Re-Enchanting a Religio-Scientific Experience: Understanding the Extraordinary within the Pana-Wave Laboratory

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Introduction

Max Weber used the term disenchantment to describe a process of rationalization that would ultimately replace religion and magic with systems of belief and practice based on reason. Despite the often contradictory concerns of religion and science, New Religious Movements (NRMs) of the 20th and 21st centuries have managed to combine these two distinct enterprises as central doctrines for religious ideologies. Rather than pursuing what constitutes science or religion, or trying to define sharply the boundary between them, this article focuses on how members of a Japanese NRM practice their understanding of what they perceive to be a synthesis of science and religion. Ultimately it is the imbrication of these distinct discourses, whereby perceptions of science are infused into religion, that have the potential to re-enchant the experience of each institution respectively.

Founded in 1977 by Chino Yuko, the Chino Shoho group is an eclectic form of spiritualism that has adopted doctrines from the Abrahamic religions, self-medicating traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism, New Age concepts, including theosophy and parapsychology, as well as a host pseudo-scientific conjectures about physics, environmental warfare, and space exploration. Seventy-one year old Chino Yuko, or Chairman Chino professes these concepts from her Toyota van (dubbed Arcadia) atop the Gotaishi Mountains in central Japan. Believed to have the ability to channel celestial figures and a special knowledge of a communist conspiracy to assassinate her, Chairman Chino survives through the assistance of some forty members of the Pana-Wave Laboratory.

The ideology is complex to say the least, however it may be summarized in the following three main contentions: 1) Chairman Chino, has been the target of electromagnetic scalar wave attacks by multiple communist factions around the world. 2) The PWL was formed to research and prevent these electromagnetic scalar wave attacks; but as evidenced by the rapid deterioration of Chairman Chino's health, the PWL has gradually failed and must now resort to alternative methods of salvation. 3) In close conjunction with the previous contention, at this time the PWL is awaiting the arrival of a UFO to conduct an emergency escape from earth. Presently Chino Shoho and the PWL are in the process of preparing for space travel.

Along with this complex ideological background, Chino Shoho and the PWL exhibit rather curious appearances. As part of their scientific process of elimination, members of the PWL believe that the color white best serves to temporarily deflect the electromagnetic scalar wave attacks; thus, as a safety precaution, PWL members cover themselves from head to toe in all white materials. White cloth reminiscent of nun’s habits cover their heads, while the rest of their bodies are gowned in white lab coats, white pants, white boots, and even some small white strips

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2 Japanese names are written in Japanese style where the family name precedes the given name.

3 The use of the term UFO may seem out of the ordinary here as if one were building a flying object, presumably they would be able to identify it. This is a complicated notion on the part of Chino Shoho and the PWL, and is further complicated by what I am being allowed to write about at the moment.
of tape that adhere to such auxiliary items as eye-glasses and watches.

In the winter of 2003, this white-clad group began a convoy toward the mountains of Fukui, in the central island of Honshu. Believing that electromagnetic scalar wave generators are attached to telephone and electric poles, this rural destination appeared ideal for evading perceived communist guerilla attacks. The 16-van convoy and their 52-member PWL foot escort, caused a moral panic among Japanese citizenry, as Japan was still very much in a state of recovery from the 1995 Aum Shinrikyo sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway line. Although they were met with considerable resistance from community leaders and the popular media, they nonetheless managed to reach their destination and establish a compound.

The environment in which PWL settled is an ecological reflection of their own presentations of self; since just as their appearance and convoy were outfitted in white, their compound is an equally illuminating white cloth structure. Surrounded by mountain tops and thick forests of the Fukui Prefecture, the PWL compound would probably stand out as the only white structure next to the seasonal winter snow, except that the surrounding trees and certain nearby portions of land are shrouded in white cloth as well. In addition, the remaining vans - including Arcadia, the one van that houses their reclusive prophetess - are enclosed by makeshift garage ports that stand erect through pvc pipes and tailored covers from white sheets.

Similar to their appearance and their surrounding milieu, the demeanor of the PWL members also exists on the fringes of conventionality. Each person engages in daily dramas of aversion and confrontation; at times violently dodging scalar waves, and at other times painfully enduring these attacks. Since the human eye cannot see these electromagnetic scalar waves, these dramaturgical enactments appear to be in reaction to invisible forces.

