THE CONSEQUENCES OF GLOBAL DISASTERS

Edited by ANTHONY ELLIOTT and ERIC L. HSU

ROUTLEDGE

Anthony Elliott and Eric Hsu have assembled an excellent collection of essays on disasters and disaster research. The book as a whole constitutes an important continuation of the denial of straightforward distinction between natural and non-natural disasters. It is characterized by a definitely global approach with a more specific and multifaceted focus on the threefold Japanese disaster of 2011.

Professor Roland Robertson, University of Pittsburgh and University of Aberdeen

Disasters and catastrophes affect people's lives and inevitably give rise to social change. Therefore, disaster research has to constitute one of the crucial topics in the social sciences. Anthony Elliott and Eric Hsu bring original theoretical dimensions to disaster studies by assembling contributions mainly about the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, which provides a new track of reflection to social scientists.

Professor Masahiro Ogino, School of Sociology, Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan

This volume is the result of fruitful collaborations between Japanese sociologists and their colleagues in Australia, Singapore, and other places. Readers will particularly find an in-depth analysis of the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, which has drastically transformed social relationships in Japan and beyond.

Professor Takashi Okumura, College of Sociology, Rikkyo University, Japan

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THE CONSEQUENCES OF GLOBAL DISASTERS

Disasters of the 21st century differ substantially from other kinds of hazards that previous societies have had to cope with because of the twin forces of globalization and the communications revolution, but what makes today's disasters – industrial, technological, environmental, and socio-cultural – so different in scope and impact? What are the possible disasters of the future? How can we, as collective humanity, best manage and respond to the globalization of disasters?

The Consequences of Global Disasters makes a distinctive contribution to the ever-expanding field of disaster research by developing a multi-contextual, multi-disciplinary and multi-methodological approach to the social analysis of disasters. Anthony Elliott and Eric L. Hsu have brought together a highly distinguished group of international contributors to focus on how people react to the unsettling effects of disasters, which come in a multitude of forms. Numerous contributors concentrate on the cultural, political and psychological ramifications of the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, but disasters in other contexts, such as Australia, China and Haiti, are considered as well.

By offering unique empirical, methodological and theoretical insights, *The Consequences of Global Disasters* sets an agenda for future developments in the field of disaster research and will be a key resource for students and scholars working in social science disciplines such as sociology, cultural studies, international relations, psycho-social studies, social work, Japanese studies and social theory.

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THE CONSEQUENCES OF GLOBAL DISASTERS

Edited by Anthony Elliott and Eric L. Hsu

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Many people at the Hawke Research Institute contributed to this conference, and subsequently have helped with the production of the book. Phoebe Smith, Lynette Copus and Maureen Cotton all worked tirelessly to organize many different facets of the event. We would also like to recognize the Governor of South Australia, Hieu Van Le, for launching the conference, as well as the support of the Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of South Australia, Nigel Relph. Other attendees at the conference, including David Radford and David Chapman, also made valuable contributions.

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Adelaide, September 2015

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PART I

Expanding forms of disaster research

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1

BROADENING HORIZONS OF DISASTER RESEARCH

Eric L. Hsu and Anthony Elliott

Global emergencies, disasters and catastrophes, it would seem, have colonized much of the early 21st century. In December 2004, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake erupted on the Pacific sea floor near the Indonesian island of Sumatra. This, in turn, gave rise to a tsunami that severely impacted the shorelines of Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand and the Maldives – with a death toll of around 350,000 people (Athukorala & Resosudarmo, 2005). In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina – one of the most deadly and costliest hurricanes to ravage the Gulf Coast of America – killed more than 1,300 people and displaced over 200,000 persons to evacuation centers (Rodríguez & Aguirre, 2006). In April 2008, Cyclone Nargis destroyed large sections of Sri Lanka and Burma, in which 140,000 people died or went missing (Stone, 2009). In 2010, a devastating earthquake shook Haiti, killing 230,000 people and displacing roughly 1.5 million from their homes (Bilham, 2010). The list of earthquakes, tsunamis, storms, landslides and floods in the ever-evolving hazardous landscape of the 21st century goes on, and from one angle represents a line of continuity with regard to natural phenomena throughout the centuries threatening peoples and societies on planet Earth.

However, there is more – much more – when considering the consequences of disaster in these early years of the 21st century. For one thing, the social, cultural and political dimensions of disasters have become all the more apparent, as it is no longer apt to regard disasters as being merely 'natural' (Weichselgartner, 2001; Quarantelli, 1989). Disasters now also have global reach. To a seemingly ever-increasing degree, disasters integrate national societies and economic regions into transnational networks through information communication technology, trade, transport and travel, and much else – as analyzed in some parts of this book.

Let us consider, for a minute, the wider frame of disasters that have threatened whole societies and their economic and social progress in the 21st century. The 2000s began, as the previous century had ended, with the European BSE crisis

(bovine spongiform encephalopathy, more commonly known as 'mad cow disease') dominating media coverage and the wider public sphere (Washer, 2006). This fatal cow disease spread to humans through consumption of tainted meat, with thousands of people around the world having died from having eaten infected cattle. On 11 September 2001, terrorist group al-Qaeda flew passenger airlines into the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, resulting in the deaths of approximately 3,000 people (according to the Global Terrorism Database). In 2007, the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Global Financial Crisis, crashed stock markets worldwide, and led to the collapse of some of the largest financial institutions (especially in the United States) and the plummeting of real estate prices (Holton, 2012). In 2010, the biggest accidental oil spill ever occurred off the Gulf of Mexico after drilling by the BP-operated Deepwater Horizon rig triggered a methane gas explosion. It was estimated that 5 million barrels of oil were spilt (McNutt, Camilli & Crone, 2012), with the environmental and long-term health implications largely immeasurable. Health disasters, terrorist disasters, financial disasters and environmental disasters: our present global order consists of an ever-widening terrain of the disaster landscape, one that reconfigures the 'natural' as socio-cultural as possibly never before. As with the previous detailing of so-called 'natural' disasters, this inventory of 21st-century human-produced catastrophes is limited and partial, but what is important about this short inventory, nonetheless, is that it captures something of the changing disaster landscape affecting our global world. Advanced technological development makes trade, travel, tourism, terrorism and many other features of the contemporary world increasingly interconnected and thus much more complex and consequently more hazardous. Increasing globalization reconstitutes disasters so far within the parameters of uncertainty that risks, responsibilities and consequences cannot always be calculated with any degree of precision. Hence, this is why it makes sense to speak of the disaster landscape in the 21st century as being a 'new ball game' (De Smet, Lagadec & Leyson, 2012), where 'mega-crises' loom large and threaten to up-end many established ways of life across the world (Helsloot, Boin, Jacobs & Comfort, 2012).

It is with this in mind that *The Consequences of Global Disasters* is designed as a provocative intervention. On one level, the work is intended to highlight how disasters can be 'global', although, in using this term, we are careful to emphasize that 'global' does not mean universal or uniform. Rather, as much scholarly work has shown, it is better to conceive 'global' as a manifold concept (e.g. Lemert, Elliott, Chaffee & Hsu, 2010; Hsu, 2014). One of the key insights to develop out of the scholarly debate surrounding globalization is that the phenomenon involves many different scales of analysis. The global does not mean that the concept of the local has been rendered obsolete (Robertson, 1995). In fact, quite the opposite. It is only through the prism of the local that the global has any meaning and vice versa. This informs what we mean when we say that disasters can be 'global'. Studying a disaster in one part of the world does not mean it necessarily is entirely applicable to other contexts (e.g. Mileti, 1987). However, it is equally the case that

disasters based primarily in one locale or set of locales can have far-reaching implications. The point of this work is to further articulate and explore this dynamic.

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, we explain the relevance and pressing need for further social scientific research to be undertaken on the topic of disasters. Disasters, as we spell out, should not be studied only by a narrow band of specialists within certain social scientific disciplines. This is because disasters have bearing on many, if not almost all, aspects of social life. We also sketch out how the disasters that people face in the 21st century are to some extent unique and how this presents new challenges to the ways disasters are studied. Our second aim in this chapter is to situate the contributions that are made in this volume within the broader context of the disaster research field. The chapters that follow can be organized along three main thematic lines. The first explores how the boundaries of disaster research can be broadened. This does not just involve undertaking more research that bears on the topic of disasters across different social contexts. It also involves articulating new kinds of disaster research, conceptually, geographically and methodologically. A second way that the chapters in this volume further advance the field of disaster research is by framing disasters as a prism from which to understand social differences and asymmetrical power relations (e.g. Reid, 2013). Disasters have the potential to reveal how ethnicity, class and gender are expressed, as they reflect and refract various social variables. The third and final theme we draw from chapters in this volume is the way in which disasters penetrate all the way down into the personal and psychological aspects of social life. Disasters are not just phenomena that have unsettling social structural effects. They also affect how subjectivities are constituted and reproduced. In the last part of the chapter, we conclude by briefly reflecting on the 'messiness' and future frontiers of disaster research.

The social significance of disasters

Why study disasters? This is a simple but complex question. It is simple in the sense that it can be answered in a rather straightforward fashion: because social disruptions in the form of disasters can dramatically affect how people live their lives. However, the question is also complex in that there are innumerable ways to articulate how this is so.

Since its inception in the 1940s and 1950s, the field of disaster studies in the social sciences has made significant strides in revealing the manifold ways in which disasters are a constitutive component of the social world (e.g. Drabek, 1986; Tierney, 2007; Rodríguez, Quarantelli & Dynes, 2007). One of the key theoretical precepts for this area of study is that disasters are social phenomena (Perry, 2007). 'Disasters', according to Anthony Oliver-Smith (1996: 303), 'occur at the interface of society, technology and environment and are fundamentally the outcomes of the interactions of these features'. Hence, disasters cannot be taken as 'given', nor can they be understood without some social referent. This is true of how they are

defined and correspondingly of the impacts with which they are associated. For example, it has been argued that disasters are events that do not always materialize, as merely being perceived as a threat to the social order is socially consequential (Cisin & Clark, 1962; Drabek, 1986).

In recent decades, disaster research has been advanced on a number of fronts. Empirically, scholarly work has moved away from studying disasters in a very limited number of social contexts. Whereas early research on disasters tended to be situated in the United States and Europe (Tierney, 2007; Rodríguez et al., 2007), there is a growing body of research that is interested in studying disasters elsewhere – although research has still been sparse in some geographic areas. The type of disasters that have been studied has also widened. During its earlier years, sociological research on disasters in the United States tended to be focused on a limited set of issues 'that were of concern to government and military leaders, centering mainly on potential public responses in the event of a nuclear war' (Tierney, 2007: 504). However, disaster research has since branched out into other types of disruptive events, such as earthquakes, hurricanes and floods, and has expanded its realm of interest to encompass other research priorities.

Empirical advances in disaster research have been informed by – as well as informing of – theoretical work in the study of disasters. One particularly fruitful and recurrent line of inquiry has been to ask the question 'What defines a disaster?' (e.g. Quarantelli, 1998; Perry & Quarantelli, 2005; Perry, 2007). This has led to the development of a number of theoretical frameworks, which have helped to differentiate disasters from other concepts. For example, Quarantelli (2005b) has advanced a good case for why disasters ought to be thought of as distinct from catastrophes. In some respects, catastrophes can be thought of as a subset of disasters, but they differ considerably in terms of scale and intensity. Catastrophes signify that most, if not all, of a particular context has been impacted by some disruptive event, and this includes the capacities of local agencies to respond or to undertake any relief/recovery efforts (Quarantelli, 2005b; Rodríguez & Trainor, 2006: 86–87). Disasters, by contrast, are not bound by such characteristics, as they can refer to socially disruptive phenomena that are not as all-encompassing.

Interrogating the meaning of disasters has also encouraged researchers to develop multifaceted understandings of what disasters constitute. For example, one strand of disaster research finds that disasters can be uniquely captured through the prism of 'hazards'. What is distinct about this approach is that it does not construe disruptive events as always rare or wholly unpredictable. Rather, it finds that they are 'basic elements of environments and as constructed features of human systems' (Oliver-Smith, 1996: 304). The hazards approach to studying disasters has been insightful, in that it has illuminated how disasters can be the result of societal actions or inactions and not just the outcome of a wholly unforeseen occurrence. However, scholars have identified some of the limitations of using hazards to investigate the significance of disasters. One of these is that it does not capture all of the types of disasters there are (Quarantelli, 2005a). It primarily captures those that are more cyclical, while partly overlooking disasters that are less so. There is also a tendency

for the hazards perspective to focus on the processes of hazards that are seen to be the 'agents' of social disruption. One common point of criticism of this tendency is that it runs the risk of downplaying the social nature of disasters. As a corrective, scholarly work employing a hazards approach has recently shifted its attention to the issue of vulnerabilities (e.g. Cutter, 2005; Comfort, Wisner, Cutter & Pulwarty, 1999). This shift is meant to highlight the centrality of social systems in the study and analysis of disasters, since it is not the hazard agent which is ultimately the producer of vulnerabilities. Rather, vulnerabilities to disasters result and are defined by the social contexts in which they are situated (Quarantelli, 2005a). This is clear, for example, in the case of Hurricane Katrina. As some studies have shown, the associated consequences of the disaster were to a large degree determined by the various social arrangements and inequalities of New Orleans and its surrounding areas (e.g. Laska & Morrow, 2006).

Questioning the classical distinction between natural and technological/social disasters has been another major theoretical development in the field of disaster studies. While there has been a tendency in public discourse to frame some disasters as being 'acts of God' in contrast to those that are 'acts of men and women', there is a growing body of work that challenges such analytical divisions (Weichselgartner, 2001; Quarantelli, 1989). This has to do with the notion that no disasters are purely natural. Disasters that appear 'natural' can be precipitated – inadvertently or intentionally – by human intervention, such as the effect that deforestation has on flood occurrence by reducing water absorption capacities (Bokwa, 2013: 716). Additionally, it can be argued that completely natural disasters do not exist because it is the social element that causes them to be viewed as disasters in the first place (Quarantelli, 1989). Some recently developed accounts have also advocated for a 'post-social' approach to studying disasters (Williams, 2008). This involves recognizing the inadequacies of dichotomous ways of thinking about society and nature.

What these various developments speak to is the way in which the field of disaster research has grown and become a more well-established and analytically sophisticated area of study. However, at the same time this is not to say that the field does not stand at a 'crossroads' in some respects. Kathleen Tierney (2007) advances this line of thought. Her argument is that, within the discipline of sociology, disaster research can be thought of as marginalized. For one thing, she suggests that it lacks visibility within the mainstream (ibid.: 517). Not only are the numbers of disaster researchers (within sociology) relatively low, but also the work they produce tends to be transmitted in highly specialist outlets that are less noticeable to broad audiences. Tierney holds the tendency to focus on applied research and narrow theoretical interests as the main culprits, as much as they have developed the area of study in other ways.

Tierney offers a few suggestions about how to steer the field of disaster studies to new horizons. One of these involves further encouraging disaster researchers to factor gender, race and social class into their investigations (ibid.: 513–514). Until recently, these have been social factors that have not traditionally been the object of much study within the field. Tierney also suggests that there are fruitful

synergies between disaster studies and other close areas of research that are in need of further development. For instance, an engagement with the well-developed sociological study of risk as articulated by the late German social theorist Ulrich Beck (2006) is one way for disaster research to reach new audiences (Tierney, 2007: 519). Connections are also to be made between disaster research and environmental sociology.

Disasters at the edge of history

While we agree with many of Tierney's points, we find that another strategy can be employed to advance the field of disaster studies. This involves underscoring that the disasters that societies face today are, in some respects, radically different in scope, intensity and consequence than those faced by previous generations. Such a claim is certainly a grand one, but it is important to understand that this assertion is quite different from proclamations regarding the 'end of history' (Fukuyama, 1992), or the arrival of a world 'beyond modernity' (cf. Giddens, 1991: 27). We can never be 'beyond modernity', in the sense that reflective human life takes place within the confines of contemporary social processes. That said, the global contours of modernity have powerfully reconstituted our always vulnerable relationship with regard to natural phenomena. We refer to the arrival of a world in which disasters no longer remain as a 'given', locked into the category of 'natural' phenomena such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, storms, floods and much else. Instead, we are all caught up in a brave new world where disaster becomes permeated by socio-technical systems, and as a result new types of risk, hazard and uncertainty come to the fore. That is to say, the Enlightenment dream of colonizing knowledge and science so as to bring the social and natural worlds under increasing control has been powerfully displaced in the 21st century by a world of competing disaster scenarios, the complexity of risk, and the incalculability of how future life on the planet intersects with many current global hazards. The advance of technoscientific knowledge – from nanotechnology to artificial intelligence and robotics – has become intimately bound up with the production of new risks, hazards and insecurities on a global scale, and is thus fundamental to the changing nature of disasters. The typical modern dilemma, in short, is living with the knowledge that a reflexive world of global risk experimentation and governance inevitably generates other uncertainties, which is very consequential for understanding and managing disasters in an effective way.

This brings us to what Rosenthal (1998) terms the 'disasters of the 21st century'. Globalization and the brave new world of digital technologies provide for new ways of minimizing occurrences of disaster, but at the same time generate new disaster parameters and consequences for managing disaster futures. The global electronic economy, technological innovation in robotics and artificial intelligence, scientific innovation in nanotechnology, transnational systems of socio-economic complexity: these are merely some of the happenings today that carry important consequences for our changing disaster landscape. Add to this concerns over global

warming, climate change and mega-pollution and it becomes evident that there is an increasing interconnection between systems, societies and peoples when compared to more conventional disaster landscapes of previous eras. In this connection, the contributions of social theory have been especially important for the development of a richer, more nuanced understanding of disasters of the 21st century. Among other characterizations of the present age, Ulrich Beck's theory of 'world risk society' (Beck, 1999, 2006) deserves special mention. Beck's theorem that we live in a world on the edge of high technoscientific innovation and new global possibilities, but where no one fully grasps the global risks and disasters we might face, has been widely adopted, celebrated and critiqued in the social sciences.[1] The major global transformations, according to Beck (1999), are these:

- World risk society introduces global risk parameters that previous generations may not have had to face.
- World risk society presupposes high levels of decision making, of reflexivity. Today we live in a world of 'manufactured risk'.
- Risk of disaster is that of irreparable global damage that cannot be limited in space and time.
- In world risk society, traditional notions of accountability collapse.
- World risk society is reacted to and coped with – its hazards, dangers and disasters – through processes of individualization.

The globalization of modernity, according to Beck, ushers into existence a wholesale 'risk society'. 'Within the horizon of the opposition between old routine and new awareness of consequences and dangers', writes Beck (1999: 81), 'society becomes self-critical'.

In the risk-infused order of modernity – and against the backdrop of new forms of global disaster and the societal management of disasters – society becomes open to reflexivity and reflexive modes of risk calculation and disaster management. Part of this reflexive dimension of societies relates to globalization in all its dimensions, especially the growing appreciation that human vulnerability, hazard, risk and disaster are transformed in a world of interconnected infrastructure systems supporting communications, transport, travel, tourism and many other networks. The British sociologist Anthony Giddens has spoken of a world moving 'off the edge of history' when considering the possibilities and risks of the new global age. Certainly, the disaster landscape of the 21st century comes with a doomsday diagnosis in many versions. According to the Astronomer Royal and former president of the UK's Royal Society, Sir Martin Rees, the chances of humanity surviving the 21st century are only 50/50. In *Our Final Century?* (2003), Rees writes dramatically of global disasters, deadly viruses, worldwide pandemics and bioterrorism – any of which might destroy planet Earth.

Rees's voice is only one (albeit highly distinguished) of a growing choir warning of disasters that threaten our societies and their possible futures. In *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Survive* (2005), the anthropologist Jared Diamond

underscores the fundamental significance of environmental problems to the disintegration of societies. Bill McGuire has added significantly to the doomsday literature with titles including *Apocalypse* (1999) and *A Guide to the End of the World* (2002). These trends have led sociologist and social theorist John Urry (2011) to speak of a 'new catastrophism' in both academic and public thinking about the future of societies. This kind of thinking about societal catastrophe trades in both current epochal transformations (global warming, climate change, environmental disasters) and states of emergency as regards the emergence of a 'new dark age'. As Urry writes, 'the twentieth century in the rich North was a short period in human history; and there are no guarantees that the increasing prosperity, wealth, movement, knowledge and connectivity of that period (in the rich North) will continue and certainly not necessarily in anything like the same form' (ibid.: 37).

By contrast, there are optimists on the topic of global risk and disaster. Many such optimists, such as the sociologist Frank Furedi (2006), acknowledge that we live with unprecedented levels of risk and danger but stress the importance of taking a more balanced or realistic assessment of risk management. Part of the argument here is that risk will only multiply, and become ultimately self-defeating, if people respond blindly with panic. Giddens (2009: 33) captures the core issue well:

> The dangers that Martin Rees talks about, for example, are on the border between risk and uncertainty – it is difficult to attach more than extremely loose probabilities to them. In the case of new-style risks – those related to the advance of science and technology – we struggle to decide how seriously to take them, because of the way they shade off into uncertainty.

One way to give the slip to uncertainty, however, is through manic, narcissistic overvaluations of certainty. As we enter the new epoch of global disasters, the search for certainty – especially at the levels of science and technology – has been one very powerful way in which states, organizations, corporations and many more have sought to annihilate the turbulence of risk, danger and disaster. Consider, for example, recent governmental responses to global disasters and their desire for absolute security. On 6 October 2013 – two years and seven months after the Fukushima nuclear incident, which killed 18,000 people and saw 300,000 forced to evacuate their homes – Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced his country actively sought assistance from overseas in a bid to help resolve the world's worst nuclear crisis in decades. Elected on a platform of re-opening the nuclear plants that were closed in the wake of the Great Earthquake of 11 March 2011, Prime Minister Abe had repeated, time and again, that the environmental situation was 'under control' (*Japan Times*, 2013). It has since been independently verified that, during this time of governmental reassurance to the public, 400 tons of radioactive water had been discharged into the sea on a daily basis (McCurry, 2015). The release of this radioactive water had also been acknowledged from the plant's owner, the Tokyo Electric Power Corporation (TEPCO), which had also

spent the previous two years reassuring the public that everything was 'under control'.

Prime Minister Abe's reassurance that the Fukushima disaster was 'under control' is arguably a prime instance of what the late Cornelius Castoriadis (1991) termed 'pseudo-rational mastery'. The rational 'mastery' of science and technology launched by processes of modernization – when expanded indefinitely – can flip over into their opposite according to Castoriadis, producing a kind of 'pseudo-rational mastery'. For Castoriadis, this sham version of rationality can be detected at work from the individual-subjective level of increasing levels of privatization and individualism (or what Castoriadis terms 'generalized conformism'), through to the societal-political level of bureaucratic discourse and capitalist ideology. In Castoriadis's hands, pseudo-rational mastery and technoscience are inextricably twinned. 'With technoscience', writes Castoriadis (1991: 272), 'modern man believes he has been granted mastery'. However, this illusory mastery is no more than pseudo-rational in character. The one-dimensional, goal-orientated purposes of technological knowledge are informed by 'social imaginary significations' of power, control and mastery. A very precise speculative proposition is developed by Castoriadis in this connection – namely, what he describes as the *supraindividual process of technoscience*, as something that happens and makes things happen. The pursuit of technological mastery is a journey into control and power, where vulnerability and pain are magically sidestepped, and fantasy always trumps reality.

The all-powerful belief that science and technology provide pure forms of knowledge that can be pressed into the service of social and political solutions is, for Castoriadis, fetishism pure and simple. It is precisely such fetishism for 'rational mastery' that grants science, technology and administration its own legitimation. The destination of technoscience is a declaration beyond the political and ethical realms; in practical terms, a realm that it colonizes so forcefully, technoscience pushes towards a brutal and ruthless celebration of the 'can do', the so-called technological fix. As Castoriadis (1991: 249) observes:

> Who among the proponents of technoscience today really knows where they want to go – not from the standpoint of 'pure knowledge' but with regard both to the kind of society they would wish to live in and to the paths that will take them there? … This path – quite paradoxically, considering the amount of money and effort being expended – is less and less that of the desirable in any sense, and more and more that of simply the doable. We do not try to do what 'would be necessary' or what we judge 'desirable'. More and more, we do what we can, we work on what is deemed doable in the approximate short term.

Instrumental action, on this view, becomes equated with the rational, and that in turn translates into the desirable.

If striving for dispassionate judgment, or objectivity, in the assessment of catastrophic disasters is an emotionally taxing affair, an obsession with the technological

fix is one way to subvert the pressures of moral thought. Spurious kinds of technoscientific knowledge routinely insist that the most pressing of today's global problems can be easily fixed or negated, and certainly some of the Japanese government's proclamations in the wake of the Fukushima disaster fit this account well. However, it should, of course, be noted that Japan is not alone in traversing the quasi-omnipotent, ideological dimension of technoscience as regards the management of global disasters. From the 'War on Terror' to Hurricane Katrina, politics is strewn with technoscientific phantoms. The kind of technological and scientific knowledge that fears engagement with social reflexivity and deep moral thought involves a fetishistic overvaluing of the instrumental-rational spheres of social action. With the launch of a new global transformation of modernity, such a fascination with the technological quick fix presents social theory with continued challenges – especially in terms of confronting the broader social, cultural, political and environmental consequences of disasters.

Expanding forms of disaster research

The Consequences of Global Disasters consists of contributions that are diverse in a number of respects. The chapters, which employ different conceptual approaches, rely on different kinds of methodologies and are not all situated in the same area or locale. Nonetheless, there are a number of crisscrossing and overlapping themes that we can discern, and which we describe in the sections that follow.

The first theme we identify explores how the boundaries of disaster research can be broadened. This theme is expressed in a number of ways. At one level, we find that the chapters in this work expand the study of disasters by being geographically varied. They are not situated in places where disaster research has traditionally been anchored. Many of the chapters concentrate on the cultural, political and psychological ramifications of the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami and the subsequent Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster. Other chapters analyze disasters in other contexts such as the 2008 Sichuan earthquake in China and the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. What is significant about undertaking disaster research in these places is that it further articulates the need for a context-sensitive approach in disaster studies. Studying a disaster in one part of the world does not mean it necessarily is entirely applicable to other locales (e.g. Mileti, 1987; Quarantelli, 1992). Augmenting what is known about various aspects of disasters in the Asia-Pacific region and elsewhere thus stands to produce knowledge about disasters that potentially departs from other more well-established accounts. However, more than this, it also stands to increase the analytical interchange there is between different geographic areas. Particularly when it comes to what Japanese social researchers have to offer, recent works have illuminated how the transfer of social theoretical knowledge should not be thought of as a one-way street, as there is much potentially to be gained on both sides (Elliott, Katagiri & Sawai, 2013: 11–12).

Another way in which chapters in *The Consequences of Global Disasters* broaden the boundaries of disaster research is by querying the conceptual and

methodological limits of the field. This is acutely evident in Chapter 3. Here, Sam Han and Nurul Amillin Hussain develop a case for widening the conceptualization of disasters to include phenomena that are of a *longue durée*. They find the classical view of disasters as focused events limiting and expand it to encompass the recurrent problem of suicide in Japan.

Methodologically, the chapters in this book contribute to the field of disaster studies by further articulating the documentary sources that can be used to investigate the social effects that disasters such as the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami have. This is significant because 'documentary'-based research is one of the key components for disaster researchers (Stallings, 2007). Thus far, documentary research within disaster studies has not been an especially prominent strand of inquiry. This is evident not only in the relative lack of scholarly works published that put the analysis of disaster-related documents front and center but also in the range of documentary sources that have been used. Although disaster researchers such as Robert Stallings (ibid.) and E.L. Quarantelli (2002) have put forth very broad definitions of disaster documents that encompass all types of cultural artifacts, the field has not yet looked to study some of these kinds of items in a sustained fashion.

One commonality that some of the chapters share is a willingness to engage with unconventional or recently emerging documentary sources. For example, in Chapter 4, Takeshi Deguchi views literary works as valid and fruitful objects of sociological analysis. By studying the cultural meanings of literary texts that appeared following the Great East Japan triple disaster, Deguchi finds that this deepens understanding of how disaster-related guilt is culturally expressed in Japan. In Chapter 5, Kiyomitsu Yui makes a case for why disaster research is not just textual, but also visual. Yui uses the 'visual turn' in contemporary Japanese sociology to understand how representations of disasters are profoundly 'iconic'. In Chapter 2, Atsushi Sawai appeals to song lyrics as a source of data. He analyzes the widely played song 'Flowers Will Bloom', which was broadcast in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, to understand how deaths in Japan are socially framed. Daniel Chaffee in Chapter 6 further bolsters the need to engage with and analyze new information communication technologies in his study of digital humanitarianism following the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti. Chaffee offers insightful reflections on the kinds of sociality that recently developed social media platforms such as *Mission 4636* engender.

Disasters and social division

The second thematic contribution that our work tries to make is to deepen what is known about how disasters transform, expose and/or perpetuate certain social differences. While disasters have the capacity to bring people together (e.g. Drabek, 1986), they also reflect and refract many types of social and power inequalities (Reid, 2013). Chapter 7 by Constance Lever-Tracy and Carolyn Corkindale speaks to this point. Through a survey-based study of Australian households, Lever-Tracy

and Corkindale show how views of climate change-related disasters differ considerably in Australia according to age. The findings they present reveal that younger people may be more willing to contribute funds to addressing disasters arising from climate change than the older age groups surveyed.

Social differences relating to disasters can also be revealed in the type of discursive language used by governments during relief efforts. In Chapter 9, Giorgio Shani bears on this issue by communicating what is worrisome about the shift in government rhetoric around the Great East Japan triple disaster from human security to human resilience. What Shani finds troubling about emphasizing human resilience is that it diminishes the government's responsibility to guarantee the safety and well-being of its people.

David Ip and Liyue Wu specifically focus on the experiences of women in their analysis of rebuilding efforts that transpired in the aftermath of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake in China. In Chapter 10, they show why it is apt to target this social group. Doing so reveals how the social needs of a society following a disaster are not uniform. Social needs differ according to variables such as gender, which should be factored into reconstruction initiatives at the policy level.

Along with gender, the issue of multiculturalism can also be explored through the prism of disasters. Kazuhisa Nishihara and Mari Shiba hold and investigate this premise in Chapter 8. By studying relief efforts undertaken by intercultural 'mediators' relating to the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, Nishihara and Shiba reveal how the cultural status of migrants to Japan is changing. While migrants are still commonly viewed as 'outsiders' in many rural areas, Nishihara and Shiba find that cultural attitudes to various migrant groups are transforming, with a greater sense of social solidarity being engendered between ethnic groups in Japan resulting from the activities of intercultural mediators.

Chapter 11 by I-Hsuan Lin analyzes the social differences of disasters through the prism of newspaper reporting. Lin's study of Japanese news coverage following the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake reveals how news outlets differ in how disasters are represented. Some tend to present the 'face' of those affected by disasters in highly distinct ways, with some relying more heavily on governmental or nameless sources rather than featuring actual persons in the affected communities.

Social theory and the psycho-social dimensions of disasters

The third overlapping theme that we can discern across chapters in this work is a marked focus on the personal, affective, indeed intimate, dimensions of disasters. In order to gain access to such areas of knowledge, areas that the social sciences and humanities have often overlooked or ignored, it is necessary to draw from advances in social theory and developments in psycho-social studies. Recent work in social theory underscores that disasters are not simply 'out there' phenomena; rather, disasters are events that have bearing on the personal and 'interior' aspects of people's lives. Numerous studies of disasters have noted how they have significant psychological impacts (e.g. Gill, Picou & Ritchie, 2012; Grattan, Roberts &

Mahan, 2011). They have tended to employ approaches to describe and measure these impacts that are situated and well established in the field of social psychology. However, what is distinctive about some of the chapters in this volume is a willingness to explore the psycho-social dimensions of disasters using conceptual approaches developed in the humanities and in the field of social theory. For example, in Chapter 14, Aiko Kashimura applies insights from a theoretical framework that has not yet received much attention within disaster studies, Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, to understand the kinds of trauma inflicted on the Japanese subject from the Great East Japan triple disaster. Similarly in Chapter 12, John Cash – drawing from a broad array of traditions in European social theory – finds psychoanalysis useful for understanding what it means to live in a risky world of various social and ecological disasters in Western contexts. From a psychoanalytically informed viewpoint, Cash critically appraises Ulrich Beck's conceptual account of risk and its associated modes of being.

Masataka Katagiri in Chapter 13 concentrates on the personal dimensions of disasters by analyzing the trend to psychologize certain social behaviors in Japanese society against the backdrop of the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Katagiri develops a highly sophisticated complex account of how the experience of disasters may counteract the psychologization process. While he finds that disasters may lead to a renewal of social bonds, he finds such countertrends to be unevenly distributed and highly restricted.

Midori Ito takes a different approach to investigating disasters at the level of the personal and intimate. Ito in Chapter 15 is interested in understanding the causes of anxiety amongst the Japanese population. Ito does not find evidence that links disasters to increasing general levels of anxiety; instead, she proposes other explanations, which involve broader social changes in Japan about how people relate to themselves and others.

Finally, Robert Holton in Chapter 16 explores the personal consequences associated with disasters that are predominantly financial. In particular, he shows how there is a link between financial disasters and mental health disorders and suicides across many parts of the world.

The messiness of disaster research in the 21st century

These ways of framing the contributions to this volume should be viewed as only starting points in need of further elaboration. Not only are there bound to be other themes (and sub-themes) that we do not have sufficient space to cover, but we also stress the importance of recognizing the overlap between each of the three thematic streams described. For example, Takeshi Deguchi's contribution in Chapter 4 could also be construed as an investigation of the psychological dimensions of disasters. Not only does Deguchi describe an under-utilized methodology to develop in the field of disaster research, but he uses such a method to illuminate underrepresented aspects of Japanese identity against the backdrop of recent disasters. Likewise, Robert Holton's Chapter 16 can be counted as a contribution that

stretches across the themes covered. Holton not only touches upon the psychological and personal aspects of disasters, but he further articulates the capacity of financial disasters to perpetuate and extend social inequalities as well.

This thematic overlap speaks to the messiness of studying global disasters in the 21st century. As John Law (2004) has eloquently put it, modes of social inquiry need to be continually renewed to capture social realities that may be messy, elusive and historically contingent. We feel this is especially the case with disaster studies. If the field is to grow and to gain greater relevance, it will need to further incorporate new disciplinary perspectives, new locales, new methodologies, new researchers and new areas of concern (Tierney, 2007). The reason for this, as many of the contributors to *The Consequences of Global Disasters* make evidently clear, is that we are now living in a remarkably different kind of socio-political and technological system from that of the past – even the quite recent past. The new global electronic economy and the spread of digital worlds have ushered into existence socio-technical systems, which, in turn, generate fresh opportunities and challenges. There are serious concerns about whether traditional ways of assessing, coping with and managing disasters can sufficiently address the trials of our global disaster society. In this connection, there are a range of areas that social theory has often overlooked or displaced – risk, hazard, danger, disaster – which must be urgently engaged with. *The Consequences of Global Disasters* is intended as a contribution to such efforts.

Note

1 John Cash, in this volume, discusses Beck's sociology of risk in some detail and appraises the strengths and weaknesses of this standpoint for the critique of global disasters.

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2

'FLOWERS WILL BLOOM'

How Japanese people mentally cope with the massive loss caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake

Atsushi Sawai

The massive loss of life (about 16,000 deaths) caused by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami had a huge emotional impact on not only friends and family members of the victims but also Japanese people in general. It is easy to recognize the importance of psychological counselling for the bereaved in some cases, but, at the same time, it can be argued that Japanese people in general may also have emotional problems – that is, problems related to how to cope mentally with the great loss caused by the earthquake and tsunami. Although the general trend of people's behaviour in this case is not easy to determine, some songs and novels that have become very popular since the earthquake seem to indicate symbolically the way in which Japanese people have attempted to accept and overcome the tragedy.[1]

In this chapter, I will focus on a highly popular and widely sung song titled 'Hana wa saku' (Flowers will bloom).[2] This song has been used as the theme song for the Earthquake Relief Project by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK). I will analyse this song from the perspective of the sociology of death and bereavement – that is, against the backdrop of changing conceptions of death, which are connected to structural changes in Japanese society since the 20th century. This song's lyrics are simple, but it is not easy to understand their exact meaning at first glance, even for Japanese people. I will demonstrate that what arouses people's sympathy in this song is a renewed (and not necessarily religious) image of continuing social bonds after death, combined with the traditional image of death from before the period of modernization in Japan.

'Flowers will bloom': whose voice is heard in this song?

'Flowers will bloom' is a charity song, with words by Shunji Iwai, a famous film director, and music by Yoko Kanno, both of whom are from Miyagi prefecture in

the Tohoku region, which was severely damaged by the earthquake and tsunami. The royalties from this song are being donated to disaster victims. The NHK made a music video of this song, in which 36 persons (singers, actors, comedians, athletes, journalists, etc.) who are from or have been in the disaster area (Miyagi, Fukushima, Iwate prefecture in the Tohoku region) sing this song in turn. The song is also often sung in schools and by local choirs.

The lyrics of this song are as follows.[3]

I can feel the spring breeze, on the white snow-covered road.
It brings to mind my old hometown that I'll never see again.
I was always chasing rainbows then, I did want to change myself.
I just hold on, hold on now, longing for my loved one.

I can hear someone sings a song, encouraging someone.
I can see someone smiles through the sorrow.
Flowers, flowers will bloom, for you who will come into the world someday.
Flowers, flowers will bloom, what have I left behind for you all.

As mentioned above, this song seems to have brought a feeling of strangeness to not a few Japanese people when they first listened to it, despite the feeling of compassion it aroused. There are many reasons for this, but, in my view, one main reason is that we cannot identify whose voice is heard in this song. The question is who is speaking to us through these words? It might be people who died in the tsunami. Or it could be people who had to evacuate. Or it could be a bereaved family. Or it could be people who experienced the earthquake and tsunami only through television news. Yet in spite of this vagueness, the song definitely appeals to people's emotions and brings them consolation when they remember the massive loss caused by the disaster. To understand exactly why this song is received in this way, we need to consider the social context of people's emotions. Therefore, I would like to examine the changing conception of death in Japanese society since the 20th century.

We will return to the song later. First, we will begin by considering the effect of modernization on the traditional conception of death – namely, ancestor worship.

Modernization and the transformation of ancestor worship

Traditional family system and ancestor worship

Japanese religious consciousness is often described as multi-religious on the one hand and non-religious on the other hand. These two features might appear incompatible at first glance. The religious consciousness of the Japanese is considered multi-religious because they employ rituals originating from various religions as part of the formal customs they practise to mark life events. For instance, it is common for Japanese people to take new-born babies to Shinto shrines to pray

for their healthy future, or to have a Shinto-style or even a Christian-style wedding ceremony. They also commonly hold Buddhist-style funerals. Yet at the same time, the Japanese are depicted as non-religious because, in many cases, those religious activities are formal, routine rituals and are not based on the participants' substantive belief in those religions. According to a survey conducted by the *Asahi* newspaper in 2003, 77 per cent of Japanese people said that they did not have any interest in religion.

Nevertheless, at least in the first half of the 20th century, Japanese people seem to have shared a more consistent, pervasive religious consciousness. In 1946, just after the end of World War II, a pioneering folklorist named Kunio Yanagita published a classic book titled *Senzo no Hanashi* (*The Story of Ancestors*). Based on his fieldwork in rural communities throughout the country, Yanagita discussed the common elements in Japanese people's religious consciousness despite the apparent diversity in religious rituals. He observed the following shared elements in the Japanese religious outlook.

1. Spirits of the deceased do not leave the local community after death (therefore, they do not go to another place, like Heaven or Hell); instead, they remain in the neighbourhood, for example, in the mountains or in the forests, watching over their posterity.
2. Spirits of the deceased return to their descendants' homes annually at certain times of the year (usually during the 'Obon' period, in mid-August).
3. Thirty-three years after a person's death, after a sufficient number of memorial services have been held, the deceased person merges with the spirit of the household ancestor.

Although religious rituals followed in rural communities are usually of a Buddhist style, these elements, as Yanagita went on to point out, had already existed in ancient Japan before the introduction of Buddhism from China and Korea in the sixth century. Thus, according to Yanagita, Buddhism gave some outward forms to endemic beliefs that had spontaneously arisen (Yanagita, 1946).

In this belief system, the relationship between the dead and the survivors was maintained after death, and each family took care of their own ancestor's spirit. Traditionally, every family had a family altar called a 'Butsudan' in their house for worshipping their ancestors. Moreover, such families collectively constituted a local community that worshipped its common ancestor or guardian god in the local shrine. To use Peter Berger's (1967) term, the local community was a kind of 'cosmos' in which the deceased were treated as if they were still living, as long as the community itself continued to exist. As Syuuichi Kato pointed out (Kato et al., 1977: 212), in such communities, 'the meaning of death was given by communities, not by individuals'.

Through the amending of the Civil Code in 1897, a family system called 'Ie-seido' was introduced, giving the previously mentioned belief system a legal underpinning. The 'Ie' system was a sort of patriarchal system in which household

heads were authorized to take control of family members' lives, for instance, concerning marriage and moving. The central feature of the 'Ie' system was the inheritance of the family estate, including house, land, property and also the family grave by the eldest son from the former household head. If married couples did not have sons, then an adopted son took over as the head of the family. As the number of workers engaging in family-operated businesses or primary industries (e.g. agriculture, the forestry and fisheries industries) was high before World War II, such an inheritance often meant taking over the family business. Thus, there would always be a grave keeper for the family grave in the 'Ie' system – that is to say, the household head who took care of the family grave and held memorial services for the deceased and ancestors.

The family-state ideology

When we consider the Japanese 'Ie' system, the relationship between the family system and the building of the nation-state is key. In order to construct a modern nation-state, the government adopted, from the early 20th century, the previously mentioned belief system as a kind of ideology that was intended to enhance people's feelings of loyalty to the state. This ideology is now called 'Kazoku-Kokka Kan' (family-state ideology). In those days, such ideological thought was taught as part of moral education in classes in schools. According to this set of beliefs, the household ancestors whom each family worshipped could be historically traced back to the common ancestors worshipped by local people in the local shrine, and furthermore, these common ancestors could again be historically traced back to presumably the oldest of all Japanese families, namely, the imperial household. Therefore, Japan was a nation-state that could be seen as one big family, as it were; a family-state whose original house was that of the imperial family. From this point of view, love and respect for one's mother and father were equivalent to loyalty to the emperor.

During World War II, on the basis of this ideology, 'State Shintoism', Shinto sponsored by the state, became the spiritual pillar of wartime nationalism and was used to mobilize people towards war. In the last phase of the war, even young students were mobilized and sent to the front. 'Chu-Kou-Ippon' was an often-used expression among students, the meaning of which was that filial devotion to parents and loyalty to the emperor and the state were one and the same. Moreover, 'Die for the nation', 'Die for the emperor', 'Death for honour by 100 million' were popular slogans in wartime Japan.

Post-war changes in family and social structure

In the early 1970s, the Japanese sociologist Syun Inoue, in his article entitled 'The Loss of Reasons to Die', argued that young people's attitudes towards death had changed after the war (Inoue, 1973). In contrast to the 'acceptance' of death among young people during World War II, he observed that the young generation

in the 1970s was marked by 'denial' of, 'disinterestedness' towards and 'refusal' of death. In reaction to the collectively understood meaning of death and the consequent tragedy resulting from the war, to talk about death officially – in other words, to talk about the social meaning of death – was generally considered taboo and was repressed.

At least in the first half of the twentieth century, as I mentioned above, there was a comparatively more consistent, pervasive religious belief system shared by Japanese people, as described by Yanagita. However, as a result of the government having transformed this belief system into the family-state ideology and using it to mobilize people towards war, not only this ideology but also the original belief system were sometimes criticized in the post-war period. Although the customs and conventional rituals related to the belief system still remained a part of daily life after the war, the belief system itself gradually attenuated. Such a tendency was reinforced by major changes in the family system, the employment structure and the social structure after the war.

First, immediately following the end of the war, through the amending of the Civil Code in 1947, the traditional family ('Ie') system, which legally underpinned the traditional belief system, was abolished. The inheritance of the family estate by the eldest son was also abolished and replaced, in principle, by an equal division of the inheritance among the children. In the traditional belief system, the custom of continuing the family line down through the generations was crucially important, because it was the descendant's family who took care of the ancestor's spirit and the family grave. However, the custom lost its legal foundation at this point.

Second, the custom of continuing the family line through the generations also lost its economic meaning. The rate of workers who engaged in family-operated businesses or primary industries declined rapidly after the war. The rate of workers participating in primary industries was 48.5 per cent in 1950, but by 2000 it had become a mere 5.0 per cent.[4] The rate of workers participating in family-operated businesses was 46.6 per cent in 1960, but by 2000 it had become just 16.6 per cent.[5] This meant that more and more workers were becoming company employees in the process of the industrialization of Japan (Japan moved into a high economic growth period in the second half of the 1950s). Thus, for family members, it became increasingly unnecessary to continue the family line (in this case, entering the family business) through generations, for the sake of earning a living.

Third, because of the rapid advancement of urbanization during the high economic growth period, rural areas generally suffered from depopulation and ties within local communities also loosened. During this period (from the second half of the 1950s through the 1960s), approximately 800,000 to 1.2 million people left rural areas each year and moved to the large metropolitan areas around Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka. In rural areas before the war, as I pointed out above, there were local communities, which constituted a kind of 'cosmos', and they worshipped their common ancestors in local shrines. However, as a result of the declining population, it sometimes became difficult for such communities to maintain mutual-help relationships between community members. For example,

before the war, funerals in rural areas were usually prepared and held not by funeral directors but by neighbourhood groups, known in Japanese as 'Soushikigumi'. On behalf of the bereaved family in a community, 'Soushikigumi' organized funerals and assisted each other. This group was sometimes made up of a whole community. Although such a custom still remains in daily life in some form, funerals held by 'Soushikigumi' were widely replaced by funerals organized by funeral companies during the high economic growth period.

Therefore, before World War II, the traditional belief system as described by Yanagita was underpinned by the family system and local communities; however, after the war, against the background of the social changes I mentioned above, such a belief system rapidly attenuated, losing its social foundation. Subsequently, rituals related to the religious belief system, for instance rituals for ancestor worship, also became simplified, and many of the memorial services and gatherings for ancestor worship were ignored. Traditionally such services were held every first, third, seventh, 13th, 17th, 23rd, 27th and 33rd year after a person's death, but people came to think that only one or two gatherings in total were sufficient to honour their ancestors. Also, the number of family graves that have lost their grave keepers and fallen into ruin has been increasing, especially since the 1990s.

Self-determination of death: from opposing control to considering personal relationships

Self-determination of death and disposal

In the 1990s, substantial changes occurred in the Japanese concept of death. In contrast to the sequestering of death up until the 1980s, it was now possible to find much discourse and many images concerning death in the media. For example, documentary-style books such as *Byouin de shinu to iukoto* (*On dying in hospital*) (1990) and *Daioujou* (*The peaceful death*) (1994) became bestsellers, and both were made into films or television dramas. Especially in the late 1990s, major monthly periodicals published special issues on the subject of death several times, containing articles titled 'For a Happy Death', 'The Preparation for Death', 'Facing Death Properly', 'To Die with Dignity' and so on.

It is possible that certain social trends influenced this 'reappearance' of death in the 1990s. In particular, some medical issues became highly controversial during this period, such as truth-telling in cancer diagnosis and prognosis, euthanasia and dying with dignity, brain death and organ transplant. Until the 1980s, most Japanese physicians had a general policy of not telling the truth if they found that the patient had a terminal illness, but as survival rates for cancer and other grave illnesses improved, they began to be more honest and emphasized the patient's right to know the details of his or her actual condition. Moreover, after the Emperor Showa's prolonged state of dying was aired in the media in 1989 (that is, endless daily reports on total blood transfusion), the membership of the 'Japan Society for Dying with Dignity' increased rapidly (the number of people who began to have a

living will, should they become terminally ill, rose significantly). The organization's membership was under 10,000 in the 1980s, but then rose to 30,000 in 1992, 60,000 in 1996 and over 100,000 in 2002. Moreover, a number of medical accidents aired by the media stirred up controversy over active euthanasia.

In these cases, we might say that the issue is the problem of self-determination in death and dying. When patients are not informed of their true condition and are under the control of medical staff, they are deprived of their right to determine their own way of living until death. However, it is the patients' lives, not the lives of the medical staff, which matter most. Thus, it is argued, the patient should be given all relevant information no matter how painful it might be (sometimes such information may include the sentence of death). It is also argued that, if the patient does not want to be kept alive in a terminal or a vegetative state, his or her right to determine his or her own death should be recognized. Writing a living will (advance directive) is a measure intended to guarantee this right.

What is more, the concept of self-determination as a basic principle applies not only to death and dying but also to funerals and burials. For example, since the 1990s, 'the Grave-Free Promotion Society of Japan' has supported the practice of 'Shizensou' (natural burial), which means the scattering of cremated remains at sea or in forests. This movement emerged against the backdrop of the post-war changes in the family structure to which I referred earlier, but it also embodies, by implication, the idea of self-determination of burial. In other words, by being freed from the traditional family grave, which is related to the pre-war family ('Ie') system, and from traditional Buddhist formality, people can now freely determine the way in which their remains will be disposed of.

Generally speaking, such a trend towards the self-determination of death has appeared not only in such practices related to death but also in discourses and images concerning death in the media, as mentioned above. For example, the title of a television drama that became hugely popular in 2003, 'Boku no Ikiru Michi' (My way of life), which was a story about a young teacher diagnosed with a terminal illness, is symbolic in this respect.[6]

Self-determination and personal choice seem, therefore, to have become the leading guidelines for people facing death who wish neither to persist in the pre-modern tradition nor be under the control of modern medical professionals.

Two social contexts of self-determination

It would be untrue to say that such a trend towards self-determination has appeared only in debates about death and dying. Rather, this has been a general trend underlying changes in many social areas since the 1980s. I will now take a look at two structural changes related to this trend in Japanese society since that time – that is, the advancement towards a 'consumer society' and the process of 'individualization' in the family and the company.

First, Japanese society in the era of high economic growth (that is, from the second half of the 1950s through the 1960s) has often been depicted as a 'mass

society' from a social theoretical point of view. Rapid industrialization brought about a new and different lifestyle based on mass production and mass consumption. In those days, the term 'Sanshu no Zinngi' (three holy objects) in family life was often used. This term originally meant the three sacred emblems of the imperial family, but with economic development, it came to mean a (black and white) television, an electric refrigerator and an electric washing machine. Generally speaking, people now wanted to have the same commodities as their neighbours had.

However, in the 1970s, as the penetration rates of the 'three holy objects' for households reached almost 100 per cent and that of the car or the air conditioner reached more than 50 per cent, the shift from mass production to high-mix, low-volume production (the manufacturing of a wide variety of products in small quantities) became necessary to sell these products in many industrial segments.

Furthermore, in the mid-1980s, a famous debate among scholars and marketing managers arose about the 'end of mass society', in which some commentators depicted Japanese society as a consumer society. Thus, it was argued, people now wanted to become 'somebody' who was different from others, not 'anybody' who was similar to others (Murakami, 1984). A measure for such self-realization was the consumption of a wide variety of commodities and the coordination of those goods in an individualized style. During the same period, social theories on consumer society (for example, that of Jean Baudrillard) and theories on postmodernity (for example, that of Jean-François Lyotard) were introduced to Japan. However, what must be noted is that the reception of those theories at that time was one-sided. These ideas were not used to criticize certain characteristics of consumer society (for instance, the fragmentation of self-identity), but instead to legitimate the status quo (Sawai, 2013). Therefore, in consumer society, it was argued, people had become able to live more freely on the basis of their own personal choices and could also lead their lives in more individualized ways. Since then, one could say that the trend towards self-determination has emerged as an extension of such a structural change in consumer society.

Second, the process of 'individualization' in the family and the company can be referred to as a structural change underlying the trend towards self-determination. In the past, especially in the high economic growth period, Japanese society was often characterized by terms such as 'groupism' or a 'group-centred orientation', in contrast to Western individualism. It was often argued, even in the late 1980s, that this was the key to the success of Japan in the world economy. This management style consisted of a lifelong employment system combined with the recruitment of new graduates (in contrast to short-term, episodic work); a seniority-based pay and promotion system (in contrast to a performance-based pay and promotion system); an enterprise-based welfare system, such as the provision of company housing, company pension, company health insurance, company hospital, company-owned resort facilities and company athletic sporting events; and the labour union in enterprise (in contrast to the industrial union). The last aspect meant that the labour union was actually a part of the company, so that employers and employees

basically cooperated. No matter how much disputation arose, both parties shared the same overall interests, namely, those of the company. From this point of view, Japanese companies at that time were characterized as a community-like system that protected employees for their entire lives. We can say that such companies actually replaced weakening local communities. An employee, in turn, worked as a 'Kaisha Ningen' (company man), sacrificing himself for the sake of the company. Such features of company life had changed gradually since the late 1960s. The word 'privatization' was now used to describe the emergence of a new lifestyle in which people wanted to enjoy leisure and consumption in their family lives rather than become company-first employees. To put it simply, people began to think of the family as more important in their lives than the company or the nation.

However, since the 1980s, a further change in family life has emerged with the term 'individualization'. First, because of the increase in the number of unmarried people and the decrease in the number of three-generation households, the percentage of one-person households has increased. The rate of one-person households rose from 19.5 per cent in 1975 to 20.8 per cent in 1985, 25.6 per cent in 1995 and 32.4 per cent in 2010.[7] Even within the family, the lifestyles and time schedules of family members have become differentiated and individualized; as a result, 'hotel-like households' or 'eating alone' have become widely discussed phenomena.

In addition, within businesses, the process of individualization became a remarkable trend, especially in the 1990s. After the collapse of the bubble economy and, above all, after the amendment of the Work Dispatch Law, more companies began to employ more non-regular employees. When we review the long-term change in the rate of non-regular employees (including part-time workers, temporary workers, contract employees and agency workers) among all employees in Japan, it is clear that the rate has noticeably increased since 1995. The ratio of non-regular employees among all employees rose from 16.4 per cent in 1985 to 20.2 per cent in 1990, 20.9 per cent in 1995, 26.0 per cent in 2000, 32.6 per cent in 2005 and 34.4 per cent in 2010.[8] Today, more than one in three employees is a non-regular worker. Broadly speaking, this rapid change was due to the collapse of the Japanese bubble economy, globalization and neoliberal policies. To revive and to compete with foreign companies in the globalized economy, Japanese companies underwent radical change.

Furthermore, more companies have started to introduce a merit- or performance-based system instead of the seniority system. According to one survey among companies that have more than 1,000 employees, 82.5 per cent of companies have already introduced a performance-based pay and promotion system.[9]

Nowadays, for most employees, companies are not a community-like group as before. Instead, more and more workers have become individualized, and have to shape their careers by themselves, taking responsibility for their own actions.

Returning to the original topic, the trend towards self-determination of death that has emerged since the 1990s can also be connected with the process of individualization that has occurred within the family and business.

From opposing control to considering personal relationships

At this point, I would like to emphasize that this trend towards self-determination of death in Japan cannot be interpreted simply as the result of the importation of Western individualism to Japan. It is certainly true that the way of thinking about death in contemporary Japan has been influenced by Western styles of thought, particularly American, and concerning medical issues. Yet, it seems that the meaning of the concept of self-determination changed in the process of its reception by Japanese society. In the Japanese context, self-determination actually implies not so much respect for the rights of the individual, but rather giving individuals options to do what they like even though the actual choices might be very difficult.

I mentioned earlier the denial of the wartime concept of death in the post-war period, which led to the loss of the traditional belief system concerning death. It might be argued that this denial and loss have led to the trend towards self-determination of death. In other words, without a shared conception of death, people must now make sense of suffering and death as individuals, and are forced to do so on their own.

Yet at the same time, there is another tendency related to death and bereavement – that is, a tendency towards rebuilding social bonds in the face of death. We can see that, compared to the 1990s, there has been a significant qualitative change in the focus of self-determination since the late 2000s, at least with regard to self-determination of death. There is a change, as it were, from self-determination as a way of rejecting control by others to self-determination based on a consideration of personal relationships. In the 1990s, self-determination of death was preached in order to counteract the control of organizations such as hospitals, temples and funeral companies over the individual person and, with this goal in mind, organizations such as the Japan Society for Dying with Dignity or the Grave-Free Promotion Society of Japan were founded, as I mentioned above.

The more recent movement towards self-determination that places an emphasis on personal relationships has been remarkable. Since the late 2000s, activities called 'Shukatsu' have become widespread. Originally, this word meant the job-hunting activity of young people, but now it has come to mean the activities in which elderly and middle-aged people engage to prepare for their own death. A symbolic example of these activities is the so-called 'ending note', which has become common in recent years. This is, literally, a note about preparing for the end of one's life. In many cases, a 'living will' requesting death with dignity is also included in the note, but it is not limited to that, and the contents may in fact be rather wide ranging. For instance, it may include the writer's hopes concerning nursing care, a funeral and burial, information on insurance and savings, contact information for relatives and friends, identification and passwords for websites, memoirs and so on. Thus, the note is a kind of memorandum, based on the person's desire to prevent the bereaved from being upset by his/her death. Another change is that a small funeral or a family funeral has become common these days. This suggests that many people hope the funeral will be an opportunity to reaffirm the

relationship between the deceased person and his or her bereaved survivors in an intimate setting, rather than a formal ceremony.

While such a trend can be seen as an extension of the earlier movement that began in the 1990s, more important is that the current movement for self-determination stresses the importance of considering the relationships among people who have lived together for a length of time. Such a desire for self-determination is based on people's hope of maintaining and protecting these relationships beyond the boundary of life and death. It might be said that people are acting on the principle of self-determination, but nevertheless, there exist social bonds between them.

