* change" (p. 50). Then there is his worldview pertaining to life and future. These are "The Dream"

emphasizing the difference between mere "existing" and true "living". By referring to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, according to Tanja, the Japanese people have satisfied their first four needs (sex, safety, friendship, the self) but are still in the process of satisfying the fifth, that is, self-expression, or to use his terminology, the "The Dream" (p. 12-13). But there is an underlying subtext to *F.U.C.K, I Love Japan!* that is informed by fear. To illustrate, Tanja selects the horrific metaphor describing the American equivalent of a salaryman at the Chicago Sears Tower who, after the terrorist acts of September 11, 2001, took to buying parachutes and keeping them under his desk, despite having no idea as how to actually deploy such a parachute should the need arise. It is in this vein that the Japanese people too, suggests Tanja, need to prepare themselves for such future possibilities (p. 11) requiring a metaphoric leap from a sky-rise window.

F.U.C.K, I love Japan! as an image of the future is rich in imagery and mythic iconography. But its greatest contribution at the level of the myth lies in Tanja's call for a revival of the following Japanese "authentic" sensibilities:

- the traditional aesthetic of *ma* (間), a highly developed quality found in Japanese spatial aesthetics;
- a thoughtful disposition of always taking into consideration the perspective of the Other in one's actions and behaviours;
- a sensibility that is in tune with, rather than antagonistic towards, the natural world;
- the spirit of ink painting (a form of Chinese derived art whose origins are not acknowledged by Tanja within the text); and
- the teachings of Zen Buddhism (p. 161).

Despite his emphasis on this set of five specific sensibilities, Tanja does not state which aspects of the sensibilities should be focused on, or what benefit such a focus would bring, leaving the expectant reader wondering what kinds of futures would ensue with such a revival. The fifth sensibility, Zen Buddhism, requires a revival of the rustic aesthetic qualities of *wabi* and *sabi*: in effect, a re-confirming of all that is supposedly uniquely Japanese but lost from the Japanese spirit during its post-war Americanization. Japan's way to better futures lies in a new self-image that subverts the pursuant and imitative behaviours of American culture; a Japanese renaissance.

Taken in isolation, this myth of loss seems contrived and conservative but Tanja's overall thesis is more than just cultural revisionism. To demonstrate: on the very last page of *F.U.C.K.*, Tanja invokes the myth of the self-creating autopoetic individual Japanese who stands outside conventional social constructions of reality. He or she achieves this by way of a postmodern juxtapositioning of two contrasting iconic historical figures: James Dean and the Buddha. The former for his determination to authentically define himself and achieve the ultimate freedom, exemplified by the character he portrays in *Rebel Without A Cause*, and the Buddha, who found transcendence in a modest bowl of *miso* soup, rather than a bottle of champagne (p. 190).

5. *IMAGINATION/CREATION: Towards the Century of Creative Imagination*, by Haga Tōru (Ed.) (2001)

The title of the fifth image of the future text I analyse is *IMAGINATION/CREATION: Towards the Century of Creative Imagination*. The first two kanji characters, "creative"

創 (*sō*) and "image" 像 (*zō*), are combined into a hybridized neologism intended to connote the new synergistic possibilities by this unconventional coupling. The final three kanji characters, 新世紀 (*shin-seiki*) are more straightforward, simply meaning "new century". This text is a compilation of the proceedings from the 23rd Japanese Culture Design Forum held in the city of Kyoto, November 2000. It is divided into three sections. Section I is by chemistry graduate turned poet and literary critic Yoshimoto Takaaki whose keynote address discusses the transformations of Japanese poetry over the last 100 years and what these mean for the futures of Japan. Section II is the keynote symposium consisting of five guest speakers: honorary chair of Kyocera Corporation, Inamori Kazuo; philosopher, Umehara Takeshi; architect, Kurokawa Kishō; cultural anthropologist and President of Hokkaidō University, Yamaguchi Masao; and Haga Tōru, who is honorary professor of comparative literature at Tokyo University, honorary Professor at the International Research Center for Japanese Culture, Professor Chancellor of Kyōto Arts University, and Curator of the Okazaki Arts Museum. Section III, 'Japan's 21st Century Rebirth', is a discussion between Kawakatsu Heita, specialist in comparative economic history and professor at Waseda University, and acclaimed architects Kurokawa Kishō and Dan Norihiko. For my analysis I draw predominantly but not exclusively from Section III.

The litanies in *IMAGINATION/CREATION* offer little that is new or original, offering the reader the conventional problems with which we have now become familiar, that is, political corruption, the collapse of Japan's financial system, the bureaucratic system at a standstill with no way out, and confusion within Japan's educational system, combined with the idea that these features have all become socially normalized, leading

to a diminished and de-spirited life world for the 21st century Japanese (p. 82). What is needed, however, according to the authors, is the insight and imagination that will give rise to a new "thread" to the future. To make such a new future possible, the argument goes, Japan also needs a new worldview and concept of history; themes I will return to shortly.

The authors of *IMAGINATION/CREATION* frame Japan's problematic as a crisis in terms of "loss"; the loss of the requisite dynamic creativity for driving an image of the future into being a social reality. To this effect, the authors cite the famous biblical epithet from the Old Testament, "where there is no vision, the people perish" (「ヴィジョンなきところ、民ほろぶ」・ *bijon naki tokoro, tami wa horobu*), which the authors qualify, stating: "the peoples who fail to see beyond everyday reality, whose power to envision （想い描く・*omoi-egaku*） no longer operates, will collapse"（滅亡・*metsu-bō*）(pp. 4-6).

To what social causes do the authors attribute such a deep and systemic loss of vision? They argue this loss can be traced to an identifiable origin: the era following Japan's Meiji Restoration, a nation-wide organized strategy with the aim of re-orienting Japan as a nation capable of competing with, or out-competing, the United States and Europe through the strategic deployment of a technological capability grafted onto the Japanese "spirit". Inevitably, this kind of grand narrative approach prioritization of national goals will lead to the crushing of the free and goal-less creative spirit. The new priority becomes the new hegemon.

The authors, as academics and creative minorities themselves, are familiar with the conventional thinking on Japan's worldviews, with the period of Meiji Japan circumscribed by its national organizing policy of *fukoku-kyōhei*（富国強兵）—'Rich Country Strong Army'. This was an age of so-called 'correction-ism'（修正主義・*shūsei-shugi*）—intolerant of anything that was not in tune with this framework, and structured by a strict vertical hierarchy equally intolerant of horizontal relationships (p. 59). Yamaguchi invokes a metaphor of contrast by pointing to European historical thought and literary works featuring the figure of a character going against the grain of the prevailing regimes of truth. One example invokes an episode in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, in which the laggard character of Pierre wanders into a battlefield, and in the midst of the horrors unfolding around him, takes his leave by lying down to gaze up at the sky. Yamaguchi reminds us that it was this kind of laggard individual that, situated outside of conventionality, eventually delivered Europeans to a new worldview. The way out for Japan, poised at the brink of an all-consumed and exhausted Meiji/post-Meiji worldview, is to consciously usher in the next paradigm, the age of imagination and creativity.

This brings me to two metaphors that neatly encapsulate the essence of *IMAGINATION/CREATION*: *guzu*（愚図)—the laggard, and *kabi* (黴)—mould. The first, the *guzu*—similarly translatable as the slowcoach, the irresolute good-for-nothing individual who exists outside of the dominant worldview of economic efficiency and productive capacity—is re-constructed in this image of the future as a central figure, an untapped reservoir offering the potential for cultural renewal, and possessor of unrecognized creative capacity. Here, Yamaguchi reminds us that Japan also has its own

history of the laggard. One such movement was known as the Erotic Grotesque Nonsense (エロ・グロ・ナンセンス・ *ero guro nansensu*), a movement that was active and prolific during the early Showa Period of 1926-1989. During tough times, such movements and laggard type social characters popularized a culture of decadence by producing erotic publications and the establishment of cafés and bars offering erotic services for sale. One laggard who typifies this genre was the figure of Uchida Roan who lived from 1868 to 1924.

Uchida the laggard started his career as an architect but gave this up to try his hand at writing novels, which he soon abandoned in favour of the more popular genre known as "miscellaneous writings". He continued profession hopping, but always with his eye keenly attuned to what Yamaguchi calls the "mould of the times" (p. 60). This is the second major metaphor that underpins *IMAGINATION/CREATION*, the image of *kabi* (mould), an unconventional and inconvenient image that Yamaguchi suggests be revived in the 21st century as a source of cultural renewal imperative for reconstructing Japan's futures:

> This is my conclusion: Japan has all but banished the possibility of mould from this country—other than the moss gardens of Kyoto, and in so doing [has] ended up creating cities void of one of nature's most valuable barometers for measuring the purity of the air. I therefore think we need to increase the prevalence of mould in our cities of tomorrow (p. 61).

I conclude this analysis of *IMAGINATION/CREATION* with a story related by one of the participating members, the renowned architect Kurokawa Kishō (pp. 125-7). Kurokawa believes this story to contain the essence of Japan's future. It concerns

Japan's powers of insight and the suggestion for creating an education system that fosters macro-thinking, big picture perspectives, and an holistic worldview. He relates how two automobile engineers, one from Toyota and one from Renault, working at the peak of Japan's technology revolution, had for years been pre-occupied with the ultimate goal of creating the world's quietest engine. As the logic went: a quiet engine is directly indicative of a high-performance car. The Japanese engineer would boast: "Our cars are super quiet, not like those noisy European cars", so the myth proceeds (p. 126). Kurokawa, however, prefers European cars because their policy vis-à-vis the sounds engines should make seeks to "produce engines with a sound that make their drivers happy". The sound of a European car engine is like music. There is a reason for this difference of perspectives he believes. The auto-design teams of European car makers make it policy to include the contributions of composers and musicians, not just engineers. The point of the story, as Kurokawa concludes, is that in the future, Japan too, must employ artists and creative types in the development of technologies for the 21st century, a revival of the artisan spirit that characterized Japan's culturally prolific Edo period (1604-1868) (p. 126).

6. *Visionary People in a Visionless Country: 21 Earth Connecting Human Stories*. Peter David Pedersen (Ed.), (2003)

My sixth Japanese image of the future diverts from previous images. This book is a compilation of chapters compiled and edited by Denmark-born, Peter David Pedersen, a Tokyo-based environmental advisor of the movement known in Japan as LOHAS: Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability[38]. This compilation of micro-images consists of

[38] LOHAS is an acronym for Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability, which has become a "demographic

21 ‘stories’ penned by Japanese and non-Japanese authors, activists, and business entrepreneurs, from a range of diverse fields. Of the 21 stories drawn from the actual experiences of the authors, I focus on the meta aspects, and those possessing characteristics demonstrating divergence and/or convergence of opinions when compared to the other six future texts analysed in this investigation.

At the meta level, the litany of these composite images of the future is inscribed in the title: “Japan the *visionless* country, populated by individual Japanese people *with* vision”. The inside sleeve, as peri-text, succinctly summarizes the essence of these varied yet commonly pursued futures images:

> We are welcoming in the greatest challenge in history. Firstly, this generation is possibly the first to not be more prosperous than the last generation. It will also be the first generation to experience the natural limitations of this planet earth. Furthermore, this is the first generation [that] will have to seriously think proactively about their futures—from predicting the future to making it happen. Without doubt, the success of our futures will depend upon our ability to build praxis based on sound thinking. Both government and industry, having achieved their goal of transforming Japan into a super-economic power, find themselves swayed left and right in their search for a new goal. Here we strongly believe this nation must be re-built, not in the image of a *money*-rich nation, but as a *land*-rich nation (from inside sleeve).

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defining a particular market segment related to sustainable living, ‘green’ ecological initiatives, and generally composed of a relatively upscale and well-educated population segment. Researchers have reported a range of sizes of the LOHAS market segment. For example, Worldwatch Institute reported that the LOHAS market segment in the year 2006 was estimated at $300 billion, approximately 30% of the U.S. consumer market; and, a study by the Natural Marketing Institute showed that in 2007, 40 million Americans were included within the LOHAS demographic”. (Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LOHAS. Retrieved May 20, 2010).

This term "*land*-rich nation" is ambiguous but I interpret this as a term of quality rather than quantity. By land-rich, the authors are making a reference to Japan re-claiming, re-creating, and maximizing the natural beauty of its limited geography, in places devastated by years of unchecked economic and industrial expansion.

To interrogate and communicate solutions to Japan's visionless-ness, Pedersen, as activist, has gathered a collaborative team of creative vanguard individuals who claim to possess the kinds of visions that are lacking in Japan's political leadership and governmental institutions. While laying the responsibility of Japan's vision-less on the nation's leadership, the potential for articulating and implementing new images of the future lies within ordinary and extra-ordinary people, pointing to a Japanese public mistrustful of the foresight of its leaders. Future-oriented leadership must be claimed by the people in a sort of peoples' revolution. Pedersen and his image co-authors are collectively protesting against a system of leadership that does not reflect the future-oriented imagination of ordinary Japanese citizens, a leadership paradigm which in fact impedes the self-organizational capacities of ordinary people to to exploit their naturally inherent skills as futures-seeking, futures-making humans. Individually, the authors present a complex tapestry of inter-related, though not coordinated, social causes for Japan's image of the future crisis.

The way out for Japan as a meta-strategy at these combined levels is readily understood. Japan must articulate images of the future of ordinary people, living and practicing the imagined and projected future in the present—a "praxis of future-oriented livingry", to borrow a term from Buckminster Fuller (1981, p. xxv). One strategy for shaping the

contours of the ways out is suggested in Pedersen's image stated in the preface to this text which starts with the following introductory passage: "In order to change this world we live in, we need a 'Great Cause'—*taigi*—(大儀), a cause that transcends mere 'self-profit and desire' (私利私欲・ *shi-ri, shi-yoku*) and a vision that possesses the 'power to transcend' (突き抜けた力・ *tsukinuketa chikara*)" (p. 6). Great Cause and transcendent power then are the two fundamental prerequisites for achieving Pedersen's image of the future, in which he envisions Japan as transformed from "great economic nation" (経済大国・ *keizai-taikoku*) to "great lifestyle nation"[39] (生活大国・ *seikatsu taikoku*) (p. 7). It is this notion of Japan as a "great lifestyle nation", not as economic super-power or super-consumer, which forms the basis for a new Japanese worldview for the 21st century.

However, achieving this kind of major transformation in Japan's future as a so-called "great lifestyle nation" implies tackling a complex of issues including gender imbalance. A great lifestyle cannot be great if it benefits some whilst not others. Therefore, as one macro-criteria, a partnership-oriented society is required. Kimata Mitsu sets the stage of her image, "earth connecting story", with these words: "Did you know about Japan's hidden resource kept under lock and key? I am speaking of Japan's women. Leave the future and the next 100 years to us women!" (p. 68). She continues:

> With the first half of the 20th century dominated by wars, the second half by economism, the socio-economic system built up during Japan's postwar period is redundant, and yet, it is the men, stuck in their old ways, like rugby players in a

[39] For a concise analysis of the "great lifestyle nation" discourses, see Sepp Linhart's 'Popular Leisure' in Sugimoto Yoshio (2009) (Ed.), *Modern Japanese Culture*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 216-235.

> scrum, who keep on scrambling in pursuit of the phantom of economic growth (p. 68).

In an other chapter, Norman Myers promotes the praxis of love as the principle motivating worldview (p. 172) for building Japan as a true global community, while Pedersen refers to the worldview driven by a citizen-led bottom-up form of leadership, to which the formerly politically powerful must align themselves (p. 10). Managing Director of the Harajuku fashion district aromatherapy store The Lifestyle Tree (生活の木・ *seikatsu no ki*) Shigenaga Tadashi presents another worldview based on his own neologism, what he calls *jimae-shugi*[40] (自前主義), literally "self first-ism". The idea of "self-creating-ism'" was learnt literally from his own father and refers to the social technology of the self of finding one's true self through interactions with the Other, and through complex networks of intimate relationships, from which a "true information society" emerges (pp. 24-26). Shigenaga formulated his own Charter of Oath based on the aforementioned principles in the service of his local community, the vibrant Tokyo district of Harajuku, with the following guiding philosophies:

> [Harajuku as the town] where there is friendship, love and energy; which is kind to nature and the environment; which presents the arts and culture; which gazes at history and modern science; which creates peace, the future and human happiness (p. 31).

Kiuchi Takeshi presents another worldview, which on the other hand, is suggestive of an ideal human society founded upon the "laws of the rainforest". These are characterized

[40] Literally translated as "self-first-ism", this term may not connote the essence of Shigenaga's intended worldview, which I prefer to interpret as being closer to the idea of "self-creating-ism", a more positive concept.

by the following four "lessons" (p. 15):

- Lesson 1—Look forward at all times with one's antenna in place (that is, foresight as daily lived praxis);
- Lesson 2—True profit results not from material objects, but from design concepts (that is, a new economy of aesthetics); and
- Lesson 3—Success in the new economy requires learning the lessons from the rainforest:
    1. Search for feedback
    2. Adapt and change
    3. Differentiate and do what is different to others
    4. Cooperate (symbiosis)
    5. Apply appropriately
- Lesson 4—Save the rainforest, protect the environment of planet Earth. Herein resides true business opportunity (p. 15).

Despite the multiplicity of myths in Pedersen's *Visionary People*, two myths underlie the text as a whole. The first is the myth of James Lovelock's Gaia[41]—of earth as living organism, of the Japanese people inextricably interconnected to all other peoples of the earth in a complex self-creating macro-ecosystem. But this is a construction of harmony that does not necessarily correspond to the Japanese concept of *wa* (和) or social harmony. *Wa* privileges the mundane world of human affairs and inter-personal relationships. By contrast, a Gaian harmony demands that human affairs maintain the

[41] For an analysis of Lovelock's Gaia theory and how this stands in the context of Futures Studies, see Christopher B. Jones 'Cosmic Gaia: Homeostasis and Planetary Evolution', in Galtung and Inayatullah (eds.) *Macrohistory and macrohistorians* (1997), pp. 151-158.

harmony and balance of all of nature, in a form of sacred balance.

The myth of Gaia is also related to the second myth of autopoiesis, which, according to Audience Dialogue's on-line *Glossary of Futures Studies Terms,* refers to "the way a living system continually renews itself by redefining the boundary between itself and its environment". In the case of Japan, this could be understood in terms of the entire nation of the Japanese archipelago continuously engaged in an effort to define and re-define itself as a single harmoniously functioning entity in relation to the "outside" world.

Like Tanja's *F.U.C.K, I Love Japan!*, Pedersen's *Visionary People* is a fertile stage for metaphor expression. Three metaphors are especially representative of the 21 earth connecting stories. The first is the metaphor of the *network*. This refers to the overall structure and foresight communication strategy inherent in the potential of the network, or the interpretive community; *Visionary People* is itself a network of future-oriented creative types resisting the established dominant social paradigm exemplified by the vision-less governmentality of post-bubble Japan. The synergistic effects of the interpretive community as network extend the boundaries of the knowable, and the possible.

A second defining metaphor is the ecosystem as interconnected "web of life". This is especially so in Kiuchi's story, 'What We Learned in the Rainforest'. One feature of the rainforest's delicately balanced ecosystem is the notion of "contingency as catalyst of new knowledge and possibility" (p. 12). He explains the beginnings of his interest in the

future and novel sustainability-friendly business applications by relating how during his appointment as chair of Mitsubishi Electric in the USA, he received a bundle of letters of complaint from high school students, threatening to boycott all products featuring the three diamond logo of Mitsubishi (as seen on their cars) claiming that their products were damaging the world's rainforests. Realizing the well-meaning students had *confused* Mitsubishi Electric with Mitsubishi Trading Co. Ltd., Kiuchi was faced with the dilemma of how to respond to an apparently simple oversight, that could potentially cause complex and far-reaching effects across a matrix of peoples, products and organizations. Deciding not to point out the mistake he embarked instead upon a creative plan that first took him to the heart of the problem as claimed by the students: the rainforests of Malaysia. Impressed by the economy of the rainforest as a self-creating, self-sustaining system existing in a dynamic equilibrium, his metaphor for the ideal human society based upon the principles of the no-waste rainforest was able to emerge and take form as the starting point for a new philosophical stance.

A third and final metaphor, suggested by Pedersen himself, is that of the *seed*, for as in any living ecosystem, new growth starts with a seed (p. 11). The 21 stories constituting this image of the future are in fact themselves the living seeds of practical-oriented, alternative futures paradigms, residing within Japan's dominant industrial econo-centric worldview. As the seeds grow and mature, they self-reproduce and spread. Like social memes their attractant power functions virally, infecting the minds of people and organizations across time and space, eventually taking on new hybrid forms, in an infinite process of self-organizing, self-replicating social transformation.

In the final analysis, Pedersen's *Visionary People* and the 21 stories of transformation, possesses appeal and charisma; in the language of Shinto, the image becomes a *kami,* a living organic entity holding extra-ordinary powers to motivate people in the real world. *Visionary People* assumes the qualities of *kami* because it contains real stories about real and "ordinary" people defying normalized common sense in order to fulfill their visions. It is the strategy of collective effect in *Visionary People*—as a constellation of short stories—that embodies the possibilities of pluralistic futures strategies including amongst others a transformational shift from male-oriented economies and social spaces to the female. The synergies contained in and between these stories from the life-world succeed in transforming inert blueprints of a hypothetical future into their latent potential to form living, organic spaces of possibility.

7. *Exodus from a Country of Hope*, by Murakami Ryū (2002)

I conclude my analysis of seven Japanese image of the future texts by introducing a new dimension in the form of a novel by celebrated Japanese polymath, Murakami Ryū. Murakami is a writer, television commentator, film director, and music producer. He has been one of Japan's most prolific novelists since his debut in 1976 with *Almost Transparent Blue*, a modern realist portrayal of the lives of young people immersed in a culture of sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. The book won the Gunzo Prize for New Talent and the Akutagawa Prize while Murakami was still a student at Musashino Art University. Saito Sayuri (1999) notes how *TIME* article once nominated Murakami as "one of the 11 who will revolutionize Japan" (p. 7).

Exodus shares the attributes of what Norman Mailer (1993, in Shapiro, 1992) calls a

"true life novel": a "fictional recreation of events, involving in-depth investigation—interviews, public documents, and informants—but which then translates the 'findings' into a coherent novelistic plot" (p. 68). To legitimize the underlying concepts that form the rationale of his novel, Murakami includes critiques from ten leading Japanese thinkers and scholars including Kaneko Masaru, a high profile economist and television commentator who has written extensively on the theme of Japan's futures, including *Japan Revitalization Theory: Beyond Marketism versus Government* (2000), and *From Myself in 2050: Real Futures of Japan* (2005).

In *Exodus*, Murakami describes a near-future Japan, in which the forces of globalization facilitate the development of a Yen Economic Sphere. On the one hand, this competes fiercely with the US dollar and the European euro, while on the other, brings back negative memories to its neighbouring countries, the victims of Japanese aggressions of their Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere strategy.

The first litany in the *Exodus* storyline points to the "loss of hope" for Japan's youth. This sense of loss is summarized by Jonathon Sprague and Murakami Mitsuko (2000). A CNN news crew in northern Pakistan finds a Japanese teenager in the midst of a band of Muslim guerillas. In a TV interview, he declares: "there is nothing in Japan. It is a dead country". His words strike a chord with Japanese children his age. Across the country, middle-schoolers stop attending class. They organize across the Internet, form a video distribution agency named Asunaro that beams their messages across the world, and start a variety of new businesses (*Asiaweek.com magazine* Retrieved from http://www.asiaweek.com/asiaweek/magazine/2000/1020/sr.japan_ryu.html, p. 1).

At the social systems causes level, the perceived sense of the loss of hope by Japan's youth is the byproduct of a nation "where no one talks about how society should be or even says, 'I want to do something with my life'" (Sprague and Murakami, 2000, p. 1). Such a system produces a Japanese youth subject to various extreme pressures, especially the threat of being bullied at school. There is only one way out for the protagonist at the beginning of the novel: to escape Japan's system of oppressiveness in an act of outright rebellion against his own country and its alliances with the European powers. This search for an escape route compels him to seek a new sense of belonging in a Pakistan-based Muslim guerilla movement. There is a second stage way out for the alienated rebelling youth: to take the future in their own hands, strategically deploying state of the art Information Technologies of their generation.

As a creator of believable but fictional worlds and stories, Murakami consciously blends a veritable tangle of conflicting and complementary worldviews, with which the reader must creatively and multi-epistemically engage in order to make sense of and reconcile his mixed intentions. As for Murakami's own worldview context, he himself inhabits and is active within the worldview of the pragmatist creator, as both novelist and entrepreneur, and as host of his own television show, *The Cambrian Palace* (カンブリア宮殿・*kanburia kyūden*). The titling of this program is a direct reference to the Cambrian Age, a period of rapid and diverse evolutionary activity. The strategy of Murakami's program is to showcase Japan's creative vanguard and minorities, the paradigm-breakers, and an assortment of other individuals who have gone against the grain of mainstream society. In effect, they are real people who echo his fictional characters and subvert current orderings of knowledge to create new categories of being

and doing. In this sense, Murakami situates himself as part of a greater cultural, revolutionary movement and therefore positions himself and his characters in a political space charged with the responsibility of opening new possibilities, specifically as the promoter of a new Japanese style of individualism. For Murakami, this strategy satisfies the goal of his work facilitating Japan's "third opening".