An elite knowledge of invisible evils, the ability to identify these evils, communication with celestial powers, a laboratory of scientists working to combat these evils, and an outlet for salvation through intergalactic transportation are modes tantamount to re-enchantment.

**Literature Review**

Much has been written on the topic of the disappearance of religion. Though it was Schiller who first introduced the phrase *Die Entzauberung der Welt*, or the disenchantment of the world, it was Weber who popularized this idea as a consequence of formal rationalization. This world that Weber reluctantly envisioned would not only be characterized by overarching rational systems, but also by the devaluation of magic and religion in favor of secular forms of reasoning, ingenuity, and technological advancements. According to Weber this demonstration of rationality led to the development of a secularization framework where historical religious traditions would shift toward a more secular manifestation, effectively eradicating irrational beliefs and practices of the past. Weber explained:

> The great historic process in the development of religions, the elimination of magic from the world which had begun, with the Old Hebrew prophet and, in conjunction with Hellenistic scientific thought, had repudiated all magical means to salvation and sin came here to its logical conclusion...There was not only no magical means of attaining the grace of God for...

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those to whom God had decided to deny it, but no means whatever.6

The ‘elimination of magic’ would become the basis for the ethical movement that changed modern religion. It is within this disenchanted society that Gauchet described religion as having “reached the end of its life in the modern world”.7 In effect, the religious beliefs and practices of the past have been overshadowed by a concentration on secular forms of a means to ends schema.

Stark and Bainbridge's model of secularization theory offers another approach: Rather than arguing that beliefs in magic and religion have disappeared, Stark and Bainbridge propose a deprivation in support of the supernatural.8 Whereas Weber posited that such rational dimensions of efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control would undermine a societal need for religion, Stark and Bainbridge located that enervation within a humanly unsuccessful attempt to "provide sufficiently vivid and consistently supernatural compensators."9 The main difference in views is that Weber's notion is a loss of need for religion, while Stark and Bainbridge focus on the failure to impart the necessary ideas and materials that sustain religion.

Bellah created a general model for the evolution of science away from religion by distinguishing between characteristics found in archaic and axial religions.10 Whereas archaic religions - where he states Weber believed magic to found - were embedded in a this-worldly orientation, axial

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12 Christopher Partridge, UFO Religions with a foreword by Paul Heelas (London: Routledge, 2003), xiv.
13 Dr. Irving Hexham, “Yoga, UFOs, and Cult Membership,” Update 10, no. 3 (Spring 1986): 3-18.
religious traditions. Works such as von Däniken’s *Chariots of the Gods?*, William Strieber’s *Communion*, Zecharia Sitchin’s *The 12th Planet*, Matthew Hurley’s *The Alien Chronicles*, and Graham Hancock’s *Fingerprints of the Gods*, are all popular attempts by authors to make a case for a more erudite analysis of the marriage between science and religion, all the while never discounting possible truths that science fiction may have introduced.

With the advent of New Religious Movements (NRMs), and an increased pop cultural interest in science fiction, notions of disenchantment and secularization fall short of capturing the many fantastic developments that would seem to counter assertions about a modern world that devalues religion or fails to provide supernatural compensators. In examining the content of many NRM’s ideological systems, it becomes apparent that the very concept of rational science is found along side religion in an overlapping fashion. In fact, many of the NRMs such as the International Raelian Movement (IRM), Heaven’s Gate, and the Order of the Solar Temple (OTS), have some form of this religio-scientific synthesis embedded within their ideologies. Though one could argue that the science these groups invoke is merely that of a pseudo-science, it must be noted that it is their faith in these versions of science and religion that serve to produce the very outcomes that they anticipate. In this way, any truth-value to claims that seem implausible in reality are irrelevant; the belief in these outcomes is of central importance in motivating action. It is on the basis of such expressions of belief and practice, that W.I. Thomas was able to elaborate on his famous dictum of the definition of the situation that states: "If men [or women] define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."14 This notion illustrates how rather bizarre expressions can in fact have some operational truth. For groups that share beliefs in such abstract notions, the project of infusing science into religion serves to legitimize these expressions.

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The IRM tout as their motto "Science is our religion!"15 Their December 26th, 2002 announcement in Montreal reflected this claim when Dr. Brigitte Boisselier, biochemist and bishop of the IRM, announced that their Clonaid Company had successfully cloned the first human. Although this cloned baby, referred to as Baby Eve, never surfaced, the claim that Clonaid and the Raelians had conquered this scientific frontier was evidence that religion and science were an inseparable union within their movement.

