Introduction and Short Pieces

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On relatively short notice, presenters from the Mānoa Futures Symposium were asked to provide essay-style snapshots of their talks for inclusion in *The Journal of Futures Studies*. As it was necessary to impose a hasty deadline, some presenters were unable to lengthen their pieces sufficiently, but as we did not want to exclude anyone from this symposium, the shorter pieces have been pooled together and included below.

As Jim and Aubrey have already noted, there was magic in the air that day, and much of the excitement and inspiration floating around the room was due to the keynote given by Dr. Jose Ramos whose eloquent call to arms served as the perfect capstone to a day of critical insights and creative thought. I could not have imagined the symposium going any better than it did, which is a testament to the many efforts of Aubrey, whose perseverance and grace made the event all that it was and more than any of us could have expected.

The symposium and this recollection of it seems worthy of a dedication. While the most obvious person for this honor would seem to be Dr. Dator, I know that he is not fond of such things, and, as I imagine he would say, the event was the *Emerging* Futurists symposium not the *Emerged* Futurists symposium. With that in mind, it is my pleasure to dedicate this publication to Dr. Seongwon Park, who successfully defended his dissertation last year and now works as a futurists for the government of South Korea. If there is anyone who embodies the ethos of the Emerging Futurist symposium, it is certainly him.

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Alternative Futures for Abortion

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The legality of abortion is a contentious socio-political issue in the United States. While abortion rights advocates state the debate is settled, anti-abortion rights advocates continue to press for the banning of all abortion services. Despite the fact that the issue is portrayed as a binary – you're either with us or against us – many people are on the fence. And while it seems that the future can only hold one possible outcome – either abortion stays legal or becomes illegal – there are more possibilities, outside of the legal argument, we rarely think about. What might the debate on abortion be like in twenty, thirty, forty years? Could technology eliminate the need for abortion? In what ways does the abortion debate play the role of the 'canary in the coal mine' for emerging debates on Human Rights, Disability Rights, and the conception of personhood? My research explores the driving forces and current trends that have influenced the legality and accessibility of abortion services and abortion rights in America over the past 75 years and the emerging issues that could deconstruct the binary argument. I present some ideas of what the futures of abortion may look like in American, examining how this would affect the rights of women and men, and how debates on abortion and personhood could influence debates on the rights (and personhood) of animals, children and future generations, artificial intelligence, cyborgs, and other entities currently not recognized as warranting much or any legal protections by our society.

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Making Chinese Futures

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The rise of China is a hot issue in Futures Studies. In two decades, China has caught up to the U.S., and their massive population and growing economic power must be an important variable in the future of humanity. Will China cohabitate with the West? Will it challenge the hegemony of U.S.? These questions, however, highlight the reality that there is much that we still do not know about China, including most Western futurists, who do not understand the basic concepts that constitute the Chinese view of the future. For instance, the most popular term for the future in Sino characters (未来 : *wei-lai* in Chinese pronunciation) has not been fully researched relative to Futures Studies.

A term for the future in any language is a foundational aspect of Futures Studies. Without a proper term for the future that has conceptual equivalence with one in another language, it is not possible to translate various concepts and images of the future between different cultures. In carrying out research for this project, I found that the dominant Sino character term for the future, *wei-lai*, was used not only in China but was actually shared by Korea, Japan, and Taiwan. Furthermore, it has been used only in singular form, even by East Asian futurists. This non-plural usage shows that there is no distinction between "future" and "futures" in Sino characters. In addition, the term implies that "Futures Studies" in English is technically translated into "Futurology," which is a singular concept in Sino characters and has been naturalized in China. For instance, the Chinese Wikipedia notes that Futures Studies and Futurology are translated into same singular noun, *wei-lai xue* (singular future + study) in Sino characters.