But the revolutionary characters that populate and lead *Exodus* are not necessarily the strong and combatant revolutionaries a modern film viewer would expect to see in a Hollywood action film. To the contrary, Murakami privileges the task of transforming society with a creative vanguard composed of society's most vulnerable. As Murakami has said elsewhere: "it is often the weak who trigger major changes. The first creatures who left the sea were actually weak, in danger of being eaten by bigger fish, so they came up on shore and eventually became the ancestors of land animals" (Sprague and Murakami, 2000). In the case of *Exodus*, this role of the creative vanguard is assigned to and claimed by Japan's disenfranchised youth, squeezed out of a system that to them no longer seems relevant.

Exodus, as near-future Japanese novel, is the myth of the biblical exodus itself, the creation of a new kind of diaspora in search of a new Promised Land, the search for new frontiers, and the journey, echoing the archetypal hero's journey. There is a social myth that the protagonists of Murakami's *Exodus* successfully subvert; the myth that Japan is not able to transform from within, that Japan's transformations have, historically, been the result of an external disruption, known commonly in Japan as *gai-atsu* (外圧)[42],

[42] This themes of *gai-atsu*, or "pressure from the foreigners" and the so-called "Black Ships" is discussed in

literally “external pressure”. These are the “black ships” of the Other for the 21st century, without which Japan’s history is set in a deterministic trajectory devoid of a way out.

We can also locate a mythical discourse of the utopian in *Exodus,* in which the youthful protagonists decide to create their own spatial ideal, their own utopia—(理想郷・ *risō-kyō*)—on Japan’s northern island of Hokkaido (Murakami, 2002, p. 360). This youthful vision of an advanced network society is echoed in the NHK television program *Networked Citizens Change the World* (2000) which doubles up on a number of themes including the island of Hokkaido as a locus of change for Japan’s future.

If this analysis is to identify the defining metaphors for *Exodus*, the first is perhaps the World Wide Web itself, and its infinite possibilities for self-expression, inter-connectedness, and its perceived and optimistic potential as a platform to subvert Japan’s current political mentality of controlling the people. A second metaphor is that of the “opening”. This refers to Japan’s third opening to the world as an opening that does not come voluntarily from the nation’s political leadership, but as a bottom-up revolution. It is a forced opening, not from the *gai-atsu* of the new “black ships” but emerging from within, a literary twist that emphasizes Japan does possess the ability to self-transform and transcend current social constructions of the Real. I offer a final metaphor found in the network named “Asunaro”. This word is represented in the Japanese using a two-kanji hybrid made from the character 翌 and 檜—combined these mean the *hinoki* tree, symbolic in Japanese culture of purity, cleansing, a fresh start. A

Appendix IV, ‘Pushes of the Present’, p. 303.

dictionary definition of Asunaro (翌檜) interprets the symbolic functioning of the term *hinoki* tree in the context of a proverbial statement:「明日はヒノキになろう」(*ashita wa hinoki ni narō*), for "tomorrow we become a *hinoki* tree" (広辞苑 Kōjien Electronic Dictionary). It is the *hinoki* tree that stands as a metaphor for the pull of the future that, although tacitly understood to be unattainable, it draws and attracts.

To summarize, Murakami's *Exodus* is a persuasive and compelling image of the future for Japan's disenfranchised youth who are increasingly disempowered by the litanies that threaten to quell the creative impulses of Japan's youth growing up during the post-bubble social system. Murakami offers a concrete, attractive and seemingly attainable way out of this system: a utopia of the possible and the here and now, in the form of a youth-oriented, independent utopia-state in the northern island of Hokkaido, a land replete with its own rustic frontier and pioneering spirit.

SECTION II

Poststructural Toolbox Analysis of Combined Image of the Future Texts

Introduction

In this section I apply the Foucauldian poststructural toolbox to the seven image of the future texts collectively, using the five categorizations of deconstruction, genealogy, distancing/defamiliarization, alternative pasts and futures, and re-ordering knowledge. Not all texts are covered in all five categories, rather, I focus on the most informative and insightful aspects of each of the texts. Also for ease of reading I abbreviate the original titles of each of the seven texts as indicated by the words in **bold** as follows:

1. *Report of the Prime Minister's Commission on Japan's Goals in the 21st Century—The* ***Frontier*** *Within: Individual Empowerment and Better Governance in the New Millennium*, edited by Kawai Hayao;
2. ***Slow*** *Is Beautiful: Culture as Slowness*, by Tsuji Shinichi;
3. ***MuRatopia***, Awaji Future Island Project, by Yamaguchi Kaoru;
4. ***IMAGINATION/CREATION****: Towards the Century of Creative Imagination*, edited by Haga Tōru;.
5. *F.U.C.K, I* ***Love Japan***, by Tanja Yujiro;
6. ***Visionary People*** *in a Visionless Country: 21 Earth Connecting Human Stories*, edited by Peter David Pedersen; and
7. ***Exodus*** *from a Country of Hope,* by Murakami Ryū.

1. Deconstruction

In this section my focus questions include: What are the virtual fractures and contradictions in the image? What is missing, what is said and un-said? Who is privileged and silenced? What are the assumptions underlying the text as image of the future? Our texts, in that they are constructed as and understood to be alternative images of the future, inherently possess a deconstructionist element, either explicit or implicit, that seeks to dismantle existing constructions of reality. But even a text that deconstructs necessarily approaches its subject, the futures of Japan, by saying some things and not others; somebody is privileged.

In the *Frontier* image, for example, we ask who is silenced? Despite the apparent comprehensiveness of this report, many voices are avoided, neglected or deliberately

left out of the equation: those that slip in-between the recognized spaces of conventional "Japanese-ness"; the non-Japanese resident, the children of Japanese/non-Japanese relationships, the dissident, the un-productive, society's laggards, to name but a few. The *Frontier* image of the future lacks the poetry and emotion to function as an attractant towards the future it subscribes to, especially for Japan's youth sub-cultures, with their own interpretations of the world. On the other hand, Tsuji's *Slow* privileges those with the greatest potential to escape from the bonds of temporal constraints in the current, time-driven, advanced capitalist social construction that typifies Japan. Escaping from Japanese "time" is not an option available to all people in Japan, especially without causing upheaval to current ways of living and socially determined temporal priorities. Tsuji also privileges the non-human natural world, not the ability of humans to subvert and control nature to un-natural ends and desires: mountain time over machine time; seasonal cyclic time over production round and just-in-time time; female time over male time; and indigenous time over colonizer time. Tsuji has confidence in Japan's capacity to overthrow current competitive time-dependent Japanese social systems in order to accommodate his image of a subversive-transformative slow living philosophy. But Tsuji adopts a stance that assumes Japanese people prefer slow time to fast time and the contemporary social machineries of speed, as glorified by the Italian futurist movement.

The theoretical foundations of Yamaguchi's *MuRatopia* also embody a living deconstructionist philosophy transformed into a partly working real-world construct. If we conceive of the futures images in general, and of the seven images presented in this investigation specifically, as competing discourses, *MuRatopia* is situated in direct

opposition to Japan's other utopian and futuristic purpose-built heterotopian spaces such as the techno-utopian park of O-Daiba in Tokyo's waterfront district. O-Daiba is a reclaimed land project populated by buildings that evoke science-fictionally futuristic city-scapes which embody technological representations characteristic of Japan's aspirational urban futures. Thus we have a binary confrontation between the under-invested spaces of *MuRatopia* and the over-invested futures spaces of O-Daiba, prompting the questions: Is it possible to change a society that has invested so much in certain kinds of futures exemplified by the heterotopian IT sci-fi wonderland of O-Daiba and the O-Daibas yet to come? Is a de-investment of big business supported city futures really possible for Japan? And, at what stage can de-investment be achieved and who will push such a radical de-investment?

For the image of *IMAGINATION/CREATION*, it is the worldview of Japan's creative minority that is privileged, although we must not assume that the said *creative minority* is a singularly identifiable sector possessing a unified vision. The seven writers of *IMAGINATION/CREATION* are male, mostly aged in their 60s (one in his late 40s) and all successful professionals from academia, literary arts, architecture, and business. By their definition, is the creative minority they refer to, themselves? Which futures are silenced within this discourse of their "creative" "minority"? I argue, *IMAGINATION/CREATION* remains uncommitted and ambiguously positioned towards Japan's youth-specific futures and the roles of youth in driving creativity, the nature of that creativity, and who decides the demarcations between the creative and the non-creative. Creativity as a gendered construct also remains conveniently off the chart.

What can we say about Pedersen's *Visionary People*? Firstly, this image makes a privileged stage for the social visionary, a certain creative vanguard with business sense and aptitude. This futures image also privileges the builder with the capacity to construct new projects, the market-profiteer who knows not to go too far in search of self-profit or overstep the boundaries of acceptable desire for possession. This carries an assumption that the rainforest is an appropriate and viable metaphor for contemporary human affairs and that there can be a permanent point of reference, that is, an archetypal rainforest that symbolizes the characteristics of all possible rainforest types. But a critical reading also warns that the true rainforest is a harsh place, despite its utopian and idealized constructions in *Visionary People*, with similarities to the less saccharine "law of the jungle" which privileges the "survival of the fittest". *Visionary People* can also be understood as a form of social neo-Darwinism: no room for laggards in this Japanese future.

2. Genealogies

Generic focus questions for this section include: Which discourses have been victorious in constituting the present? How have they traveled through history? At what points did the issue become important or contentious? What might the genealogies of the future evolve? To keep the focus I recall Foucault's statement:

> Genealogy does not resemble the evolution of a species and does not map the destiny of a people. On the contrary, to follow the complex course of descent is to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion; it is to identify the accidents, the minute deviations—or conversely, the complete reversals—the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us; it is to discover that truth or being does not lie at the

> root of what we know and what we are, but the exteriority of accidents (Foucault in Faubion, 1994, p. 81).

Furthermore—

> Foucault's advocacy of a shortness of vision is therefore supplemented by a glance at the past, a glance aimed not at the production of a developmental narrative but at showing what we are now. This 'what we are now' is not meant as a simple description of the current state of things. Rather, it is an attempt to show that the 'now' is an unstable victory won at the expense of other possible nows (Shapiro, 1992, p. 12).

Shapiro (1992) continues to describe the "imagined transcendent" and "dematerialized place", the forms of power which: "show the lines of force that are no longer visible in the present, genealogy goes back to the point of emergence, the historical moment at which an interpretation emerges as dominant" (p. 12).

Let us now apply some of these concepts. Firstly, a brief genealogy of Tsuji's *Slow* reveals how it is the owners of time who have been victorious in constituting Japan's present borders of intelligibility, and that historically, Japan's cultural creative minorities such as Yoshida no Kenko[43], author of *Essays on Idleness* (Merryl Wyn Davies, in Sardar, 1999, p. 243) have exposed the folly and hubris of accelerating lifestyles that accompany technology-driven progress. Precursors to *Slow* include

[43] Yoshida no Kenko's *Essays on Idleness* is discussed by Merryl Wyn Davies' 'Other Futures Studies: A Bibliographic Essay' in Sardar (1999) *Rescuing All Our Futures*, p. 243, in the context of non-Western perspectives on Futures Studies. *Essays in Idleness* as its official English translation records, or *Tsurezuregusa* (徒然草) in Japanese, was originally a collection of essays written between 1330 and 1332. The work is considered a classic in Japanese literature.

Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) and Bertrand Russell's (1935) *In Praise of Idleness*. The former of these brought worldwide attention to hidden corporate environmental destruction, and the latter is a subversive treatise on the hubristic over-industriousness of modern man. More contemporarily, Creative Industries theorist Charles Leadbeater (2000) had this to say:

> Soon the great acceleration began. In the 1890s, critics warned that bicycle-riding would lead to an epidemic of bicycle face, a permanent disfigurement caused by pedaling into the wind at high speed. In 1899 the leisurely 3/4 time of the waltz was on its way out after Scott Joplin published the bouncy ragtime classic 'Maple Leaf Rag'. Ragtime marked the start of the acceleration of music to match the acceleration of industry: jazz was followed by boogie-woogie, rock 'n' roll, disco, punk and techno (which races along at 200 beats a minute). Now we often feel tyrannized by our ability to do so much, so quickly. There is a frenzied search for time-saving devices, short cuts, and most importantly, 'quality time' with children or partners (p. 220).

The image of *MuRatopia* is the product of a confluence of genealogies. At the macro scale, the economic theories of Keynes and Marx have led Yamaguchi to propose a new economic paradigm as a way out of today's global socio-economic crisis, through the next evolutionary stage of an economic system he refers to as FOCAS, an acronym for Future-Oriented Complex Adaptive Systems. FOCAS becomes the bifurcation point of a new genealogy of the future for economic thinking. Furthermore, insofar as *MuRatopia* is a real world space, it is imbued with the histories of Awaji Island as the space of Japan's creationist mythologies; reinvented as a 21st century *tōgenkyō*-like utopia mediated through the confluence of genealogical positions including contemporary Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

In *Visionary People*, improving Gross Domestic Product as a discursive objective has been accompanied through Japan's history by a technocratic reform-minded leadership since the Meiji Restoration till the collapse of Japan's bubble economy of the early 1990s. Then as a nation without a sense of direction, Japan faces the acceleration of environmental problems threatening to subvert all other forms of human progress, thus giving birth to a new social construction which recognizes the foundation of all life on earth as an interconnected organic holon. In the absence of positive human intervention, this may degrade to the point of an unsustainable environment. To replace this dominating discourse the collaborating authors of *Visionary People* collectively posit a new meta-discourse which reconciles dynamic business with environmental sustainability.

3. Distancing and Defamiliarization

According to Parton (in Chambon et. al. 1999), one of Foucault's trademark analytical strategies was to introduce an *untimely* and disruptive ethos in to the present, thereby heightening our sense of awareness vis-à-vis the fragility and contingency of the here and now, with the implication that the present, though taken for granted, does not necessarily have to be as it is or appears to be. The present is not seen as necessary, inevitable, the result of some logical outcome or homogeneous, but as something to be decomposed, problematized, viewed with a skeptical eye, and finally acted upon. Destabilizing and fragmenting the present opens up a transformative space from which new constructions of freedom and change can be worked (p. 103). I ask therefore two questions: collectively, in what ways have our seven Japanese images of the future released Japan from the constraints of the present and made the Japanese feel freer than

before? And, of these Japanese futures images, which offer the most insight and transformative potential in terms of spatial, temporal, or cognitive disorientation and defamiliarization, stretching and expanding the boundaries of possibility into alternative discursive spaces?

For the *Frontier* text, one major distancing affect is at first a paradoxical one: the reader is brought back home, back to a "real" Japan and the latent possibility within the country, its peoples, histories, traditions, and creative abilities. Rather than transporting the reader offshore in search of a new utopia, the reader is brought back home as the locus of future inspiration. Distancing performs its function by ironically *de*-distancing, and de-familiarization is transmogrified in the form of a *re*-familiarization with the separated identity of self and potential for self-futurizing. *Frontier* reads:

> We would also like to see the next century viewed through an extensive temporal perspective. It is not realistic to accomplish our ambitious goals in one generation. We should set out and develop a consensus around a new vision and set an appropriate direction of change and pursue it, even if it may take—as the saying goes—80 years to accomplish it (p. 231).

For Tsuji's *Slow*, the strategies of distancing and defamiliarization start with his profession as cultural anthropologist. Tsuji draws upon personal experience with fieldwork amongst Canadian indigenous peoples and environmental activism in Ecuador to inform his argument for slowing down the social pace of Japan. Tsuji also performs a semantic defamiliarization with key terms such as "slow" and "sloth". This is usually associated negatively in time-driven capitalist societies with unproductiveness and as a burden to a monetarist society. From standing inside conventional Japanese

time, the reader is transported to an alternative temporality, to distance him or herself and perceive the present from another perspective.

The meta-text of the praxis-oriented *MuRatopia* project, proposes juxtaposition of unfamiliar economic models with the distancing effect that juxtaposes the physical island of Awaji-Shima from the Japanese mainland. The Island of Awaji is portrayed in this new light of being simultaneously connected yet *dis*-connected to the national psyche through its mythical and historical significance. This we can construe as one of the classic utopian strategies of locating the utopia-as-island as being within reach of the everyday real. It is not an impossible utopia. The final distancing strategy Yamaguchi produces is achieved by framing his this-worldly *MuRatopia* experimental community in a long term perspective by looking ahead 100 years to the 22nd century.

IMAGINATION/CREATION similarly suggests a powerful distancing and defamiliarization strategy by re-inventing Japan as a creative nation, driven by its collective and co-creative imagination. *Love Japan,* on the other hand, uses a surreal and disruptive juxtaposition of youthful humour, sub-culture constructions of the real, history, myth, politics, and legitimized statistics as compared with global analogies. The images of the future presented in *Visionary People* are at once familiar and unfamiliar; familiar in that ecological discourses which address the antagonisms and contradictions between industrial development and environmental sustainability have been transformed into real aspects of everyday life for the Japanese authors of the earth connecting stories.

4. Alternative Pasts and Futures

The question for this section is: what kinds of alternative pasts and futures do the seven images of the future present? In *Slow*, as the title suggests, slow is the operative word, recommending not only a decelerated future Japan, but what might have been if Japan had not become a time driven culture. Time as a social construction from Japan's history is valorized as pastoral nature time: unrealistically nostalgic or based on a natural inclination for all living beings to organize their time to the slowest possible degree as the path of least resistance. The normalization of consumer-driven societies favors the time-diligent and monetary-driven. The unity of Japan's present is the main product of industrial time and procedures, to which all other forms of social life must conform or be left behind.

Alternative pasts and futures suggested by *MuRatopia* is the Japanese utopia that never was. *MuRatopia* uses Awaji Island as a symbol of Japan's mythical past, containing the seeds to give birth to new futures through a combination of deep histories, presents and possible futures. While the term "utopia" is used frequently in Japan as an advertising slogan and device, deeper historical connotations are lost due to the unfamiliarity of its historical significance. This has positive and negative effects. That is, the distancing and defamiliarizing effect of the utopia as a term can also function as a catalyst with creative effect.

Tanja's *Love Japan* is rich with alternative pasts and futures. In one such alternative Tanja declares: "we are the grandchildren of the magnificent samurai are we not? Let us tell our dreams with more passion. True freedom cannot be won by merely having our

own style" (p. 9). This is an image of Japan's youth re-claiming their neglected heritages, not literally that of the samurai, but with the samurai as metaphor for that nation's cultural history, a legacy whose spirit still survives as a key element of the national self-image. In *Visionary People*, Kimata's image of a Japan in the future is with women as the new leaders; in various ways all 21 stories of *Visionary People* as future images undo the boundaries of the real and the possible, positing both alternative pasts and futures.

Finally there is a twofold temporal strategy in Murakami's *Exodus*—the myth and the technique of temporal mythologizing. The apparent ambiguous temporal strategy of his near-future novel which unfolds in the recent past has a twofold effect. On the one hand it may impede and *dis*-empower the now-orientation and impetuousness of youth: the presumed reading market. On the other hand, this counterfactual *What if?* technique also presents a disorienting temporal framework that suggests an alternative history, leading to an alternative present, and futures of the "what-could-have-been-if-only *x*, *y* and *z"*.

5. Re-Ordering Knowledge

The final tool from this Foucauldian poststructural tool-box analyses the re-ordering of knowledge. What was Foucault's stance on knowledge and its roles in the production of histories? He once claimed: "Knowledge doesn't really form part of human nature. Conflict, combat, the outcome of the combat, and, consequently, risk and chance are what gives rise to knowledge. Knowledge is not instinctive, it is counter-instinctive; just as it is not natural, but counter-natural" (Foucault, 1984, in Faubion, 1994, p. 9). From this unconventional framing of knowledge, what derangement of knowledges have our

futures images perpetrated upon us? Tsuji's *Slow Life* reorders knowledge from fast and faster and fastest as the "winner knowledge" to universal, slow knowledge as applied across all spheres of human activity including business, food, love, sex, applications of technology, and other aspects of human life; from accelerating time in the competitive international consumerist market to decelerated time knowledge, which ushers in a new system of knowledges based on natural cycles, local knowledges, and practices over globalized universal knowledge.

Tanja's *Love Japan* re-orders love-sex as the overarching knowledge construction in preference to conventional economics, thus reordering Japan's hierarchical human relations. Tanja also de-centers Japan's human-centric worldview to include constitutional provisions for the environment. *Visionary People* also reorders knowledge by privileging the micro-visions of ordinary people over the would-be grand narrative futures images of government and top-down leadership that have long dominated the discourses of meaning and the implementation of Japan's guiding images of the future. These signify shifts from centrally produced governmentalizing knowledges as authoritative and macro-guiding, to locally produced micro-knowledge; from male-dominated to female-driven, and from the concrete jungle of human-centric affairs as the organizing principle for knowledge and action. Finally, *Exodus* delivers a powerful re-ordering of conventional knowledge, showing how it is the weak, not the already powerful, which are in possession of the kinds of knowledge from which new and vital futures can and should be forged.

Conclusion

In contrast to the previous chapter which focused on five sets of pushes of the present, and three sets of weights of history and tradition, this chapter has explored and analysed seven Japanese image of the future texts. The chapter applied the CLA methodology to each of the texts, followed by an application of poststructural analytical tools to those texts promising insight and *transformative* potential. Key issues identified in this chapter included the following:

1. It is now possible to establish the richness of Japan's images of the future in terms of their interpretations of litanies, systems causes, worldviews, myths and metaphors. This image-richness helps to demonstrate the robustness of Japan's responses vis-à-vis the problem of a reported mapless and model-less future, features that originally informed the research in this investigation.
2. *Frontier* is a useful image of the future, whose hybrid textuality, consisting of government, business, academia, and creative minority perspectives, demonstrates the seriousness of Japan's leaders vis-à-vis the creation of innovative futures for that nation.
3. *Slow* is powerful in its aim to reconceptualize Japan's philosophies of temporality and build a new kind of nation founded on the principles of a human-oriented and expanded vision of economy based around the core metaphor of community-enhancing slow culture. However, Japan's post-Meiji historical push to an increasingly speed-obsessed social construction of reality could render the image impotent.
4. *MuRatopia* is compelling in its creative hybridity of an advanced Information Technology society, set in a modern day utopian space based upon principles of a

richly communicative social paradigm, and sustainability.

5. The major contribution of *IMAGINATION/CREATION* is its function as a platform for a new discussion of Japan's transformation from an econo-centric social framework to a new creative age. This is an image that accords with the emerging global discourses promoting the creative industries, creative cities, and creative minorities, which would re-shape Japan as a leading maker of meaning.
6. *Love Japan* is still the most idiosyncratic and un-conventional of the seven images of the future. Its communication style, which appeals to Japan's oppressed youth, establishes it as a potentially formidable change agent in Japan's competitive images marketplace.
7. *Visionary People* is compelling for its revolutionary and subversive stance against Japan's vision-less political leadership, showing that it is ordinary people, not the futures-making elites or aristocracy, who must take the lead and create a new vanguard.
8. Finally, Murakami's *Exodus* cannot be ruled out as a compelling image of the future. Sharing the appeal of Tanja's *Love Japan* to an increasingly disenfranchised youth, *Exodus* portrays a near-term future that is achievable in the here and now, by Japan's youth, using Information Technologies to subvert leadership, and create utopianist communities based on alternative social principles.

To conclude the discussion on this chapter, I present these words from Herb Addo (1983) which keeps the analysis of futures images in balanced perspective:

> Visions of desirable societies also tend to be very personal. This is because visioners tend to approach their visions with sensitivities, choices and preferences,

> which must spring from their individual experiences in the societies under scrutiny, and from their understanding of it. This personal nature of visions of desirable societies must not be decried; rather it must be encouraged, because it is by comparing different *personal* visions of desirable societies that their differences and similarities can be known; and it is by doing this that any *virtues* that different visions may possess can feed into each other in a cumulative manner (p. 157).

With this chapter I have completed the trilogy of the Future Triangle Analysis consisting of pushes of the present, the weights that resist and/or anchor the realization of images of the future, and the pulls of images of the future. In the concluding chapter, I respond to the original research questions, and the title of the thesis, to see if they have been appropriately addressed. My ultimate objective at this stage is to synthesize s from the three FTA dimensions in order to identify the problems of *where* Japan is now located in time and space, and vis-à-vis its futures, that is, the Japanese episteme of its national conversation. From this I intend to suggest a plausible future for Japan that emerges from the contours of these three sites of tension. Following this, I summarize the contributions of this doctoral investigation in terms of theory, method and overall findings, and end with suggestions for follow on research.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Chapters five and six mapped out and analysed five sets of pushes of the present; three suggested weights of history and deep structure; and seven Japanese image of the future texts. This final chapter concludes this doctoral investigation with three major tasks. The first task is to respond to the title of this thesis and the three research questions. The second task is to consider the implications for and contributions to theory and method used in this investigation, with a special emphasis on findings from Chapters three through six. The third task is to suggest further directions for research to emerge from these analyses.