Marshall Herff Applewhite, one of the late leaders of Heaven's Gate, directed the attention of his members to the Hale-Bopp comet, as it was more than just a spectacle for the natural sciences. Relying mostly on information spread through the supernatural media circuit, Applewhite speculated that former co-founder Bonnie Lu Nettles was actually trailing the comet from its rear, in a mission to relieve followers from their earthly existences.16 Though Applewhite and Heaven’s Gate member later resolved that they could not visibly see any spacecraft, they nonetheless took their lives as a group on March 22, 1997 in Rancho Santa Fe, California.

On that same Saturday in Quebec, Canada, the last of three larger mass suicides associated with OTS took place. Their infusion of science into religion dealt with transit rituals where members would leave their physical bodies in exchange for solar ones during their departure to the star of Sirius.17

**Method**

I have spent the approximately two and a half years researching, visiting, and corresponding with members of the

Pana-Wave Laboratory (PWL) in Fukui, Japan. I have interviewed, photographed, and videotaped my subjects over this time period.

Beginning in March of 2003, I made my first trip to Japan, at which time I was unable to contact the group because of the intense media bombardment and the PWL’s subsequent tendency to deny any interviews to the public. 

I returned again in March of 2004 for a two-week stay. At this time I made my first visit to the PWL compound, as well as securing certain personal contacts that remain my strongest informant ties to date.

I was invited back for a brief period of one week in June of 2004. That particular visit was uneventful; communications were out of sync, and there was some confusion as to which members had solicited my return. My own intentions were suspect by certain members of the PWL, so I felt it was best to keep contact from a distance until I had an opportunity to explain my motives in detail. I spent the remainder of that summer in 2004 clarifying my project to members of the PWL over email and by telephone.

After re-assuring the PWL that my work was legitimate and supported by my university, I was invited back once again. This visit was a three-month stay from October to December of 2004. During this period, I was able to collect the majority of my data, as well as establishing greater contacts within the PWL leadership.

I made my most recent visit in July of 2005. During this visit I probed into the preparation plans for their journey into outer space. Upon being asked to write a chapter in support of their group, I respectfully declined. Since this time, I have had no further contact with the Chino Shoho or PWL.

A Background of Chino Shoho and Pana-Wave Laboratory

The God Light Association (GLA) was formed in 1969 as a religious group that incorporated Buddhism and Christianity into its beliefs in Spiritualism. After the death of GLA leader Takahashi Shinji in 1976, a power struggle occurred that ended in the creation of a number of splinter sects. At that time Chino Yuko, then a 42-year-old member of GLA, had an experience that would make her an outcast of the GLA and the founder of one of these tangential sects.

I was taking a walk, despondent and alone, when a female angel, with deep blue eyes and auburn hair, dressed in white and blue, with large wings, suddenly descended before me. She attended me for three days, wailing beside me and protecting me with her gentle presence wherever I went. My confidence returned and I realized that I had much more courage and composure if I tried to walk with spiritual wings. Thus, I gained strength and my newly posted guardian spirit watched over me until Michael finally took her place to guard me day and night thereafter.

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18 For the only discussion of the effects of this media frenzy, see Benjamin Dorman’s article “Pana wave: The New Aum Shinrikyo or Another Moral Panic?” In *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions*, Volume 8, Issue 3, (March 2005): 83-103.

19 There were a number of members that soon became apostates during my March 2004 visit. Some of these apostates contributed to my interviews, and subsequent correspondences. There seemed to be a lot of distrust among the group and toward myself at that time. In such an atmosphere my invitation may have appeared unimportant, or even threatening.

20 Many groups that have been subject to defaming media attention demonstrate this vacillation between accepting and denying inquiries. For some uncanny similarities between my own experience and Susan Palmer’s (2004) recent work on the International Raelian Movement, see the introduction to her latest book, *Aliens Adored: Rael’s UFO Religion* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2004).