'I am a thousand winds'

In this context, it is interesting to examine a number-one Japanese hit song from 2007, which is called 'Sen no Kaze ni natte' (I am a Thousand Winds).[10] The lyrics of the song go as follows.

> Do not stand at my grave and weep;
> I am not there; I do not sleep.
> I am a thousand winds that blow.
> I am the diamond glints on snow.
> I am the sunlight on ripened grain.
> I am the gentle autumn rain.
>
> When you awaken in the morning's hush,
> I am the swift uplifting rush
> Of quiet birds in circled flight.
> I am the soft stars that shine at night.
> Do not stand at my grave and cry,
> I am not there; I did not die.

This song has many exceptional aspects. First, the singer was not a pop star, but rather an opera singer. Second, the lyrics, which were originally written in English in the United States and translated into Japanese, are about death and mourning, which are never usually associated with hit songs in Japan. Moreover, the opening lines, which state that the deceased is absent at the grave, are also rather peculiar, because, traditionally in Japan, the family grave is one of the most important sites at which family members mourn, remember and worship the deceased and their ancestors. These lines are actually at odds with the traditional family grave system. Thus, on the one hand, the fact that this song became hugely popular could mean that people were attracted to its liberating feeling, namely, the possibility of freely imagining one's own afterlife, without adhering to tradition.

On the other hand, other lines, which state that the spirits of the deceased exist in nature, fit in well with the older concept of ancestor spirits in Japan. As discussed

by Yanagita, it was believed that the spirits of the deceased remain in the neighbourhood, for example, in the mountains or in the forest, and then return to their descendants' homes once a year.

In this context, it is quite interesting to note the slight modification of the lyrics in the Japanese translation. In the original version, the spirits of the deceased are considered to exist in nature, as 'winds', 'the sunlight' and so forth. However, in the Japanese version, the phrases 'waking you up' and 'watching over and protecting you' are attached to words like 'birds' and 'stars'. This means that, in the Japanese version, the spirits of the deceased are regarded as beings who care about and help the bereaved, as older ancestor spirits used to do. Therefore, it might be argued that what arouses people's sympathy in this song is not so much nostalgia for the traditional belief itself, but rather a renewed image of continuing social bonds after death, combined with the traditional image of death.

Western scholars often argue that the traditional theories of grief, which were mainly developed by psychologists and psychiatrists, have been challenged since the late 1990s, and more social models of grief are now being explored. Generally speaking, the traditional theories have in common 'the idea that grief resolution necessarily requires the bereaved to "let go" of the deceased'. In contrast, according to the new model, 'bereaved people do not ordinarily relinquish their attachments to the deceased in order to reattach to others' (Howarth, 2007: 196). Rather, the bereaved survivors of the deceased often retain their 'continuing bonds' with that person (Klass, Silverman & Nickman, 1996). In the Japanese case, these 'continuing bonds' are rather traditional concepts. As I mentioned previously, ever since World War II we have no longer been able to take the existence of these bonds for granted, as being self-evident. However, such images of continuing bonds still seem to be shared by many Japanese people as a sort of natural feeling and sentiment. This is a renewed image of continuing social bonds based on the concept of self-determination of death, as it were.

For the next generation: the renewed image of continuing bonds

Returning to the song 'Flowers will bloom', given what I have argued so far, we can now understand more clearly why this song has had broad appeal among Japanese people and gives them solace.

First, singing or listening to this song itself generates a kind of imagined community among people, which extends beyond the boundary of life and death. As mentioned, we cannot identify whose voice is heard in this song. In other words, when one sings or listens to this song, one can feel multiple voices (those of dead people, bereaved people, displaced people and so forth) come together in the singing or inner voice. However, I would like to suggest that this is somewhat different from identification with others. No doubt, a person may sing this song as an individual, but the act of singing itself makes one's voice resonate with the voices of others. For instance, when a person sings 'what have I left behind for you all', it is possible for the singer/listener to imagine, almost automatically, the

feelings of the deceased, the bereaved or the displaced. Then, the singer/listener may think about what he or she will be able to do for him or herself and for others in the future. Thus, as it were, the imagined community emerges in the act of a person's singing the song or listening to it. I often hear people say, 'whenever I listen to this song, tears flow from my eyes, but I don't know why'. In my view, this is simply because others' voices sound in a person's inner voice and affect them.

Second, while this song gives people a sense of imagined community synchronically, it gives them a sense of continuity beyond generations diachronically. 'Flowers will bloom' is the title of this song, obviously, but why will the flowers bloom? It is not for the deceased. It is not for the bereaved or the displaced. It is not even for people in general who are living today.

According to the lyrics, flowers will bloom 'for you who will come into the world someday'. So flowers will bloom for our future children who are still unborn.[11] Just because of this, people listening to this song can have the same feeling of hope, beyond the difference of the present circumstances they are in now. When people sing or listen to this line, it may give them a sense of a bond that continues beyond generations. Flowers symbolize nature, and nature, which may last forever, will give its blessing to our posterity, no matter how difficult the present circumstances may seem. Such a sense of continuity that this song may arouse among people will surely bring them consolation.

Such images of the imagined community and continuing bonds remind us of the belief system of traditional ancestor worship, which I discussed above. In that system, the relationship between the dead and the survivors was maintained after death, and each family took care of their own ancestors' spirits. Such families collectively constituted a local community in which the deceased were treated as if they were still living, as long as the community itself continued to exist. Compared with this traditional belief system, the images created by 'Flowers will bloom' are different in that they are not underpinned by real local communities or a family system like 'Ie'. Moreover, the images inspired by the song are not in themselves religious and are not related to religious rituals or doctrines. Rather, these images are akin to a renewed image of continuing social bonds based on the concept of self-determination of death, as I noted above. That is why this song has been widely popular among Japanese people. The song's images are images that people already had. Although these are imagined community and bonds, they could be the basis of a future solidarity in real life. In the face of great catastrophe, 'Flowers will bloom' has endowed these images with clear substance and showed us how to accept and cope with disastrous experiences.

Concluding remarks

Ulrich Beck's book *Risk Society* (1986) was translated and published in 1998 in Japan, but after the earthquake and the nuclear disaster it is drawing renewed attention from the reading public. Beck suggested that there are two possibilities

when we cope socially with risk. On the one hand, people can be more cooperative because they have a common fear of risk. On the other hand, there can be more conflict, because to estimate how risky it is and to determine who is responsible can be controversial issues to which not only people in general but even experts and scientists sometimes cannot provide a clear answer. Regarding the disaster in Japan, broadly speaking, the issue of the nuclear accident seems to have produced conflict concerning the estimation of risk or the responsibility for the accident, but, in the case of the tsunami, it seems to have brought a sense of togetherness and solidarity throughout the country (although the tsunami is not so much a risk in a strict sense but rather a natural disaster).

As seen in this chapter, such a sense of togetherness and solidarity in the Japanese case came about not so much through a common fear, as Beck argues, but rather through rebuilding a renewed image of continuing social bonds after death, in combination with the traditional image of death. The song 'Flowers will bloom' seems to capture this image very effectively and persuasively. Generally speaking, it might be said that such an image can lead us to think of the possibilities for a new way to rebuild the bonds between isolated individuals who are living according to the principle of self-determination. And these bonds could be bonds that might even extend beyond the borders of locality and nationality.

Notes

1 Regarding the novels, Seikou Ito's *Souzo Radio* (*Imaginative Radio*) became a bestseller in 2013. It is a story about radio broadcasting by dead people who were killed in the tsunami.
2 The song was released in 2012. The lyrics were written by Shunji Iwai. The song was composed by Yoko Kanno.
3 There is an English version of this song, sung by an English vocal group called Il Divo, but, in my view, the English translation of this version does not capture the meaning of the original Japanese lyrics well enough, and furthermore, it changes or simplifies many lines. Therefore, the English lyrics in this chapter are my translation.
4 'The Population Census', Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2000.
5 'The Labour Force Survey', Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2000.
6 This drama drew a huge audience, and the title tune, 'Sekai ni Hitotsu dakeno Hana' (The one and only flower in the world), became the number-one hit song in 2003.
7 'The Population Census', Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2010.
8 'Labour Force Survey', Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2010.
9 'General Survey on Working Conditions', Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2007.
10 The Japanese version of this song was released in 2006. The song was written and composed by Man Arai and sung by Masafumi Akikawa. The author of the original English poem is Mary Elizabeth Frye.
11 The last part of the second verse at the end of this song is slightly different from that of the first verse. The last lines of the first verse are, as mentioned earlier, 'Flowers, flowers will bloom, for you who will come into the world someday / Flowers, flowers will bloom, what have I left behind for you all'. In contrast, the last lines of the second verse are as follows: 'Flowers, flowers will bloom, for you who will come into the world someday / Flowers, flowers will bloom, for you who will be in love with someone someday'. We could interpret this 'you' both as the future children who are still unborn and as children who are living today.

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3

DEATH AND DISASTER

The catastrophe of suicide in Japan

Sam Han and Nurul Amillin Hussain

There is much talk today of the 'rise of the rest' (Zakaria, 2009). Sparked by journalistic accounts of the economic successes of China and India – and the correlating decline in the fortunes of Europe and North America, a narrative describing an 'eastward' shift in geopolitical influence and power lingers in pages of foreign affairs journals, magazines and more serious Internet writing on world affairs. Nevertheless, so few of these accounts ever contextualize the pre-history of the recent 'Asian pivot'.

There was, many remember, a prior chatter about ascendency linked to Asia in the 1990s. We refer, of course, to the discourse of the so-called 'Asian Tigers'. The economies of Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan were booming, at the clip of 7% annual growth, at one point, following the growth of Japan, which had experienced rapid growth from the post-war period up until the 1980s. By 1997, though, the 'Asian miracle' quickly revealed itself to be a 'myth', as the economist Paul Krugman writes. Like nearly all credit crises, even the most recent one in 2007, the Asian Financial Crisis was characterized by contagion. While today the most-affected economies – Indonesia, Thailand and South Korea took International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailouts – are somewhat recovered, there are still lasting effects not only there but in other Asian economies, including Japan. It is here that we return to the point above, regarding the recent narrative of the ascent of Asia.

Today, nearly two decades after the financial crisis, there are still social and cultural ramifications that are not mentioned in the excitement over the prospects of an 'Asian century'. In Korea and Japan there has been ongoing concern with one particular issue – suicide, especially among youth. According to Chang et al., the rise of suicide rates in East and Southeast Asia 'coincide[d] with the Asian economic crisis in 1997–1998' (Chang et al., 2009: 1322). 'Compared to 1997, male rates in 1998 rose by 38.7%' in Japan and by 44.6% in Korea (ibid.: 1325).

Unemployment rates, which shot up as a result of the economic downturn, did not go back down to their pre-1998 levels *until* 2006. Of note, Japan was particularly affected as its levels of unemployment were already creeping up prior to 1997. Research states that the leading cause of death for South Korean and Japanese youth (18–24) is suicide. In Korea, the suicide rate was 28.1 per 100,000 in 2012. For Japan, it was 21.7 per 100,000 for the same year. These rates make up the highest among Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) nations.

In this chapter, we wish to put forth the case of suicide in Japan as an instance of disaster in spite of the extended period during which the phenomenon has persisted in Northeast Asia. Its slow, candle-like burn prevents the urgency for which many other phenomena sound the alarm. Suicide, then, allows us to ask: What is the *durée* of disaster – that is, how long does it last? How long do its effects last? What makes it a disaster or catastrophe as opposed to a crisis? How far ranging, or deeply embedded, are its ripples? Is the still-high suicide rate in Japan one that we could attribute to the financial crisis directly? These sorts of questions, relating to the temporality of disaster and catastrophe on the one hand, and the implicit causal logic of disaster studies on the other, we will explore in this chapter, using the case of suicide in Japan. We leave it to the other chapters in this volume to deal with more specific aspects of disaster in the Japanese context. Put simply, while this chapter mentions Japan quite heavily, it is not *about* Japan centrally.

We begin with a brief reading of the sociological literature of disasters. One of the benefits of this literature, we argue, is its denaturalized perspective of disaster. We problematize the process of labeling certain social phenomena as well as the association of functionalist theoretical language, which tends to focus rather singularly on the effects of disaster on 'solidarity' and social bonds. Instead, by counterposing scholarship that focuses on the cultural, political and philosophical deployment of disaster, we try to shift the focus to approaching disasters not as distinct analytic units but as related to other catastrophic events in the past. The chapter then proceeds to discuss suicide in greater depth, fleshing out the core argument of the chapter. In particular, we connect suicide with the discourse of 'compressed modernity', especially the work of social theorists who have focused on the changes in the institution of the family. We do so in order to make an argument that the structural changes, which are often conceived of as narrowly 'economic', are part and parcel of the compressed modernity that has affected the family, which we characterize as a shift in emotionality or affect. Lastly, we thematize on affect to raise the idea of 'political depression'.

From disaster to catastrophe in Japan

The social research on disasters, in English at least, has always revolved around questions of typology. Some of the earliest writings in this vein begin by differentiating what are dubbed 'natural' as opposed to 'technological' disasters (Kreps, 1984). What is the difference between a tornado and a blackout? These distinctions

were meant to be clarifying for researchers as well as those who were in charge of organizations, both governmental and civil, which were to provide relief. However, instead of adding specificity to the study of disasters, what it overlooked was the question, which scholars too easily considered to be already answered, of how one separates nature from technology. This could be seen as a ridiculous question but, in fact, as Bruno Latour would undoubtedly remark, the dividing line is not so clear. Take, for instance, flooding. Usually, flooding occurs due to heavy rainfall from a storm of some kind. However, the flooding is not caused by rainfall only but also by a failure of infrastructure. Furthermore, in addition to physical destruction, the failure of responses by governmental or other kinds of institutions also contributes to a disaster. This is quite frankly what occurred rather infamously in New Orleans and the surrounding area in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The disaster was not simply the result of the rainfall and heavy winds. It was a wide-ranging disaster, which was initiated by the storm obviously but which then included institutional failures from the national level down to the municipal, local level. In a sense, then, the distinction between natural and technological was not necessarily so clear. Acknowledging such an analytic quandary, scholars have provided a broad definition of disasters as:

> [E]vents, observable in time and space, in which societies or their larger subunits (e.g., communities, regions) incur physical damages and losses and/or disruption of their routine functioning. Both the causes and consequences of these events are related to the social structures and processes of societies or their subunits.
>
> *(Kreps, 1984: 312)*

What is striking about this definition is its focus on physical damages as well as disruption of routine functioning. Routine functioning is a clear reference to the functionalist aspects of Durkheim's social theory. Thus, quite expectedly, much of the discourse on disasters relies upon Durkheimian categories. For instance, Quarantelli and Dynes speak of disaster alongside what they deem 'social crisis', wherein there is a 'collective stress situation' caused by a mismatch of reality and expectations (Quarantelli & Dynes, 1977: 23). This occurs during disasters brought about by 'physical agents', as they call them. However, the 'cost' of such disasters, in strict adherence to functionalism, is whether the 'system' functions or malfunctions (ibid.: 32, 35). The social disruption is the true litmus test of a disaster. If there is 'consensus' about the 'meaning of the situation' as well as the norms and values that are appropriate, then there is not a great disruption to social bonds. As a matter of fact, there is some evidence that shows that in the wake of a disaster greater social bonds are forged through the formation of a 'therapeutic community' (ibid.: 26).

An example of such a trajectory can be seen in the example of drought discourse in Australia. According to West and Smith, drought, whether the impending threat of drought or the experience of currently experiencing one, has 'functional consequences for social integration' (West & Smith, 1996: 93). As they argue, drought

and crime nearly serve the same purpose vis-à-vis the social order. They both remind citizens of the social contract, so to speak, that they are participating in a thing called society in the first place. Much in the way crime constructs an enemy ('the criminal', or in the way that the United States once declared a 'war on drugs'), drought discourse does so but by positing nature to be that very enemy. Drought then constructs, as they describe it, a 'moral drama' between people and nature, one that threatens 'civilization' (ibid.: 95). As the drought is reported to be an unprecedented threat to society, news media, in particular, rely upon certain 'motifs' that call for 'a new moral discipline and unity' in the wake of impending doom (ibid.: 96).

The 'social construction of nature', as West and Smith call it, creates valuable outcomes for the social order. It engenders solidarity by representing drought as 'an alien force against which society must unite' (West & Smith, 1996: 95). In other words, while there may be existing social differences, in the face of nature so epic and uncontrollable, society must come together to deal with it. This is similar dramatic kindle that serves as the premise for a lot of Hollywood blockbuster cinema. Alien or primate invasions also 'reaffirm social morality and solidarity' (West & Smith, 1997: 205).

Australia does not stand alone in this regard. As Eric Klinenberg shows in his study of the 1995 Chicago heatwave, disaster is hardly ever 'just natural'. In fact, disasters, he writes, 'are constructed according to categories of common sense and classified in a vocabulary that effaces their *social* logic' (Klinenberg, 1999: 242, emphasis added). This social logic actually runs up against what he calls 'the natural frame', a parallel to West and Smith's 'discourse' (ibid.: 275). The natural frame, through which not the media but public officials speak, often sees the disaster as 'an unplanned accident'. Hence, its consequences are seen as simply unavoidable, as 'an act of God', so to speak.

However, the effects are hardly distributed evenly. As Klinenberg argues, the natural frame obfuscates the 'political economy of vulnerability and the role of the state' in the social conditions that determine whether communities can deal effectively with disasters such as drought or a heatwave. The natural frame allows for both media and public officials to attribute heatwave deaths, and their skewing heavily toward impoverished, black and Latino neighborhoods, either to failures of individual behavior (by not adhering to prior warnings by the city to seek shelter in designated 'cool down' areas that were air conditioned) or the insurmountable scale of the disaster as such. Their own role in the level of response and the effectiveness of it could be excluded from the explanation of the heatwave, which is remembered as 'the city's most deadly natural disaster'. The deadliness of the heatwave, its destructiveness, was:

> [I]n fact, a sign and symptom of the new and dangerous forms of marginality and neglect endemic to contemporary American big cities and notably severe in Chicago, a structurally determined catastrophe for which sociological analysis illuminates not simply the obvious relationship between poverty and

> suffering, but some of the institutional and social mechanisms upon which extreme forms of American insecurity are built.
>
> *(Klinenberg, 1999: 240)*

The preexisting insecurity of the marginalized populations of big American cities, in other words, had as great a bearing on the casualty toll in the heatwave as did the heat itself.

Juxtaposing the work of West and Smith with that of Klinenberg brings into relief some of the key analytic questions contained in disaster research. In the former, the disaster is an occasion to strengthen social bonds, and for the latter, it is a means of covering over the social violence and structural inequality that has existed for marginalized populations during 'non-disaster' times. Both cases highlight the way in which disasters are always 'framed' as natural, and constructed socially.

The work of West and Smith and Klinenberg brings to the fore an important point missed by earlier disaster theorists. Disasters are not that infrequent, especially in this day and age. As the philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy forcefully argues most recently, there is an 'equivalence', in the way Marx viewed the equivalence of value in a capitalist mode of production, in much of catastrophes today:

> From now on there is an interconnection, an intertwining, even a symbiosis of technologies, exchanges, movements, which makes it so that a flood – for instance – wherever it may occur, must necessarily involve relationships with any number of technical, social, economic, political intricacies that keep us from regarding it as simply a misadventure or a misfortune whose consequences can be more or less easily circumscribed.
>
> *(Nancy, 2014: 3–4)*

This, of course, does not mean that all catastrophes are the same in terms of gravity or scale. Instead, it means that they are all linked within 'the totality of interdependencies' or 'generalized catastrophe' (Nancy, 2014: 6, 55). This also means that the effects of such catastrophes can be found in all spheres of life. Put simply, generalized catastrophe means we are always living with the risk of disaster, with their consequences reaching far and wide.

Fundamental to this is the notion put forth by Nancy that there are no longer any 'natural' catastrophes (Nancy, 2014: 34). Technology, from industrial, mechanical ones to biogenetic and nuclear, has mixed the 'nonproduced' with 'produced' forces (ibid.: 25). Hence, the general forces of production today do not separate the given, or natural, and the artificial. The upheavals of nature, as he puts it, namely earthquakes, floods or volcanic eruptions, are produced by our technologies, Nancy argues. Here, it is clear that Nancy is pointing out the fact that nature, being subject to the technological rationality of humans, has been transformed. One only need look at the vast amount of evidence on global climate change, which, as nearly all scientists agree, is a product of human actions.

If, indeed, we can no longer speak of natural as opposed to 'man-made' disasters, then it follows that the effects of such generalized catastrophe take on a different character. Most notably, Nancy suggests, in our attempt to 'neutralize' disasters we connect more and more aspects of social, psychological and political life in a web of 'ever more intricate and complex' interdependence (Nancy, 2014: 25). Nancy uses the example of the automobile, whose risks demanded seatbelts, airbags, speed limits, speed cameras, and governing bodies that oversee the seatbelts, airbags, speed limits, etc. Therefore, the world of generalized catastrophe is a world of 'interdependent totality' (ibid.: 31). This interconnection, Nancy writes, results in a 'profound solidarity, that of ends and means, that of ends without end, that of producers and products, that of technologies and profits, that of profits and creations, and so on' (ibid.: 32).

This 'solidarity', obviously, is quite different from the Durkheimian solidarity of integration and social bonds. It does not contribute to the functioning of the social order. To the contrary, this solidarity Nancy describes as '*struction*, in the sense of heaping up [*amoncellement*] without putting together [*assemblage*]' (Nancy, 2014: 36). The heap offers no order.

The works of West and Smith, Klinenberg, and Nancy have great significance for understanding disasters today. In particular, they force us to rethink the commonsense 'causality of disaster', which holds specific purchase for understanding the stated 'disaster' under study in this chapter – that of suicide in Japan. The phenomenon of suicide in Japan over the past 13 years can hardly be said to have been spurred by the Asian Financial Crisis, nor any other particular event, as the *New Yorker*'s Evan Osnos seems to imply when he writes after Fukushima, 'Must Japan brace for a silent wave of suicides in the years ahead?' (Osnos, 2011). However, this intuitive understanding of suicide following traumatic events does not take into consideration the generalized catastrophe under which we live today. It ignores the intricacies of today's existence, and the *longue durée* of catastrophe, and, with respect to suicide especially, the compounded nature of disasters in Japanese life.

Suicide, familism and 'the economic'

As a standing social problem in Japan, suicide nets a wide range of explanations within what we can broadly call 'the economic'. In Japan, analysts point to rigid and pressure-filled academics and work life. For young Japanese of the 'lost generation', a life such as their parents' based on long-term employment is nearly unimaginable due to rapid changes in the economic structuring of society. The high suicide rate, especially among youth, is linked to this fact. This line of thinking has a great deal of influence on respective governments as we can see by the sort of steps that either has taken to address this issue. The BBC reports that in 2006 Japanese officials approved measures seeking to deal with its suicide problem. They identified welfare provisions, especially unemployment, as part of its 'comprehensive plan' to cut its suicide rate (Hogg, 2007).

There are also 'cultural' reasons that underpin these economic ones. Indeed, even in the purely economic analyses that root studies like that of Chang et al. (2009), there are always some inferences toward culture as also an important factor. The conceptualization of culture in this regard has two different aspects. First, the case of Asia presents a point of comparison to gauge the differences between the effects of a financial crisis on the West and on the East. As Chang et al. write:

> The Asian economic crisis provides an opportunity to examine the impact of economic recession on suicide in a region with very different social structures and culture compared to Western societies.
>
> *(Chang et al., 2009: 1323)*

However, additionally, Japan in particular makes for a special example within Asia.

> Alternatively, Japan might have responded to the economic crisis differently from other countries with a particularly steep rise in suicide. Explanations include a rather permissive attitude toward suicide in Japanese society which puts the working-age men at particularly increased risk during recession. Japanese businessmen used to have a strong bond to the company, akin to the ancient samurais' loyalty to their lords. They were severely challenged when becoming the target of corporate restructuring following the economic crisis and might feel betrayed by the company. Indeed, Japanese suicide rates reached a post-war peak in 1998.
>
> *(Chang et al., 2009: 1330)*

From this report, we can tell that the classical sociological explanation of suicide, hinging upon the Durkheimian themes of integration and regulation, are seen as not quite sufficient to explain the Japanese case in particular (McKenna, 2015: 294–295). Durkheim's analysis, which has been well documented, makes a correlation between times of economic and other sorts of crisis and suicide, but for Durkheim, financial uncertainty and suicide were also part of a larger theoretical framework, which included the concepts of anomie and solidarity. Suicide, therefore, was a result of anomie, which, *inter alia*, springs forth from the social order's inability to match reality and expectations during times of crisis. However, Durkheim argued that social groups with greater levels of integration (he specifies not only religious groups but also certain occupations as having greater levels of integration or solidarity) are able to withstand the anomie that comes with times of upheaval. Japan, with high levels of integration and regulation, at least culturally, would seem to present a counter-argument. However, as Tony McKenna suggests, these characteristics speak to the moral or cultural state of a given society only, without much mention of the effect of economics.

In an economy whose lifeblood is a relentless and free-flowing movement of labor power, the possibility for such integration and regulation is constantly undermined by the dynamic of the process at the metabolic view. In a capitalist

economy, traditions and moral codes less and less determine the relations between employers and employees, consumers and producers, and so on, for such relations are in a perpetual state of fluctuation that is largely (though often indirectly) determined by the forces of market competition more broadly (McKenna, 2015: 296).

The language of systems theory actually helps clarify the points made by McKenna. Capitalism, as a mode of production, creates a situation whereby stasis is hard to come by. It is constantly in flux. It is always in a state of entropy. This means that there can never be 'order' in a true sense. With that being the case, an historical question arises: how is it that Japan did not have a greater upshot of suicide when it first introduced proto-capitalist economic reforms? According to McKenna, this is due to the particular and peculiar trajectory of Japanese capitalism, which saw market reform but feudalist political and corporate structures left intact, even after the Meiji Renewal in the 19th century. He gives the example of the history of the Mitsubishi company, which had a samurai past. From this feudal corporate culture comes, according to McKenna, a *shafu* or 'company spirit', a sense of identification with the ethos of the parent company (McKenna, 2015: 299). In the contemporary era, we have 'laws and bureaucratic forms that regulate and constrain individual economic actors alongside the anomie that is provoked by market instability and isolation. Rather, in Japanese capitalism we can also locate a ghostly echo of the feudal past from within the capitalist present' (ibid.: 299–300).

This disjuncture between social and economic development McKenna bases on the Marxist notion of 'uneven development', which can be traced from the thought of Trotsky to the late Neil Smith, but is clearly also Durkheimian in nature. To put it more directly, the expectations that serve as the justificatory basis of the social order could not be met by reality. To map it onto Japan, the expectations of continued lifelong employment as well as the identification inherent in *shafu* were ultimately not met by social order, leading to what McKenna describes as alienation from it. Alienation, then, is 'the content' of contemporary suicides, pointing especially to the phenomenon of online suicide pacts, where people considering taking their own lives go on the Internet to find others like them. 'The act of killing oneself in a group', McKenna writes, 'allows alienated individuals to experience an ultimate act of purpose through a level of social integration that the uncertainty and fragmentation of modern existence has denied them' (McKenna, 2015: 301).

We can look at what McKenna argues and also link it to what many scholars of East Asia have called 'compressed modernity' to describe the particular experience of modernization that the region faced in the post-war period. East Asia is experiencing both 'first' and 'second modernity' simultaneously in a short period of time, to put it in the terms of Ulrich Beck. Having embarked on modernization later than in the West, what East Asia is facing now are issues unique to the experiencing of multiple modernities at the same time. The Japanese sociologist Ochiai argues that, while Asian societies are grappling with 'first modernity' issues such as construction of civil society and a welfare state, they are also dealing with 'second modernity' issues such as low fertility (Ochiai, 2011). We leave it to other

contributors in this volume to discuss this more fully. Suffice to say, it is within this fractured experience of multiple, asynchronous modernities that we situate the phenomenon of suicides in Northeast Asia. Suicides too are conceptualized as 'the price to pay' for 'unsustainable fast economic development', as one South Korean professor describes it. 'Traditional social structures have broken down' (Choe, 2007).

The conditions of compressed modernity, like economic liberalism, have ushered in an age of unprecedented growth and wealth in Northeast Asia, and, along with it, high levels of risk and instability to individuals and, in particular, *families* living in the region.

Under the post-war regime of the 'enterprise society' and Fordist capitalism, people were affectively ensconced in a very particular orientation to life grounded in the triple institutions of home/work/school and the desires/disciplines of working hard, reproducing home, and consuming brand-name goods (Allison, 2012: 350).

Transient labor arrangements, decreased employment security and minimal state support, which followed the post-war regime, have all concentrated increasing amounts of risk in the hands of individuals and families at a time when the neoliberal market has also removed their ability to mitigate them. This very often becomes a hopeless situation, where the individual's worth is calibrated around a traditional family structure in which he or she can no longer participate as the risks have become too heavy. The 'crisis' of the family thus must be considered 'part of a much broader crisis of the political economy and is likely to be resolved only when we confront the fact that families can no longer be expected to be the exclusive domain of familism' (Dizard & Gadlin, 1990: 24). The family can no longer be counted on as the primary structure that equips individuals to participate, materially and emotionally, in social life. What Allison calls 'the family corporate system', which propped up 'the enterprise society' of the post-war period, constructed a particular 'affective relations' of the home, which made it a 'breeding ground for hyper-productivity in the way of workaholic husbands, industrious students and sacrificial mothers' (Allison, 2012: 361).

This particular set of 'affective relations of homelife' we choose to equate to 'familism' from the sociology of family. Familism, which is seen as distinct from individualism and communalism, can be defined as:

> [A] reciprocal sense of commitment, sharing, cooperation, and intimacy that is taken as defining the bonds between family members. These bonds represent the more or less unconstrained acknowledgement of both material and emotional dependency and obligation. They put legitimate claims on one's own material and emotional resources and put forth a set of 'loving obligations' that entitles members of the family to expect warmth and support from fellow family members.
>
> *(Dizard & Gadlin, 1990: 6)*

In the case of South Korea and Japan, the centrality of familism remains in spite of the fact that the reality of maintaining family units is increasingly difficult. That is,

the needs of the family as a collective constitute the purpose of existence of the family, more so than the needs of individual members. However, the ability of the family to provide the material and emotional resources expected of it for its members have eroded due to political-economic conditions that have made the family vulnerable. The Korean sociologist Chang Kyung-Sup writes: 'modern East Asians have commonly led family-centered lives, but this modern attribute is becoming increasingly untenable due to the various structural conditions of East Asian modernity and late modernity (or second modernity)' (Chang, 2014: 23).

This is the paradox. To deal with heightened levels of uncertainty, individuals turn to family as a resource in mitigating risk – individual risk effectively becomes group risk, a shared burden borne by one's family members. Family becomes 'the only social resource that can support individuals exposed to capitalist industrialization, urbanization, proletarianization, extreme tendencies in educational pursuit, and privatized welfare protection in rapid modernization' (Ochiai, 2011: 228). While more is being demanded of the family as a resource, neoliberalism's restructuring of both market and state undermines the family's ability to provide individuals with what they need. The threats of what Beck calls 'second modernity', brought about by the weakening of dominant social institutions of the 'first modernity' and trends such as globalization and neoliberalization, are experienced by the Japanese and South Koreans in a 'condensed' and even more acute manner.

Unlike countries in the West that have dealt with the social issues of modernization by increasing social welfare, the state in Japan and Korea have maintained a familist position, where the family must take on the majority of welfare responsibility traditionally taken on by the state. It may also be called 'familist compressed modernity', where 'the institutional weakening of families induces family relations to turn from social resources into individual risks' (Chang, 2010: 24). As the state retreats and leaves the family to fend for itself, the shared risk borne by the family becomes a heavier burden for each individual – not just in addition to one's own personal risk, but also in what it demands from the other individuals in the family. Individuals find it more difficult to navigate shared risks and to meet obligations within the family (e.g. get a good job and pay, participate in ideal families of their own), so they choose to pursue short-term individualization in hopes of being able to better participate in long-term family life. This kind of risk-averse individualization is a 'social tendency of individuals trying to minimize the family-associated risks of modern life by extending or returning to individualized stages of life' (Chang, 2010: 25). Underpinning this individualization is not a socio-cultural ideal of the independent, free 'individual', but an intense affective attachment to family that rationalizes the temporary separation from family in order to achieve optimal relations in the future (less risk). In this way, being alone is not a choice East Asians are making voluntarily.

Our brief venture into the sociology of the family and theories of 'compressed modernity' engaged by East Asian sociologists act as an example of the *intensive*

effects of 'the economic'. While we could describe this as 'far-reaching', we prefer to think of it as 'deep'. The choice of words is not simply a rhetorical sleight of hand but rather, we feel, a more apt way of talking about the consequences of what seem like 'merely' economic shifts. In effect, by pointing to what happened to the family structure as a result of increased economic precarity in a post-crisis Japan, we are suggesting that the economic reaches down into the fundamental cultural, and even emotional, tenets of Japanese life. By emotions, we wish to emphasize the emotional toll placed on contemporary Japanese for whom the family is not simply an economic unit but, as the theorists of compressed modernity highlight, a central ethical principle. The phenomenon of suicide, especially the forms it has been taking in Japan recently, makes this point rather clear.

As mentioned earlier, in the discussion of McKenna, Japan has seen the experience of online suicide pacts in recent years. According to the anthropologist Ozawa de Silva, the background of rapidly changing structural conditions after World War II is crucial in understanding this phenomenon. This, most especially, includes the decline of traditional extended family structures and the loss of lifelong job security in the structure of companies (Silva, 2008: 533), contributing to a feeling of the absence of what in Japan is called *ikigai* ('the worth of living') and loss of meaning (ibid.: 520). In Japan, meaning is not necessarily individual meaning but rather *social* meaning grounded in the concept of '*amae*', 'a wish to be indulged and to be loved' (Silva, 2010: 408). Meaning and 'will to live' or '*ikigai*' are thought to be achieved through social roles and institutions, at least traditionally. This includes one's job (in the case of men, in earlier times) and family, including the in-laws (in the case of women, again, in earlier times). However, today the fulfillment of *ikigai* is made difficult as traditional social roles are fading away. As the sources of *ikigai* become harder to find, then feelings of being 'needed' and 'essential, not merely a nameless cog in the machine' (Silva, 2008: 534), contributing to a generalized 'loss of affiliation that leads to a loss of meaning' (Silva, 2010: 412). Online suicide pacts, therefore, emerge as attempts at building 'affiliation with others' (ibid.: 393). In other words, they create and share a world of meanings amidst a social reality wherein prior institutional forms and techniques of 'being together' (Silva, 2008: 532) are not as available. They 'involve individuals giving up, or subordinating, their autonomy to a collective decision, a group choice' (Silva, 2008: 518). Of high importance is that individuals are not withdrawing, which is a common motif of the mental health discourse around suicide in the West, but rather looking for sociality. The difficulty in understanding its nature in online suicide pacts is rather obvious. Those who participate are strangers and may not mean much to one another. They are, however, forming a recognizable bond, involving commitment and trust. It could be said that they are replacing the intimacy of the family with that of the suicide pact.

We do not mean to be apologists for suicide or online suicide pacts. We seek to understand the phenomenon within the larger context of disaster and its deep effects, which can seep into the collective psyche and 'affective atmosphere'. This requires understanding suicide on its own terms – that is, immanently, which

should not be misconstrued as justification. It is, put differently, a look into the *ratio* of suicide. This is an approach taken by Kitanaka in her recent study of depression and psychiatry in Japan. There, she even writes about 'the cultural logic of suicide', which grants suicide an aura of legitimacy. This logic, she argues, is even reproduced by many psychiatrists in Japan who speak of pathological suicide, using words such as 'petty' and 'trivial' to describe it, and 'suicides of resolve' (*kakugo no jisatsu*), using descriptors such as 'pure' and 'true' (Kitanaka, 2011: 118, 128). The dividing line between the former and the latter is intentionality. The former is considered to be a product of diseased irrationality, stemming from neuropsychiatric malfunctioning. The latter is seen as 'the ultimate expression of personal will' (Kitanaka, 2011: 108) with connotations of admiration on the part of psychiatrists based on a sense of moral aesthetics. What Kitanaka's work makes clear is that psychiatrists in Japan express a deep ambivalence towards 'medicalizing' suicide. In other words, they try not to understand cases of suicide, and suicide attempts, in terms of biological pathology only. As Kitanaka writes:

> Knowing their own powerlessness in altering *the social conditions that have contributed to patients' psychological desperation*, psychiatrists avoid explicitly intervening in patients' own reasons and intentions for attempting suicide.
>
> *(Kitanaka, 2011: 127, emphasis added)*

The 'cultural logic of suicide' remains squarely in the realm of the social. Even though the psychiatrists mentioned by Kitanaka speak in psychological terms, they recognize, as she notes, the social roots of the desperation felt by their patients. Although Kitanaka focuses on the aura of legitimacy and the moral aesthetics of death among the clinicians, it seems that even within the ethnographic data she presents there is evidence to suggest that their reluctance to medicalize suicide comes from their recognition of the far-reaching impact of a protracted economic, yes, but also cultural and psychological catastrophe of the Lost Decades. In other words, the 'proliferation of repercussions from every kind of disaster hereafter' that is characteristic of our era of 'equivalence of catastrophe' makes it difficult for scholars and policymakers to view any particular set of phenomena 'as simply a misadventure or a misfortune whose consequences can be more or less easily circumscribed' (Nancy, 2014: 4).

Effects to affects of disaster

In this chapter we addressed the phenomenon of suicide in Japan in the wake of the Asian Financial Crisis as a means of exploring the boundaries and limits of the causality and temporality of disaster in sociological research on the topic. We have argued that suicide presents an example of what Nancy has called 'generalized catastrophe'. The generalized catastrophe, with its nebulous effects and unintuitive reaches of its consequence, affects the overall collective psychological and emotional condition of the social. The transition undergone in Japan's compressed

modernity – from fixed social order based on the family and corporation to the uncertain chaos of increased privatization and forced individualization – has taken out the very fabric with which the texture of social life was woven. The symptom of this protracted catastrophe is manifest only occasionally in the form of suicide. It does not mean that those who do not consider taking their own lives are not affected. Living in an era of generalized disaster and catastrophe, they too exist in an affective atmosphere of what, after the literary theorist Lauren Berlant, we are calling 'political depression' (Berlant, 2006).

Political depression, for Berlant, stems not from the foregoing of hope or faith in the current state of affairs but rather a *cathected* relation between the promise and reality of contemporary life. However, these attachments – the expressions and extensions of hope and faith – exist in the face of 'compromised conditions of possibility' of those very hopes becoming realized. Similar to how the early scholars of disaster understood 'social crisis', Berlant writes:

> What is cruel about these attachments, and not merely inconvenient or tragic, is that the subjects who have *x* in their lives might not well endure the loss of their object or scene of desire, even though its presence threatens their well-being, because whatever the *content* of the attachment, the continuity of the form of it provides something of the continuity of the subject's sense of what it means to keep on living on and to look forward to being in the world.
>
> *(Berlant, 2006: 21)*

Put differently, the very forms of life affirmation seem to be doing the opposite by giving false hope. Yet, subjects have a difficult time letting go because these are invested with so much meaning. Thus, we have an intractable, unresolvable situation – 'a condition of attrition', in the words of Berlant, whereby 'the labor of reproducing life in the contemporary world is also the activity of being worn out by it' (Berlant, 2006: 23). While Berlant is not describing the situation of Northeast Asia in the post-Asian Financial Crisis era, her idea of 'political depression' reflects the realities of contemporary Japan, where suicides are not only the *symptom* of such a collective depression but also the way out of it. When scholars of Japan begin to analyze the effects of the triple disaster of Fukushima, they will undoubtedly have to deal with the compendium of consequences buried deep within the psyches of young Japanese.

We can already see why this is so important. As an article in *The Guardian*, which went viral in 2014, notes, young people in Japan are rejecting sexual intimacy. The article cites rather startling statistics.

> The number of single people has reached a record high. A survey in 2011 found that 61% of unmarried men and 49% of women aged 18–34 were not in any kind of romantic relationship, a rise of almost 10% from five years earlier. Another study found that a third of people under 30 had never dated at all … A survey earlier this year by the Japan Family Planning Association

> (JFPA) found that 45% of women aged 16–24 'were not interested in or despised sexual contact'. More than a quarter of men felt the same way.
>
> *(Haworth, 2013)*

The article profiles Ai Aoyama, a self-proclaimed sex and relationship counselor and former dominatrix. In her home, she consults clients who are, in her words, 'deeply confused'. The confusion stems from multiple roots. As the article notes, 'the pressure to conform to Japan's anachronistic family model of salaryman husband and stay-at-home wife remains'. The 'sense of crushing obligation' affects both men and women. Additionally, two decades of economic 'stagflation' as well as the events of Fukushima have 'scarred' the psyche of young Japanese. Her clients, she reveals, 'don't see the point of love […] don't believe it can lead anywhere'. Relationships, in other words, 'have become too hard'. This is the new normal. As the article concludes, 'it could be a long-term state of affairs' (Haworth, 2013). It seems that this could be the perspective on all relationships.

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4

SOCIOLOGY OF JAPANESE LITERATURE AFTER THE GREAT EAST JAPAN EARTHQUAKE

Analysing the disaster's underrepresented impacts

Takeshi Deguchi

This study elucidates the impacts of the Great East Japan Earthquake on Japanese identity. Presented below is a controversial statement made by a Japanese conservative politician following the Great East Japan Earthquake:

> Japanese politics is tainted with egoism and populism. We need to use [the] tsunami to wipe out egoism, which has rusted onto the mentality of Japanese over a long period of time. I think the disaster is 'tembatsu' (divine punishment), although I feel sorry for [the] disaster victims.
>
> (Kyodo News, *2011)*

The politician was severely criticized for the comments and soon apologized and withdrew the remarks because he had been inconsiderate of the disaster victims. However, one may notice that he associated the catastrophe with '*tembatsu*' (divine punishment)[1] for the Japanese identity or mentality of egoism, although he cautiously avoided the terms 'nuclear' or 'atomic'. The Japanese identity of egoism that he refuted in his remarks has taken root in economic values characterized by the 'individualism of desire', which was fostered in post-war affluent society.

This negative image or criticism of individualism can also be observed in an attitude of *jishuku* (self-restraint in relation to pleasures), even among ordinary people, and in the cliché *kizuna*, which was on everyone's lips immediately following the disaster. *Kizuna* is the Japanese equivalent of 'social bond', but it is often used among native speakers to refer to blood relationships. In other words, the relationship goes beyond individual egoistic interest. The above-mentioned events indicate that the Great East Japan Earthquake evoked a negative image of the individualism of desire in the minds of Japanese nationals.

The Great East Japan Earthquake was followed by a nuclear accident at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant. This combination of events made this disaster a

'traumatic event' to be repressed or expelled from consciousness, because the Great East Japan Earthquake was not merely a 'natural' disaster such as those the Japanese have weathered throughout the country's long history; it was a cataclysmic 'man-made' misery. In general, earthquakes and tsunamis are events of the natural world and the Japanese are often said to be accepting of them as part of life because Japan experiences them very frequently. However, in this case, a man-made disaster, that is, the nuclear calamity, has led the Japanese into an ambivalent state of mind, because the Fukushima disaster is the fourth instance wherein Japan has been exposed to dangerous nuclear radiation. Although Japan experienced the atomic bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima (1945) as well as the Daigo Fukuryu Maru Incident (1954),[2] people did not learn lessons from these horrors. Because Japan has pursued economic prosperity, it depends primarily on imported energy resources and has forgotten the risks of atomic energy. Its national image has drastically changed from being the victim of the triple traumatic miseries of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Daigo Fukuryu Maru into being a dream and symbol of economic and technological success. Nevertheless, Japan remains the only nation in the world that has suffered atomic bombings.

The Great East Japan Earthquake was not merely a natural disaster that raised people's awareness of emergency preparedness, risks and self-responsibility. Coupled with the nuclear plant disaster, it may be the most traumatic event to take root in the socio-culture of post-war Japan. In this study, I shed light on the under-represented meanings of these disasters to clarify Japanese identity and individualism in the past, present and future.

Before beginning the main discussion, I describe the present study's methodology. To investigate the unconscious and the deepest levels of individual psychology, I adopt the 'sociology of literature' approach developed by Keiichi Sakuta, a famous Japanese sociologist. According to Sakuta, by using literary works as qualitative data, the sociology of literature enables us to elucidate an under-represented psychology, which conventional empirical research cannot penetrate. In other words, it does not reduce literary works to 'the social' as the sociology of knowledge does; rather, it enriches the theory with the help of literary works and critics,[3] consequently throwing light on social and psychological reality.

In addition to introducing his methodological approach, in this study, I revisit Sakuta's theoretical heritage of individualism from his book *The Fate of Individualism: Modern Novels and Sociology* (1980), in order to contribute to the recent study of individualism in Western countries in terms of Japanese sociology. Thus far, little attention has been paid to Sakuta's individualism theory even in Japanese sociology, but it is possible to add different viewpoints of individualism by, for example, studying the impacts of the Great East Japan Earthquake on Japanese post-war individualism.

First, I discuss Sakuta's theory of individualism in comparison with a recent study on the same topic. Then, I offer an analysis of literary works from two perspectives: communication between the living and the dead, and the symbolic meanings of nuclear calamity. Finally, I examine the under-represented psychological impacts

on post-war Japanese identity or mentality with the help of the sociological theory of individualism in and outside Japan.

The most recent study on new individualism and Sakuta's theory of individualism

New individualism

First, I introduce Anthony Elliott and Charles Lemert's 'new individualism', which is the most recent and well-known theory in Japan, with an introduction by Masataka Katagiri and Atsushi Sawai, in order to later outline Sakuta's theory of individualism (Elliott & Lemert, 2009; Elliott, Katagiri & Sawai, 2010). Elliott and Lemert categorize the concept of the individual in the 20th century into three types – manipulated individualism (in the 1920s and 1930s), isolated privatism (in the 1950s and 1960s) and reflexive individualization (in and after the 1990s) – in addition to their originally formulated 'new individualism' in the age of globalization (Elliott & Lemert, 2009). Each concept has its own historical and sociological background and perspective for understanding contemporary individualism.

Manipulated individualism originated in the critical theory of the Frankfurt School, which experienced 'the end of individualism' during the Nazi regime. Advocates of this concept, including the Frankfurt School, contended that mass media and the 'cultural industry' weakened the power of the individual to resist social institutions and made people conformists. In the 1950s and 1960s, according to Elliott and Lemert, another form of individualism appeared: individualism as isolated privatism. This type of individualism, which can be observed typically in David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* (1953), emphasizes the fact that the more conforming an individual is, the more isolated they become. Adding to Riesman, Daniel Bell pointed out that, in post-industrial society, modern individualism had lost its asceticism and transformed into hedonistic and consumerist individualism. At the same time, Richard Sennett and Robert Bellah explained the demise of public life as a consequence of pathological narcissism and argued that the balance between public commitments and private attachments had tipped overwhelmingly in favour of the latter. With the age of globalization on the way, a reflexive modernization process began, in which people constantly had to undertake inventive and resourceful self-rebuilding and self-design to avoid having their identities broken into pieces. The new individualism Elliott and Lemert introduce in their book, *The New Individualism: The Emotional Costs of Globalization* (2009), is a result or an extension of reflexive individualization. However, the new individualism focuses on affective consequences of self-reinvention or the self-reproduction process required by reflexive individualization.

What is important is that not only new individualism, but also the other two concepts, manipulated and privatized individualism, can be seen as perspectives from which today's multi-layered individual psychology is examined, although these two concepts have certain restrictions. The authors point out their restrictions

as follows. Manipulated individualism pays no attention to the individual and exclusively focuses on the institutional level, mistakenly regarding the individual as more powerless in the face of global forces. On the other hand, privatized individualism has more anachronistic and elitist assumptions than individualism today, which is rendered merely surface oriented, media driven and focused on personal or apolitical issues. However, the notion that the individual self is multi-layered from the exterior to the interior makes it possible to build up one integrated theoretical model of the individual. Before more closely examining this point, I outline Sakuta's theory of individualism.

Sakuta's theory of individualism

Sakuta divided individualism into three types on the basis of the works of Georg Simmel and René Girard: individualism of reason in the 18th century, individualism of individuality in the 19th century and individualism of desire in the 20th century. The first two come from Simmel's book *Fundamental Problems of Sociology* (1917),[4] and the last one from Girard's *Deceit, Desire and the Novel* (1961).[5] Individualism in the 18th century tried to realize human freedom as a universal principle, while individualism in the 19th century exclusively pursued individuality and the uniqueness of the individual. The former originated in the Western thought of the Enlightenment with Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant, and the latter in German romantic philosophy with Friedrich Schlegel and Friedrich Schleiermacher.

In contrast with these two types of individualism, the individualism of the 20th century proposed by Sakuta with reference to Girard's imitation theory is an individualism of desire. The most important difference between Simmel's two kinds of individualism and Sakuta's and Girard's individualism is that the former are autonomous and independent, while the latter are heteronomous and other-directed. Hence, it may be concluded that Elliott and Lemert's manipulated and privatized individualism corresponds to Sakuta's individualism of desire, as both are commonly characterized by hedonism and control by others or institutions.

I now return to the point noted in the previous section. To shed light on the Great East Japan Earthquake's multi-layered impacts on individual psychology, it is useful to build a theoretical model of the self, taking into consideration that the self is multi-layered from the exterior to the interior. Provisionally, I propose to divide the self into two layers: an exterior aspect that is sensitive to the outside, strongly influenced by social changes and consequently more reflexive and flexible, and an interior dimension that is relatively free from external pressure and seldom changes itself but at the same time directly works on the exterior in the medium and long term.[6]

From a chronological perspective, the interior and deepest dimension of the self is older than the exterior, and the former is formed through a socialization process. In particular, there is an internalization of roles of significant others in Mead's sense or desires of father-like authoritative others in a Freudian sense. This deepest dimension consists of desire, which is normally unconscious in everyday life. On

the contrary, the exterior aspect is exposed to and must adjust in a quick-witted manner to drastic changes in society, such as rapid globalization or sudden catastrophes.

From a sociological perspective, the exterior aspect may significantly differ by individual, because people have unique and particular experiences in everyday life. However, the interior dimension, which determines individual ways of behaving or thinking at the deepest levels, is formed in accordance with common and collective values of the historical society in which one is born or grows up. Therefore, we may say that the deeper the level of the self we penetrate to, the more common and collective features of the national identity we can reveal.

The Great East Japan Earthquake and the accompanying nuclear calamity impacted both the exterior and interior dimensions in different ways. In the following section, I investigate the influences on the interior of Japanese identity by analysing literary works written after the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Analysing post-earthquake literature

Four literary works and the imaginative sphere

In the following, I will pick up four literary works written after the Great East Japan disaster: *Suito hiaafuta* (*Sweet Hereafter*) by Banana Yoshimoto, *Sozo rajio* (*Imagination Radio*) by Seiko Ito, *Yamaneko domu* (*Wildcat Dome*) by Yuko Tsushima and *Koisuru genpatu* (*A Nuclear Reactor in Love*) by Genichiro Hakahashi. Japanese literary critic Saeko Kimura (2013) says that post-earthquake literature appears as a new genre that comes into being just at the moment when something old is lost. Something new has been added after the Great East Japan disaster. In other words, conventional values and outlooks of life have changed. Sociologically, it can be said that the disaster has made it possible to deconstruct self-evidence of everyday life and establish another sense of reality from the cracks in the triviality of everyday life. The four typical post-disaster literary works I will discuss below depict different realities for possible exchanges between the living and the dead. I will use the term 'imaginative sphere' to refer to a spatial realm for these exchanges. This concept is also a tool for analysing literary works and identifying the effects of the disaster on individual psychology.

Sweet Hereafter and the imaginative sphere as healing

Banana Yoshimoto, the author of *Sweet Hereafter*, is one of the most well-known Japanese pop-culture novelists within and outside Japan. In fact, some of her main works have been translated into other languages and have won literary awards abroad. As Yoshimoto herself says in the epilogue of the novel, 'I know it is difficult to be understood, but this novel, *Sweet Hereafter*, is written for and dedicated to all who have experienced the Great East Japan disaster everywhere, and not only the survivors, but also the dead'.

In the story, the heroine, Sayoko, and her boyfriend Yoichi are in a traffic accident. Sayoko survives, but Yoichi is killed. The story is her experience of the loss of her *Mabui* (soul) in the accident and her actions to recover it. During her near-death experience, she meets her late grandfather and her beloved dog again. Her grandfather persuades her to go back to her life and he sends her to 'this world' across the rainbow bridge on his favourite Harley-Davidson. Since the accident, she has lost her *Mabui* and her everyday life has changed drastically. She lives in *Ano-basho* (the literal translation of 'that place') between life and death, on the opposite side of the rainbow bridge. She can see the dead or ghosts. After a while, she realizes that it matters little whether ghosts exist or not, or where 'that place' actually is, and she accepts at last that the distinction between life and death has no importance, because everything is 'reality' for her. At that moment, she recovers her *Mabui*.

The story is written against the backdrop of Kyoto, which is a traditional city with a lot of Buddhist temples and Shintoist shrines. It has been a capital city of Japan for more than 1,000 years. In this novel, Kyoto is described as a city full of the signs of old dreams, which tear up the present world and transport one to the distant past. The *Mabui* or soul that Sayoko loses and recovers in the novel comes from the culture of Okinawa, in southern Japan. Okinawa is well known for its unique religion of ancestor worship and for *Yuta*, who are mediums between the living and the dead.

The motif that survivors meet the beloved dead again may be seen widely in works related to disasters or calamities. However, in this novel, what is unique is that the imaginative sphere for communication between the living and the dead is situated in an extension of the heroine's dreams in everyday life. It does not belong to the Hades of Shintoism, Paradise of Buddhism or the Heaven of Christianity. Precisely speaking, she herself thinks it is no longer necessary to distinguish 'that place' not only from the next world of the dead, but also from her own dreams. As a matter of fact, Sayoko wants to meet Yoichi again at 'that place' where she met her grandfather and beloved dog, but she cannot; rather, she meets him in her dreams. Still, the reunion in her dream brings her the same healing effects as if it had happened in 'that place'.

Imagination Radio and listening to the voices of stranger victims

The calamity of the East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami is said to have provoked an increase in religious consciousness. This consciousness can be observed in literary works as the imaginative sphere for dialogue between the living and the dead. Let us now leave *Sweet Hereafter*, and turn to *Imagination Radio* by Seiko Ito, who is a multi-skilled musician, entertainer and novelist. *Imagination Radio* was made into a radio drama and broadcast on 9 March 2014, two days before the third anniversary of the Great East Japan disaster.

Imagination Radio is a radio programme of the imagination where DJ Ark emcees and only the dead can listen or participate. DJ Ark is, in fact, not at the microphone in a radio station, but is caught upside down on a branch at the top of a

tree. There are no sponsors, no radio station and no studio. In fact, everything, including the radio waves, microphones and even the voice of DJ Ark, are just products of the imagination.

DJ Ark, whose real name is Fuyusuke Akutagawa, returned to Fukushima from Tokyo with his wife and son in order to embark on a business venture with his elder brother in his hometown. Their first day back in Fukushima, they are met by the earthquake and tsunami, and Ark is washed away into the mountain where nobody will be able to go for many years because of the dangerous radiation. He was struck by the tsunami so suddenly that he forgot what happened just before and just after the disaster, and at first, he does not know if he is alive or dead. His real motive for starting the radio programme, although he is dead and is not a real radio DJ, is to try to make contact with his wife and son. The other dead listeners participate and enjoy the programme or report their present situations in imaginary mail or on imaginary phones. However, Ark and his wife and son cannot get in contact with each other via the radio programme, because his wife and son survived the disaster. The story ends with the following: at the end of the radio programme, the listeners report this scene one after another to DJ Ark … long after the disaster, his wife recollects and talks to her son about his father and her son takes pride in Ark.

In the literary world, the Great East Japan disaster has opened the imaginative sphere of exchanges between the living and the dead, which is called 'that place' or takes the form of an imaginary radio programme. Also, it may work, especially in the case of *Sweet Hereafter*, as a way of healing survivors. However, it must be noted that the imaginative sphere is considered not necessarily the next world of only the dead. It is connected with or a part of the dreams, daydreams or imagination of the living as well. Broadly speaking, this could provide a sociological context for religious consciousness in the post-traditional or late-modern age, although there is no space for an extended discussion here.

Having found the similarity between these two works, I turn to a different story to illustrate another significant impact of the 2011 disaster on Japanese identity. In order to examine this story, we must understand in advance the role of another character, S from *Imagination Radio*, who was a member of the volunteers in Fukushima and a perfect stranger to DJ Ark. *Imagination Radio* consists of two parts: one is the imaginary radio programme of DJ Ark and the dead listeners, which I have described above, and the other is a group of living volunteers on the way from Fukushima to Tokyo.

The heroine, Sayoko, of *Sweet Hereafter* sees her late beloved grandfather while living in this world and, at the same time, while being aware of the imaginative sphere. On the contrary, it is next to impossible for S of *Imagination Radio* to listen to the programme, though he is eager to. This shows that *Imagination Radio* places attention on the difficulty of exchanges between the living and the dead. Nevertheless, S, taking Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the bombing of Tokyo as examples, talks about the impossibility of neglecting the voices of victims who are strangers and emphasizes the importance of listening to them.

Wildcat Dome and the recurrence of nuclear calamities

To listen to the voices of victims means to recall and reflect on the past, which survivors often repress or expel from their consciousness. The novel *Wildcat Dome* is a reflection of the total history of Japan since World War II. The author, Yoko Tsushima, like Banana Yoshimoto, is a very well-known novelist in the world and her main works have also been translated into many other languages.