The Thesis Title

The title of this thesis: *Unpacking Japan's 21st Century 'National Conversation': Images of the Future beyond the Iron Cage of the 'Catch Up' Model*. My responses to the three original research questions below will show that I have unpacked Japan's national conversation, using the Futures Triangle Analysis, and Causal Layered Analysis, to shape, map, and analyse Japan's images of the future, all of which indicate the richness of Japan's conversation—its communicative climate—as a poly-vocal space of innovative, subversive, humorous, and creative futures images. Collectively, this futures image matrix signals the demise of the iron cage of Japanese futures, the "current conceptual gridlock" (Inayatullah, 2002, p. 17), transcending the catch up model of development that characterized, shaped and constricted more positive images

of the future from being realized because they were outside of the regime of truth. The components of this title will be addressed in the discussions below.

Research Question 1: ***What are the pushes—in terms of current trends—that are affecting Japan's futures?***

This study focused on five generic sets of pushes perceived as impacting Japan's futures: the pushes of new technologies; globalization and internationalization; demographics; shifting values; and the influence of Japan's creative vanguard. While each of the pushes potentially leads to a dystopic future, it was also demonstrated that future positive solutions already exist within the Japanese socio-cultural meme pool. Drawing from the wider Japanese cultural textual field, I identified and summarized potential ways out from the dystopian scenarios latent within each push. It was shown that although the collective impact of these five sets of pushes upon Japan's futures are significant, even formidable, ways out for each of these pushes are possible, but need to be achieved through a mindful and strategic approach that involves the deployment of the collective will of the nation's peoples, not just futures-making elites. Directing the latent dangers within each push towards positive futures outcomes will necessarily require of Japan a massive shift towards a more participatory form of national conversation including many of the kinds of futures images examined in this research.

Research Question 2: ***What are the historical/cultural weights that influence Japan's future?***

A second aim of this study was to consider the types of historical, traditional, and cultural weights that operate against change. Due to the constraints of this research I

concentrated on three of several candidate weights: the mood of the nation, self-image, and the notion of *wa* or social harmony. The major features of each of these weights were introduced and the mechanisms by which they conspire to impede social change—but not necessarily in negative terms—was also outlined. As with the pushes mentioned above, despite the possibility of negative trajectories inherent in each of these weights, I suggested how each of them can be disrupted to produce positive ways out facilitated by creatively re-conceiving the respective problems.

Research Question 3: ***What are the emerging transformative Japanese images of the future discourses, as embodied in actual images/texts, and what potential do they offer for transformative change in Japan?***

The task for Chapter six was to explore and analyse seven Japanese images of the future from which it was initially anticipated we would be able to identify transformative potential for Japan's futures. The future texts eventually included in this study included Kawai's *Frontier*, Tsuji's *Slow*, Yamaguchi's sustainable *MuRatopia*, Haga's *IMAGINATION/CREATION*, Tanja's radical *Love Japan*, Pedersen's *Visionary People*, and Murakami's future ICT fiction, *Exodus*, a mere seven amongst hundreds of images of the future exploring and discussing the futures of Japan. During the completion of this thesis I continued to identify new images of Japan's futures, which although not included in this investigation, require on-going monitoring, analysis, and evaluation.

Through analysis of this very small selection of Japanese images of the future from the very specific disciplinary perspective of Futures Studies, it is possible to construct these final conclusions about our future texts. Given that the seven texts represent a very

small share of the overall futures image meme pool in Japan, identified by the author, the potential for transformative change in that nation appears to be strong. What has also become apparent is the gender biases present in these images of the future. Female, indigenous and other minority futures were shown to be under-represented, not entirely absent, but not possessive of the kind of balance expected of a democratic, industrialized nation like Japan. My own biases towards seeking a balanced perspective probably gave greater attention to a non-conventional and idiosyncratic sample of futures images than a more random sampling would have produced. Pursued from a Futures Studies perspective, this investigation finally reveals that despite the apparent robustness and variety of creative approaches to Japan's futures, what is ultimately lacking, is a systematic, unified, language *of* and *for* the future existing within the Japanese nation, from which a true participatory national conversation can emerge to meaningfully discuss, create, and implement alternative futures. To make a topical analogy: the problem with Japan's national conversations is that it is like trying to solve global environmental problems without having the appropriate words, terms, concepts and theories, to make this possible. The national conversation is closer to a Babel of proto-conversations, seeking commonality, but not knowing how to talk to each other in order to achieve actionable communication.

Implications and Contributions to Research

The Japanese Image of the Future

The major contribution from this investigation in terms of theory belongs to that of the Japanese image of the future. In this respect, the literature reviews (in the main body of the text and in Appendix I) represent a significant compilation, specifically about

Japanese futures thinking, the Japanese image of the future, and the Japanese utopia. Though not exhaustive, this compilation serves as a useful starting point for follow-up research, not only for the Japanese image of the future, but also for all image of the future research, in a global Futures Studies environment dominated by Western perspectives. Many of the sources are in Japanese and their English summations are an added reason to respect this achievement.

Secondly, the seven images of the future analysed in Chapter six represent the first time that Japanese future texts have been systematically organized for analysis. What is more, they have been analysed according to current and emerging Futures Studies methodologies that reveal a layeredness, depth, and overall richness existing in the Japanese images. Revealing this image-richness has been one of the most significant findings of this investigation, suggesting that there is fertile research to be found from this still under-explored field, the implications of which go beyond domestic Japan concerns, and offer rich material for futures thinkers, futures researchers, Japanologists, planners, and policy makers. Again, the translation of these Japanese texts for an English-reading audience is a significant contribution.

Suggestions for Further Research

The Futures Triangle Analysis was used strategically to try to give a sense of shape to the study and understanding of Japan's images of the future, which as I have emphasized, is a strongly neglected yet important field of research. Accordingly and necessarily, much detail has been simplified or omitted. To keep this field of Japanese images of the future research alive and relevant, I therefore now propose possible

avenues of enquiry as a continuation of findings garnered from this doctoral investigation. These include systematic enquiries into: Japanese utopias; Japanese macrohistories and image of the future theory; image of the future effects research; cross-cultural comparisons using the Futures Triangle Analysis; image of the future evaluation against hybrid criteria; and how to facilitate the jump from futures theory to futures-oriented praxis, that is, towards enactment.

1. *Japanese Utopias*: As sources of images of the future, ideal futures, and deep socio-cultural structures, the theme of the Japanese utopia offers much more potential than addressed in this investigation. Firstly, the preliminary, three-part matrix consisting of Chinese-derived utopias, Shintoist ideal worlds, and Buddhist paradises can be more fully developed. Secondly, a more methodical approach could be applied to the emergent but not quite systematized utopian possibilities of the American Dream, Japanese science fiction—including animé and *manga*, and virtual on-line communities. Other potential utopian spaces such as Japan's island geographies, and newly emerging utopianist experimental communities need also to be explored in future research.

2. *Japanese Macrohistory and the Image of the Future*. From my research into the historical patterning of Japanese images of the future and their functioning in space and time, we get the sense that the image of the future plays an influential role in the unfolding of history in that nation. Also, we now have a sense that although various images of the future "win the battle of the images", to employ a Foucauldian metaphor, these images are often subverted, often by outside forces such as American and allied forces intervention after World War Two. My cursory analysis of Japanese utopias hints

that these too function in a macro historical sense, although their actual workings are little understood. It is interesting to note that Galtung and Inayatullah's (1999) collection of global macrohistory analyses do not explore those of Japan.

3. *Image of the Future Effects*: A third useful and insightful avenue for on-going research is found in the idea of tracing the effects and impacts of the images of the future, in their various media, as they operate over time and space upon real-world environments. As one aspect of futures images research, it is vital that we have a more systematic understanding of how images of the future in general, and more specifically the images I have selected and analysed in this investigation, have actually functioned in their capacity as pulls of the future in the real world: whether they have been communicated, implemented, or lost along the way in an escalating cacophony of proliferating images, or whether they have brought identifiable change to the futures of Japan. New images that continue to be produced need also to be monitored and mapped out.

4. *Cross-Cultural Comparisons Using the Futures Triangle Analysis*: This investigation focused on Japan as the unit of analysis, but further applications of the FTA across cultural areas could be expected to provide new and insightful material for developing not only the FTA as method, but new understanding of inter-cultural issues. How does the operation of the image of the future within the FTA dynamic compare between different nations, different cultures, and what can they learn from each other? How can these points of difference and commonality be reconciled and strategically applied to

the better understanding of futures issues and improving the possibilities of positive outcomes?

5. *Image of the future evaluation against hybrid criteria*: Over the duration of this investigation I identified a number of criteria models for evaluating the image of future. Although I did not apply these criteria, retrospective reflection upon my own research strongly suggests that comparative model analyses would reveal new details and insights into futures images. New hybrid models could be developed and strategically applied not only to existing images but for developing new images. My own viewpoint is that the richer the criteria, the more accurately we can determine the viability of the image.

6. *Theory to Praxis—Towards Enactment*: A final recommendation for further research suggests that more work is required to understand the dynamics that inform the shift from image of the future at the theoretical level, to strategically applying futures image for positive effect in real world futures issues. This gap between theory and praxis is an issue that need be applied to not only Japanese images, but to all images.

Conclusion

It is a feature of the Futures Triangle Analysis that the sites of tension and the synergistic effects produced by the three dimensions of push, pull and weight, suggest the limitations and possibilities of plausible futures. What then can we say about Japan's futures having subjected that nation to a Futures Triangle Analysis in conjunction with a Causal Layered Analysis?

I have shown how the pushes of the present aspects identified by the synergies of new technologies, globalization/internationalization, demographics, emerging values, and the creative vanguard, constitute a widespread, deeply rooted coalition of forces to a kind of future qualitatively different from Japan's past and present. The push of new technologies towards increasingly softer, environmentally friendly, and local knowledge technologies shows a massive shifting away from the modernistic, catch-up technological drive from Japan's Meiji and postwar periods. The pushes of globalization and internationalization drive Japan to be potentially more at home in the world, more open to global influences, more flexible in their interpretations of Japanese-ness, and less culturally parochial. This particular push is able of creating a Japan that increasingly transforms from absorber and inheritor of "meaning" to maker of meaning, as exemplified by the global impact of Japan's animé film, *manga*, interactive games, and character icons. Emerging values systems, often resulting from the influences of the fifth push in this analysis, that of Japan's creative vanguard, have been shown to be a wide and deep complex of individuals, organizations, communities and movements, who are not only derivative and imitative, but possess international influence for positive futures-oriented change. Collectively these findings subvert one theory discussed in this thesis which claims Japan is unable to self-transform.

From the small but diverse sample of seven Japanese images of the future, we are able to understand the extent, depth, creativity and richness of Japanese metaphor and myth. The challenge will be to support them by future-oriented theories, and convincing foresight strategies which could maximize their survivability and viability within Japan's competitive field of competing images.

Appendix I

Literature Relevant to Japanese Futures

Outline

Appendix I is an overview of key developments in Japan-specific images of the future research. I divide this Appendix into two parts. The first is a very brief summary of early Japanese research into general futures. The second part surveys a range of texts which although not always derived from a Futures Studies discourse, do offer useful insights into Japan's futures research and thinking. This Appendix is useful especially for readers with an interest in the history of Japanese futures research.

Early Japanese Futures Research

Pioneering research on Japanese futures issues by Inoguchi and Mushakōji (in Ornauer et al., 1976) demonstrated Japan to be the most "future conscious" nation in a ten-nation survey. As the economically fastest growing country in the world at that time Japanese leaders would be inclined to induce in its population a sense of time as something clearly portrayed as a forward-pointing arrow. Key findings in the report noted that the future consciousness of Japanese people tended to be more domestically-oriented rather than internationally so and that the "Japanese seem even more than others to see the future in technological terms, both positively and negatively" (p. 53).

In another pioneering futures research report, Kato (1985) presents an image of a future Japan in the form of a synopsis of key determinants shaping Japanese society in the year 2000, including the following dimensions: "population structure, education, social

change, resources, the shift to an information society, Japan's economic model, and its relationships with neighbouring countries" (p. 570). This research is premised on his observation that Japan's post-war guiding image of the future, the "catch-up and overtake" the West model, has outgrown its usefulness. He furthermore attributes Japan's miraculous modernization to two main factors: diligent man-power, and the decision of the government to "pursue a program of revolutionary social change known as the Meiji Revolution" (p. 570).

The implications of this kind of "achievement-oriented" society have 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" (p. 571). 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 concludes his analysis by assigning the hopes for Japan's futures on the emergence of the new generation, 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". But Kato stops short of suggesting what those new futures images might consist of and the processes of transformation required for achieving them (p. 573).

Futures-Informative Texts

Herbig and Borstoff (1995) explore the implications of Japan's so-called *shinjinrui* (新人類) or new breed of young people, for the future of Japanese society. Woronoff

(1983) has labeled the *shinjinrui* the "reactionless" generation, who not only show no leftist inclinations but display absolutely no interest in politics. The authors 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 characterized 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). *Shinjinrui* are also depicted as individualistic—*kojin-shugi* (個人主義)—eschewing traditional Confucian values that apparently underlie the "legendary Japanese values of loyalty, hard work and respect for elders" (p. 51). In terms of communication, *shinjinrui* "create a network of friends in separate non-overlapping groups, so they can express different aspects of their personality 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 characterized as having low future-orientation, are concerned mainly with short-term personal problems, and have only passing awareness of the global crises facing mankind (p. 52).

Despite this overall bleak portrayal and apparent low futures-orientation of the *shinjinrui*, they do however impact Japan's imaging of alternative futures in a number of significant ways. 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 aging *shinjinrui*

insistent on pursuing the Good Life, forcing companies to adjust to this new reality. Smaller companies are learning to attract skilled personnel from among *shinjinrui*, which may in turn lead to the rise of a new kind of entrepreneur who creates his or her own company based on these 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* (ふるさと作り) or "old village"-making program in the city of Kodaira, 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—the *furusato* or old village which emerged as the dominant representation of the Japanese past and present in the mass media since the global 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" (p. 5).

As one 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-à-vis the present, and the future vis-à-vis the past" (p. 6), the concept of *furusato-zukuri* is employed by the state as a synonym for "cultural administration" 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 administrative reform which was characterized by the "culturization of administration" (*gyōsei no bunka-ka*・行政の文化化). This even entailed a kind of strategic impression management in transforming the very look of the administration's buildings by

> decorating government offices with works of art; producing colorful 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, this strategic deployment of the term *furusato*, the old village, functions in the current futures-building images discourses 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" (p. 37).

Nakamae's (1998) *Three Futures for Japan: Long Hollowing or Rebirth: Views from 2020*, perhaps signifies a turning point in Japan's relationship with the discourses of futures making. *Three Futures* is a thorough study on Japanese futures images. In this compilation of future scenarios for Japan, Nakamae 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 assumption 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 americanization of Japan, have led Japan into a bottleneck. Based on extensive interviews and thirteen workshops, three scenarios for Japan's futures were formulated:

1. *The Long Hollowing*: This scenario images a Japan beset by a defiant financial sector refusing to transform itself for long-term benefit; diminished economic performance; loss of social vitality as the result of an ageing population; pressing environmental problems and conflict with Asia that goes beyond Japan's coping capacity. 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 (p. 256).
2. *Crash & Rebirth*: In the second scenario, crash and rebirth images Japan in a preferred future where the nation's financial world 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 (p. 258)
3. *Hercules Departs*: The third is a dystopian scenario in which security plays a vital role. Here, America's reduced military presence in Asia causes domestic political and social confusion. Japan is faced with difficult choices in the areas of self-

defense and foreign policy (p. 260).

The book suggests that in order to achieve the positive image embodied in the crash and rebirth scenario, "foreign pressure"—*gai-atsu*—will be a primary influencing factor. It is also suggested that Japan's national characteristics of resilience in crisis situations, the samurai spirit and social solidarity will facilitate transitions to a preferable future society (p. 256). The authors also hypothesize that without the shock of an external influence, and direct experience of a systemic crisis, true social transformation will not come about, while in another image, it is claimed that Japan has "lost track" (道標を失った・ *dōhyō o ushinatta*), and is like a giant tanker without a clear sense of direction (p. 259).

The opinion that Japan lacks the inherent ability to self-transform without the aid of external pressure (*gai-atsu*) is a recurring theme in this book. As the author notes, even the changes brought by the Meiji Restoration were the direct result of foreign pressure in the form of the "black ships" (p. 260). Another participant in the scenarios-creating process claims that although ordinary Japanese people are very flexible and optimistic, it is Japan's bureaucrats and government officials that are inflexible and conservative (p. 261); 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).

One participant believes that the key to Japan's self-facilitated social transformation lies in a new *communicative-ness*. It is related how the Japanese are culturally reluctant to show 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) while another suggests that transformation can be best achieved through the active roles of Japanese women (p. 265).

President Yazaki (1996) of the Kyoto Future Generations Alliance Foundation presents a meta-image of the future in which he claims that Japan's goals:

> should be to search for a new way of living by channeling 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 (cited 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. Four conquering mechanisms for overcoming egoism are outlined including:

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

Once these four aspects of egoism have been overcome, a new and preferable Japanese worldview possessing four new viewpoints can emerge. Replacing the above negative dimensions are: (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" approach providing a future-oriented and therefore sustainable temporal perspective (p. 35).

In a presentation at the conference *The World We Are Entering*, Inoguchi Takashi's (1999) 'Three Scenarios for the Third Millennium' uses three broad frameworks of global politics to explore Japan's futures; the Westphalian; the Philadelphian; and the Anti-Utopian. The Westphalian refers to the "well-known framework of nation-state, national economy, and national culture whose centrality lies in the preeminence of state sovereignty" (p. 1). The second, Philadelphian scenario revolves around "popular sovereignty, built on the trinity of democracy, the global market, and global governance" (p. 1), while the final Anti-Utopian framework paints a scenario characterized by Japan's "loss of sovereignty" brought about by a "failed state, the marginalized economy, and localized anarchy" (p. 2). Arguing that all mentalities exist to some extent and in varying degrees within contemporary Japanese culture, Inoguchi attempts to synthesize them into a grand strategy for Japan's future in 2000-2050 (p. 17). The results of this synthesis are that Japan's own futures lie in what can only be an uneasy tension between all three frameworks, without the possibility for a transcendent, novel or creatively synergistic scenario. Inoguchi offers in conclusion three elaborations on this Westphalian-Philadelphian-Anti-Utopian mix. Firstly, Japan will remain, on the surface, Westphalian (p. 19). Secondly, the combined pushes of globalization, uni-

polarization of security, and democratization of governance will ensure that the Philadelphian will continue to exert an irreversible influence on Japan (p. 19). And thirdly, in reaction to the excesses of the Philadelphian push, Japan can expect a persistent undercurrent of a "possible salience of the Anti-Utopian scenario" (p. 1). Inoguchi finished off at a point ripe with analytic possibility for the futures-oriented thinker in search of ways out of this closed cycle, framed as it is, with no possibility of exit to a preferable future.

In 'Changing Japan Through Think-Tanks', Suzuki Takahiro (in Slaughter, 1996f) seeks to apply a Futures Studies perspective to a strategic social transformation approach for Japan's futures, which he envisages as achieved through a future-oriented and independent think-tank. Embodied in the currently operational think tank Global Foundation for Research and Scholarship, one of Suzuki's key missions is to facilitate the creation of Japan's first true model of socio-political development, as described in the following passage:

> Japan has not had to create its own socio-political development model in the past because it has in a sense always been a developing country, following the lead of more advanced nations. However there is no existing model of development by which Japan can transcend the circumstances in which it currently finds itself. It is now compelled to create its own development paradigm (p. 3).

This last statement gets to the core of the objective of this doctoral investigation. I wish to know if indeed there are such 'models', or 'images of the future', which in fact do transcend Japan's current circumstances.

Suzuki's vision of an independent think tank as one of a portfolio of critical social technologies for transforming Japan is currently supported by similar visions. Another independent and non-profit think tank known as Japan Initiative (構想日本・ *kōsō nihon*) headed by future-oriented thinker Kato Hideki (2002) claims to be in the business of turning "aspirations into policy".

In 'Japan at the Crossroads', author, futurist and consultant on sustainable development Hazel Henderson (2001) portrays Japan's futures in a comparatively positive light, using a Futures Studies perspective. Her first bold observation is that "Japan is the world's first economy to attain maturity" (p. 1), indicating that Japan is in the current throes of effecting its transition from a "short-term, material economic growth at whatever social and environmental costs—to more long-term economic optimization" (p. 1). This implies a shift towards more "spiritual, non-material concerns" as consumers seek out "personal development, intellectual challenges, opportunities to volunteer and make their communities more livable".

Writing eight years before Henderson's 'Crossroads', veteran Japan commentator Karel van Wolferen (1993), had an opposing theory. Henderson's usage of the 'crossroads' metaphor, as a signature of a Japan capable of strategically choosing between multiple future courses, is a view not shared by van Wolferen, who is of the opinion that:

> changes in Japan are not coming from the youth, or from consumers, or the public generally, because the public cannot translate its misgivings and dissatisfaction into political action (p. 22).

Rather than seeing Japan as a self-transforming nation, the "changes that take place in Japan are triggered by circumstances that are essentially external, like the inability of the world to absorb Japan's productive capacity or like the fact that the United States is no longer worried at all about what it has been most worried about since the end of the war, because the Soviet Union no longer exists" (p. 22). What stands out in van Wolferen's analysis is his observation that Japan, far from being a mature economy, is shown, once again, to lack the social will to self-transform.

In David Staley's (2002) 'Scenarios for Japan's Uncertain Future', it is suggested that "by the year 2025, Japan will be transformed by a combination of three driving forces", including the restructuring of the economy, the long term effects of an aging population and the coming age of Japan's "new breed" generation, the so-called *shinjinrui* that has been discussed previously in this investigation. From the confluence of these three intersecting societal tensions, Staley draws up four contrasting scenarios for Japan's futures. I quote at length:

1. In scenario one, "*Japan goes entrepreneurial*", lifetime employment weakens allowing individual initiative to flourish in the workplace; Japan's corporations harness the creativity of its younger workers, while American type risk-taking entrepreneurs create their own startup ventures eventually producing Japanese style Bill Gateses by 2025.
2. Scenario two portrays Japan as a "*runner up*" nation, settling into second-tier economic status, delivering high levels of "wealth, health and literacy to its people" in much the same way as Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries, but relinquishing its position as a global leader.

3. Scenario three: Here, Japan undergoes a transformation to become an "*inclusive society*", finally facilitating the acceptance of women to aspire to positions of authority in government and corporate life; foreign immigrants are granted access to fill Japan's chronic labour shortage, and are, over time, accepted and welcomed as Japanese citizens.
4. In scenario four on the other hand, Japan retreats into social conservatism, resisting gender equality and aspirations of multiculturalism. Japan's women, rather than becoming the new *tour de force* in politics and business, are encouraged to care for the country's aging population, foreigners are discriminated against, with Japan finally occupying an increasingly isolationist position in global affairs (p. 7).

Krs'n'aseveda'nanda (2000) offers an alternative perspective on Japan's futures. Operating from within a Proutist concept of 'Balanced Economy', Krs'n'aseveda'nanda argues that Japan's current crisis of the future is a "manifestation of natural, social and economic forces working to push the Japanese economy back towards a balanced state" (p. 129). Any attempts to address this "healing process" should involve a "renaissance in agriculture and rural industries" (129). The concept of "Balanced Economy" is, as Krs'n'aseveda'nanda explains, one "part of a larger socio-economic theory known as PROUT or Progressive Utilization Theory, formulated and expanded upon between the years 1959 and 1990 by the great Indian social thinker, P. R. Sarkar" (p. 132). Essentially, PROUT provides for a spiritual worldview in which the "ideal society is seen as one that both sustains and facilitates this process [of seeking higher forms of consciousness] not just for human beings but for all life" (p. 132). To circumscribe the notion of a PROUTian-type Balanced Economy, Krs'n'aseveda'nanda indirectly

deploys the language of Complex Systems and Chaos when he suggests that even small deviations from balanced proportions "will encourage the decline of even the most prosperous economy" (134). Although Sarkar warns that "if the number of people engaged in agriculture falls below 30% agriculture will be neglected", only "4% of the Japanese population were engaged in farming" in 1998, leaving "most Japanese [to] live in an unbroken urban sprawl utterly suffocating the human spirit" (134). These perspectives suggest that the solutions to Japan's crisis of the future reside within righting this imbalance, with the ultimate aim of achieving not only economic security for that nation, but the formation of revitalized communities, both new and old, allowing for the creation of a "more balanced lifestyle, closer to the nature and more in harmony with the original ideals of Japanese life" (p. 144).