Upon sharing this revelation with the GLA she was told that her story was implausible because the spirit she had encountered was elsewhere at that time. Shortly thereafter she made the claim that Takahashi Keiko, daughter of Takahashi Shinji and heir to the highest leadership of the GLA, was in fact not the rightful heir but a case of misjudgment on the part of Takahashi Shinji. Channeling Takahashi’s spirit, Chino revealed this mistake:

[D]uring my life, although my daughter was still a child and her character still unformed, I allowed myself to be misled solely by her spiritualistic powers. I mistakenly thought, because Michael spoke from her to transmit messages and the will of Heaven, that she was a reincarnation of him, a soul-sister to be, and the successor to my position. And I caused the members of GLA to believe these things. I am most regretful of any one of the weaknesses of the flesh, chained as it was in the third dimension, and my lack of wisdom. I desire that my daughter and my wife, those in GLA working for my sake, and those outside all know this.22

Not recognizing the legitimacy of Takahashi Keiko’s leadership and implying that Takahashi Shinji had inadequacies, ostracized Chino from any form of membership within the GLA.

In 1977 Chino Yuko began crafting her own version of spirituality that seemed to be tailor made for easing the pain of her personal experiences. She named this form of spiritualism Chino Shoho, or the True Law of Yuko Chino. Being fluent in English, she taught private lessons to groups of young students, who would later become her first following. Chino became a charismatic figure to her students by making claims that she could channel the Archangel Michael and Saint Philip. She also became a medium for a variety of divine figures, as illustrated in the following excerpt:

There is a miraculous experience called ‘opening of the Spirit Way.’ One day, about the end of February, the Spirit Way began to open for me, giving me new and precious spiritual powers, enabling me to speak with spirits, who were previously not approachable, although they had entered my body.23

With this new gift, Chino would become a prime target for what Chino Shoho has dubbed the ‘forces of evil’ – forces that Chino herself had identified during the Cold War as communists from the U.S.S.R. As a target, Chino believed she was under constant attack by harmful electromagnetic waves, whose generators were attached to power lines and telephone poles throughout Japan.

Though the Cold War ended, the assault apparently intensified, and in a peculiar twist Chairman Chino commissioned a portion of her following to research the negative effects of these harmful electromagnetic waves. This group would be called the Pana-Wave Laboratory, and the following explanation summarized their mission:

After the collapse of the former Soviet Union, the scalar wave weapon proliferated, to be employed by the extreme leftist groups in Japan. They utilized the scalar wave technology by illegally altering and installing devices on the power transmission lines to mind control the masses, and to assassinate conservative citizens. Furthermore, it became clear that the harmful properties of the scalar wave, radiated from

22 Ibid., 131.

23 Ibid., 13.
looped coils, was exerting a lethal impact on biological systems, to include human beings, as its side effect. The destruction of the environment such as anomalous weather and gravity anomalies were also brought about by excessive amount of the scalar wave.

Working on a daily basis to prevent these electromagnetic wave attacks, the PWL put themselves ‘in the line of fire’ so to speak. In order to assure their own health and safety, PWL members created certain preventative measures that drew attention to Chino Shoho by the Japanese media. The most notable of these measures is the PWL appearance; in an attempt to deflect electromagnetic wave attacks, the PWL clothe themselves in all white lab jackets, head and mouth coverings, and rubber boots. In addition, there are similar coverings on bodily-related accessories such as eyewear; as well as non-bodily-related objects like vehicles, riverbanks, and trees surrounding their compound.

Setting

The Fukui Prefecture is approximately 325 km west of Tokyo. Known for little else aside from being a seasonal skiing attraction, the Gotaishi Mountain in Fukui is home to the PWL compound. At an altitude of 650 meters, the Pana-Wave members constructed their laboratory about as far away from electric and telephone poles as one could imagine in technologically savvy Japan. Though there are some power and telephone lines that facilitate communication, they are scarce and heavily monitored.

A single lane road, running north to the west coast and winding southeast to the city of Fukui, traverses the entrance to the compound. For at least 50 km there is little life in either direction. In fact, upon the top of Gotaishi Mointain, there are but a few local residents not affiliated with the PWL. Essentially, the PWL compound is heavily secluded, though receiving regular attention from tourists or people posing as tourists, to get a glimpse of the white-clad followers of Chairman Chino.

The compound itself is nestled between forests blanketed in white sheets and appears as a rather anomalous spectacle in relationship to the local environment. In addition, the immediate layers of trees encompassing the compound are also covered with this same white cloth. The color white is said to deflect the scalar wave attacks from the communist aggressors. However, the white cloth is not the only deterrent combating the scalar wave attacks. There are also strategically positioned mirrors and scalar wave capturing mechanisms throughout the compound.