In *Wildcat Dome*, three main characters, Micchi, Kazu and Yonko, appear who are all fatherless. In particular, the fathers of Micchi and Kazu are American soldiers who have returned to their homeland. Micchi and Kazu have been adopted by a cousin of Yonko's mother, and the three of them grow up together with other half-Japanese, half-Americans. The story is mainly retrospection of the life courses of Micchi, Kazu and Yonko, written to correspond to Japan's history following World War II.

One day, when they were elementary school students, Miki, who was a half-Japanese and half-American, drowns in a pond in the park. A boy named Tabo was observed by the neighbours near the pond, but nobody witnessed the very moment when the incident took place. However, after the incident and until Tabo's suicide at the age of 51, similar murders took place five times. The victims were all young women in orange-coloured skirts, the same as Miki at her death. Each time a woman with an orange-coloured skirt falls victim to murder, Micchi, Kazu and Yonko are deeply shaken and remember the incident with Miki, which they have repressed and sunk into oblivion.

First, note how the main three characters, Micchi, Kazu and Yonko, have such a deep sense of guilt, even though they seem to have had nothing to do with the deed. At the same time, nobody has evidence that Tabo did it or tries to get to the bottom of the incident by checking up on the matter or questioning Tabo. The sense of guilt they embrace may come from the fact that they neglected and excluded Tabo before and even after the incident. Added to this, they are obsessed with and stand in fear of the idea that they may be accessories to the crime because they could have stopped the subsequent murders.

Considering the orange-coloured skirt as a metaphor for atomic energy or a nuclear accident,[7] the message of the novel is self-evident. However, before solving the message, we must turn to the existence of the orphans. According to literary critic Saeko Kimura, the characters in the novel, with their half-Japanese, half-American heritage, are the figures of Japan itself (Kimura, 2013: 221). After the war, Japan became one of the most affluent countries in the world, following the example of the United States. In the process of becoming affluent, Japan has forgotten the miseries of atomic bombings, nuclear radiation and other man-made catastrophes. Because Japanese nationals have sunk such miseries into oblivion and enjoy an affluent society, they may be perpetrators of the nuclear accident and cannot but suffer from a sense of guilt, just like the three characters in *Wildcat Dome*.

Let us now look at the uniqueness of the imaginative sphere in *Wildcat Dome* in detail. Different from the previous stories, this imaginative sphere is not restricted

to being a space for exchanges between the living and the dead, but also includes inner communications with internalized living others as in G.H. Mead's sense. For example, in the inner and imaginative sphere for communication in Yonko's mind, Yonko talks at the bedside with Kazu when he is in a coma and after his death. So, as she talks with living Kazu, she also talks with Micchi, who is far from Yonko at that time. The whole story is described as a process of inner communication connected with other characters. Therefore, the imaginative sphere in *Wildcat Dome* is not a single space, but gives the whole story its sense of multi-layered dimensions of different imaginative spheres connected with each other. Therefore, each event in the novel has no objective basis outside the imaginative sphere. This impresses on the reader the fact that there is no evidence of the murder(s) and, as a result, Micchi, Kazu and Yonko suffer from a sense of guilt.

Another literary work and sense of guilt and desire

Imaginative sphere and impacts of the Great East Japan disaster

It was observed in the preceding section that, in the literary world, the Great East Japan disaster opened the imaginative sphere of exchanges between the living and the dead. In each work that I discussed, this sphere is called *Anobasho* or 'that place' (*Sweet Hereafter*), or takes the form of the imaginary radio programme (*Imagination Radio*) or the whole story itself (*Wildcat Dome*). It may function as a way of healing; however, it also functions as a space for listening to the voices of the dead and provides the reader with an opportunity to recollect and reflect on past calamities that are neglected or forgotten by survivors.

Japanese society repressed the memories of repeated nuclear calamities, including the atomic bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima and the Daigo Fukuryu Maru incident. Recollecting these catastrophes has evoked a sense of guilt in the deepest levels of Japanese psychology, which is characterized by the individualism of desire. The sense of guilt after the 2011 disaster may lead to criticism or negation of Japan's entire history after World War II. However, the result of this attitude is ambivalent: on one hand, it may make people reflect on the individualism of desire, which prioritizes only economic growth; on the other, it may refute individualism itself, acquired by the Japanese society, with the values of democracy and return to conservative and collective-directed nationalism.

Let us now turn our focus exclusively to the sense of guilt as the negation of individualistic desire. In general, a sense of guilt is evoked by the internalized negation of desire, and the sense of guilt in turn oppresses the desire. In this process, guilt can be unconsciously compensated for or rationalized in altruistic acts such as solidarity with victims or the practice of charity.

I will return to the above-discussed remarks concerning *tembatsu* (divine punishment) made by a conservative politician and the negative attitude *jishuku* (self-restraint with relation to pleasures) and the clichéd concept of *kizuna* (social bonds), found among ordinary people. It would seem that there is a significant

difference between the statement concerning *tembatsu* and the attitudes of *jishuku* or *kizuna*, in that the former shows a lack of consideration towards the victims of the disaster, whereas the latter seeks solidarity between victims and other ordinary people; nevertheless, it can be said that they are functionally equivalent for psychoanalysis, as repression of desire. As a matter of fact, it is easy to refute *tembatsu*, in the remark quoted above, but difficult to criticize *jishuku* or *kizuna*. In the next section, I will examine a literary work that confronts this difficult challenge.

A Nuclear Reactor in Love *and taboos in post-war Japanese society*

After the Great East Japan Earthquake, Genichiro Takahashi, a well-known novelist and literary critic, wrote a 'scandalous' comic novel, *Koisuru Genpatsu* (*A Nuclear Reactor in Love*), which is full of sexually explicit and indiscreet content. *A Nuclear Reactor in Love* is not only the title of his novel but also the name of a pornographic film created in the novel to raise money for the victims of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster.

The story is that Ishikawa, who is a storyteller and a director of pornographic films and who lacks an interest in political issues such as nuclear policy, diplomatic and national defence policy and Japanese responsibility for World War II, is ordered by the chairman and the president of his company to make a pornographic film to raise money for the victims of the nuclear disaster. In the novel, the company has already created several pornographic films to raise money for causes, films that derive their material from political and religious issues, although, in Japanese society, political and religious topics as well as sexually explicit expressions are considered taboo in entertainment and everyday conversation. The chairman and the president also prohibit directors from using political and religious material for the subject matter of their films; however, the chairman and president have made politically sensational videos.

In one pornographic film created by the president of the company, an *eirei* (spirit of a dead soldier), killed at the site of the hard-fought battle of Saipan, returns to the world of the living and rapes young Japanese women. The *eirei* says that, when he was alive, he fought for *Tenno* (the emperor) at the front, where there were no *jugun ianhu* (sex slavery in military brothels), to say nothing of respectable women whom soldiers could violate. After the war, he continues, only elderly Japanese visit old battlefields to console *eirei* and gather their remains, while more and more young Japanese women dressed in the height of fashion come to travel in Saipan, have love affairs and have sex with non-Japanese inhabitants. The *eirei* claims, on these grounds, that he and his comrades have a special privilege to be acquitted of sexual crimes.

The Japanese war dead are enshrined together and deified as *eirei* at the Yasukuni Shrine, which functioned in the former Empire of Japan as an ideological state apparatus, in an Althusserian sense. Therefore, the issue of sexual crimes by Japanese soldiers during wartime is considered taboo, and the revelation of the existence of *jugun ianhu* is thought to defile the honour and sanctity of *eirei*. The Imperial Japanese Army responsible for *jugun ianhu* is severely criticized in this

pornographic film by the idea that *eirei* or the spirits of the imperial Japanese dead soldiers, although believed to fight for the helpless women and children left behind on the front lines, violate Japanese women. More importantly, the film is created to raise money for Korean victims of sex slavery by the Imperial Japanese Army. The film provoked severe anger and was discontinued before the company was able to make any financial contribution to the cause. Nevertheless, this erotic and obscene story was able to break down the taboo around the myth of the former Imperial Japanese Army.

The structure of the novel is worth a mention in passing. The novel consists of eight chapters describing the creation of a pornographic film for charity and one chapter of literary criticism by the author himself. In the second from last chapter, Takahashi comments on literary works following the disaster, clarifying the distinction between 'grammar' and 'ethics' in writing about catastrophes such as war, acts of terrorism and natural disasters. Takahashi says that novelists and critics are expected to follow the grammar or 'logic of justice' and, in accordance with it, prior to writing, they must declare an official position, namely that every war is abominable and such a tragedy must never be repeated or that human life must never be taken. According to Takahashi, the logic of justice is merely grammar and consequently abstract. However, he supports the position that Susan Sontag articulated after the 9/11 attacks. She first posed the questions 'What is terrorism?' and 'Are there people who have no choice but to commit terrorist acts?' before following the accepted grammar, stating that 'acts of terrorism are by no means forgivable'. As a result, she was called 'an enemy of American society'. Sontag's ethics, thus, are entirely different from the conventional grammar, and they are not abstract. Takahashi says:

> Sontag's logic, or her 'ethics', is not abstract at all. I believe firmly that her ethics are built up from her own sense, her own dialogue with herself and each scene of her own daily life; they are nurtured in her body by everything she has learned in her own life: the books she has read, the music she appreciates, the paintings and pictures that have impressed her. Her body is engraved in her logic.
>
> *(Takahashi, 2011: 203, my translation)*

Throughout the story of the novel *A Nuclear Reactor in Love*, the 'sexual' represents what is 'arising from or rooted in the body', namely what is 'ethical' and not ideological. The novel has a very ironic effect, because ordinary readers may regard making a pornographic film to raise money for charity as impudent and indecent, but this negative judgement of readers uncovers the deceitfulness of the attitude that gives respect to acts of charity. Only an 'ethics' rooted in the body or sexual desire can reach the truth of act and discourse. Ethics is paradoxical in this sense.

The chairman of the film company in the novel was once a crew member of the *Yamato*, a legendary battleship of the former Imperial Japanese Navy and was instructed by his elder brother, a wounded soldier, absolutely never to rape in war.

The chairman took his brother's admonition to heart. When the *Yamato* was torpedoed and sunk, its crew afloat at sea, the chairman spoke with a young sailor friend of his about the forms of women's genitalia, to keep up their spirits, until the friend died, both of them still at sea. The two were still virgins. The chairman survived and made up his mind to live his life thinking only about genitals. The works of his company are truly indecent and immoral, but for this reason, they uncover the deceit of moral and ideological myths.

The chairman breaks the so-called *kiku no gomon tabu* (chrysanthemum taboo), which refers to the gag rule in mass media in relation to the emperor and his family. The chrysanthemum is the crest of the imperial family. In a project meeting during the creation of a film, the chairman proposes to ask Akihito, the name of the current reigning emperor, to act in his film, simply because he is a true and pure 'enthusiastic admirer' of Akihito. The reason the chairman respects him is that the emperor spoke out against compelling teachers and pupils to sing the national anthem in unison at school ceremonies, although the Japanese ruling class have made it an obligation. In addition, the emperor noted at a press conference on the occasion of his birthday in 2001 that the mother of the famous ancestral Emperor Kanmu (737–806) came from the Korean Peninsula. Certainly, the point of this episode is not that the emperor seems ironically more liberal than the Japanese right-wing ruling class but that the emperor is neither denounced nor called *hikokumin* (unpatriotic), unlike others who may have held the same ideas. Before and during World War II, many anti-establishmentarians were oppressed or killed under the same label of *hikokumin*. This episode embodies a severe criticism of the double standards of the right wing. If they criticize the chairman, they must logically criticize the emperor.

During the project meeting, the Great East Japan Earthquake and the associated tsunami occur, and in the last, eighth chapter, Ishikawa's plan for a pornographic film to raise money for charity is described. The film ends with a scene in which impersonators of world leaders have sex with sex dolls in front of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station, along with 20,000 ordinary men and women. Like most pornographic films, the plot of *A Nuclear Reactor in Love* is very simple. However, having so many people, along with impersonators of world leaders, perform sexual acts in front of a power station is extremely unusual. Taking into consideration Takahashi's viewpoint on the difference between grammar and ethics, it is evident that both nuclear power and pornographic films are taboos in conventional society; at the same time, from an ethical perspective, they are cues to the ideological deceitfulness of society.

Discussions, conclusions and further suggestions

The impact of the Great East Japan Earthquake and the following nuclear catastrophe on Japanese identity is very complicated. It may be a warning of the limits of the scientific technology in which Japanese society takes pride. However, simultaneously the Fukushima calamity evoked a sense of guilt that had been expelled from consciousness; namely, Japan experienced the atomic bombing of

Hiroshima and Nagasaki and dangerous radiation from a thermonuclear test, but it then repressed, in part, the memory of those tragedies and enjoyed its economic prosperity. We cannot stress enough that, particularly in post-war Japanese society, the critique of egoism or individualistic desire can easily be related to the negation of individualism itself and invite collective-directed nationalism, which was not conquered before.

We must now return to the problem related to different influences of the disaster on both the reflexive and flexible exterior level and the interior level or desire. As Elliott said in a lecture on the great global crash at Chiba University in September 2010, the Great East Japan disaster also strengthens the ideological effects of new individualism (Elliott, 2010).[8] Sawai applied the theory of new individualism to Japanese society, noting that the rapid social changes accompanying globalization provoke in Japanese identity a feeling of ontological insecurity in Anthony Giddens's sense of the term (Elliott et al., 2010), and the ontological insecurity accelerated by globalization and the new individualism is connected with a sense of guilt rooted in deepest identity after the 2011 disaster. Consequently, conservative discourses are generated that deny the positive heritage of modern individualism.

Last of all, I am a critical theorist. From the beginning, in the age of Adorno and Horkheimer, critical theory has prohibited itself from depicting an iconology of a rosy future. Actually, we cannot but remember the remarks of the Japanese politician that I mentioned at the beginning of my chapter: 'We need to use [the] tsunami to wipe out egoism, which has rusted onto the mentality of Japanese over a long period of time. I think the disaster is 'tembatsu' (divine punishment), although I feel sorry for [the] disaster victims.'

Notes

1 'Divine punishment' is a literal translation of *tembatsu*.
2 Daigo Fukuryu Maru is a Japanese tuna fishing boat, which was exposed to nuclear fallout from a US H-bomb test at Bikini Atoll.
3 For post-earthquake literature criticism, see, in particular, Kimura (2013).
4 The English translation was published in 1950.
5 The English translation was published in 1965.
6 Elliott and Lemert acknowledged the importance of psychoanalysis and crucial attention to feelings and affect at multi-layered levels of psychology (Elliott & Lemert, 2009: 74–75). This study divides the self into an exterior reflexive and flexible level and an interior level of desire.
7 See Kimura (2013), in particular, footnote 38 on page 233.
8 Elliott's lecture was delivered at the annual meeting of the Society for Sociological Theory in Japan at Chiba University in 2010. It has been published as 'The New Individualism after the Great Global Crash', *The Journal of Studies in Contemporary Sociological Theory*, No. 4.

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5

FROM 'THIS IS NOT A PIPE' TO 'THIS IS NOT FUKUSHIMA'

Global disaster and visual communication

Kiyomitsu Yui

It is Peter Berger (1967) who once said that wars and disasters are the events that provoke the collapse of the 'sacred canopy' of daily life, which is where the starting point of sociological awakening lies. In this vein, what Ulrich Beck (2010) has argued about risk society can be considered a disclosure or chronicalization and the routinization of the collapse of the 'sacred canopy' of modern institutions, where we, the 'homeless people' of institutional canopies who have been expelled from 'sacred' ones, are exposed to the global arena. This describes the present situation of being thrown into the endless cycle of de-contextualization and re-contextualization on both sides of the local and the global, which Beck describes as the reality of the 'second modernity'. This chapter attempts to situate this double process in relation to visual communication vis-à-vis global disasters like Fukushima and more fundamental destructive processes like global climate change.

The visual has been treated as a 'second-class citizen' in academic scholarship, especially in the 'Western' tradition, where language, as a phonetic symbol system, is supposedly most advanced when it keeps the sharpest and farthest distance from visual imitation. From this view it is only language discourse, as the articulated system of phonetic elements, that can create critical thinking, with other means of human communication ranked at a secondary level. As Mitchell points out, the idol – as in the context of idol worship – in the 'West' is a false and illusory image. In the Western philosophical tradition descending from Plato (the allegory of the cave wherein projected images are deep-seated illusions of human beings), through Francis Bacon (listing the idols including that of the cave; see Mitchell, 2005: 189), to Theodor Adorno's criticism of 'photological proof' in the culture industry as a dialectical opposite of the language of Enlightenment (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002: 118), 'idol worship' is the worst sin an academic can commit.

Although this chapter does not try to completely overturn this tendency or try to shift focus to the opposite pole, it asserts that some 'affirmative action', so to

speak, is needed to bring about a greater balance between the visual and language components of communication. The fundamental irony about this 'affirmative action' concerns the mode of expression of the chapter itself; I need to 'write' the shift towards the visual in order to indicate its significance.

From the visual to the social

To begin, I want to work with the 'famous' image of a polar bear on a tiny piece of melting ice. I suppose that you have already seen at least a few examples of this. Actually, if you enter keywords such as 'global warming' into a search engine, one of the images that first appears is of melting ice in the North Pole and then you will see these 'cute' endangered animals popping up in front of you. For some people, this is one of the iconic images when we talk about climate change. Actually these visual images themselves have some impact in their own right, and the first half of the chapter will discuss the capacity or power these visual images have.

To be sure, I am not suggesting that there are no contested discourses around these images. In fact, when we say that this image is one of the clearest representations of a symptom of global warming we have available to us, it is conceivable that some people might counter by arguing that melting ice is not a problem for polar bears, since they can swim and have survived periods when there was even less ice in their long history on the Earth. Even if some people were to

FIGURE 5.1 Polar bear on a tiny piece of melting ice.

suggest that the ice melting will lead to less food for polar bears and, in turn, to the miserable situation of them feeding on each other, others might respond by claiming that they have a habit of devouring one another that has been around long before we started talking about global warming. Therefore, we can dispute one visual image.

In the same vein, we have the 'famous' image of the island of Tuvalu in the South Pacific,[1] with the caption 'Tuvalu in danger of being submerged as an effect of melting ice' (global warming and climate change). Again the visual image has its own impact. Some news reporters, including one who was once a Japanese TV newscaster before becoming an official in the United Nations public relations sector, have visited the small island to report on the serious situation of people's daily life. The report has been broadcast as a documentary program on Japanese TV. Yet there is no rigid consensus among scientists or specialists as to the exact cause of the phenomenon. There are still some contested discourses around the issue, meaning that some people might say that there is no scientific proof, that scientists have not reached a consensus, and that their scientific observations and opinions differ as to whether melting ice caused by global warming is the exact cause of the Tuvalu phenomenon.

Setting aside these contested arguments, you can easily find on the Internet images such as skyscrapers in Manhattan, New York, which are half submerged, the Statue of Liberty almost drowning in the sea, with the caption 'This is not Tuvalu'. Of course it is not, it is a composite photo of Manhattan Island.[2]

FIGURE 5.2 This is not Tuvalu.

As I argue in this chapter, this *combination* of caption and photo implies a certain 'critical' stance towards the interpretation of the image's meaning. The possibility of 'critical' communication via certain combinations of the visual and the social (meaning) is the main subject of this chapter.

The chapter argues that, in the cosmopolitanizing globe, it is increasingly the case that the *social* is constructed via *visual* images, and, at the same time, *the visual* is constructed via *the social*. The social and the visual are, in other words, mutually constructed (Kurasawa, 2012). There are some sociologists, Alexander and Kurasawa among others, who are now committing to this new visual turn in sociology. In the first half of the chapter I will work in the direction of the visual to the social, and in the latter half work from the social to the visual.

Symbolic culture in the age of globalization

The first issue to be discussed concerns a basic shift of people's action orientation in contemporary society. The following is a quotation from the Japanese sociologist Maruyama, a specialist in globalization theory, with a particular interest in different aspects of symbolic expression in the context of globalization. He developed his approach drawing upon the theoretical base established by Parsons in the field of cultural sociology, namely the relation of the symbolic system to social structure. Maruyama's focus is especially on the expressive aspects of visual or digital modes of orientation in contemporary society. His major contribution to the renovation of Parsonian theory is his emphasis on the expressional dimension of culture, which was relatively weak in Parsons's theoretical configuration, as being important in the age of globalization. Maruyama comments:

> It cannot be denied that in the age of the formation of action theory, the expressional element was treated as a residual category compared to cognitive and evaluative elements … [T]hough to deal with contemporary culture, in the age of popularization of electric media, it is needed to incorporate the elements of expression into a unified theoretical frame of culture.
>
> *(Maruyama, 2010: 56)*

Maruyama's argument, in other words, concerns those aspects of the symbolic system (culture) that can be globalized more easily than other aspects. He states further:

> If I dare to put the discussion forward, as the result of globalization, when globality is an emergent property, the essence of it should be explained as a symbolic constitution mediated by symbols. In this context, we should identify the symbolic domains that can be prone to globalize and those inseparable from local places.
>
> *(Maruyama, 2010: 145)*

In conclusion, Maruyama refers to these aspects as cognitive and expressive ones:

> To apply the assumption of autonomy and globalization of symbols to the elements of the cultural system in the Parsonian sense, because the empirical/cognitive system of culture has a most distinctive code and symbolic autonomy, it fits the manipulation of simulation. Therefore it features the possibility of constant reconstruction and reproduction on the global level …
>
> Then, expressional cultural elements based on emotional cathexis, by constant reproduction as the object of desire beyond necessity, in the domain of visual symbol and image, come to constitute the core of consumer culture. Simulation evolves with the elaborate technique of duplication by digitized mode, creates things of emotional satisfaction with 'persuasive power' because of its reality and visuality.
>
> *(Maruyama, 2010: 175)*

In the age of a visual turn in sociological theory, especially with regard to the global public sphere, Maruyama's contribution to the field is significant. While Maruyama's arguments seem to be confined within the range of the extension of Parsonian theory, we need to go beyond that range in order to obtain more free imagination towards globalization/cosmopolitanization. That said, other sectors of society as a whole (political, economic and social) remain to be investigated from Maruyama's point of view.

Power of visual mode of orientation

As I pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, visuality has been treated like a second-class citizen among academics, but this is not necessarily the case for ordinary people. This problematic becomes more relevant to contemporary society where visual communication/transmission are penetrating into our daily life much more deeply than before, for both academics and 'ordinary' people (the distinction between the two is now also problematic). In this context, we can quote Appadurai:

> [T]hey [electronic media] are resources for experiments with self-making in all sorts of societies, for all sorts of persons … Because of the sheer multiplicity of the forms in which they appear (cinema, television, computers, and telephones) and because of the rapid way in which they move to and through daily life routines, electronic media provide resources for self-imaging as an everyday social project.
>
> *(Appadurai, 1996: 3–4)*

> The link between the imagination and social life, I would suggest, is increasingly a global and deterritorialized one.
>
> *(Appadurai, 1996: 55)*

Combining Appadurai's idea with Maruyama's, we come to the insight that the digitization of electronic media affects the construction of people's daily consciousness through the vividness of visuality. Visuality shifts people's basic and daily consciousness in orientation. The orientation of the visual, especially in digital form, easily traverses social borders, when compared to some of the other aspects of cultural symbols, such as the cognitive (e.g. language, mathematics, linguistics), or the evaluative (e.g. traditional types of religions).

In this regard, it can be said that the visual most concerns the cathectic (feelings, emotions) aspect of human communication. Digitally reproduced images as visualities are, as Maruyama put it, emotionally penetrative of minds, and they shape 'easily' our daily life and daily consciousness. Thus we have here one of the most relevant connections of *the visual* with the age of cosmopolitanization.

To review, what we have been considering in the first half of this chapter is the impact of the visual image per se. In other words, we have focused on the ways that people contest issues based upon images, around images and with images. Whatever issue we are talking about these days we cannot escape from the image as (to say the least) the first impact. In this sense, if we use one of those 'traditional' terms in communication studies, the visual has the capacity of 'agenda setting'.

To illustrate this point I use the following example: Fukushima. The capacity of the visual for agenda setting is evident in what occurred during the Fukushima disaster in 2011.

FIGURE 5.3 White mushroom cloud.

The image of the explosion of Fukushima Daiichi (the first) nuclear power plant with that high-rising white mushroom cloud (hydrogen explosion) has been repeatedly on air after the event. TV news reporters, newscasters and critics have talked *around* this image, and the impact of the event itself still remains with us with this image. We are still unable to escape this image when we talk about Fukushima.

Analytical frame for the sociology of visuality

Kurasawa has coined the concept 'foresighted cosmopolitanism' (Kurasawa, 2007: 109). The visual image of the explosion, in this regard, functioned to provoke 'foresighted cosmopolitanism' in the global media, and for people around the globe, 'awakening the sense of concern' (Kurasawa, 2007: 109). Alongside Chernobyl, this was the second really global wake-up call for global risk society.

Kurasawa is one of the foremost theoretical pioneers working within the visual turn of sociology, notable in particular for developing the visual turn in the direction of *critical theory*. In a conference paper presented in Kobe, Japan, he outlined the following framework for a critical sociology of visuality (Kurasawa, 2012). Here I draw on the following insights from this paper.

A critical sociology of visuality takes three main aspects into analytic and empirical consideration: symbolic structure, network of circulation and iconographic field. The aspect of symbolic structure concerns the quality and organizational structure of a symbolic work itself – for instance, say, beautiful or ugly, well or badly structured. In the case of the polar bear, this 'cute' looking ('*kawaii*') animal, 'snow white' in color, against a purely white background and in combination with a tiny melting chunk of ice on which it is barely hanging should be a more appealing one than other images because of the structural arrangement of its elements.

Network of circulation concerns how these symbolic works reach the people. How effective or ineffective civil society organizations (CSOs) or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (for example, eco movement practitioners) are in their visual communications depends on the networks of circulation. In the case of the polar bears, there have been plenty of events organized by environmental protection groups both in governmental and non-governmental sectors. For instance, Kochi prefecture in Japan has its Environmental Activity Support Center and they regularly hold an event called 'Eco-Lab' (meaning ecology laboratory). At one of these events, they invited a director from the science and environment section of NHK (Japan Broadcasting Agency, the biggest broadcasting agency in Japan) as a speaker to the Kochi Center organized forum for the prevention of global warming. The director had made and broadcast a program for NHK entitled *Great Transformation of the North Pole: When Polar Bears Disappear*.

We also have many books featuring the animal. Among these, Nicola Davies's *Ice Bear: In the Steps of the Polar Bear* (2005), and Jean Davies Okimoto's *Winston of Churchill: One Bear's Battle Against Global Warming* (2008) are well known, and

have been translated into Japanese. The National Geographic Society also issued DVDs featuring this animal in relation to global warming. There has been a campaign by WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) to name two mother polar bears that were the objects of the fund's 'Polar Bear Tracker' research project in the North Pole area.

The third analytical aspect of Kurasawa's theoretical frame is the iconographic field. This concerns the situation/field in which a competition among the symbolic works takes place. One particularly relevant notion is Bourdieu's 'field' of competition for cultural distinction. Why one particular work – the polar bear, Tuvalu – and not others 'win' in this particular iconographic field is the issue here.

In the context of the polar bears, for instance, there are photographic genres such as animal photos, eco photos, or more broadly natural/scientific photos of a *National Geographic* sort. Each genre has its own accumulated cultural memory and collective taste. These cultural resources are used as cultural capital by photographers competing with each other to try to create the persuasive 'next' trend, in-fashion piece of work in the genre. Through overlapping trials amongst them, somehow the photos of the polar bears won in the cultural/photographic field.

Critical theory of visuality

The analytic framework just outlined allows for the development, theoretically and empirically, of a sociology of visuality that connects with critical theory. I will now address this topic.

We have so far discussed the mutual construction of the social and the visual moving in the direction of the visual to the social. In the next section we proceed in the direction of the social to the visual, which fundamentally concerns *critical sociology*. Here we start with the argument 'this is not a pipe'. 'This is not a pipe' is the title of a René Magritte painting, as well as that of an article written by Michel Foucault about the painting.

FIGURE 5.4 This is not a pipe.

Foucault sees the core mystery of the painting as follows:

> What misleads us is the inevitability of connecting the text to the drawing (as the demonstrative pronoun, the meaning of the word *pipe*, and the likeness of the image all invite us to do here) – and the impossibility of defining a perspective that would let us say that the assertion is true, false, or contradictory.
> *(Foucault, 1982: 20)*

> Magritte secretly mines a space he seems to maintain in the old arrangement. But he excavates it with words. And the old pyramid of perspective is no more than a molehill about to cave in.
> *(Foucault, 1982: 37)*

> *Ceci n'est pas une pipe* exemplifies the penetration of discourse into the form of things; it reveals discourse's ambiguous power to deny and to redouble.
> *(Foucault, 1982: 37)*

Here we return to the issue of the capacity that comes from the combination of visuality and language discourse. Through this very *combination* or *encounter* we see the point of 'excavating' the visual with words, or 'the penetration of discourse into the form of things', and accordingly 'discourse's ambiguous power to deny and to redouble' (Foucault, 1982: 37). Referring back to the example of 'This is not Tuvalu' as a caption, we can also consider this as one in which the 'encounter' of the visual and the discourse reveals the latter's 'ambiguous power to deny and to redouble'. In other words, this is the 'penetration of discourse into' *the visual*, and from this point on we can take up the issue of the penetration of *the social* into the visual.

By connecting the penetration of language discourses with *the social*, we can consider Mitchell's ideas. In *What do pictures want?*, Mitchell (2005) has developed an analytical frame for delineating the relationship between the visual and human agency. Here he proposes three different modes of relationship between human agent and icons (visual images): fetish, idol worship and totem.

At its core, the mode of fetish is connected to the desire to touch icons and to attach them to the body, to make them a part of one's body. This is a psychoanalytical mode, which is exemplified in practices like tattooing, devotion to a stuffed toy or doll, high-heeled shoes, and so forth. In the context of this chapter, an example could be that there are stuffed toys of polar bears beloved by children, and these children could become climate change activists in the future.

The second mode described by Mitchell, that of idol worship, is one in which people adore icons, have a desire to become them and possess them, or to belong to them. Practices that are exemplified in this mode include costume play, adoring comic figures, idolizing singers, movie stars, celebrities in general, and so forth. In the context of this chapter, an example could be the famous idol/star actors or

actresses who appear as enthusiastic activists for climate change issues and thus engage people's attention with the issue through their adoration of the idol.

The last mode discussed by Mitchell, regarding the figure of the totem, is familiar to sociologists. This is the Durkheimian idea of solidarity among tribe, community and society in which visualized materials called totems are core symbols of solidarity. In the context of this chapter, objects in fetish mode and idol worship mode are able to be used as totems as well. Those stuffed toys of polar bears or the famous idols can appear as 'totems' in a more direct connection with solidarity among people in the 'community' of movements mentioned above.

Beyond how Durkheim is discussed by Mitchell, I propose that Durkheim can actually be considered a founder of the visual turn of sociology more broadly speaking. In *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, Durkheim wrote:

> [W]e arrive at the remarkable result that *the images of the totemic being are more sacred than the totemic being itself.*
>
> *(Durkheim, 1995: 133, emphasis in original)*

> [A]nd the animals and plants used as totems would play the leading role in religious life. But we know that the focus of the cult is elsewhere. It is symbolic representations of this or that plant or animal. It is totemic emblems and symbols of all kinds that possess the greatest sanctity. And so it is in totemic emblems and symbols that the religious source is to be found, while the real objects represented by those emblems receive only a reflection.
>
> *(Durkheim, 1995: 207–208)*

> Now what does he see around him? What is available to his senses, and what attracts his attention, is the multitude of totemic images surrounding him. He sees the waringa and the nurtunja, symbols of the sacred beings. He sees the bull roarers and the churingas, on which combinations of lines that have the same meaning are usually engraved … Repeated everywhere and in every form, how could that image not fail to stand out in the mind with exceptionally sharp relief? Thus placed at center stage, it becomes representative. To that image the felt emotions attach themselves, for it is the only concrete object to which they can attach themselves
>
> *(Durkheim, 1995: 222)*

Durkheim's logic here is as follows. For Durkheim, ultimate sacredness lies in collective consciousness, and sacredness in this context is the core of human solidarity. However, it is important to note that Durkheim puts the greatest importance on the materialized shape of the sacred, which is the totem. The totem stems from the bonds between the individual and those sacred animals, plants and natural beings. Yet, as the quoted passages clearly show, the core of the sacredness of totems, for Durkheim, lies in nothing but the *images* of them, in materialized shape such as the

tattoo on the body, churingas as painted images, 'combinations of lines' on soil, rock or wood, materialized signs, emblems and so forth. In short, it is this visual image shaped in materiality that is ultimately sacred for social solidarity.

It is worthwhile noting that Durkheim's insight on the sacredness of the relationship between the visual image and solidarity is now becoming more and more relevant to the mindset of contemporary 'ordinary' people. As Durkheim states at the beginning of *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, his own interest is in 'present-day man':

> More especially, it is present-day man, for there is none other that we have a greater interest in knowing well … I have made a very archaic religion the subject of my research because it seems better suited than any other to help us comprehend the religious nature of man, that is, to reveal a fundamental and permanent aspect of humanity.
>
> *(Durkheim, 1995: 1)*

Thus we have yet another significant and relevant issue here: there are two lines of the relationship between images and human beings. The idol (as visual illusion), disdained in an intellectual tradition running from Plato via Bacon to Adorno on the one hand, and on the other, a deeply intrinsic and emotional tie between the image and human being among 'ordinary' people.

However, in their critique of the culture industry, Adorno and Horkheimer ask an important question about the kind of 'solidarity' that the relation of visuality to human agency constructs: can this be only a very superficial, pseudo solidarity, 'a caricature of solidarity' (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002: 112)? On the issue of communication via visuality ('photological proof') in relation to the culture industry, they write:

> The mere cynical reiteration of the real is enough to demonstrate its divinity. Such photological proof may not be stringent, but it is overwhelming.
>
> *(Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002: 118)*

In Adorno and Horkheimer's chapter 'Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception' (in Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002), almost all of the significant issues related to the culture industry and visual communication are laid out – from the essentially paradoxical nature of commodified culture, the forceful urge of the visual image ('photological proof') penetrating into people's minds, the blurring of the boundary between high and low art, the mass media as manipulative of subjective agency in (counter-) interpretation, the culture industry as re-enchantment, through to the issue of the kind of solidarity that fandom entails (see further, Yui, 2013).

I want to add a fourth mode of relationship between human agents and visual images here in order to develop this line of discussion further. This fourth mode can be called *critical idol destruction through visuality*. This mode expressively indicates the effect of the very *combination* of language discourse and visual image, as in the

case of 'This is *not* a pipe'. It is this mode that reveals the moments of the 'excavation of the visual with words' or 'the penetration of discourse into the form of things'. What then is the difference between the traditional pattern of criticism of idol worship by intellectuals and this mode of *critical idol destruction*? The difference lies in the way that the destruction is performed *through visuality per se*, as was the case in the painting of 'This is not a pipe' by Magritte.

Instead of starting with human action, Mitchell suggests that we can initiate analysis with pictures themselves. The picture as a subject/initiator evokes human action and human collectivity. Therefore, this approach can lead us to the analysis of both text and social context at the same time. Put differently, fetish, idol and totem have their own 'wants' towards humans. Totems want to be a core of human solidarity, therefore they want to be humans' friends, comrades or coteries, while fetishes want to be embraced by people, have people immerse themselves in them, and attach them onto their bodies. Finally, idols want humans to be sacrificed for them and to adore them. This approach starts its analysis with pictures as the initiating point of reference, so I will call this method of analysis 'text *subjectism*'. That is why pictures as original points of power do have the power to connect with people. Yet the additional mode discussed here, that of critical idol destruction, moves more in the direction from the social to the visual, where social factors are most crucial for analysis.

After Fukushima and climate change

We now suggest that this movement from the social to the visual is most relevant to one of Beck's projects – namely, the regional contextualization of cosmopolitanization. With regard to this project I will focus, in what follows, on the regional case of East Asia.

As an East Asian case study related to the issue of climate change, I suggest we explore the following themes:

1. recent territorial disputes in East Asia, with a background in the history of invasive wars by Japan in the region;
2. after Fukushima; and
3. the Kyoto Protocol and Conference of the Parties (COP) 18.

I will start with the last issue, that of the Kyoto Protocol and COP 18. With respect to the regional mediation of climate change in the area called 'Japan', one of the issues of concern has been the regulation of carbonic acid gas exhaust. Japan has viewed nuclear energy plants as a main technical condition allowing it to meet its obligations under the Kyoto Protocol. What happened in Fukushima blew up this plan. Because of this, Japan is now reluctant to declare any serious commitment to COP 18. There is now the awareness that nuclear energy plants can be a source of fundamental risk to climate change or, more exactly put, to climate destruction.

My point here is that, in the situation following Fukushima, we could produce a visual communication like this: a photo of a tall and ill-omened mushroom cloud, with the caption 'This is not Fukushima'.

It turns out to be the case that this is actually not *Fukushima*, but rather *Hiroshima*, with its atomic bomb site/sight. 'This is not Fukushima but Hiroshima', I am trying to suggest, is an example of critical idol destruction through visuality per se, namely a mode of *visual communication* combined with a language discourse of captions that 'excavates the visual with words'. As occurred in the case of 'This is not a pipe' or 'This is not Tuvalu', the combination of the visual and the language discourse penetrate 'into the form of things'.

Put differently, and in connection with *the social* more directly, Japan, in the post-World War II period, has failed to connect Fukushima and Hiroshima until the time of the actual explosion of the nuclear energy plant. Why has this been so? This question leads us to consider broader relations in time and space, with the region of East Asia.

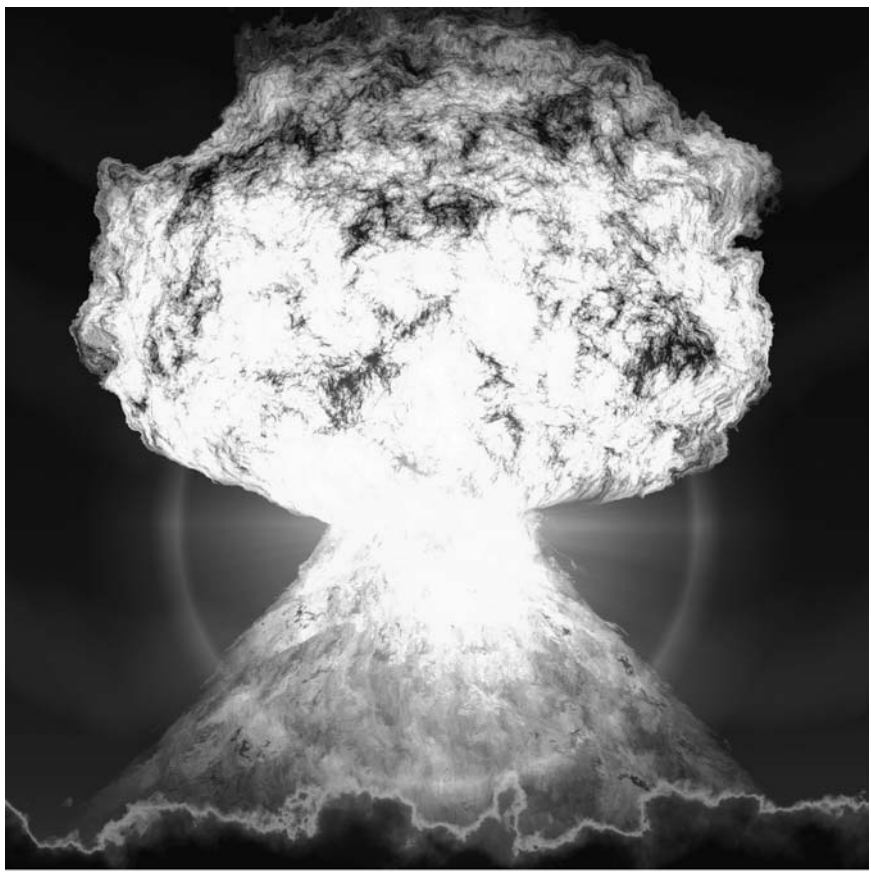

FIGURE 5.5 This is not Fukushima.

Regional contextualization of global disasters

The Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings are, of course, tragic events for the Japanese people, not confined to the direct victims but for Japan in general. This led to significant peace movements in post-World War II Japan. Yet at the same time it can be said that the Hiroshima/Nagasaki bombings have been a symbol for ordinary Japanese people as war victims, and not as offenders. Meanwhile, from other Asian people's perspectives, the bombings marked the end of suffering occasioned by the Japanese invasive wars. Japanese (ordinary) people's consciousness as victims, it could be said, has functioned as a 'barrier', preventing any imagining of Asian people as victims, their sufferings, their traumas caused by the wars. The 'victim consciousness' arising from the atomic bombing by the United States has led the Japanese people, in its strong political, economic and socio-cultural relationships with the United States after World War II, to confine any such imagining of victims of Japanese aggression to Asia. As Japan has been under the US nuclear umbrella, the archipelago has been cocooned by the power of the United States and separated from other Asian countries in its imagination.

It is not just in the matter of official apologies, but in general, that Japan has failed to commit to co-construct the traumatic experiences in Asia as a whole with other Asian people. Meanwhile, in the period after World War II, the meaning of nuclear energy for Japanese people has been transformed from 'monstrous other' (the atomic bomb) to utopian technology (nuclear energy plant) and its scientific development, by which, it has been said, Japan can contribute to the world in a peaceful manner. In all these processes, the imagination vis-à-vis Asian others has tended to be totally lacking. We know that the European past is also full of warfare, but the process after World War II in Japan has been quite different from that of Europe. Whereas in Europe the process led to the formation of the European Union (EU), in East Asia we see rather, and very recently, *territorial disputes*.

A certain period of time has passed since the end of the Cold War. During this time, we witnessed the collapse of the former Soviet Union along with the socialist bloc in Eastern Europe. We first talked, in this period, about the monopoly powers of the United States, before realizing that the new situation was more one of decentralized/dispersed powers. With regard to East Asia as a region, the rise of China is one of the most significant developments in the region these days. Countries in East Asia now have their own multiple connections through various routes with many different countries on the globe as a whole. It is this multilateral interconnectedness that indicates an emerging cosmopolitanization in the region, one actually brought about here because of the very situation of trying to block regional interests in the globally developing 'anarchy' of multilateral interconnectedness. Because of this very process, the United States now declares it is shifting to a more serious commitment with Asia. Yet this declaration, it seems to me, ironically indicates the fundamental trend to be one of loosening the grip of the United States on East Asia, including Japan. In this sense, it can be said that the United States' deep grasp of Japan as the fundamental trend after the end of the

Cold War has been transforming in the direction of loosening the power of its grasp. To be sure, I am not saying that the presence of the United States in this area has become less significant, but rather the contrary. This situation is the reason why Japanese and US politicians are now bringing up the issue of the importance of the ties between the two countries.

We now have a situation where East Asian countries are joining together with each other in a more direct manner than before and experiencing a relative loosening of the hold of the United States. Finally, 70 years after the war ended, we are now in a situation where we need to commit to dialogue more directly with each other in the region of East Asia than ever before, although we cannot neglect the US presence.

Perhaps, in this regard, recent territorial disputes could provide a real chance of forging an Asian Community or Asian Union (AU), similar to the EU, although this is likely to be a painful and complicated process. In this process, as mentioned, the issue of Fukushima in relation to Hiroshima could perhaps be significant for constructing a co-experience of East Asians. The nuclear plant explosion in Fukushima, as was the case with Chernobyl, could perhaps provide the opportunity to practice cosmopolitan risk communication and, as this chapter suggests, practice this in the context of East Asia.

These 'perhaps' should be put in a dialectical mode. To put it more generally, we have to take into serious consideration, when we think of the mutual construction of the visual and the social, the historical occurrences/events in the area/region, and that this is especially the case in the context of broader/global phenomena like cosmopolitan risk communication or climate change. In this chapter I have tended to emphasize an analytical movement from the visual to the social because this has been relatively neglected in sociological theory, but for the further development of the visual turn of sociology, especially for a critical sociology of visuality, we need to be keenly aware of mutuality in this construction process, that which moves in both directions.

Notes

1 Tuvalu in fact is a nation-state.
2 This type of caption, 'This is not Tuvalu' underneath the photo of Manhattan, New York, could also be done with photos of Hamburg, Seoul, Osaka/Kobe, Copenhagen, Liverpool, Rotterdam, London, Paris and so forth.

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6

DIGITAL DISASTER COMMUNITIES

Daniel Chaffee

In a speech on 21 January 2010, less than two weeks after a devastating earthquake hit Haiti, then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton remarked about the new role of the Internet in disaster response: 'And on Monday, a 7-year-old girl and two women were pulled from the rubble of a collapsed supermarket by an American search-and-rescue team after they sent a text message calling for help' (Clinton, 2010). Clinton went on to remark on the 'spread of information networks' that have led to unimaginable interconnectivity. It turns out that the women texted their families for help, and the request for help was broadcast via radio, although it is also true that the USS *Carl Vinson* asked a group of digital humanitarian volunteers to confirm and identify coordinates (Munro, 2013: 254). However it happened, Clinton was certainly correct: digital volunteering had entered the field of disaster response. This story of social innovation, however, only glosses over the broader tale of the impact of digital humanitarianism and how it operates.

Popular news media have made much of the role of new information communication technologies (ICT) in disaster response, particularly the impact of social media like Twitter and Facebook, and, while this is certainly an important shift, there is a deeper story about the socio-technical innovation and the networked communities that lie behind Clinton's remarks about the impact of the Internet. The digital response to the Haiti earthquake makes it the first 'digital disaster' – not a collapse of digital infrastructure, but the emergence of new forms of socio-technical systems that demonstrate the unprecedented levels of global interconnectivity.

This chapter focuses on just one digital humanitarian group that emerged after the earthquake in Haiti, Mission 4636. While it was not the only digital humanitarian initiative, it is particularly interesting because it was the first time that crowdsourced microtasking was used in disaster response (Meier & Munro, 2010). I examine Mission 4636 as a case study of emergent digital humanitarian

organizations through the social theory of Manuel Castells to explore the innovative socio-technical network organization. Examining Mission 4636 through the lens of Castells's social theory of networks opens up new ways of thinking about the digital communities that arise in the wake of disaster.

Mission 4636[1]

On 12 January 2010, an earthquake of magnitude 7 on the Richter scale hit Haiti. In human terms it was one of the most devastating earthquakes recorded. The overall social impact of the earthquake in terms of human suffering was astounding. The death toll estimates vary widely, from the official government estimate reported by Reuters at 316,000, to an academic estimate at 160,000 (Kolbe et al., 2010). Whatever the exact number, the overall impact and human suffering is astonishing. *The New York Times* reports that there were 300,000 injuries, and 1.5 million displaced into makeshift camps, with the economic impact 'at $7.8 billion, or 120 percent of that nation's 2009 gross domestic product' (Gronewold, 2010). Five years on and the impacts are ongoing, with many continuing to live in makeshift accommodation.

The humanitarian response to the Haiti earthquake was immense and the role of new communication technologies and social media was a key feature of the popular media's reporting on the Haitian quake. After the earthquake, social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter were inundated with posts and tweets.[2] Not only were these platforms instrumental in facilitating communications between people, but they played an emergent role in fundraising. In a new release, the American Red Cross stated that over half of all fundraising they generated following the earthquake came from online sources.

While social media and the new communicative environment played an important role in information sharing and processing, as well as facilitating donations, there are two more complex responses that highlight how the new communication environment is changing humanitarian response.[3] The first is that social media platforms were not just used as communication platforms, but facilitated a more complex socio-technical response, which has led to the emergence of new digital humanitarian groups and novel modes of engaging social media for information sharing following a disaster. The second, and the more explicit focus of this chapter, is the emergent digital humanitarian organizations, which, while incorporating social media, used other technological platforms to form a global response.

In the hours and days following the quake, there was a cluster of new digital humanitarian initiatives. One that gathered a lot of media attention was a crisis mapping platform led by Patrick Meier and a group of Tufts students in Boston called Ushahidi Haiti. Meier says, 'I just couldn't sit there and do nothing, so I reached out to Ushahidi's lead developer, David Kobia, and we went live with the Ushahidi-Haiti map' (quoted in Heinzelman & Waters, 2010: 6). The Ushahidi crisis mapping technology was developed in 2007 in Kenya to help prevent election fraud. Ushahidi, Swahili for 'witness', is an online platform that is a method

for crowdsourcing local activism, allowing users with mobile phones to submit reports via text message (SMS), which are published to a live mapping platform. As one of the founders puts it more colloquially, 'Think of Ushahidi, which means "witness" in Swahili, as a multi-media inbox connected to a live map. I added these Twitter users to my inbox and began mapping the most urgent Tweets (those that had enough geographic information to be mapped)' (Meier, 2012). The platform is open source, and allows for a real-time database of both temporal and spatial information to be published online.[4]

According to Robert Munro, the initiative leader for Mission 4636, the digital humanitarian response had a certain network momentum with a 'global collective of leaders in mobile technologies, content management and crisis response' (Munro, 2013: 261). This included technology experts from places including 'ActiveXperts, Energy for Opportunity, The Extraordinaries, FrontlineSMS:Medic, Google.org, MIT Media Lab, Sahana, Stanford University, US State Department, Ushahidi and Votident' (Munro, 2013: 261), and unaffiliated digital volunteers as well. One volunteer, software developer Tim Schwartz, created haitianquake.com, which was a missing person finder, which later was incorporated into Google's Person Finder (Munro, 2013: 221). Starbird and Palen (2013) call this a 'social convergence' that catalyzes volunteers to action.

As Munro notes, very quickly it became clear to the digital volunteers that they had to set up a way for the affected population to be able to send information through text message or SMS. This itself was another convergence: Josh Nesbit of FrontlineSMS:Medic, and Katie Stanton of the US State Department, contacted Digicel, a Haitian mobile phone company (Munro, 2013: 261). Along with Thomson-Reuters Foundation, and InSTEDD, they set up an SMS short code, '4636', that was a free service for the affected population to text for help (Meier, 2012).

It was into the network of digital humanitarian volunteering that Mission 4636 was born, for, once the code was established, they needed a way to translate and geolocate the messages. There was lots of information streaming in that needed to be translated and structured. It became clear that one of the difficulties for responders receiving the short code messages was that they were predominantly in Haitian Creole, and not comprehensive for most of the digital volunteers. This is where Mission 4636 began: 'The Mission 4636 system was first conceived of as a way of gathering and disseminating missing person data, reaching people via text messaging, the most dominant form of remote communication, which, unlike direct calls, was more robust on overloaded phone networks' (Munro, 2013: 214). Once the platform was set up by some of the international volunteers, they needed to find members to do the work of translating. Here, Mission 4636 relied on more mainstream social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn, and also personal networks.

That the 4636 initiative was possible at all was due to the expansion of mobile telephony. There was a relatively high level of mobile phone usage in Haiti, and following the disaster much of the infrastructure for mobile phones was quickly restored. As Castells et al. (2009: 15–16) document, mobile phone use is

particularly growing more rapidly in less developed countries such as Haiti, in part because the infrastructure is cheaper. They also note that this growing expansion is becoming important in disaster response (Castells et al., 2009: 98). Additionally, in Haiti mobile phone uptake was high, with 83% of men and 67% of women owning mobile phones.[5] More importantly, the infrastructure was quickly restored after the quake, with 70–80% of cellular towers functioning again in the days following the quake (Munro, 2013).

Once conceived, Mission 4636 was rapidly launched: 'From conception to launch was just 48 hours' (Munro, 2013: 25). People on the ground could text free emergency messages to the short code number '4636' and the message would be relayed to the online platform. The SMS messages from the affected population would move to the Mission 4636 platform for processing by volunteers (often members of the Haitian diaspora). Munro writes of the process:

> The messages, in plain language, were translated, categorized and mapped by Kreyo'l and French-speaking volunteers worldwide via online crowdsourcing platforms. 80,000 messages were processed (about 10 novels in length) with 45,000 relevant unique structured reports streamed back to responders on the ground.
>
> *(Munro, 2013: 211)*

Not only were they translated, but each message was also categorized, and geolocated (Munro, 2013: 211). The work was also done quite quickly, with the messages being conveyed back to responders on the ground in 'less than 5 minutes' (Munro, 2013: 211).

What they achieved was to create an international community of response that also held local knowledge, and was able to relay information back to international relief efforts, which included the US Marines and UN Disaster Assessment Search and Rescue Teams. The work involved translation, categorization, mapping and missing persons reports.

Mission 4636 did the bulk of its work in the first five weeks (though it continued for 16 weeks) following the earthquake. What they set up was an international collaborative space that in particular connected and relied on local knowledge, both from Haitians in Haiti and also from the Haitian diaspora across the world, who were able to connect and provide meaningful support in a time of crisis. One of the key strengths was that they leveraged local knowledge, and the international Haitian community for their information (Munro, 2013: 220). In so doing, they created a close connection between online and offline. Physically distant international workers developed very emotional attachments to the crisis in Haiti. Sometimes volunteers would help out simply to have a communication channel to Haiti, where in the days after the quake it was difficult to make phone calls or have direct contact with the affected population, although volunteers were often in contact with friends and family in Haiti and used those connections to help process Mission 4636 reports.

> Thus what Mission 4636 became was a way for the affected population to reach out, then be translated, and geolocated. There was a decision not to offer emergency response as there could be no guarantee of forthcoming assistance. Although we worked with a number of relief organizations, the US military became the main responders for the emergencies sent to 4636 and credit it with saving 100s of lives and helping deliver the first aid to 1,000s of people among the Haitian population.
>
> *(Munro, 2013: 216–218)*

One of the most common messages was for supplies, including food and water.

> The most lives saved were in less dramatic but arguably larger ways: directing aid to populations with particularly at-risk people like infants, pregnant women, and the infirm, and providing supplies to hospitals and clinics.
>
> *(Munro, 2013: 219)*

The work that Mission 4636 and other digital humanitarian initiatives were doing certainly helped in providing aid to the Haitian community following the earthquake, but also says something about what is happening in society. Many have pointed to the new role of social media, as well as crowdsourcing of information and other new ICT developments, as 'disruptive innovation' in the field of disaster response (Büscher & Liegl, 2014). I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter Clinton's (2010) remarks on the Internet. She emphasizes the overarching impact on social life: 'The spread of information networks is forming a new nervous system for our planet.' There is a need to continue to develop modes of understanding these changes at a societal level. The sociologist Manuel Castells has been at the forefront of theorizing the network society. His theory drills at the core of the institutional, cultural, political and societal changes that are wrought by this transformation.

Castells: networks and global information society

Castells is one of the preeminent theorists of the network society. In this section I will first review some of his key concepts, and then use Mission 4636 as a case study to examine his theory of network society. While there is not space here to detail Castells's whole theory of the network society, which he laid out in the three-volume set *The Information Age* (Castells, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c), I will sketch in brief some of his core arguments before focusing on a few key areas that are useful in unpacking and analyzing Mission 4636 and digital humanitarianism. The concepts I focus on are real virtuality, networked individualism, and mass self-communication.

Castells defines the network society as that social formation that dominates in the information age. He is careful to say 'age' and not 'society', as he argues that knowledge and information are central in all societies (Castells, 2000: 10). While Castells grants that networks have been a component of all societies, the changes in

flows of information made possible through technological advances have substantively altered the fabric of social life. 'Networks', writes Castells, 'constitute the new social morphology of our societies and the diffusion of networking logic substantially modifies the operation and outcomes in the processes of production, experience, power and culture' (Castells, 2010c: 500). It is important to mark that, for Castells, networks are also global in nature because the infrastructure on which they are based is global (Castells & Cardoso, 2004: 8). Networks are able to expand without limits.

One of the key aspects of the network society is that there is a distinct change to the way in which communication operates in our lives. Networks, in effect, are expanding into all domains of social life. Thus Castells argues that the network society is a new social morphology: informationalism is a factor, or condition, but networking represents a new structure with its own corresponding logic. For Castells the dynamic and recursive properties of networks should not be conceptualized as simply modifiers of society or traditional social institutions; they are a new form of society.

Networks themselves are not new, having existed as long as communication, and are synonymous with primary social bonds. However, new communication technologies have allowed the emergence of a new type of network: not only are they different in scale, but they are different in function. The practice of networking, driven by networking logic, substantively alters the experience of time and space. To describe and theorize this change effectively, Castells develops two new terms: the 'space of flows' and 'timeless time', which he argues form 'the material foundations of a new culture' (Castells, 2010c: 406). These new forms of time and space emerge in addition to, but do not necessarily replace, the older forms.

Without spending too much time on the theoretical details, Castells is arguing that the experience of time and space has changed (and thus the categories themselves). Time has shifted to 'timeless time', which is a shorthand way of arguing that it has become internally referential. Time used to be socially defined as a kind of sequence: biological time, or clock time, has a kind of progression. By contrast, time in the network society is relentlessly compressed, processing power is always rated in the speed at which it processes, which Castells argues is the drive to annihilate time. However, as experienced in a network, there is a blurring between past, present and future. Time is dissolved as it becomes increasingly ordered by the logic of the network. Space is transformed into the space of flows, by which Castells means several things. 'While in the space of places, based on contiguity of practice, meaning, function and locality are closely inter-related, in the space of flows places receive meaning and function from their nodal role in the specific networks to which they belong' (Castells, 2009: 34). There are different types of networks, such as financial networks, social networks and humanitarian networks, each type performing the activities of function and meaning.

It is against this backdrop, of the growing importance of information and the networked manner by which it is deployed, that Castells uses the concept of real

virtuality. It is an attempt by Castells to begin to define the new communicative environment, but also by acknowledging that reality has always been virtual because communication takes place through symbols, and meaning always escapes. 'All realities', argues Castells (2010c: 404), 'are communicated through symbols'. However, in using the term culture of virtual reality, Castells is trying to define the new communicative experience, in which the experience of communication takes on a different tenor.