In 'Japan Invents the Future', Daniel Pipes (1992) disturbs two stereotypical views of that nation. The first stereotype is one that condemns Japan to its role as cultural copycat, incapable of originality. The second stereotype suggests that "if Japanese have any originality, it is limited to two areas—technical ingenuity and economic proficiency", both perceived by Pipes as "glib generalizations" that ignore the "broad-based and profound cultural transformation that has taken place in Japan" (p. 2). Pipes highlights that nation's creative contribution to global culture in areas as diverse as business; government; policing; education; science and technological development; literature; theatre; Kabuki; cinema; painting; architecture; fashion; philosophy and religion; food cultures; sports; and current trends in Japanese popular culture infiltrating not only other Asian cultures but also the West. He also notes that some observers feel that Japanese culture holds the key to the future" (p. 26), quoting from a Tokyo-based

interior designer who claims that “the future belongs to the Japanese. When I am in France, I am fascinated by the culture, by the decoration, the furniture, the art. But I can’t help feel that a great deal of it belongs to yesterday. Japan, to me, looks like tomorrow” (p. 27). In all fields of human behaviours, supported by a stable political economy, and the “cosmopolitanism of the populace”, the Japanese are able to explore new possibilities, to the envy of foreign counterparts. As Herbert Passin (in Pipes, 1992) explains: “Japanese no longer simply copy the modes of the outside world; they now participate actively in the development of international styles” (p. 27).

From Pipes’s analysis and reconceptualization of Japanese stereotypes, we can extract important implications for this investigation into Japan’s images of the future. One implication is that Japan does possess the requisite creativity for producing compelling images of the future which possess viability not only for that nation’s domestic futures, but for adoption into other cultural areas. This highlights an apparent contradiction in the litany that portrays Japan as inherently incapable of self-transformation (Nakamae, 1998; van Wolferen, 1993). With the trinity of creativity needed to produce novel cultural artifacts, such as those mentioned above, or in our case, images of the future, along with the communicative capacity and social energy to see these realized domestically and internationally, it would seem to follow that the business of creating, articulating, implementing and diffusing viable and novel images of the future is indeed possible for Japan.

Although Sakaiya Taichi’s (2003) *The Twelve Men Who Made Japan* does not explicitly deal with Japan’s futures, we can read it as an implicit attempt to explore the

possibilities of that nation to produce the requisite "creative power" (p. 263), the new generations of "men" who will "make" Japan for the future, under its current crisis, which as Sakaiya sees it is:

> In the coming years, when software will take over from hardware, Japan will no longer be able to catch up by copying things that other countries have made. The critical question is whether the creativity-poor Japanese will be able to survive in the age of mega-competition (p. 263).

As we can gather, Pipes (1992) would not agree with Sakaiya's condemnation of a "creativity-poor" Japanese, a claim which Sakaiya self-contradicts further on by saying that "the Japanese have also displayed creativity and originality" (p. 263). Indeed this is the raison d'être for his book—to show that ten Japanese men, one fictional Japanese novel protagonist—*Hikaru Genji* (源氏光)—and one non-Japanese—General Douglas MacArthur—were the kinds of creative minorities to provide just this impetus and the originality to redirect Japan's historical trajectory of the time. In fact, each of the twelve 'men' (and the male bias is to be lamented) usher in new paradigms, with Prince Shōtoku's introduction of a worldview based on religious plurality "an original idea of which the world outside Japan offers no parallel" (p. 265).

Another important text is Ishida Baigan's (in Sakaiya, 2003) system of thought, *Sekimon Shingaku* or 'Heart Learning', a "unique philosophy that the Japanese can be proud of" (p. 265). With his history of Japanese paradigmatic or epistemic shifts, Sakaiya is building an argument whose central tenet must be read as saying: each period brings its own sets of problems, but in the final analysis, Japan always rises to the

occasion, building upon its deep historical reservoir, to find new and creative solutions as the ways out to better futures. To conclude his book, Sakaiya finishes by saying:

> The great changes we are facing cannot be overcome by altering systems, organizational structure, of by fine-tuning economic figures or official procedures. What is required is to overhaul the bureaucratic culture that has built up since the Meiji period, and instead create a culture of the people. We have to go beyond anything that even the twelve great men in this book achieved. It is our decisions about which aspects of the past to keep, and which to throw away, that will determine the future of Japan (p. 269).

Achieving such a massive transformation away from a bureaucratic culture, what Foucault would call a 'governmentalizing' culture, to a "culture of the people," reflects what has been one of the major concerns of this doctoral investigation. Sakaiya's second comment—"going beyond ... the twelve great men"—has been another central focus, as I wished to reveal the currently emerging discourses of the people in the form of images of the future. His third point, regarding "which aspects to keep, and which to throw away," brings to front stage the notion of human agency in historical cultural editing. Is it possible to consciously and selectively 'throw away' inconvenient aspects of a nation's deep history, and at what cost? Is there not a preferable Futures Studies oriented way to transcend histories whilst remaining fully conscious of the traces they leave in contemporary cultures?

Jeffrey Kingston's (2001) *Japan in Transformation, 1952-2000* is another valuable resource for the Japan futures researcher. I wish to summarize Kingston's thinking with one key idea below and with his analyses of two key documents referent to Japan's

futures. First, the paragraph below provides a focus for Kingston's overall thesis on Japan's futures. He asks:

> Where is Japan's new frontier? Where are the new sources of growth, innovation and dynamism? The new paradigm will be shaped powerfully by the aging of society, the need to integrate women more fully, and to some extent foreign workers, into the labor market and the ongoing IT revolution. The logic of the prevailing paradigm cannot accommodate or impede these forces, but it is too soon to speculate on the outcome they imply. What is clear is that Japan's future depends on how resolutely Japan can shed the practices and patterns of the past that handicap the economy and have made it difficult to translate Japan's enormous wealth into shared public prosperity (p. 103).

The problem of locating Japan's "new frontier" or frontiers, has also been a major concern for my own investigation. This concern served as the focus for the Futures Triangle analysis in which I attempted to show the dynamics between five sets of pushes of the present, as played out against a range of pulls of the future, and weights of history. As such, I disagree with Kingston's claim above that it is "too soon to speculate on the outcome they imply". This is the role and functioning of the Futures Triangle Analysis: to make sense of, to reveal the tensions and dynamics of inter-related forces, and from these, map out the range of plausible futures that can emerge. Another point I wish to disturb from the same passage, speaking from a Futures Studies perspective, is Kingston's notion that "Japan's future depends on how resolutely Japan can shed the practices and patterns of the past that handicap the economy" (p. 103). Rather than a singular 'future' dependent on a shedding of the past, a futures perspective, in particular a macrohistorical perspective, would point to the need to be more acutely aware of that nation's position within an overall historical patterning as an indicator of possible 'ways

out' of the present and into a preferable future. A futures perspective prefers the notion that a nation's futures are dependent on its having positive and realistic images of the future, accompanied by the requisite social energy to implement them, whilst strategically employing that nation's histories and cultural contexts as a reservoir for cultural revitalization and renewal, not just Kingston's economic revitalization.

Secondly, I wish to look at Kingston's summarized analysis of Document 28—'Japan's Third Transformation: Five Bridges to the Twenty-First Century' (p. 179)—and Document 31—'Japan in the 1990s: Ichiro Ozawa's Five Freedoms' (p. 188), as examples of future-oriented texts worthy of consideration. The former considers a speech by former Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi, who enunciates Japan's commencement of a third major transformation, the first being the Meiji Restoration and the second, the Post-War era (p. 179). The major paradigmatic shift entails a transformation no less than a "fulfillment of our souls", a shift from the material to the spiritual consisting of five bridges as the guiding metaphors.

The first, a "bridge to the world," is a call for a more globalized and internationalized Japan, taking a more appropriate position in global politics and international relations. The second bridge to prosperity guarantees an "abundant and comfortable lifestyle for the people", although the connectedness of this particular bridge with the meta-goal of fulfilling the soul remains somewhat fuzzy. The third bridge, to "safety", refers not so much to a life free of physical dangers, as to an assured post-retirement safety net for a Japan with a rapidly aging population. A fourth bridge entails "security", to which Obuchi means the creation of a "beautiful and stable environment", a "renewable

economic society", which "respects nature and preserves natural resources in order to defend our irreplaceable earth" (p. 184). The fifth and key bridge is the bridge to "the future" itself. This metaphor of the bridge to the future posits science and technology as key driving forces for economic development and improvement in the lifestyle of our people in the future, along with the creation of a "social infrastructure upon which each and every one of our people can dream for the future" (p. 184). Supporting this future bridge will requite the "creation of unique schools in which a spirit of individuality and autonomy is respected", and a moral base in which the "spirit of warm and friendly relations among people, as well as our excellent culture and traditions, are precious assets which must be handed down and continued on into the future by the next generation" (p. 184). Despite the well-meaning tone of this policy speech, regrettably, as far as we can ascertain from Kingston's summaries, Obuchi is unable to make concrete connections between the five bridges and its overarching goal of facilitating a paradigm transformation of Japan towards "fulfillment of our souls".

The second document in Kingston's summarizations is Document 31, 'Japan in the 1990s: Ichiro Ozawa's Five Freedoms' (1994, p. 188), a proposal that constitutes a "direct challenge to the patterns of behaviour and the values that have permeated postwar [Japanese] society" (p. 189). Echoing Obuchi's call to a more spiritual oriented societal paradigm, Ozawa also refers to Japan as a society "dedicated solely to its corporations", with the peoples themselves as having become "mere cogs in the Japanese corporate wheel" (p. 189). But there is transformative potential for Japan through the realization of the "five freedoms": freedom from Tokyo, freedom from companies, overwork, ageism and sexism, and from regulation. I summarize:

1. Freedom from Tokyo seeks to decentralize the hegemonic authority imposed on the rest of Japan by Tokyo and the over-concentration of resources and population, not to mention decision power and creative skills base, which work against the development of suitably viable futures-oriented strategies throughout the rest of Japan.
2. Freedom from companies refers to dethroning the company as center of Japan's social and economic framework, to the individual citizen, charged with more leeway to create his or her own individual lives and lifestyles drawing from personal value systems.
3. The third freedom—from overwork—related to the above freedom from companies, expands this theme to include the right to be able to maintain satisfying personal lives whilst maintaining the right to work shorter hours, spend more time with family and on health-enhancing activities including spiritual advancement. Through such a granted freedom, it is hypothesized that the individual will be able to plan their own futures rather than having their futures imposed by corporations and corporate enforced values.
4. Freedom from ageism and sexism is a call for a more inclusive society, a recurrent theme in this Japanese futures overview. One aspect of ageism, not treated directly here by Kingston's analysis of Ozawa, is freedom from the constraints imposed by Japan's communication modes, which privilege the elder communicator, and male over female.
5. The fifth—freedom from regulation—"entails abolishing", or undoing, loosening, "anachronistic and meaningless rules", so that companies and individuals enjoy greater freedom, to presumably, be more creative and flexible (p. 189).

After his *Japan in Transformation*, Kingston (2004) follows up with a new book: *Japan's Quiet Transformation: Social Change and Civil Society in the Twenty-First Century*. To counteract the mass media litanies portraying Japan as a "nation adrift, doing too little too late to cope with its enduring economic malaise", his own story "highlights substantive transformation rather than dismal prospects", pointing to the "seeds of change" (p. xiv), the cumulative effects of which constitute a quiet transformation characterized by a "gradual and incremental reinvigoration of civil society" (p. xv). The focus of his revived argument suggests that:

> Since the mid-1990s a series of interlocking and mutually reinforcing reforms in government policies and corporate practices, coupled with legislative and institutional innovations, have been the laying the foundations for a thorough renovation of civil society. Citizens are responding by using the new weapon of information disclosure and participating in non-profit organizations (NPOs) to exercise political oversight and shape the national agenda. Popular support for open government and concerns about quality-of-life issues are increasingly reflected in politicians' campaigns. Greater transparency and accountability are evident and affecting relations between the people and those who govern (p. xv).

The image of a new Japan that Kingston's analysis shows emerging from the "rubble of Japan, Inc." (p. 310) , the "images of stagnation and gridlock" (p. 306), a "transitional era marked by chaos" (p. 310) are envisaged as eventually coalescing into a new form of civil society, partly motivated, as he explains by the "desire to establish a more people-friendly society" (p. 308) from which "there is no turning back" (p. 311).

A more scholarly and structured analysis of Japan's futures is Mushakōji Kinhide's (1993) 'Post-Modern Cultural Development in East Asia: Beyond the Japanies Version

of Confucianism'. As one of Japan's pioneering futures researchers, this thesis provides the Japan futures researcher with a rare analysis, portraying Japan in its macrohistorical position poised between two massive societal organizing paradigms. Japan, Mushakōji warns, is undergoing a transformation from a Confucian based cosmology and economic model: the "JapaNIEs model" which privileges the "values of harmony, obedience, and hard-working dedication to the community" (p. 58). This model is, according to Mushakōji, undergoing a shift to a postmodern Daoist syncretic hybrid which incorporates aspects of Shinto and shamanism (p. 70). While the former Confucian order will inevitably, by virtue of its accumulated contradictions, lead to an unsustainable development path, Japan will be forced "to choose ecological survival by stressing its Daoist tradition" (p. 72). Mushakōji sees this battle between the polarities of Yin and Yang as being represented by the Confucianists (Yang), residing in governments and firms, and the Daoists (Yin), inside neighbourhood communities, families, and "even within the minds of individuals" (p. 73). In the context of my own investigation into Japanese images of the future after the first decade of the 21st century, the question to be asked is to what extent Mushakōji's prediction has in fact come to pass.

In another book, although not strictly a book on Japanese futures, Oguma Eiji's (2002) *A Genealogy of Japanese Self-Images*, serves as an invaluable secondary contribution to this overview of futures related literature. In this book Oguma provides an expansive, indeed macrohistorical perspective of the transformations that Japanese self-images have undergone: from birth of the nation theories, to contrasting theories of the homogeneity or mixed-ness of the Japanese peoples, Japan's confrontation with the

Other, the operating of deep historical myths as they have shifted under new interpretations through time and time, and other metaphoric representations of self-imagery. An especially useful point in Oguma's genealogy is set out as the conclusion to his book in which he states:

> The conclusion of this book, therefore, is very simple. It is not sufficient to fight against myths by destroying one myth and replacing it with another, as in, for example, criticizing the myth of the homogenous nation by replacing with the myth of the mixed nation. What is required is to liberate ourselves from all myths—something which will require some work (p. 349).

In this sense Oguma is using the term myth, not in its positive meaning, but in the sense that myths function as the catalysts of self-deception, whose intra-social effects are usually the outcomes of the dominant message-producing aristocracies.

A third application from Oguma's book points to a knowledge gap that provides for a convenient point of entry for my own analysis. To elaborate, of all the self-images that Oguma covers, he is unable to point out the roles of the ever-shifting self-image within the context of Japan's images of the future, how contemporary Japanese see themselves in relation to the future. Does Japan image itself as a nation colonized by external images of the future, the neo-Black Ships of the 21st century, or does Japan see itself as a nation whose time is yet to come, and who will eventually, having 'won the peace', once again rise to lead a new variation upon the theme of the ill-fated Greater Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere with the dream of "all corners of the world under a single roof"?

Of importance to this investigation, in what is a mostly masculinist-centered meta-discourse, we refreshingly find 'The Development of Japanese Women and Future Prospects' by Saito-Fukunaga Mitsuko (1991). This work creates a genealogy of the roles of Japanese women through history from the *Amaterasu Ōmikami* the great deity (p. 397), to the Middle Ages, the civil war period of the 16th century, the Edo Period (1603-1867), the Meiji and Taisho periods (1868-1925), and Showa to the present (1926-). In effect she creates a female Japanese macrohistorical framework in order to investigate Japan's futures from the perspective of Japanese women. Written in 1991, at the end of Japan's Bubble Period, much of Saito-Fukunaga may seem dated in light of the massive social transformations that have affected Japan during its post-bubble and post-Global Financial Crisis days, especially the shifting roles and perspectives that have permeated Japan through the resulting changes in women's everyday lives. Despite this apparent 'datedness' (and I use the word with care, as we can not be certain that the current roles of Japanese women are all that they seem, nor do we know that the pre-equality conscious days will not return) there are three points that are relevant. Firstly, Saito-Fukunaga summarizes noteworthy changes in the course of Japanese women's lives in five main transformations including:

1. Longer periods of schooling for women;
2. Later marriages—to which we can add higher divorce rates and more unmarried single mothers;
3. Shorter childbearing periods, meaning that women's housebound duties are compressed creating leeway for alternative life-enhancing activities;
4. A later "third period", the period of intensive childcare lasting until the last child enters school, a trend whose ramifications further expand upon the freeing up of

time devoted to the home, allowing for alternative activities; and

5. Longer periods of being without children: this period refers to the years free of any child-rearing responsibilities, through to old age, the so-called "empty nest period", which has led, as Saito-Fukunaga points out, to a vacuum in women's lives continuing into a "solitary old age period" (p. 401-2).

A second point of interest is Saito-Fukunaga's treatment of future prospects for Japanese women. Here, she declares that "Japanese women are living in a multiple-channel society today", a shift away from narrowly accepted social roles for women in society; normalized historical patterns have opened up new possibilities, which we can extrapolate will diversify increasingly in the future (p. 402). Accordingly, in the "future, women should be an independent thinker having a definite outlook and purpose of life, which goes beyond her family and her nation in this age of globalization" (p. 403). Nineteen years after this chapter was written, analyses in Chapters five and six have attempted to shed light on the extent to which these changes have been realized, or otherwise.

The third point of concern comes from the last two paragraphs of Saito-Fukunaga's chapter in which she indicates the need for men and women to work in cooperation in a high-tech society (p. 404), although she does not elaborate on what the causal connection between high-tech and cooperation mean. More importantly, Saito-Fukunaga's final word on the futures of Japan and the roles of women in creating such futures declare that for Japan to truly transform, both sexes must change in order to achieve liberation from stereotypes images of the past. To facilitate this transition to a

stronger partnership model of society, a new field of research is proposed—"men-women studies", on which the focus is of an "understanding of the position of men and women in relation to the total picture of the universe and its history" (p. 404). It is by following the prescriptions above that "the position of men and women in the 21st century will be much closer to the ideal than it is today" (404).

Donald Richie's (2003) *The Image factory: Fads and Fashions in Japan*, is at first an unlikely addition to this overview of Japan's futures. Suggested by the title, Richie's book is "both an investigation into Japanese fads, fashions and styles, and an appreciation of their inherent meanings", covering aspects as diverse as *manga*, karaoke, theme parks, *kosupure*—or costume play, mobile phones, the sex industry, and the so-called 'image clubs' (see inside cover). In particular, Richie points to the especially ephemeral nature of Japanese self-images as expressed through constantly changing fads and fashions, in what amounts to a "highly evolved image culture" that is more noticeable than most other nations "perhaps because it is more commercialized than many" (p. 17). This centrality of the image has been of direct concern to my own analysis of Japan's images *of the future* as one kind of image production—in this period in history in which we witness a proliferation of such futures images. By extrapolating from Richie's thesis on Japan's highly evolved image culture, characterized by its rapidity of image-turnover and ephemeral fleetingness—especially when compared to other image cultures, we can in part explain the social functioning of futures images within Japanese culture. Richie explains this phenomenon of the Japanese image as one aspect of Japanese aesthetics, by noting:

> This tolerance, even affection for the transient, is one of the qualities of the Japanese aesthetic. Traditional Japan has long seen and shown the beauty of the ephemeral" (p. 12), reflected contemporarily in "gold flakes on sushi fleetingly seen during Japan's short-lived 'bubble' years (p. 162).

A second idea pertains to the notion of *wa*, which has performed as a recurring leitmotif in my investigation, or what he calls "the circle of agreement" or "consensus of harmony" (p. 167). *Wa* recalls Richie, "remains an idea, not a fact. It is an ideal to be aspired to, not a goal which has to be attained. It [*wa*] constitutes an ideology—an invisible one" whose problematic aspects "are rarely acknowledged and seldom allowed to show themselves" (p. 168). Here, under the social construction of *wa*, unruly nature is traditionally tamed and like the Japanese garden and the bonsai tree, the potentially unruly populace is trained into belief in the *wa* (p. 168). One of the features of *wa* is that, according to Richie "*wa* needs concern itself only with the present—there is no past *wa* worth mentioning, and it is not possible in Japanese to formulate a future for anything, let alone *wa*" (p. 168). Claiming that Japanese language lacks a true future tense, "Japanese traditionally believe only in present reality: *utsutsu*, that which is right before your eyes. Future and past tense alike tend to be seen as insignificant" (p. 169). With the present as the "only inhabitable" space, all Japanese images of the future are rendered problematic in the face of such deep historical reading of *wa*.

I also include in my overview Gavan McCormack's (1999) masterful "critical examination of the dilemmas facing contemporary Japan" (p. xvi), *The Emptiness of Japanese Affluence*. This analysis encapsulates Japan's multiple transitions through history in the formulations of the "constructions state", the "leisure state", the "farm

state", the "regional state", and the "peace state" (p. xv), in order to provide insight into the directions Japan is likely to take in the future. As the title implies, McCormack interrogates the costs of Japan's having achieved its historical goals of catching up with the United States and Europe, at the widespread social costs of a devastated environment, an exhausted population working and living in relatively low standard conditions, and ultimately left no clear image of the nation's futures. From the litany of unfolding state projects defining the national purpose, what is there for Japan at century's end, asks the final chapter:

> The deep-rooted dissatisfaction with the workings of the supposedly triumphant market in Japan, and the search for an alternative way in government, business, and society generally, gathers strength as the end of the century looms, even if the direction it will eventually take remains unclear (p. 289).

To make his point McCormack refers us to a 1995 *Governmental White Paper* which stressed the "urgency to move to society based on the use of renewable materials and energy in a sustainable cycle, calling attention to the model of Ainu society, which had preserved its natural ecology and treated foods taken from rivers and sea as blessings from the gods" (p. 290). While the token gesture in praise of "Ainu ecological wisdom" was a first for the Japanese government, no lessons from Ainu culture seem to have been applied to the futures of Japan as a whole.

Two points from McCormack are pivotal for my own investigation. The first is McCormack's aspirations to see Japan assist in creating a "future world and regional order founded on peace", the first step of which is to cooperate with Japan's

neighbouring countries to “establish a common past”, as a “precondition for a shared future” (p. 291). A second pointer to Japan’s image of the future expresses hope for a true transformation away from a “sublimation of social and individual goals to the ends of the corporation”, “market share” and the “routinized, rationalized organization of human life” towards a transformation in every day lifestyle, a program for a “reorienting of Japan’s energies in creative and socially beneficial ways” (p. 294). Such changes, McCormack concludes, are most deeply rooted in Japan’s multiplying popular movements and grass-roots organizations shown to be actively resisting the “excesses of corporate society, environmental degradation, fetishistic consumerism, and the now collective gloom and hysteria” (p. 296). A transformation of the kind mentioned here would lead to a new vision of an ideal future Japan whose features would include restoring Japan’s immense natural beauty combined with the “wisdom and maturity of a post-growth order based on revived regional communities, openness to the world, economic zero-growth and zero-emission technology, and restoration of mountains, rivers, and sea” (p. 297).

I turn to a Japanese author who has specialized in writing about Futures Studies and how this discipline should be instrumental in Japanese cultural renewal, Hamada Kazuyuki. He has written two books in the Japanese language on Futures Thinking, *chiteki mirai-gaku nyūmon* (知的未来学入門・*An Introduction to Intellectual Futures Studies*) (1994), and *mirai-bijinesu o yomu: 10-nen-go o shiru tame no chiteki gijutsu* (未来ビジネスを読む：10 年後を知るための知的技術) (2005), simplified in English as *Read the Future Business*. Concentrating on the latter, I distill main points concerning Japanese futures thinking in general, and Japanese images of the future in specific.

Chapter one, ‘Futurology in Japan’ adopts a critical stance towards the status of Futures Thinking in Japan, as compared with Western countries, by which Hamada actually means the United States of America. His first criticism is that despite the universality of interest in the concept of ‘future’, certain aspects of Japan’s traditional sensibilities inherently reject such future-oriented posturing (p. 21). For example, the inevitability of the collapse of Japan’s bubble economy was never articulated despite the systematic and strategic deployment of various predictive technologies in both the USA and Japan, and Japan being armed with enough relevant information to indicate the collapse a *fait accompli* (p. 23). This points to a foresight communication dilemma: despite actionable information for the successful subversion of a negative future scenario, its possibility remained *un*-communicated, and consequently *un*-heeded.

Hamada points to a second ‘traditional’ Japanese cultural trait impeding strategic and systematic future-oriented thinking. He observes that although Futures Studies, as this field was understood from the 1960s to 1980s, was originally popular in Japan, it never underwent more than an un-systematic understanding and fuzzy application in economics, indicating a failure of Japan’s future-oriented thinkers to fully understand the “essence of Futures Studies” (p. 24). Hamada then makes the causal leap from this former observation to another indicating a strong tendency for Japanese to dislike the act of thinking about worst case scenarios (p. 28), which, are as much as anything else, the best spaces to look for and find new business opportunities (p. 27).

The implication of Hamada’s analysis is that Japan’s futures thinkers tended to ply their living by shying away from future danger signals in favour of “rose-coloured futures” (p.

32), exemplified by the 1969 publication *2001-nen no nippon* (2001 年の日本), or *Japan 2001*, replete with techno-utopian future worlds such as perfect earthquake prediction systems, male-female birthing pharmaceuticals, ubiquitous nuclear fusion plants, weather controlling systems and optically directed rockets (p. 32). According to Hamada's analysis this technological orientation accelerated over time culminating in its present state in which, borrowing from the observations of Kato Hideki (p. 34), "the woes of Japan are such that Futures Studies has never really taken hold in Japan, leading to a failure to adopt either global or human-oriented perspectives on the future" (p. 34).