Infusing Science into Religion

Ideas of religion and science are of central importance within Chino Shoho and PWL. The co-existence of both institutions creates the capability to invent suppositions tailored to legitimize their ideology. Where Chino Shoho provides spiritual guidance, PWL works to ensure a scientific support system for that spiritualism. It is believed that without the PWL, Chairman Chino would be executed by these scalar wave attacks. Likewise, without Chino Shoho, the PWL would be without purpose in protecting their prophetess as well as the guidance from their prophetess herself.

This relationship however, is not entirely reciprocal, as scientific claims seem to be privileged over any claim of religion. For this reason, it is more appropriate to imagine an infusion of science into religion, rather than some equal

\[^{24}\text{Pana-Wave Research Laboratory, "The Extended EM Weapon: Extended Electromagnetic Wave from Japan is the Cause of The Global Warming," in New Century Report 1 (November, 2001), 11.}\]

\[^{25}\text{For one of the few remaining picture galleries online go to \url{http://mainichi.co.jp/photospecials/030/panawave/01.html}}\]
combination of the two. This young member’s response to question about the role of religion within PWL reflects the dominance of science over what might be a more traditional form of religion:

Personally, I assert that Shoho is not truly a religion because it is so scientific. Shoho is not about prayer bringing salvation or the unconditional worship of a particular being. It is a way of life, and if just everyone would live by it, we would have no more wars, no more child abuse, and no more globalization.26

Such an assertion seems to characteristically discredit the presence of religion, however this same member goes on to explain what he understands to be the religion of Chino Shoho in a somewhat religiously accrediting fashion. In reference to their main literary text, “The Door To Heaven,” this member explains his reasoning behind describing Chino Shoho as more of a science:

As you may have picked up from reading the book, Shoho is not truly a religion. Well, it is, and it isn’t. Many elements of Shoho seem to me more of a way of life: a way of thinking about things, a way of solving problems, a set of standards.27

It becomes evident that much of this conception of science over religion is based on definitions of the two institutions. The following is an example of this same subject’s attempt to squarely define religion:

Despite this attempt to make formal distinctions between science and religion, the end result appears to be science injected within a religious system, for the purpose of rationalizing extraordinary claims found within their ideology.

The main scientific claims of the Chino Shoho and the PWL can be organized into three categories:28 1) Electromagnetic wave studies, 2) magnetic axis shifts, and 3) space travel. These categories are for purposes of clarity, as these three categories overlap each other in their beliefs. For example, the electromagnetic wave attacks executed by communist aggressors have had the latent effect of contributing to magnetic axis pole shifts. Moreover, PWL members believe that a UFO fleet constructed the force field which helped to prevent the March 15, 2003 doomsday prophecy; that same prophecy was predicated on both electromagnetic wave destruction upon the environment as well a massive shift in the earth’s magnetic axis.

Electromagnetic Wave Studies

26 Member of PWL. 2004. Email interview by Salvador Jimenez Murguia, 1 July 2004.
27 Ibid.
28 These categories are my own conceptual divisions of PWL’s scientific claims. The way in which they are categorized does not necessarily reflect any formal view of Chino Shoho and the PWL.
Electromagnetic wave studies make up the most substantial portion of PWL’s scientific research. The very name Pana-Wave Laboratory can be broken down into the prefix *Pana* which is a borrowed adaptation of the Greek word for ‘all’, and *Wave* which denotes the various types of electromagnetic waves undertaken in their research. Electromagnetic waves include radio waves, infrared, visible light, ultraviolet, x rays, and gamma rays; however PWL researchers are interested in waves that they refer to as scalar waves. More specifically the objective of their research is to deter the adverse effects of these scalar waves on humans, but most importantly, Chairman Chino.

For PWL, the Yugoslavian born physicist Nikola Tesla is a central figure within their electromagnetic wave research. As a young man Nikola was commissioned by Thomas Edison to develop an alternating current (AC) to replace the direct current (DC). After a disagreement about compensation for his inventions, Tesla became an independent scientist researching and producing new technology in Colorado Springs.29 In 1891, Tesla developed and patented the Tesla Coil for the purpose of producing wireless communication and power transmission.30 PWL insists that this Tesla Coil also produces scalar waves.