'It is a system in which reality itself (that is people's material/symbolic existence) is entirely captured, fully immersed in a virtual image setting, in the world of make believe, in which appearances are not just on the screen through which experience is communicated, but they become the experience' (Castells, 2010c: 404). He is building on McLuhan's famous turn of phrase, 'the medium is the message' – that the media determine how the message is received. However, for Castells, McLuhan's theory does not go far enough because of the new communication environment and multi-dimensional information processing (Castells, 2010c: 371). Lives lived in the new digital online experience are shaped by the new communication environment, which is characterized by interactional media rather than the mass media of McLuhan's era.

Part of the core argument of the culture of real virtuality is that our online communities are part of reality, not removed from it. The online environment, argues Castells, is not separate and distinct, but part of a shared culture that connects online and offline. 'It is an extension of life as it is, in all its dimensions, and with all its modalities' (Castells, 2001: 118). There are, he argues, a couple of different types of communities that exist in this space. One type is that of the virtual homesteader, made popular by Rheingold's book *The Virtual Community* (1993). However, for Castells there is a second group, one that engages online and forms more ephemeral communities (Castells, 2010c: 362). This kind of virtual community, argues Delanty (2003: 176), is the 'strong thesis' of virtual community. Participation, which despite issues of differentiation is through virtual participation, 'blurring or de-differentiation in institutional spheres'.

One of the key strengths of Mission 4636 seems to be in its culture of real virtuality. In translating and categorizing SMS messages, volunteers often drew on their local knowledge of Haiti. The volunteers were located in 47 countries around the world, but they were deeply enmeshed with the local population. 'The diaspora were in constant contact with their own friends and relatives in Haiti and used this information to update the maps and share information' (Meier & Munro, 2010: 97). The experience of doing the work of Mission 4636 work was emotionally intense. Munro compares the experience to that of drone pilots. The expectation is that if something is experienced online, and not physically proximate, it will not be as emotionally intense, but the opposite seems to be true: drone pilots can experience high levels of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) precisely because of the blending of online and offline contexts.

The Mission 4636 workers seemed to be able to move in an osmotic fashion between online and offline. The virtual community that was formed was not a

parallel universe, but a lived experience and a shared culture. Part of the shared culture that was brought in was previous lived experience, but part of it was the sense of being in a community. 'Clearly', write Meier and Munro (2010: 94), 'it is the shared commitment of people who were physically remote from each other but working together in an online collaborative environment that built a strong community about this key step in the emergency response process'. Not only was there a shared community that provided a sense of community, but also that collaboration improved the quality of the work. They point to over 200 instances of shared information through collaboration in the first two weeks alone.

Munro argues that part of the success of Mission 4636 was due to the inclusion of the crisis-affected population and the diaspora for the greatest volume, speed and accuracy of processing (Munro, 2013: 212–213). This runs counter to the evaluation by several other reports, which focuses more on the role of the international worker and on the crisis mapping initiatives (for example, Heinzelman & Waters, 2010). This success is evidenced by the large volume of information processing undertaken. A quick comparison shows that Mission 4636 was able to process about 80,000 messages using the community of volunteers, compared to Ushahidi Haiti, which relied on international volunteers and processed about 5,000 reports to their live map. This is not to disparage the valuable work of Ushahidi Haiti, but to note the distinctly higher processing that was achieved through a larger community.

This culture of real virtuality is part of Castells's attempt to explain changing patterns of sociability, where social relations are carried out through online presence, rather than online interaction replacing offline interaction. There is a relationship of this idea to what Castells calls the rise of networked individualism (Castells, 2009). Delanty summarizes: 'It is not information and communication technology itself that is changing social relations but the emergence of individualism and in particular networked individualism' (Delanty, 2003: 177). Castells defines networked individualism:

> On one hand, the culture of individualism, inscribed in the social structure characteristic of the network society, reconstructs social relationships on the basis of self-defined individuals who aim to interact with others following their own choices, values, and interests, transcending ascription, tradition, and hierarchy.
>
> *(Castells, 2009: 361)*

Networked individualism, for Castells, begins in the broader trend of individualism, but certainly does not stay there. Networks have come not to supplant, but to add to traditional communities. They form the basis of a new type of sociability that is not bounded by spatial restrictions. They might also be called 'personalized communities' (Wellman, 2001), or 'elective communities', but each iteration shares the common view that these are communities built around choices of individuals more than of shared culture.

It is fruitful here to read Castells's definition of networked individualism through his argument about virtual community. Communities, according to Castells, were traditionally based on shared values (Castells, 2001: 127), but, for networked individualism, the shared value is effectively choice. The effect for community, especially those that happen online, is that there is a de-emphasis on the cultural component, but an increasing importance for its supportive role (Castells, 2001: 127). This is strikingly true of the Mission 4636 community: it was truly a collection of individuals, many of whom did not even claim any institutional affiliation. Munro notes that Mission 4636 did not have time to gather information about its volunteers, but there was information gathered about the missing persons platform, a connected digital initiative. Of the volunteers, 72% gave no institutional affiliation – compared to 4% from all Silicon Valley tech (Munro, 2013: 223). This leads Munro to conclude: 'This was clearly an initiative of individuals' (Munro, 2013: 224).

In Castells's theory this cultural force of networked individualism has the potential to change society: 'A culture that starts with the values and projects of the individual but builds a system of exchange with other individuals, thus reconstructing society rather than reproducing society' (Castells, 2009: 361). It is instructive to situate Mission 4636 against the emerging field of digital humanitarian initiatives. These new digital communities are built on shared interest, a shared drive to help out others. The whole diverse community of Mission 4636 came together to help out after the quake. They were international volunteers with technical expertise, as well as people who knew Haitian Creole and were able to translate, and members of the affected population.

One of the ways that networked individualism operates as a new pattern of sociability is through what Castells (2009) calls 'mass self-communication'. This neologism describes communication that happens over the horizontal networks of the Internet and mobile telephones.

> I call this historically new form of communication *mass self-communication*. It is mass communication because it can potentially reach a global audience, as in the posting of a video on YouTube, a blog with RSS links to a number of web sources, or a message to a massive e-mail list. At the same time, it is self-communication because the production of the message is self-generated, the definition of the potential receiver(s) is self-directed, and the retrieval of specific messages or content from the World Wide Web and electronic communication networks is self-selected.
>
> *(Castells, 2009: 55)*

This change in communication, argues Castells, opens up new social spaces and new possibilities (Castells, 2009: 65). Mass self-communication raises the potential for people to dynamically change the communication process (Castells, 2009: 129).

This picture of the new communication environment fits well with Munro's description of Mission 4636, but also adds complexity to Castells's notion of what

mass self-communication is. According to Munro, none of the technology used by Mission 4636 was innovative or new (Munro, 2013). However, I note that the way they used the technology was. Mission 4636 opened up a communicative bridge between the crisis-affected population and international responders. As a form of mass self-communication, this goes beyond a simple viral video on YouTube. Certainly the audience for the information was not as large as those assembled through social media, but this was certainly self-directed, and utilized the Internet and SMS to reach a targeted global audience and form a new community.

What Mission 4636 demonstrates is a more osmotic relationship between the virtual and physical planes. Many Haitian locals and members of the Haitian diaspora were drawn into the community of volunteers. This is a population that is in a poor country, but, through participating in the international online platform, are able to use their knowledge for good. It is through this new network that there is a disadvantaged population that has a high level of 'network capital'. Perhaps it would be better to call this network-activated knowledge, low in what would traditionally be called network capital, but high in network activation. There is a kind of intensive social flourishing that is happening in response to the crisis, which is enabled by the new communication environment.

This claim of access to and demonstration of network capital needs to be heavily qualified. These possibilities of network capital following disaster are very fleeting and uneven. Sheller (2013) details the ways in which the humanitarian response to the Haiti quake reveals entrenched inequalities. The military, which made use of the information systems, also imposed strict controls on movements. The foreign responders were highly mobile, both through network capital and in responding on the ground, while the affected population remained displaced 'in an ongoing process of marginalization, serial displacement, and containment' (Sheller, 2013: 187). These new infrastructures of digital humanitarian initiatives have differential impacts on the population. One reason that I have focused on Mission 4636 and not on the more reviewed crisis informatics is that the community was not just foreign workers, but members of the affected population, as well as the diaspora.

Globalization, privatization and pro-social behavior

Rebecca Solnit's 2009 book, *A Paradise Built in Hell*, has garnered a lot of attention. Her argument is that in the wake of disasters there is a rise in altruism and pro-social behavior – people come together to care for each other. She details historical disasters such as the 1906 earthquake and subsequent fires in San Francisco, as well as the more modern, such as the 2005 impact of Hurricane Katrina on New Orleans. Drawing on sociological work, such as the 1920 book about the Halifax disaster, *Catastrophe and Social Change*, as well as work from the eminent disaster sociologist Charles Fritz, Solnit is keen to debunk myths of disasters, that people become hysterical and selfish. Quite the contrary, on the basis of her research into high-profile disasters – including Hurricane Katrina and 9/11 amongst others – she found that people came together and found new

communities outside established social institutions. She is careful not to downplay the trauma and shock of disaster, but argues that new forms of community that arise in the wake of disaster form positive social bonds. I do not have the space here to cover all of her historical and contemporary examples, but it is worth touching on briefly as it helps to illuminate disaster communities.

Solnit sets her argument against a backdrop of a world marked by globalization. She focuses on a picture of globalization that is marked by neoliberal policies and through ever increasing mobilities and individualization, rising levels of privatization. In this account, globalization takes on a largely ominous tenor, that there are increasing stresses on social life that are driving individuals apart. Solnit argues that traditional societies are built on deep commitments between individuals and social groups such as family and other social institutions and groups (Solnit, 2009: 3). This stands in contrast with modern society, which is 'mobile and individualistic' and does not maintain these social bonds. In the face of disaster, this social order does not hold up, and allows for the emergence of a new cooperative community, literally 'the paradise entered through hell' (Solnit, 2009: 10).

These communities that arise after disasters disrupt the disturbing trends of privatization. 'Disasters, in returning their sufferers to public and collective life, undo some of this privatization, which is a slower, subtler disaster all its own. In a society in which participation, agency, purposefulness, and freedom are all adequately present, a disaster would be only a disaster' (Solnit, 2009: 9). Trauma, displacement and destruction notwithstanding, her research found disaster survivors who enjoyed the sense of community. A version that she notes is supported by William James, who was visiting San Francisco in 1906 and experienced the devastating fires. In his essay on the experience, 'On some mental effects of the earthquake', he likened the experience to war and its negative effects; however, he also noted that, perhaps because of the hardship, people felt a sense of urgency, meaning and solidarity.

The British sociologist Chris Rumford (2013) takes Solnit's arguments one step further, and suggests that her work charts what should be called 'the cosmopolitan dimension to disaster response'. He terms her claims 'communities of disaster', in the wake of disaster with a rise of altruism and the new sense of community. He writes: 'The collective response to disasters points the way to a form of sociality which cannot thrive in a world of individuation, neo-liberal precepts, and a "me first" culture. The spontaneous action of people coming together outside of any formal structures of community or belonging' (Rumford, 2013: 134). This ultimately, for Solnit, means that these communities of disaster are literally 'improvising another kind of society' (Solnit, 2009: 305).

There are some distinct affinities in the rhetoric of Solnit and Castells. For both, modern society is distinctly global, and along with that globalization there are rising levels of individualization. For Castells, as discussed in the preceding section, taking up the broad trend of individualization, but bringing it in a more communal direction, there is the emergence of networked individualism, a new pattern of sociality that leads to a new kind of virtual community. As I argued, these new digital humanitarian communities fit this description well. In Castells's argument,

part of the redeeming feature of networked individualism is precisely that it leads to a reconfiguring of society. Networked individualism can help new ideas of society to thrive by providing openings in the discursive space in which alternative visions of society can be constructed (Castells, 2009: 53). Solnit's work focuses more exclusively on disasters, but she finds a similar distinction between the broader global trend of individualization and a more positive counter-trend of pro-social behavior and community formation, which emerge following a disaster. For both, disasters and the communities that rise up are pictures of a new society.

While the use of these social media platforms for communication and support is valuable, the more engaging question for this chapter is the way in which these information communication networks were the basis for new types of socio-technical innovations around what is now being called digital humanitarianism. One of the major ways that this happened was through the crowdsourcing, and crowd curation, of information. One example of an emergent community/practice that emerged in response to the Haiti quake is the 'Tweak the Tweet' (TtT) initiative (Starbird & Stamberger, 2010). During times of crisis people turn to social media for information. What TtT does is offer a code to standardize the way that information is presented so that it can be more easily collected and collated on public sites. They call this process 'crisis reporting hashtag syntax'. Volunteers can read tweets from the affected area, and retweet with the information in an updated syntax so that it can be collected and processed into spreadsheets and interactive maps.

The emergence of digital humanitarian communities following disaster, while not covered by Solnit, fits well within her argument about pro-social and self-organized communities that form following disasters. This is something that Büscher and Liegl (2014) call 'self-organizing connected communities'. Since the Haiti earthquake and Mission 4636, which has since ended, this movement towards online community groups processing information has grown out from crowdsourcing into more codified and stable digital humanitarian groups such as Humanity Road, and The Standby Taskforce. These ongoing groups utilize volunteers and crisis mapping technologies to provide digital assistance following disasters (see Starbird & Palen, 2013). While my focus here is not on these groups, it is worth mentioning that they have undertaken the next developmental steps by evolving into relatively stable social institutions and have taken the necessary institutionalizing steps of maintaining membership, but also of second-tier information processing including codes of practice and modes of verifying digital information.

Conclusion: the thinning of social relationships?

By way of conclusion, I would like to speculate a bit more about the more radical claims that are part of Castells's and Solnit's arguments about digital disaster communities. Part of the significance of emergent communities – digital and disaster – for both authors is that they point to the reinvention of society. The discussion in this chapter about digital disaster communities can be set against a backdrop of the broader transformations happening in communications and the impacts on social life.

There is an ongoing debate in both academic and public circles about the impact of new communication technologies on society. From Sennett's *The Corrosion of Character* (1998) and Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (2001), to Turkle's *Alone Together* (2011), many contemporary analyses stress the deleterious effect of increasing electronic communication as pushing apart social relationships. Marche (2012), writing for *The Atlantic*, sums up the general tone of the argument:

> within this world of instant and absolute communication, unbounded by limits of time or space, we suffer from unprecedented alienation. We have never been more detached from one another, or lonelier. In a world consumed by ever more novel modes of socializing, we have less and less actual society. We live in an accelerating contradiction: the more connected we become, the lonelier we are.

The idea of a damaging or alienating modern society is certainly not a new one. Classical social theory, at least going back to Tönnies's theory that *Gesellschaft* (society) was replacing *Gemeinschaft* (community), has been obsessed with the notion that modernization (and associated processes) damages social relationships. Though these works are vastly different, they share the theme that the modes of human association of the modern period are ultimately damaging to social relationships, leading to the loss of the social bonds that once forged robust collectives of human togetherness, often called community or society.

In a study on traders' relationships with electronic spot markets for foreign exchange, Knorr Cetina and Bruegger (2002) conclude that human relationships are not simply 'flattened' through digital communications. They suggest (ibid.: 162–163) that we see 'new kinds of bonds' and a situation where humans may not be 'the most fascinating part of their environment'. The most interesting thing is that the environment, which for the traders is the market, has been converted to the Internet.

> [T]he transfer of the market onto the screen has meant that traders are now able to simultaneously position themselves inside the market in the sense of becoming players in its overlapping networks, and to relate to the market on screen as an exteriorized other, a sort of master-being that observes all transactions and includes their contextual conditions and motivations.
>
> *(Knorr Cetina & Bruegger, 2002: 164)*

The focus here is not on the knowledge the traders have or produce, but that they form a bond or relationship with an environmental entity. As they note, 'the screen brings a geographically dispersed and invisible market close to participants, rendering it interactionally or response-present' (Knorr Cetina & Bruegger, 2002: 162). While these interactions make the screen proximal, they de-emphasize the social in social relationships. Hence they argue for a post-social relationship.

Against this debate on the role of technology in social relationships, the accounts of disaster communities from Solnit, and that which I have put forward about

Mission 4636 through the social theory of Castells, run counter to this trend. As noted, Solnit and Castells emphasize that there are disaster communities that arise that are fundamentally about the reinvention of society. For Solnit, these are local, pro-social and altruistic; they open up when the broader society has been stripped away through disaster. For Castells, it happens through networked individualism and real virtuality creates a new culture, new values and new modes of meaning. For both, these digital and disaster communities offer new cultures, meaning and avenues forward in a world of globalization.

Notes

1 Much of my information about Mission 4636 comes from two reports by the initiative's leader, Robert Munro (see Munro, 2013; and Meier & Munro, 2010). I would also like to acknowledge input from software developer Tim Schwartz, who created haitianquake.com, a missing person finder, and also created the first platform for Mission 4636.
2 Facebook has since developed a disaster tool, 'Safety Check', which allows users to let friends and family know that they are safe after a disaster (Alba, 2014).
3 According to the *New Media Index*, of the Pew Research Center, the American Red Cross, which utilized mobile SMS donations, set groundbreaking numbers for collecting financial donations, which happened in part through the use of text message donations. www.journalism.org/2010/01/21/social-media-aid-haiti-relief-effort/.
4 The story of the Ushahidi Crisis Map is itself engaging, and certainly part of the convergence and emergence of digital humanitarian efforts.
5 As of 2012 there were 50,000 landlines and over 6 million mobile phones in Haiti. www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html.

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PART II

Disasters and social division

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7

WILLINGNESS OF AUSTRALIANS TO CONTRIBUTE NOW FOR LONG-TERM NATURAL DISASTER MITIGATION

Constance Lever-Tracy and Carolyn Corkindale

Until recently, the discourse about long-term global warming and climate change tended to be separate from that about specific manifest climate disasters, such as fires, floods and tsunamis, droughts and storms. Quite distinct strategies for studying, attributing causation, mitigating, preparing and responding were in the hands of different experts and different levels of policymaking. The first have had only limited success in mobilizing public acceptance for large-scale spending now, to reduce or avoid uncertain and distant future dangers. The second connects directly with immediate experience by victims and those who know them or have seen their plight in the media. In conditions of climate change, however, their established remedies are likely increasingly to miss their targets for the next unexpected disaster, and to be inadequate or irrelevant for those in the longer-term future, especially if climate tipping points are passed.

In the last few years, however, there has been a significant change, especially after Hurricane Sandy hit New York in 2012, and the two discourses have started to converge. For increasing numbers of climate scientists, as well as media and politicians, the initial disastrous impacts of climate change are already becoming manifest in the immediate experience of many. Public opinion has sometimes been ahead of them.[1] We no longer have the luxury of waiting for hypothetical future advances in our wealth and technology before we decide to act on climate change. On the other hand, those preparing for climate disasters can no longer be guided by past experience or limited to short-term future perspectives. Neither of these will prepare them for the unprecedented and escalating uncertainties that already evident long-term global trends will bring. Could this new convergence between the discourses of climate change and of climate disasters, between distant futures and immediate experience, initiate a greater public willingness to support action now for the long term?

Section one of this chapter discusses this convergence and its possible implications. Section two presents the findings of a nationwide Australian survey of 1,502 adults, conducted in March 2013, concerning their willingness to make significant income sacrifices in the present in order to mitigate the future impacts of natural disasters. It focuses in particular on any progressively greater discounting of more distant threats, up to the centuries-long time scales placed on the agenda by climate change. In so doing it tries as far as possible to abstract from uncertainty factors and also to analyse separately those with and without relevant experience. An approach to the influence of changing historical cultures is commenced by comparing different generations (different age groups), but clearly much more longitudinal research will be needed.

The discussion of the findings in section three will place them in the context of other studies about a presumed tendency to devalue or dismiss the importance of what is remote compared with actual experience, and to discount benefits (including protection from harms) in the future, relative to those enjoyed in the present.

Climate change and climate disasters

Climate change

The discourse of most scientists, with unprecedented near unanimity,[2] has asserted their confidence in the reality and human causation[3] of the warming of the globe. The public has common-sense questions about how harmful could be the seemingly small forecast of just a couple of degrees of warming, but a large majority of climate scientists have accepted the accumulating evidence that such slowly rising average temperatures, if not mitigated, would lead in future to a multiplication of extremes, a conclusion well documented in the United Nations' (UN) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2012) SREX report, and the probability of positive reinforcements and tipping points with likely future disastrous impacts (Huber & Gulledge, 2011). The evidence includes thousands of repeated measurements of temperatures from around the world on land, in the upper atmosphere and in the ocean depths, as well as long-term data (including from such sources as tree rings and ice cores) and projections based on comparison of multiple mathematical models with different assumptions.[4]

The dangers of climate change were always uncertain in their timing (most often only confidently forecast for decades into the future) and specific location. Planned responses have become politicized and controversial, mired in uncertainty. In many countries the public hesitate to make sacrifices in the present to mitigate or adapt to what many see as hypothetical dangers of climate catastrophes in the future. Various explanations have been presented for this.[5] Sceptics have spread doubt about scientists' evidence and confidence[6] in projected climate change trends, but with only limited success (Frame & Stone, 2013; Poortinga, 2011). Doubts may get a boost when episodes of cold extremes seem to run counter to warming

expectations, but the cold snap in the northern winter of 2014 saw many more scientists willing to speak to journalists and explain how, as the poles warmed, currents of cold air and melted ice could shift south.[7]

Economists and psychologists have debated and doubted the rationality or will of people to value such uncertain and remote dangers enough to take costly action now (although a simple dominance of selfish self-interest has not been clearly demonstrated in empirical studies).[8]

Disasters

Disasters, on the other hand, are rare and irregular localized events, with immediate impact calling for urgent action. Their current reality and possible short-term threats are not in dispute and there is enormous accumulated experience of the relative effectiveness so far of various defensive and adaptation responses – sea walls and dykes, evacuation procedures, fire-fighting strategies and so forth.

Until recently climate scientists were wary of attributing any specific disaster to long-term anthropogenic climate change. The origins of such rare disasters are multiple and mediated in complex ways and have always manifested themselves irregularly. Limited and often unreliable long-term data have made it hard to demonstrate or project any clear trend.

Wary of accusations of unsubstantiated fear mongering, media reporting of actual disasters rarely had much to say linking their occurrence or severity to long-term changes in the climate.[9] For example, ridicule greeted the chair of the IPCC when he suggested that the greater volume and currents of rising seas, a product of the melting ice and thermal expansion of global warming, may have contributed to the exceptional severity of the Asian tsunami of 2004, and perhaps to that of 2011 that trashed the Japanese nuclear power plant at Fukushima.

Although the Colorado fires of 2012 received enormous media publicity in America, mentions of the probable role of climate change were few and scientists were hesitant about claiming attribution. The contribution of accumulating kindling from trees killed by pine beetle infestation was discussed, but there was little comment pointing out that beetle numbers had multiplied due to warmer than usual winters.[10] Even at the end of 2013 the Australian Greens Senator Adam Bandt was pilloried for 'politicizing' the tragedy of the October 2013 New South Wales bushfires, by pointing to the obvious contribution of global warming in exacerbating high temperatures and drought and multiplying tinder-dry kindling.

Separate but converging discourses

This separation is changing and the discourses are converging. The IPCC report in 2007 already illustrated the logical relationship between small shifts in average temperatures and increases in the extremes.[11] In recent decades some climate-related disasters have multiplied along with their media visibility. In 2011 the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) published a report discussing 'weather

extremes in a changing climate'. The same year the leading scientific journal *Nature* published an article by Schiermeier asking, 'Can hurricanes, floods and droughts be pinned on climate change? Scientists are beginning to say yes'. Now the frequency and intensity of some such catastrophes, including heatwaves, drought, floods[12] and hurricanes,[13] are increasingly being attributed by scientists to climate change.

Coumou and Rahmstorf, in *Nature: Climate Change* (2012), come to the same conclusion in their study of a decade of weather extremes. They propose that changing probability of weather extremes can be conceptualized in a familiar and readily understood image:

> If a loaded dice rolls a six we cannot say this particular outcome is result of the manipulation […] What we can say is that the number of sixes is greater with the loaded dice […] Likewise, the odds […] increase in a warming climate.
>
> *(Coumou & Rahmstorf, 2012: 5)*

In his first post-election press conference, on 14 November 2012, President Obama echoed this discourse:

> We can't attribute any particular weather event to climate change. What we do know is the temperature around the globe is increasing faster than was predicted even 10 years ago. We do know that the Arctic ice cap is melting faster than was predicted even five years ago. We do know that there have been extraordinarily – there have been an extraordinarily large number of severe weather events here in North America, but also around the globe. And I am a firm believer that climate change is real, that it is impacted by human behavior and carbon emissions. And as a consequence, I think we've got an obligation to future generations to do something about it.
>
> *(Think Progress, 2012)*

On 9 July 2012 the respected and always careful scientific weekly *New Scientist* published an editorial which asserted:

> We have become used to reports of extreme weather events playing down any connection with climate change. The refrain is usually along the lines of … 'you cannot attribute any single event to global warming'. But increasingly this is no longer the case […] the effects of global warming are becoming ever more obvious.

Climate scientists have long been warning that our actions today will have cumulating, cascading and possibly irreversible impacts on future generations and on biodiversity for centuries or even millennia to come. Now there is growing evidence that more severe and more frequent natural disasters, which are more widely publicized by global media, have already arrived. Scientists are increasingly attributing them to anthropogenic climate change, and predicting their dramatically

increasing prevalence and greater impact in future, unless mitigating action is taken very soon. Optimism about progress, allowing the long-term future to look after itself, has surely been shaken.

Our un-readiness for unexpected disasters is becoming apparent. Bush fires are common in New South Wales, but not as early as October. The state found itself unready in 2013, with its usual seasonally chartered fire-fighting helicopters not due to be delivered until December. The defences of the Fukushima nuclear power station, like the dykes of New Orleans six years earlier, were inadequate for the unprecedented height of the invading waters. Hurricanes regularly make land-fall on the east coast of America, but rarely so far north and not with as much force or such heavy inundation as Sandy. A week before the 'super-storm' devastated the east coast, the models available to the National Weather Service showed that Hurricane Sandy was going to do something that 'no storm had ever done – slam into the New Jersey coastline at a nearly 90 degree angle, going from east to west'. Despite this notice, the hurricane killed 159 people. Of the 44 killed within New York, most were drowned by coastal flooding. The towers of New York were engineered to withstand the gale, but the subway system was unprepared and overcome by the waters, themselves affected by rising sea levels due to melting ice and thermal expansion. Since then, in light of expected future impacts of climate change, engineers have had to start developing giant inflatable 'plugs' in the hope that these could rapidly block the water from entering subway tunnels.[14]

The discourse of climate change has often been hampered by uncertainty about the long-term effects or about the efficacy of measures to tackle it. For many it may also seem hypothetical or abstract and remote from daily experience. Anthony Giddens (2009: 2) proposed what he called the 'Giddens paradox', which states that:

> … since the dangers posed by global warming aren't tangible, immediate or visible in the course of day-to-day life … many will sit on their hands and do nothing … Yet waiting until they become visible, and acute before being stirred to serious action will by definition be too late.

This is likely to change, at least to some extent, insofar as climate change is increasingly associated with real disasters, as actually experienced or reported by known people or presented visually in the media. Most impacts of climate change are of course not expected in the near future, but the tentacles of that future are already here, and precursor events already current might make even the threats distant in time seem tangible and visible.

On the other hand, if the long-term trends of climate change are introduced into disasters' discourse, it becomes apparent that their dangers can be expected to increase and that the past will no longer be a sufficient guide to preparedness for future events. Such disasters can be expected to multiply and worsen in decades or centuries to come, and to strike with a force and in locations and at times where they have not been seen before. Fewer places may reasonably feel safe for ourselves or our descendants.

Discounting the future

Seemingly unchanging human propensities to devalue or discount the future, as argued by many economists and psychologists, and widely believed beyond their ranks, might represent insuperable barriers to costly long-term mitigation. On the whole, however, empirical studies (usually based on 'experiments' with small groups of students) are often contradictory[15] and unconvincing. Such discounting involves entangled composites of 'pure time preference' together with uncertainty and mistrust about the delivery of the future benefits as well as the opportunity cost of better returns from investing elsewhere. Are any such preferences (even when demonstrated) unchangeably rooted in human nature? Any universal human tendency to such discounting has been countered by evidence that present 'short termism' is a recent cultural product[16] and even now far from universal. Even where people have not had access to interest-bearing deposits, they have still saved money under their mattress for their old age; they spend on the education of their children for an uncertain future career and they have engaged in very long-term projects to construct cathedrals and monuments and to build business and political dynasties. Migrant workers spend years in lonely and onerous conditions to build 'a better future' for their families.

This might seem to contradict many economists' cost-benefit calculations that 'discount the future' by a certain sum for each year that passes before the return is received. While many economists do indeed see this as some general attribute of subjective utility, for others it is very contentious. There is nothing in theories of economic rationality that would place a necessarily greater value on the present. Where it does occur, some economists in fact refer to it, disparagingly, as 'impatience' or 'addiction', or argue that 'pure time preference' should be zero allowing only for the opportunity cost of the capital component (Loewenstein & Prelec, 1992; O'Donoghue & Rabin, 1999; Sumaila & Walters, 2005).[17] Empirical experiments, by economists and psychologists with subjects in small groups, in fact, find contradictory results with no consistent tendency to prefer present benefits over future ones. One indeed was led to suggest utility in the pleasure of 'anticipation' to explain an apparent preference by some for postponing benefits even if they thereby made a loss (Frederick et al., 2003: 359).

For many economists, however, what is at issue in cost-benefit calculations that discount the future, in the context of long-term climate change, is not so much a lesser valuation of the future but a belief that advancing technological progress and growing wealth would provide the resources to solve the problems in the future more effectively than we can by spending now.[18]

This argument from opportunity cost is, however, quite inappropriate. It lacks awareness of the probably massive and certainly unpredictable effects of climate change under 'business as usual'. In discussing what we might owe to future generations, Lind (1995) argues it is best for them if we choose to invest in what will maximize economic growth, as this will leave them the most resources to deal with climate change themselves, when technological advances will in any case make it

cheaper. Insofar as the historic progress of society's wealth will make our descendants richer than we are, we have neither moral obligation nor rational reason to make sacrifices for them.[19]

This assumption of apparently inevitable future progress ignores the certainly ruinous effects of unmitigated climate change as well as the catastrophic effects of tipping points. Technological advances can take alternative directions. Those selected as the most efficient now may actually lock the future into the heavy sunk costs of high emissions choices. The irreversibility of cumulating threats to the atmosphere and ecosystems, to ocean acidification, rising sea levels, species extinctions and so forth, make such calculations of the rationality of postponing action (until it is too late) absurd.

The study described in the second part of this chapter seeks to explore public expressions of willingness to contribute to ameliorate climate disasters in the kind of time scales placed on the agenda by climate change. It focuses in particular on any progressive discounting of more distant futures and aims to contribute some disentangling of such 'pure time preference' from uncertainty factors on the one hand and from the indifference, of which Giddens spoke, when dangers seem hypothetical or abstract because remote from daily experience.[20]

The study

In a nationwide survey of 1,502 Australian adults in March 2013,[21] 36% said 'yes' when asked:

> Would you be willing to contribute regularly, a significant, but affordable[22] part of your income, if you were sure this would be used effectively, accountably and fairly, to prevent or reduce the impact of major natural disasters (such as bush fire, tsunami, drought, flood, earthquake or hurricane[23]) that will occur … [over one or more of three future time horizons]?

Some 64% said 'no' to all three time horizons but for those who responded positively the distance in time made no significant difference. Thirty-one per cent of all respondents gave a positive response to a further question about experience of such a disaster by themselves or by people they knew. Amongst this subset, the willingness to contribute was significantly higher, at 46%. We analysed the data further to see if demographic variables made a difference. Age was the only one that proved significantly and consistently relevant.

The wording of the questions attempted as far as possible to abstract from uncertainty about either the reality of the problems or the effectiveness of the remedies.

Future distance

The question about willingness to contribute, described above, was presented to all respondents three times, referring to one of three time scales for the disasters to be prevented or reduced:

- that will occur in the next couple of years [horizon 1].
- that will occur in the future, within your lifetime [horizon 2].
- that will affect our descendants in centuries to come [horizon 3].

The wording of all the questions had first been discussed and progressively modified during hour-long discussions by four focus groups comprising 40 volunteers from students, academic, administrative and maintenance staff from Flinders University in Adelaide, South Australia.

The focus groups produced a very high proportion of 'yes' answers, especially when the wording was clarified. At no time in the discussion was there any suggestion that the distant future or future lives mattered less than the present or near future. All but one of the respondents had children, but no one said this had affected their answer. A number insisted it would be wrong to prefer their own family to others or to society.

TABLE 7.1 Percentage willing to contribute by time horizon of threats

Horizons	*% willing to contribute*
Horizon 1 (next couple of years)	28
Horizon 2 (within your lifetime)	31
Horizon 3 (centuries to come)	26

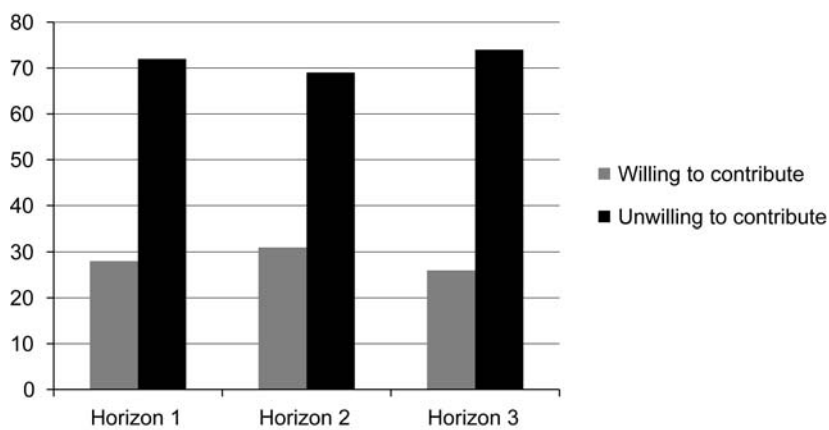


TABLE 7.2 Percentage willing to contribute (for horizon 2) by demographic factors

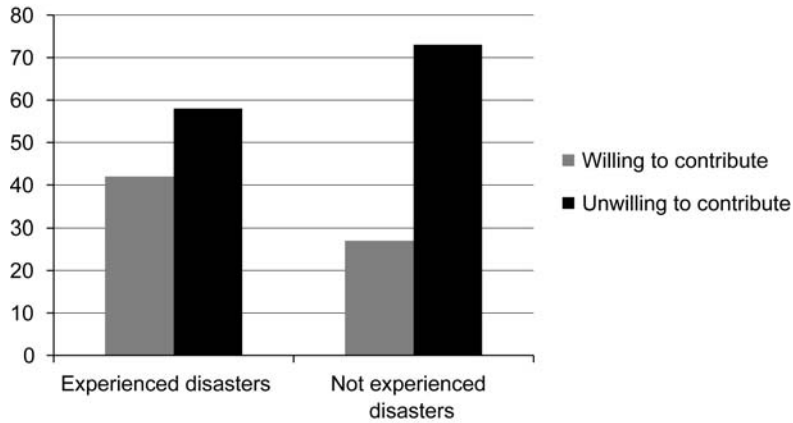
Demographic factors (Total N = 1,502)	*% willing to contribute*
Gender	
Male (699)	33
Female (803)	30
Children	
Yes (955)	31
No (547)	33
Residence	
State capital cities (924)	32
Country areas (578)	31
Occupation	
Blue collar (182)	33
Lower white collar (300)	26
Upper white collar (345)	37
Household income in A$ '000s pa	
Under 40 (307)	28
40–59.9 (188)	33
60–79.9 (172)	37
80–99.9 (168)	36
100–119.9 (134)	27
Over 120 (186)	31

Focus groups can produce important qualitative insights but are obviously not representative (Capstick, 2012).[24] The focus groups' strongly positive findings, in what were small, face-to-face groups of unrepresentative respondents, were not reflected in the much lower willingness to contribute of respondents in the large-scale, anonymous and randomized questionnaire. Nonetheless, a comparison of the survey answers for the three horizons also did not support a claim for a general progressive 'discounting of the future', which would have seen higher support for horizon 1 (within the next couple of years). Horizon 2, 'within your lifetime', obtained more positive answers than the other two, but even horizon 3, 'centuries to come', was only a few percentage points behind.

The same ranking of time horizons was demonstrated with surprising consistency for subgroups classified by age, gender, occupation (blue collar, upper and lower white collar or no paid occupation), employment status (employed, home duties, student and unemployed), residence in different states or in or outside state capital cities, household income or by whether or not respondents had children, and whether or not they had experience of such an event.

TABLE 7.3 Percentage of those with and without (direct or indirect) experience of disasters willing to contribute (for horizon 2)

Experience of disasters (N = 1,502)	*Willing to contribute (N = 466) %*	*Unwilling to contribute (N = 1,036) %*
Yes (469)	42	58
No (1,033)	27	73



Demographic factors

Further discussion and analysis then focused on the most common (intermediate) response – those expressing a willingness to contribute to prevent or reduce the impact of disasters within their lifetime (horizon 2).

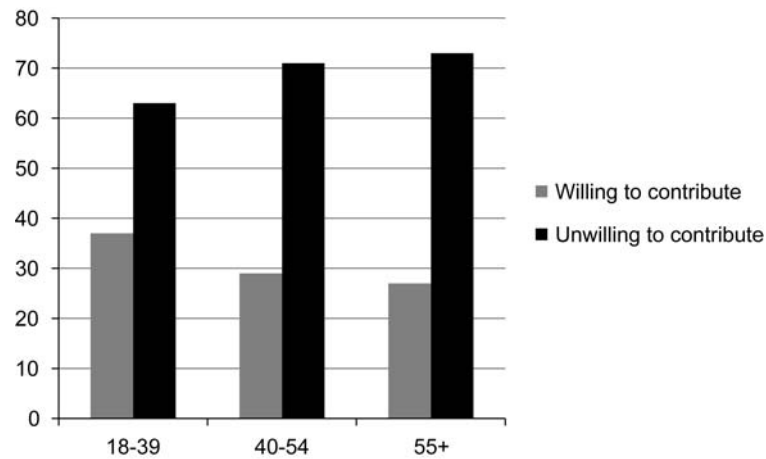
Gender, whether or not respondents had children, and whether they resided in state capital cities or in the rest of the state, made little difference to willingness to contribute. The broad occupational classification provided suggested a difference between 'upper white collar' (which would include professionals) and 'lower white collar', with 'blue collar' in between. Greater household income seems to have a positive effect up to about A$80,000 a year, after which there is a decline. Those with incomes under $40,000 are somewhat more willing to contribute than those with $100,000–$120,000!

Experience of disasters and age cohort

The two seemingly most important and consistent positive factors, in the willingness to contribute, were prior experience of such disasters and younger age. Since these pull in opposite directions (with older people having accumulated more

TABLE 7.4 Percentage of each age group willing to contribute (for horizon 2)

Age group (N = 1,502)	*Willing to contribute (N = 466) %*	*Unwilling to contribute (N = 1,036) %*
18–39 (569)	37	63
40–54 (380)	29	71
55+ (553)	27	73



experiences than younger ones, but otherwise being less willing to contribute), combining them produces quite striking contrasts.

A further question we asked of all respondents was: 'Have you, or anyone you know, ever suffered damage or harm from a major natural disaster (such as bush fire, tsunami, drought, flood, earthquake or hurricane)?' A surprisingly large number, 469 (31%) out of the 1,502 respondents, said they had.

Those with experience of disasters were significantly more willing to contribute now to reduce future harm (Pearson Chi Square 32.69, $p < 0.001$). This is not perhaps surprising, although some studies have produced more ambiguous or contradictory results on the willingness to take preventative action (Wachinger et al., 2012).

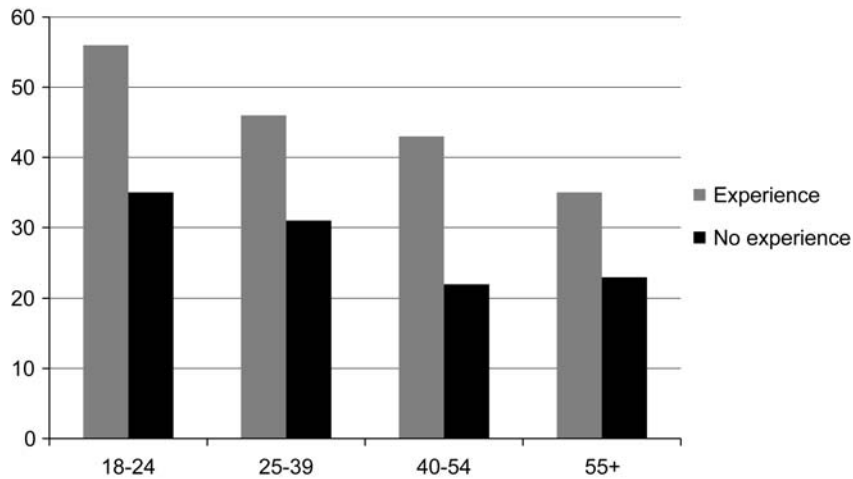
The impact of experience on willingness to contribute was positive in all states and state capital cities, but the extent of its effect varied for reasons that would require further investigation.

The consistent importance of age emerges even more clearly when the 18–39 group is subdivided, with 40% of the 18–24 age group willing to contribute. (Using multiple comparison post hoc tests, this youngest group was significantly more likely to agree to contribute than the 55+ group, $p = 0.18$, SE 0.456.)

TABLE 7.5 Percentage of each age group who have experience willing to contribute (for horizon 2)

	Age group	*Age group*	*Age group*	*Age group*
Experience	*18–24 (125) %*	*25–39 (444) %*	*40–54 (533) %*	*55+ (380) %*
With experience	56	46	43	35
No experience	35	31	22	23

All percentages are of those willing to contribute, hence they do not add up to 100.



Willingness to contribute reduces with age, but as seen in Table 7.5, experience is a great differentiator for all age groups.

In order to determine which of the variables were most likely to influence willingness to contribute to the horizon 2 scenario, a stepwise linear regression was conducted, using the key factors of age group, experience, gender and having children. Experience (Standardized Beta 0.155, $p<0.001$) and then age group (Standardized Beta 0.110, $p <0.001$) entered the model. These act jointly but independently to influence whether a person is prepared to contribute to the mitigation of future disasters in their lifetime ($F = 26.284$, sig <0.001, R square 0.34). Combining age and experience of disasters produces clearly greater and consistent contrasts in willingness to contribute.

The findings

In this study we asked how people would react when the immediacy and certainty of current disasters was associated also with the kind of long time scales and global dangers characteristic of climate change scenarios. Uncertainty about whether the future dangers will actually eventuate and whether the proposed expensive solutions will work are major reasons for inaction[25] pushed repeatedly by climate sceptics. However, even if uncertainty is overcome by evidence and argument, any supposed inherent tendency to discount the value of the distant future would continue to pose (perhaps insuperable) obstacles to the needed costly actions now. For this reason, this study chose to focus, in the wording of the questions, on any supposed devaluing of the future independently of uncertainty.

The survey indicates quite clearly and consistently that, for the quite large minority who are willing to contribute, there is no significant 'pure future preference' that attributes more value to the present or more to the near than to the far future, when considering major disasters (see also Gattig & Hendrickx, 2007; Bohm & Pfister, 2007). This finding reinforces others (including by many economists) that cast doubts on such a universal pure future preference.[26]

Another unambiguous finding of the survey is the correlation of willingness to contribute, even for disaster mitigation 'in centuries to come', with actual experience of disasters by respondents or people they know. It is not distance in time (or space), but the remoteness from lived experience of which Giddens spoke, that makes the difference. Our study certainly adds some empirical support to the contribution of experience to willingness to act, as do a number of other more specific studies.[27]

Finally we should note the consistent increase in willingness to contribute of each younger cohort. When these factors are combined, a majority of those aged 18–39 who also had direct or indirect experience of disasters were willing to make significant contributions. Does this reflect age or generation? It would require a longitudinal study to determine how far such willingness may decline as people age, or whether more recent cohorts have had their perceptions and values permanently shaped by historically evolving cultures and circumstances. Awareness of anthropogenic impacts on the environment and of the dangers to human life triggered by them have been growing over the last decades in Australia, at the same time as the frequency and intensity of disasters have grown, along with dramatic media coverage of them.[28] It is plausible that they may have had a particularly powerful formative influence on newer cohorts growing up. There may be a rising sense of urgency, with a decline in belief that technology and economic growth will in future automatically solve all our problems.

Conclusion

The survey set quite a high bar of willingness to contribute 'regularly', 'significant' sums for disaster reduction or mitigation and perhaps it is not surprising that little

more than a third answered in the affirmative (especially in a period of stagnant earnings and economic insecurity). The important question may not be whether this is high or low but whether, how far and how fast it could increase. For this we need longitudinal studies. As sociologists, in contrast with many psychologists and economists, we are attuned to the sometimes dramatic overturning of prior historical and cultural norms. As new cohorts mature, and as the threat of climate effects becomes increasingly experienced, tectonic shifts in public opinion are not unthinkable.

Notes

1 A New Scientist (2012: 5) editorial reported that some six out of ten people in a US Public Relations Research Institute poll thought the severity of recent natural disasters was evidence of global climate change. The editorial concluded: 'That is a bolder link than most scientists would make.'
2 See Doran & Zimmerman, 2009; and Ding et al., 2011.
3 See any of the IPCC reports. For one of many examples, see Friedrich et al., 2012.
4 See any of the IPCC reports.
5 McCright & Dunlap (2011) have studied the politicization of climate change and polarization in the American public's views of global warming from 2001 to 2010.
6 Lewandowsky et al. (2013) have pointed to the pivotal role of perceived scientific consensus in acceptance of science, and the negative impact of (false) denialist claims about scientific disagreement.

White (2014) writes that: 'The *Guardian* has previously revealed that a group of anonymous billionaires have spent more than $120 million funding more than 100 climate denial groups in an effort to discredit climate science'.
7 See, for example, Walsh (2014) in *Time Magazine*; Palmer (2014) in *International Business Times*; and Vissar (2014) in *The Huffington Post*.
8 Self-interest and altruism have different values in different contexts. See Evans et al. (2013) on self-interest and pro-environmental behaviour, and Bolderdijk et al. (2013) who compare the effectiveness of monetary versus moral motives in environmental choices and found the latter to be more effective.
9 For more on climatologists' hesitation to assert definite causation for specific climate disasters, and the resulting limited linkage of the two by the media, see Lever-Tracy, 2013.
10 For more detail on the scientists' responses and media coverage of the 2012 Colorado fires, see Lever-Tracy, 2013.
11 Figure 7.1 is the widely reproduced 2007 IPCC graph (Solomon et al., 2007: 53), on the theoretical relationship of averages and extremes. The actual manifestation of this relationship and its impacts on disasters depends on climate variability not declining, but there is in fact some evidence that variability is actually increasing. While some cold extremes have been breaking records, they have been exceeded by a ratio of three to one, by record-breaking hot extremes.
12 Carrington, 2012.
13 See Grinsted et al. (2013), who project an Atlantic hurricane surge threat from rising temperatures, and Schiermeier (2011), who asked, 'Can hurricanes, floods and droughts be pinned on climate change?' and concluded that scientists were beginning to say 'yes'.
14 According to NCAR senior climatologist Kevin E. Trenberth (2012: 283), 'The answer to the oft-asked question of whether an event is caused by climate change is that it is the wrong question. All weather events are affected by climate change because the environment in which they occur is warmer and moister than it used to be.'

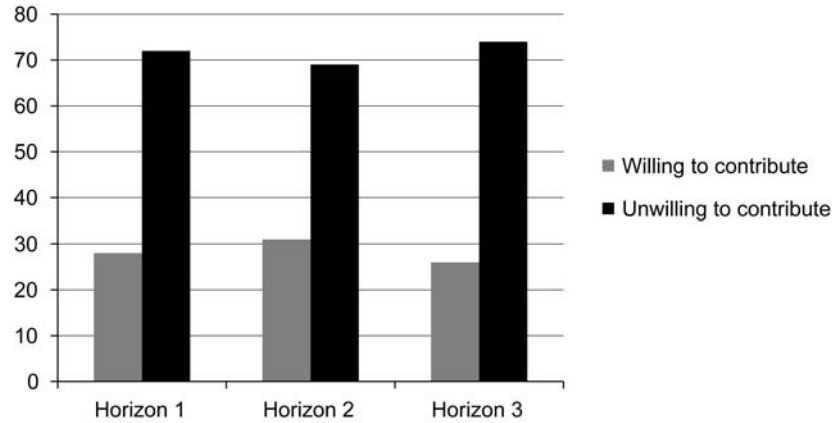


FIGURE 7.1 Mean temperature increase and impact on extreme temperatures
Source: © IPCC

15 Some studies had suggested even that respondents would be willing to trade many lives in 100 years' time to save one life today (Cropper et al., 1994, cited by Frederick, 2003: 39). Frederick, however, questioned economists' assumptions about the motives for apparent discounting of the value of future lives. He interviewed over 400 respondents and showed that their time preferences were actually dramatically affected by the wording of the specific question asked. Many formats 'revealed no preference for [the lives of] current generations over future ones'.
16 For excellent sociological introductions to these transitions, see Lash & Urry (1987) on the end of organized capitalism, and Harvey (1989) on the condition of postmodernity.
17 The UK report in 2006 on the *Economics of Climate Change*, by economist Nicholas Stern, chose to use a very small discount rate (which many economists indeed criticized as too low), but even this lowest possible rate could discount to zero very distant catastrophic effects to our descendants and the planet in centuries to come.
18 Frederick, 2003.
19 See also Schelling, 1995. This would hardly apply to the future victims of increasing disasters.
20 One outcome of the Fukushima disaster was the decision to phase out Germany's nuclear energy programme and Chancellor Angela Merkel was quoted in the French paper *Le Monde*, in December 2013, as explaining: '*Je ne m'attendais pas a ce qu'un risque theorique et de ce fait acceptable devienne realite*' [I had not expected that a risk that was theoretical and therefore acceptable would become a reality].
21 Six questions derived from focus group discussions were inserted in the Nielsen Omnibus Survey 1309 conducted from 8 to13 March 2013 and directed at a panel quota sample of 1,502, being representative of the total national survey population of 17,786. This was achieved with online self-complete interviews. The margin of error for each question ranged between 2.3% and 4.6% at 95% confidence level. Using SPSS, the data were analysed using cross-tabulation, ANOVAs and finally Linear Regression. Flinders University claim based on research conducted by Nielsen, March 2013, 1,502 overall.
22 'Affordability' varies with circumstances and priorities. We did not try to delimit a specific sum or percentage. The focus groups discussed this wording at some length and came to agreement about it. It was clear that no one thought the wording implied trivial amounts.

23 Although climate change was deliberately not mentioned as such, the list included the terms 'tsunami' and 'hurricane' (rather than 'tidal wave' and 'cyclone'), terms that are not usually applied to disasters in Australia, to convey the global relevance of the issues.
24 One important outcome of the focus groups was a progressive revision of the wording of the questions, from each group to the next, in response to discussions offering suggestions and seeking clarification. As far as possible we sought to neutralize uncertainty in the wording of the survey questions and omit any reference to contested subjects such as climate change and carbon tax. The final revised wording achieved more clarity, in line with the aims of the researchers and the understanding by the respondents. An initially proposed question, 'Would you be willing to contribute a significant part of your present income to prevent or reduce the impact of major natural disasters that could occur in the future', was replaced by the final version.
25 See Barrett & Dannenberg (2013) for more on the influence of uncertainty.
26 Frederick et al.'s critical review of time discounting and time preference surveys some 250 papers and argues that: 'In our view the cumulative evidence raises serious doubts about whether there is in fact such a construct [as 'time preferences'] – a stable factor that operates identically on and applies equally to, all sources of utility' (Frederick et al., 2003: 392). It concludes that 'economists' understanding of intertemporal choices will progress most rapidly … by relinquishing the assumption that the key to understanding intertemporal choices is finding the right discount rate (or even the right discount function), and by readopting the view that inter-temporal choices reflect many distinct considerations and often involve the interplay of several competing motives' (ibid.: 394).
27 Myers et al. (2013) demonstrate the relationship between personal experience and belief in the reality of global warming.
28 A recent paper by the (then) Australian government's Climate Commission (Karoly et al., 2013), titled *Off the Charts: Record Breaking October Heat and Climate Change*, noted that the 2012–13 Australian summer was the hottest on record and that the record-breaking heat continued into the following summer, with intense bush fires. The paper makes the connection with climate change clearly: 'Climate change influences our weather. In Australia this means hotter days and more frequent and intense heatwaves. These combine to increase the risk of bushfires.' The report, and the government website on which it appeared, has been deleted, but the ABC report on its contents is in the reference list under Karoly et al., 2013. The new Abbott government closed down the Climate Commission, which has survived with private funding.

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8

NEW EMOTION, ACTION AND RECOGNITION OF MIGRANTS AND MEDIATORS AFTER THE GREAT EAST JAPAN EARTHQUAKE

Toward a new sociological theoretical approach to multicultural situations in Japan

Kazuhisa Nishihara and Mari Shiba

Human beings are at any time 'getting older together' as Alfred Schutz has suggested. According to Schutz, '[a]s long as [hu]man is born of women, intersubjectivity and the we-relationship will be the foundation for all other categories of human existence' (Schutz, 1966: 82). We could then add another axiomatic sentence to his words: a human being always needs support from someone else during his or her whole life. In Japan's modern context, those sentences remind us of the term '*Kyōsei*', which means the phenomenon of living together with foreign people in the contemporary Japanese 'multicultural' situation. Yoshio Sugimoto, a sociologist living in Australia, suggests that the word 'Kyōsei' can be translated as 'Japan's Cosmopolitanism' (Sugimoto, 2012: 452). The Japanese word 'Kyōsei' originally means 'living together', but in contemporary Japanese society it is generally understood as the society where Japanese people are living together in a multicultural way with foreign residents, that is, people living in Japan who came from foreign countries.

This chapter has two aims. The first aim is to show how the relationships among immigrants, locals and 'intercultural mediators' have transformed after four years since the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in 2011. We will describe this transformation by understanding the subjective meanings of the survivors (the victims of the disaster who survived), as well as by observing changes in their activities. Second, we will re-examine the definition of multiculturalism based on our field research on people living in its disaster areas. The development of multicultural situations in Japan has been discussed eagerly by many researchers including sociologists. Those discussions refer to the foreign residents such as foreign workers, called '*Kenshusei*' (trainees) and '*Jisshusei*' (technical trainees), Japanese South Americans (most of them are Japanese Brazilians), foreign care workers mainly from

Southeast Asian countries, and foreign brides to Japanese. Our chapter, however, focuses in particular on the 'mediators' who link foreign residents with Japanese locals. We pay special attention to the transformation of their activities after the disaster, this showing a new direction in the multicultural society. We hope this analysis will contribute to discussions of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism in transnational/global sociology not only in the sociological sense but also in an actual, practical political sense.

Multicultural situations in modern Japan: past, present and future

Imperial Japan colonized Taiwan, the Korean Peninsula, and built a puppet state called Manchuria. Japan in those days advocated *Gozoku-kyowa* (five races co-prosperity), i.e. co-prosperity among the Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, Manchurians and Mongolians. However, it should not be forgotten that imperial Japan also adopted the assimilation policy, which could be called 'Japanization', to the locals in the occupied areas. Adult males from these colonized areas could have a certain suffrage as long as they lived in inland Japan because they were regarded as Japanese residents.

After World War II, as a new democratic nation-state, the Japanese government enacted the Japanese Nationality Law and the Alien Registration Law, which together were called the '52 regime'. Under this regime, foreign people living in Japan lost their Japanese nationality and began to be treated as aliens or foreigners. Needless to say, they were deprived of their franchise, including their voting rights. Furthermore, since Japan restored diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1972, the Japanese government has refused to recognize the Taiwanese nationality of its Taiwanese residents. Accordingly the Taiwanese residents have three options: to obtain PRC nationality, to become Japanese by naturalization, or to remain non-national people (people without any nationality). Along with the pre-war Japanese policies of assimilation to Japan for the Ryukyu (Okinawa) and the Ainu peoples, the post-war Japanese government drastically oriented to a one-race/homogeneous nation-state.

However, in the late 1980s Japan faced a labor shortage, which prompted the Japanese government to introduce a foreign labor force. The Japanese government then revised the Immigration Law (in 1989), allowing descendants of Japanese emigrants to South American countries to get jobs in Japan. In addition, a new training system for foreign workers was introduced. These workers were called 'Kenshusei', meaning 'trainees' and not 'workers', although they worked substantially as manual workers. This occurred because the Japanese government has not permitted any foreign manual workers to enter Japan except for the Japanese descendants, though there have been many illegal workers in Japan. The number of undocumented workers in Japan was estimated at roughly 100,000 in around 1990 (Komai, 1993: 3).

Under these circumstances, the number of foreign residents increased dramatically from 1990 to 2000, doubling during this decade. In 2005, the number of foreign residents reached 2 million. Since then Japan has admitted over 2 million

foreign residents, although this number, and the percentage of foreign residents as a proportion of the total population of Japan, are remarkably low (1.7%) compared to the main Western countries. However, we should realize that Japanese society is becoming more multicultural: there were scarcely any foreign residents except *Zainichi* (Koreans living in Japan with special permission) in the era of Japanese rapid economic growth, but after this era Japanese society experienced considerable change, with many newcomers arriving from the 1990s onwards.

One group of newcomers consists of foreign brides of Japanese males. In the 1980s, a local government in the Tohoku area (the northeastern part of Japan) adopted a policy of introducing foreign brides to their town by using the official budget to compensate for bride-shortage problems in that farming district. This policy was, however, criticized as a kind of human trafficking and soon abolished. Nowadays, though, brokers have been taking over that role. In the 1990s, the number of marriages between Japanese men and Philippine women, who had originally come to Japan as entertainers, increased. In the 2000s, many foreign brides have been coming from China with the support of private marriage-setting agencies.

