

Nationalizing Nature

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Nationalizing Nature : Discourses of “*Fudo*” and National Environmentalism in Modern Japan

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INTRODUCTION

The rise of the interests in nature preservation and environmental conservation in contemporary Japan seems to suggest a kind of homogeneity in people's attitudes on nature and environment. Economists, politicians, and even capitalists, as well as the environmental activists or the radical naturalists, recognize a value of natural environment and often consider nature preservation and environmental conservation as vital issue to the contemporary various crises (environmental crisis, economic crisis, food crisis and political crisis).

Now, it would be even unreasonable, undemocratic and unprofitable for everyone not to take accounts of nature and environment. However, what is “nature” and “environment” people keep in mind as a given object? Who talks about it? For what is it talked? This is the question Harvey (1996) noticed at the Left Bank Jazz Club in Baltimore almost 30 years ago, in which Harvey realized that “the ‘environmental issue’ necessarily means such different things to different people” (Harvey 1996: 117). He has perceived subtle differences in the meaning of “environment” or “nature,” and proclaimed the polyphony of those notions.

With rising public interests in environmentalism, the meaning of environment and the value of nature have become the object of critical research. Also in recent geographical studies, social character of nature and environment has been emphasized. For example, Harrison and Burgess (1994) analyses social construction of nature in different discursive

contexts and the ways in which particular representations of nature are used to legitimate the specific institutional policies and practices. Nature and environment are socially constructed and interpreted through diverse representational practices such as planning discourses on the rural land development (Whatmore and Boucher 1993), scientific discourses on the exploration (Katz and Kirby 1991), and media texts of environmentalism (Burgess 1990). As Willems-Braun (1997) describes, dominant discourse is produced through contesting uneven power relationship between different subjects, for example, like environmental groups, forestry companies, and indigenous peoples. That process is, therefore, inseparably connected to the postcolonial conditions in contemporary society.

Returning to the contemporary environmentalism in Japan, what kind of conditions should we consider? In considering this question, discourses of forest conservation in Japan would give us a clue of consideration. In recent discourses on the forest conservation, an essential connection between forest and Japanese culture has been emphasized. For example, Japanese forestry expert Sugawara (1996) proposes the concept of “forest as Japanese culture” and advocates conserving and creating traditional Japanese forest. Other forestry experts (Shidei 1998; Kitamura 1995, 1998) also adopt the discursive strategy that appeals to the nationality or cultural identity of Japan in order to conserve forest in Japan. They argue the conservation of forest by way of emphasizing how necessary Japanese forest is for Japanese culture. In this rhetoric, Japanese forest and

Japanese culture are considered to be inseparable. Those discourses of forest conservation seek their theoretical bases from recent ecological theories on Japanese culture, for example the theory of East Asian evergreen forest culture (Sasaki 1982) and the theory of beech forest culture complex (Ichikawa 1984). Those cultural theories attempt to explore the underlying culture of Japan into the ecological environment based on the forest types. Within the context of those cultural theories, talking about nature leads to talking about cultural identity of Japan. Those discourses talking about nature in relation to cultural identity of Japan seem to increase with rising interests in nature preservation and environmental conservation in Japan.

Behind such specific type of discourse on forest conservation, there exists an epistemological structure that is characterized by specific ways of articulation between nature and nation in Japan. Such an epistemological structure has been underlying Japanese environmentalism since the prewar times, which is generally known as “*fudo-ron*” (theory of climate). Focusing on the relationship between nature and nation embedded in “*fudo-ron*” would give us some clues to the previous question.

This paper focuses on Japanese discourses on *fudo* (climate, nature, environment, milieu and so on) in modern times written by famous Japanese moral philosopher Tetsuro Watsuji (1889-1960) and other Japanese scholars. By examining the way of articulating nature and nation in their discourses, this paper attempts to depict them as “the national environmentalism,” and make a preliminary study for critical studies on the human-nature relationship.