The PWL members believe that the U.S.S.R. used Tesla’s technologies to brainwash its populace. According to Chairman Chino, this Tesla-Coil was distributed to the Japanese Communist Party (JPC) as a tool to conduct the same sort of brainwashing programs in the Japan. The PWL identified coils of excess electrical power lines, which roughly resemble the coil formation found within Tesla Coil, as an electromagnetic wave generator, or scalar wave generator.

In 1994, when PWL was formed, Chino Yuko had been complaining of severe health problems. Although none of her claims have ever been confirmed, she and the PWL contend that her condition amounts to some form of cancer. Based upon this diagnosis and some tenuously related data gathered globally, the following condition has been identified by PWL as resulting from scalar wave attacks:

When the scalar potential in blood becomes excessive by continuous exposure to scalar fields, the oxygen supply to tissues becomes insufficient to exert an influence on the oxygen bonding to hemoglobin. Therefore the cells become acidosis and cell metabolism deteriorates. The peripheral circulation stagnates and the living body will come under the condition of stagnant blood, which, in Oriental medicine is said to occur from the advancement of acidosis.31

According to the PWL one of the most well known victims of these scalar wave attacks was Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo.32 Attributing former Prime Minister Obuchi’s cerebral infarction to contact with scalar waves further established a conspiracy by communists to dominate global politics.

In a positivist effort PWL constructed a full-fledged laboratory to scientifically validate these claims. In a physical sense, this laboratory would appear to be functioning as an architectural base for scientific endeavors, but through closer examination, it merely reflects an aura of science, rather than science itself. That is, this laboratory provides the necessary props that enable the scientific setting and performances that

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accompany that setting, yet the scientific theory, method, and product resemble little of actual science.

To shore up the product of their operation, the PWL publishes a monthly so-called peer-reviewed journal entitled, Love Righteous (LR). The majority of LR is comprised of alleged photographs of UFOs and spiritual ectoplasm sightings, poetry contributions from members, dictations from Chairman Chino, and most importantly a depth chart of each member’s ranking in relation to the Kingdom of Heaven. Although this journal is only reviewed among other members of the group and sold back to them as a finance mechanism, the journal establishes scientific verification of their progress by invoking an academic tradition.

If a laboratory is said to be a structure equipped for scientific experimentation or research, then surely this setting does just that – adhering of course to the principles and methods of the researchers involved. It is inside the white-blanketed laboratory where the most fantastical ideas, capable of re-enchanting the fields of science and religion, are produced. Electromagnetic waves, magnetic pole shifts, and space travel may be the focus of their research, but their perceptions of how to go about researching these topics and the way in which they enact their roles as scientists inside of a laboratory, are foundations for enchantment.

Carrying on in a laboratory setting, gowned in lab jackets, all the while in the company of others in an identical situation, must give some sort of reassurance that the production of science, if nothing more than the reproduced imagery, is taking place. Skepticism is virtually non-existent, as this perception of science is infused with religious doctrines, thereby validating all claims – regardless of their extraordinary content. Assurance comes from the daily approval of their prophetess over the short-wave radios each member carries and the confirmations of their research that she makes within their LR journal.

Magnetic Axis Shifts: Failed Prophecy

In April of 2003 Chino Shoho and the PWL began a caravan journey around the Honshu island area of Japan. Slowly winding through the mountainous regions of the Gifu and Fukui Prefectures, this all white caravan became a spectacle for the media and the public in general. Heavy questioning by these onlookers revealed that the PWL was in search of an environment free of scalar wave exposure and a place of refuge from the foreseen disasters to come. The PWL reasoned that the planet “Nibiru” was approaching Earth’s orbit, and would eventually reverse the magnetic poles. The doomsday was predicted as 15 May 2003, at which time massive earthquakes and tidal waves would disrupt life on Earth, leaving no survivors.

According to Chairman Chino there was one piece of undeniable evidence that had literally floated into the coastal waters of eastern Japan. During August of 2002 a bearded seal appeared in the Tama River of Tokyo – a river known to be heavily polluted. Affectionately named “Tama-chan,” this seal was a sign that animals were now experiencing the disorienting effects of a magnetic axis shift.

In a show of concern, PWL members were involved in a plot to rescue Tama-chan from its polluted surroundings. Though the rescue attempt ended very much within the planning stages, in the view of the PWL the Japanese media misconstrued the event as a kidnapping scheme.33 In less than six months, the PWL was again at the center of media attention, when police officials effectively raided their facilities on the 14th of May – one day prior to their doomsday prediction.