While the multicultural situation in Japan has been developing, the Committee for Localities with a Concentrated Foreigner Population (also called the Council for Cities of Non-Japanese Residents) was organized in 2001 and held its first conference in Hamamatsu city in central Japan. In 2006, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications announced the 'Promotion Plan for Multicultural Coexistence', though this was not a declaration of multiculturalism. Since then, the term '*Tabunka Kyosei*', which can be translated as 'multicultural living together', has become popular in Japan.

However, there have also been serious issues arising in this developing multicultural society. Due to the impact of the financial crisis precipitated by the Lehman Brothers bankruptcy in 2008, the Japanese economy was damaged, especially for medium-sized and small companies. As a result, the Japanese government urged foreign laborers, such as Japanese Brazilians and Japanese Peruvians, to go back to their homelands, giving them one-way air tickets. Tens of thousands of people from South America were forced to leave Japan. Furthermore, after 2008 the number of intermarriages between Japanese and Chinese also began to decrease. At the same time, the second generation born into mixed-nationality marriages reached school age, and so those children's educational issues have been discussed seriously.

Then the Great East Japan Earthquake happened on 11 March 2011. The death toll from this catastrophe reached approximately 20,000, mainly in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures of the Tohoku area. The disaster caused huge damage to society but also prompted a shift in its multicultural aspect.

The problem of 'time lapse' after the disaster, in the case of the Great East Japan Earthquake

In 2015, four years will have passed since the disaster. When the first year passed, people in Japan focused on the reconstruction processes in the devastated areas.

The third year seemed to be a turning point for some people, general planning of the reconstruction processes having come into view, aside from the Fukushima nuclear power plant issues. Presumably 2016 – half a decade after the disaster – will be another turning point. In addition, the Tokyo Olympic Games will be held in 2020, which may be regarded as a symbol of recovery from the disaster. Japanese society has been worrying about the remarkable rise in costs of reconstruction in the disaster-hit areas recently, while estimating the cost of new construction for the international event. Just after the earthquake, however, transport infrastructure, including main roads and an airport, were restored more quickly than people expected, the main railways were revived and many collapsed buildings had been removed by 2015.[1]

Our research activities in the Tohoku area during these four years have been paying attention to the status of sufferers who have their roots in foreign countries. In particular, we have been focusing on both the trend of public opinion, including nationalism in the Japanese mass media and people as a whole, and the movement of voluntary supporters for foreign residents. This research has been reported in some academic articles (i.e. Nishihara, 2013a, 2013b; Nishihara & Shiba, 2014; Nishihara, 2015b, 2015c). As for public opinion, we have referred to the recent trend of 'soft nationalism', which we can find in discourses like 'Carry on and never give up, Japan!' or 'Japanese people have a strong mentality to keep the social order, to have tolerance against hardship, and even to restore their society on their own'. These discourses do not seem to take foreign residents into consideration and thus could be regarded as a sort of nationalistic discourse. As a counter-argument, we have been conducting field research mainly on the supporters and non-profit organizations (NPOs)/non-governmental organizations (NGOs) of foreign residents as voluntary movements.

In the next section, we will describe the transitions and transformations of the transnational movements since the disaster of people who are closely related to the foreign residents in the Tohoku area. Then we will develop our argument that the supporters of the transnational communities – those whom we call 'mediators', or more precisely 'intercultural mediators' – have begun to expand the range of their activities and broaden their perspectives from an initial focus on a single social minority of foreign residents to encompass other social minorities like disabled people and the elderly. This transformation shows their orientations towards, to use our own terminology, the convivial living together with all social minorities.[2]

Time lapse and the transformations of the subjective world of survivors and mediators

This chapter was written four years after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami struck the Tohoku area. As of 10 April 2015, the number of confirmed deaths was 15,892, and 2,574 people were still missing.[3] Both the public and private sectors have been working on the 'restoration' of the area's infrastructure and people's daily lives. One example of this is the way news of a temporary bridge in

Rikuzentakata city of Iwate prefecture – constructed in only 61 days to allow access for rescue traffic – was broadcast to the world and praised as an example of Japanese efficiency. Some 97% of the total length of highways has been reconstructed,[4] and other restoration work on rivers, coasts and harbors seems to be progressing steadily as well.

At the same time, other shocking images have been shared with the world, such as a bus and a large ship stuck on the top of buildings as a result of tsunami damage. Ishinomaki city, Minamisanriku town and Onagawa town, where we have been carrying out investigations, also have many destruction sites. For example, a huge red can figure from a fish factory crashed in the middle of the road, an elementary school burned down, and the skeletal remains of a city hall were left. Some have suggested that this wreckage should be preserved as educational material for subsequent generations: Japanese science Professor Takagi (2011) regards the remains of the tragedy as important for enhancing disaster education and enlightenment. These collapsed buildings and shipwrecks have another role, as sightseeing highlights, drawing the attention of visitors after the tragedy. However, for local people, especially the bereaved families, these remnants serve to recall the nightmare of the disaster, leading to a petition to have these wrecks dismantled. Embankment work has since been undertaken, with soil piled over most of the stricken areas to prevent another disaster, with only a few major remains being preserved.

We are drawn here to Rebecca Solnit's idea of a 'disaster community', which she likens to a utopia where 'mutual aid and pleasure are linked, and that the ties that bind are grounds for celebration as well as obligation' (Solnit, 2009: 271). It was certainly the case that in the immediate aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake-stricken areas such mutual aid happened among the disaster victims, and in other parts of Japan and even overseas people were moved to tears at television broadcasts of the victims' difficult situation. However, after four years have passed, we have noticed a fluctuation in the 'subjectivity' of the utopia. As explained above, the restoration work has progressed very quickly and this could be understood as a 'visible' ending of the tragedy. In addition, we would point out that the public interest has been gradually shifting from the disaster restoration to the Tokyo Olympics in 2020, which could mark an end of keeping the tragedy in mind.

Here we should once again examine the 'ending' of a tragedy. Do we really understand the survivors' current situations and feelings? Have they themselves admitted to an 'ending' of the disaster tragedy? These questions have led us to focus on the 'subjectivity' of the difficult situations at this moment in the disaster-stricken area. Yet, it is hard to fathom the victims' feelings and difficulties, especially for people far away from the area. Thus we have focused upon the 'mediators' or in-between persons who are trying to convey the local people's real feelings and needs to wider Japanese society.

We have been conducting research on these in-between persons – those whom we call 'intercultural mediators' – in the Tohoku area since 2011. These persons

used to be 'outsiders', having their roots in non-Tohoku areas. Later, they became 'insiders' through their efforts to communicate with the local people, capture their voices and experiences in order to understand their real needs, and then deliver their requests to the public and private sectors to initiate social change. In this section, we focus mainly on two women as the 'intercultural mediators'. One is Japanese and the other is non-Japanese, but both have non-Japanese cultural attributes, and thus have been acting as in-between persons, mediating between Japanese people/society and others, for instance non-Japanese residents. As we will explain, these mediators are now struggling with the current of time: as four years have passed, these two women now feel that the volunteers and support sectors in general are fading away from the local people in the disaster areas, which then pressures them to move forward.

The first 'intercultural mediator' is MK, a 49-year-old Korean woman in Ishinomaki city. She is married to a Japanese man and has a teenage daughter. She runs a trading company and a language cramming school for teaching multiple languages (Korean, Chinese and English) to the local Japanese, many of whom have been caught up in the Korean culture boom triggered by a Hallyu drama, 'A Winter Sonata', broadcast in Japan in 2004. However, after the Great East Japan Earthquake, she shifted the focus of her activities from the local Japanese to the local non-Japanese residents, most of whom are women who married Japanese men and are in need of learning Japanese, as well as sharing their anxieties about their new lives in Japanese rural communities, especially in these tragic times. In order to make a place for non-Japanese spouses, she searched for subsidies and grants, but all she could finally get from the Japanese government was a subsidy for 'volunteering activities for the disaster victims', not directly applicable to supporting foreign residents. Therefore, she opened an '*Ochakko*' (a traditional community café in the Tohoku area) and hired these non-Japanese women as staff to serve the local Japanese people. She hoped that the Ochakko might enhance mutual understanding among the local Japanese and the non-Japanese residents as well as being consistent with the Japanese government slogan 'Tabunka Kyosei'.

In 2015, however, three years after the disaster, she renovated the Ochakko building as a school just for non-Japanese residents. The non-Japanese women are now learning the Japanese language and sharing their thoughts. After brushing up on their Japanese competency, some of them are planning to acquire certification as care workers given the increasing demand for this in an aging society. MK explained her reasons for this. While hiring the non-Japanese staff at the Ochakko she realized the diversity of non-Japanese residents. Accordingly, she felt she would like to focus on the non-Japanese group to care for the diverse problems and needs of each individual. Based on her energetic activities, she was appointed a member of the local government committee for promoting multicultural living.

While describing the current situation, MK identified 2015 as the turning point of her NPO's activities. She considers the devastating situation to have calmed down, and now wonders what and how she could provide sustainable support to the non-Japanese residents into the future. As one such sustainable support, she has

started a new activity in which she invites the Japanese husbands of her non-Japanese students to the school and assists these multicultural couples to share their problems and anxieties with each other. She insists that, even though it is important to share non-Japanese residents' problems with the whole public, it is even more important, for their real happiness, to make their partners realize their anxieties. Another issue with her activities concerns how to acquire sustainable financial support. On this front she has been making use of her unique and flexible attributes as a Korean-rooted cosmopolitan: since she found it difficult to get enough grants from the Japanese government and society, she appealed for support for her activities in the newsletter of the Korean Residents' Union in Japan. Since then she has been receiving support for 'improving Korean-rooted children's Korean language fluency'.

The other 'cultural mediator' is KU, a 53-year-old Japanese woman in Ishinomaki city, who has taken on the role of local coordinator of a non-Japanese NPO for disaster victim support. Before moving to the city, she was in the United Kingdom learning English and massage. Just after the earthquake, she moved back to Japan and then to Ishinomaki city to support the disaster survivors. She started to heal the local people with massage techniques acquired in the United Kingdom. During healing sessions, her clients shared their problems, which were not identified by government researchers. These included needing people to mow grass in their backyards and for the local shrine festivals. Another request was for donations of play equipment for the elementary school playground, since these were wrecked by the disaster. At the same time, she was approached by an NPO, most of the members of which were non-Japanese and worked at multinational companies in Tokyo as high-skilled, white-collar workers. This NPO was established to support disaster victims in the Tohoku area by raising donations from their members and the global elites in Tokyo, as well as offering hands-on assistance to the victims. However, not being made up of Tohoku locals and not having access to research into local people's real needs, the NPO was looking for someone who could coordinate their monthly activities in the area. Accordingly KU, who had skills to communicate with both local people and non-Japanese supporters, took up the post of the NPO's local coordinator.

Now KU and the NPO have also been facing the problem of finding resources to provide continuing sustainable support for the community. With the donation of a container house by a French company, KU opened an 'Ochakko' for the local people after the disaster, where they could retrieve their sense of belonging to the local community. However, four years later, the owner of the land occupied by the Ochakko approached KU to leave. This was because all landowners in the disaster areas had been granted tax waivers for five years after the tragedy, but as the fifth year was approaching, this landowner was starting to renovate the place for his own interests. The NPO also fell upon hard times: it experienced the gradual decrease in financial support from large sectors, such as large companies, and therefore had to cover most of the costs of supporting the disaster victims on its own. Even though the members were highly skilled and receiving high salaries, it

was difficult to accomplish large-scale action without the financial support of the large companies. The NPO thus had to limit and scale down its activities and the frequency of visits to the disaster area.

KU and the NPO have recently redefined the target of their support. As the local people's daily lives settle down, the NPO members have reconsidered who is really in need of their support, settling upon families with handicapped children in the area. Now they actively support these families by selling products the children have made and serving the children on special occasions, such as their Christmas party. They also offered the container house for these families' activities, as KU had to remove it soon after closing her Ochakko. KU has also been shifting her mindset: as the local people's lives have settled down, and the NPO's activities have shrunk, she has decided to leave Tohoku soon and head to the suburbs of Tokyo. There she is planning to be a supporter of the Olympic/Paralympic Games in 2020 as a translator of English and sign language, while maintaining her support for the NPO, even though she will be away from the Tohoku area. Indeed, she has already initiated activities connecting Tohuku and the other areas, having developed a new food item originating in Tohoku's marine products and the Tokyo suburbs, and she is now promoting it.

These two women's stories highlight further important issues facing contemporary Japan. First, Japan's policies tend to focus 'inwards', toward the Japanese members of Japanese society. They do offer help all the time, but their targets do not seem to include non-Japanese residents. Thus the non-Japanese residents and their supporters have to devise multi-layered tactics to be included as members of society and accordingly receive subsidies. The second is that society does not only exclude the non-Japanese residents, but also regards them as the weak of society. However, those women and their group members made the best use of their personal attributes as cosmopolitans and looked outside Japan to raise support for their activities.[5]

Although not in the disaster-stricken area, we want to mention another NPO as an example of an inter-cultural group beginning to move forward in a new direction. This NPO was established in 2008 by MO, the Japanese husband of a foreign bride in Tome city. MO established an NPO in the hopes of enhancing Japanese husbands' understanding of their foreign spouses' anxieties in the community. This NPO aims to communicate the husbands' voices to the government to gather support for their wives' adaptation to a new environment and to gain acceptance from the community for these new 'community members' from other countries. Their city, Tome, did not suffer the disaster directly simply because of its geographical location, being 75km away from Sendai and the coast hit by the tsunami. However, MO worries that many of the non-Japanese groups, including those established after the disaster in the Tohoku area, may start turf squabbles among themselves. MO believes that, rather than grouping non-Japanese residents according to their mother countries, it is more meaningful and productive to form a multicultural group. In addition, his NPO has redefined its target as 'multicultural families', not only families that include non-Japanese spouses but also families caring for disabled and sick persons. Moreover, with regard to non-Japanese

spouses' futures, the NPO has been leading an awareness campaign to promote understanding of their lives in an aging society and their status as elders in the Japan of the future. MO and his NPO's recent activities as a multicultural group have therefore shifted in the direction of cooperating with other minorities. This suggests that the multicultural movement has reached its 'cosmopolitan' turning point, broadening its definition of 'multicultural' to encompass the 'multicultural co-living society' with other social minority groups.

Triangle of transnationalism, interculturalism and cosmopolitanism as a new social environmental design[6]

Before concluding, we want to refer to another interesting project where an NPO shifted its way of working recently. In organizing Japanese language classes in the disaster areas, this NPO included some Chinese staff who tried to support foreign residents suffering after the earthquake and tsunami. YC, the NPO's leader, then began to support the elderly people in 2014 along with other voluntary staff who were experts in welfare work. Furthermore, YC, who is a 58-year-old man, started another agricultural project. He got permission from several elderly farmers to use fields that had been abandoned, for free. He has now begun to produce a cash crop, all the while receiving advice from the former farmers who cannot work due to their advanced age. This is intended not only to support the elderly farmers, but also, through the planned reconstruction of the farm village, protect against depopulation in this rural area. This project has just begun and it is uncertain whether it will be successful. In order to succeed, a lot of voluntary collaborators may be needed. We want to keep our eyes on this seemingly quixotic trial, but we may say at this point that he is orienting towards being a cosmopolitan. He wants good relationships with social minorities, including foreign residents, elderly people and the retired farmers, by supporting them. His sights are on sustainably 'living together' with social minorities by trying to secure bread to live on.[7]

In our chapter, what the findings collected from our field research show is that intercultural mediators have recently begun to orient themselves towards convivially living together with some social minorities such as disabled people, elderly people and retired farmers who experience difficulties due to their age and small farmland. In light of what we have presented, we would like to mention the problem of 'multiculturalism'. Multiculturalism has been criticized for its high cost, for its tendency towards ghettoization and, accordingly, for the segmentation of local/national society (Nishihara, 2015a; cf., Meer & Modood, 2011; Cantle, 2012). In the 2000s, a new and contrasting idea called 'interculturalism' emerged. In 2008, the Council of Europe advocated intercultural dialogue in a White Paper where democratic governance of cultural diversity, democratic citizenship and participation, learning and teaching of intercultural competences, spaces for intercultural dialogue, and intercultural dialogue in international relations were taken up and discussed as the five political approaches to the promotion of intercultural dialogue (Council of Europe, 2008: 33ff).

In the present formation of transnational society, the idea of interculturalism is considered manifestly significant because there are a lot of foreign residents in most societies, but there are also a lot of other social minorities in each country as well. The problem of migrant/foreign residents is extremely important but it is just one example of social minorities' issues. In order to promote intercultural dialogue, is it solidarity among social minorities that is required urgently? If so, it is here that we want to introduce the concept of cosmopolitanism in a culturally diverse world. We can consider this concept of cosmopolitanism not only as the final end of transnationalism but also as a concept embracing all vulnerable social minorities including the disabled, elderly, sick, poor, women and children with difficulties, and even all 'dumb' creatures.[8] In other words, it is an orientation toward convivially living together with all animate creatures in the world which have vulnerable bodies (Turner, 2006). This is a kind of cosmopolitanism that corresponds with the globalized/cosmopolitanized contemporary world (Beck, 2012), which was silhouetted in the activity of intercultural mediators in the Tohoku area. It can be called cosmopolitanism from below, not top-down cosmopolitanism such as the institutional reforms of the United Nations (Held, 2010). The mission of our sociological theoretical research is to investigate this cosmopolitan idea and to suggest a new social environmental design.

Interactional interculturalism mediated by the bridging third person is able to form a new social relationship.[9] By good intercultural mediators, people can live intersubjectively together, getting older together, living convivially with others and with diversity. However, how can we create better relationships? This question would be a trigger to start debating on the further challenges of theoretical sociology to design a new social environment. Or, specifically speaking, how it is possible that mutual understanding, based on sympathy and resonance in intersubjective interaction that phenomenological sociology develops, can be activated.[10] In order to think about this question, first of all we should examine the idea of cosmopolitanism, which embraces all social minorities, while criticizing and breaking through the reified intersubjective old frame, including the old nationalistic frame composed of a sort of hard 'collective consciousness', to use Durkheim's term. In this orientation, the idea of sustainability for life, which includes agricultural systems to secure safe foods, should also be investigated (Nishihara & Shiba, 2012).

A sociological, theoretical approach toward social environmental design for the creation of multicultural society should be based in the field of glocalization (i.e. the place where globalization and localization interface). The first step to making a future design is here in this cosmopolitan idea. It can be called 'critical cosmopolitanism' because it will be developed by the critical examination of traditional cosmopolitanism, which is nowadays the task to be dealt with by sociological theory.

Notes

1 Based upon our own local observation, the speed of the recovery process is slower than that of the Sichuan earthquake in China in 2008, and faster than that of the Christchurch

earthquake in New Zealand in 2011. In main towns facing the sea, large quantities of soil are being moved in to maintain a certain height to protect against future tsunamis. The lapse of four years and the prospect of revival in sight has brought a new light of hope to a lot of survivors. This is the impression we were able to gain through interviews with survivors in the devastated areas. At the same time, we would say that this is the time consciousness they have in 2015.

2 The term convivial or conviviality originally stems from Illich (1973). Recently Les Back referred to this term in his keynote speech, 'Multicultural Conviviality in the Midst of Racism's Ruins', at 'Cultural Typhoon 2014' at the International Christianity University, Tokyo.

3 Japan's National Police Agency, www.npa.go.jp/archive/keibi/biki/higaijokyo.pdf (accessed 31 July 2015).

4 Tohoku Regional Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, *Earthquake Memorial Museum*, infra-archive311.jp/en/s-douro.html (accessed 31 July 2015).

5 These current conditions remind us of the popular Japanese comic book series, entitled 'Attack on Titan'. The storyline is about people fighting against human-devouring Titans. The people's nation had been defending itself from Titan attacks with enormously high walls. They had enjoyed their lives for a hundred years without seeing or even caring about the Titans' existence outside the walls. However, one day the Titans suddenly smashed down the walls and started invading. During the first phase, the young people of the military defense against the Titans were hopeless because the Titans seemed to attack them without remorse or 'reason'. However, later some of the soldiers transformed themselves into Titans, for no particular 'reason', and then later still some young soldiers gradually realized that they needed to find the 'reason' for the battle inside their nation and themselves. This storyline sounds a bit like the current situation in Japan, one in which there is a felt need to protect the country from outsiders for no concrete 'reason', or if there was an original 'reason' this has been forgotten as time has gone by. If only Japan could also start recognizing the domestic problems of non-Japanese residents as well as grassroots actions aimed at helping local communities, then Japanese society could promote its policy of 'multicultural living together' in a real sense.

6 The social environmental design is a component of Nishihara's conception of social innovation theory. Based on 'glocal' sociology, Nishihara discusses innovation society and social environmental design, both of which make up social innovation theory (cf. Nishihara, 2015a).

7 In particular, the last (agricultural) project with a co-working system is designed as a sustainable support system. We've already discussed another farming village where a lot of foreign workers are working together with Japanese farmers. Recently, the co-working system of this village was criticized mainly because a portion of the Japanese farmers forced unpaid work upon the foreign workers. Generally speaking, however, it is the technical trainee system that is a system of introducing foreign workers through the side door that should be criticized.

8 M.C. Nussbaum lists 'Other Species, being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world nature' as one of the central human capacities (Nussbaum, 2006: 77).

9 The classical sociologists who paid special attention to the third person were G. Simmel (1908) in his investigation of social relationships, and G.H. Mead (1934) in his theory on the genesis of consciousness.

10 As we showed at the beginning of this chapter, Schutz clearly pointed out the existence of the 'mutual tuning-in relationship' as 'the pre-communicative social relationship' (Schutz, 1964: 159). We consider this mutual tuning-in relationship a kind of fundamental sympathy theory of interaction. We can see the same thesis in the following sentence: 'communication always and already presupposes a social interrelationship upon which it is founded, i.e. the relationship of being "tuned in" one upon the other' (Schutz, 1966: 38; see also Nishihara, 2013b).

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9

GANBARŌ NIPPON

Human insecurity, resilience and national identity after 3.11[1]

Giorgio Shani

The 'triple disasters' of 11 March 2011 (hereafter 3.11) had consequences that reached far beyond the tsunami-devastated Tōhoku region.[2] The devastation wrought by a natural disaster of unprecedented proportions, which displaced entire communities, was compounded at the Fukushima Daiichi and Daini nuclear reactor by a 'man-made' disaster (The National Diet of Japan, 2012), which exposed the entire Kantō area to radiation. The 'triple disasters' (earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident) of 3.11 revealed the inability of a modern, industrialized nation-state to protect its own citizens, shattering the public's trust in the government led by former Prime Minister Naoto Kan. The Japanese state, despite adopting the principle of human security as a basic goal of its foreign policy, had failed to protect the human security of the Japanese, and, in so doing, endangered national cohesion. This in turn created space for the articulation of a discourse of *resilient* nationalism, which underpins the current Abe administration.

It will be argued in this chapter that 3.11 shattered the binary opposition between 'inside' and 'outside' upon which the Japanese state based its commitment to human security. Previously, the referent objects for human security, as a tool of Japanese foreign policy, were, as Satō (2007) has pointed out, racialized 'Others' in the developing world. Human security, defined in 'broad' terms as freedom from fear and want, was assumed to have already been achieved in Japan. After 3.11, these previously 'racialized' biopolitical divisions were applied *within* Japan, thus shattering the myth of Japan as a *tan'itsu minzoku* (homogenous society).

This chapter will first introduce the concept of human security. It will be argued that, in its 'broad' instantiation, human security can be understood as a form of 'biopolitics' (Foucault, 2008), which seeks to take life itself as a referent object for discourse on security. However, central to the operation of biopolitics is the concept of 'race', which allows a distinction between 'inside' and 'outside' to be drawn. After World War II, 'race' was used as a means of constructing a cohesive

post-imperial national identity on ethnic lines. Colonial minorities such as the zainichi found themselves excluded from the nation-state and, until recently, deprived of citizenship rights (Chapman, 2004). It is argued that, after 3.11, evacuees from the Tōhoku region similarly found themselves marginalized as their 'security' was sacrificed to safeguard the interests of the 'nuclear village' and residents of metropolitan Tokyo. Finally, the chapter will critically examine the concept of 'resilience' as encapsulated in the slogan '*Ganbarō Nippon*'. Unlike 'security', resilience is a discourse that *embraces* danger and risk, and seeks to make it central to the 'human condition'. *Ganbarō Nippon*, as applied to the residents of tsunami-devastated Miyagi (宮城) and irradiated Fukushima (福島), abnegates all responsibility from the state for their protection and displaces it onto the affected communities themselves.

Human security as biopolitics[3]

The notion of human security is premised on the assumption that the individual human being is the only irreducible focus for discourse on security. Consequently, the claims of all other referents, including the nation-state, derive from the *sovereignty* of the individual (MacFarlane & Khong, 2006: 2). Japan played a key role in the institutionalization of the concept of human security internationally through the establishment of the United Nations (UN) Trust Fund for Human Security in the wake of the East Asian financial crisis in the late 1990s. This was followed by the formation of a UN-appointed Commission on Human Security (CHS), co-chaired by former Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) President Sadako Ogata. Under Ogata's leadership, JICA, along with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), identified 'human security' as a basic policy goal.

While most advocates of human security agree that its primary goal should be the *protection* of individual human lives, they differ as to what the individual should be protected from. Conventionally, a distinction is made between 'narrow' and 'broad' definitions. The first approach conceives of human security negatively, in terms of the absence of threats to the *physical* security or safety of individuals. This 'narrow' definition has been adopted by the pre-Harper Canadian government and is exemplified in the publication of the *Human Security Report*, which defines human security as the protection of individuals from 'violent threats' (Human Security Centre, 2005, 2011). It also informs the concept of the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP), which, following its adoption by the UN General Assembly after the World Summit in 2005, has recently been institutionalized by UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions 1970 and 1971 authorizing the creation of a 'no-fly zone' over Libya in 2011.

The second approach prefers to ground human security in terms of 'negative liberty' (Berlin, 1969); the resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly (A/66/290) in September 2012 goes beyond a narrow focus on the responsibility of states to protect their citizens and appears to repudiate the use of force as a means of protecting the individual from 'violent threats'. Responding to calls to come up

with a working definition of human security as contained in paragraph 143 of the World Summit Outcome document, which committed the UN to 'discussing and defining the notion of human security in the General Assembly' (A/Res/60/1), the resolution posited a 'common understanding of human security' defining it as the 'right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair'. 'All individuals', it continues, 'are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential' (United Nations General Assembly, 2012).

In part, the wording of the General Assembly resolution reflects the conclusions of the Final Report of the CHS, headed by Amartya Sen and Sadako Ogata, which put forward a 'broader' conception of human security that takes into account 'freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to take action on one's own behalf' (CHS, 2003). At the heart of the CHS approach is a 'positive' definition of human security as encompassing the 'vital core' of all human lives: a set of 'elementary rights and freedoms people enjoy' and consider to be 'vital' to their well-being. The objective of human security is, thus, to protect 'the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment' (ibid.: 4). However, protection alone is seen as insufficient to combat human insecurity: human security seeks also 'to *empower* them to act on their own behalf' (ibid.: 2, emphasis added). 'Security' therefore entails a commitment to 'development'.

It is argued that human security as understood from a broad perspective may be viewed as a form of 'biopolitics' (Berman, 2007; Duffield, 2007; Grayson, 2008; De Larrinaga & Doucet, 2008, 2011), in contrast with the 'sovereign power' of the sovereign state as exemplified by the national security paradigm. Whereas 'sovereign power' refers to a sovereign's right to 'take life or let live' and is exercised over territories, biopolitics marks a new power: 'to "make" live and "let" die' (Foucault, 2003: 241). Defined as 'the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species become the object of a political strategy', the origins of biopower or biopolitics go back to the attempt, starting in Europe in the 18th century, 'to rationalize the problems posed to governmental practice by phenomena characteristic of a set of living beings forming a population: health, hygiene, birth rate, life expectancy, race' (Foucault, 2008: 1). The last of these phenomena, 'race', was of particular significance to the operation of biopolitics. The 18th century also marked a period of European imperial expansion and, as Foucault acknowledged but did not make central to his conception of biopolitics, the lines dividing those who were 'made to live' and those 'left to die' became increasingly racialized during the 'Age of Empire' and remain with us today (Duffield, 2007; Shani, 2012).

'Internal others': human insecurity after 3.11

Although Article 14 of the Japanese Constitution states that 'all of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin' (The Prime

Minister of Japan and his Cabinet, 2014), in practice institutional discrimination against 'outsiders' has been endemic in contemporary Japan. Indeed, the initial Japanese submission to the UN Human Rights Commission in 1980 claimed that Japan had no minorities, which was not surprising since the Japanese Census does not include a category for ethnicity (or religion). Subsequently, in 1991 Japan acknowledged the existence of 'ethnic minorities' (*shosu minzoku*), but a 2006 UN Economic and Social Council Report of the special rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance found racism to be 'deep and profound' in Japan. The special rapporteur, Doudou Diène, concluded that three 'circles' of groups were subject to discrimination: national minorities such as the Buraku and Ainu; people and descendants of Japan's former colonies in Korea and China; and foreigners and migrants from other parts of Asia and the rest of the world. Discrimination was first of 'an economic and social nature', as manifested through lack of access to education, health care and employment. Second, it was manifested politically through marginalization from the political process; national minorities were, according to the report, 'invisible in State institutions'. Finally, discrimination against descendants of Japan's former colonies as well as national minorities was of 'a cultural and historical nature', reflected in the 'poor recognition and transmission of the history of those communities and in the perpetuation of the existing discriminatory image of those groups' (Diène, 2006).

Following the publication of the Diène Report, an attempt was made by the Japanese state to incorporate its ethnic minorities and migrant populations through a discourse of 'multicultural symbiosis' (*tabunka kyōsei*). At a grassroots level, this took the form of local attempts to create 'an inclusive society where everybody is respected regardless of nationality, language or culture' (Multicultural Center Tokyo, 2013). At a national level, however, it reinforced the myth of ethnic homogeneity upon which the Japanese state was based by emphasizing the *cultural* distinctions between foreign residents, ethnic minorities and 'native' Japanese citizens.[4] The Japanese state, therefore, by its very commitment to multicultural inclusiveness, reified 'racial' boundaries between 'self' and 'other' in 'multi-ethnic Japan' (Lie, 2001).

After 3.11, these 'racialized' biopolitical divisions between 'inside' and 'outside', which had hitherto been used to distinguish colonial and ethnic minorities, became (re)inscribed *within* the Japanese nation. Whilst *Ganbarō Nippon* became a mobilizing slogan for a new, more 'resilient' Japan, much of the Tōhoku area was abandoned, in urgent need of reconstruction and assistance. Basic essentials such as food, water, fuel and shelter were in short supply as many remote areas were cut off from transportation routes by debris from the tsunami. This predicament was more acute for those inside the exclusion zone who were not evacuated as humanitarian organizations were reluctant to expose their staff to unsafe levels of radiation in order to help them. Human insecurity for those within the exclusion zone was acute and, when the mayor of Minami-Soma made a dramatic plea for help on YouTube, the watching online audience could be forgiven for thinking that his

town was in a conflict-ridden area of the developing world rather than an 'advanced', industrialized nation-state.[5]

Approximately 150,000 still remain displaced, living in temporary housing facilities and receiving only 10,000 yen (approx. $1,000) a month in compensation from the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2013a). In Fukushima alone, approximately 64,000 people were displaced by the disaster (International Medical Corps, 2011) and the total cost of 3.11 was estimated at 3 trillion yen, not including personal damage (Reconstructions Bureau, 2013). The cost, in terms of health insecurity, to almost 2,000 workers exposed to dangerous levels of radiation carrying the increased risk of cancer was far higher (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2013b). Many of these workers were on informal contracts with inadequate insurance to cover the costs of hospitalization and illness. There is also evidence to suggest that some were recruited by Yakuza criminal gangs in order to provide cheap, 'disposable' labour for the nuclear power plants (Adelstein, 2012). When then Prime Minister Kan ordered TEPCO not to abandon the plant, it was these workers who were coerced into potentially laying down their lives for the 'nation'.

It should be pointed out that 'subcontracting' is an important characteristic of the Japanese nuclear industry, which relies upon informal labour for menial and often dangerous jobs. Whereas employees of the energy companies are usually skilled, permanent workers with adequate insurance and compensation packages, those entrusted with the most hazardous tasks are usually unskilled workers hired indirectly through recruiting agencies. The energy companies are, therefore, exempt from the responsibility of providing for the security of the workers. Deprived of important rights, these informal workers are treated as 'disposable', forced to carry out the most dangerous assignments often without adequate training and protective gear. Many move from plant to plant working as nuclear '*ronin*' at considerable cost to their health. They are often hired from the most disadvantaged sections of society, including the homeless and those unable to repay debts. The demand for 'disposable' workers is particularly acute when reactors are taken offline for maintenance each year and dangerous tasks need to be performed. It is at this time that the Yakuza become actively involved in the recruiting process. Human insecurity in the nuclear industry, therefore, is not just a post-3.11 phenomenon but an outcome of pre-existing forms of socio-economic insecurity.[6] Viewed in biopolitical terms, these 'disposable' workers may be seen to correspond to Agamben's *Homines Sacri*: 'bare life', which can be killed – through exposure to unsafe levels of radiation – but not 'sacrificed' for a Japanese 'nation' unaware of their existence (Agamben, 1998).

Health security, identified by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) as a key component of human security in their 1994 report, remains poor not just for the workers in the nuclear plants but for all residents of Fukushima. There have been reports of a rapid increase in reported cases of thyroid cancer amongst children, with the scientific community divided over whether it is attributable to radiation leaks (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2013c). Thyroid cancer normally affects only one to two children aged 10–14 out of a million in Japan, yet there have been 26

confirmed and 32 suspected cases of thyroid cancer amongst children in Fukushima, well above the national average (*Japan Times*, 2013). This figure has recently risen still higher. Taking into account all those suspected cases of children and young adults under 18, it stood at 75 on the third anniversary of the 3.11 disasters. Of these, 33 have been confirmed (McCurry, 2014).

Although medical authorities correctly point out that the absence of systematic screening in other parts of Japan makes a comparison problematic, this begs the question of *why only residents of Fukushima are subject to such screening*. Local health authorities, working under the guidance of Fukushima Medical University, have tested 254,000 out of 375,000 children and adolescents, who will continue to be screened regularly throughout their adult lives (McCurry, 2014). It appears as if children in Fukushima have been targeted by the state; their bodies effectively 'securitized' and rendered 'bare life' (Agamben, 1998) through a regime of systematic testing that differentiates them from other members of their age group in Japan. This sense of alienation from the rest of Japan, however, is not confined to children, leading to widespread psychological insecurity. The suicide rate in Fukushima increased from ten to 23 from 2012 to 2013, while the national average decreased by 2.1%. Of those who committed suicide, a majority (16) were evacuees, with 12 in their fifties. Isolation from family and friends were cited as contributory reasons for committing suicide (*Japan Times*, 2014).

The Fukushima nuclear crisis, furthermore, demonstrated the 'powerlessness' of the state to protect its citizens in a globalizing world where the dominant economic actors are corporations. According to the official report into the nuclear accident, TEPCO 'strongly influenced energy policy and nuclear regulations while abdicating their own responsibilities and letting the Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry (METI) take the responsibility on the frontline' (The National Diet of Japan, 2012: 44). The report described the 'regulatory capture' of Japan's nuclear industry, in which oversight by regulators effectively ceases, tracing this back to the establishment of the Federation of Electric Power Companies (FEPC), an unregulated lobbying association of electric power companies which is accused of influencing government policy on nuclear power. The FEPC 'prioritized the interests of their organizations over the public's safety', and, in effectively deciding that Japanese nuclear power plant reactor operations would not be stopped under any circumstances, effectively compromised the security of the general public.

The report concluded that it was 'a profoundly manmade disaster – that could and should have been foreseen and prevented' (The National Diet of Japan, 2012: 9). Specifically, the report assigned primary responsibility for the accident to the government, regulators and TEPCO, accusing them collectively of betraying 'the nation's right to be safe from nuclear accidents':

> The operator (TEPCO), the regulatory bodies (Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency, NISA, and National Security Agency, NSA), and the government body promoting the nuclear power industry (METI), all failed to correctly develop the most basic safety requirements … such as assessing the probability

> of damage, preparing for containing collateral damage from such a disaster, and developing evacuation plans for the public in the case of a serious radiation release.
>
> *(The National Diet of Japan, 2012: 16)*

Three years on from the disaster and Japan's 'resilient nuclear village' (Kingston, 2012b) has tightened its vice-like grip over the political process, lobbying to remove Naotō Kan and elect pro-nuclear Shinzō Abe as prime minister. Under Abe, Japan has not only resumed its nuclear programme but has also sought to export its nuclear technology overseas! However, for Kiyoshi Kurokawa, the chair of the official report into the disaster, the 'fundamental causes' of the disaster are to be found not solely in the stranglehold that the 'nuclear village' continues to exert over the political process but in the

> ingrained conventions of Japanese culture: our reflexive obedience; our reluctance to question authority; our devotion to 'sticking with the program'; our groupism; and our insularity.
>
> *(The National Diet of Japan, 2012: 9)*

The implications for an ethnically defined Japanese national identity are clear for all to see.

Ganbarō Nippon: from human security to resilience?

For proponents of 'human security', the natural world is filled with danger. The assumption is that risk and uncertainty are sources of *insecurity* necessitating 'protection' from an external agent: the state or 'international community'. The objective of human security is, therefore, *protection*: the protection of individuals from violent threats (Human Security Centre, 2011) and/or 'from sudden and hurtful disruptions in patterns of daily life' (UNDP, 1994). Resilience functions to prevent humans from conceiving danger, risk or uncertainty as phenomena from which they might be secured.

The focus is on *prevention* rather than protection (Chandler, 2012). It seeks instead to inculcate the capacity to *withstand* danger and to rise to the challenges posed by natural disasters or crises. Building resilient individuals and communities necessitates *exposing* them to danger (Reid, 2012; Evans & Reid, 2013). Resilience, in short, is a discourse that *embraces* uncertainty and risk and makes them integral to human existence and flourishing. It challenges the anthropocentrism of human security and the associated claims to individual agency and the possibility of societal transformation through collective action. The 'docile body' (Foucault, 2008) loses its status as specifically 'human' and with it legal protection afforded by the state through a discourse of rights and citizenship. Our only possibility of securing ourselves from the world and its dangers lies paradoxically in *embracing* them, for it is only through the process of exposing ourselves to danger that we can overcome it.

In so doing, however, resilience impoverishes human existence and excavates autonomy and agency from individuals and communities. Humanity is reduced to another form of species-life; 'bare life' (Agamben, 1998) in its most 'degraded' or 'debased' form (Reid, 2012). This has profound implications for the possibility of human security. If the 'human' is but another form of species-life, then the biological fact of life itself is no longer sufficient to legitimize the subordination of nature to human needs. We, therefore, (re)enter a world where mankind can no longer be secured from the 'violent threats' posed by our environment. Security, instead, lies in reconciling ourselves with the capricious natural world and embracing 'absolute immanence' (Agamben, 1999) as the human condition.

Conclusion

Writing in the immediate aftermath of 3.11, the Japanese philosopher Kojin Karatani argued that 3.11 signalled not just Japan's demise but rather the 'possibility of its rebirth' (Karatani, 2011). Just as the detonation of the atomic bomb at Hiroshima[7] and defeat in World War II proved to be the catalysts for the unravelling of the old imperial order based on militarism and unconditional obedience to the emperor, Fukushima will necessitate a rethinking of what it is to be Japanese; of who is to be included in a nation of many different regional and ethnic identities, and of who is to be excluded. Japan emerged from the ashes of World War II as a modern, democratic, affluent and peaceful society but it continued to be imagined as a homogenous, ethnic community. Colonial minorities such as the Korean and Chinese zainichi were excluded from the post-war Japanese 'nation' at its very inception and the Japanese state has come to view the People's Republic of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as Japan's natural 'enemies' and a source of external threats.

3.11 exploded this myth by laying bare the biopolitical divisions upon which the modern Japanese state was based. Faith in the state was badly shaken by the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident as many Japanese nationals were forced to leave their homes and were effectively abandoned once evacuated. Slogans such as *Ganbarō Nippon* rang particularly hollow in the immediate aftermath of the 'triple disasters' for irradiated communities and residents of the tsunami-affected areas who had lost everything to the 'black waters' while political elites were preoccupied with 'containing' the crisis. Aside from the insecurity and panic caused by the nuclear crisis with its concomitant effects on an economy still reeling from the financial crisis and two 'lost' decades of 'stagnant' growth, life returned to normal for most in Japan.[8] 3.11 was not Japan's trauma, it was primarily that of Tōhoku! On a recent visit, I was struck by the absence of the ubiquitous slogan that had been co-opted into a nationalist discourse in other parts of Japan. Instead of *Ganbarō Nippon*, the banner that greeted me as I looked out into the devastated bay from where the black waters had come read *Ganbarō Ishinomaki*. This was a poignant reminder that the isolated fishing villages and farming communities of the

north-east and not the 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1991) of Japan were the real victims of 3.11.

Only a commitment to protecting the human security of *all* of Japan's residents – from tsunami-hit and irradiated rural communities in the north-east to migrant workers employed on irregular contracts in the informal sector in urban areas – can, it is argued, form the basis of a new national ethic capable of rising to the challenges of a rapidly globalizing and increasingly complex and uncertain world. Japan faces a stark choice: 'multicultural' human security or resilient ethno-nationalism.

Notes

1 This is a substantially revised version of '*Tabunka Kyōsei?* Ethno-Nationalism and Human Insecurity in Japan', in Shani (2014). It was first presented at the international conference 'States of emergency: The emotional costs of global disasters and regional emergencies', Hawke Research Institute, University of South Australia, 20 March 2014. The author would like to thank Professor Anthony Elliott and Eric Hsu for the invitation to the conference and to contribute to this volume.
2 See the various contributions to Kingston (2012a) and Bacon and Hobson (2014) for more information on the consequences of the 'triple disasters' for the people of Japan. The latter volume explicitly takes a human security approach.
3 This section draws on Shani, 2011, 2013.
4 See Weiner (2009) for a detailed analysis of Japan's minorities.
5 The mayor of Minami-Soma's appeal for assistance is available at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=70ZHQ–cK40 (accessed 23 July 2013).
6 Indeed, it has been argued that nuclear power companies are more likely to locate plants in communities where 'social capital' is at its weakest, often choosing socio-economically vulnerable populations without traditions of political mobilization (Aldrich, 2008). Expressed differently, Japan's 'resilient nuclear village' (Kingston, 2012b) prefers 'vulnerable' and insecure communities.
7 For Karatani – as for many other Japanese – the Fukushima nuclear accident 'cannot help but call forth memories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki' (Karatani, 2011).
8 Returning to Tokyo from Kathmandu, where I was conducting research, I was struck by how bright the neon-lit city was and how short the power cuts were compared to those in Nepal. Kansai, on the other hand, appeared unaffected by the crisis.

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10

FROM MAKESHIFT TENTS TO APARTMENT UNITS

Women rebuilding life in post-disaster Sichuan

David Ip and Liyue Wu

> Building a house is easy; rebuilding life is so much harder …
>
> *(Informant of Sichuan earthquake, 2012)*

On 12 May 2008, a massive earthquake measuring 7.8 on the Richter scale struck many provinces in south-western China, including Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan. However, Sichuan suffered the most, with 68,227 people who lost their lives, 3,746,343 injured and 17,923 missing (Huang & Zhang, 2012). Given the large number of casualties and widespread destruction, understandably the government was under great pressure to make post-disaster rehabilitation work their top priority, especially when the disaster made headlines the world over. Subsequently under the banner of 'one in difficulties and all will support' (一方有难 百方支持), all provinces, cities and governments were asked to mobilize their officials, army and soldiers, business community, social workers and psychological counsellors to give support to the earthquake victims and their communities. The Sichuan government also responded with the determination to 'complete a three-year mission in two'.

Indeed, the Chinese government was reported to have injected RMB 8,658 billion into 29,692 projects to rehabilitate damaged communities at the end of May 2012, and it was estimated that 99% of these projects had been completed (Chinese Government, 2012). The rapid reconstruction work impressed many, and also received nothing but high praise in the Chinese media as well as from the general public.

Not surprisingly, many Chinese took enormous pride in what had been achieved, especially considering how short a time it took and how massive the scale of rehabilitation work was involved. Likewise, it was difficult for one not to be impressed when one realized the makeshift tents and temporary housing provided for settling the earthquake victims immediately after the disaster struck were replaced by new complexes of houses.

Behind these impressive new apartment blocks, however, lay many untold stories about the traumas and difficulties numerous rural women had encountered and experienced in rebuilding their lives, which were rarely reported in Chinese media. They were only revealed through ethnographic studies conducted by frontline social workers who were commissioned to deliver social services in 'rehabilitated' communities in Sichuan. This chapter thus aims to recount the hardships of these rural women who were relocated to one of the 'rehabilitated' communities near the township of Yingxiu in Sichuan in 2012. The data for this chapter were gathered over a period of one year when the women earthquake victims were sent to settle in the new apartment complex specially designed to house them. Much information was collected through participant observation and in-depth interviews with women who came into the social work station requesting assistance and services.

Background of the 'rehabilitated' community

Before the earthquake struck, the community was originally situated 2 kilometres away from the closest township. It was also a rural village consisting of three distinct communities. The first was relocated near Chengdu in 2004 when their land was taken over by the local government for constructing a dam. The second and third communities, with a total population of 107 households, or 339 people, were situated in two separate locations. In the main, these communities were made up of people of Han, Tibetan and Jiang backgrounds.

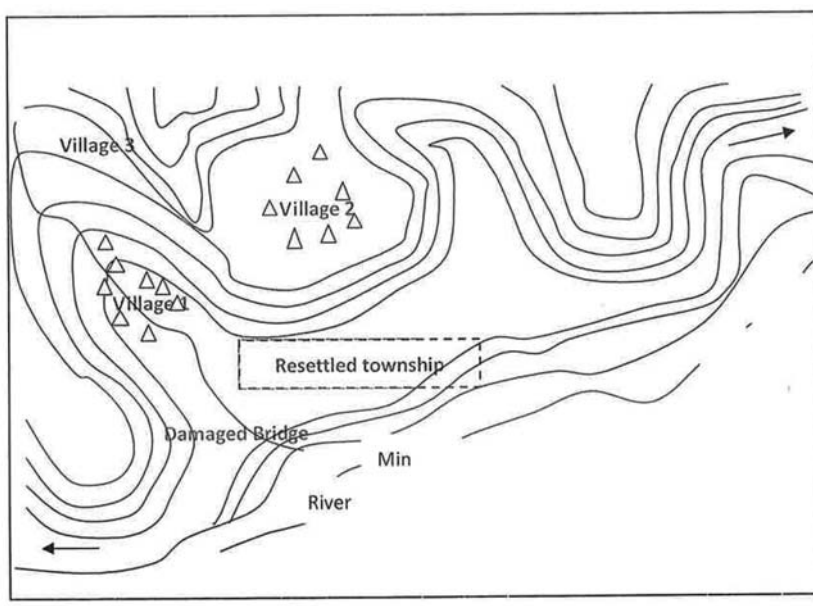

FIGURE 10.1 Location of original villages before relocation

A common characteristic between the latter two communities was that, although many families derived their incomes from farming, many men in fact worked in the nearby township as casual labourers during the slack agricultural seasons. Given these men were always away from home, many women in the villages complained quietly that their 'family relationships' were less than ideal, particularly in that 'there was little communication between husbands and wives' as a consequence of frequent separation and leading almost separate lives. Not surprisingly, many women felt somewhat insecure without their men around to give them 'protection'. These men felt otherwise, however, because they were convinced that, by having their spouses and children living in a community where people knew one another intimately, their absence would not matter at all. Fortunately, those who were left behind in these rural communities, especially among older relatives, felt compelled to band together to give one another support, although it was common to see quarrels or conflicts erupting from time to time among them.

Overall, the impression one gathered was that before the earthquake, for women, life was a bit boring in these communities as they had little option but to accept their traditional roles and duties to look after their children and older parents. Despite this, many women also felt that, with mutual support they had from others, life was not 'uncomfortable' and was 'stable', particularly considering the absence of their men actually had given them more personal space. At the same time, they were also provided with many public places for meeting other women. As one of the informants recalled, 'Sometimes I feel my husband and I were leading separate lives, but I never felt alone in the community because I knew other women well and I felt close whenever I met up with them'.

Likewise, these women were quite 'contented' with their lives because they could grow almost everything they needed to feed themselves, including vegetables and fruit, which they also could sell in the nearby market or along the national highway whenever they had any surplus. For those living on higher ground with a better vista, they could earn extra cash by participating in government-initiated rural tourism projects, renting off their spare renovated rooms supported by government subsidies to visitors from nearby townships or cities. Those living closer to the river could further generate additional income from sand mining. In sum, people in these communities were able to subsist on an annual income as meagre as RMB 3,000 with little difficulty.

Culturally, the Tibetans and Jiang minorities in these communities also were able to find expression. For example, although it was common for men to marry 'into' their spouse's family, such a cultural practice was never considered 'strange' and was widely accepted by Han villagers. As well, these ethnic village members were able to organize their own communal celebration activities (庙会) honouring their traditions and heritage four times a year, usually in February, June and September of the lunar calendar. On these occasions, they were often seen dancing together in a circle with others in the community (跳锅庄) around a bonfire in the public square. These activities had attracted many visitors from adjacent townships,

and even cities to come and stay in the local temples, generating extra income amounting to RMB 6,000 a year for distribution to all community members.

Tragically, the Sichuan earthquake not only killed family members, destroyed their homes and land, but also brought an end to their way of life and sense of community. Out of the 107 households only 97 survived the disaster, while 32 people were killed and another 32 people were severely injured. Of the 505 *mu* of cultivated land in these communities, nearly half, or 200 *mu*, was completely buried. Life was made even more difficult when roads and the water and power supply were reduced to rubble. The only consolation local villagers had was that, because it was common for local men to find work in the nearby townships, many men (and as the main providers for their families) had their lives spared by the catastrophe. However, this also meant that many among those who lost their lives were women who stayed behind to look after their families.

There were numerous aftershocks and, because of these, many villagers had to move and resettle again and again in the following months and years. The frequent relocations, some reported, amounted to 17 times in a period of three years after the major quake struck. This, along with the loss of family members and friends, took a heavy toll on them not only as individuals, but also on a collective level, as the strong community bonds disappeared rapidly, even though social workers and counsellors from the nearby local social work stations were doing their best to rebuild a sense of community among them by reviving their traditional dances and encouraging them to participate in other group activities. These activities had little impact on them as many were living in makeshift tents and temporary houses, and many times they made it known to local social workers that all they hoped for was to get a 'permanent' house so that they could rebuild their 'home'.

Rebuilding life and community

For many, it was more than three years before they were offered something more than a 'shelter' in September 2011. However, rebuilding life was much harder than they had hoped.

The new urban village

As a way to ensure the physical security among earthquake survivors, a total of 98 apartment units were built and provided for the 279 surviving villagers. However, it must be noted that these apartment units were not 'given' to the residents for free – the government was only giving earthquake survivors low-interest loans, or subsidies to purchase their units. Alternatively, home owners who had lost their homes during the earthquake could rebuild their houses using their own money. This meant that, to begin with, many survivors had to borrow money from their relatives or friends, or use their own savings for resettlement, which got many of them into debt.

At first appearance, these two-storey units looked terrific as they were built in a narrow valley and were organized in two-rowed clusters, with one row facing the Min River, the other facing the mountain. They were also surrounded by three main roads, one specifically designed for local pedestrians, the second built along the river for locals to enjoy the river view, and the final one, closest to the hillside, built to link up to the national highway to allow tour buses to visit this 'rehabilitated' community as part of the national strategy for resuscitating the local economy, which the provincial government believed to be one of the most essential measures to help these earthquake victims resurrect their livelihoods.

The first and greatest impact many felt when they were moved to live in their new units was that they had to adapt instantly to an alien and unfamiliar urban lifestyle that was completely new to them, particularly among women. In some ways many women did appreciate the many 'modern' conveniences provided for them in the new units. For example, having modern bathrooms for which they did not have to fetch water for showers; having gas stoves instead of gathering wood and other fuels for cooking; and a cleaner, indoor living environment. In addition, not having to spend as much time on performing these chores also gave them more time for leisure. However, these also brought with them, especially for the women, many new problems they had not anticipated.

For one thing, although they had more time for leisure, many did not know what to do with the extra time they had, as there was little for them to do at home. In the past a favourite pastime for local women was to meet up in the local public square to do their collective circular dance. However, when they were moved into these new apartments, without having their individual houses and associated front yards, unless they had to go out to see their children off to school they saw little reason to go out on their own because they felt the old, intimate community ambience was gone. They also did not feel safe at all, especially when their neighbours were no longer necessarily from the community they used to know. This was due to the fact that, when they were relocated, they were randomly assigned to live in an apartment unit by local authorities rather than by their own choice.

Of course there were good reasons for the government to designate apartment units to these villagers based on random drawing. A lottery draw would appear fair and unbiased so that no one could complain about government favouring a certain ethnic group when deciding who should live where. This would also help to prevent potential conflicts emerging among different members in the community as the unit allocation process was transparent and equal. Subsequently, while many were resigned to the fact that 'what vistas and who would be your neighbour is an act of God', it did not mean that they were comfortable and could live happily with their neighbours. In some cases parents with larger families were forced to live far away from their adult children and grandchildren, instead of just being next door, when their unit allocation was purely based on a random draw. There were also cases where old adversaries ended up unexpectedly as neighbours simply because of such randomization.

In other words, while random allocation may well be a fair system, it also unintentionally destroyed the previous social ties and networks of members of previous communities, and ended up creating a new urbanized community made up of strangers as neighbours with few cultural, blood or place ties. This also surprised many social workers working in the local communities in that they had believed that, when people had experienced so much suffering together after a major disaster, they would feel closer to others from their village. Instead, they grew more distant and alienated from one another.

For women caught up in this situation, it gave them another reason simply to stay home – being the subject of local gossip if they were seen together with 'strangers'. This in turn encouraged them to develop a new routine – watching television, indicating to a certain degree that the traditional sense of community had disappeared. Subsequently, many women when asked if they were not interested in doing what they used to love, i.e. doing traditional collective dances in the public square, admitted that they no longer were motivated to do so. As one informant indicated, 'There is really no point in doing these dances anymore … Now everything becomes so tedious'. Furthermore, when other members in the new urbanized community were asked if they wanted to revive their traditional heritage festival, many also felt apathetic. This led many to believe that sooner or later their traditional culture and heritage would vanish completely if it continued to be considered irrelevant and not treasured.

Rebuilding the economy

As expected, after the earthquake the livelihoods of many local villagers were devastated as they had lost their land, their crops, fruit trees and, worst of all, it was impossible to grow anything on whatever flat land they could find locally as the environment was contaminated by the collapse of the aluminium factory nearby. The frequent and sudden landslides caused by continuous aftershocks made it even more dangerous to farm. A typical case was Mr W who ran a guesthouse before the quake:

> We had a house of about 8–900 square metres, and many elderly visitors would come and stay with us to escape the heat in the summer. We charged 10 *yuan* a day, plus 15 *yuan* for meals per day. Many would stay for a month because we were located near the famous tourist destination of Jiuzhaigou. We were very successful and made a lot of money and because we were new in the business, we decided to use our profits to expand and build more rooms and facilities. But then when the quake hit, we lost everything …

Another case was Mr L who used to live next to the Min River. He was equally successful in fish farming, easily netting RMB 50 to 60,000 a year. However, because of a series of landslides, he lost his fish farm entirely.

Indeed, it was one of the top priorities on the agenda of local government to help earthquake victims to rebuild their livelihoods. To this end, as initiated by the

local planning bureau, the local government decided to promote 'disaster tourism' as a strategy to generate incomes for local communities. In implementing tourism, the government injected a great amount of capital to rebuild the roads, establish 'disaster landmarks' and tourist sites as well as market stalls to enable local villagers to make a living by selling souvenirs and trinkets such as key chains, embroidery, maps and pieces of rubble from disaster sites to visitors.

Initially the strategy seemed to work. Many tourist groups came because they were curious while many others arrived because they wanted to show their compassion and support for the earthquake victims and affected communities. At the same time the construction projects, including building tourist sites and widening roads to allow tourist buses to come in, had also created jobs for some local men. However, most preferred to leave home and work elsewhere to earn more to support their families. For those men who chose to stay behind and worked on local construction sites, they soon found themselves without a job when the construction work was completed. Subsequently they also had to leave and find work elsewhere in places that were farther away from home because the job opportunities in nearby townships were filled up by earlier waves of men seeking employment. This, in turn, put additional pressure on women who were left behind to find ways to generate income to support their families, and many began to look for work, creating further rapid changes in interpersonal relationships in local communities.

Financially, many local villagers found themselves trapped in poverty as they could no longer engage in farming as a way to support themselves. It was a common sight for locals to carve out small plots of land along the banks of the river, near the foot of the hillside and even in front of their apartment buildings, to grow vegetables. 'Everything costs so much' were the words one heard frequently from locals in the community. Those who were more entrepreneurial tried to run family restaurants and grocery shops, as well as makeshift fruit stalls in the street. However, eventually they failed because the streets were basically empty most of the time, and the volume of business was simply too small to sustain their operations. At the end of 2011, the average annual personal income among villagers in the community was estimated around RMB 1,000, a big drop from what they had before the earthquake.

Understandably, many women had little option but to find work on tourist sites selling souvenirs or drinks. As one woman informant candidly remarked, 'What else can I do because I have my parents and children to support? I simply cannot stay home and let them starve'. Having to take on additional work was not only physically tiring; they also had to contend with tremendous emotional costs.