Hamada's stance is not entirely antagonistic vis-à-vis Japan's techno-futures fetishes and the fruits of this orientation. He cites accomplishments such as the Earth Simulator (p. 34-5), whose implications and potential for creating better global environments are yet to be exploited. Nonetheless, Hamada concludes his critique of Japan's limited application of the broader possibilities contained in Futures Thinking with the following:

> Japan has ample information about the future, but has failed to use this effectively for creating better social futures. The root causes for Japan's low levels of achievement in the sectors of environmental planning, city development, improvement in transportation and distribution networks, are not due to a lack of resources in terms of super-computing power, but rather reflect lack of political will and the inability of Japan's peoples to conceive of alternative futures (p. 37).

From the above predicament and dilemma, Hamada's final word is to suggest that Japan is well situated on the 21st century global stage to make unique contributions to the betterment of world futures and well-being. In a world characterized by runaway

technological advancement detriment to the human condition, what is needed is a novel approach. New ways of "being in the world" can be achieved through a reinvigoration of "Oriental thought", a niche for Japan's sensibilities to be positively exploited in the future, a triple-worldview of new "coordinates" as a higher form of balance consisting of a *human-centered worldview*; the *natural environment*; and *technologies*. World futures depend on creating new perceptions of these three factors to right current imbalances, a task for which Japan is well-equipped (pp. 41-42).

Continuing with my overview, critic of popular culture Okada Toshio's (2000) *Lost Futures* presents a clear and bleak prospect of Japan's futures. Okada compresses critiques of 51 of Japan's futuristic projects as promises of the future ranging from the dream car, the 1970 Osaka Expo, scientific paradises, the dream kitchen of the future, the promise of gender equality, teaching machines, time capsules and space needles, amongst others, to prove his point. His question is: What ever happened to the promises of science, technology and democracy that characterized the nation's psychological landscape so pervasively from the 1950s through to the 1970s? His claim is that the abundance of alluring toys, mechanisms and *manga* up until the 1970s had provided the Japanese people with dreams of a futuristic utopia (未来の理想郷・ *mirai no risō-kyō*), which having never been fulfilled, leaving a phantom of promised futures, indeed, "lost futures" (outside cover, p. 27). His objective: to investigate the social effects upon the Japanese mindset and mood of the early twenty-first century by looking at the gaps and sites of cognitive dissonance between the promised future and the actual future as it passes into the present (p. 8).

His first observation that concerns my investigation suggests that young Japanese have turned away from the prospects of a techno-scientific utopia, and are increasingly turning towards stories of the occult and divination. Instead, near past scientific paradises are taking on an increasingly nostalgic nuance, not of a possible future, but of a quaint past (p. 10, 16), provoking the question: What will become of Japan if this techno-skeptic pessimism becomes the new social norm, in a Japan in which once thought of future-oriented technologies become the stuff of entertainment?

Turning away from purely technological concerns, Okada's second observation concerns the future of global unity, symbolized in the so-called Unisphere object, on display at the time of publication in New York's memorial park since 1998 (p. 45). Originally designed to signify a positive vision of a unified world, recent international conflict casts doubt on its potential to unify what appears to be an increasingly fragmenting world. Okada suggests that the Unisphere as an American invention embodies more sinister significance such as a new global order, ordered according to totalizing American ideals. He notes how the Unisphere was represented in Ridley Scott's feature film *Black Rain*[44] filmed in Japan. The title *Black Rain* can also be interpreted as referring to the atomic radiation polluted rain that fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In an opening sequence the shot of Japan's Rising Sun flag—the *hi no maru* (日の丸)—fades out to reveal a blackened rusty Unisphere. Okada interprets this as a

[44] *Black Rain* (1989) is an American action-thriller film starring Michael Douglas, Andy Garcia, Ken Takakura, Kate Capshaw and Yusaku Matsuda, directed by Ridley Scott.

cynical American message about global unity as really meaning American domination (p. 47). The Japanese response to this cynical filmmaking dispels another dream of the future—of a possible global unification under the banner of world peace, the now troubled and endangered Article Nine of Japan's Constitution.

Okada's anthology of lost futures is prolific: among them, the promise of a gender equal Japan whose traces are still strongly felt through normalized and masked institutions such as the nominal differentiation between male and female police officers, with the former referred to simply as *keikan* (警官), a gender-neutral term, and the latter, as *fujin-keikan* (婦人警官), a term which makes the female gender explicit. Despite ongoing legislation and public policy to create a new generation imbued with the ideals of a gender-equal or partnership society, conventional outdated stereotypes and images linger in the private lives of Japanese people (p. 48-9).

Though too numerous to mention, Okada's cataloging of lost Japanese futures and dreams of ideal, utopian or simply 'better' worlds, points to a meta-problem, which can be summarized with the following key questions: What if things had been different? What if Japan could go back in time and take another try at history? At this moment in Japan's history, this interregnum between two social paradigms, what if Japan could now finally realize and achieve the lost futures and redeem the dreams of the past? (p. 196). Stretching the metaphor even further, Okada asks: What if Japan could flick a magical "switch" (p. 200), like those on a vending machine venue, to usher in a new world system faithful to the images of the future which passed unfulfilled into history (p. 203). Okada concludes with a powerful indicator of Japan's current position vis-à-vis

thinking about the future by noting:

> We [the Japanese people] never talk to our children about the 'future' any more. Talking about a future such as the importance of the goal of landing on the moon have become worn out. Instead of the 'future', all we teach the young is about being 'pure-hearted', or aiming for one's 'dreams'. We want them to keep believing in fairies and the Devil and their own potential. We, the generation who have become skeptical of the future, in fact, lost the possibility of achieving our desired future, console ourselves by saying that we hope our children at least keep believing in their dreams. And yet all along while preaching of pure-heartedness and dreams, trying to escape from a reality we know all too well to be harsh and merciless (p. 211).

I include in this overview Ogawa Tetsuo's (1991) 'Beyond the Hegemonic State: A Consideration on the Past and Future of Japan', due to its resonance with my own research. Ogawa's thesis is straightforward: Japan is at a turning point in a highly volatile world economy. Focused mainly on "self-interest" in the past, Japan should contribute more to the future of the world (p. 361), by noting: "... we Japanese people, especially young people seem to be uncertain of the objects in future life" (p. 361). Written in 1991, the year that signified the collapse of Japan's bubble economy, Ogawa fails to make mention of this important background context, as he shifts to his main question: What is beyond the hegemonic state, the state as "a state that rules or sustains the order of foreign countries by means of military, political or economic powers" (p. 358)? The implication is that Japan, just as its economic bubble is bursting, is exerting expansionist pressures on other nations. Ogawa fails to however follow up on this point and immediately shifts to three scenarios to explore new international roles and contributions for Japan's futures.

Of these scenarios, the first is the cooperation with a new Pax-Americana in which Japan will have to "make efforts diplomatically to accelerate the alleviation of US-USSR opposing relations" (p. 362). The second is a transformative-ideal scenario, at least from Ogawa's perspective, which sees the "realization of a new common managing system of the world" which demands that Japan accelerate her import liberalization, especially to increase her import of manufactured goods in Asian countries, along with improvements in the international monetary system, and burden-sharing of international public goods, such as defense costs for settling international conflicts (p. 363). The third scenario suggests a "regression to the hegemonic state in the prewar period". This is where Ogawa finally addresses the key word "hegemonic" in his title, by portraying a dystopian scenario. Here, Japan's economic domination of the Asian region leads to further re-militarization at the request of the USA, with Japan eventually becoming a military power in East Asia, opening the possibility of once again attempting to assert its authority as a hegemonic state within that geo-political region.

Ogawa points to a single alleged national characteristic of the Japanese peoples that could facilitate this third dystopian scenario of Japan as a revived hegemony, by claiming that "we Japanese are a simple-minded people and have a traditional habit of tending to forget the evil in the past even though it was done by ourselves" (p. 364). This traditional habit, coupled with Japan's inability to recognize sufficiently the invasive nature of Japan's modernization process, especially "in the education of history in the elementary and middle schools in Japan", points to the possibility that Japan will in the future turn hegemonic (p. 364).

But is there a way out, beyond such alleged simple-mindedness, or is this an immutable Japan trait that at best can only be contained? If, as Ogawa claims, Japan is not sufficiently aware of international events (p. 364), a continuation of Japan's "moral deterioration" as the nation becomes richer will make it increasingly difficult for Japan to "confirm the ideal of building a new peaceful world order" (p. 365). In the last analysis, despite the utopian intentions of Japan's Constitution in which it is declared:

> We desire to occupy an honored place in an international society striving for the preservation of peace, and the banishment of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance for all time from the earth. We recognize that all peoples of the world have the right to live in peace, free from fear and want (p. 365)

Japan must choose between enacting positive contributions to the world, such as peace, or, once again seek "hegemony over the world" (p. 364).

I now turn to John Nathan's (2004): *Japan Unbound: A Volatile Nation's Quest for Pride and Purpose*. the inside cover of which claims: "With immediacy and élan, John Nathan dispels conventional wisdom about Japan and replaces it with a brilliant vision of a country rolling with pride, uncertainty, creativity, fear, and hope". The metaphor "unbound" refers to the epic shifts in daily Japanese life that collectively undermine the cohesive forces in Japanese culture: family, classroom, corporation, pop culture, emerging feminism, and teenage consumerism. These are amongst the nation's many profound social shifts, unraveling the perceived myth of a harmonious Japanese social fabric. Nathan's story is peopled with antagonistic cultural icons such as Ishihara Shintaro, "the charismatic, inflammatory governor of Tokyo and Japan's most powerful

nationalist" (p. 169), pitted against his "antithesis", Tanaka Yasuo, the then governor of rural Nagano Prefecture, an eccentric novelist whose aggressive rejection of public works projects—in particular the construction of dams has gathered national and international attention under his reforms known as the "Nagano revolution" (p. 203). By juxtaposing such polarized Japanese personalities, Nathan emphasizes the chaotic and antagonistic socio-political environment from which conflicting meaning-making strategies and new national purposes and visions are produced.

Underlying Nathan's metaphor of "unboundedness" is Japan's "shift away from America", especially "evident in youth culture", whose scope of interests show leanings towards closer Asian neighbours such as Thailand, China, Korea and Vietnam. Such a re-orientation necessarily leads to questions of Japanese identity. To illustrate, Nathan quotes from Nobel Prize winning author Oe Kenzaburo:

> Our identity as Japanese has withered away. From the European and American vantage, we appear to be Japanese. But inside ourselves, who are we? What basis do we have for building our identity? In the past, we had reverence for our fathers and ancestors. This is still powerful in Korea and China. But in Japan the family has come apart, and our sense of community has also disappeared. Now we have nothing but the reflection of ourselves we see in the eyes of the West (p. 250).

Patrick Smith's (1998) *Japan: A Reinterpretation*, is another insightful analysis of Japan's possibilities for the future. I refer to the back cover which asserts: "Smith offers a groundbreaking framework for understanding the Japan of the next millennium", of which a key point is that Japan's transformation for the future will not be the result of external influences, but will be a re-conception of consciousness created by the

Japanese themselves. This is a concept which diverges significantly from previously discussed theories claiming that Japan does not possess the ability to self-transform. "The future of Japan, Smith suggests, lies in its citizens' ability to create new identities and possibilities for themselves—so creating a nation where individual rights matter as much as collective economic success" (back cover). I have previously referred to the metaphors of the bridge in Kingston's (2001) analysis of Document 28—'Japan's Third Transformation: Five Bridges to the Twenty-First Century' (p. 179). Smith uses the bridge metaphor in reference to the "arched wooden bridge" the first Europeans—Portuguese Jesuits—had to cross to land on Japanese soil. The bridge, is the bridge "you have to cross to understand Japan" (p. 316), "for Japan has been an imaginary country—imagined by foreigners and the Japanese alike—ever since it took the name Nippon from Chinese characters" (p. 316). But, as Smith notes: "Japan is now preparing to dispense with both the bridge and the non-existent country on the far side of it—the images of themselves they [the Japanese peoples] hold up to the West. They seem ready to reinterpret themselves—an act of far greater importance than any reinterpretation an outside person can offer" (p. 316), thus ushering in "another vision of the future" (p. 316) in which Japan will take the world into a healthier ecological balance, back toward humanity's true relationship with nature. Considering Japan's environmental record Smith's position might seem preposterous. Yet it was only when Japan modernized (and therefore Westernized) that it learned the ambition of conquering nature—an ambition none of us can any longer afford to entertain (p. 317).

A second part to this "another vision" asserts that Japan will have to re-create itself in its own 'authentic' image, in order to "advance beyond the old assumption that the

modern is by definition the West" (p. 317). To achieve this Japan must accept 'diversity' and only then will Japan "have found the national purpose that has so far eluded it" (p. 317). But these all come with a proviso that warns: in a globalizing world, the above attempts to re-create themselves could be subverted by a loss of autonomy from the individual to national levels (p. 317). This ushers in a question about Smith's point of a renewed "national purpose:" would the Japanese, if asked, actually want a return to the bubble days, for example, with its totalizing national purpose, or privately do they aspire for a new paradigm, bringing the need for Japan to undergo a sustained period of creative chaos as the preferred option to the tyranny of another grand design which subsumes and diverts individual freedoms and agency?

Appendix II

The Poststructuralist Roots of Inayatullah's Causal Layered Analysis in Brief

Introduction

Appendix II contextualizes Inayatullah's Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) within the context of poststructuralism and poststructuralist approaches to futures research and the analysis of images of the future. Accordingly, 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 to solve real-world problems. This section is especially useful for the futures researcher with an interest in critical analytic approaches to futures issues.

Background to Poststructuralism

Poststructuralism is an intellectual movement which started in the 1960s and continues today. It 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 rather than diachronic, that is, 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, and communication, whilst currently making an impact on the field of Futures Studies.

Poststructuralism has been variously defined as a method, as an anti-method and even as a movement. Although the nature of poststructural thinking renders any attempt to define it inherently problematic, various interpretations and definitions merit discussion. *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. Poststructuralism 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 (p. 304).

Palmer's (1997) definition emphasizes the poststructuralist tendency to destabilize meanings, formerly unproblematized in which poststructuralism constitutes:

> The name of a loosely-knit intellectual movement that emerged out of structuralism after some of the practitioners 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 poststructuralism, language, meaning, social institutions

and the self are destabilized (p. 144).

Harland (1989) positions poststructuralism in symbiotic co-existence alongside structuralism and other types of critical analyst including "Semioticians, Althusserian Marixists and Foucaultians, etc" (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" (p. ix).

Callinicos (1995) posits two main strands in poststructuralism: one is Rorty's 'textualism' while the second is Foucault's master category, a form he refers to as "worldly poststructuralism", a term borrowed from Said (1991). Foucault's worldly poststructuralism is said to primarily involve "an articulation of the said and the unsaid" (Hawthorn, 1998, p. 180). Callinicos argues that whereas the textualists see people 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).

Deconstructing Images of the Future

In Inayatullah and Stevenson's (1998) eleven item criteria[45] for normative futures research they stipulate in article nine the importance for the "deconstruction of texts

[45] Inayatullah & Stevenson's Criteria Model for Futures Research. Although not strictly a set of criteria for the image of the future, this model of what futures research *should* do, also provides many insightful features for a

explicitly on the future to show what is missing from a particular scenario, image of the future, that is, critical and value-oriented analysis of a particular future of alternative futures" (p. 112).

Generally attributed to Derrida, the analytical method of deconstruction is described by

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discrete image of the future as well. According to these authors futures research should engage in and focus on:

① visions/scenarios of the future: preferably more than a generation ahead, and preferably alternative visions/scenarios;

② methodologies of futures studies: that is: (a) how to engage in a study of the future or alternative futures; (b) ways to research how people and civilizations (as well as other units of analysis) study or otherwise think about the future; or (c) analysis of procedures for forecasting and anticipating;

③ epistemological assumptions of studies of the future, for example, the layers of meaning hidden in various forecasts;

④ means for attaining a vision of the future, for example, backcasting (certainly going beyond strategic planning and strategy in general);

⑤ explicit consideration of the longer-term (from 25 to 1000 years) from one to seven to 30 generations) consequences of today's actions;

⑥ implications for the present and past of particular visions and scenarios;

⑦ theories of social, spiritual, economic and technological change that directly examine where and how society is moving and can move to, i.e., the shape of time, space and perception;

⑧ analysis of events and moments in human history where a different future could have been followed and why it was not, that is, historical or genealogical alternative futures;

⑨ deconstruction of texts explicitly on the future to show what is missing from a particular scenario, image of the future, that is, critical and value-oriented analysiss of a particular future of alternative futures;

⑩ novel social analysis or social innovation that can create different or unconventional futures different from today; differences and similarities in how civilizations, men and women imagine, create and know the future including historical changes in the idea and the practice of the future;

⑪ What ought the future be like and who should make such decisions including discussions of the ethics of forecasting (pp. 1-2).

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) also notes that deconstruction "is generally taken to represent an important—even dominant—element in post-structuralism" (p. 38).

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 under-layers 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 coined the neologism *differance*, a hybrid of 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) adds that deconstructionist analysis is "dedicated to teasing out the repressed, marginalized and absent in the chosen discourse" (p. 304). Inayatullah (1998) 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?" (pp. 815-829).

For the New Critics, deconstructionist analysis of texts "necessarily involves a political attitude, one which examines authority in language" (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 revealing internal contradictions" (Salusinszky, 1987, in Hawthorne, 1998, p. 167). Despite the Derridean roots of deconstruction, Easthope (1988, p. 187) separates deconstruction as carrying five different meanings. In brief, these are:

1. 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).
2. Secondly, Foucauldian deconstruction is a "procedure for revealing the inter-discursive dependencies of a discourse" (p. 187).
3. 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).

4. 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" (p. 188).
5. The fifth type of deconstruction is the Derridean, 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, 1998, p. 39). How can one interpret a text or communicative event if there is nothing 'fixed' in the text? Foucault (Palmer, 1997, 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, 1981, p. 29). However, 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). Rather, the deconstructionist position is that "some interpretations are more powerful than others" (p. 168). This position leaves open both the possibility of including normative perspectives in deconstructing futures images, and the possibility of reconstruction.

Hobson (1998) 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" (p. 41). Also in defense of the deconstructionist technique, Chang (1996) claims that "despite checkered and varying interpretations of deconstruction as 'playful', 'open-ended', or 'nihilistic', deconstruction is in fact "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" (p. xiii).

The implication of deconstructive approaches for futures images research suggests 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 (1987, in Chang, 1996) notes that, "the future of the humanities may well depend on the capacity of ... society ... to admit and accept the fictionality of what it assumes to be real, as well as the reality of fictions" (p. 152).

According to Inayatullah (1998), deconstruction in a futures-oriented research context involves "taking a 'text' (here meaning anything that can be critiqued—a movie, a book, a worldview, a person—something or someone that can be read) and break apart its components, asking what is visible and what is invisible? In the context of futures research, questions that emerge from this perspective include: Who is privileged at the level of knowledge? Who gains at economic, social and other levels? Who is silenced? What is the politics of truth? Which assumptions of the future are made preferable?" (p. 815).

Appendix III

Yoshikawa's Seven Japanese Communication Modes, Double-Swing Hybrid Model and Analysis of Communication as Weight

Outline

Pre-submission versions of my investigation included Japan's communication modes as one of the weights of history and tradition, within the context of the Futures Triangle Analysis (FTA). Although eventually deleted from the main body of text, I include this section as Appendix III for the futures researcher with an interest in the roles of communication in futures research. This section now includes a brief outline of Yoshikawa's seminal 'Seven Modes of Japanese Communication', concluding with the FTA weights analysis eventually dropped from the final version.

1. Yoshikawa's Seven Modes of Japanese Communication

Yoshikawa's (1986) seven modes of Japanese communication remains one of the most comprehensive and articulated of Japanese communication models. In a comparison of Japanese and American business communication practices, Yoshikawa isolates seven specific modes of Japanese communication. Yoshikawa begins with a reminder of Hall's (1959) insight that "communication is culture, and culture is communication" (p. 93). Yoshikawa 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.

Mode 1—Fusion-Oriented Pattern: The first Japanese interpersonal communication pattern Yoshikawa 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, but which 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" (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. *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, 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 the form of personal diary-writing (p. 162-3).

Mode 2—Affective Communication Style: Another mode of communication involves an *affective* communication style. Yoshikawa juxtaposes the American "Maximum Message Communication" in contrast to a Japanese style "Minimum Message Communication". The making of public announcements for the Japanese is perceived as "half the reality, the other half being the action behind the scenes" (p. 162). Consider the Japanese corporate behind the scenes communication style known as *nemawashi*.

Mode 3—Verbal Mistrust: The third communication mode borrows from Kato's (1962, p. 71-85, in Yoshikawa) idea involving the apparent Japanese mistrust toward verbal language. Accordingly, Japanese "children are traditionally trained from early childhood not to talk too much" (p. 164). This mode is represented in the four-kanji compound expression *mugon-jikkō* (無言実行)—deeds not words. Within the context of Japan's socializing environments characterized by increasing levels of complexity—in terms of globalization forces, dissolution of universe-maintaining inter-human relationships (and therefore transformations in communication hierarchies); sources of social conflict requiring communicative mediations and solutions; and the on-going diversification of communications technologies, each producing their own communication modes and environments, we can ascertain that a continuation of Japan's mistrust of verbal communication is an unsustainable communication mode for Japan's futures.

Mode 4—Mediated Communication: 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 (p. 164). At this point, omissions by Yoshikawa include the employment seeking strategy involving the formal introduction—*shōkai* by a "go-between" between a candidate employee and employer; and the so-called *kone*—or contact, another type of go-between who is usually instrumental in deal-making decisions behind the scenes.

Mode 5—Space-Oriented Communication: The fifth mode Yoshikawa refers to is space-oriented communication. He demonstrates this notion with the Japanese word for

human—*ningen* (人間)—which involves combining two kanji characters. The first means person and the second 'space' or 'in-betweenness', implying that the human is only human insofar as he or she stands in a relationship to another human. The notion of space is also expanded to the time dimension. In a typical American context, according to Yoshikawa "time flows in one direction, past to present to the future" (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" embedded within a 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 the decision-making processes. Accordingly, "this creative space is room for future adjustment", allowing "the Japanese to be ready for any crisis" (p. 172). The downside of this communication mode is that 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" (p. 172).

Mode 6—Holistic Communication: A sixth mode of communication is *total* or *holistic* communication. Yoshikawa explains: "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" (p. 174), a mode which impacts heavily on the ways in which images of the future are communicated and disseminated throughout Japanese media environments.

Mode 7—Grey-Oriented Communication: The seventh and final Japanese communication mode involves the concept of *ma* (間), used in the sense of in-between-ness or ambiguity of meaning. Yoshikawa refers to this communication style as the grey-oriented mode of communication. Here, it is explained, 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 perceived as the "fusion of opposites" (p. 176).

Towards a 'Double-Swing' Model

Based on Yoshikawa's seven modes, and their comparison vis-à-vis American modes, should we attempt to have them reconciled or allow them to stand alone? For Yoshikawa, his preference is to reconcile these two modes by presenting a conceptual model for integrating seemingly antagonistic Japanese and American worldviews. As such he proposes a "Double-Swing" model, 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. This Double-Swing model is diagrammatically 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" (p. 179) and synergies. Yoshikawa's infinity hybrid communication model presents a unique starting point for re-considering the social functions of communication within Japan's national conversation, and for analyzing the dynamics which inform how

images of the future are produced, communicated, disseminated, discussed, and applied in that nation.

2. Japanese Communication Modes as Weight

This weight of history and tradition focuses on the problem of communication in Japan. The national discussion on Japan's futures is inherently a problem of communication, in that images of the future involve messages and an environment in which these take place, potentially involving everyone including future generations. There are many aspects of Japanese communication modes and environments which cause it to function as a weight upon the realization of positive images of the future. In this study, communication as social construction functions integrally to all three dimensions of the Futures Triangle, in that communication functions also as a prime organizer of reality and the making of meaning. Insofar as communication is conceived of as a medium for the organization of reality, it can by inference also be used to re-organize reality into alternative ontological and epistemological configurations. That is, communication, used strategically, can be deployed to both articulate new future possibilities but also to contour the limits of the possible and to even "weigh down" the future.

I present a communication cluster of five associated and inter-linked problematic areas that must be re-evaluated in order to create the framework for a futures-transforming communication environment, beyond communication as static, as functional and perfunctory, but as a creative and novelty-producing practice; that is, communication as transformative strategy. These five areas are: the problem of Japanese honorifics or *keigo* (敬語); the dilemma of public versus private communication (the concepts of

honne and *tatemae* as discussed above); conceptions of meaning-making; foresight communication and the social communication of worst-case future scenarios; and the fear of *mura-hachi-bu* (村八分), a Japanese version of social exclusion or ex-communication. I treat each of these in turn exploring how they function as weights against achieving preferable images of the future, and seek to locate futures-oriented interventions as suggested ways out in order to transcend their weighted-ness. In other words I ask: Can the weight be subverted creatively into a novel re/source of cultural renewal for future transformation?