Though the May 15th 2003 date passed without incident, new prophecies have surfaced. In the June of 2004 Chairman Chino made the following prediction:

There have been new messages revealed to us regarding a new end date. Cracks are forming on the sea floors of Japan, and at this rate Japan will sink to the bottom of the seas by spring next year.\textsuperscript{34}

During the winter of that same year Japan was bombarded with natural disasters. With earthquakes, typhoons, and subsequent floods, it seemed a stage had been set for developing and enacting apocalyptic dramas.\textsuperscript{35} Yet the PWL has remained rather quiet and out of the media’s view since that May 2003 police raid.

**Space Travel**

On December 12, 2004, I received a series of short memoranda addressed directly to me from Chairman Chino. These communications would change the direction of the Chino Shoho movement from a group that was directed by the celestial beings living among the stars, to a group that was preparing to depart into the stars. In these rather cryptic messages Chairman Chino began by informing me that “all 21 units of the UFO Fleet have crashed into the sea, as a result of shortage of food and fuel.”\textsuperscript{36} As explained in the following excerpt, the objective of Chino Shoho was to now build one of their own UFO’s to escape the impending disasters.

The Shoho Group has plans for its escape as early as next spring if preparations are complete, but if time not ripe yet (if the UFO’s needed for the escape are not yet ready) the plan is three years down the line…It will be as early as half a year, and at most five years. On the fifth year there will be no salvation. However, if we go to build the UFO, it will be three years…If we stay for more than three years, there will be disasters and humans will no longer be able to live.\textsuperscript{37}

Chairman Chino attempts to fortify her statements in more scientific terms by naming the building materials to be used, suggesting a method of finance, and inviting an established Doctor, though his discipline was not specified, and myself to take part of this project.

The building material for the UFO is an alloy of steel and titanium. Currently we are considering methods of where to obtain this material. … [A] possible method is to accept donations to build the same UFO, so we plan to ask around the Tsudoi members for the donation of such funds. If you would be willing to participate, along with any of your friends, it would be well received… We would be more than happy if you, as a guest member of Pana-Wave, would join the members of the PW office, head of the science department, etc., with activities relating to the building or piloting … We have also invited, from Japan, Dr. Seike of Daiwa.\textsuperscript{38}

Needless to say, the building of the UFO was never completed, nor was there any attempt on the part of Chairman Chino to explain why it did not occur. However, five months later I received another series of memoranda via fax that explained a new course of action code named “Project Circle P.”

\textsuperscript{34} Member of PWL. 2004. Email interview by Salvador Jimenez Murguia, 1 July 2004.

\textsuperscript{35} Pana Wave Laboratory was actually a name given to the group by an English magazine. The original name was “Pana-Wave Research Center”. The actual name is Pana-Wave Denpa Kenkyujo (Pana-Wave Electromagnetic Wave Research Center).

\textsuperscript{36} Memoranda from Chairman Chino, 12 December 2004

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
The “P” stood for “pick-up,” or a rescue mission on the part of a UFO as a last resort in escaping another prophesized catastrophe:

It started when we were made aware of the Nibiru-related disasters. If planet Nibiru were to approach Earth, Earth would see great destruction and the possible ruin of humankind. Therefore, Chairman Chino worked with the extra-terrestrial beings that she keeps in contact with to have Shoho Members rescued. A UFO would be arriving to “pick us up” from earth to salvage humankind and create a new civilization on a different planet.39

This was not the first mention of a rescue mission. In fact, Chairman Chino had been directing mass departures as early as 1982 when she believed that the Soviet Union was going to invade Japan.40 According to Chairman Chino, the UFO fleet protected the Earth from catastrophe in May of 2003 when the first prophecy was disconfirmed, but the scalar wave attacks intensified, resulting in another planned rescue in August of 2004. At that time, the UFO fleet once again intervened, and that rescue mission was also cancelled.

This time however, Chairman Chino believes that the U.S. government is involved in a plan to make a new sun out of Jupiter – a plan she has dubbed “Project Lucifer.”41 This plan is a continuation of a previous attempt by the U.S. to crash a “space probe carrying 23kg of plutonium,” into the planet.42 This new plan to “solarize” Jupiter, would make Mars into an asteroid belt and put Earth in danger of a similar cataclysmic fate.