DISCOVERING THE NATIONALITY INTO NATURE: DISCOURSES ON NATURE IN THE WARTIME JAPAN

Japanese physical geographer Yasuda (1992) says that the attempts to develop Oriental *fudo-ron* set about by Watsuji had broken down since the

Asia-Pacific War ended in Japan’s defeat. He seeks a cause of the breakdown into the excessive rejection of *fudo-ron* in postwar Japan. According to Yasuda (1992), such rejection has appeared as a reaction to the vulgar nationalism and statism that had dominated the discourses of many Japanese intellectuals in wartime. Yasuda (1992) carefully distinguishes Watsuji from other naturalists or environmentalists who had been prepossessed with those ideologies, and evaluates Watsuji as a leading environmentalist “who had penetrated the limits of European civilization and never forgotten the brilliant civilization on which he had founded himself” (Yasuda 1992: 13). Despite of Yasuda’s intention of re-evaluating Watsuji’s *fudo-ron*,, however, his evaluation of Watsuji is ironically betrayed by Watsuji himself. As mentioned later, Watsuji has certainly maintained Japanese nationalism and statism from his viewpoint of ethics, and tried to define *fudo-ron* as a theoretical basis of his ethics. In that sense, we cannot distinguish Watsuji from other naturalists or environmentalists in the wartime Japan.

Before examining Watsuji’s works, this chapter takes up some of the discourses written by other Japanese naturalists or environmentalists during wartime. Making a brief sketch of their discourses on nature, this chapter attempts to point out some common features between Watsuji’s discourse and others’ with regard to the position of nature.

In 1935, the same year as Watsuji’s famous work “*Fudo: ningengaku-tek kousatsu (A climate: a philosophical study)*” was published¹⁾, famous Japanese physicist Torahiko Terada also published an article “*Nihonjin no shizen-kan (The Japanese view of nature)*” (Terada 1935). Though his article was published as one of the “Oriental Thoughts” series, it was not always aimed at the Oriental thought. As shown in its contents (see Box 1), it focused on the Japanese thought about Japanese nature. First, he attempts to describe the uniqueness of Japanese nature, “There seems to be the proper location of Japanese Nation on the earth as a basic

Box 1. Terada (1935) *Nihon-jin no shizen-kan*
(*The Japanese view of nature*).

Introduction
Nature in Japan
Ordinary life of the Japanese
Mental life of the Japanese
Conclusion

principle at the basis of various aspects of the uniqueness of the natural world in Japan, and it seems to dominate everything.” (Terada 1935: 5). This uniqueness is illustrated by taking an example of Japan’s climate which is considered as “the most unique in all of the temperate zone on the earth” (Terada 1935: 7). Then he explains the features of Japanese nature as “stern father” and “mother land,” and tries to relate them with national culture of Japan as follows:

Thus, in our home land Japan, the land where we stand plays a role of “stern father” that often lashingly constrains us not to be easily swayed to the idle way, as well as it becomes “mother land” that fosters us with deep affection. The nationality that holds the good combination between the sternness of father and the affection of mother only can be hopeful of developing the best culture of human beings. (Terada 1935: 10)

After describing ordinary material and mental lives of Japanese people, he concludes that the diversity of Japanese nature has made people’s unique attitude towards nature and such an attitude has affected Japanese ways of lives. He attempts to figure out the unique nationality of the Japanese on the basis of the uniqueness of Japanese nature. In other words, herein nature in Japan is used to identify the nation of Japan, and the geographical uniqueness is interpreted as the nationalized uniqueness.

Japanese physical geographer Yoshino (1968) evaluates Terada’s “*Nihonjin no shizen-kan*” as one of the representatives of Japanese thoughts in the

Box 2. Takase (1942) *Nihon-jin no shizen-kan* (*The Japanese view of nature*).