This egregious error in translation in which the popular term for the future in Sino character does not discern between singular and plural forms promotes unproductive misunderstandings within Futures Studies, which analyzes and crafts alternative images of the futures. I argue that this phenomenon is structurally based on the ideographic traits of Sino characters that do not discern the plural form clearly and, thus, should be changed in favor of coining a new term that reflects the plurality of futures. Sino characters such as mountain (山), bird (鳥), stream (川) have been actually used as a kind of collective noun, which can be analyzed as both singular or plural forms according to the context. Linguistic environments based on ideogram might naturally affect the formation of a holistic worldview that individuals are understood as a part of a collective group, and character users likely became subconsciously indifferent to the distinct plural form.

Therefore, *wei-lai*, even in singular form, also holds potential as a collective noun that can be analyzed into plural concepts according to context. At present, East Asian futurists still employ the rather ambiguous usage of a singular name interpreted as "futurology"

in public, but is also implicitly regarded to mean plural "Futures Studies" in professional exchanges. Nonetheless, using a singular term for the future is anathema to the common sense of Futures Studies. Above all, it seems unreasonable to expect ordinary Chinese people to easily distill plural images of "futures" from the singularly-expressed *wei-lai xue*.

If one accepts the central tenant of the Mānoa School of Futures Studies that there are images of plural futures, Chinese people need to develop a more appropriate term for plural futures in Sino characters. Confucius, who is the most admired thinker in Chinese culture, states, "right naming (正名) is the most priority in politics." Confucius understood the power of ideographic naming, which imprints specific images and sounds on one's mind, and how right naming can guide the beliefs and actions of people. Futures Studies in East Asian culture must consider the wisdom of Confucius in establishing a right name for futures. I suggest a new Sino character term for plural futures: " 多未来 " (*duo wei-lai*), which means multi (多) + future (未来). Futures studies in Sino characters should be " 多未来學 "(*duo wei-lai xue*) composed of plural futures (多未来) + study (學). The establishment of a new term for plural futures will be useful for Sino character users to understand the core concepts of Futures Studies and can also be a conceptual weapon for Chinese people to pursue their preferred futures beyond the direction of the Chinese goverment.

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The Future of the Arab Spring in the Islamist ruled governments

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The Arab Spring has given birth to a new era in the Arab region, from Morocco in the West to Bahrain in the East. These nations are striving to have a fairer and more equitable future after long decades of authoritarian ruling run by small dynasties that remained in power for decades. In the countries in which these revolutions took place, the well-organized Islamist parties have won the elections and held the reins of government by an overwhelming majority. The uprisings have forged the collapsed states at odds with poor, ideologically unidentified, and secular parties seeking to get rid of the religious-oriented dominance and putting forward a more liberal and open-minded alternative to the so-called ideological parochialism of traditional Islamic parties.

This struggle took place due to the significant lack of a forward-looking vision by all stakeholders within these nations as no one is focusing on the long-term and instead solely emphasizing immediate benefits for their own respective parties or groups. There are increasing demands to change the way Arabs think, even involving fundamental elements and worldviews that usually seem to be inseparable to them, thus resulting in tremendous challenges and obstacles that hinder efforts in reconstructing ideological foundations that seek to gain freedom, pluralism, and democracy.

This research aims to address the shaping of the Arab region in light of existing Islamist-ruled governments by outlining the possible scenarios for the region by using Futures Studies methods. The answer to the following questions will be sought after the execution of this research: are there comprehensive and radical reviews to take place on the existing literature and discourse of the Islamic groups? What led to having Islamists leading theses countries after the revolution? Will pragmatism or ideology prevail in light of such changes? How will the Islamist leaders of these countries deal and handle the repercussions from other Muslim majority countries and the rest of the world? What are possible scenarios that may happen in the future for the Arab region under the leadership of the Islamist ruled governments?

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Social Media is Today: What Comes Tomorrow?

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We will not live in a black and white future. It is not an "either-or" but an "and"-future (Horx, 2005). Post cards and letters will not be replaced by emails, and emails not by Facebook posts and blogs. Post cards, letters, emails, and Facebook messages will coexist side by side; likewise video chats and face-to-face communication. We need to have "a work personality and a party personality" (Qualman, 2011). Unless we would experience dissolution of fundamental societal structures, scholars agree that the social transformation of the last centuries cannot be reversed.