1. *Japanese Honorifics*: One significant omission from Yoshikawa's (1986) modes of communication discussed in Appendix II from our poststructural futures thinking perspective is the hierarchical nature of the Japanese language. Japanese favors 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*, a linguistic custom whose effect suppresses the free exchange of true feelings between two or more communicators, especially if that were to entail a challenge to the authority of the former. Despite the inequities inscripted into the Japanese language, notably, there are few references challenging the authority of *keigo*.

One challenge however, an NHK television documentary *nijū-isseiki no nihongo* (21 世紀の日本語) (1999) on the future of Japanese language, however, boldly confronted the nature of *keigo* honorifics and the implicit imbalances it creates in inter-personal Japanese relationships. To illustrate I refer to a story related in the *Handbook of*

Knowledge Society Foresight (2003), an insightful account into the role of simulations used during the second world war and the relations that led to the Japanese inhibition from "undertaking acts that would place their superior officers in difficult situations" (p. 87).

One Japanese commentator to explicitly recognize the politics of the *keigo* communication mode is Tanaka Katsuhiko (1999). In '*Keigo* Shuts Japanese Out from the World', Tanaka critically observes how honorific Japanese clearly demarcates the dominant and dominator in all communicative relationships, a political stance which carries "great social costs" (p. 42), in part accounting for the popularity of English with young Japanese females who find relief in the loosening of hierarchies bounded in *keigo* (p. 44).[46]

2. *Public versus private communication—The Honne / Tatemae Dilemma*: What are the implications of this Japanese communication paradigm upon Japan's images of the future? In a communication environment that values both private and public discursive expressions, is it ever possible to know if any opinion is one or the other? Skeptically we may ask: Has the Japanese author written the text, or have the texts written themselves as prescribed by the social context? Does *keigo* deprive the Japanese people of psychic identity and fail to facilitate rich communication between the individual and deep collective image archetypes? In *Man and his Symbols*, Jung (1964) argues for a

[46] Anecdotal evidence from the teaching of my own students at a Japanese University has shown that, once pointed out, students are surprised to admit that they have trouble speaking frankly to even a peer who might be no more than a few weeks older because custom demand that the younger use polite language.

healthy society as one that knows how to gracefully indulge in argumentation by declaring: “a sane and normal society is one in which people habitually disagree, because general agreement is relatively rare outside the sphere of instinctive human qualities. Disagreement functions as a vehicle of mental life in society, but it is not a goal; agreement is equally important” (pp. 46-47).

3. *Meaning-making*: A third communication problematic concerns the making of meaning. 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” (pp. 107-113). Insofar as communication and language organize what we understand as the real, communication functions largely as an anchor, constitutive of the real, an active participant in constructions of the real. From a communication futures perspective, communication is also the driving force of meaning-making, and the formation of new and novel meanings systems and perceptions of what is real, what is possible, and where viable futures are situated. The importance of communication as an organizing fundamental of social relationships remains un-reflected in Japan’s educational curriculum. Communication as impediment to creating a different kind of societal dynamic, beyond the current hierarchical, stratified, or phatic-oriented communication modes, has largely eluded attention. Such is the need for a social re-negotiation of ‘meaning’ and meaning-making in Japan’s Confucian-oriented educational system, a system which assures that the student will not question the authority of the teacher as *the* owner of authoritative knowledge. Trapped in this paradigm, and unaware that meanings are continuously shifting through the processes of negotiation, the students’ ability to participate in the

re-negotiation of meaning is thwarted from the outset, castrating the transformative functions of a future-oriented understanding of communication's roles in society.

For Foote and Frank (in Chambon, 1999) it is the Foucauldian perspective of transformation which can "come only from those who have come into collision with each other and with themselves, run into dead-ends, problems and impossibilities, been through conflicts and confrontations" (p. 181). In Japan the discourses referring to what are called "barrier free technologies" became popular during the 1990s. Is it possible to conceive of a communication mode as a "barrier free social technology", a barrier free communication, in which the need for *tatemae*—the concealment of one's true and honest feelings—need no longer be suppressed out of fear?

4. *Foresight Communication and the Communication of Worst-Case Future Scenarios*: Here I suggest a new weight under the category of communication, as 'foresight communication' (Ramos, 2006). As a pioneer of the futures sub-field of foresight communication, Ramos has vigorously advanced the hypothesis that the greatest weight for the realization of any image of the future is ultimately attributable to the lack of an appropriate foresight communication strategy. One way out of this conundrum is to propose that all images of the future are accompanied with a built-in foresight communication strategy. None of our texts are strategically conscious of the transformative potential contained in communication, nor do they seem to be especially strategic in their approaches to communicating their respective images of the future.

One aspect of foresight communication and the communication of futures images is the need for communicating not only best-case and ideal scenarios, but also their opposites—worst-case scenarios. Hamada (2005) and Kingston (2004) have both written about an apparent Japanese distaste for worst-case scenario thinking. Hamada notes how "Japanese people have a strong tendency to dislike unlucky things. Accordingly, they try to avoid thinking about worst case scenarios" (p. 28). In *Japan's Quiet Transformation* Kingston (2004) for example observed how, in the context of explaining the excesses of Japan's bubble economy, he claimed that: "in this frenzied atmosphere, risks were dismissed as minimal and mega-projects were launched without concern for returns or worst-case scenarios" (p. 8). These point to an anomaly: Although Japan demonstrates strong interest in the future, as exemplified not only in the proliferation of futures images discussed in this investigation, but also in all aspects of culture such as *manga* and animé with their own futuristic preoccupations, it can be claimed that conversely, Japan shows little interest in the *systematic* investigation of futures issues, and in the concept of developing what Slaughter (1995) calls a "foresight society". Such a foresight society would have to develop a cultural orientation towards encouraging the proliferation, communication, and discussion of images of the future, positive, negative, and the continuum in between both extremes.

5. *The fear of 'mura-hachi-bu'—ex-communication*: A fifth communication weight I identify for discussion is the historical Japanese custom known as *mura-hachi-bu* (村八分), or village (*mura*) ostracism. *Mura-hachi-bu* involves the practice of barring a household from full participation in the social and economic life of the rural

community[47]. In the absence of empirical research I speculate that if the *mura-hachi-bu* communication dimension of social ostracism, that is, ex-communication, retains its unspoken potency in contemporary social relations, we can infer that such a politics of fear would deeply affect individual self-disclosure resulting in a tendency amongst communicative-poor individuals to avoid intimate relationships for fear of possible ex-communication.

Although the custom of *mura-hachi-bu* started in Japan's Edo Period (1603-1867) its legacy lingers into the 21st century in Japan. The Asahi Newspaper (Retrieved from http://www.asahi.com/english/Herald-asahi/TKY200710169.html) reported an incident in Niigata Prefecture as recently as 2007 on how eleven residents of the hamlet of Sekikawa had been ostracized for refusing to take part in a local event. The ostracized residents took legal action against the community leaders who were found guilty and ordered by the courts to pay the plaintiffs 2.2 million Yen in compensation.

The threat of ex-communication operates not only at the level of individuals in

[47] '*Mura-hachi-bu*' is the practice of barring a household from full participation in the social and economic life of the rural community. Because the break was partial, *hachibu* (eight parts) is said to refer to the parts of normal relationships that were suspended. Another possible origin of *hachibu* is a corruption of *hajiku* (to reject or repel). The ostracized household is itself also called *murahachibu.* Until the recent past the Japanese hamlet acted as a corporate entity whose member households regularly performed communal religious rites and exchanged mutual aid and labor, particularly for the purpose of rice production and irrigation. Conduct such as cutting firewood in the communal forests without permission or revealing illegal or shameful village actions to the police or outsiders was cause for a charge of wrongdoing to be brought against the household at a hamlet council meeting. If it was unanimously agreed that the charges were valid, an official notification of ostracism was delivered to the household. As urban employment replaces farming, the power of the hamlet and incidence of ostracism have steadily diminished (*Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan*).

communities or organizations, but also has a more global effect. To illustrate the weighted-ness of Japan's communication modes, I refer to an incident related by Pascal Bruyere (personal communication, 2005) who observed, as international project manager at Hewlett Packard, that Japan was coming to be considered increasingly 'irrelevant', not only at Hewlett Packard but across all Silicon Valley. There were three reasons for this. The one which concerns this discussion refers to the poor communication and decision-making skills of the Japanese engineers and sales personnel, causing Japan to be sidelined in favour of China, Korea, India and even Eastern European up and coming ICT cultures, all perceived as better 'communicators'.

Ways Out

1. *Towards a Japanese Communicative Age*: For Stevenson and Lennie (1995) the way out lies in the creation of an alternative image in the shape 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 characterized 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-centered 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 Information and Communication technologies facilitate collaboration and empowerment between diverse groups and individuals (pp. 22-23).

2. *Creating a New Change-Oriented Language*: As a new aspect to the above Communicative Age I suggest the notion of creating new modes in the form of a change-oriented language. Chambon (1999) 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).

Two examples point to the potentials of change-oriented language in the case of Japan. First, telecommunications companies are aware of the latent power for instigating social change by the combinatory effects of communication and new communications technologies. In 1999, J-Phone ran an ingenious national television commercial campaign which brandished the slogan "THE OTHER STANDARD HAS COME". In this series, a middle-aged *salaryman* unexpectedly confesses to his wife: "I love you". Shrugging off her husband's unfamiliar and disruptive advance, he repeats the confession until she recognizes his seriousness. Both appear personally transformed by the outward expression of one's true feelings—a communication style of significant *un*-Japanese-ness.

In a similar vein, a second example from a *NEWSWEEK* special issue (Beals, 2000, pp. 56-57) on technologies, language and social change explicitly refers to the transformative potential latent in changing the historical dynamics of Japanese communication modes. The writer notes that: "the cell phone has become the weapon of Japan's rebellious new generation, who are fed up with the hierarchies and formalities of their parents' era. In the *i*-mode world, there is no bowing to superiors or lengthy, roundabout language" (p. 56). If these claims were to become a new social reality for the Japanese, the ramifications for the social super-structures would be an irreversible transformation.

3. *The re-enchantment of communication*: A third way out strategy is closely related to Stevenson and Lennie's (1995) recommendation to revive the arts of conversation. This involves the addition of the notion of the re-enchantment of communication. We hope to set up something more than a conventional conversation between texts for our poststructural position is suspicious of all conversations. Rather, our approach, following Shapiro (1992), is that "there are few day-to-day occasions in which the tensions are revealed, for most linguistic genres, whether presentational or interactive in form, are merely communication-oriented; they emphasize joint task achievement rather than rendering problematic the society's systems of meaning and value" (p. 39). When the Japanese monk-scholar Kūkai returned from China to Japan in late 806 he presented to the incumbent Emperor a form of esoteric Buddhism he had learnt in China, known as the True Words (*Mantrayāna* in Sanskrit, *Shingon* [真言] in Japanese), whose name itself indicates the importance accorded to speech as one of the Three Mysteries—body, speech and mind (de Bary, 1958a, p. 135). There is an associated concept in Shinto

philosophy and early forms of esoteric Buddhism which assume that certain voiced sounds of words contain transformative power. Esoteric Buddhism refers to this as the "mysterious intimacy of speech" (*gomitsu*); Shinto calls it the "spirit of words" or *kotodama* (Kasulis, 2004, p. 96).

Summary

To summarize this Appendix on Japan's communication modes as a form of weight, I refer to a problem of August 22, 2007, outlined in an article from *The Hokkaido Times* with the following headline: 「美しい国」消えた？, (*'utsukushii kuni' kieta*?)—"Has the 'Beautiful Country' Disappeared?" The letters are imprinted on the newspaper gradually fading out. The title refers to a book written by the then Prime Minister Abe Shinzō in July, 2006 and used as a frequent slogan for his own future vision for Japan as well as an organizing metaphor for the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). While the term 'Beautiful Country' was originally defined as a country which (1) values its culture, traditions, nature and history; (2) places social freedom at its core whilst maintaining social discipline, and a noble demeanor, the defeat of the LDP in the upper house elections of August 2007, and intra and inter-party criticism as well as criticism from Japanese opinion leaders, led to the Prime Minister abandoning the term. Defeated LDP representative Tamura Kōhei openly criticized the *Beautiful Country* vision saying that in the face of mounting distrust of politicians and other social ills such as the pension problem, that the very mention of the term 'Beautiful Country' sounded as though the Prime Minister was mocking the whole nation (p. 4). This illustrates a number of problems regarding the functioning of the image of the future within the context of 21st century Japan. For one, this highlights the precarious shelf-life of a new image,

susceptible to public opinion. Second, it shows that the power of the image to mobilize Japan's increasingly skeptical public is especially precarious. It also indicates that if an image of the future is not supported by an effective foresight communication strategy, as was the case of the Abe administration's 'Beautiful Country' campaign, who took it for granted that the image would capture the imaginations of his people, the image is unlikely to be adopted and implemented into a viable guiding principle for the nation.

Conclusion

For this weight, I explored five problems associated with Japanese communication modes including honorifics (*keigo*); the dilemma of public versus private communication; imbalances in the social roles of meaning-making; a lack of foresight communication for Japan's images of the future; and the fear of *mura-hachi-bu* or ex-communication, and how they functioned to weigh upon Japan's futures. Ways out of the weights took the form of a new Communicative Age paradigm based on the work of Stevenson and Lennie (1995) with the additional aspects such as the development of new linguistic forms designed specifically to strategically cope with change, and re-enchantment of communication. This section ended with a modern day parable—the premature demise of Prime Minister Abe Shinzo's *Beautiful Country* image of the future, which as was shown to have failed as an image due to its failure to come equipped with an appropriate foresight communication strategy.

Appendix IV

Analysis of Pushes of the Present

Introduction

Appendix IV was originally included in the Futures Triangle Analysis of Chapter five. The contents of this section was originally used as part of the detailed analysis of Japan's pushes of the present, but was assigned to the appendices to facilitate the overall readability of the main text body. To frame this push analysis in a systematic manner I use a flow-model bracketed under a Causal Layered Analysis framework including: contextualization; the litanies; social systems causes; worldviews, followed by myth and metaphor analysis. To support my analyses I often refer to media artifacts from film, television programming, and other media. To ensure readability this framework is not strictly adhered to in this order, nor is each factor repeated in title form. Furthermore, brevity is preferred over lengthy deliberations of each of the pushes.

Pushes

1. New Technologies

Pioneering research on Japanese futures images and issues by Inoguchi and Mushakōji (in Ornauer et al., 1976) demonstrated the extent to which Japan's futures perceptions tend "even more than others [other countries] to see the future in technological terms, both positively and negatively" (p. 53). New technologies are often cited as one of, if not *the*, main push to the future. In the case of Japan, technologies have played an especially important role in the post-war development even before the Meiji Restoration and its policies of catching up with the West. As Tim Larimer (2000) succinctly put it:

"more than any other country on earth, Japan has put its faith—and future—in the hands of technology" (p. 19).

The first public description of Japan's technology related litanies is an extension of Japan's national technology prioritization strategies which indicates the imperative to create a new generation of leading-edge technologies. This point was made by Bill Powell (1993) in a *TIME* magazine feature, 'Can Japan Catch Up?' in which he claimed that "the mix of industrial policy and prowess that made Japanese electronics firms world beaters in the 80s is failing them in the 90s" (p. 21). With the 'catch up' generation of Japan's technologies having run their course, a new generation is needed to catch up to the next wave, as Japan's technological prowess has fallen behind as a result of increased overseas competition, failure to ride the Information Technology wave, and a lack of innovation and creativity on part of new successor generations of technocrats.

A *Yomiuri Newspaper* front page feature, 'Science and Technology to Revitalize the Nation: 10 Sector Key Strategies' (January 9, 2005), sums up Japan's official discourse on science and technology as part of their on-going revitalization push. A letter addressed to the newspaper from an associated steering committee states that: "the source of Japan's presence in the global community lies in our international industrial competitiveness, the maintenance of which guarantees the infrastructure of the peoples' livelihood, financial wealth and society" (p. 1).

A second litany, somewhat antagonistic to the former, portrays new technologies not as the unquestionable saviors of Japan's economic and social futures but as the cause of Japan's environmental destruction. This is the story of Al Gore's Academy Award winning eco-film (2006) *An Inconvenient Truth*. This ambivalent, double-edge sword approach to Japan's technologization is in part caused by new perceptions vis-à-vis technology of a more skeptical younger generation who have witnessed the dissolution of family ties through their salaryman fathers, naturalized into techno-econocentric employment systems, and the gradual de-beautification of the environment by technological infrastructures, whose ugliness is gradually becoming recognized. To illustrate two technology litany/systems/worldview approaches I present a text in the media of a promotional film—*AURA: A Message from the Ubiquitous Society in 2015* (referred to hereafter as *AURA*) (2006) produced by the Japan Promotion for the Ubiquitous Society.

AURA: A Message from the Ubiquitous Society in 2015

It is 2015 in the fictitious town of Aura. The technological determinist stage is set with a litany of questions from the producers: "2015: what will be the role of ICTs? What will happen to your society and your family? What is ubiquitous computing? What are ICT promises for the future?" In the opening scene the male protagonist returns to his home after several years on the road taking photographs of the world's festivals. A helicopter is sprinkling the town of Aura with sensors designed to detect each individual's 'aura' as measured by body temperature, voice tones, and other corporeal data which it seems is all openly made available for other Aura citizens. In another room, the grandfather of this three generation household spies on his attractive senior female neighbour. A fire

has broken out in her house as he watches from a table projected display. Notifying the authorities he runs to her rescue, only to find that she is frying fish on an outdoor barbecue. Ubiquitous technologies of 2015 in the town of Aura are not yet made perfect, the producers would have us believe.

Episode two of *AURA* overflows with projected displays and Yumi the wife of the protagonist photographer struggles with keyboard-induced neck pain. One by one intrusive technologies of surveillance are introduced for the viewer. A rift develops in the family between the antagonistic techno-optimistic Yumi and the techno-pessimistic husband Takeshi. While he berates his wife by saying: "You're gonna end up fully dependent on machines" she retorts with: "isn't denying evolution an act against nature?" pointing to the normalized world of technologization as progressive Darwinian inevitability, from which, as far as the film viewer is concerned, there is no space for viewer discussion; the message is clear: the future is ubiquitous technology, and there is no escaping this social reality.

In episode three, the outcomes of this technological worldview confrontation coalesce as husband Takeshi declares his intention to revive the local Aura town festival, cancelled soon after he left for overseas to photograph festivals. While Takeshi makes fliers to give out to passersby, his IT-literate son creates a home page to advertise the festival. On the day of the festival comeback drizzly weather has kept town residents away. But just as all is lost, wife Yumi is seen ascending the stairs leading a trail of festival goers who had seen another home page she herself created entitled: '*Aura town autumn festival produced by the man who knows every festival in the world*', decorated

with Takeshi's photo collection of exotic world festivals. Yumi and Takeshi are re-united at a higher bond of affection and mutual admiration through the success of her home page. The film concludes in an ultimate advertisement for the inevitable ubiquitous society as the temple priest happens to access a terminal showing the intensity of the town's aura, depicted in luminescent pink icons, which have caught the attention of the global on-line community, triggering a flurry of international users to access the virtual site. To end, the camera pans back to show peoples of the world uniting in the aura of Aura town, with the camera finally panning back beyond earth's atmosphere showing the town of Aura glowing from the depths of space.

Social Systems Causes

Japan's state-driven technological imperatives, education and corporate systems, and office layout—all designed with modernistic production modes—increasingly find aggressive competition from other nations to challenge Japan's technological supremacy. New values about the global environment have made technology consumers more discriminating in their purchase strategies, privileging some developments over others. ICTs, biotech, new energy sources, miniaturization, robotics and other artificial technologies, all push Japan increasingly to a worldview whose *telos* is towards predictive technologies that facilitate a managed predictable world with the potential for control of all aspects of human behaviours, an ultimate Confucian worldview.

Going beyond the litanies, systems and worldviews of *AURA* briefly discussed above is James Canton's (2006) observation pointing to the new imperative in Japan's technological drive culminating ultimately in replacing human beings altogether. He

notes:

> Japan, for example, is not as open to immigration as the United States. The Japanese, rather than opening their society to foreigners, are heavily investing in high technology and robots for a new cybernetic society. This is why the most innovative research in Japan is about replacing people in the future (p. 109-110).

This image is the storyline organizing Sori Fumihiko's (2007) futuristic animé film *Vexille 2077: Japan's Hi-Tech Isolation*. In this dystopian future, reflecting not only the nightmarish aspects of Japan's technological worldview, but also the fears of a repeating past, Japan once again isolates itself from the outside world, retreating into an ultra-high technological dystopia, in which a firm known as the Steel Conglomerate has transformed all human beings into robots. This is a top-secret project the corporate hegemon tries to keep from the rest of the world.

There are *resistances* against this kind of robot controlled dystopia; not just from the underground resistance army in the movie *Vexille*, but also in Japan's contemporary real life. Despite a shallow perception of the Japanese as unquestioning adopters of all technologies with neither skepticism nor resistance, various forms of resistance are nonetheless evident. I present three examples of Japan's techno-resistance. The first is Japan's Slow Life Movement, the rise in spiritual-religious practices, and the national obsession with *iyashi* (癒し)—the practices of 'healing' that nation's post-bubble *dis*-ease and traumas. In a second example, David Matsumoto's (2000) *The New Japan*, points out that Japan's youth are less inclined to place their trust in the power of technologies to afford better futures. This does not indicate a Luddite attitude towards

technologies in general, but widespread and healthy skeptic attitudes, which in turn, unbinds technologically colonized futures to allow in the possibilities of non-technological solutions to the perceived social problems of the day. One implication is that young Japanese students are turning away from science and technology related education and career paths. In turn, this is leading to a new pedagogical paradigm—science communication, whose goal is to revive trust in the sciences and inspire a new generation of Japanese youth to pursue careers in science and technology related fields.

A third example of technologization resistance is found in Takagi Jinzaburō's (2000, p.266) 'Scientific Technology and the Citizen of the 21st Century' essay. Takagi frames Japan's technologization push as a dichotomy of confrontation between Japan's technologists and the ethical gaze of concerned citizen's groups, bent on assuring that technological applications are not left to unchecked technocratic impulses. In what Takagi refers to as a 'science war' (p. 266), citizen membership of university Faculty committees and steering committees have become the norm, ushering in a new age of science and technology community participation and viability for the new breed of social activism-oriented scientist-technologist.

A more skeptical attitude towards technology and their every day usage is accompanied by a correspondingly more opportunistic day-to-day application of technology. This is especially prevalent in the field of ICTs, and the new and subversive social arrangements made possible by networking and mobile communications technologies. Japan's indigenous applications of global Internet technologies have facilitated the creation of social transformation strategies whose combined effects have demonstrated

new vectors for that nation. In a Japanese NHK produced documentary '21st Century Network Citizens Changing the World' (2000), net technologies are coupled with citizen's movements and the emergence of networks to show the day to day applications of such technologies and how they push societies in alternative directions. Showing the leadership role taken by Internet initiatives in the USA, the NHK documentary starts out with a public speech by film director Steven Spielberg on the emerging and unanticipated emotion-communicative potential offered by new networking technologies. Shifting its focus to Japan, the documentary shows how the Internet is pushing Japan in new and unexpected directions such as the trend to downshifting. The producers follow a Japanese family who re-locate to the northern island of Hokkaido, away from big city living in order to pursue healthy and sustainable lifestyles, mediated and made possible by new ICT technologies.

Worldviews

The dominant but perhaps forgotten worldview culturally embodied by Japanese technology is that technology is power; the power that functions to keep the enemy, the Other, at bay. Although this perceived Other has in recent times been largely the West, the rapid ascent of South Korea and China as emerging Others must now also be kept in check with the aid of Japan's technological supremacy. Since the technological catch-up policies that emerged as a nationally unified discourse in the Meiji period, Japan's perceived technological supremacy has also been a focus of national pride. The constructions of technology have long defined Japan's worldview and helped form not only Japan's self-images but also images of Japan from the outside world. This is a point not lost on the director of the hit film *Transformers*, Michael Bey (described

below in Myth and Metaphors).

But as suggested previously, Japan's technological worldview shares much with a Confucianist worldview, one that privileges social order, hierarchy, and the technologies of statistics as the means to achieve this kind of control. This technological worldview also privileges domination over nature, in contrast to an indigenous Japanese pre-Western nature-oriented worldview. The need to control nature and Chaos has dominated the Japanese 20th century scientism worldview: all things are judged according to scientific standards; science is the only way to the future. This scientism-oriented worldview, according to *Concise Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory Third Edition* (Hawthorn, 1998) consists of "a form of reductionism which examines all social and cultural phenomena according to (normally pre-Einsteinian) scientific principles" (p. 209). This view resonates with Polak's (1973) description of a hyper-mechanistic worldview and the work of Sorokin who:

> saw crisis as caused by the pervasiveness of a scientific outlook which had sensory experience as its principal intellectual yardstick; once liberating he thought it had now come to impair social development. Indeed, it would lead us down the path of destruction unless it were informed by something approaching the religious perspective (in Pemberton, 2001, p. 137).