Foreword
1. Ancient view of nature
2. View of nature in Manyoshu
3. China thoughts and view of nature
4. Sense of nature in Heian Era
5. Consideration of nature in medieval times
6. Attitude of considering nature in early modern times
7. Development of natural environmentalism
8. Naturalist literature and description of nature
9. Theory of anti-naturalism
10. Conclusion
Afterword

1930s Japan, as well as Watsuji’s “*Fudo*.” In fact, such an attitude regarding nature as material basis of Japan’s nationality can be seen in other wartime discourses, too. For example, Japanese historian Shigeo Takase (1942) wrote his book of which title is quite same with Terada (1935) and traced the history of Japanese view of nature from ancient times to modern times (see Box 2). He stresses the necessity of relating nature with Japanese thoughts historically and attempts to put the modern Japanese environmentalism into the long history of Japanese nation. This kind of writing style shows typical features of modern discourses on national history. As Japanese critic Karatani notes, most of modern discourses on history project the “Nation,” which was produced in modern times, onto the past times (Yamaguchi et al. 1992). Takase (1942) also attempts to construct the historical continuity of the Japanese view of nature from the modern viewpoint and to locate Japanese modern environmentalism in it again. In its conclusion, Takase says, “The specific aspects of the Japanese view of nature in each times we had traced are not just the past view of nature but the types of the Japanese view of nature in modern times” (Takase 1942: 246). Though he takes up the history of the view of nature in Japan since ancient times, his gaze is consistently turned on the modern

Japanese view of nature. In other words, Takase attempts to re-discover the Japanese nationality into the human-environment relationships since ancient times.

It is a feature of the wartime environmentalism that a few physical scientists had actively remarked. Meteorologist Sakihei Fujiwara (1942) refers to the effects of Japan's climate upon its nationality from the viewpoint of meteorologist. He summarizes the relationships between Japan's climate and its nationality into six points (Box 3). His conclusion suggested above is neither rational nor persuasive, but rather conventional or stereotyped discourses on Japanese nationality. What matters here is his will or desire to relate nationality with nature from the scientific viewpoint. He says that his book is aimed at complementing existing literary and artistic studies on nationality from the scientific and practical viewpoint (Fujiwara 1942: 230).

We can see the similar argument in Tetsugoro Wakimizu (1939). He is a geologist who had tried to elucidate the beauty of Japanese scenery on the basis of geological analysis. In the beginning of "*Nihon Fukei-shi (Japanese Sceneries)*" (Wakimizu 1939), he praises the current tendency of re-evaluating Japanese scenery in a new light at the time, and insists the necessity of elucidating the real value of Japanese scenery on the basis of scientific analysis. Yoshino (1968: 334) criticizes Wakimizu's argument, "In introduction of his book, we can see frivolous words following the fashion of the day which are contrastive to scientifically detailed studies of other chapters." Yoshino accuses of the non-scientific and the timeserving character of discourses of Wakimizu. However, what is problematic in Wakimizu's discourses is the way nature is interpreted as an essential element that constitutes the beauty of Japanese national scenery. In illustrating the scenery of Yabakei-Hikosan in northern part of Kyushu, Wakimizu criticizes a conventional theory that regards Yabakei and Hikosan as two different sceneries: the former is valley and the latter is mountain. He insists that

Box 3. Fujiwara (1942) *Kisho Kanshoku (Sense of weather)*: 228-230, partially summarized.

1. The climate is temperate, moderate and suitable for human life. The land is productive, enough to take care of life and never suffers from perpetual disaster. This leads to the permanent residence, and increases local and national patriotism. The affection of parent and child, non-individualism, family-centrism, clan-centrism, community-centrism, nation-centrism and imperial-family-centrism, such nationality has been fostered by climate.
2. The climate changes moderately, and the season changes clearly. This demands the preparation for winter and thus foster the character of diligence and saving. This leads to the development of agriculture.
3. Sometimes natural disasters like earthquake and storm happen, and this fosters the resisting and repelling power of people. This causes the bravery and weakens the fear of death.
4. As Japan is surrounded by the sea, people like the sea and they have developed the fishery and the voyage. People have become adventurous and indifferent to death.
5. As it is hot and humid in summer, people like the lightness common in tropical people, and they are pleased with cleanliness. People have become intuitive, emotional, non-legal and liked simplicity. As it is cold in winter, people study hard, they have an ability of calculation, they are persistent, stubborn and intelligent as well as people in the sub frigid zone.
6. As people haven't had so much contact with other nations, they are not good at commerce, and poor in cunning. People are not good at foreign languages, music and propaganda. They are good at fine art and craft because of their good vision and fingers.