Social media competence will be a prerequisite for the next global supercycle following the knowledge age. Changes resulting from mega trends are connected not only at a technological but at a much deeper socio-cultural level and express an overall evolutionary principle (Horx, 2011). Thus societal changes related to social media and Web 2.0 are the herald of an underlying trend: connectivity (Horx, 2011). The internet evolution continues into Web 3.0 as "words, pictures, movies, blogs are pieced together around a single sematic topic, written by different people at different times" (Pollock, 2009). Web 4.0 will be defined through an intelligent web. New internet architectures need to be developed to overcome to fundamental challenges and to ensure open internet standards and digital security (internetsociety.org, 2012).

Economic globalization connects businesses. Communication technologies connect people and enable global information exchange. Worldwide interactive media connects cultures which elevates the new connectivity towards a new level: Everybody can send and receive in a global network structure (Horx, 2011). Finally virtual realities, especially the hyper-reality, are pushing us into a transhuman age (Spencer, 2012).

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Altered states through biotechnology in science fiction cinema

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This paper was first presented at the University of Hawaii's Centre for Futures Studies (HRCFS) in December 2012. It introduces case studies demonstrating how science fiction cinema has long explored the possible social implications of utilizing biologically active technologies to induce altered states of consciousness or perception. As synthetic biology and a broad wave of personal biotechnological industries mature and diversify, these cinematic explorations can be contextualized as a form of futures practice - the use of popular narratives to present a spectrum of speculative scenarios to mass audiences.

By comparing films including Wim Wenders's *Until the End of the World* (1991), Kathryn Bigelow's *Strange Days* (1995), David Cronenberg's *Existenz* (1999), Richard Linklater's *A Scanner Darkly* (2006), Christopher Nolan's *Inception* (2010), and others, the question of how their various "diegetic prototypes" (David A. Kirby, 2010), in- narrative technologies, could map to a 2x2 matrix of critical uncertainties in biotechnological product development was investigated. Each of the 10 cinematic texts utilized in the study are introduced, and the defining characteristics or uncertainties of each speculative scenario detailed. Images are provided demonstrating the user experience of each futuristic technology as it induces an altered state of consciousness or perception. Some of these "science fiction prototypes" (Brian David Johnson, 2011) portray the socialized use (for better and for worse) of technologies that in some cases have been directly inspired by actual contemporary and historical scientific breakthroughs including sensory deprivation methods and nootropic substances.

Two critical uncertainties emerge through analysis of the film's technologies: the first around the accessibility of future consumer-facing biotechnological products and services. Will these future technologies capable of disrupting and enhancing our perception and very states of consciousness be illegal and highly controlled, or loosely regulated and widely available? The second critical uncertainty is around the nature of their form and the process of their function. Will they function in the same ways as today's "analog" drug delivery systems and pharmacological interventions, or will they resemble distributed digital networks, exotic adaptations of designer recreational drugs, or subscription enhancement tools?

The creation of this paper oriented its author around concepts including design fiction, tangible futures, and critical design - a visceral and sensual approach to creating speculative future scenarios - leading to the creation of a cross-media 8-month alternate reality game in 2012 called ZED.TO. The project explored some of the same subject matter as this

paper and its case studies, through participatory collapse scenarios exploring commercialized and "lifestyle synthetic biology" futures. This transmedia narrative spread across online communities, social media, web videos, and interactive theatre performances, and actively engaged thousands of Torontonians in the materialization of a speculative future scenario. ZED.TO, and ByoLogyc, the fictional company through which the story is told, won numerous awards in 2012 including Best in Show at the World Future Society's BetaLaunch, and Best in Cross Platform Fiction at the Digi Awards. The project has also been presented at Autodesk University's Innovation Forums, and TEDx OCADU.

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