Emotional costs

Many women immediately found it hard working on tourist sites because what they were required to do was to 'rub salt on our own wounds'. As a way to gain attention from visitors and increase their sales, they soon realized it was hard having

to recount their personal tragic stories to get their customers interested. Before long they also discovered that, unless they kept making up sadder stories about the tragic events they had endured, tourists were reluctant and uninterested in buying anything. The situation worsened when tourist numbers began to dwindle and some vendors began resorting to 'shedding tears' just to get tourists buying. As one informant commented sadly, 'The higher the number of deaths you tell the tourists, the more likely you win their sympathy and get them to spend on you. But this is so despicable …'

Emotionally they felt resentful because they were reduced to becoming subjects of 'pity'. Worse still, when everyone started to compete with one another by fabricating further heartbreaking but apparently ridiculous tales, animosity was also generated among the vendors. Considering that many of these women had already had a most difficult time immediately after the earthquake dealing with the trauma of losing their close friends, their resentment was in fact also a sad lamentation on the loss of the innocence, friendship and intimacy they once had with members of their community.

Public space

According to the informants at the social work station, public space in the new urbanized community had a major influence on women's emotional well-being. A scenario women regularly talked about was mounting economic pressure as a consequence of living in an urbanized setting with few local employment opportunities and limited channels for earning extra income. Many agreed that conflicts between them and their husbands over money or financial issues were much more frequent and common. However, the impact on them went much further. In an apartment block where individual units were built close to one another, women were made to feel more miserable when quarrels erupted because they felt their privacy had been compromised. A number of the informants indicated they felt very 'uncomfortable' with the new living environment. As one informant explained, 'Often at night when I'm alone, I could hear the sound of the flowing river on one side of my room, and the howling noises made by wild cats in the hills on the other, I feel anxious and worry whether my next door neighbours are secretly watching me, peeping behind their curtains …' Another informant expressed similar sentiments, remarking, 'When I looked across the window, I could see clearly everything in that room – you know, the desk, the closet, the patterns of the curtains and everything. Whenever people in the room had a conversation, or watched a movie on television, I could hear every word that came out there. All these made me feel I needed to draw the curtains closed in my room because there wouldn't be any privacy at all had I not done so'.

Given their husbands' frequent absence, many began to feel they were more than alone – in fact, they had been left in limbo. When the sense of insecurity sank in further they began to lock their front doors, something that they would never have considered doing when they lived in their rural habitat. As a result, this

further made the community look and feel like a 'ghost town', especially when the majority of small businesses did not survive, leaving streets empty and deserted.

An unanticipated consequence of all this was that many women found little reason for going out other than taking their children to school and walking them home. As one informant explained, 'We'll have to be more careful about visiting and interacting with other people in the community, particularly if we don't know them too well. You see, this is because our men are not around a lot, and people will gossip if you are not at home regularly and rumours will fly around insinuating that you are doing something or involved with someone "improper"'. For this reason, and also because of their extreme caution, children were also discouraged from going out to play with other children, especially those from a different ethnic background. Such tension and suspicion that people had developed among themselves thus became a major force for fuelling a community that many women described as spatially 'abandoned', 'alienated' and 'cold', which in turn further reinforced their emotional desolation.

It was not uncommon to hear from women living in the new community expressing their wish to return to their old habitat up on the mountain, not only because it was their 'homeland', but also because they felt they were more in control of their lives.

Social workers who spent time working in the community had, in fact, found that some long-term residents were still living in their partially collapsed, dilapidated houses. When they were asked why they did not move to the new, modern apartment units where they would not have to worry about problems of mosquitos, water and fuel supply, their answers were simple and direct:

> We have a large family but the new units would not be able to allow us to live under the same roof. It is also difficult to live with young people, and with the apartment block's management. We could easily plant some beans and vegetables in the apartment's front yard, but the property manager refused to let us do it because having crops in the yard does not go well with the look of the apartment which was designed by some well-known architect. For us, how can we support ourselves if we can't grow our food? In here, we can also raise pigs and chickens …

For many young women, however, having seen their close friends and family members lose their lives during the earthquake, as well as realizing much of their collective memories were erased when many of the public spaces were not rebuilt in their new community, it was difficult to stay on. Instead, many indicated their wish simply to leave and start a new life elsewhere – especially when they saw that plaques inscribed with names of donors were displayed prominently in almost every new building in their community. A few women informants confessed, 'I can understand why it was done but, at the same time, these inscriptions and plaques keep reminding us that this is not our place, but a place with no collective memories of our own'. Reading deeper into their words, it becomes more

apparent that their sentiment was not just about the disappearance of traditional-looking buildings and places, but was also about not having a say, or more specifically, as one informant put it, 'the absence of voices of women', in rebuilding their community.

To many local women, this also meant their needs were completely ignored. For example, they were hoping that they would get a bigger kitchen in their apartment units because 'we'll have to provide three meals a day for our family members and we spend a lot of our time in the kitchen everyday'. They were also hoping that their new homes would have sufficient public space for caring for their surviving family members who were old, or mobility challenged, but eventually they were most disappointed because the design paid little attention to meeting the special needs of the earthquake survivors, especially for older people and those who were injured, either having difficulties walking up and down the steps to get to their units when the building was not provided with an elevator, or any ramp or access for people with disability or in wheelchairs. Subsequently, many found they were literally 'imprisoned' in their homes because it was so hard for them to go outside and return. In this context, many women felt that the provision of space in their resettled new community was gender-blind, hostile to older people and those with a disability. As a number of informants commented, the entire resettlement process seemed to have been conceptualized and built for not only men, but men who were healthy, young, active and productive. Ironically, they were also the ones who were hardly around and were irregular users.

Conclusion

The earthquake that struck Wenchuan in Sichuan province in 2008 was one of the most serious and devastating natural disasters in China's history (Nash, 1976; China Earthquake Administration et al., 2010). Given its immense physical destruction and scale of suffering, including loss of lives, emotional wreckage imposed on the victims, economic loss, and the eventual difficult process of rebuilding or rehabilitating affected communities, not surprisingly there has been a proliferation of publications on the problems confronted by the earthquake victims as well as the post-disaster community recovery. While many of these studies are devoted to highlighting the immediate aftermath of the earthquake – i.e. overcrowding, mental health or post-traumatic stress disorder, public health and sanitation, community economy and disaster relief (Bian et al., 2009; Chan et al., 2011; Huang & Wong, 2013; Kun et al., 2010; Liu et al., 2011; Li et al., 2011; Pei et al., 2009; Teets, 2009; Ting & Chen, 2012; Xiao & Van Zandt, 2012) – little is known about the effects of the many intervention efforts implemented for assisting earthquake survivors to cope with their psycho-social stress and loss, rebuilding the local economy, adapting to the reconstructed community, particularly from a woman's perspective. One of the objectives of this chapter is to bridge this knowledge gap and examine how such a perspective could contribute to developing a better understanding of and planning for more effective post-disaster resettlement.

In this case study of women rebuilding lives in one of the affected communities in Sichuan, and from the perspective of the informants, despite all good intentions of the central and local governments to assist all earthquake victims in the quickest possible time, many of their efforts were disappointing. The most glaring mistake they made was their insensitive imposition of a new urban way of living onto the earthquake survivors in their process of resettlement. Relocating survivors away from their culturally distinctive rural habitats, they were put together in an apartment block without realization that apartment living was essentially an urban lifestyle. The process of changing from a rural existence to entering an urban way of survival involves complex layers of adjustment and adaptation that were often personally and socially difficult as well as confusing, not to mention economically arduous. The severity of the loss of a sense of place and community, and the need to rebuild feelings of belonging, closeness and a commitment among survivors to live together with others in a new community, did not seem to have received much attention in the post-disaster reconstruction efforts organized by governments. Yet according to previous studies, social capital and community resilience have proven essential in moderating and buffering depressive post-traumatic impacts (Flores et al., 2014; Aldrich, 2011, 2012; Cox & Perry, 2011; Tse et al., 2013).

In rebuilding a post-disaster economy the government-initiated 'disaster tourism' might have generated much-needed income for some local families, but it was apparent that the project was doomed even when it first commenced, as the curiosity, compassion and appeal that were driving tourists to visit disaster sites would wane over time. Yet long-term planning for reviving or rebuilding local community businesses was simply absent.

Most importantly, based on the stories gathered from local women, many felt the intervention efforts made by governments were not effective because they had failed to undertake a gender perspective to work out how to meet their needs – an indication that their critical roles in keeping their family together as well as maintaining well-being had not been taken into consideration seriously by decision makers. This has reconfirmed Enarson's (1998) observation that gender issues are rarely examined by disaster scholars, and perhaps decision makers. This also means that, in post-earthquake reconstruction, greater attention needs to be directed to the crucial role of participatory planning, which is not a novel idea in China (Ying, 2009), but should be promoted to involve women in the future (Emel Ganapati, 2012).

It has been acknowledged that the occurrence of natural disasters will become more frequent and their impacts more severe as our climate and weather are becoming more extreme. In fact, risk reduction and enhancement of community resilience are considered most important for minimizing loss and rebuilding life and communities for disaster victims by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR, 2015). However, it is equally apparent that post-disaster rehabilitation work would become more effective with civic participation. The findings of this case study from China have illustrated well that, in managing disasters,

governments often seem to rely primarily on economic, technical and other quantitative data, statistical analyses, and formal 'premise-argument-conclusion' argumentation as their bases for decision making (Epstein et al., 2012), while ignoring the importance of 'situated knowledge' as a valuable source of information for problem analysis. This is particularly the case when narratives or stories illustrating highly contextual points of view of lay people are ignored, or regarded as illegitimate or unacceptable evidence for designing programmes and services delivered to needy recipients.

As illustrated in this study, given that the perspective of women and of ordinary citizens was considered situated outside the policy community, and they do not share any of the repertoires of the so-called professional decision makers, it confirms further what Cerezo and García (1996: 57) reiterated – that 'expert knowledge is not epistemically self-sufficient', but rather 'contextually dependent'. In this context, in planning for post-disaster reconstruction, public engagement is crucial (Ge et al., 2010).

It is high time that the contribution of situated knowledge, i.e. 'information about impacts, problems, enforceability, contributory causes, unintended consequences, etc. that is known by the members of the public because of their lived experience in the complex reality' (Farina et al., 2012: 148), be acknowledged. As social science researchers caught in an era of impending emergencies and instability, greater continuous efforts must be made to test and refine the tools for collecting such knowledge to help minimize emotional costs and strengthen resilience in disasters.

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11

THE 'FACE' OF EARTHQUAKE DISASTER REPORTING

Inspecting *Kahoku Shimpo*'s sources of information

I-Hsuan Lin

Rethinking earthquake disaster coverage

In the aftermath of the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, attention in daily news stories shifted to earthquake disaster coverage. However, the coverage following disaster events both in Japan and abroad tends to be rather transient in duration. Following the 11 March 2011 earthquake and the series of simultaneous disasters that accompanied it, the density and pace of news coverage quickly intensified, with news companies in fierce competition with each other. However, with the passage of time, as normalcy was restored, the once intense coverage calmed down and fewer articles were written about the disaster, the topic decreasingly appeared in the newspapers, and eventually disappeared from the pages entirely. Disaster reporting comes with an 'expiration date' – i.e. a time when readers are saturated with coverage and writers write about other topics. However, thinking from the perspective of those directly affected by disasters, this tendency in the news media could result in grave outcomes, such as fragmented recollections of the event and obliteration of issues.

The 11 March 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake completely changed the image we held of such disasters. Pictures of the catastrophe have been etched into our minds, striking with such unexpected power to demolish an entire coastline, taking the lives of thousands of people, and rendering a town completely destroyed. The destruction was so acute that we could barely believe our eyes.

On 12 March 2011, the day after the initial earthquakes, Japan experienced a nuclear meltdown in Fukushima that released radioactive pollution, presenting a serious threat that continues to this day. Moreover, tax increases, the high cost of reconstruction and rumors have inflicted financial damage, and led to complications in the coverage of the disaster. These complications also led to political problems going from bad to worse. Facing such a brutal reality, what point of view does the coverage from local papers in the afflicted areas assume?

The phrase 'surreal sight' appeared frequently in an overwhelming number of news stories. This phrase struck the hearts of both journalists and readers, acutely conveying the condition of the victims. Just who was using the phrase 'surreal event', and what exactly was said? In order to ask the question 'Who is disaster coverage for?', I have chosen to examine data collected from a local newspaper, *Kahoku Shimpo*, which I describe in the following section.

Inspecting the source of information

Kahoku Shimpo is a local newspaper operating in the region directly afflicted by the Great East Japan Earthquake. Headquartered in Sendai with branches in Tokyo and Osaka, it was first published as a daily paper in 1897. *Kahoku Shimpo* boasts about 300 journalists and eight head offices in cities including Fukushima, Kesennuma and Ishinomaki, with 31 branch offices in cities such as Shizugawa and Iwanuma. *Kahoku Shimpo* is a mid-sized newspaper company, which, according to its website, has a morning edition print run of approximately 480,000 copies, and an evening edition with a print run of approximately 100,000 copies, issued across all six prefectures of the Tohoku (northeastern) region. Even after the quake struck, *Kahoku Shimpo* never missed a day's publication and continues to publish to this day. Taking into account that it has long been popular in the Tohoku region with a 70% market share in Miyagi Prefecture where it is the pride of the locals, the paper represents the local perspective and is considered suitable source material for this study.

To get an idea of whose voice is most represented in the earthquake disaster coverage in local papers, I asked the question 'Whose face appeared most in the articles?' By 'face in the articles', I mean the source of information, and for this study, these terms are interchangeable. Whether the source of information is explicitly stated or not is crucial when measuring the credibility of an article's contents (Fujita, 2010), particularly when the article concerns sensitive issues and keeping a watch on authorities in politics and economics. However, it is important not only to measure the credibility of the source of information but also to understand the character of the people who are portrayed in the articles. What kinds of people are portrayed in each story, with what configuration on the printed page, and, importantly, what implications does the story take on? I wish to conduct an examination from the point of view of the 'faces' that appear in the paper.

For this investigation, I have analyzed every page of *Kahoku Shimpo* from 12 March 2011, the day after the quake, to 11 April 2011. In 2011, *Kahoku Shimpo* published an anthology that reprinted the coverage from 11 March to 11 April 2011, but there were some articles that were omitted from the collection. To clarify, the data for this investigation were collated from the original daily newspaper publications. Over 70% of the articles printed in this timeframe were related to the disaster. I analyzed a total of 2,512 articles, of which 2,014 were published across 31 morning editions and 498 were published in 25 evening editions (lifestyle-related information was exempted from this analysis; see Figure 11.1). In addition,

when disaster coverage was compared to the average number of pages published per edition before the earthquake, there was a dramatic reduction in the page count for papers published during the period covered in this study. Figure 11.2 demonstrates the data for newspaper page counts published throughout the month following the disaster. With 520 pages collected from the morning papers and 118 pages from the evening papers, there were a total of 638 pages. The results of a simple calculation confirmed that each page contained, on average, approximately four disaster-related articles. However, until 9 April 2011, approximately two pages per paper were allocated to lifestyle-related information, such as traffic, critical infrastructure, healthcare, communications and broadcasting, goods, and telephone consulting, along with other pages covering the disaster. This was vital information for the victims who survived the disaster. There were also about one to two pages that featured photographs, lists of the victims' names and those who were missing, advertisements expressing sympathy, and television programming information. After removing this lifestyle information from the equation, approximately four or more articles remained on each page in which the source of information was present.

Thus, I was able to fully comprehend the organization of space in *Kahoku Shimpo*'s printed pages during the month following the disaster. Next, I viewed the 2,512 articles to examine who appeared as the information source and what kind of 'face' the paper created from these sources.

For analyses of the sources of information, I used the classification criteria that were adapted by Hiroshi Fujita when he conducted a study of front pages from *Asahi Shimbun* and *Yomiuri Shimbun* in February and August 1977, 1987 and 1997. Fujita investigated, '[W]hether or not sources of information were credited and if so, the ways in which they were mentioned' (Fujita, 2010: 114). In the present

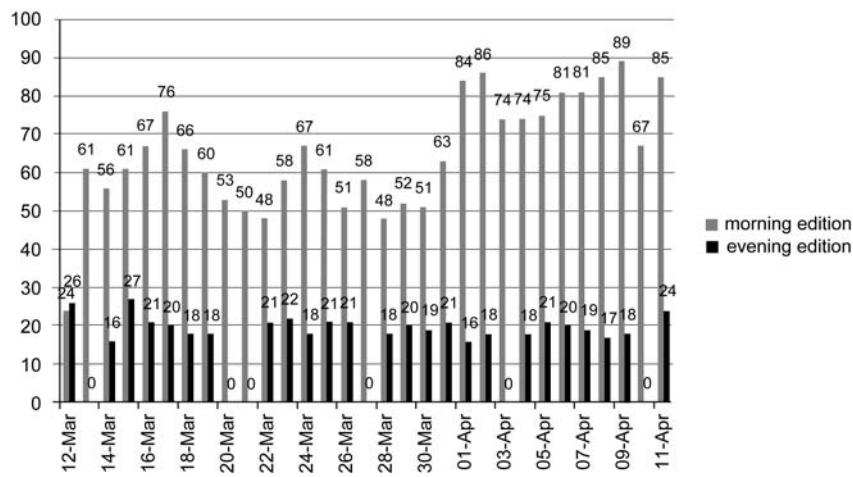

FIGURE 11.1 Kahoku Shimpo morning edition/evening edition 12 March–11 April 2011

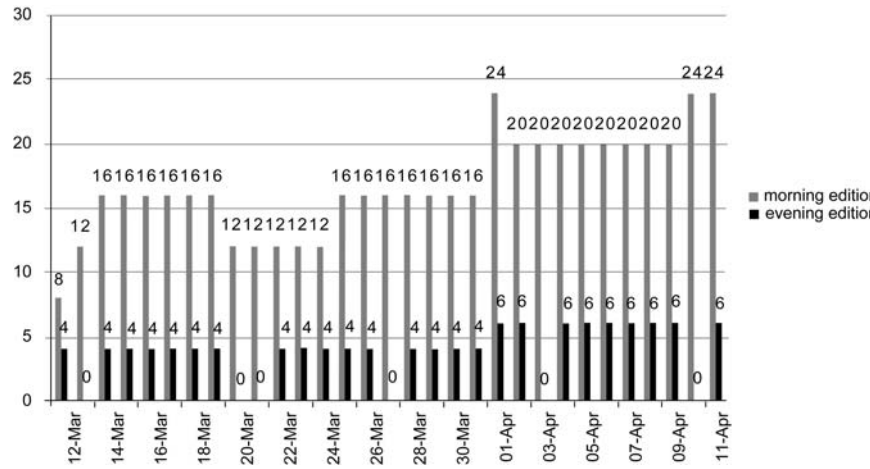

FIGURE 11.2 Kahoku Shimpo 12 March–11 April 2011

investigation, in addition to the presence or absence of the source of information, I examined the degree to which the source was stated explicitly.

First, I classified the sources of information into the following two categories: (A) 'government sources', and (B) 'sources of the people'. Government sources refer to statements and remarks made by government officials, government agencies, municipalities, and organizations established from public funds. Sources of the people represent statements and remarks made by general corporations, private companies, individuals, and non-profit organizations (NPOs)/non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The category of government sources has been further divided into three subcategories: both the position at the agency and the personal name were stated explicitly (A-1); the name of the agency was stated explicitly, but not the individual's name or position of the actual source (A-2); and neither the agency name nor an individual's name or position at the agency was stated explicitly (A-3). Clearly, A-1 is the most ideal for conveying the source of government information in detail to the reader. A-3 represents information that allows the reader to safely presume that the source of information was a 'government official', but there is no clarity about the identity or position of the source, leaving the reader without any idea from which official in what position the information was obtained.

Similarly, the category 'sources of the people' has also been divided into subcategories: names of private organizations or companies where the source's name and affiliation were stated explicitly (B-1); names of private organizations or companies where the source's affiliation was stated explicitly, but the source's name was not given (B-2); and neither the company name, source's affiliation, nor the source's name was stated explicitly (B-3). Some examples of the latter subcategory include unemployed man/woman, and conference attendee. A third category, 'news agency/other articles' (C), was established to distinguish news sources that were not

affiliated with *Kahoku Shimpo*. Finally, given that there were articles where the source could not be confirmed, a category was created, 'source not applicable', for articles in which it was not necessary to document the source, as in cases where the journalist was a first-hand observer at the scene and acted as their own source, or where a scheduled event or facts from the past were referenced.

The 'face' that built the page

The numbers obtained in the classification described above were arranged separately for morning papers, evening papers, and morning + evening papers (Figure 11.3). However, in cases where there were information sources with multiple categories in one article, the final result was the general number of information sources surpassing the general number of articles, since the method used takes both records separately.

First, examining the ratio of categories A (governmental information sources) and B (private sector information sources) for morning papers, the ratio was A = 47% and B = 45%. For evening papers, the ratio was A = 33% and B = 59%. Morning + evening papers produced the results A = 44% and B = 48%. From these numbers, we can affirm that morning papers and morning + evening papers have practically the same ratios for information sources in categories A and B, respectively, with the number of articles appearing roughly at the same levels.

On the other hand, solely examining evening papers, category B sources appear 1.8 times more frequently in the number of articles based on information sources from category A, confirming a clear disparity between the categories. However, considering that the number of articles in evening papers is only a fourth of the number of articles in morning papers, and that the numbers for morning + evening are very close to the numbers for categories A and B, preliminarily it can be said that, overall, the frequency of articles published based on information from ordinary citizens and groups is approximately at the same level as those published using information from government officials and politicians.

Government information sources appearing with organizational faces

To assess governmental information sources for credibility and reliability, examining the ratio of mistaken information and analyzing the form of the text of the article is one option. However, in this section our main concern was the level of information source transparency.

There are some common points in the results of the verification achieved this time. For morning, evening, and morning + evening papers, providing very vague information described earlier as type A-3 (name of organization, title or individual not clearly stated) was extremely rare. For example, forms of writing that do not clarify where accountability comes from, such as a 'government-related person', 'a member of the government', or 'a related person' are frequently criticized (refer to

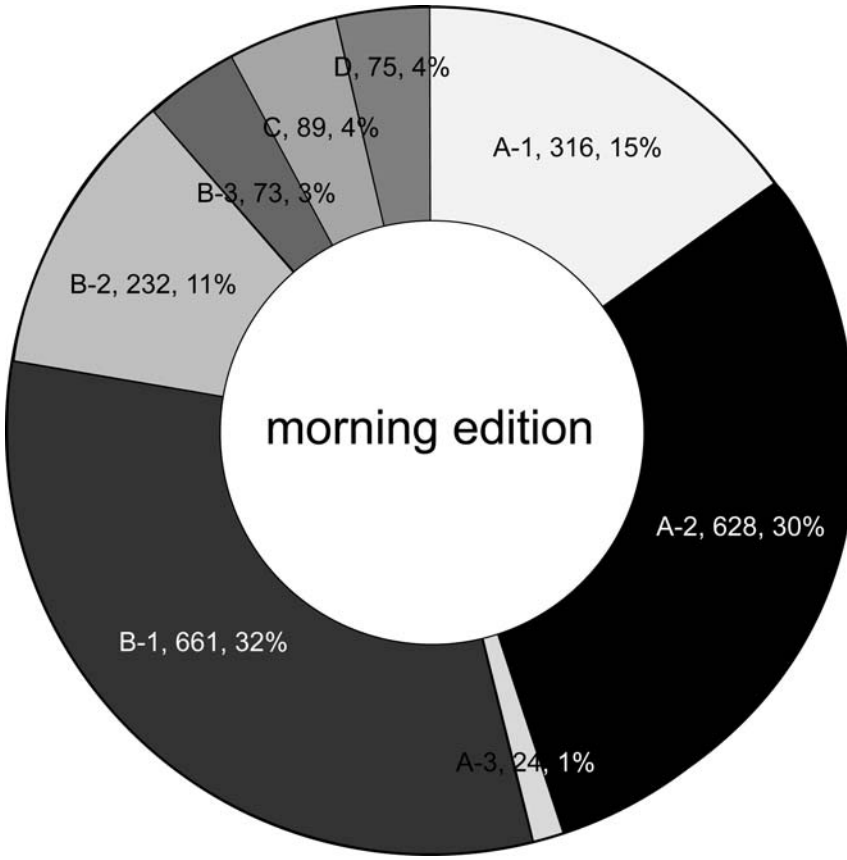

FIGURE 11.3.1 Kahoku Shimpo sources of information – morning edition

Fujita, 2010, for an analysis of the handling of governmental information sources in Japanese newspapers), and accounted for less than 1% of the total number of articles from governmental sources. From this point of view, considering the great confusion caused by the occurrence of this earthquake, all newspapers that published governmental information sources clearly provided accountability information, suggesting an effort to support the reliability of articles. The result of this effort can be confirmed by the number of articles published in the categories of A-1 (articles clearly indicating individual names and titles within organizations) and A-2 (articles where names of organizations were clearly indicated, but titles or individual names were not).

The ratio and number of cases related to the results of types A-1 and A-2 are separately indicated in Figure 11.3. In any case, the ratio and number of cases for A-2 were larger than those for A-1. A-1 conveyed its message showing faces clearly as public figures, narrating the nuclear reactor accident and evacuation problems,

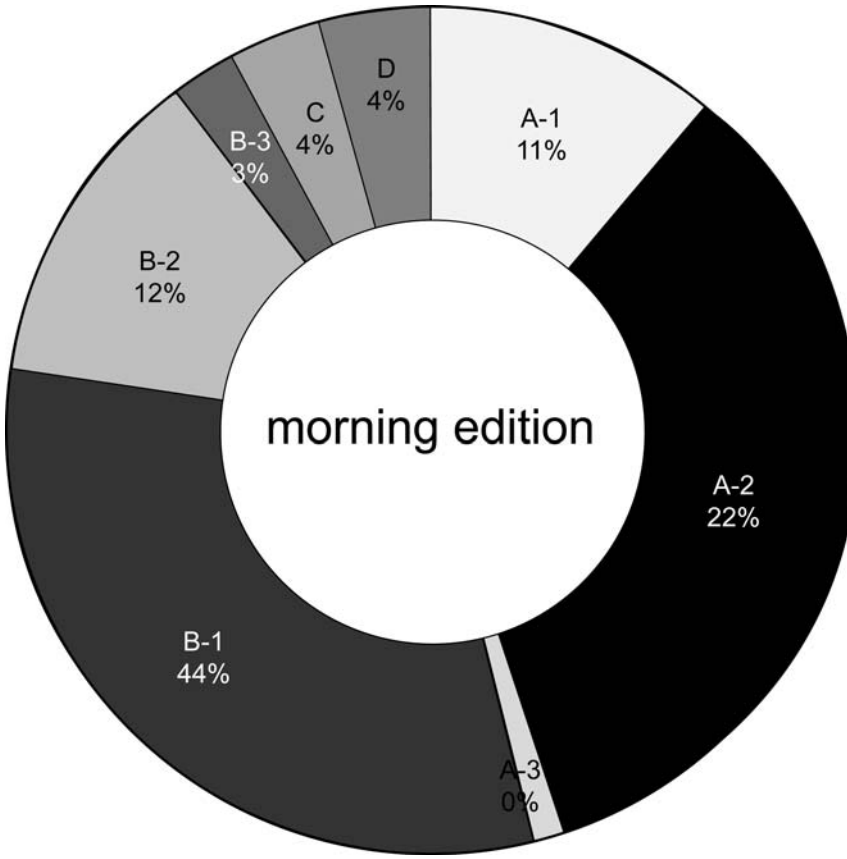

FIGURE 11.3.2 Kahoku Shimpo sources of information – morning edition

using proper names and titles of authority such as 'Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano', 'Prime Minister Naoto Kan', and 'Miyagi Prefecture Governor Yoshihiro Murai'. A-2 primarily provided formal names of the agencies providing information or a general title, such as 'The Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency of the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry has announced …', 'According to the person-in-charge from the Committee on Nuclear Energy Safety', 'According to the Miyagi Prefecture Anti-Disaster Headquarters', 'A city official', 'According to the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare/Ministry of Defense/Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism', 'A leading member of the Prefecture Education Committee has stated', and 'The city office has talked of'. Although a determined type of information source is clearly described, the only aspect that is revealed is, at best, the 'organizational face' of a government entity.

Additionally, although we have divided information sources generally into 'governmental sources of information' and 'private sector sources of information' for the sake of convenience, in reality B-2 includes a type of 'para-governmental

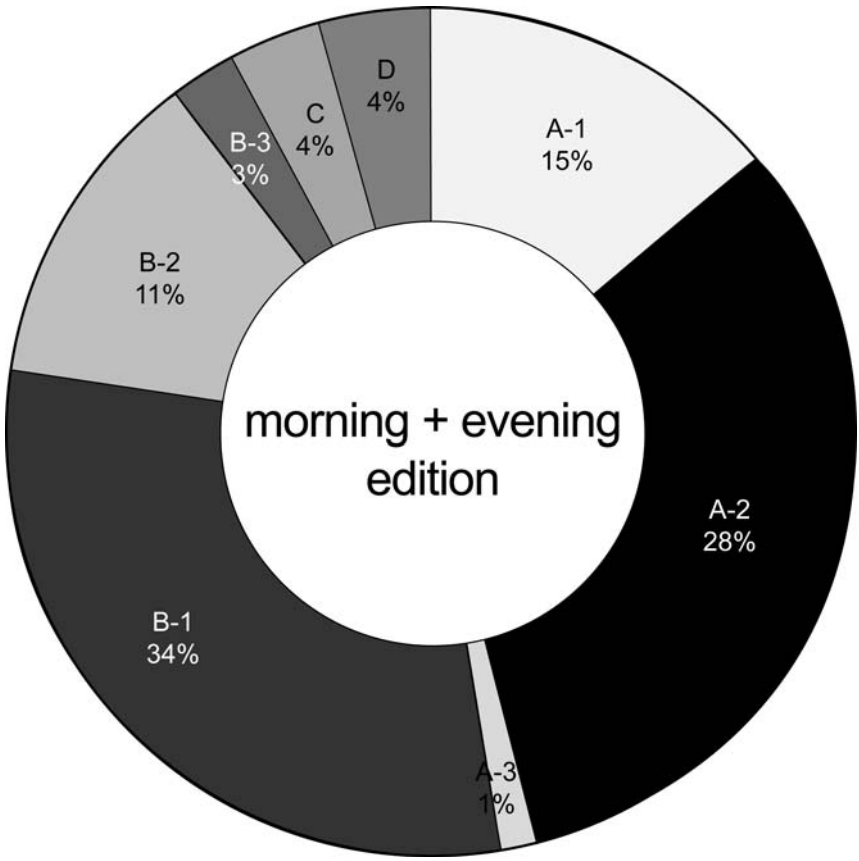

FIGURE 11.3.3 Kahoku Shimpo sources of information – morning and evening editions

information source' that includes private companies, such as the Tokyo Electric Power Company or the Tohoku Electric Power Company. Considering the fact that in this nuclear accident, both companies, particularly Tokyo Electric Power, were hidden information sources that could have had a considerable influence on government decisions, it seems appropriate to consider Tokyo Electric Power and Tohoku Electric Power as governmental information sources as well.

In morning papers the number of articles where both companies were cited as sources of information reached a rough estimate of 3% (67 cases). Adding these numbers to A-2 increases it to 33%. Re-dividing these numbers along these lines in morning, evening, or morning + evening papers, A-2 sources become twice the number of A-1 sources. Therefore, in newspapers, with governmental information sources, the 'faces of organization' from the public sector and local government appear at twice the frequency in comparison to the 'faces of public figures'. Although it might be considered difficult for journalists to demonstrate in detail all potential governmental sources of information due to limitations such as the

number of characters and deadlines, providing transparency about who is responsible for public statements is important for the recovery of areas afflicted by disasters. We have emphasized the importance of clarity in government information sources. Furthermore, there is another important problem that has been exposed concerning government information regarding the Fukushima nuclear power reactor accident.

Innumerable statements and excuses were published that resulted from conflicts arising from the back-scratching relationships between the government and Tokyo Electric Power that the incident exposed. This new public awareness caused a lack of trust in the information being provided that was followed by a tremendous scare about the spread of radioactive material in the affected areas due to delayed responses by these sources. Even when reports from government information sources were abundant and publicized in detail, people doubted how much they could trust this information was true, for fear of the 'information quality' problem. Many false rumors were spread and reputational risks occurred as a result of inaccuracy of the government-issued statements and the public distrust of government information.

Private-sector information sources cited with their real names

Figure 11.3 clearly indicates that B-1 (a category for published articles with a clear citing of the names of private groups/company as well as the titles and names of the source individuals) is the highest ratio in comparison with other B categories. The order of the highest to lowest numbers is B-1> B-2> B-3. In morning and evening papers (Figure 11.3), B-1 has high ratios of 31% (661 cases) and 44% (245 cases), respectively, while the majority of 'ordinary people/private individuals' who provided information that was published were victims of the disaster or people related to areas affected by the disaster. They are typically described in print as 'Mr/Ms XXX (age) = XXX City, XXX area, Number XXX' or 'Mr/Ms XXX, Profession/Company XXX (age)', with real names, ages, home addresses and professions. These articles were often accompanied by pictures of the individuals in the story and statements conveying their emotions and sentiments. On the other hand, B-2 occurred in one third to one fourth of the ratio of B-1 (in morning editions, 11% = 322 cases; in evening editions, 12% = 69 cases), citing information sources such as Tokyo Electric Power official, employee of Izumi Ward, and the Japan Red Cross. As explained above, excluding B-2 from the morning papers, since Tokyo Electric Power should be considered more as a 'para-governmental information source', the ratio falls by another 3%.

Additionally, comparing government sources of information to private-sector information sources, the impact of the latter is markedly evident. For example, both evening papers and morning papers had a largely equal ratio of approximately 90% of the total when A-1 and A-2 and B-1 and B-2 were combined. However, the defining difference was the size of the presence of category B sources in evening papers. B-1 had twice as many articles as A-1, representing 44% of the sample,

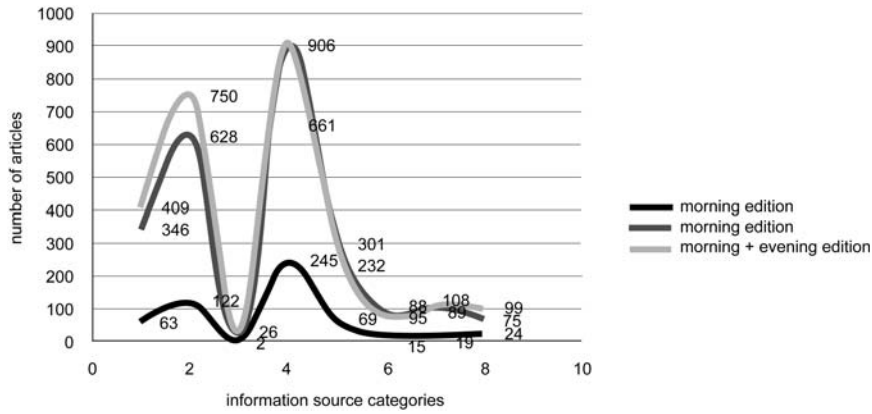

FIGURE 11.4 Kahoku Shimpo sources of information

close to half of the total of samples. Evening papers, in comparison to morning papers, focused more on a large number of individuals and private groups, assuring that their circumstances and voices were determined. On the other hand, the ratio of articles based on governmental information sources, i.e. government, government officials, organizations, etc., decreased in comparison with morning papers, stopping at slightly above 30%. Furthermore, as Figure 11.4 demonstrates, in morning + evening papers the disparity between B-1 and A-2 sources was even greater. In morning + evening papers, B-1 reaches 906 cases or 34%, a number that is not at all low. Calculating the total category B for morning + evening papers reveals 1,295 cases or 48%.

Up to this point, what we can conclude from this sequence of comparisons and analyses is that *Kahoku Shimpo*'s position on reporting on this earthquake disaster focused on the local people and was markedly visible. Through an inspection of category B, it is evident that close to half of the articles portray the voices of the disaster victims about real conditions in areas afflicted by the disaster. Also, more than 40% of the articles in evening papers provided the real names and ages of real people who were giving their real testimony. The paper depended less on only government entities' formal announcements, and showed a preference for carefully assembling the real voices of the populace and transmitting the reality of the disaster-stricken areas as seen through their eyes and as experienced by them daily.

Articles and serial stories focusing on disaster victims as interested parties

Kashiwagi and Maehara identified a major difference between the coverage of *Kahoku Shimpo* and three national papers, *Asahi Shimbun*, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, and *Mainichi Shimbun*, which indicated the 'importance given to reporting on the earthquake and tsunami' (Kashiwagi & Maehara, 2012). This finding is strongly

related to the distribution of information sources described in this chapter. The reason more private sector information sources in category B were published was directly related to the engagement of local reporters essentially investigating the areas damaged by the earthquake and the tsunami. This was an invaluable testimony acquired from people within the debris areas, in the evacuation areas, hospitals, town halls and temporary residences. For example, the serial story 'Evacuation area now' started on 15 March, in addition to carefully recording the terror at the time of the disaster, the feelings of sorrow due to the loss of family and friends, the joy of reunions, and the despair in rebuilding lives, also chronicled the lack of sufficient food and emergency supplies, the tragedy of transmittable diseases, and other difficulties that people faced living in the evacuation areas. From 20 March, it determined the cries and thoughts of people in each of the evacuation areas in five-paragraph articles (around 780 cm^2), with approximately 50 Japanese characters for each person, continuing to transmit their actual voices. The serial story 'Funbaru (persevere hard) – the 3.11 Great Earthquake disaster', which started on 22 March, emphasized the names of individuals and groups in its headlines, highlighting those who were trying to rebuild the bases of their lives after evacuation through their own efforts and without depending on help from the administration. These articles also recorded in detail how earnestly people were trying to deal with the mountain of problems they were facing while providing support for handicapped children, care of children's emotional conditions, care for the elderly, and rebuilding local businesses.

Another characteristic of the articles investigated was the coexistence in the same article of information sources from both the government and the private sector. These articles attempted to structure their content to focus information from governmental sources as a spotlight on local concerns including the local people's perspectives.

In the end – earthquake reporting for whose purpose?

Focusing on aspects of information sources, we have examined the contents of articles about earthquake disasters in the local newspaper, *Kahoku Shimpo*, to reveal the 'faces' reflected from the sources of information. Whether these 'faces' were government related or not, they were captured in a broader sense as disaster-affected parties entangled in complex relationships caused by this grave disaster. Although reporting on the earthquake disaster should be in the interests of the affected parties, it is also necessary to carefully observe the power relationships that cross and inform these interested parties.

The role of earthquake reporting should be to emphasize all interested parties, to reveal the existence of weak ones placed in disadvantaged positions, and to pursue those responsible for the policies and political decisions that contribute negatively to such unfortunate situations. In this disaster, the position of *Kahoku Shimpo* tended to focus more narrowly on interested parties who were primarily the weakest of local victims. This conclusion was confirmed not only as an impression but also

statistically through this investigation. Also, although outside the study period for this investigation, in papers from 12 April onward, serial stories published for posterity about the earthquake disaster, with titles such as 'The 3.11 Great Earthquake and Tsunami disaster that I saw', 'The Great Earthquake disaster document', 'Memory – I will not forget you', were initiated. By April 2012, one year after these events, even though the papers had returned to their pre-disaster editorial structures, articles such as 'Disaster victims now', and 'Testimony/spotlight on the 3.11 Great Earthquake disaster', continued using a large space covering the investigation that is trying to identify the reasons for such a grave tragedy that resulted in so much sacrifice.

With the passage of time, the type of reporting on a past earthquake changes. Yet we hope that it will continue to determine the voices of a large number of interested parties, making society aware of their existence through the newspapers, and sharing with society the issues they faced and how the event will affect their lives forever.

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PART III

Social theory and the psycho-social dimensions of disasters

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12

TO DWELL IN AMBIVALENCE

On the promise and dilemmas of Beck's 'The Art of Doubt'

John Cash

In his analyses of the contemporary period – which he termed the world risk society – Ulrich Beck argued that the new technological, economic and political constellation that has arisen over the past several decades carries inside itself both risks of catastrophe and, also, newly released imperatives, indeed necessities, that contain, potentially, a bright upside. This potential upside involves the psychic and cultural shift to what Beck (1997) has termed 'the art of doubt': a way of being, relating and acting in the world that has become the essential corrective to the mega-hazards of the global risk society. Globally, we are at a crossroads and, unless the art of doubt is instituted as the proper mode of being, thinking, feeling, relating and acting in the world, that world – our world – will self-generate its own mutually assured destruction. As Beck puts it:

> [S]ince the middle of the twentieth century the social institutions of industrial society have been confronted with the historically unprecedented possibility of the destruction through decision-making of all life on this planet. This distinguishes our epoch not only from the early phase of the industrial revolution, but also from all other cultures and social forms … [P]olitical stability in risk societies is the stability of not thinking about things. Put more precisely, nuclear, chemical, genetic and ecological mega-hazards abolish the four pillars of the calculus of risks.
>
> *(Beck, 1999: 53)*

For instance, the loss of these four pillars that previously enabled the adequate calculation of risks has produced an ontological and experiential metamorphosis – as in the way the 'accident' is experienced and understood. Beck (1999: 54) nicely captures the insidious, haunting assault on ontological security that is involved:

> [T]he 'accident' loses its delimitations in time and space, and therefore its meaning. It becomes an event with a beginning and no end; 'an open-ended festival' of creeping, galloping and overlapping waves of destruction … [where] calculation turns into obfuscation.

Given this fearsome prognosis, Beck does well to find hope amongst such dread prospects. For Beck, the two are internally related as it is actually these very dread prospects that generate the hope for a bright side to the world risk society. As Beck (1997: 163) puts it, there is 'a glowing spark inside people's self-images' that may free them from the mentalities and practices that have generated and accompanied the world risk society and its wealth of mega-hazards. However, this hope is more than merely a worthy ambition; an ideal to be aimed for in the best of all possible worlds. Rather, for Beck, its realization is an absolute necessity if mutually assured destruction is to be avoided. According to Beck, we are all playing the ultimate high-stakes game in which only a new 'ethics of a post-industrial and radically modern identity and social contract' can save us from mutual self-destruction (Beck, 1997: 162).

In this context, three questions immediately arise. What does this new ethics and its radically modern identity and social contract involve? How likely is it to be socially instituted as the redemptive form of identity and the redemptive social contract? If socially instituted, what would ensue? In order to address these and related questions, this chapter will consider a major dilemma inherent in what Beck terms the 'world risk society'; a 'second modernity' haunted by the prospect of mega-hazards and an expanding sense of insecurity. As I see it, the dilemma that the 'world risk society' must confront is that it has come to rely, for its economic, political and symbolic efficiency, on the universal capacity of human individuals to dwell in ambivalence and to exercise what Beck has termed 'the art of doubt'. However, the profound dilemma is that this very condition of insecurity generated by the world risk society constantly throws up challenges to any capacity to dwell in ambivalence. These challenges are manifold and pervasive. They stretch from the everyday insecurities of the labour market or the family, to the mega-hazards of nuclear disasters or global warming. They impact on both psychic life and the cultures that human subjects draw upon in order to negotiate the multiple challenges generated by individualization and globalization.

Individualization and globalization, as two internally related features of the contemporary period, leave human subjects more reliant than ever on their own psychic capacities in the face of disruption and adversity, and more exposed than ever to fluctuations and unintended consequences of expert systems that promise a degree of security that they can never guarantee; whether in economic, political, technological or ecological systems. Although the risk of such mega-hazards being realized as catastrophic events is not routine, their very possibility haunts the contemporary world. Paraphrasing Beck's quote above, the effect is that the ordering of time and space threatens to collapse and there is a loss of meaning as open-ended destructiveness creeps yet gallops ever on. In these circumstances, the symbolic

efficiency of cultures and institutions is fractured, leaving individuals to manage complexity as best they can or else to resort to fundamentalisms of one kind or another. At its most extreme, this is the cultural and subjective world of Samuel Beckett's aptly named play *Endgame*.

Robert Castel (2003: 6) nicely characterizes the haunting effects of this 'modern insecurity' by explaining that 'it emerges from the unclarity of the scope of protection in a social universe that has been organised around the endless pursuit of protection'.[1] The very risk of mega-hazards, prior to any actual occurrence, already produces disorienting effects and a chronic sense of ontological insecurity that human subjects must either creatively incorporate into new forms of subjectivity or defend against. The risk society condition already challenges, prior to any actual catastrophe, the psychic capacities of individuals and the symbolic efficiency of the cultural repertoires they draw upon to perform their identities. Moreover, such mega-hazards are now inherent aspects of the prevailing global economic, technological and political constellation. As actual catastrophic events they may be rare, but they have occurred, of course – recently in Japan, for instance, with the Fukushima nuclear power station 'accident'. Significantly, such catastrophic events, even when initiated as the after-effects of a natural disaster such as a tsunami, are themselves systemically linked to the mentalities and practices of the prevailing global economic, technological and political constellation. They are generated and organized by what Beck (1997) terms 'linear doubt', the type of doubt inherited from the Enlightenment. Only the displacement of this global constellation and the linear doubt that helps drive it by a 'reflexive doubt' that promises a new constellation can slay the Frankenstein's monster of the global risk society. Or perhaps that would be better put as 'fully humanize' the Frankenstein's monster of the global risk society. Beck (1997: 168–169) anticipates this fundamental transformation as follows:

> Established doubt requires a new distribution of power, new structures of decision-making, a new architecture of institutions, a new type of technology and technology development, a new science, new learning groups and ways to revise decisions – not least of all the anticipation of side-effects. Everything a couple of sizes smaller, slower and more open to the opposite, to antagonism and refutation, as is proper for self-assured doubt.

While highlighting the scale of the profound challenges posed by the mega-hazards of the contemporary period, Beck also sees an upside to the risk society, in that it may promote the art of doubt as a new way of being in the world. Pervasive insecurity is 'not just the dark side of freedom' as it could promote the psychic qualities 'that are necessary for the change to a new modernity' (Beck, 1997: 168). In order to better address both the bright and the dark sides of this new 'freedom' released by the world risk society, with its combination of individualization and globalization, this chapter will draw on psychoanalytic theory to deepen Beck's account of the 'art of doubt', thereby both detailing its emotional aspects and characterizing its inherent fault-lines; fault-lines that inhabit both psyches and

cultures and are themselves promoted by insecurity whenever it restricts the capacity to dwell in ambivalence. In developing this discussion I will draw some parallels between Beck's 'art of doubt' and Julia Kristeva's more psychoanalytically focused account of a new cosmopolitanism that:

> cutting across governments, economies and markets, might work for a mankind whose solidarity is founded on the consciousness of its unconscious – desiring, destructive, fearful, empty, impossible.
>
> *(Kristeva, 1991: 192)*

I also will follow Beck in asking whether, along with the negative aspects of individualization in a risk society, there is also an upside to the demands that individualization loads onto individuals. While Beck's account of human subjectivity is often, indeed typically, characterized as unduly focused on cognitive capacities and the cognitive monitoring of risks – and this criticism is usually warranted – in what follows I will draw out the psychoanalytic resonances that are occasionally present in Beck's work and which point to a more adequate conceptualization of human subjectivity. In doing so, I will focus especially on Beck's virtuous and redemptive 'art of doubt', as it is in this discussion that the psychoanalytic resonances are most apparent.

The art of doubt as negative capability

The major challenge confronting those of us living in the current 'interesting times' is to find a way to dwell in ambivalence without reaching for ready-made certainties. We need to achieve what the poet John Keats termed 'negative capability'; a capability that is exercised 'when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason' (Keats, 2009: 41–42). This notion of a negative capability that involves the capacity to resist the lure of ready-made certainties and, as I have put it, to dwell in ambivalence, resonates in interesting ways with Beck's advocacy of 'the art of doubt'. Beck (1997: 162) regards the art of doubt as an antidote to the hubris of the Enlightenment and its lodestars of 'the individual, identity, truth, reality, science, technology, and so on'. Doubt of a certain kind and quality, what Beck terms 'reflexive doubt', 'will overcome industrialism's arrogant faith in technology and will establish tolerance and curiosity with respect to the otherness of others'. At least, that is the bright hope. A quote condenses much of Beck's argument:

> However one imagines the new modernity, it will be characterized in all areas by an enhanced quantum, probably even by a new quality of insecurity: as variation, variety, change and ambivalence, but also as threat and as dangers that exceed the customary standards of calculation. In the conventional view this implies fear, with all the expected political consequences. Yet this need not necessarily be the case. This all-encompassing and all-permeating insecurity is not just the dark side of freedom. What is important instead is to discover it as

> the bright side. The introduction of insecurity into our thought and deeds may help to achieve the reduction of objectives, slowness, revisability and ability to learn, the care, consideration, tolerance and irony that are necessary for the change to a new modernity.
>
> *(Beck, 1997: 168)*

This passage joins together both diagnosis and prognosis. Beck makes a wager that the very severity of current circumstances, in which mega-hazards expand and trust in expert opinion diminishes, will itself promote a turn to reflexive doubt. Two questions immediately arise and I will address them in sequence. First, what are the qualities and strengths of reflexive doubt? How could it generate a capacity to live creatively while on an insecure footing? Second, how likely is this 'bright side' of insecurity to be realized? How likely is it that Keats's negative capability could become the new way of being, thinking, feeling and relating? When ontological security is challenged by either the disruptions of everyday understandings and routines or, more dramatically, by catastrophic events such as nuclear contamination, pandemics, chemical or nuclear terrorism or warfare, and human-induced floods or famine – and we could extend the list, no doubt – what follows? Should we expect a turning away from uncertainties to ready-made certainties lodged in some of the available cultural forms that human subjects routinely draw upon in order to survive the trials of a globalizing risk society? For instance, should we expect a turn to paranoid-schizoid modes of constructing the event and its causes as a way of defending against the feelings of anxiety and powerlessness that such events typically engender? Or could an art of doubt become sufficiently robust and resilient to resist the attraction of these psychic and cultural defences against anxiety and insecurity?

Reflexive doubt

My first question immediately above concerns the qualities and strengths of reflexive doubt and its ability to generate a capacity to live creatively while on an insecure footing. Beck characterizes reflexive doubt in opposition to linear doubt. Linear doubt involves a corrosive process that can never dwell in ambivalence, as it is forever pressing towards certainty – a certainty that can never be attained. Consequently various pathologies of linear doubt arise as the infinite regress of following 'every doubt with another doubt, endlessly' leads to despair, defeat or dogmatism. Linear doubt is trapped in a futile search for 'certain, unambiguous knowledge'. By contrast, reflexive doubt is able to *doubt* doubt itself. Instead of the drive to dispel doubt by achieving certainty, doubt is 'accepted as an element of life like air and water'. Beck (1997: 166) immediately extends this characterization of reflexive doubt as follows:

> Doubt turned against doubt calls a halt to doubt. It also allows its apparent opposites: faith, trust, morality, knowledge, and so on, but without that strange

> pretension to obligatoriness that swallows up and condemns any further doubt, subsuming and destroying the personal in the general.

The term 'personal' is important here as it raises questions about the personal characteristics of the reflexive doubter; about his or her emotional life as well as their cognitive capacities, and also about their way of being with others and of relating to power, authority and violence. What kind of person with what mode of psychic organization is the artful doubter?

Psychoanalytic theory offers a powerful means of further developing Beck's account of reflexive doubt and there are indications in his essay 'The Art of Doubt' that a psychoanalytic perspective is implicit in his own argument. Indeed, that perspective is occasionally voiced, as in the following formulations that extend the characterization of reflexive doubt beyond its cognitive capacities and onto its broader psychic features that include emotions, drives and psychic organization itself. As Beck puts it:

> No, the destruction of the old grand illusions is not a loss, but rather a *necessity* in order to discover the breadth of smallness, the joys of relativism, ambiguity, multiple egos, affirmed drives (which had previously bowed down to the rule of a superego).
>
> *(Beck, 1997: 162, emphasis added)*

Clearly, Beck's cosmopolitan subject is envisaged here in largely psychoanalytic terms. Implicitly, Beck takes seriously Freud's (1953: 143) argument that 'the ego is not master in its own house', and then radicalizes that claim by proposing a psychic organization that deals with this lack of mastery through affirmation and sublimation, rather than repression. This is a subject for whom the power and violence of the superego have been defeated, for whom psychic heterogeneity at the level of the ego is a source of pleasure rather than anxiety, and for whom the drives may be 'affirmed', presumably through either gratification or sublimation.

Deepening the account via psychoanalytic theory

We can begin to deepen Beck's account by observing that Beck's reflexive doubter who, as I would put it, has the negative capability to dwell in ambivalence is akin to Julia Kristeva's cosmopolitan subject, just as the linear doubter who is trapped in a futile search for certainty is akin to Kristeva's account of subjects who are 'strangers to themselves' (or 'strangers to ourselves'). Kristeva (1991: 191) states this difference nicely when she comments, 'To worry or to smile, such is the choice when we are assailed by the strange; our decision depends on how familiar we are with our own ghosts'.

In his essay on 'The Art of Doubt', Beck implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, relies on a psychoanalytic account of subjectivity and the unconscious that approximates a similar argument developed by Kristeva at more length in

Strangers to Ourselves and *Nations without Nationalism*. They both recognize that a cosmopolitanism that affirms and sublimates the unconscious, rather than repressing the unconscious, is a 'necessity' in a globalizing, multi-cultural world. This is a world in which human subjects are required to negotiate their own biography within an ever more complex society and economy, while processes of individualization leave them exposed to the collapse of all those certainties that, previously, were attached to tradition and/or to established social, economic and gender roles. Faced with the collapse of all such certainties, 'to worry or to smile' becomes the pressing issue. That is to say, when ontological security is disrupted, do we respond creatively or defensively? To adapt a phrase of Wilfred Bion's (1962), can we learn from such a disruptive experience and thereby find a way to survive it both psychologically and culturally, or through defending against such insecurity do we merely displace it onto others, from where it returns to haunt us? This is what is at stake in the conflict between reflexive and linear doubt. A cosmopolitanism that affirms and sublimates unconscious desires is the necessary new ethic for a global risk society – and this is reliant on the cultivation of an art of doubt that enables human subjects to dwell in ambivalence, without reaching irritably for certainties that can never be delivered. The alternative cosmopolitanism, which relies on linear doubt and the hubris of the Enlightenment and thereby bypasses a transformation in both the individual and cultural unconscious, is always likely to founder on the shoals of particularisms of one kind or another or on a universalism that demands homogeneity. Crucially, only reflexive doubt can support and dwell within a cultural shift that promotes ambivalence as the proper way for human subjects to relate to nature, others and inner psychic nature. This is consistent with Kristeva's cosmopolitanism in which 'solidarity is founded on the *consciousness of its unconscious* – desiring, destructive, fearful, empty, impossible' (Kristeva, 1991: 192).

As if echoing Beck's advocacy of 'ambiguity, multiple egos, affirmed drives' and a vanquished superego, Kristeva (1991: 191–192) extends her discussion of the virtues of a psychoanalytic cosmopolitanism by arguing that 'Freud brings us the courage to call ourselves disintegrated in order not to integrate foreigners and even less to hunt them down'. Here she draws particularly on Freud's account of the uncanny. For Freud (1990: 358), the sense that something is uncanny and needs to be disowned and defended against is the product of an 'urge towards defence which has caused the ego to project that (internal psychic) material outward as something foreign to itself'. Here we see a defensive process of splitting and projection organized in terms of friend or enemy, good or bad, ideal or abject. For Beck (1997: 169), the art of reflexive doubt is the necessary counter to such destructive ways of being in the world because 'thinking in categories of enemies makes sense only in absolutist black-white thinking [as with linear doubt]; it is out of the question in the generally grey or flowing colour spectrum of thinking informed by [reflexive] doubt'. Again, as with Kristeva's consciousness of the unconscious as the new cosmopolitan ethic, for Beck (1997: 163) the art of reflexive doubt also counters self-harm, because '[i]n the disintegration of identity,

self, truth and reality, the handcuffs and leg-irons with which people have imprisoned and mistreated themselves at the behest of outside powers also burst'.

These characterizations indicate a move beyond the friend–enemy distinction and absolutist mentalities. So, how is this to be achieved? Beck's argument is more convincing than Kristeva's in this regard as he is clearer about the political processes involved and clearer about the involvement of social collectivities – initially through a sub-politics that undermines the authority of the conventional political institutions. This is where reflexive modernity generates self-reflection. As Beck puts it:

> Within the horizon of the opposition between old routine and new awareness of consequences and dangers, society becomes self-critical. It is therefore the combination of reflex and reflections which, *as long as the catastrophe itself fails to materialize*, can set industrial modernity on the path to self-criticism and self-transformation.
>
> *(Beck, 1999: 81, emphasis added)*

According to Beck, the process of reflexive modernization has two internally related effects. Reflexively, the very process of ongoing modernization generates mega-hazards that it is obliged to ignore, in order to extend its scope and scale. It remains trapped within the logic of linear doubt. However, as the externalities and unintended consequences of modernization cumulate in the form of both mundane insecurity regarding identities, relationships, work and family, and also as mega-hazards, this generates self-reflection and a politics of self-criticism and self-transformation. In this way the world risk society generates new forms of subjectivity and affiliation that move beyond the friend–enemy distinction:

> [W]hen self-doubts chew up the arrogance, then enemies are no longer enemies, nor are they brothers with whom one dances in festivals of solidarity; instead, they are fellow or opposing doubters. Their interests may be diametrically opposed. They will be seen as such, relativized, negotiated and arranged. The simple reason for this is that, in the age of doubt, contrasts can no longer be dogmatized into enmities that can justify a mutual killing machine or set it in motion.
>
> *(Beck, 1997: 169)*

Dark shadows

It is here that I want to begin to register my sense of the dark side that shadows Beck's bright side of the global risk society. Earlier in my discussion I argued that the dilemma that the world risk society must confront is that it has come to rely, for its economic, political and symbolic efficiency, on the universal capacity of human individuals to dwell in ambivalence and to exercise what Beck has termed 'the art of doubt'. However, the very condition of insecurity generated by the

world risk society constantly throws up challenges to any capacity to dwell in ambivalence. This dilemma is most pressing at the point of the potential transition between the negative effects of reflexive modernization and the reparative and transformative capacities of self-reflection. That is to say: now!