Yabakei and Hikosan should be considered as one and the same scenery, because both of them consist

of the volcanic products of one same old extinct volcano “Yabakei volcano” (Wakimizu 1939: 304-332). Thus, Wakimizu tries to define nature as an essential foundation of Japanese scenery by way of scientific analysis. Criticizing some literati, calligraphers, poets and painters who have praised the scenery of Yabakei-Hikosan with flowery word, he advocates dissecting it from the scientific viewpoint.

The interests in Japanese scenery had remarkably risen in the 1930s Japan. In 1934, *Nihon Fukei Kyokai* (Japan Scenery Society) was organized by scholars, politicians, aristocrats, officials and so on. It had begun publishing monthly bulletin “*Fukei*” (The scenery) simultaneously with its organization. In 1937, it had published “*Nihon Fukei Dokuhon*” (*Readings in Japanese scenery*) as an enlightening book. In this book, the relationships between Japanese scenery and various aspects are argued (see Box 4). Within this book, geographer Taro Tsujimura wrote first chapter “Japanese scenery and

As a physical geographer, he especially stresses the uniqueness of natural landscape of Japan. However, his argument about cultural landscape suggests his basic attitudes towards Japanese scenery. Tsujimura classifies cultural landscape of Japan into two landscapes, namely, urban and rural landscape. He does not conceal his preference of rural landscape over urban landscape. On one hand, he says that urban landscape in Japan is not well arranged, but rather immature. Even in the historical city of Kinki area, the immature scenery of industrial landscape produces the inharmonious scenery everywhere (Tsujimura 1937: 15-16). On the other hand, he praises rural landscape based on local nature. He says “I can say Japanese villages are beautiful. Because they don’t have such coarse things as cities” (Tsujimura 1937: 16-17). He certainly attaches much importance to rural landscape based on local nature as an essential element which constitutes the beauty of Japanese scenery.

Box 4. Fukei Kyokai (1937) *Nihon Fukei Dokuhon* (*Readings in Japanese scenery*)

Japanese scenery and geography
Japanese scenery and geology
Mountains and valleys in Japan
Japanese scenery and lakes and marshes
Japanese scenery and plants
Japanese scenery and animals
Japanese scenery and nationality
Japanese scenery and fine arts
Japanese scenery and architectures
Japanese scenery and literatures
Japanese scenery and National Park
Japanese scenery, historical relics, scenic beauties and natural monuments
Japanese scenery and tourist industry

geography.” This chapter consists of three subsections “geographical position,” “natural landscape” and “cultural landscape.” Tsujimura explains the uniqueness of Japanese scenery from the viewpoint of geographical uniqueness of Japan.

This kind of attitude that emphasizes the importance of natural elements in Japanese scenery can be seen in another chapter, too. In the seventh chapter “Japanese scenery and nationality,” philosopher Yoshishige Abe stresses the national character of the Japanese: the Japanese try to be in harmony with nature. He illustrates the feature of traditional architecture like shrine and temple, and insists that those architectures are planned to be in best harmony with nature. He concludes, “It is the scenic preference of the Japanese that they try to bring nature close to themselves in the harmony between human and nature, and they see themselves in the intimate intercourse with nature. We can see the presence of Japanese nationality in it” (Abe 1937: 113).

From the brief sketches and rough examinations of Japanese discourses on nature during the wartime, we can summarize the features of representation of nature into three points.: (1) Nature is utilized as a material basis of Japan’s nationality, in other words, the uniqueness of nature is interpreted as a

foundation of Japan's unique nationality. (2) Scientific legitimation of Japan's nationality depends on the scientific analysis of nature in Japan. That is to say, nature itself becomes the scientific foundation of Japan's nationality. (3) Nature is interpreted as an essential element that constitutes the beauty of Japanese national scenery. Japanese nationality is visualized through the aesthetic gazing at nature. In these three points, at least, first one can be seen in Watsuji's works, too. Watsuji's *fudo-ron* shares that feature with the discourses written by other Japanese naturalists or environmentalists, and develops it more logically and systematically.

