

A FUTURE TO PINE FOR

懐かしい未来:

TRANSMODERNIST MOVEMENT IN JAPAN

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## Abstract

The natural and nuclear disaster of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plants of TEPCO and its continuing aftermath reflected the emotions and frustrations of Chernobyl. The incident reignited the debate on nuclear power and critical engagement with modern society. More than ever, critical discussions and seeking alternative solutions is as important. The thesis explores one such alternative to modernity called transmodernism, a theoretical concept that was formulated by Enrique Dussel and expanded in various directions from contemporary writers. Dussel's concept is the defining idea of his engagement with modernity and its relationship to the Other. The thesis will focus on one such contemporary interpretation of transmodernism. Paul H Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson conceptualised transmodernism to describe the emergence of a new social group called the Cultural Creatives in the United States and Europe.

The Cultural Creative's value system fuses modern values with traditional and indigenous values from across the globe. Their core values revolve around the sacredness of the environment, self-actualisation through spiritual growth, importance of family and friends, green economics, activism and altruism. They are a generation of people that evolved from new social movements and consciousness movement of the 1960s and have pushed these ideas further than before. The Cultural Creatives are a new wave coming from advanced industrialised nations in the West. Can this concept of transmodernism be applied outside Western advanced industrialised nations to other advanced industrialised nations? Through a literature study, the thesis will examine 11 Japanese people from Andy Couturier's *A Different Kind of Luxury*, a group named in the thesis as the Slow Culture Artists. The Slow Culture Artists live by principles of slow, self-sufficient living and incorporate traditional arts and practices. Their values are a fusion of modern values and traditional or alternative values from traditional Japan and countries abroad. The way they approach their lives can be reflected in the core values of the Cultural Creatives.

The thesis will show how Ray's transmodernism can also be used to describe them and will discuss the importance of transmodernism in relations to critically engaging modernity. It will involve a theoretical background of transmodernism, a discussion of the Cultural Creatives and Slow Culture Artists and a comparison. From this comparison, the thesis will point to: 1) the significance of Asia in the concept of transmodernism, as the foundations of transcendentalism that constitutes the philosophical foundation of Cultural Creatives; 2) the problems of linearity in the discourse of modernity; 3) and the importance of dialogue in transmodernism, both as an 'internal dialogue' in their formation of their values and 'external dialogue' to discuss their relationship with modernity and the Other.

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## Declaration

This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for an award of any type of degree or diploma in any other university or tertiary school. To the best of my knowledge, no material previously published or written by another person, unless with due reference which has been highlighted in the thesis. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

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