One way of stating my argument is to say that globalization *already* relies on the widespread capacity to dwell in ambivalence even as it releases processes that undermine that capacity. In other words, if reflexive modernization potentially generates the art of (reflexive) doubt, it also generates a set of defences against insecurity and anxiety that rely on paranoid-schizoid processes and the friend–enemy distinction. The more globalization and individualization disrupt established identities, practices and mentalities that support ontological security, the stronger the appeal of those certainties that are produced by linear doubt and defended by paranoid-schizoid processes and friend–enemy constructions of self and other. This resurgence of friend-enemy absolutism is an emergent effect of globalization and of psychic defences against the threats posed by individualization. It may be characterized as the internally generated risk of Beck's transition period, due to the threats of terrorism and war that it generates and of reactionary forces (right and left oriented) that it stimulates.

As I have pointed out, my reason for looking closely at Beck's 'The Art of Doubt' discussion is that, while it is consistent with his argument about reflexive modernization leading to reflection as self-critique, in 'The Art of Doubt' this argument is developed in a way that integrates psychoanalytic theory. Hence, rather than being merely or mainly cognitive in its orientation to the monitoring of risks, it opens onto a richer and more complex account of human subjectivity in which desires, anxieties, psychic organization and psychic defences are incorporated along with processes of reasoning, and also of rationalizing. Anthony Elliott (2002: 300–301) provides a helpful summary of the limitations of Beck's usual cognitive orientation when he reports that Beck has been criticized by many social theorists who, altogether, claim that 'Beck's theory cannot grasp the hermeneutical, aesthetic, psychological and culturally bounded forms of subjectivity and intersubjectivity in and through which risk is constructed and perceived'. As I have argued, Beck's 'The Art of Doubt' is something of an exception in this regard. However, that very move towards psychoanalysis raises the further question of whether Beck is fully alert to the implications of incorporating psychoanalytic theory, with its ability to address 'multiple egos, affirmed drives' and vanquished superegos, as he puts it, but also, as he tends to overlook, its ability to address paranoid-schizoid defences against insecurity and anxiety. In my opinion, having appropriated psychoanalysis to better specify the bright side of reflexive modernization, Beck fails to adequately address the dark side that psychoanalysis also reveals.

Psyche, culture and society

To establish or maintain ontological security, human subjects draw upon both their own psychic capacity and the social imaginaries and social routines that are

available to them within the cultural field they inhabit. When ontological security is threatened by the disruptions and mega-hazards of the risk society, the most immediate way to restore that sense of security, or shore it up, is to resort to linear doubt and, thereafter, to defend the authority of linear doubt by paranoid-schizoid processes of splitting and projection; by splitting ambivalence and polarizing its constitutive elements. Of course, as with the uncanny, this endeavour to banish doubt and install certainty does not fully succeed, as the elements that have been projected or repressed tend to return and to haunt the stabilized certainty and the identities it supports. This produces a vicious cycle of further splitting and projection and the deeper entrenchment of absolutisms of one kind or another. This is the dark side of reflexive modernization's psychic and cultural effects.

The incorporation of psychoanalytic theory allows us to better recognize this dark side and to better analyse the attraction of linear doubt, defended by paranoid-schizoid processes, for human subjects who have been subjected to the disruptions and disembedding effects of the risk society and whose ontological security has been profoundly challenged. In Keats's phrasing, this dark side is the 'irritable reaching after fact and reason', a turn to ready-made certainties due to the incapacity to be or remain in uncertainties, mysteries and doubts. It is the failure to dwell in ambivalence that is promoted by the insecurities of the global risk society.

While paranoid-schizoid psychic processes are a characteristic of individual psychic life, they are not the only possible mode of psychic processing. Melanie Klein identified a distinct mode that constructs self and other quite differently, by accepting complexity without irritably resorting to splitting and projection. Klein (1975) termed this unconscious state and the processes it enables the depressive position, and it is the fundamental psychic position upon which a capacity to dwell in ambivalence is based. It is, then, the unconscious ground and support for the art of doubt. Furthermore, and crucially, like paranoid-schizoid processes, psychic processes that are founded in the depressive position are not solely located at the level of the human subject, although they are always enacted or performed only by human subjects. These same psychic processes, whether paranoid-schizoid or depressive, are also embedded, indeed encoded, into cultural forms and social practices. They proliferate in the ideologies, discourses and routines of everyday life and thereby organize both subjectivity and inter-subjectivity (Cash, 1996). In some social settings individual subjects, if they desire to be recognized as good and competent subjects, must perform their identities with very few degrees of freedom. The cultural repertoire deemed proper in such settings is severely restricted, as in the case of the nursing service of a London hospital discussed briefly below. Societies engulfed in ethno-national conflict, such as Northern Ireland or Sri Lanka at certain periods, are further examples of social settings in which degrees of freedom, as regards the proper mentalities and proper social routines, are severely restricted (Cash, 1996). In other settings, cultural fields are more differentiated and there are more degrees of freedom available to human subjects as they negotiate their way through these cultural fields. However, even in such relatively open settings, for example many contemporary Western and Westernizing societies, the

qualitative features of the cultural repertoire that predominates within the cultural field are of great significance, as these create the common-sense understandings that actors draw upon, or disavow, as they perform their identities. In Kristeva's colloquial phrasing, when confronted by the haunting and destabilizing effects of the world risk society and its anticipated and actual catastrophes, 'to worry or to smile' is the crucial issue. We can phrase this more technically by stating that, when paranoid-schizoid processes of splitting and projection are dominant within a cultural field and when subjects are required to think, feel, act and relate in accord with the mentalities and practices that these psychic processes generate, the capacity to dwell in ambivalence is radically restricted. Defences against anxiety and against the loss of ontological security leave no space for an 'art of doubt' and its greater capacity to negotiate the demands and dilemmas of the world risk society.

By way of illustration, the nursing service studied by Isabel Menzies Lyth (1988) is a classic case of a tightly circumscribed institutional culture that prescribed the proper way for nurses to think, feel and relate to other nurses, to the authority structure of the nursing service, to the work tasks expected of them, and to the patients and their families. In 'The Functioning of Social Systems as a Defence Against Anxiety', Menzies Lyth illustrates how paranoid-schizoid psychic processes of splitting and projection were culturally mandated within the British nursing service of the late 1950s. To be recognized as a good nurse who could perform one's professional identity and its routine work tasks properly, nurses were required, as part of an unconscious contract, to draw upon the culturally mandated set of paranoid-schizoid psychic defences against the anxieties that the care of sick and dying patients inevitably involved. This case study highlights how unconscious psychic processes are embedded and encoded within the culture of institutions and how they mark themselves upon both subjectivity and inter-subjectivity as human subjects organize their psyche in ways that accord with, or alternatively attempt to negotiate or resist, the culturally mandated proper defence mechanisms. Of course, the nurses could resist these cultural demands and organize their psychic life within the institution differently. However, if they did so they would be regarded as failures, as bad or recalcitrant nurses. As it happens, the very reason Menzies Lyth was invited to consult with the hospital's nursing service was the fact that many nurses were resisting, and performing that resistance by exiting the nursing service. The dilemma for the nursing service was that trainee nurses who left the service were drawn, mainly, from amongst the most promising recruits to the nursing service. They were losing their best and brightest recruits. Menzies Lyth's study demonstrates that the dissonance between the defence mechanisms against anxiety mandated as proper by the nursing service at that time and the disallowed, yet preferred, defence mechanisms of the best recruits lay at the root of this dilemma. These disallowed psychic processes, based in Klein's depressive position, in which ambivalence can be contained rather than split and in which a broader and more complex set of emotions are incorporated, needed to become culturally available and to displace the hegemony of paranoid-schizoid processes and the practices and mentalities they generated. The culture of the nursing service, including its

preferred unconscious defence mechanisms and the forms of subjectivity and intersubjectivity it produced, needed to change in order to provide a less anxious and more creative environment in which the nurses could learn from experience and deal creatively with their anxieties and desires. However, that potential change constituted such a challenge to the established ontological security mechanisms of the nursing service that the change of culture was resisted, even as the need for it was recognized.

It follows from the above discussion that within the cultural field that organizes identities and the routines that support ontological security we can identify unconscious processes at play that are culturally authorized as the proper way to think, feel and relate, *and* we can also identify qualitatively distinct unconscious processes, also culturally located, that are available, if only marginally, to be drawn upon in order to disrupt the established orthodoxy and potentially displace it by instituting an alternative set of 'rules' for the structuration of the unconscious in culture and the reorganization of the routines that support ontological security. In the world risk society this involves a psychic and cultural conflict that is initially sub-political, between linear doubt, defended by paranoid-schizoid processes and reflexive doubt, founded upon Klein's depressive position. The dilemma we all confront is that, as reflexive modernization becomes more disruptive and generates mega-hazards on an enhanced scale, the attractions of linear doubt and paranoid-schizoid defences become more pronounced. This is the great emergent risk of the transition phase between system reflexivity and individual and group self-reflection; the phase about which Beck comments, as already highlighted above:

> It is therefore the combination of reflex and reflections which, *as long as the catastrophe itself fails to materialize*, can set industrial modernity on the path to self-criticism and self-transformation.
>
> *(Beck, 1999: 81, emphasis added)*

My point is that a world risk society haunted by the prospect of such catastrophes yet to materialize is not only prompted towards self-reflection, self-criticism and self-transformation, but is also, and more readily, drawn towards the certainties generated by linear doubt and defended by processes of splitting and projection and their friend–enemy mentalities. There are more than learning processes in play here – defensive processes are also engaged – and psychoanalysis allows us to see these fault-lines of the risk society far better than cognitive models of reasoning, monitoring and risk evaluation.

Beck is right about the pressing necessity for the art of doubt and for what I have termed the capacity to dwell in ambivalence – or Keats's negative capability. The contemporary world can no longer afford either the hubris of linear doubt or the destructiveness of the friend–enemy distinction shored up by the certainties of absolutism. The dilemma is that the disruptions and threats posed by reflexive modernization promote the very subjectivities and mentalities that disallow the art of doubt and radically constrain the capacity to dwell in ambivalence. This is not

inevitable, however, and the inclusion of a psychoanalytic perspective not only throws light on the dark side of the crucial transition beyond linear doubt, but also identifies the subjective and cultural processes involved in this contestation between linear and reflexive doubt. It is in this linked domain of culture and subjectivity that a sub-politics on behalf of the art of doubt can play itself out, better informed by a self-reflexivity that is itself alert to the virtues of dwelling in ambivalence. Not only is this a very high-stakes game, but it is also a game that is very hard to win. The world risk society has put the capacity to dwell in ambivalence on trial, with consequences for all of us.

Note

1 This sentence has been translated into English by Conall Cash.

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13

JAPANESE SOCIETY AFTER GREAT EARTHQUAKES

From the viewpoint of the counter-relation between 'the social' and 'the psychic'

Masataka Katagiri

Introduction: 'the social' and 'the psychic' as frameworks to examine Japanese society after great earthquakes

Individualization and the disappearance of 'the social'

Many sociologists have discussed the theme of the disappearance of 'the social' in recent years. The main characteristics of this topic are related to globalization as the typical phenomenon of contemporary society. Although the disappearance of 'the social' is surely related to contemporary globalization, we can posit this phenomenon through a more comprehensive framework. In other words, we can examine it relative to these tendencies of social change such as privatization, psychologization and reflexive individualization.[1]

Privatization refers to the fluctuating interests of ordinary people. In other words, ordinary people tend to seek the meaning of life not in public areas such as nation-states and industrial areas but in private ones such as intimate relationships including family and friends. As mentioned later, privatization was recognized mainly in the 1960s and the 1970s in Japan. On the other hand, psychologization means that ordinary people tend to attribute the causes of their own troubles not to public or social factors but to psychic ones such as the mind and inner world. In some cases, ordinary people learn the psychic vocabulary referring to their inner world from various media and explain their various troubles using such words. In other cases, they consult psychic specialists such as psychiatrists and clinic counselors to solve their problems. Psychologization was found in the 1990s and 2000s in Japan. Lastly, reflexive individualization implies a deepening of reflexivity to oneself. Because stable workplaces and families have steadily disappeared in globalized contemporary society, ordinary people must continuously find new jobs and

reconstruct their families. For example, Bauman calls these social changes a shift from a solid to a liquid society (cf. Bauman, 2000).

The phenomena of privatization, psychologization and reflexive individualization are very important factors for explaining and interpreting contemporary society. At the same time, they commonly emphasize the disappearance of 'the social' individually. In other words, privatization refers to shifts in ordinary people's interest from public areas to private areas. Psychologization means that people begin attributing their own troubles not to public or social factors but to psychic ones. Finally, reflexive individualization is based on a social background in which stable and solid society has disappeared and has become more and more unstable and liquid. As Bauman pointed out, as the power of imagination to situate various events in everyday life in the social framework declined in liquid modernity, psychologization and reflexive individualization in terms of liquid modernization become common. Thus, these varied ways for the disappearance of 'the social' are different in each phenomenon. In other words, they are not simple and cannot be interpreted easily as a whole. We can discuss the different ways of disappearance of 'the social' in each case of privatization, psychologization and reflexive individualization. This gives clarity about various characteristics in those ways of disappearance of 'the social'.

Counter-relation between 'the social' and 'the psychic'

On the basis of the above considerations, we focus in this chapter on the idea that the collapse and disappearance of 'the social' corresponds to the spread and expansion of 'the psychic'. In other words, when 'the social' collapses and disappears, 'the psychic' spreads and expands. Contrastingly, when 'the social' spreads and expands, 'the psychic' collapses and disappears;.

The meaning of 'the psychic' is equivocal. As mentioned above, generally the rise of 'the psychic' or psychologization implies the tendency to interpret and explain society and self with the vocabularies of psychology and psychiatry. For example, many people attribute the cause of various social problems arising after disasters to psychic factors such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). In line with that attribution, people may consult psychic specialists for their problems. Psychologization also refers to the case where the psychological and emotional aspects of human relationships are emphasized. It is evident, for example, in 'the pure relation' expressed by Giddens (1992) and the Japanese 'gentle relationship' in which younger people in particular are asked to be emotionally conscious of each other so as not to be excluded from intimate relations (Katagiri, 2013).[2] These various tendencies of psychologization may be connected with the collapse and disappearance of 'the social' caused by globalization.[3]

However, our opinion is that such a counter-relation between 'the social' and 'the psychic' is not restricted to contemporary society but can be traced to the beginning of modern society (cf. Katagiri, 2014). If psychology is a discipline that interprets and explains the self and society with a psychological vocabulary, the

tendency of interpretation and explanation using such a psychological vocabulary must go back to the rise of psychology. In addition, the counter-relation of 'the social' and 'the psychic' must be traceable to the beginnings of modern society. However, we will not pursue this line of discussion further here. The point to which we attach importance is the use of the counter-relation of 'the social' and 'the psychic' as a framework for examining Japanese society after earthquakes. We also intend to examine the counter-relation between 'the social' and 'the psychic' in post-war Japanese society, as this is necessary for the consideration of contemporary Japanese society after two disastrous earthquakes.

Counter-relation between 'the social' and 'the psychic' in post-war Japanese society

Before discussing Japanese society after great earthquakes as our main theme, we want to examine generally the counter-relation between 'the social' and 'the psychic' in post-war Japanese society.

Since around 1990, Japanese society can be defined as a psychologized society. Many people tend to attribute the cause of their troubles not to social factors but rather to psychological factors such as depression, PTSD and withdrawal, and even consult psychological or psychiatric specialists to cure their troubles. Furthermore, they have become more emotionally conscious of keeping human relationships more intimate than previously.

As mentioned above, according to Bauman, these tendencies imply a lack of imagination in connecting private troubles with social problems (Bauman, 2001: 86). Contemporary Japanese society lacks such imagination because of the collapse and disappearance of 'the social'. These tendencies have been deeply connected with globalization and neo-liberalism since around 1990. At the same time, globalization has polarized Japanese society, allowing employment as well as families to become unstable and liquid. On the other hand, concepts such as self-responsibility and self-help have spread among the people. However, we presume that the collapse and disappearance of 'the social' did not begin after around 1990 (Katagiri, 2013).

We were able to find many discourses on 'the social' in the 1960s, because Japanese Enlightenment thinkers such as Maruyama and Otsuka insisted on the necessity of constructing 'the social' by the participation of common people. The collapse and disappearance of interest in 'the social' was a result of rapid economic growth beginning in the 1960s. In other words, many people began to seek self-wealth in everyday life after the end of the political era of the 1960s. We call this tendency 'privatization'. Privatization implies the decline of public interest and, accordingly, the rise of private interest. We define it as one cause of the collapse and disappearance of 'the social'. By the 1980s, this tendency was found among economically affluent Japanese society.

In the age of privatization, the collapse and disappearance of 'the social' was narrated rather positively, possibly for the following reasons. First, the weakening influence of public spheres was thought to liberate people from the pressure of

public spheres and to help produce autonomous citizens eager to participate in political affairs. Until then, the Japanese did not have definite routes to participate in public affairs. Second, the Japanese in those days did not feel the need for the aid and supports of 'the social', because their lives were stable and wealthy due to economic wealth. In addition, many mediating structures such as strong labor unions and student unions, which supported social movements, began to decrease. Therefore the base of 'the social' weakened and disappeared (NHK, 2010).

In contemporary Japanese society, in which psychologization is becoming more prevalent, the collapse and disappearance of 'the social' is being viewed negatively. In fragmented and anxious contemporary Japanese society, many people are beginning to seek strong bonds of human relationships, mutual aides and the construction of new public spheres. However, these desires cannot be satisfied easily, because it is difficult to reconstruct 'the social' suddenly. We can point out that this tendency corresponds to that of second modernity as a characteristic of reflexive individualization.

Against this social background, two great earthquakes happened: the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake and the Great East Japan Earthquake. With these as triggers, the need for 'the social' began to be discussed among many people. In this chapter we examine, from the viewpoint of the counter-relation between 'the social' and 'the psychic', whether those two great earthquakes can be considered turning points for reconstructing 'the social' in Japan.

Reconstruction of 'the social' after the two great earthquakes?

While the collapse and disappearance of 'the social' and the spread and expansion of 'the psychic' increased around the 1990s, the need to seek 'the new social' came to be more of a point of discussion. This manifested in phenomena such as the reconstruction of human bonds or intimacy in human relationships, public participation mediated by voluntary groups and non-profit organizations (NPOs), various kinds of nationalism including the 'petit-nationalism' seen among sports fans, and right-wing nationalism, which seeks to rehabilitate strong Japanese traditions and the nation-state. Although 'the social' is generally considered to refer to the nation-state, we define 'the social' as a more comprehensive concept, which includes the aforementioned concepts. We suggest that the two great earthquakes in Japan became turning points for seeking 'the social'.

The idea that great disasters become a turning point to seek 'the social' is not restricted to Japanese disasters. It is expressed by the phrase 'a paradise built in hell', which Rebecca Solnit (2009) defines in connection with modern society where communities are fast disappearing.

Her viewpoint is similar to ours. She defines contemporary society as privatized, and considers great disasters as turning points for counteracting the privatization process. Privatized society includes two aspects: economic privatization and social privatization. In Japan, we can find economic privatization in examples such as privatization of the national railways in the 1980s and of postal services in the 2000s. We can also find economic privatization not only in large institutions but in

various smaller ones, for example the privatization of public schools and municipal hospitals or the penetration of private insurance companies. Economic privatization implies the sale of enterprises previously managed by nation-states and municipal governments to the private sector. If considered thus, economic privatization has no relationship to social privatization. However, we conclude that economic privatization is deeply connected with social privatization, because in the background of economic privatization we can find a mundane philosophy that common people should take responsibility for their education, insurance and the public enterprises necessary for their daily functioning. Furthermore, it supports the conclusion that support by 'the social' is not necessary. So, economic privatization is considered to be fundamentally associated with social privatization. Solnit says:

> You can read recent history as a history of privatization not just of the economy but also of society, as marketing and media shove imagination more and more toward private life and private satisfaction, as citizens are redefined as consumers, as public participation falters and with it any sense of collective or individual political power, as even the language for public emotions and satisfactions withers.
>
> *(Solnit, 2009: 8–9)*

We have already discussed privatization and psychologization in Japanese society and their correlations. We also consider that the more privatization and psychologization advance, the more 'the social' weakens. In the above points, our point of departure in the analysis of contemporary society is very consistent with Solnit's viewpoint. Solnit also says that, in the age of privatization of the economy and society, 'a paradise built in hell', or 'the social' that develops suddenly at great disasters can counteract the movement towards privatization.

The notion of 'a paradise built in hell' suggests that the collapse of a stable society does not cause confusion, but rather produces solidarity or a focus on recovery among victims (Solnit, 2009: 3). While people become isolated and are eager to seek private interests in everyday privatized conditions, they unite to help each other and recover in exigencies such as great disasters. These changes also imply that isolated selves disappear and social selves come into being (Solnit, 2009: 33).

According to Solnit, 'the paradise built in hell' arises not only because of natural disasters like earthquakes and floods, but also as a result of human disasters such as terrorism and air attacks. The paradise built in hell corresponds, in other words, to the case in which social selves are produced in response to great earthquakes in Japanese society.

For example, Ann stated the following on the subject of his experience at the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake:

> I have lived in Kobe for 15 years since I moved there. However, I felt like I did not belong to [the] community of Kobe. I was living here but was 'homeless'. When the great earthquake happened, some residents in the same

> condominium visited my flat, giving me resources and inviting my wife to come to the emergency kitchen. When my friend was invited to take a bath at his friend's house, he also invited our family to go along.
>
> *(Ann, 2001: 236)*

This case describes the process of how people who were isolated reconstruct 'the social', maintaining solidarity after the occurrence of a great disaster. The construction of 'the social' at great disasters is not restricted to spontaneous communities among victims. We can find the same solidarity not only among victims but also between victims and those who had not suffered from disasters. There is an expression in Japan, 'first year of volunteers', which refers to the year of the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake in 1995. In Japan, volunteer activities were restricted for quite some time. Before then, younger people were not interested in volunteer activities, because they focused their interests on satisfying their needs via consumption activities in privatized Japanese society; they were indifferent to 'the social'. However, many of the younger generations participated in volunteer activities at the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake, changing their previous image (cf. Furuichi, 2011: 83–85).

The same tendency appeared after the Great East Japan Earthquake. Do the changes seen among younger generations mean that the transformation from isolated self to social self has occurred? Judging from the above cases, we can conclude that great disasters, including the Great Hanshin Awaji and the Great East Japan Earthquakes became turning points to unite previously isolated people and transform them from isolated to social selves (Furuichi, 2011: 197).

The reconstruction of 'the social' caused by great earthquakes is not restricted to spontaneous aid among people and the construction of public spheres such as volunteers and NPO activities. The revival of nationalism is another of its important aspects. We can find more simple nationalism in discussions that idealize Japan or the Japanese, saying that there was no crime during the turmoil of the great earthquakes. The Japanese respond very sensitively to reports by foreign mass media praising Japanese attitudes towards the turmoil caused by great disasters; they become more stimulated by the mood toward nationalism. For example, some media reported the Great East Japan Earthquake as follows:

> Japanese victims are very persevering. Cars formed a long line in good order to buy gasoline. Some mothers holding her baby in her arms stood in line for 3 hours to get food. No victims plundered anything. And some victims united to move collapsed ceilings. This sense of unity that many victims are sharing at this great earthquake is the secret of the resilience of the Japanese.
>
> *(*Tech-Insight*, 2011)*

According to Solnit's idea of 'a paradise built in hell', these phenomena are not restricted to Japanese society (Solnit, 2009: 29). Even though the committing of crime during disaster periods was not denied in Japan, the account that there was

no plundering spread and was attributed to the virtues of the Japanese. In these situations, the identity of the Japanese strengthened.

At the same time, some critics say that great disasters gave birth to a clearer and stronger sense of nationalism among the Japanese, in addition to an ambiguous sense of identity as some Japanese have shown in the above cases. Post-war Japanese society has constructed a national identity without consciously paying attention to the pre-war days, defining pre-war society as totalitarian and so quite different from post-war society, which is oriented toward peace and democracy. Due to this dichotomy, the time sense of the Japanese is divided between pre-war and post-war. Recently, as symbolized by the Abe cabinet, a tendency has arisen to recover a united identity connecting pre-war and post-war Japanese societies. In other words, it is an attempt to recover Japanese nationalism by returning the Japanese sense of time to pre-war days (Furuichi, 2011: 202).

With the recovery of right-wing nationalism, some critics have said that great earthquakes mark a turning point to reconstruct the community of the dead, which continues for many years. Senzaki emphasizes that the Japanese forget their sense of nationalism based on time consciousness, saying that nationalism is based on a need to understand and deal with the life and death of people living in the same community. According to him, a great disaster like the Great East Japan Earthquake sensitized the Japanese to a forgotten view of life and death and the fact that they are mentally connected with the dead in the past. Senzaki writes:

> In 2011, we gathered with the dead in the past and recovered a sense of connection with them. Guided by the dead, we managed to recover bonds with the living and the dead. It is the first attempt in post-war Japan to recover widespread bonds among people through a strong consciousness of the dead. The recovery by the Japanese of the dead in the past beyond post-war days and of the value systems of Japanese tradition due to great disasters is a recovery of nationalism.
>
> *(Senzaki, 2013: 224)*

Counter-relation between 'the social' and 'the psychic'

We have reviewed the recovery of 'the social' after the great earthquakes through the spontaneous seeking of human bonds, the activities of volunteers and NPOs, and the rise of nationalism. Can great earthquakes change privatized and psychologized contemporary Japanese society into a more socialized society? The situation is not so simple.

The limit of the reconstruction of 'the social'

Although Solnit described the spontaneous construction of 'a paradise built in hell', she pointed out that the reconstruction of the communities was disturbed by

established power holders, because they feared that established power structures and orders were deconstructed by great disasters. For example, Solnit shows how, in the case of the Great San Francisco Earthquake, established power holders intervened in the free delivery of food at emergency kitchens by delivering tickets to manage it. While providers of food and the recipients had equal relationships in the case of spontaneous delivery, established power holders tried to hold superior positions by maintaining unequal power relations between them. Solnit expressed the difference between the two cases as the difference between mutual aid and charity (Solnit, 2009: 46–47).

In Japan, we can find similar examples in the case of great earthquakes where local governments intervened in various spontaneous volunteer activities to keep their established power structures. There were many controversies as to what extent local governments should intervene in spontaneous private activities and whether they should permit such spontaneous activities at the time of great earthquakes. It was also reported that local governments and private developers controlled the development of disaster-stricken areas against victims' desires when residents and their houses disappeared because of great disasters.

We can find conflicts between spontaneous volunteer activities and local governments and private developers not only in great disasters in Japan but also in other countries (Klein, 2007). At the Great East Japan Earthquake, we can find a similar case in the conflict between residents and the Tokyo Electric Power Company on the issue of whether to keep or abolish the nuclear power plants (Furuichi, 2011: chap. 5; Ichinokawa & Ushiro, 2013: chap. 6). We can also cite various other problems, such as the lack of young agents to reconstruct a community due to rapid ageing in disaster-stricken areas, and polarization between big cities like Tokyo and disaster-stricken depopulated areas, when considering the reconstruction of 'the social' in disaster-stricken areas. However, it is not our main task to refer to and deal with various concrete examples and problems with the reconstruction of 'the social' in this chapter.

Instead, we focus on and inspect the problem of whether disasters can be a turning point to prevent the tendency toward privatization or psychologization and to reconstruct 'the social' in privatized and psychologized Japanese society through victims' own experiences and time-consciousness of disasters. It is undeniable that after great disasters we can find new constructions of 'the social' in the formation of human bonds, spontaneous activities like volunteer groups and NPOs, and the rise of nationalism as shown by Solnit and indicated above. However, what we should ask is whether these 'socials' created by great disasters continue to exist. Although this question must be examined over the long term, some critics suggest that the urgent reconstruction of 'the social' is temporary and weakens upon return to everyday life and always will.[4] According to the famous young critic Furuichi, the consummatory attitudes among younger generations, attaching importance to seeking present happiness in the here and now without suspending their present desire for future happiness, has not changed even after the great earthquakes (Furuichi, 2011: 104–105). In other words, the change associated with the great

earthquakes was temporary. So if emergent experiences disappear, Japanese society will recover ordinariness as always, because the structure of Japanese society has not essentially transformed (Furuichi, 2011: 216). His standpoint is very similar to our viewpoint, which examines Japanese society following the great earthquakes, with a focus on the aspect of Japanese society as privatized and psychologized.

Not only the change in strength of a disaster experience through time but also the differences in the strength of a disaster experience due to nearness to disaster-riven areas is important in examining whether great earthquakes become turning points in giving birth to 'the social'. For those who have lost close relatives, houses and precious belongings, great disasters may be defined as a turning point in constructing 'a paradise built in hell' or 'the social'. However, it is difficult to define the experience of those victims as the same as the experience of those who live far from disaster-riven areas.

Furuichi told of his experience at a disaster as follows: 'I stayed in the western part of Japan when the Great East Japan Earthquake happened. I was astonished at the sense of different degrees of interest in the disaster. While many people in Tokyo observed mourning on 14 March, people in the western part of Japan felt as if the big earthquake happened far from their residential areas' (Furuichi, 2011: 214).

Of course, it goes without saying that the difference in experience between those in Tokyo and victims at disaster-riven areas is greater than the difference between those in Tokyo and those in the western part of Japan.[5] On the other hand, someone said that each victim has different impressions regarding the possibility of reconstructing 'the social'. Those who have human relationships and money to help them escape from the disaster-affected area felt less necessity than those who have no such methods and measures of escape. The possibility of the reconstruction of 'the social' depends on the experience of disaster. We can explain the difference again using the concept of 'social capital'. Those who have rich social capital experience the same disaster differently and also feel the necessity for reconstruction of 'the social' differently from those who have scarce social capital (Saito, 2012: 205)

Thus we cannot optimistically predict the possibility of the reconstruction of 'the social', and, therefore, we cannot answer easily the difficult question of whether contemporary privatized and psychologized Japanese society changes because of great earthquakes.

Psychologized narratives on suffering

As was shown, the year of the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake was called the 'first year of volunteers'. At the same time, this year was called a first year of mental care, because disaster experiences began to be narrated using psychological or psychiatric terms such as depression and PTSD.

Overseas, particularly in the United States, the problems young soldiers from the Vietnam War suffered from were discussed for the first time using psychological or psychiatric vocabularies. Although Japan has suffered from various great disasters in

the past, not just great earthquakes and tsunamis but also typhoons, volcanic eruptions and big fires, those great disasters had not previously included psychological and psychiatric vocabulary-based narratives. Nakai, a psychiatrist who made the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake a turning point for narrating disaster experiences psychologically, explains the reason as follows. Older generations considered that the Japanese in the past were strong enough to need no mental care in the case of big disasters (Nakai, 2011a: 63). We can add, therefore, another reason: that it has been considered a virtue of the Japanese not to express visibly how they feel about the suffering in great disasters.

Although it is very interesting how the narration of disasters can be attributed to cultural aspects like Japanese mental structures, it is also difficult to work with the relation between them scientifically (Kashimura, 2011). From a sociological viewpoint, we can learn why the narration of disasters has become psychological since the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake; basically, contemporary Japanese society has been steadily psychologized. In other words, Japanese society has learned to define suffering from disasters not as material or physical problems but as psychological or psychiatric problems, because they learned to recognize the importance of psychological or psychiatric factors in seeking meaning for their lives and for their identities in general. Saito said that, for victims at the Great East Japan Earthquake, the problems of mental trauma caused by evacuation and panic were rather more serious than the problem of exposure to radioactivity (Saito, 2012: 190).

Since the mental disorders of returned soldiers were attributed to PTSD, it has become a frequent diagnosis and is now registered in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM). Psychiatrist Ann defines PTSD as follows: 'In PTSD, many people remember trauma against their will and are obsessed by fear of trauma; as a result, they try to escape reality' (Ann, 2001: 197). The standard diagnosis of PTSD is defined in the DSM. The DSM is written to aid in the diagnosis of mental disorders including PTSD. However, many psychiatrists who delivered mental care to victims at the great earthquakes said that the DSM was not useful in diagnosing mental troubles. Saito said the following based on his experience at the Great East Japan Earthquake:

> As the Japanese Traumatic Stress Studies Society made the manual of PTSD available online, information on the manual spread and was shared by many care workers at the site of the earthquake. However, I do not know any case where this manual was useful to diagnose mental troubles of victims. The most important part is not diagnosis based on the manual by specialists but primary care such as listening to victims' raw experiences at the disaster.
>
> *(Saito, 2012: 84)*

The word 'debriefing' became popular among care workers at the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake. It means that victims talk or narrate their experience of suffering of a disaster to other people. The theory is that the narration to other people of such an experience caused by disaster can reduce one's suffering or trauma, even if

narrating it is difficult. Although having specialists like psychiatrists who have faced many people suffering from trauma as listeners in debriefing is desirable, it is not a requirement.

We pointed out that the year of the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake was the first year of mental care. Nakai has written that 'the word "care" has a broad meaning of worrying, concerning, taking care of, and considering prudently others who suffer and cope with ambiguous anxiety and disorder' (Nakai, 2011a: 66). Therefore, it is not necessary that specialists like psychiatrists work for the mental care of victims at disasters.

Thus, the concept of mental care has come to have an important meaning in narrating experiences at great disasters using psychological and psychiatric vocabularies. Mental care has become a popular and universal idea applied to anyone and not restricted to particular specialists.

Conclusion

It is undeniable that many people have learned to attach much importance to mental care since the great earthquakes. However, psychologization has a tendency to prevent people from considering various problems socially and to rob them of socially imaginative thinking. There are various problems to consider when addressing the difficulty of recovery from great disasters. As was shown previously, there were problems with conflict between volunteer activities and local governments, differences in the experience of suffering based on differing social capital, and the lack of agents to reconstruct communities because of ageing and the population polarization between the Tokyo and Tohoku areas. For example, as the Tohoku area hit by the Great East Japan Earthquake is an under-populated area, it lacks young agents for reconstruction of 'the social'. We learned after the great earthquake that the Tohoku area apparently was a 'colony' of Tokyo, because it provided energy and food to people in Tokyo. These problems are considered obstacles to a recovery of 'the new social' such as human bonds and community based on voluntary activities. We cannot deny the tendency to attach importance to abstract and psychological words like mental care, mental human bonds and the beautiful Japanese mind for recovery from great disasters, regardless of these serious social obstacles.

Our standpoint from which to examine Japanese society after the two great earthquakes is to examine the counter-relation between 'the social' and 'the psychic'. Furthermore we consider that 'the social' and 'the psychic' are in opposition to each other; therefore, the more 'the psychic' becomes influential, the less 'the social' remains influential and vice versa. However, considering the cases at the great earthquakes, to a degree, we can say that the tendencies to seek 'the social' and 'the psychic' are parallel with each other. Or is the search for 'the social' such as human bonds, volunteer construction of communities and various kinds of nationalism temporary, so it soon subsides? In any case, it is important to study these tendencies for the consideration of Japanese society after great earthquakes.

Notes

1 Although generally 'the social' refers to nation-states, it also refers to corporative societies such as a commune or union, which are symbolized by socialism and social democracy. The collapse and disappearance of 'the social' may also refer to Western rationalism or 'real society' in conjunction with the spread of virtual media space. Thus its meaning is very equivocal.

2 Japanese sociologists assert that, in Japanese society, the pressure to belong to intermediate particularistic groups has increased. This pressure is expressed in such concepts as 'gentle relations' and 'emotional consciousness' typically applied to younger generations. These concepts mean that younger generations in particular tend to keep human relations, reading tentatively their friends' faces for fear of exclusion from intimate relations. Some Japanese sociologists also consider this to have originated from the background of decreasing traditional group-oriented rules. That is, the decrease or weakening of traditional group-oriented rules has not necessarily caused the individualization seen in Western society but generates new pressure to adhere to rules for intimate relations. On the other hand, the changes in self-image in Western society mean that Western social theories no longer postulate autonomous subjects, which is the condition of 'individualization with individualism' and a cosmopolitan society based on autonomous subjects. It is difficult to consider both Japanese and Western social theories against the same background because the latter postulate the autonomous subject even though they criticize it, whereas Japanese society lacks such an element. We cannot also deny completely the aforementioned opinions about Japanese society's particularity on individualization theory. However, we consider that such a premise has gradually weakened and disappeared even from Western society, and also consider that Japanese society has recently converged with Western society in terms of self-image.

3 On these points, psychologization and reflexive individualization have similar characteristics in the context of Japanese society.

4 Saito said that the reconstruction of 'the social' is based on anarchistic extraordinary exigency. So, if everyday life ever recovers, the urgent need for reconstruction of 'the social' will soon disappear (Saito, 2012: 26).

5 Nakai (2011b) described the difference in the disaster experience at the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake as follows: 'While communal feeling was produced by common sense of fear and mourning at the center of the disaster-affected area, anxiety and a sense of doubt produced violence and cases of theft at the marginal areas distant from the center.'

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14

TRAUMA, SUBJECT AND SOCIETY IN JAPAN AFTER 3.11

Aiko Kashimura

Trauma[1] is not merely a psychiatric and psychoanalytical concept but a social, cultural and legal concept that has been historically constructed (for veterans of the Vietnam War and sexually abused women supported by feminist movements). This phenomenon, the construction of the concept of trauma (cf. Fassin & Rechtman, 2007), is one of the effects of psychologization. On the other hand, it leads our societies to gradually become medicalized and universalized, which ignores social, cultural[2] and personal singular aspects and experiences[3] embedded in these symptoms. So we need to analyze these phenomena attentively from multiple (social, political, cultural, etc.) points of view (cf. Sauvagnat, 2008: 7–16) and use these analyses in order to help the suffering persons. This chapter tries to analyze psychological effects (the effects of trauma) on the Japanese people who suffered from the disaster of 3.11. Here I take both a sociological and a (Lacanian) psychoanalytical point of view.

From a sociological perspective, we see that the treatment of trauma, accidents and death is highly embedded in cultural and social systems. For example, in the Tohoku district of Japan, care for the '*kokoro*' (the mind) of affected persons by teams of psychiatrists and psychologists was not well accepted by the victims because of a strong traditional culture that views mental treatments as taboo.

From a psychoanalytical point of view, Lacanian psychoanalysis posits that for human beings the meeting with language and entering the world of language is an experience of trauma (death) (Lacan, 1975). This is because a subject enters into the world of language via others on whom the subject depends and the subject accepts castration by the relation with others and language (the loss of the fantasy of omnipotence, the acceptance of death). The recognition of death (its symbolization in culture) is the proof of existence and the condition of being human. Therefore, Lacanian psychoanalysis thinks that people can never avoid the

recognition of their own death and never deny it, and that every society and culture needs the way and 'écriture' to express and accept (console) it.

From this point of view, Lacanian psychoanalysis criticizes the current treatments based on bio-politics, which deny pain and death and, in turn, existence. Societies that deny pain and death change the quality and structure of trauma. For example, in a society that regards all risks as bad, even an encounter with a trivial accident or a slight variation in the way things usually are might cause trauma. Lacanian psychoanalysis shows that third agencies, like the 'Oedipus complex', function to allow people to meet with 'the real' (a Lacanian concept that refers to the thing that cannot be represented) and to represent it. However, now because of the lack of the third agency (by the decline of culture), a simple meeting with the real, meeting with the sexual and the separation, causes a trauma. The trauma has unraveled the ring of the symbolic (a Lacanian concept that describes the sphere of language) and the real. Correspondingly, trauma is provoked by meeting with the real, which is not represented (Cacciali, 2013: 241–253).

Therefore, in this context, a risk society ironically and paradoxically produces a new trauma. Risk society tends to be controlled by savants, experts and technocrats. Beck (1992) says that, because the current high technology is impossible to control, our citizens must make political and ethical decisions. They control science and technology by limiting the power of savants, experts and technocrats. Similarly we must also control them in order to protect the emotional security of subjects and communities.

In this chapter, I will analyze the structure of traumatism in Japanese society by examining the reactions to and the treatments of the disaster of 3.11 and its problems. I present the following properties of Japanese reactions to the disaster of 3.11: 1 as silence, 2 as bureaucratic and 'scientific' discourses and the schizophrenic reality, and 3 as suspended representations and the traumatism of trauma.

The silence

The Japanese myth

Kaës says that, as the psychic space is a metaphor of the collective space, social disasters correspond to collapses of culture and of the supports in psychic life. This is why social discourses and responses are so important (Paul, 2001). French psychoanalyst Eric Laurent (2002) says that reactions to trauma are grouped according to different symbolic or panic styles. For example, in Spain, mourning is exteriorized in the form of occupied streets and squares. In New York, the reactions were very different after 9.11. They established the list of names and the witnesses of parents and friends of the victims.[4]

However, what was it like in Japan after the 3.11 disaster? The biggest and most famous reaction of the Japanese people to this disaster was a big silence. It was portrayed by the world media as a miraculous image of the 'patient and self-controlled'

Japanese person. What non-Japanese may not know is that this mythical oriental image of Japan is linked to the suffering and repression of Japanese people.

3.11 was a disaster particularly because of its nuclear aspect. There were many man-made problems, such as concealment of the accidents and how it was inadequately dealt with. An investigation (Sekiya et al., 2012: 65–113) into the Tokyo metropolitan areas showed that, just after the disaster, 55.7% of people were enraged by the behavior of the Japanese government and Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), and 49.8% of them thought the government had hidden information. However, they never expressed their sentiments openly.

Sono (2011), who quickly began the anti-nuclear movement protest in front of TEPCO's head office, criticizes that just after the accident even social activists had joined the Japanese government as one nation in praying for the Self-Defense Forces and workers in the plants instead of asking for information and accountability. He describes the situation in Tokyo on the night of the accident. At that time Tokyo was paralyzed, the trains had stopped due to the electricity failure and many people who worked in Tokyo had to walk a long way and for a long time to get home:

> While I was walking in this town I felt the quietness of the entire Japanese people and the tendency of the Japanese people to accept the reality immediately without thinking and to follow the course of the situation.
>
> Nobody consulted with strangers and nobody offered to share any food. I confirmed once more that even in such a critical moment, the Japanese did not address others to share the information of the event and did not act differently from usual.
>
> *(Sono, 2011: 12–13, my translation)*

Maruyama's explanation of the Japanese society

Japanese political scientist Maruyama (1957) explains that the Japanese people see reality as a 'fait accompli'. In a modern society, when new realities (the 'real', for example scientific and political realities) appear, people can normally confront these new realities, start to get to work on them, try to renew their world and rewrite discourse reflexively. However, as the Japanese people have just caught up with modern technologies and sciences from occidental countries, they may not have enough habitus to act in the face of new realities (social problems) by themselves.

In Japan new realities are always updated automatically as 'fait accompli', given by administrations that the Japanese people have no intention of controlling, but to which they are only subordinate. The Japanese people implicitly accept these new realities without questioning them through traditional practices.

In Japan, there is no space in society where someone has the right to express his opinion independently against it. It exists, of course, legally but not substantially. If anyone does it, they will be socially excluded. From a Lacanian

psychoanalytical point of view, Japanese do not have a space where the 'real' and the symbolic are interwoven, and where they can negotiate with new realities. Consequently, in Japan new realities are always excluded, or accepted without being aware of them (a fait accompli). Therefore, nobody assumes leadership when new realities appear.

As Maruyama (1961) explains, Japan's social and political structures were centered on the *Kokutai* (meaning 'the form of the state': a political entity based on imperial rule and maintained by the myth that Japan is a divine nation) ideology and psychology constructed by the Meiji government. The Japanese emperor held both political power and ethical authority: in other words he dominated both the public and private life of the Japanese people. The emperor was supposed to take responsibility for everything, but he could not decide anything by himself. Located at the center of concentric circles, the emperor had to follow the will of all past and future emperors. This leads to a 'system of irresponsibility' (cf. Sasaki, 2012: 43).

After World War II the Japanese emperor went from being a god to a man and the new democratic Japanese Constitution was established, but the *Kokutai* ideology and psychology linked with old social systems still rules Japanese society. Under the *Kokutai* ideology and psychology, reality is always singular. Expressing other opinions is not considered a way to build the reality of society together, but a denial of society. Consequently, in Japan being excluded from the community means death; people feel more threatened by the community's imaginary (fantasy) than by the true (objective, scientific) reality (Maruyama insists strongly on this problem, which is the major reason for the failure to avoid World War II, which all politicians and officers of that time considered stupid).

Anti-nuclear movements as a release of tension and expression

Anti-nuclear movements were, in this context, a precious opportunity to release tension and express them. Sono (2011: 38–39) says:

> In the moment just after the accident, in Japanese society where almost all of the music had disappeared because of the '*Jishuku*' (self-restraint against amusements) mood, then I was strongly moved by a simple shout of the song of Kiyoshiro (the legendary anti-nuclear rock singer) 'Summer Time Blues': 'The electric power is left over. We do not need it. We do not need it anymore.'

Sociologist and anti-nuclear activist Oguma (2013: 13), who started and analyzed the anti-nuclear movement, also says:

> When I participated in the *Genpatsu* (nuclear plants) demonstrations, a band played a piece of music named '*Byodo ni Ikiru Kenri*' (The right to live in peace). I burst into tears upon hearing it. I felt that my suppressed feelings had broken out.

AC advertisements – a symbolic violence to compel to assimilate

In this context, except for the anti-nuclear movements there were few spaces for people to share and express their sentiments. The public space was dominated by the *Jishuku* mood in which almost all amusements were cancelled. On TV, the Japan Advertising Council (AC) was the only one to diffuse enormous advertisements (the campaign for people's unity) just after the disaster. Because of the *Jishuku* mood, ordinary advertisements were removed and in their place, every day from morning to night, AC advertisements were diffused to 'encourage' people: '*Aisatsu wa maho no kotoba*' (A greeting is a magic word to be happy), etc., with a cheerful and light tone.

By observing some intercommunication on Twitter, I realized that young people did not like this campaign and that they even felt it to be a traumatic experience.[5] I observed then that young people were so sensitive and sympathetic to the victims that they suffered from it, had 'guilty feelings' and even realized the hypocrisy of these advertisements. Why did they feel it to be hypocritical? The reasons are the contexts in which they live every day.

Young people with a more individualistic mentality than older people always feel more strongly compelled to assimilate to others than older people. On the other hand, they depend on this involuntary tie more strongly than their elders, because of the loss of the reliable sense of the relationship supplied by substantial community as in the old days. Therefore, they realize more the contradiction between an individualistic lifestyle and dependence on (even) superficial relationships. For young people such a non-sophisticated old-style campaign demanding commitment was unacceptable and did not comfort them. The disaster of 3.11 had so strongly destroyed their mental stability that they would rather withdraw to their home without participating in society. As, for young people, communication carries a risk of trauma, it is difficult for them to communicate and create a new tie that is not superficial but reliable (Kashimura, 2003).

The influential Japanese sociologist Miyadai (2013) worries about this situation. He recently wrote a book promoting intimate relationships, intended for young people. He also holds '*Suteki ka*' workshops about how to become charming in order to have a lover. His message is that, in the age of risk, those who can survive are only those who have irreplaceable relationships.

We have investigated the silence as a major response in Japan and we have understood that it was a way to deny the new reality (the 'real' and death). The psychoanalyst Ferenczi says psychic traumatism is related to the objective event, but what is traumatic is the absence of words around this event (Paul, 2001). The silence that surrounds the drama is more traumatic than the event itself. We will next investigate another way of denying reality in Japan. Its style is not silence, but it is also a non-humanistic form of non-response. Consequently, it leads Japanese society into a schizophrenic situation.

The bureaucratic and 'scientific' discourses and the schizophrenic reality

Here we examine another way of denying the government, TEPCO and the mass media. This alliance is called '*Genshiryoku mura*' (nuclear power village). Their major way of denying is the use of bureaucratic and 'scientific' discourses ('STM discourses': scientific, technique and merchandise discourses), which I argue results in a schizophrenic reality.

Post-war regime maintained for a long time by the Liberal Democratic Party

The report written by the Fukushima nuclear accident independent investigation commission in 2012 shows that 'Fukushima could not be considered a natural disaster but a profoundly man-made disaster'. It explains the disaster in terms of 'regulatory capture' (Kokkai Jikocho, 2012).

Takahara (2011) explains the Japanese social and political structure as the background of this accident. The Japanese distribution system designed by the Liberal Democratic Party had been founded for the sake of maintaining the economic infrastructure at a fever pitch as an extension of post-World War II reconstruction. It aimed to distribute public investment to local communities and to industrial associations whose competition was restricted by controls on bank financing. Japan's famous and particular management model (cf. union–management cooperation) and welfare society model (family and company as the major suppliers of welfare) are connected with the private and economy-centered conservative apolitical lifestyle. Here the local authority (like Tohoku district) is a supplier of resources and is not autonomous.[6]

We know that the alteration of society by neoliberalism does not necessarily lead to a free egalitarian society, but maintains the structural privilege of some people. In Japan, because of the neoliberal reforms of the Koizumi government (2001–06), old strong hierarchies remained and low-ranking organizations were only given pseudo-autonomy. The government could escape its own responsibilities thanks to this pseudo-autonomy and spreading of responsibility (Takahara, 2011).[7] Takahara (2011) says that nowadays, therefore, there is no political integration and no system allowing the formation of mutual agreements in Japan. This means it is difficult to resolve and dispose of these big social problems.

After the failure of the Koizumi government, which boldly cut off the distribution of welfare, leaving many weak people thrown out in the street without welfare services, the Democratic Party won office and attempted to make an alternative modern political society (2009–12). However, bureaucrats, enterprises and various groups with old vested interests in Japan, alongside the United States, disrupted the reforms. Now the Liberal Democratic Party has once again come into power and the Abe government's policy is based on stimulative economic measures, 'Abenomics', and an old moral nationalistic ideology (as Maruyama

(1983) points out, here the political is not separated from the ethical). Furthermore, Abe wishes to re-arm Japan, not only because of his ultra right-wing tendencies but also because of the military-industrial lobby (including world-allied nuclear military-industrial groups).

'*Kasumigaseki Bungaku*': Japanese bureaucrats' rhetoric

One of the ways Japanese bureaucrats disregard the people and conceal their hidden purpose is through '*Kasumigaseki Bungaku*' (Kasumigaseki literature).[8] The rhetoric of a bill or an official document, and the way it is composed, allows officials to keep or increase their profits[9] by leaving to their discretion the interpretation of bills and official documents.

Just after the Fukushima accident, Edano, the chief cabinet secretary, repeated the famous phrase: 'There are no *immediate* effects [from nuclear radiation]'.[10] While it is true that nobody was exposed to radiation with '*fast*' effects, radiation exposure has long-term ones, which went unrecognized. *Kasumigaseki Bungaku* thus functioned to conceal the more important reality and to allow the government to escape its responsibilities.

The politics of setting the standard limits of radioactive effects for inhabitants in the name of science

Dominique (2012) insists that now the 'STM' discourses have become the norm, taking the place of the ethical. He says that the STM discourses set their knowledge in a position of absolute 'semblance' (a Lacanian term that describes an agency that supports subjects and societies) with no relation to social effects. He says that this is a false semblance, which camouflages the discourses of compulsion that penetrate all relationships.

In Japanese law, 1 mSv a year is the standard limit value of radioactivity to which people can be exposed, and which is set by counsels of the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP). However, Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has issued guidelines raising this limit up to 20 mSv for public schools in Fukushima after the accident. Shimazono criticizes the process used to decide this standard, along with who decides it and for what purpose (Ichinose et al., 2012: 269). He says that, by the linear non-threshold (LNT) hypothesis, we cannot say that this standard is absolutely safe, since there are no definite safety standards about radioactivity (ibid.: 134). Kodama criticizes the ICRP, saying that it is not an authentic scientific international institution (Ichinose et al., 2012). Shimazono also criticizes the ICRP's decision of the standard value in the context of a political framework concerned with promoting nuclear plants (Ichinose et al., 2012).[11] He points out that this standard value was set by epidemiological investigations on the citizens at Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission (ABCC) after the atomic bombing, but,

as in those days they did not realize the damage of internal exposure, they excluded people who died in the five years after the bombs fell, and victims living far away, from their calculations.[12] So Shimazono says this 'scientific' standard is doubtful and must be problematized and re-examined for it to be really scientific.

Kodama argues that we must wait 20 years if we only depend on 'evidence-based data', hence it is useless to try to estimate and prevent the risks (Ichinose et al., 2012). Shimazono and Nakagawa (Ichinose et al., 2012) contend that radiation standards ought not to be decided by the state but by citizens through mutual agreement, from a political and ethical point of view (cf. Ohno, 2011).

Contrary to this, just after the accident Japanese experts and government insisted on implementing their safety standards based on erroneous 'scientific' data. The 'fear correctly' campaign asserted that, even if people are exposed to 100 mSv of radioactivity, the chances of their getting cancer would be raised by only 0.5%. Kageura critically points out that, although we must take measures to decrease risks from a prevention point of view, this point of view gets pathologized as an anxiety neurosis and rejected as a reputational risk for Fukushima (even increasing the risk of discrimination against Fukushima children) (Ichinose et al., 2012). Kageura highlights that it is equivalent to the phenomenon surrounding the risks of nuclear plant accidents. The 'safety' propaganda leads to no measures, which leads to no accusation – a vicious circle of thought stopping and 'omission'.

Japanese media and the schizophrenic situation

Japanese mass media have a bad reputation in the world because of the 'Kisha Club' (the Japanese Journalist Association), which monopolizes the access of rights to important political interviews and excludes independent journalists, including foreign journalists. This club has its office in the Diet (as if it were a public section of the Japanese government) and sticks to the Japanese government line. Moreover, big Japanese newspaper companies grouped with Japanese TV are restrained by the largest Japanese TV sponsor, TEPCO. Therefore, most of the information about the nuclear plants and radioactivity including the System for Prediction of Environmental Emergency Dose Information (SPEEDI) was not broadcast by mass media outlets. People could only get this information through small independent media and SMS communications.[13]

While anti-nuclear movements communicated through these methods, they were also used by those who attacked anti-nuclear activists and insisted strongly that the plants were safe and risk-free, and that the anti-nuclear activists' discourse was not scientific.

People realized then that they could not trust the Japanese government or mass media (cf. Sekiya et al., 2012: 65–113), and that even SMS information was difficult to judge (besides the fact that some strange rumors also circulated). The information was confusing, nobody knew the facts and, crucially, people could not communicate and debate it frankly, because of the silence of the Japanese mental system.

Consequently, the reality was divided in two: there were two adversarial sides, '*Kiken Chu*' (danger) and '*Anzen Chu*' (safety), who attacked each other and could not argue constructively. People thus lived in a schizophrenic situation. This situation continues now partially, for example, around the problem of the effects of radioactivity.

The suspension of representation and the traumatism of trauma

The third type of reaction to 3.11 is the suspension of representation and the traumatism of trauma. It means that in Japan disasters are not well articulated and represented. Disasters are viewed as unrepresented things. This is not only a phenomenon specific to Japan but is also found in most neoliberal societies in the world, where we are losing the meaning of symbols. Alberti and Brousse (2013: 1) say that 'the question becomes: how do we live after the traumatism without traumatism?'

Japanese traumatism, the relation with death, was half an exclusion of death, and is represented in a famous folktale, in which a person (a man) does not realize his vice (the breaking of a promise), but both the vices and the victims (here a crane in the disguise of a woman) are excluded because they are dreadful (Kitayama, 1997; Kashimura, 2013). Here is a split and a denial of reality; however, there is still a representation.

Actualization of the latent threat

Lacanian psychiatrist Saito (2012) describes Fukushima as a 'latent threat', referring to a concept developed by Deleuze. He explains that it is difficult to represent the phenomenon of Fukushima, which allows the infinite production of stories. Of course, the accidents of Fukushima and the tsunami are single events, so the cause of the suspension of representations is not merely due to Japanese culture, but Japanese culture reinforces this aspect. As a result, because of fear and exclusion, disaster victims in Japan are ignored and abandoned. This is evident in the phrase '*Fukushima Kimin*' (abandoned people in Fukushima). The truly guilty people cannot assume their responsibilities at all; on the contrary, victims are forced to be ashamed for being burdensome and discouraged from claiming that the guilty parties should take responsibility (Kitayama, 1997; Kashimura, 2013).[14]

'The earthquake catfish': creating an open space to express the disaster

It is instructive to look at a previous experience in Japanese history, the relation between earthquakes and Japanese culture, by investigating the representation of 'the earthquake catfish'. Until the Ansei great earthquakes (in 1855 at the end of the Edo era) the symbols of earthquakes were dragons and serpents. There were only a few minor folklore stories about catfish. For example, some people thought

that catfish could catch the signs of earthquakes because they live near the bottom of rivers. Just after the Ansei great earthquakes, enormous pictures of the earthquake catfish were printed in a very short time and the earthquake catfish became the symbol of earthquakes. When we look at the different kinds of stories about the earthquake catfish, we find not only the humor of their funny faces but also the cultural richness of the Edo era. As a matter of fact, some earthquake catfish were drawn as gods who create earthquakes, with people praying in front of them. Some were drawn as cheerfully drinking with clients at a banquet with the carpenters who gained much money through the need to build houses after earthquakes. Some were drawn as righteous people who punished the greedy rich crying over the loss of their money because of the forced contribution they had to make to cover the damage.