This clash of technological worldviews is expressed vividly in another media artifact, a promotion video produced by the Kyoto Future Generations Alliance Foundation. The video analyses the environmentally exploitative worldview embodied in the mining of an island known as Gunkan-shima (軍艦島), literally 'Battleship Island'. As Gunkan-shima's resources of coal became obsolete in the emerging post-world war two global

energy markets, the mine was abandoned. In contrast, a nature-oriented worldview is exemplified by the ceremonial Shinto practice of 'periodic rejuvenation'. In this ceremony, held every twenty years at the Ise Shrine, periodic rejuvenation involves the dismantling of the main shrine at one site, which is then rebuilt according to time-honored architectural technologies on an adjacent site, under a scheme that considers future generations two hundred years into the future.

Myths

In terms of myth, technologies have become one of the defining myths of Japanese culture. On channel 2, *The Breakfast Show* (August 3, 2007) during a special segment on the latest feature film *Transformers* by director Michael Bey and produced by Steven Spielberg, Bey revealed that this is a story "that really comes from Japan" as the Transformer character is based on a Japanese toy. There is a scene in the film in which the protagonist, a sixteen year old youth as hero, who upon seeing a robot-like mechanism appear on the street, utters "it must be Japanese", a statement which embodies the world's image of Japan's pervasive know-how and prowess in robotics.

There is also the myth of technology as the key to power and domination over nature and other cultures, with the Frankenstein myths on the one hand, and on the other, the myth of Japan's *Astro Boy* character. *Astro Boy* represents the benevolent side of futuristic technologization dressed in the dreams of youth and driven by his admirable social ethic. The mythologies surrounding Japan's technology conceptions invariably reflect a yin-yang type relationship, with the seeds of destruction lying within the promise of the techno-utopia. This yin-yang binary perception is most clearly embodied

and expressed in Japan's media cultures of *manga* and animé.

Gavan McCormack (1996) also tells of the myth of Japan's technologies as social panacea in the story of one example of a real-life hero of Japanese technological industry—Matsushita Kōnosuke. As one of the more philosophically minded of Japan's postwar corporate leaders, former National Panasonic's chairman Matsushita Kōnosuke once advocated a 200 year national project for the construction of a new island that would involve leveling 20 percent, or 750,000 square kilometers, of Japan's mountains and dumping them in the sea to create a fifth island about the size of Shikoku. He argued that only the containment and focusing of Japan's energies in some gigantic project at home could create the sort of national unity and sense of purpose that formerly had come from war (p. 67) and that all social problems can be fixed by the correct application of a new technology.

Metaphors

One metaphor that strongly underlies Japan's techno-push is the might of the machine, the machine as metaphor and symbol of perfection and perfectibility. With humans naturally beyond perfectibility, it is through on-going technologization that the means to achieve liberation from human suffering is mediated. Technology on the one hand is like the 'door to anywhere' (どこでもドア・ *doko demo doa*) from the Japanese *manga* character *Doraemon*—affording everyday life the possibilities of 'magic', in which anything appears possible: the science-fictional dreams of immortality, time-shifting, and deep space travel. On the other hand, technology is like Pandora's Box, unleashing unstoppable forces the consequences of which are inherently unpredictable. With the

atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and Minamata disease as its guiding metaphors, Japan has undergone a bifurcation vis-à-vis its relationship with technologies and the environment, similar to that which occurred in the West with Rachel Carson's (1962) *Silent Spring*. As *Astro Boy* has declared: "do not trust a civilization that puts too much emphasis on science".[48] In more recent times, the techno-utopian promise offered by the stakeholders of technology has shown its limitations in a litany of techno-environmental disasters and near-disasters including the Tomari Nuclear Power Plant (TNPP) incident in 1993 in which primary coolant leaked at the regenerated heat exchanger room of the station's No. 2 pressurized water reactor (*Japan Times*, September 9, 2003).

A more hopeful metaphor for the push of Japanese technologies can be found in a simple four-kanji compound. These compounds are frequently used in Japanese communication environments as linguistic devices to convey complex concepts. In this case, the Sapporo Beer Corporation (2001) employs a future-oriented four-kanji compound as its corporate guiding metaphor. The four kanji characters—美感遊創 pronounced *bi-kan-yū-sō*—signifying beauty, sensibility, play, and creativity, is designed to subvert another four-kanji compound— 軽薄短小—or *kei-haku-tan-shō*—meaning light, thin, short, and small, a concept which came to characterize Japan's technological orientation of the latter 20th century, the pinnacle of modernistic technologies framed by their spatial characteristics. By contrast, the former compound *bi-kan-yū-sō* signifies a new orientation which privileges the beauty or possibilities of beautification, the aesthetic qualities of the technology. Its appeal to human sensibilities

[48] This declaration is taken from an *Astro Boy* T-shirt.

or emotional content reflects the perspective of Rolf Jensen's (1999) *Dream Society*. In this subversion, *yū* refers to the playful aspects of a technological device, its potential to satisfy human expressivity; and *sō* functions doubly to refer to the creativity embodied in the device as well as the creative possibilities for the user.

2. Globalization and Internationalization

Research on Japanese futures thinking by Inoguchi and Mushakōji (in Ornauer et al., 1976) suggested that while Japan was the most 'future conscious' of the nations in their ten-nation survey, the future consciousness was more domestically-oriented than international. The geographies of globalization discourses are one of the most pervasive of all contemporary 'isms' and most powerful forces in the world today whose footprint leaves no locality untouched. But let us keep a sobering historical perspective with these words from William Van Dusen Wishard (2003) who reminds us that globalization is not as new a phenomenon as is often believed (p. 77). For Japan, the dynamics of globalization and internationalization carry special significance for six reasons. Firstly, Japan has historically considered itself and advertised its distinctiveness as a homogeneous society with a people of singular ethnicity. Secondly, imperialistic forays by Japan into its Asian neighbours have left an on-going and unresolved legacy of antagonistic and delicate foreign relations. Thirdly, Japan's relatively resource poor geographic circumstances leaves the nation dependent on imported resources from other countries often perceived as being 'difficult'. Fourthly, Japan's post-war success can be largely attributed to its massive export drive. Fifthly, Japan is one of the few nations to have successfully closed itself off from contact with the outside world. Lastly there is the ironic fact that much of Japanese culture has been appropriated and simulated into

its own culture making Japan an especially syncretic cultural hybrid. Between the diametrically opposed views of globalizations as global Westernization on the one hand and as Western dominance at a higher level of complexity on the other, we ask: where does Japan find itself situated and towards what kinds of images of the future do Japan's multiple viewpoints lead to?

Litanies

There are two litanies vis-à-vis Japan's stance towards globalization and internationalization which can be neatly categorized as the problem of "Japan-in-the-world", and its converse, "the-world-in-Japan".

1. *Japan-in-the-world*: This first litany is about Japan's place in the world and its search for a new kind of role for Japan. How can Japan contribute considering the current global political realities, and what are Japan's limitations in being able to effectively communicate and implement such contributions? One solution to the above is Japan's unique role as a stabilizer of peace. For Japan to find it's place in the world means reconciling relations with China, the South and North Koreas, and its relationship with America; a post-America age. For Japan the deep fear of a future China is itself a sub-litany: to find its new place in the world, Japan needs to create and present to the world a new image to replace a so-called 'face-less' Japan, whose post-bubble image to the outside world is a postmodern pastiche of images including the salaryman, technological prowess, and management styles that changed the corporation. In other words, Japan needs a new face to show the world. In this sense, Japan's sporting heroes have performed a vital function as they show that Japan can compete internationally;

and in sports other than traditional stereotype-reinforcing sports *(The Hidaka Report in Washington*, 2007).

Another aspect of this litany hints at Japan's fear of its own position, its own ranking and status in the new world order at a time when a strong China threatens to overshadow Japan's own efforts at re-establishing itself as a trustable member of the international community. This is a fear that manifests in the statement by linguist scholar Charles Wiz who said: "In ten years all Japanese will be working for Chinese corporations anyway so they may as well learn Chinese instead of English" (personal communication, 2006).

2. *The world-in-Japan*: This second litany, the converse image of the first, problematizes Japan's roles within an increasingly complex global environment highlighted by the growing numbers of non-Japanese residing in Japan. Foreigners, though few at approximately 1.5% of the total population, a ratio that seems almost negligible in comparison with other developed nations, is a source of deep anxiety for many Japanese. The question for this litany becomes: Should Japan become a multicultural and pluralistic society, emulating the immigration policies of most other developed nations, or should she seek to retain her mythical Japanese uniqueness and erect barriers to control the inflow of non-Japanese?

A related effect of this second litany of the world-in-Japan concerns the fear of Japan's icon corporations not only falling behind globally literate and strategic foreign competitors, but of being overtaken by multi-national companies, the new "black ships".

This prospect constitutes a new form of insidious colonization that until recently had been unthinkable for Japan, as the excesses of the bubble economy helped to erect a self-image of Japan as Number One, as inherently superior at business and immune to the globalizing forces that seemed to affect other developed nations.

Social Systems Causes

As a social system, Japan's perceived linguistic isolation makes keeping pace with global events, as they unfold with increasing complexity, to be especially problematic and a ground source of cultural inferiority. There are various structural and systematic barriers which collectively conspire to exacerbate this dilemma of failing to be able to understand global events. Language and cultural literacy barriers as well as a systemic lack of critical thinking skills in order to methodically making sense of events, interpret and analyse them, make it problematic for most Japanese to keep track of globally unfolding events let alone apply them strategically in business and personal lives. In order to keep pace with global knowledge discourses, Japan's English deficiency is seen as an obstacle to 'keeping up with' not only the USA and the linguistically competent European nations, but even other Asian nations whose superior global literacy skills give them an advantage over Japan. To correct this deficiency one solution lay in establishing English as Japan's second official language, a contentious view espoused by former Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo's appointed Commission on Japan's Goals in the 21st Century, aspiring to the creation of a new generation of 'globally literate' Japanese in the guise of savvy international communicators confident in delivering Japan's messages to the world while strategically making sense of complex global events.

A Story of Japan's Internationalization

An NTV (2005) made-for-television production, *Shinjuku District: School of the Future* is an expository documentary exploring the lives of the 160 pupils at Shinjuku Primary School in Tokyo. More than 60% of the students are from mixed Japanese to non-Japanese marriages or overseas families living in Tokyo. With bravado the program commences with the statement: "This school contains the seeds of all Japanese schools ten years from now" (2005). The story is told through the experiences of a young Thai-Japanese boy named Supott, who struggles with daily life at the school, teased by other pupils for smelling of spicy foods. Aware of the teasing problem his teachers devise a creative strategy to make a food festival for Supott and the other students, who, indulging in Supott's favourite spicy food, find that they like it, and end up smelling together of the same spices, thus forming new bonds of commonality through a simple culinary cultural experience. *Shinjuku District: School of the Future* reveals the litany of increasing numbers of non-Japanese and mixed-marriage Japanese individuals in Japan's school education system ill-prepared to deal with non-Japanese culture systems, thus indicating the need for a multi-culturally sensitive worldview for Japan's pluralistic society of the future.

Worldviews

Of the four utopian prototypes as worldviews introduced in Chapter three of this thesis, it is the Confucian worldview that tends to rank, with Japan ranked in a global hierarchy either 'above or below'—with a self-image of superiority vis-à-vis its Asian neighbours, but of inferiority against the USA and the developed European nations. But, if Mushakōji (see Chapter three) is correct in his assertion that Japan is in a transition to a

Tao-ist worldview, how will this affect Japan's perspectives on globalization and internationalization? Is Japan likely to become Tao-oriented in the face of the perceived threats of globalization and internationalization? Let us take the example of chapter 80 of John C. H. Wu's (1961) translation of Lao Tzu's *Tao Teh Ching*, which refers to the ideal society type with clues as to its stance on internationalization:

> Ah, for a small country with a small population! Though there are highly efficient mechanical contrivances, the people have no use for them. Let them mind death and refrain from migrating to distant places. Boats and carriages, weapons and armour there may still be, but there are no occasions for using or displaying them. Let the people revert to communication by knotting cords. See to it that they are contented with their food, pleased with their clothing, satisfied with their houses, and inured to their simple ways of living. Though there may be another country in the neighbourhood so close that they are within sight of each other and the crowing of cocks and barking dogs in one place can be heard in the other, yet there is no traffic between them, and throughout their lives the two peoples have nothing to do with each other (p. 179).

What of a Shinto worldview or the notion of *kami* as the 'unifying' principle in which it has been noted that what underlies much of Japanese history is the desire to unify perceived disintegration? The possibilities residing in Shinto-ist *kami* find resonance with Kaldhun's (in Galtung and Inayatullah, 1999) *asabiya*—the threads that keep cultures together. Seen from this point of view, with Japanese culture constructed as 'unification-seeking', globalization operates with simultaneous centrifugal and centripetal forces. The former casts the threat of globalization, throwing the ancient myths of Japan's cultural uniqueness(es) into stronger relief with the resultant desire to centralize. The latter, sees the seeds of Japanese cultural *kami* as potentially expansionist, with the capacity for unifying supra-Japanese cultural spheres.

In light of Japan's *tōgenkyō* utopian prototype which prefers being cut off from a turbulent and imposing world in favour of a secluded world, the Tao ideal world which prefers leaving one's neighbours alone despite the audible sounds of dogs barking, and Japan's seclusionist policies of the Edo Period, it would seem culturally logical for Japan to prefer a quiet life away from the complexities of international politics. Despite this, the world will not leave Japan alone, and so, Japan faces no alternative other than to find peaceable and mutually acceptable ways to find a new place for herself in an increasingly complex global environment.

Itsuki Hiroshi's (2007) made for television program *Travels to 21st Century Buddhism*, provides a plausible contemporary worldview for Japan's international stance. Approaching the topic from a Buddhist perspective in which Itsuki visits various global centers of Buddhist practice including India, Korea, Bhutan, France and the United States, he [Itsuki] is able to highlight the possibilities of a Buddhist-oriented Japan in partnership with the other Buddhist nations. Such Buddhist nations would include the nation of Bhutan and its policies inscribed in the term 'Gross National Happiness',[49] situating Japan as one of a federation of cross-cultural, inclusive and peaceful Buddhism cultures.

There is another worldview which paints a Japan as victim. This refers to the post-war

[49] The term Gross National Happiness was coined in 1972 by Bhutan's former King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, who opened up Bhutan to the age of modernization soon after the demise of his father, King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk. He used the phrase to signal his commitment to building an economy that would serve Bhutan's unique culture based on Buddhist spiritual values (Retrieved June 2, 2010: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gross_national_happiness).

trauma in which Japan has been colonized by the Other, the American, and any chances of globalization is mediated through the eyes of the approving or dis-approving American. To reclaim its position as an equal amongst equals in the world, Japan must cut its symbolic ties with the USA in order to achieve the independent status of an adult nation. Japan has never been an actual colony, but in terms of our unit of analysis, the image of the future, Japan was symbolically colonized by the occupation of US forces after the nation's defeat in World War Two. This has left the vestigial legacy of the catch up model of the future and a constitution supervised and drafted by occupying American forces. In a powerful metaphor, McCormack (1999) has noted how some Japanese commentators have likened Japan's situation to suffering the traumas of "Rape Syndrome" (pp. 159-60).

Finally, I introduce a mundane and individual worldview of globalization/internationalization, by referring to the simple idea of feeling 'at home' in the world as requisite for Japan finding its place in the world. In a personal exchange of opinions with Chaos theorist Professor Ueda Yoshisuke (personal communication, 2006), he once said to me: "I cannot speak English well but I am a very international person". This personalized position points to the possibility of a worldview often missed at the litanies and systems level. This worldview subverts conventional litanies by suggesting that America and American English, or other forms of English, are not the final arbiters for measuring degrees of globalization or internationalism. Rather, the starting point is no more than a subjective feeling, that is, the feeling of simply being at home in the world.

Myth and Metaphor

At the deeper level there is the social myth that speaks of the seemingly unstoppable forces of globalization forcing Japan's confrontation with the Other, in that Japan will be subsumed by the perceived powerful 'individuality' of the non-Japanese, the strong-willed foreigner. This will in turn reignite Japan's feelings of cultural self-doubt which can only be countered by a revival of nationalistic tendencies. From a macrohistorical perspective, this would indicate that Japan is subject to oscillation between periods of great self-confidence, followed by equally great self-doubt.

Many metaphors refer to the phenomena of Japan's internationalization and globalization pushes. One generally negative metaphor is that of the 'black ships', Commodore Perry's fateful first landing in Tokyo Bay. This in turn, suggests the metaphor for *gai-atsu*—foreign pressure and intervention in Japan's domestic affairs—a stance which directly conflicts with the *tōgenkyō* utopian of wanting to live "as one always has". Another metaphor, not unfamiliar in Japanese culture, is that of Pandora's Box: this suggests that once the lid is opened the flow of foreigners into Japan will be unstoppable and their disruptive influence irreversible.

Another historic metaphor are the symbols for Yin and Yang—陰陽—from the Chinese theory of the five elements. These can be read to symbolize the Japanese within the world, and the world within Japan, as existing in harmony and balance, each residing within the other in relative mutual symbiosis, at times uneasy but mutually exclusive, and ultimately a dynamic that produces creativity.

A final and also negative metaphor I borrow from Kingston's (2004) symbolic portrayal of the whale. Kingston suggests that it is the whale which has come to embody Japanese nationalism as a strategy to resist foreign pressure to discontinue the whaling tradition. He observes: "The consumption of whale meat has become a powerful touchstone for a country that perpetually views itself as a victim of international pressures and prejudices" (p. 214).[50]

3. Demographics

By demographics I refer to the sets of information about the people who live in a particular area including statistical figures, age and gender cohorts, ethnicities, population movements, and the effects these dynamic shifts in populations bring to bear upon Japan's futures. Demographics are a complex phenomenon which elude convenient categorization. More simply, demography can be simply defined as the study of human populations and the ways in which they change. To my futures research on Japan's images of the future, we can embellish this definition by also investigating the qualitative effects such changes have upon the nature of that society and its future socio-cultural trajectories.

Litanies

The macro-litany of Japan's demographic problematique refers to the accumulation of Japan's multiple and complex demographic changes: from relatively immobile and static populations to a population increasingly characterized by a constant shifting

[50] To the whale metaphor I can add that of the dolphin, which came to international attention in the Academy Award winning *The Cove*, a 2009 American documentary film that describes the annual killing of dolphins in a National Park at Taiji, Wakayama, in Japan.

producing imbalances. These are perceived as a problem for governmental bureaucrats as they lead to a perceived loss of control over Japan's heretofore relatively static population, a population marked by 'docile bodies' subject to categorization, classification and measurement.

Social Systems Causes

At the systems level, a multitude of structural problems can be identified. None however, is more prominent than the arch problematic concerning Japan's aging population and its adverse influence on an ideal balanced socio-economic structure of correct proportions conducive to the maintenance of a robust and youthful economy represented by a surplus of productive bodies.

Symbolically, this arche and all-pervasive fear of an aging population and steadily declining Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is reflected by the cover of Japan's 2006-7 National Census (2007) whose cover page depicts an image of two infants standing on a podium from the year 1970 with the TFR statistics 2.13. To the right of this is another podium, with a single infant from the year 2004 displaying a contemporary TFR of only 1.29, signifying a crisis: the decreasing number of Japanese babies born every year.

According to *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan* (1978), "the Japanese population is aging faster than any other in the world, a situation which is causing serious problems for society". If society is envisaged as a harmonious whole, the smallest imbalance can potentially bring about major disruptions. This is the essence of the Lorenz's butterfly effect from Complex Systems thinking. An aging population means strained welfare

and family systems. Declining fertility rates and fewer numbers of productive members of society will create labour shortages. These changes usher in the question of how to compensate for the shortage: through introducing foreign labour, through increasing the productive longevity of its citizens, or through the development of working robots, leading to a high-technology society in which humans and robots will co-operate and co-exist. A passage in Jeffrey Kingston's (2004) presents a compact summary of Japan's demographic litanies, systems and myth by observing that:

> Japan conjures up images of stable families, dedicated workers, paternal employees, traditional gender roles, social harmony, and respect for the aged. These images linger despite sweeping changes that are transforming Japanese society. A nexus of powerful trends involving family, gender, aging, and work is shaping and driving fundamental social transformation in the emerging Japan (p. 257).

But Japan's demographic shifts and challenges extend beyond the current aging trend. To contextualize the litany of an aging population versus a low fertility rate, there is also the perceived "successor problem". According to the television program *Hokkaido Data Map* (2007), one identified problem in the agriculture sector was a lack of successors to existing agriculture related organizations, with successor rates in eastern Hokkaido of approximately 33% but less than 10% in western Hokkaido, pointing to the potential extinction of certain industries, including agriculture, due to a lack of successors emerging from youth cohorts. There is also the domestic migrations phenomenon, the so-called *ijūsha* (移住者). On the NHK 3 television program *Hokkaido Close Up* (2007), an episode on young migrators presented a positive representation of 21st century population movement, documenting the lives of young people downshifting to country

agricultural based lifestyles. It was shown how this new cohort was contributing to regional branding as they engaged in slow lifestyles in the Prefecture of Nagano.

Another demographic issue relates to Japan's post-war baby-boomers, the so-called *dankai* generation (団塊世代・ *dankai sedai*)—the first generation of post-World War Two baby boomers, the salaryman generation—which started retiring in 2007; and there is also the new Japanese diaspora, with Japanese themselves traveling widely and often deciding to live overseas in increasing numbers as they search for a new identity, a phenomenon known as *jibun-sagashi*（自分探し）—literally, 'looking for oneself'. This new Japanese diaspora is often searching for new cultures of freedom where the youth are freer to be themselves and find lifestyles conducive to their own values systems.

Furthermore, there are new demographic cohorts emerging such as long-term *resident foreign communities*, who often exert pressure for change as they find dissatisfactions with Japanese services and cultural limitations. There are is also a converse demographic in the form of returnee Japanese children, the so-called *kikoku-shijō*（帰国子女）, who, having lived outside Japan, often face difficulties readjusting to their reverse culture shock. Then there is the issue of center-periphery out-migration, a trend that is lamented by Takahashi Katsuhiko (2000) in 'De-regionization of the regions' as the loss of regionality on the heels of a period that was known as the 'Age of the Region' since the 1980s (p. 273). This is a phenomenon which has occurred throughout Japan's provinces and country towns, as a result of federal policies aimed at increasing local autonomy with the underlying logic of improving local economic vitality by improved connecting infrastructure such as better road systems. What often happened,

conversely, and perhaps counter-intuitively, was called 'stripping the countryside' (p. 273) as more people flowed out of the country and into more populous urban areas. Ironically, rather than developing local knowledge systems, the influx of city-imitating convenience stores, mobile telephone retail outlets and assorted financial institutions, have all but turned the once unique Japanese countryside into what he calls a 'sinking ship' (p. 274). This 'stripping the regions of their backbones' (p. 274), to use Takahashi's metaphor, began, not as a result of federal policy from the Nara or Heian periods, but from Meiji Japan. Until Meiji, Japan's regions had been steadfast in the creation of distinctive local values and economic structures (p. 274). But now this process has been completely normalized leaving Japan bereft of viable futures strategies. In Takahashi's opinion, it is Japan's regions who ought to change national policy, rather than the opposite current reality (p. 274).

Is it possible to identify a meta-cause to the above litanies or are they mutually independent? One candidate meta cause are the various social freedoms guaranteed under an advanced capitalist society, which thrives on dynamic mobility. New technologies have also facilitated the realization of new lifestyles. In the television program *21st Century Network Citizens Changing the World* (2000), a new generation of Internet technologies are recognized as contributing to young professionals moving into the country in pursuit of new values such as healthier lifestyles, a trend now referred to as the 'I-Turn' phenomenon. For the entrepreneurial minded the increased mobility of Japan's static populations also presents novel business opportunities, exploited in an emerging new genre of television exemplified by programs such as *Dream Lifestyles: Okinawa or Hokkaido?* (2007). This program follows the lifestyles of ten Japanese

families—both young and old, with and without children—who complete their move from urban living to rural areas such as the middle-tier city of Asahikawa in Hokkaido and the Okinawa island of Iriomote, known as a 'Paradise of Mystery' (神秘の楽園・ *shinpi no rakuen*). Key features of this new downshifting lifestyle embody the values of self-sufficiency, slow-living, healthy living, family-oriented, and the on-going struggle of rural-island life in a nature-oriented environment. People are shown engaged in rapid-water rafting, nature guiding, herb picking, organic farming, home baking with self-grown ingredients, battling typhoons and snow, shepherding, fishing, and forest walks; in effect the antithesis of the conventional salaryman-centric lifestyle of Japan's bubble period.

To further illustrate this initial set of demographic dilemmas I introduce an NHK (2003) made-for-television film, *Where to Japan? Towards a Low Population Society* as an exemplary media expression of the litanies, systems causes and worldviews underlying Japan's demographic challenges of the 21st century. The context of the program considers the problems associated with Japan's falling population and other associated litanies. A dramatic representation of a future Japan in the year 2020 ensues with themes such as the introduction of a 'singles tax' (独身税・ *dokushin-zei*) to encourage reproduction. The drama's protagonist (遠藤憲子), Endō Keiko, Japan's first female Prime Minister, struggles to identify strategies to alleviate Japan's seemingly unstoppable population decline, a beacon to the ultimate fear of a childless society. This childless dystopian world is portrayed in the science fiction film *The Children of Men* (2006); and is also the subject of Muriel Jolivet's (1997) *Japan: The Childless Society?*, an innovative study examining "the implications of the declining birthrate and …

towards the future of an ageing society that is in danger of becoming 'childless'" (back cover).