If Mars is destroyed, Jupiter’s gravity will attract Earth, inevitably causing it to approach contact with the second asteroid belt, and it is quite obvious that Earth will see catastrophe. 99% of humans on Earth will most likely be ruined.43

With prophetic claims such as these, Chino Shoho began drawing up plans for Project Circle P. During this planning stage Chairman Chino advised members to prepare themselves for a six-month journey into outer space. These preparations include gathering living necessities that are “centered on items that are less affected by gravity, such as space food, and other items instructed by PW.”44 The exact instructions appeared to be more geared toward salvaging animal life, so as to someday reconstitute the ecological fabric of earth:

Bring Pets, such as birds, dogs, and cats, and other living things to fill the nature of the new world, including seawater fish and young fish. Needless to say, bring enough food for these animals as well. It would be appropriate to think of it as Noah’s ark, only on a UFO.45

Essentially Chino Shoho was planning to re-build and re-populate an Earth-like setting on another planet.

Naturally, what humans of Earth and Martians must do is transplant the nature existing currently on Earth to that planet. The science department of PW has already been instructed to

39 Ibid.
40 During the 1982 evacuation, many members fled to the United States. This also led to the marriage between Chino Yuko and an anonymous spouse in an attempt to keep her safe in the United States. Though the marriage did take place, Chino remained in Japan.
41 Memoranda from Chairman Chino, 10 April 2005.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
prepare the seeds, plants, saplings and needless
to say, food and necessities for each person.\textsuperscript{46}

Though the destination was initially uncertain, after discussing travel details with the “Planetary Alliance”, Chairman Chino has now stated that Chino Shoho will be arriving on “Planet A.” Aside from a brief description of the rocky terrain, lakes, and the absence of flora and fauna, she provides no further information about Planet A.

At this point, Chino Shoho and the PWL are still very much determined to leave earth. Although there have been a series of delays, Chairman Chino continues to advise the group to prepare themselves for departure. During my last visit in late July 2005, I questioned leaders about current status of travel, but received only vague responses about their lack of preparation. More specifically, a two-acre landing port near the PWL compound was only recently completed and another six-months of preparation would be required before departing.

Conclusion

One of Weber's major concerns for society was that it was headed toward a state of irrationality. When progress by any means became an objective for modern societies, systematized routines and a multitude of profit motives replaced transcendental projects of magic and religion. Enchanted beliefs in gods, spiritualism, mythos, folklore, superstition, and the extraordinary were cast aside as regressive vestiges of the past. A modern disenchantment of life was not only a result of this formal rationalization, but also necessary for the continued advancement of progress. However, this progress came without the personal attachments that evoke creativity, livelihood and sincere meaning.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid.

Without perfect foresight, Weber may have failed to recognize that the very characteristics that would succeed magic and religion would also serve to resurrect these enchanting concepts. Secular reasoning, ingenuity, and technological advancements can be dehumanizing when formally rationalized. However, by combining multiple versions and interpretations of these progressive characteristics into religious beliefs and practices, I believe their fundamental manifestations begin to re-enchant.

The members of Chino Shoho and PWL have managed to do just this. When their versions and interpretations of science are appropriated into their religious doctrines, ideational constructions become limitless. Electromagnetic waves discovered through scientific inquiry become diabolic scalar waves that destroy the beliefs and practices of the righteous. The geological research that reveals pole shifts confirms evidence for apocalyptic ends as foreseen by prophets. The fascination with outer space and the cold war determinations to conquer strategic angles of defense, give way to possibilities of journeying beyond this planet as a last resort. Moreover, none of these ideas need to be proven through science as such, but through the aura of what science represents.

On one occasion, while walking near the PWL compound, a member of the group accompanying me abruptly advised that I move out of the path I was on, as I was headed straight into the trajectory of a electromagnetic scalar wave attack. I was filming during this incident, and have since used it as evidence to demonstrate the invisible nature of these so-called scalar waves. However, I had not realized that the use of my camera's technological insight and my own mode of skeptical reasoning have yielded nothing in the way of capturing the beliefs of PWL; what they believe in can't be captured by secular reasoning, ingenuity, and technology. It was that which I could not see, that I had actually failed to see. My own rationality had in fact blurred the vision necessary to appreciate true enchantment – the inefficient, unpredictable, incalculable,
uncontrollable re-enchanting of an experience where science is infused into religion.