The earthquake catfish was a contradictory existence, which had a good aspect and a bad aspect, as did ancient gods. It could be argued that this property was passed on to Godzilla (the monster that symbolized nuclear power in the film) and the characters in the animation films of Miyazaki Hayao (the ecological symbols representing the conflict between human and nature).

This representation is one of the strategies that we can see in the behaviors of the 'weaker' people of colonial countries: the 'mimicry' (the psychotic identification). The 'weaker' people identify with the strong others imaginatively, until at last they believe that they themselves have an authentic existence in order to support their own identities through this psychotic mentality. During the Heian era when faced with the big civilization of the Tang in China, the '*Honcho Ishiki*' ('Honcho ideology') appeared in Japan (Hotate, 1997). *Honcho Ishiki* meant that Japan already had everything that China had, and that Japan was the origin of China. This can also be viewed as a strategy of mimicry.

I find that it is through fantasies such as *Honcho Ishiki* and of the earthquake catfish that people are able to support their own existence (Kashimura, 2012a), to face new realities and to act.

The 'wise theory of catastrophe' by Dupuy

It is worthwhile considering Dupuy's (2005) criticism of ordinary theories of catastrophe. He instead presents his own 'wise theory of catastrophe'. This theory considers catastrophe not as the consequence of human intentions but as the mood of destiny – letting us gain the freedom to distance ourselves from reality. We will be able to think and imagine the disaster not only from a scientific perspective but also through the cultural point of view, as in the case of earthquake catfish. Dupuy says that this would give us another way of seeing the world and ourselves.

On the other hand, Lacanian psychiatrist Saito (2012) worries about Dupuy's argument in the Japanese case, because the stories about Fukushima are going to produce symbolic violence based on thoughts like, for example, '*mujyo*' (everything is uncertain) where there is no subject or date. Above all, Saito worries about excessive sacred symbolism.

This no doubt is a difficult problem. As Douglas and Wildavsky (1984) point out, in critical new situations we are often influenced by archaic thoughts, like staying away from things considered disgraceful. This is a mental function and system, which is a basis of fantasy, which protects our psychic health, but cases of very poor representation and fantasy will cause the exclusion of reality and even discrimination by cutting off victims. We must be aware of the nature of our traumatism and create new traumatism more open to reality. Importantly, we must respect the singularity of people, local communities and cultures, which Lacanian psychoanalysis emphasizes (Kashimura, 2012b).

The return of repressed trauma and the catastrophe

Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Fukushima: the atomic bomb and the nuclear plants are all connected historically. As a matter of fact, the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) began to plot a campaign to calm movements against the United States in 1954, after the '*Dai go Fukuryu maru*' affair, when fishing boat crews were exposed to the radioactivity of American hydrogen bomb experiments. The CIA campaign aimed to change the image of nuclear power, and promote the construction of nuclear plants in Japan as symbols of peace and growth (happiness) by changing the way nuclear power was used. The United States needed to change the Japanese dislike of nuclear energy (Arima, 2008).[15]

Hence, the nuclear military-industrial alliance suppressed the existence of the effects of radioactivity by representing the problem as a low-level one. Hiroshima, Chernobyl and Fukushima have been linked in how they have been repressed from the public consciousness, but they are also linked in how they are 'returns of the repressed'. Recently to show this characteristic, the word 'catastrophe' is often used in place of the word 'disaster', because catastrophe means the constant return of symptoms. Financial crashes, nuclear plant accidents and natural disasters (its victims often could not live anywhere except dangerous zones), etc., are not only simple disasters, but signal that our economic and social systems have fundamental defects.

Risk society and 'disaster capitalism'

In neoliberal societies, disasters have already been included in our economic and social system, as the term 'disaster capitalism' implies (Klein, 2008). In Japan we know already that the weak strata suffered more from the Hanshin Awaji Earthquake disaster (in 1995) because of poor geographical conditions (tied with their economic conditions). Although they needed economic help to rebuild their commercial and living conditions, governments instead proposed big development projects (in favor of the concerns of big companies) without local citizens taking part in the decision (only a few local districts' citizens claimed the right to change the plans being enforced by the government). Consequently, small old shopping districts could not be reconstructed as they wanted, and they had to take out many loans in order to participate in the government's new big shopping plans.

As Yamashita (2013) notes, fishermen, small merchants and farmers in Tohoku districts also want to reconstruct in their own way and need help to do this, but they must wait a long time for big development projects in which they will not be able to sustain themselves. The structure and the principle of disaster capitalism are pronounced in both times of emergency and ordinary times in Japan. As neoliberalism and the risk society promote more precarious and unstable situations for people, they instead welcome wars and disasters if they do not need to pay for them. What is repressed in ordinary times comes to appear in emergency times as catastrophe.

Japanese culture and traumatism

Fukushima (2013) observes that the origin of Japanese literature (poem) was an offering from the people, nomadic performing artists in subordinate districts, to the ruler of the state. New rulers, who feared the hatred of the killed loser's ghost, needed art to calm its sentiments. He says, therefore, that the origin of Japanese literature was a requiem, and its tones were colored by sadness and grief. In a sense, Japanese literature is in part one of traumatism. Since Japanese literature was originally oral, it was not written with the intent of being read in the first person or in the third person, but as a communication between the ruler and the performing artist in what Fukushima calls 'the second person'. There the voices of the losers themselves did not appear.

Without 'the Big Other' (in the Lacanian sense), Japanese people did not construct wisdom, courage, patience and devotion, etc., which normally are produced by the relation with the 'Big Other'. In Japanese literature the trauma is represented as a form of the 'real'. This memory of the sadness of the losers being embedded in the tradition of Japanese literature is one of the reasons that Japanese people do not like to fight but always stand by the loser's side (with sympathy and hidden fear). The belief in spirits and ghosts, linked with ancestor worship and ritual, remained until today in the Japanese culture and shaped the image of traumatism. After World War II in Japanese subculture, trauma had a central role as a war, a nuclear power or an apocalypse, and these figures were colored with sadness, grudge or loser sentiments. In this 'defeated dog' aesthetic, silence is considered a virtue, and claim positively is considered a disgrace. This traditional culture has maybe introduced a certain form of quietness, courteousness and rituality in Japanese social movements (including anti-nuclear movements).[16]

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have investigated reactions to trauma – or traumatism – after 3.11 in Japan. The Japanese form of major traumatism (or, in a sense, the half-lack of traumatism) is a silence, which keeps the social order. However, the property of silence, as we saw in this chapter, also maintains many social dysfunctions. During times when citizens try to limit the influence of science and technology, traumatism in Japan can become very repressive and dangerous.

This is evident in the way that the STM discourse of the 'atomic village' is unable to be strongly contested. In Lacanian psychoanalytic terms, this is because Japanese culture does not have full symbolic representations of death. It only has half the representations of the 'real', representation is suspended, and there is a lack of a container to confront the 'real'.

Yet, Japanese people still always feel the 'real' and have singular representations. This is why the 'Peace Constitution' ('*Heiwa Kempo*') in Japan was accepted. It was done from a 'defeated dog aesthetic'. Chiriaco insists that 'psychoanalysis is the opposite of victimology'. Some psychoanalytical patients remain victims, confined in their suffering. Their only chance to free themselves from suffering is to engage with their responsibility (Chiriaco, 2012: 172–173). After World War II, the Japanese subject is in part based on victimology. Since it has sworn peace in order to forget its responsibility in the war, the return of repression is coming.[17]

Trauma makes a subject of traumatism (on diverse levels). Hence there is a need to undertake a thoroughgoing self-analysis of this subject in Japan, as in psychoanalytic treatment. As Japanese social relationships are not based on blood relatives as in China, or on religion as in Islamic countries, but on concrete locality – living alongside others for a certain lasting period – the breakdown of this experience of living together caused by disasters destroyed the social relationships, which protected the cooperation and mental health of the Japanese people, easily and completely.

I conclude by remarking that we do not need the imaginary symptom of shutting off reality, such as in Prime Minister Abe's ultra-nationalistic military ideology. Instead we need the words (metaphors) and thoughts that support us in facing reality and creating relations and communities.

Notes

1 Bokanowski (2010) explains the difference between the concepts of trauma, traumatic and traumatism. He says that trauma means the action and negativity of traumatism, and that traumatism means the effect of representable things and symbolic things like fantasy.
2 Lash (2000) points out the importance of culture in thinking about risk, which is lacking in Beck's theory.
3 The contemporary usage of the concept 'resilience' tends to cut off the social and cultural context. Tisseron (2007) discusses the risks of using this concept.
4 Laurent (2002) says that a fear is a traumatism in the clinical sense. Here people make holes in common discourses. These are common representations of impossibility. Therefore, Laurent also critiques the way that the new concept PTSD in DSM-V attempts to change this common impossibility into becoming biological, universal and post-cultural.
5 Sekiya et al. (2012) shows that these advertisements were generally accepted favorably.
6 Yamashita (2013) explains that the Tohoku district, as a remote and discriminated against region, was not well integrated into the Japanese-wide system after World War II. He points out that this district has been so particular that some of its regions have their autonomy while others have been totally subordinated, as, for example, Fukushima.
7 Some see this point as one of the causes of the accident of Fukushima, i.e. the cost-cutting and moral hazard.
8 'Kasumigaseki' is a government office quarter.

9 For example, the famous '*Ama kudari*', the profits made by retired bureaucrats by creating and keeping posts with high salaries and useless or easy work.
10 The bureaucrats also express '*Jiko*' (the accident) using another word, '*Jisho*' (the phenomenon).
11 Hamblin (2012) says that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has always existed to promote uses of nuclear energy but has no responsibilities. It is only the watchdog for preventing nuclear proliferation.
12 Dower (1999) points out the existence of the censorship by the United States of articles about the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki just after the war.
13 For example, Twitter and several Internet broadcasters like Marugeki, Niconico, etc.
14 The novel *Kuroi Ame* (*The Black Rain*) (Ibuse, 1970) describes the disparagement of and discrimination against the atomic bomb victims at Hiroshima. However, these phenomena are not only seen in Japan – for example, the refugees from Chernobyl were also hated in Ukraine (Azuma, 2013: 100–104).
15 It is said that, through the accident of Fukushima, Japan has been bombed twice.
16 Kimura (2013) points out that the Japanese literature has not taken up politics and that, after the earthquake disaster, those Japanese writers who realized the repression of Japanese society had difficulties expressing themselves.
17 In fact, some young people are now interested in the extreme right-wing movement that demands the restoration of the Japanese subject.

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15

RISING ANXIETIES AND THE LONGING FOR TIES

On the transformation of relationships and self in Japan

Midori Ito

It is said that the Great 2011 Earthquake and subsequent nuclear disaster in East Japan dealt a major blow to Japanese society. Looking at the transition in *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper headlines, it is true that headlines including the word 'bond' (*kizuna*) suddenly increased in 2011. After the earthquake, various organizations, including the Japan News Network (JNN) and the Japan Graphic Designers Association, established projects with 'bond' names, mainly to raise disaster relief funds, and this was reported in newspaper articles. This fact also contributed to the sudden increase in the use of the word. However, a closer study reveals that frequency of the words 'ties' (*tsunagari*) and 'bond' began to increase in the mid-1990s. Usage of the phrase '[destined] connection' (*en*) increased at the end of the 1980s (Figure 15.1).

It is not quite true that people's anxiety levels about their future outlook suddenly jumped after the Great East Japan Earthquake. For instance, according to a public opinion survey by the Cabinet Office, no sudden changes were detected in people's awareness after the earthquake. Rather, '[t]hose with worries and anxieties in their daily lives' gradually increased in number from the mid-1990s (Figure 15.2).

Thus, it is more reasonable to say that certain events that had happened since the 1990s changed people's awareness and that the 2011 disaster spurred this trend. What was the background to the increase in the rate of people with anxiety? What kind of ties and bonds, in other words relationships, did people seek? Were there any changes in relationships and in 'the self' among Japanese people? If so, what kind of changes? This chapter explores these questions. To do so, we will refer to the discussions on private partnership and the reflexive self by Beck (1986) and Giddens (1991), new individualism by Elliott (2010), and consumerism by Bauman (2004, 2005). We will then discuss whether the characteristics they have presented can also be observed in Japanese society, whether there are any differences and, if so, specific examples of them.

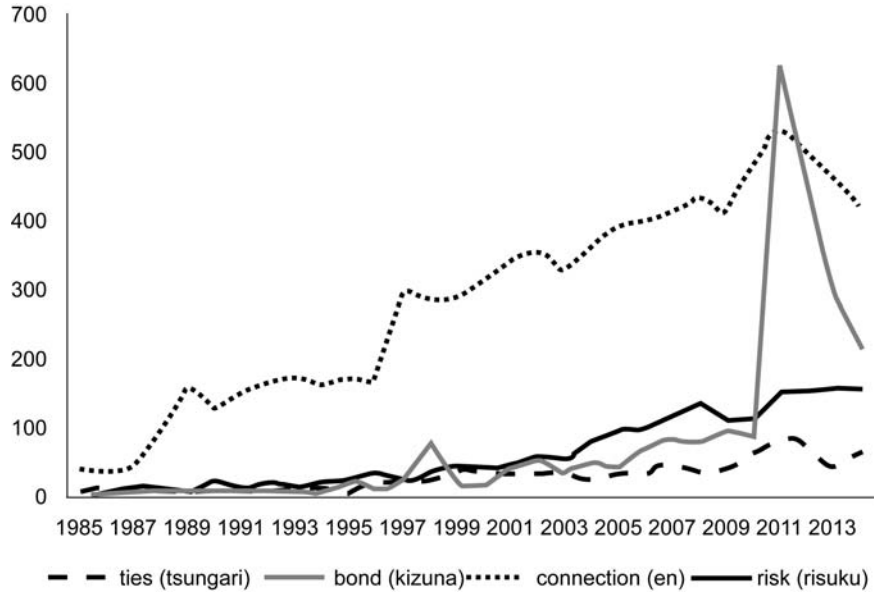

FIGURE 15.1 Number of headlines including the words ties, bond, connection or risk, 1984–2014

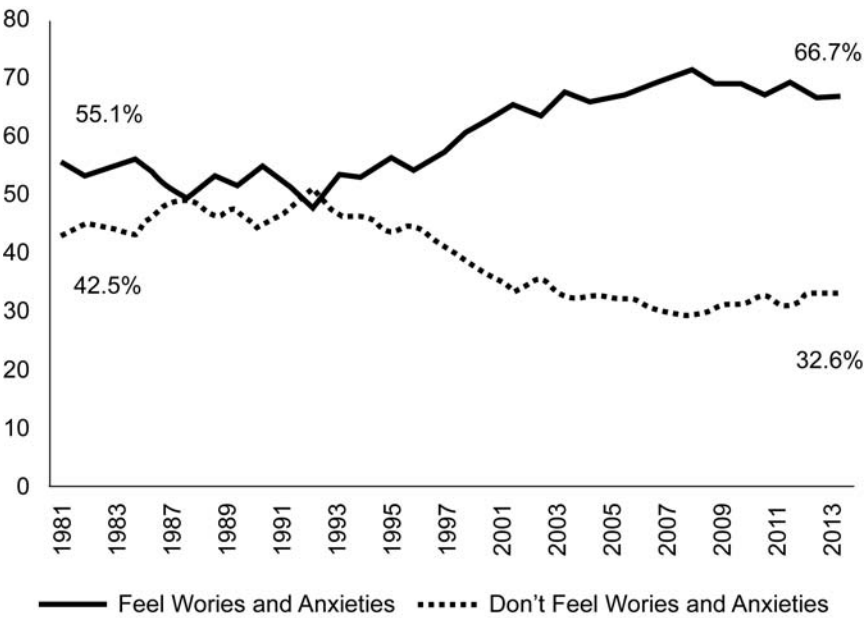

FIGURE 15.2 Rate of people who feel or do not feel worry and anxiety, 1981–2014

Structural transformation in Japanese society and the increasing trend of aspiring to have relationships

In this section, we shall look back at Japanese society over the last 20 years. First of all, there were serious natural and man-made disasters as well as environmental problems. Specifically, the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake and Aum Shinrikyo's sarin gas attacks on the Tokyo subway occurred in 1995. The problem of dioxin also came under close scrutiny in the late 1990s. Those events perhaps raised people's awareness about various risks, helping to instill the feeling that Japan is no longer safe; they were not living in a safe society. Then in March 2011, the Great East Japan Earthquake, Tsunami and nuclear disasters occurred.

Second, employment polarization began to take place. After the collapse of the economic bubble in 1991, job opportunities for the young were reduced. With the Asian currency crisis of 1997 as a turning point, several major financial institutions collapsed from 1997 through 1998. As a consequence, a great many people had difficulty making ends meet. The number of people who committed suicide jumped in 1997–98: by age, the greatest increase was among the middle-aged and older men; by profession, it was the unemployed (Cabinet Office, 2010). Those events forced people to realize that belonging to a company did not guarantee security in life. Furthermore, the 'shock' of the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers in the United States in 2008 led to an extensive economic downturn in the Japanese economy.

Meanwhile, the number of people not included in a family continued to rise. The lifetime rates for being unmarried and for divorce have been on the rise since the mid-1970s. The lifetime unmarried rate was about 1% for both women and men from the 1920s through the 1960s, and then began to rise gradually, reaching 20.1% for men and 10.6% for women in 2010. In addition, cohabitation is rare in Japan; as of 2010, the rate of those who did and do cohabit among those aged 18 to 34 years was 5.5% for men and 5.8% for women (NIPSSR, 2012, 2013). The divorce rate was around 1.0 (per 1,000 people) from the 1920s through to the early 1970s, then began to rise, reaching 1.84 in 2013 (MHLW, 2014).[1] Single-person households have increased in recent years, topping 30% in 2010 (MIAC, 2013).

It was not until the mid-2000s that people began to take notice of the presence of 'isolated' people who had not been included in intermediate groups. In 2005 and 2010 Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) broadcast a program about those who died alone after severing their ties with society. To express this social condition, a new word, '*mu-en shakai*' (society without connection), was coined in the 2010 broadcast. The broadcasts generated strong responses from viewers and made them more aware of the reality that cases of 'lonely death' were on the rise (NHK Special Crew & Sasaki, 2007; NHK Special Crew, 2012).

These events must have made Japanese people aware of ecological and financial risk, and of the risk of not being included in an intermediate group, a family or a workplace, for instance. In fact, there was an increase in the number of the headlines including the word 'risk' (*risuku*) in the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper (Figure

15.1). These suggest that Japan had become a risk society; in other words, Japanese society had shifted from the first modernity to the second modernity.

Moreover, the number of those who want to do something 'for the benefit of others' has been increasing since the mid-1990s. According to the Survey on the Japanese National Character, the rate of those who 'want to do something for others, regardless of whether I like it or not' was in decline up to 1993 and then began to increase. By 2013 it was 53% (ISM, 2014).

From the above, one can infer that under the structural transformation of Japanese society people's 'anxiety' level gradually rose from the mid-1990s and that the importance of relationships was re-confirmed, with people wishing to contribute to others increasing in number.

What kinds of relationships do people seek? When asked, 'What is the most important thing?' in the 2013 Survey on the Japanese National Character, 44% of the respondents named 'family', 18% of them said 'life/health/self' and 18% answered 'love/spirit'. Since 1983, 'family' continues to have the highest percentage as 'the most important thing'; the rate has been on the rise by and large (ISM, 2014).

The increasing trend of aspiring for relationships is not limited to family. There is a tendency to re-examine relationships at work, for instance. According to the Survey on the Japanese National Character, the rate of respondents who said it was better to have 'a social relationship with your superior outside work' has been on the increase since around 2000; in particular, the rate of respondents in their twenties and thirties rose to around 70% in 2013, almost the same rate as in 1973. Furthermore, while the rate of respondents expressing a desire 'to work at a company with a family atmosphere' decreased from 1978 to 2003, the rate is likely to begin increasing again (ISM, 2014).

Relationships are closely linked to the degree of satisfaction in life. In the 2013 Youth Survey (15 through 39 years old) conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW), approximately 60% of young people said they were satisfied with their current lives (the total of 'satisfied' and 'quite satisfied'). When asked the biggest reason for satisfaction, 'emotional fulfillment' (82.6%) was dominantly higher than 'financial wealth' (5.7%). Of the respondents on emotional fulfillment, 55.2% said it was due to the presence of favorite family members, lovers or friends. The biggest factor for satisfaction among young people nowadays is relationships with people close to them, rather than hobbies or work (MHLW, 2013). The above findings revealed that, in aspiring for relationships, loving relationships with people close to them, including family members, are valued most, although aspiration for relationships with people outside the intimate sphere have risen, too.

Transformation of relationships in the intimate sphere

This trend of 'placing value on relationships' is not merely a return to tradition. Using the case of 'family', which nearly half of the respondents chose as 'the most important thing', let us examine the realities about relationships that many Japanese now seek, while comparing them to studies of those in Western Europe.

In 2007 a new word, '*kon-katsu*' (marriage activity), was created to denote the activity of looking for future marriage partners as if it were a job search. This word was nominated for one of the Buzzwords of the Year in 2008 and 2009. In the latter year, the NHK made a drama series named after it; it became a social phenomenon (Yamada, 2013a: 3; Yamada, 2013b: 16). This phenomenon also reflected that those who valued family and wished to start a family had increased in number. At the same time, the word meant that one had to aggressively conduct the 'activity' of pursuing a future spouse, showing that the 'relationship' tied to marriage was something one had to actively generate for oneself. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim pointed out that individualization in the second modernity requires one to aggressively create relationships with people under given systems such as the education system, the labor market and the current legal system (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1993: 186). This characteristic attitude can be seen in the Chinese character '*katsu*' (active; activity) in *kon-katsu*.

It is not just marriage that Japanese feel they have to work at aggressively. Since *kon-katsu* became widely popularized, various forms of '*-katsu*' phrases have begun to emerge. For example, there is '*nin-katsu*' (the activity of getting pregnant), '*koi-katsu*' (the activity of looking for lovers), '*shu-katsu*' (the activity of preparing for one's own time of death), and '*ho-katsu*' (the activity of looking for preschool for one's child) (Yamada, 2013b: 16–17).

Beck and Bauman noted that the intermediate group called family became more fragile in the second modernity (Beck, 1986; Bauman, 2004). Let us look at family in present-day Japan.

First, the divorce rate was on a rising trend from the mid-1970s up to 2002 (2.3) and then declined slightly. Still, the current rate of 1.84 in 2013 is higher now than around 1.0 in the first modernity (MHLW, 2014). Let us examine attitudes toward divorce. The number of single men and women believing that 'once married, one should not easily divorce over irreconcilable differences' was declining up to 1997, and then began to rise; as of 2010, the rate was 72.3% for men and 62.2% for women (NIPSSR, 2012). However, there are other survey results that show a different trend. In the Survey on the Japanese National Character, targeting men and women of 20 or older, the rate of respondents believing that 'in the case of a terrible marriage, divorce is acceptable' increased from 39% in 1983 to 46% in 2013; the rate of 'one should not divorce' dropped from 35% to 25% (ISM, 2014). Those two sets of survey findings reveal that people in Japanese society mostly believe that one should not divorce 'easily' except 'in the case of a terrible marriage'. In other words, according to the statistics, Japanese people seem to regard family not as a strong institution that never breaks but as a relationship that one should strive to maintain, but can be dissolved depending on the case.

From the above findings we can infer that in Japan the collective longevity of the intimate sphere of family in second modernity is shorter than that in first modernity, but that this is slightly different from the relationship of consumerism that Bauman identifies. Bauman wrote that people discard relationships the same way they toss out physical things (Bauman, 2005: 87; Bauman, 2004: 64–6).

People in Japan are not at the same level; they make a conscious effort to try to maintain relationships. In fact, the divorce rate was 2.3 in 2002, a record high since 1899, but then declined to 1.84 in 2013 (MHLW, 2014).

Actually, on one level, the trend of wishing to have a family of a relatively strong institutional nature has increased. First, in the Survey of Single People by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (NIPSSR), the rate of respondents agreeing that 'if a man and a woman live together, they should get married' was in decline until 1997, and then began to rise. As of 2010, the rate was 73.5% for men and 67.4% for women. For the 'merits of marriage', the rate of those choosing 'so one can have a child or children and a family of his or her own' continued to be on the rise from 1987; as of 2010, the rate was 33.6% for men and 47.7% for women, the highest for both genders in the survey. The idea that an institutional family is needed to have a child remains strong. In fact, the out-of-wedlock birthrate was 0.8% in 1980 and, while this rose to 2.2% in 2012, it was still much lower than the 40% to 50% in other developed countries. Furthermore, the rate of those choosing 'so I can have more financial latitude' as one of the merits of marriage among single women has been on the rise since 1987 (NIPSSR, 2012; MHLW, 2012). At the same time the rate of selecting 'so I can gain social credibility and be on an equal footing with others' as one of the merits of marriage has been on the decline since 1987 for both men and women (NIPSSR, 2012).

The above data reveal that having a family with strong institutional aspects is relatively common, and one expected institutional aspect of family is financial security for women and children. On the other hand, the expectation that family will grant social credibility is no longer held as strongly as before.

What is also shown here is that the diversity of private lifestyles, as identified by Giddens (1992) and Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1990), is not at the same level in Japan; the Japanese have not reached the degree of individualization where the individual, not the family, is the unit of living, at least not on a conscious level.

Still, this is not simply a regression to the family concept as it was understood in first modernity. One reason is that we no longer expect to gain social credibility from family. Another reason is that the understanding of gender roles has changed, and thus it is common to see women continuing to work even after marriage and childbirth, as we shall see next.

According to the Opinion Poll on a Gender-Equal Society conducted by the Cabinet Office, targeting men and women of 20 or older, the rate of respondents who said 'it is better to continue to work even after pregnancy' was 23.4% in 1992 and has been on the increase since then. It became the most commonly chosen option (37.6%) in 2002 for the first time and reached 47.5% in 2012. Combining this with 'it is better to quit work when becoming pregnant and return to the workplace when the child grows up' (30.8%), as of 2012, nearly 80% of adults of both genders believe that it is good for women to work one way or another after childbirth (Cabinet Office, 2012). More and more Japanese positively view the idea of women working after childbirth.

With regard to the life course that single men hope their future partner will take, the balancing of work and family is also on a rising trend. Some 35.2% of men hoped that 'the partner has a child after marriage, temporarily quits her job when pregnant, and then returns to work after rearing a child or children', and 30.6% picked 'the partner continues to work all her life despite marriage and childbirth'. Combined, 65.8% of men wished that their marriage partner would work one way or another after childbirth (NIPSSR, 2012).

Let us summarize the above. Change is underway in relationships in the intimate sphere. A 'relationship' has become something that requires a person to make an effort to maintain, and is also a breakable, fragile thing in some cases. In this respect, the change in Japan is similar to that in Europe and North America. However, observed closely, there are not only similarities but also differences among these counterparts. The mindset to expect material security from family is strong. The trend to resist diversity in private lifestyles is also relatively strong.

One reason for this is that the welfare functions supplied by family continue to be far more important in Japan than in European welfare states (Miyamoto, 2011: 199–201). For most Japanese people the main preventive measures against life's risks have been starting a family and being protected by it. However, as stated above, those who were not included in families increased in number.

Because Japan underwent modernization in a relatively shorter period than Western European countries, the characteristics of what Chang (2010) called 'compressed modernity' are reflected in relationships in the intimate sphere.

Transformation of self

The self is constructed and developed socially and through interaction with others. This is the thesis of Mead. Has the self, then, been changed through the transformation of society and relationships with others? Let us examine this point while comparing and referring to theories on self and/or identity in the West.

In the second modernity in Japan, characteristics such as 'reflexive self' addressed by Giddens and Beck (Giddens, 1991: Beck, 1986; Beck et al., 2001), or 'reinvention' as one characteristic of new individualism (Elliott & Lemert, 2009: 58), can be observed, such as the 'self' described in business-related books on self-branding.

In one such book, self-branding is explained as follows: keep your 'consciousness high' and 'continue to have the attitude to think', it will be possible to 'trailblaze the path … of your own life'; 'things like one's own axis and the code of behavior will be formed'. This is '"the establishment of self", or "self-branding"'. In some cases, this self must change. This is because in contemporary society where 'opacity' has increased, it is necessary to have the 'flexibility to modify decisions sometimes' (Ariyoshi, 2013: 8–9, 15). Another author in the same book explains how to reflexively transform oneself, as follows: the important thing is to have the goal of 'what I want to be', fully comprehend one's 'existing condition' (Nakajima, 2013: 24), and 'take action to bridge the gap between the goal and one's existing condition' (ibid.: 28). In addition, one goes on to produce results while 'preparing

for oneself the way to perceive goals and the existing condition'. This 'process itself is self-branding' and 'this process has no end; the cycle will continue to go on' (ibid.: 29). It is explained that, when one is trailblazing the path, the self has to reflexively change goals and oneself to accommodate change in one's environment.

The phrase self-branding became widely known in Japanese society in the mid-2000s. The discourse to change oneself in a reflexive manner emerged earlier than the phrase self-branding. The former came into use around the mid-1990s (Tsunemi, 2012: 141; Makino, 2012), exactly the period when Japanese society plunged into the second modernity.

This self-branding has become a fad for a certain group of people in Japan. At the same time, in some cases, self-proclaimed genuine self-branders criticize the act of self-branding conducted in public areas as fake. For instance, Sato cautions: 'Some people mistake self-branding for how to make oneself good', but it is never about 'trying to make oneself look nice' (Sato, 2013: 115). Tsunemi says some acts of self-branding are 'close to fraud' (Tsunemi, 2012: 84). They are 'trying to raise the value of their own brands' by employing various tools such as self-made titles, embellished résumés, digitally enhanced pictures, exaggerated personal network, book publication and media exposure, dress and hairstyle, office supplies and digital gadgets, event hosting, an excessive use of emails, the books they have read and famous quotes (Tsunemi, 2012: 52–81).

The chief criticism was that self-branding includes embellishments and untruths and that one's inner self remains unchanged. Critics demand that self-branders not only conduct 'impression management' (Goffman, 1959) but also change their inner selves in accordance with changing circumstances; in other words, they demand to be 'governable subjects' (Rose, 1999: vii). The tools Tsunemi mentioned are indeed a self-presentation method that is recommended in Japan today. In addition, as they admonish self-branding as 'fake', the abovementioned methods have already become widespread in public areas. On this point, this method can be deemed the popular version of self-presentation in Japan.

These tools to enhance one's own brand are, to invoke Bauman, the bits that constitute one's identity in each case. According to Bauman, a liquid modern identity is formed each time by fitting together the bits that one has at hand (Bauman, 2004: 50–4). From these tools, the following characteristics can be observed.

First, these tools include a large number of things. Bauman's claim that in liquid modernity an identity comprises 'details' (Bauman, 2005: 87) is applicable to Japanese cases as well. However, while Bauman asserts that 'all the details … are obtainable in the shops' (ibid.: 87), the tools that Tsunemi lists do not all comprise things in the shops. Other things included personal networks, reading and event hosting, things one has to obtain for oneself. Also, these items were related to both one's appearance and inner self as well as personal network. All of these are parts that constitute one's identity. Moreover, these parts are treated as functional equivalents in making up one's identity.[2]

Second, self-branding tools exist in other than what appears on the surface layer at the instant of talking at a certain point in time; what should be extracted for talk

about oneself will be determined depending on the time and the case (Tsunemi, 2012: 58–62). As pointed out by Beck et al. (2001: 44), biography is constituted by narrative ex-post facto; in this regard biography is fictive. By changing identity-forming parts to suit one's narrative partner and situation, an 'instant transformation' (Elliott & Lemert, 2009: 58) becomes possible.

In the first modernity, the answer to 'who are you?' was basically the same no matter whom one was answering; if it was a man, that person's occupation was the answer to that question. To address the differences between Japan and Western Europe, the name of the company one belonged to and the line of work were important, as in 'skilled workers at Siemens' (Beck, 1986: 221) and 'miner' and 'Benetton shop manager' (Bauman, 2005: 86); in Japan, the name of the company one belonged to, such as 'Mitsubishi' or 'Sumitomo', was important (Takeuchi, 1995). By contrast, in the second modernity, one shows a different identity depending on the situation and partner. On top of that, faux self-branders whom Tsunemi criticizes try to make themselves look better by making up titles that had never existed before.

Third, hosting events and setting up organizations have become tools for self-branding. From this, one can see that making personal connections for oneself or for others, or providing the opportunity to make personal ties, is regarded as an achievement to be proud of. In addition, events and organizations taken up by Tsunemi (2012) as examples were often on a singular or short-term basis; their relationships were not very deep. From this, one can see that the ties that are socially requested are getting shorter and shallower. We can observe characteristics such as 'episodicity' that constitutes one dimension of 'new individualism', and 'engagement through detachment' – one of the life strategies in new individualism (Elliott, 2010).

Fourth, personal network (being an acquaintance of a certain figure) is included in the self-narrative tools by popular self-branders and this has become 'material to self-promote as if one is amazing' (Tsunemi, 2012: 36).

To examine this phenomenon, we can refer to the concept of '*kanjin*' (the contextual) by Hamaguchi. According to him, the Japanese perceive '*hito*' (human/person) as an existence inseparable from interpersonal relationships. There exists a sense of oneness with others already and that interpersonal sense per se verifies the presence of self. Hamaguchi expressed this way of 'human' to be the 'human' as a '*kanjin*' (Hamaguchi, 1988: 63, 71).

In the first modernity in Japan, when people talked about their turning points in life – in contrast to Western Europeans who emphasized their own decision making in life – the Japanese counterparts often mentioned other people (and their advice) that had been important to them. Those important others were typically described as 'a teacher I respect' and 'such and such a person who looked after me', who had been lifelong important people to the narrator (Hamaguchi, 1979; Ito, 2010; Shimada, 1995). By contrast, the other people mentioned by popular self-branders in the second modernity were such celebrities as Mikitani and Son, prominent entrepreneurs in Japan, but their ties to the narrators were somewhat weak

since they had merely 'exchanged business cards' (Tsunemi, 2012: 31, 67–68). Therefore, in another scene of self-narrative, it is highly likely that some other person could be cited as their personal connection.

What we can infer from the above is this: the self-presenting method of talking about interpersonal relationships, that is to say, the way of being a 'person' by which one's relationship per se is perceived as self, was handed over from the first modernity to the second modernity. It is just that those cited 'others' with strong ties in a lifelong relationship have changed to those with weak ties in a short-term relationship.

From the above findings, we can observe an increase of self-reflexivity and interaction with others in the form of 'engagement through detachment' (Elliott, 2010). At the same time, we see second modernity's version of 'the contextual'.

Thus, in general, what are considered the characteristics of identity and interactions in the second modernity in theories in the West can also be seen in their Japanese counterparts. However, observing in closer detail, one can see that what could be described as traditional Japanese elements in the first modernity were handed over, or adapted, to fit the second modernity.

Conclusion

This essay has dealt with the transformation of relationships and of the self in Japan, in comparison with the discussion in Western sociological theories. The following has become evident.

There occurred global and regional disasters under weakening intermediate groups, which had protected people from various risks. This caused the anxiety level about living to rise from the mid-1990s. In the worsened state of anxiety, a certain trend, which may be called the 'longing for ties', emerged among people. This 'longing for ties' was not merely nostalgia for traditional values. On one hand, there were various characteristics of relationships in the second modernity, which had been presented in theories in Western countries, such as weakening intermediate groups. On the other hand, certain characteristics believed to have been influenced by the paths of modernization were also observed. The diversification of lifestyles did not completely occur. Rather the phenomenon of trying to return to the family in Japan did. However, the situation did not go back to the first modernity. In fact, those who were not included in families increased in number. The self has also changed under the transformation of the social structure and of relationships. The reflexive self and several characteristics of the new individualism were also observed in contemporary Japanese society, for instance. One of the characteristics believed to have been influenced by the paths of modernization was the way of being of a 'person', by which one's relationships per se are perceived as self, although there was little change; those quoted 'others' with strong ties have shifted to those with weak ties.

In sum, basic transformations in social structure relating to the reflexive modernization were not only observed in Western developed societies but also in

Japanese society. However, the way in which people coped with them varied depending on available resources in their society, since such resources vary from different paths to modernization.

Notes

1 We will discuss later how the divorce rate has been declining over the past ten years.
2 T. Makino noted the functional equivalence of various things in 'self-polishing' ('*Jibun migaki*', reflexive formation of self) in Japan. According to him, activities such as external management (fashion, beauty and cosmetics), leisure activity, consumption, and direct approaches to change oneself from the inside were 'all characterized as functionally equivalent as materials for self-actualization to transform and strengthen one's inner self' in the magazine '*an an*' targeting young women in the 2000s (Makino, 2012: 165).

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16

SOME SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS

Robert Holton

Major financial crises are an important type of social disaster or emergency. Two very striking examples are the recent Global Financial Crisis (GFC) that began around 2008, and the major crisis of 1929–31 associated with the Wall Street crash. Their impact on social life has been immense. In both cases, financial crisis had major economic and social consequences, not simply the collapse of equity markets, but also profound effects on growth, employment levels, human welfare and social stability. While not identical in their origins and effects, each crisis introduced a phase of disruption, volatility and uncertainty into economic relationships. In social terms, financial crises have had profoundly negative effects on social morale, including the health and emotional well-being of those affected. In this chapter I shall focus on the recent Global Financial Crisis, examining some key social implications for social life arising from financial emergency and dislocation, drawing on my recent book *Global Finance* (Holton, 2012).

Global financial crises

Finance is an integral and very real part of the global economy and the governance framework of economic life. Financial liberalization has been a prominent feature of the upswing in cross-border trade and investment since the 1970s. In a climate of increased deregulation, capital mobility has been underwritten by increasingly autonomous capital markets, where new techniques of securitization and arbitrage have been deployed by investment banks on a global scale. Confident that quantitative formulae could manage risk (McKenzie, 2006), trillions of dollars of financial instruments have been traded each day around the globe. Underlying finance markets were increasingly sophisticated electronic trading networks that could conduct transactions across space in nanoseconds. These innovations in finance capital thereby created greater interdependence of the different parts of the system,

such that crisis in one part of the financial system was likely to spread. While the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997–98 was largely confined to Asia, the GFC was more international in scope. This greater spread was a reflection not simply of the increased intensity of interconnected transactions, but also the hubris of financiers that financial uncertainties associated with very high levels of debt could be managed through insurance against risk. The illusion unravelled from late 2007 onwards.

Economies, states and households all depend on the functionality, sustainability and stability that finance can bring to economy and society. Finance performs four key functions for society – namely, payment services, insurance services, futures services and credit services – bringing together lenders and borrowers (for further discussion, see Holton, 2012: 15–16). This last function is probably the most critical but also the one with the greatest potential for disaster. Finance is therefore central to life, but this centrality is not well served by language, which treats this sector as not part of the 'real' economy. Lying behind this is something akin to a moral economy of peasant producers, whereby the creation of material goods is somehow real and necessary, while intangible and often arcane financial services are not. The reality of finance, necessary to any kind of complex social order beyond the household, does, however, become egregious when things go wrong, generating crisis and emergency.

Financial crises are a periodic feature of the history of capitalism over the last 300 years (Kindleberger, 1978: Reinhart & Rogoff, 2009). The GFC is neither unique nor rare. The mix of dynamism and periodic crisis associated with finance fits very well with Schumpeter's notion of capitalism as a process of 'creative destruction'. Nonetheless, financial crises take different forms. The four types of financial crisis identified by Reinhart and Rogoff are as follows:

1. Banking: reflected in system-wide runs on banks that may generate bankruptcy.
2. Currency: involving collapse of the value of national currencies arising from state action or inaction.
3. Debt: involving default on debts by businesses, and especially states, often associated with type 2.
4. Inflation: often seen in developing nations, again associated with currency crisis and with the printing of money to meet debts.

The recent GFC was a combination of type 1, banking crisis, and type 3, debt crisis. The former was concentrated in the corporate sector, the latter in the public sector via an increase in the net sovereign debt of nation-states. The dual nature of the GFC reflected two analytically distinct system failures. Market failures were a key element in the banking crisis (for a very comprehensive account of the wide range of relevant causes, see Davies, 2010), linked to a significant degree with the mispricing of risk within market transactions. The fiscal crises of states represented regulatory failure to come to terms with excessive state borrowing. This *combination*

of market failure and regulatory failure has been obscured in the rush to ideological explanations of the crisis – with economic liberal ideologues blaming regulatory failure and social democrats blaming market failure.

Analysis of the GFC is further complicated because the two dimensions of crisis were closely intertwined. This is evident in several ways. First, corporate banking failure prompted public policy actions including public responsibility for corporate debt. This in turn put pressure on other aspects of public finance, leading to cuts in social and welfare expenditure and increasing reliance on austerity to resolve fiscal crisis. Second, regulation of the financial sector was weak, uneven and poorly coordinated, especially in the new financial derivatives sector, whose risks turned out to be unmanageable (Holton, 2014). Put another way, risk migrates to where regulation is weakest. Market actors and regulators are still struggling with how far finance markets will always be marked by volatility and radical uncertainty that defies risk management through statistical understanding of market transactions (Haldane, 2009).

This then is the multi-dimensional context against which the social consequences of the GFC can be investigated.

Social consequences of the GFC

There are two useful entry points into this issue. The first is through an analysis of economic consequences of the GFC. The main themes here are the negative impact of the GFC on output, gross domestic product (GDP) per head, employment, bankruptcies, savings and pensions. This kind of dislocation was a matter of extreme concern at the height of the crisis in 2008–09, with predictions of massive cuts to output and increases in unemployment. Leaving aside very short-run disruptions, a recent World Bank report (2015) argues that the GFC has had a negative effect on longer-term economic growth trajectories. Before the GFC, annual growth rates in world trade were around 7%. After a collapse in world trade in 2009, growth resumed in 2010, but now on a reduced rate of 3.4% per annum. This suggests that current world output is running at 4.5% below what it would have been before the crisis, with the biggest impact in higher-income countries most highly integrated into global capital markets. There is nonetheless a methodological problem in assuming that this shift in growth trajectory is entirely the product of the GFC. Other processes may be at work, including a slowdown of growth in emerging economies like China.

Variations in growth rates may not in and of themselves feed through into negative social consequences. Much depends on the incidence of unemployment in various sectors of economic activity, together with sectoral age and gender profiles (Verick, 2009). While the GFC led to increased unemployment across Europe and North America, its incidence was uneven, being especially high in Spain, Ireland and most Baltic countries. Beyond this, increased unemployment was highest among young people, and often highest among young men, which Verick (2009: 17) attributes in part to the construction sector being hardest hit. In

the worst-hit countries a very rapid worsening of unemployment by around 20 points occurred within 18 months. In another study, Verick (2010) looks at the impact of the GFC in South Africa. Here he notes that worsening job opportunities may lead not simply to unemployment, but to discouragement about re-entering the labour market. At the same time he also finds that employment in the informal economy did not increase with loss of formal jobs. The most vulnerable were uneducated young black males.

A second way of looking at the social consequences of the GFC is to focus on public policy arrangements and responses to crisis, notably those that have direct or indirect consequences for income support and social welfare. There have been two basic strategies here: a quasi-Keynesian policy of fiscal stimulus such as quantitative easing, and austerity involving cuts to social policies. A country-by-country analysis is necessary to delve deeply into the wide range of policy responses that have been adopted, with some countries shifting from one to the other (Dellepiane & Hardiman, 2012) and others combining different policy options. Cutting through these complexities, the key issue here is the relationship between austerity policies arising from the GFC, and adverse effects on welfare and well-being.

Austerity in the form of cuts to social welfare and public pensions has been a widespread but not universal response to the GFC. It remains controversial in terms of whether it really delivers what is promised (Blyth, 2008), though alternative strategies of fiscal stimulus are also not without problems (Streeck, 2013). Austerity can be seen both as a way of re-balancing excess of public spending over revenue, but also as a weapon in the armoury of neo-liberal policymaking designed to create what is perceived as a more favourable environment for business and private capital. Use of public funds to rescue financial institutions in Europe and the United States, as well as large businesses such as the US car companies, meant an effective transfer of resources to private capital from other uses such a welfare. In countries such as Ireland, public welfare was cut precisely to save banks and their creditors, with liabilities paid out in full. Cuts were then made to pensions and public health services. In Spain, by contrast, the context for austerity, begun in 2010, was not banking crisis or even a pre-existing public debt crisis, but a European fear that the Greek public debt crisis would spread elsewhere in Europe. This raised the interest rate for sovereign debt that nation-states use to fund fiscal needs beyond those funded through taxation (Dellepiane & Hardiman, 2013). Spain then shifted from fiscal stimulus to austerity, cutting pensions, child support and dependants' benefits.

To be sure, the fiscal crisis in which many nation-states now find themselves is only partly an effect of the GFC. Historical factors particular to individual nations should also be taken into account. The case of Greece is a telling example, with a large pre-existing public debt, coupled with a weak system of direct and indirect taxation that severely compromised revenue raising. The humanitarian crisis that emerged in the light of the GFC is thus both a product of the harsh programme of austerity enforced by external forces including the European Union (EU) and International Monetary Fund (IMF), and a product of historical legacies of political

clientelism that have undermined state capacities to respond to crisis. Beyond this, there is a broader problem of whether there is an optimal upper limit for public expenditure, which, if consistently exceeded, piles up problems of readjustment for future policymakers and populations. This point is distinct from knee-jerk neo-liberal exaggerations of the scale of public debt often used to justify austerity (Blyth, 2008).

Three general points emerge from this discussion. The first is the dual character of the GFC as both banking crisis and fiscal crisis. The second is the importance of national variations in fiscal health and policy responses between nations. The third is that adverse social consequences in the immediate aftermath of the crisis are not necessarily to be explained – certainly not in full – by the crisis. To think otherwise is to adhere to the fallacy 'post hoc ergo propter hoc', meaning 'after this therefore on account of this'.

Dimensions of social crisis

In the remainder of this chapter I select *two dimensions of social crisis* for more detailed attention. The first looks at issues of suicide and mental health in relation to financial crisis. The second extends more widely into questions of the social legitimacy of finance capitalism

Suicide and mental health

A major issue faced in disasters and crises is that of mental health in general and suicide in particular. Much research on the relationship between natural disasters and suicide shows no consistent increase, and in some cases a reduction in suicide behaviour (Kõlves et al., 2013). The impact of financial crisis seems rather different in that a significant positive relationship is evident across time and space. In a major 54-country study of the GFC, Chang et al. (2013) noted an excess of 4,884 suicides in the year 2009, compared to the annual average between 2000 and 2007. This finding replicates earlier studies of the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997–98, when a significant rise in suicide was observed in many East Asian countries such as Japan, Hong Kong and South Korea, where the economic impact of the crisis was greater (Chang et al., 2009).

In relation to the GFC, increased suicide rates were largely concentrated among men, with some evidence of a decline in rates among women. The highest rates of increase in Europe were concentrated among men aged 15–24, while in North and South American countries the highest rate of increase was among an older male cohort aged between 55 and 64. It is argued that patterns of increased suicide are correlated with increased unemployment, and especially increased unemployment in countries where pre-crisis unemployment was lower than average.

It is important to place these findings in some more general context. Even if there is a rise in suicide rates, reflecting increased unemployment during crises, this does not mean that the absence of crisis, i.e. economic growth and development as

usual, always means declining suicide rates. Increased medium- to long-term suicide rates sometimes correlate with economic growth and development. Blasco-Fontecilla et al. (2012), in a major worldwide study of World Health Organization (WHO) data, find that economic development has been positively correlated with suicide rates for many developing countries in Latin America, the Caribbean and East Asia, in contrast with most affluent Western countries (including most of Europe and Canada). This contrast may reflect high levels of inequality in developing countries, or a failure to match increases in GDP per head with health and social support structures and programmes. It also suggests suicide may be a different phenomenon in developed and developing countries.

Such secular trends help place the impact of crises in some kind of perspective. What is perhaps most striking is that the increased suicide rates during the GFC in higher-income countries sharply reverse underlying trends towards lower suicide rates in much of the developed world. This points to the radical social impact of the GFC.

Moving beyond suicide, increased rates of mental health disorder during the GFC are also reported for many single-country studies. Looking at England, Katikireddi et al. (2012) found a significant increase in poor mental health under the impact of the GFC but only for men, and this seemed not to correlate with unemployment. Economou et al. (2013), in a study of Greece between 2008 and 2011, found an increase in depression including among young, married persons and those already taking medication, but could find no clear relationship between different types of financial hardship and worsening of mental health. In Spain between 2006–07 and 2010–11, Gili et al. (2012) found an increase in a range of indicators in those presenting to primary health centres including anxiety, mood swings and alcohol-related disorders, but not eating disorders. These behaviours were linked not only with unemployment, but also with wider aspects of financial hardship, notably pressure to keep up mortgage repayments and eviction. These housing-related concerns had an impact independent of unemployment.

These studies are interesting in helping to broaden understanding of the possible mechanisms that link the GFC with mental health problems. Unemployment is clearly a very important influence on mental health in any context, not simply during economic crisis. Moser (2009), in a systematic meta-review of the literature, notes that psychological problems are twice as high among the unemployed as the employed. Crisis nonetheless adds to this relationship, especially where unemployment rates are concentrated among particular groups, such as young people in Europe in the aftermath of the GFC. However, it is not the sole influence. Lee et al. (2010), for example, in a study of increased depression in Hong Kong during the GFC, found depression became more widespread both among men and women, and for higher- and lower-income groups. A key issue here was threats to overall household welfare arising from investment losses. Higher levels of a major depressive episode were evident among those who had sustained losses, compared with those who had not.

Other approaches to the social consequences of the GFC have examined a further set of processes arising from policies of austerity designed as a response to fiscal

crises faced by nation-states. The relevant mechanisms here include cut-backs to social support programmes, public pensions and public health services designed to address budget deficits, and the rising costs of government borrowing from capital markets during the uncertainties of the GFC. These processes have become very visible, at the time of writing, with the return of the Syriza Government in Greece pledged to combat austerity and the humanitarian crisis facing the old, the sick, the poor, the unemployed and all those vulnerable to reductions in public welfare. In Greece, cuts to hospital budgets, increases in user charges, and the closure or disruption of some health services have led to a self-reported increase in poor health (Kentikelenis et al., 2011). A number of observers have also linked the rise in HIV/AIDS cases in Greece to adverse fiscal pressure on needle exchange and other preventive services (Karanikolos et al., 2013: 6). Austerity-induced social crisis is found in many parts of Europe, but especially in Mediterranean countries.

Connections between austerity and deteriorating health in Europe are reviewed in an important paper by Karanikolos et al. (2013). Here considerable variety in state responses is evident. Some countries were better prepared to meet fiscal crisis through prior actions (Italy and Czech Republic), such as the building up of reserves; others protected health from public expenditure cuts (e.g. Belgium, Denmark). Elsewhere, however, adverse changes of various kinds were made to public health systems, such as the imposition or increase in user charges, and cuts to hospital budgets (e.g. Greece, France, Ireland and the Netherlands). These then contributed to a deterioration in health. This is reflected in a rise in both suicides and infectious diseases in countries facing especially severe austerity cuts in health provision such as Spain, Greece and Portugal. Underlying these responses is the longer-term coherence and structure of the health system. In countries, notably Greece, where this structure was poor, with lack of explicit public funding criteria, little coordination of services, and weaknesses in administrative capacity, the failure to negotiate the crisis more successfully is clearly in part the result of long-term problems of governance, rather than financial crisis and austerity alone (Kentikelenis & Papanicolas, 2012).

An alternative explanatory strategy is to examine health consequences where austerity has been abandoned (Karanikolas et al., 2013: 7). Consider the case of Iceland. This country faced a severe banking crisis and considerable public indebtedness. However, after several years of austerity and increased unemployment between 2008 and 2010, further austerity was rejected at popular referenda. The adverse consequences of the GFC were met instead by a deliberate collapse of the value of the currency and capital controls. This increased the price of imports and reduced the standard of living. Yet the government maintained social support with active measures to get people back to work. The post-2010 suicide rate did not increase, and the impact on health was, according to this study, imperceptible.

Such comparative perspectives on public policy options as key influences in understanding the national trajectories of health outcomes in the aftermath of the GFC are very useful. What remains is a very complex state of affairs across Europe, with many different ways of balancing social-democratic and neo-liberal pressures

in health policy. For those Mediterranean countries, including Spain and Italy, still struggling with fiscal crises of the state in the face of mounting public opposition to austerity, the situation is now perhaps best described not as pervasive austerity, but more as a 'new age of permanent strain' (Pavolini et al., 2015). In Asia, by contrast, where the GFC has a lesser impact on banking and public indebtedness, the social impact on health, while significant in the worse-hit countries like Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong, has been less traumatic at a political level.

Social legitimacy of finance capitalism

Disaster and crisis have major impacts not only on human welfare and public policy, but also on the broader social order. In the following discussion I leave aside detailed consideration of political changes and elections – clearly of recent importance in Greece – and turn to consider how the financial crisis may have shaken the social legitimacy of finance capital.

Crisis is of course an over-used word (Holton, 1987). It is best used sparingly to depict social moments in which radical and far-reaching challenges and opportunities are manifest. Not every moment of unrest or strain is a crisis. The GFC qualifies as a crisis because it exhibited many symptoms of radical challenge to economic processes. These include the collapse of capital markets through bankruptcy and loss of savings prompting extraordinary measures of state intervention to bail out major institutions, together with rising unemployment and a very rapid deterioration in the fiscal health of nations. What has also been evident is a wave of hostility to banks and bankers, not only seen in opposition to the payment of large bonuses even to individuals whose activities led to huge financial losses, but also fuelled by revelations that some in the finance sector colluded to manipulate financial processes to their private corporate advantage. A major example of this is the 'rigging' of the London inter-bank offered rate (LIBOR), which is used in around US$300 trillion of financial contracts around the world (Hou & Skeie, 2014: 2). In an opaque process free of regulatory oversight, bankers colluded to set the rate to maximize their profits rather than providing a neutral process that simply coordinated overnight rate setting (Tabb & Grundfest, 2013).

There is then a very real sense of a legitimation crisis (a term originally developed by Habermas, 1976) in relation to finance capital. This is reflected not only in relation to the banking crisis, as described above, but in relation to the way in which private holders of corporate and government bonds operated during the crisis, insisting that their investments be repaid in full whatever the social consequences. The self-interest of bond holders created unpopular arrangements in Ireland, where the government bailed out private holders of the debts of failed banks even though this led to a strict programme of austerity including pension cuts reducing the living standards of the elderly and cuts in public health reducing services to the sick. This led to defeat of the Irish government in the election of 2011. In Greece, the reaction against austerity led to the election in 2015 of the Syriza Government. In this case it is the IMF, EU and the European Central Bank

that have managed the neo-liberal policies of austerity, and whose legitimacy is put into question. Finally, in Iceland in 2010, 93% of the population rejected the reimbursement of bank creditors (Karanikolos et al., 2013) demanded by external holders of the debts of Icelandic banks.

Evidence of manifest opposition to the operation of banks and capital markets suggests that the GFC and its austerity aftermath has generated a legitimation crisis for finance capital. For Habermas, such a crisis occurs when two conditions are met. First, markets fail in some fundamental sense. This economic condition is met in the evident failure of the finance system to price risk leading to massive volatility, bankruptcy, and loss of savings through the destruction of value (Haldane et al., 2010). Uncertainty overwhelmed capital markets, which have not yet fully recovered their trust in current arrangements. The second political condition is that states lose their effective steering capacity to meet economic crisis. This has not been met in a universal way, but is evident in the conflict between neo-liberalism and anti-austerity policies linked with social democracy across much of Europe, most clearly in Greece. Insofar as these two conditions are met, crisis is projected onto the third terrain of legitimacy – that is to say, on the undermining of normative compliance with the principles and policies involved in unregulated private investment banking coupled with neo-liberal public policy.

The overt crisis of legitimation is only currently evident in a limited number of national settings, but the global framework of capital markets creates an interdependency not only in terms of flows of capital, but also in terms of wider interest and concern about the over-arching principles that should apply in regulating such markets. The shadowy world of central bankers, who are charged with overall financial stability (Holton, 2012: 64–7), has done much more than individual nation-states for financial stabilization, heading off deeper economic crisis with quantitative easing. However, the attempts to re-regulate private banking – the so-called Basel agreements – have been less successful, as the neo-liberal ideology of minimal regulation reasserts itself.

Crises, using the medical metaphor, are resolved either through the death of the patient, or through recovery. Conflicts between adherents of the various therapies that might assist recovery remain in place, as we have seen. The crisis in Greece is still at a very serious stage. Elsewhere crisis has been alleviated to varying degrees, though the harsh medicine of austerity remains controversial with many patients. However, it is nationalism as much as social democracy that is attracting wider support as a therapy for recovery, and certainly much more so than the anti-capitalist option.

Conclusion

From a theoretical viewpoint, social crisis associated with the GFC may be seen as a crisis of extreme social differentiation. Classical social theory set an enduring theoretical agenda for us in emphasizing how capitalism and modernity differentiated spheres of society from one another. Economy, polity and culture became

separated into specialized processes, which differentiated markets, government, and the sphere of meaning and values. This raised the problem of order. How could processes hitherto integrated be harmonized in a world of differentiation? How could the whole hang together? Polanyi (1957) offered a more recent reformulation of this problem, noting that laissez-faire economics is in fact a rather transient form of social life across history, one that constantly requires reintegration into a broader sense of social integration.

Within this framework the recent extreme differentiation of deregulated finance capital from political regulation and prevailing social values, once again generates a major challenge for social order. The legitimation crisis associated with the GFC is precisely concerned with pathologies arising from extreme differentiation of finance from the rest of society. Those aspects of human welfare I considered earlier, involving suicide, depression and mental health, have multiple causes. Yet the increase in these measures during the GFC has brought to the forefront a subset of causes linked not simply with worsening unemployment and loss of welfare services, but also with the pathologies of laissez-faire capitalism.

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