The 2020 world of *Where to Japan?* depicts a topsy-turvy Japanese life-world in contrast to Japan's image of a stable nation: not only is a woman Prime Minister but multicultural schools are depicted as the norm; Chinese Tai Chi practitioners perform on the streets; trains provide multi-lingual announcements; and a high tech age care service center—Careclue Corp.—keeps watch over the elderly cared for in their homes using state-of-the-art IT monitoring systems. The film also depicts growing public sentiment against singles; multi-generation households with grandparents from both sides of the family; middle-aged men who can't find marriage partners; and women reluctant to marry despite the desire to bear children because men are perceived as an obstacle to their individuality and freedom. This all culminates in a society whose demographics present the family and other demographic arrangements as transformed from the world of 2003, when the program was produced and broadcast. Despite a litany of policies to increase the birth rate, having dropped below the 1.0 mark, the Prime Minister's popularity ratings continue to drop. In cabinet her policies are criticized by the opposition as ineffective in a country which ultimately offers no hope for future generations. But despite the demographics time bomb presented in the story, there is a happy ending. The male protagonist known as Ryuta forms an 'emotional' family with his love interest Yukino, mother to a young daughter, even though Yukino continues to refuse his marriage proposals. Eventually the Prime Minister returns to her home town—an island, notably—to reconnect with her roots so that she can face the ordeal of giving birth and making a family of her own.

Worldviews

The worldview behind Japan's demographics reflects more than anything a Confucian worldview, especially the promulgations of what were called, during the 'Great Reform Era', an 'ideal social order' (in de Bary, 1958a, p. 68). It was the Great Reform Era, the Taika Reforms of 645 that aimed to establish a "centralized administration of the Chinese type" (p. 69). It was on the 19th day of the 9th month that Commissioners were sent to all the provinces to take a record of the total numbers of people (p. 71). In 646 the Emperor promulgated an edit of reform in which article II called for "the superintendence of the population" by an alderman for each geographic ward (p. 72). Article III of the edict stated:

> Let there now be provided for the first time registers of population, books of account and a system of the receipt and regranting of distribution land. Let every fifty houses be reckoned a township, and every township let there be one alderman who shall be charged with the superintendence of the population (p. 73).

But if, as Mushakōji has suggested in earlier sections of this investigation, Japan is in the throes of transitioning from a Confucian to a Tao-ist worldview, how would this affect a Confucian-oriented demographics worldview of the present? I conclude by suggesting that the core myth of Japan's demographics and population transformations is the myth of Japan as 'one', with the multi-generational family as the traditional demographics unit. This unit, however, is rapidly giving way to nuclear families, single mother families, and other post-modern family hybridities, resisting the historical push to sit still and be counted.

4. Values

This fourth push of the present explores Japan's shifting values. Here I ask: What kinds of futures do Japan's changing values push towards? Is it more of the same, nostalgic futures recreating values from an imagined past, or towards qualitatively different futures? From all the existing types of images and scenarios, Ogilvy (in Slaughter, 1996b), champions 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). This sense of 'what ought to be' illuminates the idea of values, and values are not always consistent across individuals and organizations, nor are values temporally static. In brief, the role of values and their relationship to futures images is pointed out in Slaughter's *The Knowledge Base of Futures Studies* (1996c):

> There is an intimate connection between the two [Futures Studies and values]. Values dictate the outlines of the present and future agenda. Many symbolic and real conflicts turn on values and differing interests. Hence terms such as 'desirable' and 'sustainable' refer back to fundamental assumptions and their associated values. There is substantial evidence that 'industrial' values are inadequate for a world of over five billion people, poised on the edge of the twenty-first century (p. 278).

In order to analyse the pushes of Japan's shifting values, I borrow from David Matsumoto's (2002) *The New Japan: Debunking Seven Cultural Stereotypes* as a core text, which treats specifically Japan's changing values systems. Matsumoto, a Japanese-American professor of psychology and director of the Culture and Emotion Research Laboratory at San Francisco State University, is a recognized expert in the study of

emotion, human interaction and culture and also chairs the development committee for the U.S. Judo Federation.

Litanies: shifting identity landscapes and dissonance

The litany of Matsumoto's *New Japan* is the shifting landscape of Japanese cultural identity and the dissonance caused between former self-identities as they merge with new identities. In the author's words:

> For over a century, Japanologists have characterized Japanese society and culture as homogeneous, centered on a few core values, personality traits, and moral virtues. These views have been promulgated by Japanese and non-Japanese alike, in academic and non-academic circles (p. 3).

The objective of Matsumoto's book is therefore to demonstrate how seven core self-directed / externally-directed cultural stereotypes have rapidly shifted for Japan's youth generation within the context of Japan's current instability, resulting in a "clash of cultural dualities in contemporary Japan and how the various directions, shapes and forms Japanese culture and society may take in the future" (p. 3).

The systems causes Matsumoto refers to are "multiple, and include political, social, economic, and psychological factors, all of which interact to produce a unique experience for Japanese individuals—the blending of traditional and contemporary characteristics of society" (p. 28). Setting aside briefly his academic-professional voice, Matsumoto declares: "Quite frankly, much of the strain people experience today is, in my opinion, the result of opposing cultural values held by large segments of the

population, the stress that is created by a cultural duality, and the resulting social and psychological consequences" (p. 30).

At this level, the solution to this de-stereotyping cultural transition is to empirically investigate the extent of the dynamics and to question the implications of such shifting core values upon the future of Japan especially in terms of business, education, sports, and culture in general. In the case of sport, of which Matsumoto is a dedicated proponent:

> Traditional judo, which included moral and intellectual education, has lost its meaning because the Japanese have come to see winning in competition as the only viable option that determines or defines their self-worth and that of the Japanese people (p. 163).

Matsumoto describes the underlying 'instability' in Japan as the naturally occurring outcome of a nation undergoing rapid transition from "low resource availability, population dense culture to a high resource availability, population dense culture" (p. xvi). These are the growing pains of a Japan which is, in short, "evolving into a society with a different culture" (p. 1). The seven referred to stereotypes that have heretofore defined Japan according to Matsumoto include:

1. **collectivism**: *being displaced by* > **new individualism**;
2. **interdependent self-concept**: *being displaced by* > **independent self-concept**;
3. **high interpersonal consciousness**: *being displaced by* > **low interpersonal consciousness**;
4. **low emotionality**: *being displaced by* > **high-expressive emotionality**;

5. **The self-sacrificing salaryman**: *being displaced by* > **self-satisfying salaryman/employee**;
6. **lifetime employment**: *being displaced by* > **lowered commitment to company and increasingly opportunistic**;
7. **married life, loyalty, obedience and conformity-oriented values**: *being displaced by* > **independent lifestyles, spouse friendship-oriented, partnership models, marrying later and having fewer children**.

In turn, each of these stereotypes, under the forces of a newly emerging kind of individualism resulting from technologies, affluence, and changing demographics (p. 195), are giving way to their respective opposites. The effects of globalization, especially American culture, infiltrating Japan through television; youth-oriented popular culture media; and consumerist culture, gives rise to speed-driven fads and fashions and causing cognitive dissociation with traditional values. Added to these, the on-going loosening of Japan's rigid high school education system also contributes to changes in perception of what is to be valued at personal, inter-personal, and organizational levels of life.

Solutions to 'Negative' Youth Values

Japan's mass media have assumed a leading role as the problem solvers for Japan's social issues of the early 21st century. This media stance has resulted in a minor boom of youth-oriented television programs, such as the NHK production 'The Dreaming Eggs' (「夢見るタマゴ」・ *yume-miru tamago*) which features young Japanese people taking on their dream careers. These 'dream pursuants' are teamed up with a peer cohort;

another youth who is correspondingly disaffected and 'dream-less'. Another television series, also from NHK (2007) *Seizing Tomorrow: An Anthology of Youth Work in the Heisei Era*, refigures the youth-oriented program as a new genre of television programming—the 'motivational TV show', or 'values-correctional entertainment'. Also featured on NHK (2007) is the program *Once in a Lifetime Opportunities: Stories of Following in one's Parents Footsteps* [ichigo-ichie: oya no ato o tsugu hanashi]. Broadcast immediately after the show discussed above 'Seizing Tomorrow'—in one episode, the viewer is invited to follow the disciplined training of a 17 year old Buddhist monk trainee as he guides around another youth searching for his own life path. The show ends as the disenfranchised youth finally finds his personal image of the future, his *shōrai-zō* (将来像), guided by a new system of values inspired by his experiences and conversations with the young Buddhist mentor.

Values and the Clash of Generational Worldviews

The seven-point values systems represented by Mastumoto (2002) above can be seen as emerging from a Confucian worldview which emphasizes hierarchical and unchanging relationships in all aspects of human affairs (p. 80). The worldview he speaks of is that of the Japanese peoples as an identifiable and measurable collective, subject to data-driven and empirical investigation. Conversely, there is also a worldview to which Matsumoto speaks; this it to the worldview of the sociologist, the empiricist, the inter-cultural researcher, and finally the corporate worker, whose interests lie in understanding the shifting values of Japanese people in order to facilitate his or her business dealings within that cultural milieu.

Myths

The arche myth of the Japanese value system asserts that its core values are immutable and not subject to the kinds of changes experienced in other cultures. This arche myth also asserts that Japan is culturally homogenous and unique. The self-conception is that Japan is beyond cultural contamination and out of reach of the influences of external value systems. In essence, Japanese values are beyond negotiation, possessing an historically constructed logic of their own. But despite this myth of immutable Japanese values, historical analysis shows the extent to which what is considered of 'value', however defined, is in fact subject to the same kinds of continuous transmutation and evolution found in other cultural systems. The mechanisms whereby these value memes and systems shift are manifold: the mood of the times, and the influences of new technologies rendering the once impossible possible, leading to replacement of one social value type over another, all contribute, along with other multiple forces to keep value systems in a constant state of flux.

Metaphors

The metaphors of Matsumoto's *New Japan* are 'metamorphosis' suggestive of Japan's cultural DNA shedding its skin to be reborn as a new cultural phenotype through new generations; a new species of Japanese. A second metaphor suggests a 'blossoming' of cultural authenticity; allowing the true nature of the Japanese, hitherto thwarted through historical forces, to achieve full flight and become who they really are. Two other metaphors are also useful for understanding Japan's values shifts: The first is the metaphor of the 'Dream', especially the power of the American Dream, which has been a powerful resource for guiding Japanese conceptions of what is of value in society.

This metaphor is not without contention, for as McCormack (1996) has pointed out in *The Emptiness of Japanese Affluence*, the attainment of an Americanized values lifestyle has left Japan without its own authentic Japanese Dream to guide the formulation of a new value system. A final metaphor is drawn from the Shinto conception of 'functionalism' and the logic of 'disguise and transformation', concepts which resonate with Ishida's (1978) use of the doll metaphor. The doll is used to signify the logic of thought formation marked by a free change of form involving a continuous return to a new starting point; not to a single point in history, but to a *series* of starting points. This logic forms a dialectic between rapid change and restorative strength, compromise and preservation, change and continuity (p. 25). The doll's clothing may change with the times but the doll itself, the core values, remains a constant and stable core always promising "the way home" (Kasulis, 2004, p. 148).

5. The Creative Vanguard

The fifth push differs from the previous four as its focus is not on social phenomena so much as actual people and the kinds of images of the future their collective pushes suggest. This push is organized around the following questions: Does Japan's creative vanguard constitute an organized sub-category with Japanese culture at large, or are they a meta-collective of self-organizing/self-dissipating communities? Or, conversely, is Japan's creative vanguard about to take flight—a thematic suggested in Richard Florida's (2005) *The Flight of the Creative Class*—to environments more conducive to their creativity-driven values and goals? Who are Japan's creative vanguards and what are their sources of creativity? What kinds of futures is it they are calling for; and do the newly-emerging creative vanguards exert a definable influence on Japan's futures? This

fifth push is simultaneously the most difficult to delineate, and yet, potentially the most informative of all five pushes, for it is society's creative types and creative classes (Florida, 2002) who might be expected, by virtue of their 'creativity', to use new technologies, both soft and hard, for creative purposes, and be guided by novel values, living and working in unconventional places.

It is not easy to find a satisfactory definition for Japan's creative vanguard. The term 'vanguard' I borrow from Inayatullah (1997), who used the term to denote a generic class of peoples within a culture who show the way to alternative futures, whose role is to find exits out of macrohistorical patterns and into a "future out of its past and present limitations" (p. 187). For Japan then, I identify a number of terms which indicate eligibility to this creative vanguard. To name but a few, there are the creative types themselves—the so-called *kurietā* (クリエーター) or *sōzōsha* (創造者)—as used in Japan's Creative Cities literature[51]. We can also include the so-called heretics or *itansha* (異端者)—the social revolutionaries; the *kawari-mono* (変わり者) or idiosyncrats and eccentrics with unconventional views;[52] and the *kata-yaburi*[53] (型破り) or paradigm-breakers, a term that became popular in reference to Koizumi Junichiro used by Japan's

[51] For a Japanese perspective on creative cities literature see Yoshimoto Mitsuhiro's *CREATIVE CITY* (2006), Kajima Publishing. Written in Japanese this book compiles case studies of global creative cities with two Japanese examples: the island of Naoshima, and Yokohama City. For further information, National Institute for Research Advancement (NIRA) has published a comprehensive assessment of Japan's creative regions, including creative cities in the book 地域の「創造力」向上を目指した再生のあり方 (*chiiki no sōzō-ryoku kōjō o mezashita saisei no arikata*) (2006), in Japanese only.

[52] See Sataka Makoto (2002) 変わり者が日本を救う:異端者という才能 (*kawari-mono ga nihon o sukuu: itansha toiu saino*) (*Idiosyncrats Will Save Japan: The Talents of the Herertic*) featuring conversations with Honda Corporation's Honda Soichiro, former Cabinet Minister and daughter of former Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei, Tanaka Makiko, and eccentric painter Okamoto Taro, most celebrated for his 'Sun Tower' sculptor made for the 1970 Osaka World Expo.

[53] The term *katayaburi*, is a compound of two kanji characters, *kata* and *yaburi*. The former variously means mold, type, pattern, or 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.

media before he became Prime Minister. To these we can add the *kaikaku-sha* (改革者), the social revolutionaries; the 'outsiders'; and the so-called 'front-runners'—a term used as the title of an NHK television program. Combined there various appellations comprise a relatively un-categorized meta-group thought to practice future-oriented and/or change-oriented behaviours.

At this point a Japanese definition of creativity is useful. Takahashi Makoto (2007), from The Japan Creativity Society, has compiled a definition of the creative process which translates as:

> Certain people/s (creative types) take a problem (definitions and awareness of problems), compile information from various sources (informational organization, creative thinking), integrate these and solve the problem (solution procedures, creativity techniques), at the societal or individual levels (creativity education, 'genius theory'), to produce novel value (evaluation techniques, value theory).[54]

Accordingly, the pushes of Japan's creative vanguard refers to a collectivity of change-oriented minorities made up of Japanese individuals and organized groups dissatisfied with current Japan, pushing to create new social arrangements, not just in the obviously

[54] See table below for an original Japanese definition of the creativity process, by Takahashi Makoto (2003) of the Japan Creativity Society.

定義	領域
人が	（創造的人間・発達）
問題を	（問題定義・問題意識）
異質な情報群を組み合わせ	（情報処理・創造思考）
統合して解決し	（解決手順・創造技法）
社会あるいは個人レベルで	（創造性教育・天才論）
新しい価値を生むこと	（評価法・価値論）

creative pursuits such as the arts, but also in the designing and implementing of social movements, activism, and other forms of non-conventional, novelty-producing behaviours, whose effects are disruptive of established Japanese practices and social constructions of reality.

In *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators*, Charles Landry's (2000) emphasizes the importance of developing creative milieus, where creative things can happen. He defines the creative milieu as:

> a place—either a cluster of buildings, a part of a city, a city as a whole or a region—that contains the necessary preconditions in terms of 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure to generate a flow of ideas and inventions. Such a milieu is a physical setting where a critical mass of entrepreneurs, intellectuals, social activists, artists, administrators, power brokers or students can operate in an open-minded, cosmopolitan context and where face to face interaction creates new ideas, artifacts, products, services and institutions and as a consequence contributes to economic success (p. 133).

This Japanese theory of creativity resonates with two associated definitions from creativity theorist Csikszentmihalyi (1996). Csikszentmihalyi distinguishes between two essential forms of creativity: 'big *C*' and 'little *c*'. Big C refers to the outcomes of creativity which bring lasting change to a culture or a specific cultural *domain*, while little c refers to personal creativity, the small examples of creativity such as finding a new way to "bake stuffed artichokes, or original ways of decorating the living room for a party" (p. 8). As to the question of what creativity *is*, Csikszentmihalyi defines it as: "any act, idea, or product that changes an existing domain, or that transforms an existing domain into a new one. And the definition of a creative person is: someone whose

thoughts or actions change a domain, or establish a new domain" (p.36).

Litanies

The first litany to inform the pushes of Japan's creative vanguard points to the need to transform Japan, simply, into a more creative type of nation. The purposes of this creativity push are multifarious, but the most visible is the demand for new generation technologies—not for the Creative Industries per se, which are still seen as secondary, but to Japan's technology-oriented infrastructure and economic base. The litany suggests that what is needed in Japan is a revival of the economy, however defined, and a renewal of self-confidence through creativity-oriented practices, although the public descriptions of this litany are not reflected at the systems level within the education system, nor within a strategic 'creativization' of Japan's social landscapes. As Sakaiya (2003) observes, "As globalization proceeds, and the importance of software (in the broadest sense of knowledge and information) grows, there is more and more discussion about the creative power of Japan" (p. 263). His next statement is more to the point: "The critical question is whether the creativity-poor Japanese will be able to survive in the age of mega-competition" (p. 263), a statement which he contradicts only one paragraph later by observing that "The Japanese have also displayed creativity and originality" (p. 263) in a reference to the main theme of his book: the twelve men who made and changed Japan.

Social Systems Causes

At the level of social systems, Makino Masayuko (in Beech, 1999) of the Okinawa actor's school 'Dream Planet', argues that Japan's straight-laced education system

stifles creativity, squeezing the imagination out of students with its military type educational regime. When the author of this report questioned a student of music about which singers they admire on the world's stage, the student responded by citing Whitney Houston and Janet Jackson, to which the reporter comments "Individuality, it seems, goes only so far" in Japan, questioning whether the spirit of creativity is really understood even in a rebellious school such as Dream Planet (p. 38).

At the corporate and education systems levels, Nakamura Shuji (in Hirao, 2001), inventor of the world's first blue light-emitting diode (LED) has aggressively criticized Japan as a "socialist country. ... Regardless of your (personal) achievements, (your reward) is the same as that of everyone else". This observation is typified by the Japanese university system which offers "absolutely no culture to nurture venture businesses" (p. 1).

In Japan's federal government, the notion of creativity, as understood and defined in the various Creative Industries initiatives around the world, is invariably equated with technological innovation. This tendency is evident in former Prime Minister Abe Shinzo's Innovation 25 Strategy Council. Headed by Kurokawa Kiyoshi, physician and vocal supporter of technology, the promise of this innovation council is to "reform dramatically Japan's rigid structures of scientific education, funding and decision-making in order to boost technology and innovation in the country" (Fuyuno, 2006, pp. 734-5).

Japan's alleged failure intolerant society has led, in part, to a conscious political initiative to address this intolerance with the Liberal Democratic Party who established a so-called Ministry of Re-Challenging (再チャレンジ・ *sai-charenji*). The goal of this ministry was to create a social climate more tolerant towards failure in order for Japan to have a platform upon which to build a truly creative nation (Retrieved from http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/saityarenzi/plan_gaiyou.html).

Worldviews

Japan's Confucian and bureaucracy-oriented worldview, with its clearly demarcated hierarchies and emphasis on a benevolent sage leader as the keys to maintaining social harmony, functions negatively vis-à-vis fostering a culture of creativity. Shinto worldviews on the other hand provide a more creative platform. Shinto's characteristics of 'changeableness' and 'the logic of disguise and functionalism' (Ishida, 1978), embodied in the forms of *kami* worship, possess a reservoir of 'creative or pro-creative power'. This power is understood as an unseen and mysterious power latent in all objects, holding the pro-creative power to propagate and enrich all forms of life (p. 25).

There is also an incrementalist worldview. Fashion designer Issey Miyake (1997) once said for a *Newsweek* special:

> It has often been said that the Japanese are not creative, but that we are clever about improving the inventions of others to make them uniquely our own. We have translated large and cumbersome items into compact forms that are more convenient and functional. ... This cleverness is a longstanding Japanese tradition, dating from the craftsmen of the Edo period. Much of Japan's prosperity in the 50 years after World War II has stemmed from that 'age of craftsmen' (p. 4).

The social construction of reality of *wa*—the form of social harmony discussed throughout this investigation—is also a worldview that can thwart the creative spirit, for in the creation of the new—Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) big C—the creative spirit necessarily displaces existing norms and is therefore intrusive upon established social harmonies. In effect big C subverts *wa*. To be creative in many Japanese contexts is also to be considered out of harmony and a source of social disruption.

Myth

One omnipotent and ultimately debilitating myth is that of the *un*-creative Japanese—the Japanese as copy-cat. This myth condemns Japanese people as inherently derivative, a myth which Daniel Pipes (1992, see Appendix I, pp. 229-231) systematically dispels. From the above dominant myth, Sakaiya's (2003) analysis of the influence of Matsushita Kōnosuke on Japan's national worldview points to a transition in values in the form of a new paradigm. Three major ideologies took root in the 20th century. Firstly was the 'philosophy of efficiency and hard work', exemplified by Henry Ford and Matsushita himself. A second ideology was the pursuit of 'equality of results', the ideal of economic equality as promoted by Socialists such as Marx, Lenin and Mao Zedong. The third is the 'pursuit of pleasure and amusement', as exemplified by Charlie Chaplin, Walt Disney, and the Beatles, whose guiding ideal was the pursuit of fun, a force now recognized in the institutionalized form of the Creative Industries and creative classes (p. 261).

Metaphors

One positive metaphor—albeit with a nostalgic resonance—resides in the often-cited

Japanese proverb *onko-chishin*（温故知新). The meaning is explained as "Learning from ancient things, to create new ideas, concepts and values" and is attributed to the teachings of Confucius (*Yoji-Juku-Go Jiten*, 2003, p. 30). This four-compound kanji idiom was the title of a book by the future-oriented *Japan Initiative Volume 3* (in Kato, 2005), which aimed to mine Japan's deep past for ideas and hints for its futures. An example of *onko-chishin* in action is found in Hikosaka Yutaka's design of the Bamboo Pavilion at the 2006 Nagoya Expo. This architectural structure combined traditional bamboo technologies with ecological principles in a design meant to symbolize the building *of* and *for* the future (*mirai-jin,* 'Designing the Future', 2005).

As a final metaphor for the pushes of Japan's creative vanguard, I introduce the metaphor of 'simulation-ism', a reflection of a well-documented Japanese cultural penchant for creating and enjoying simulated environments. Simulations include those associated with virtual reality programs; the myriad of theme parks such as Spain Village dotted around Japan; and artificial indoor environments such as Miyazaki City's Ocean Dome. We can also include Japan's technological prowess in human-like robot design, a characteristic of Japanese design which can be traced back to the so-called *karakuri-ningyō* (からくり人形), or robot-like mechanical puppets popularized between the 17th and 19th century in Japan. These *karakuri-ningyō* are generally considered precursors to Japan's contemporary robotics industries. There are also the arts of the miniature *bonsai* tree, a form of simulation which can be traced back to Japan's medieval nobility who honed the shaping of nature into art forms (Tanikawa, 2000, p.10). A final example of simulation-ism is OMRON Corporation's use of the Japanese rock garden as a spatial microcosm for creating novel connections and associations

between things and concepts. Nakase Yuzo, President of Omron Institute of Life Sciences Ltd. has noted how “within that small space we are not just imitating nature”, and that the garden is a “place for seeing the connections between things ... the garden offers an image of how the different parts can create a harmonious whole”, representing an approach to creating new types of automation technologies, organizational structures, working arrangements and modes of production (Perlmutter, 1999).

List of Figures

Figure 1 (p. 56): This concept of the ideal state as exemplified by the three God Instruments or *jingi* (神器)—the mirror, the sword and the jewel, is from Tanaka Takeyuki's (2002) 'Folk Philosophy Readings of the Kojiki: Lessons from Myth for Contemporary Society'「民族哲学としての古事記:神話から読み解く現代社会への教訓」, in *Kojiki*, 2002, Gakken, Tokyo: Japan, p. 177.

Figure 2 (p. 77): This diagram is based on Inayatullah's original Futures Triangle Analysis (FTA).

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