THE RETURN TO THE TOTALITY AS THE GEOGRAPHICAL RETURN: WATSUJI'S ETHICS AND FUDO-RON

Watsuji's famous work "*Fudo: ningengaku-teki kousatsu (A climate: a philosophical study)*" has been repeatedly mentioned as a masterpiece of Japanese cultural theory. Also in geography, some geographers have argued *fudo-ron* on the basis of Watsuji's *Fudo*. However, most of the geographers' discussions on Watsuji's *Fudo* mainly focus on the scientific validity of three types of climate: monsoon, desert and meadow. Or they focus on the possibility and limits of the ontological analysis of *fudo*. However, they have paid few attentions to the relationships between Watsuji's ethics and *fudo-ron*. Though, as few exceptions, Ueno (1972) and Berque (1992) have attempted the comprehensive examinations of *fudo-ron*, the former was criticized as easy substitution of Marxist theory of reification for Watsuji's *fudo-ron* (Kobayashi 1977) and the latter has paid few attentions to the position of *Fudo* in Watsuji's ethics. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the theoretical relationship between Watsuji's ethics and *fudo-ron* and attempt to show how *fudo* is situated in his national philosophy and national humanism.

We can see one feature in the contents of "*Fudo*." It consists of five chapters (see Box 5). Chapter 1 is

a theoretical analysis on *fudo*, chapter 2 and 3 are concrete illustrations of each type of *fudo*, chapter 4 is climatological analysis on arts, and chapter 5 is a brief sketch of the history of Western climatology which is eliminated from English translation (Watsuji 1962). In amount of the pages, chapter 2 and 3 cover more than half of *Fudo*. And these chapters of *Fudo* have conventionally caused various criticism of Watsuji's *fudo-ron*.

Japanese philosopher Minatomichi (1990) analyzes *Fudo* as a travel, which starts from "monsoon," going through Europe, and returns to Japan.

Watsuji (1935: 101) says, "If you set out from

Box 5. Watsuji (1935) *Fudo: ningengaku-teki kousatsu (A Climate: a philosophical study)*.

Introduction
1. The basic principles of climate
(1) The phenomena of climate
(2) Climatic limitation of human existence
2. Three types
(1) Monsoon
(2) Desert
(3) Meadow
3. The distinctive nature of monsoon climate
(1) China
(2) Japan
Typhoon nature of Japan
The uniqueness of Japan
4. Climate in art
*5. Historical examination of climatology
(1) Climatology up to Herder
(2) Spiritual climatology of Herder
(3) Climate philosophy of Hegel
(4) Climatology after Hegel

(* Chapter 5 is eliminated from English translation)

Japan and travel with the sun from east to west, you experience first the intense humidity of the monsoon zone, then the absolute opposite of humidity, the dryness of the desert. Then, when you reach Europe, you find a climate neither humid nor dry but

something of a combination of the two.” Minatomichi argues that this travel is not the one way travel from the East to the West, but the travel promised to return to Japan. Therefore, “This is the travel which relativizes the dialectics of history completed into the West, and which brings about national philosophy to “our national-land” in returning (Minatomichi 1990: 29). As Minatomichi suggests, after illustrating three types of *fudo* in chapter 2, Watsuji returns to the monsoon type and distinguishes Japan from China within the monsoon type, and lastly comes back to “the uniqueness of Japan.”

As well known, Watsuji had wrote *Fudo* inspired by his own experiences of traveling to Europe and studying in Germany in 1927. However the structure of his text suggests more than just a reflection of his own experiences on his works. It has something to do with the essential thought of his ethics.

The ethical norm that constitutes Watsuji’s ethics is the concept of “totality.” Watsuji (1937) defines “the evil” and “the good” clearly. “The evil” is defined as follows:

The law of human existence is movement denying the absolute negation. One rebels against one’s origin by deviating from certain communality. As an *action*, this *movement* of rebellion is the destruction of communality and the rebellion against the origin of the self. Therefore, this is not only approved by other people who participate in that communality, but also not approved by the profound essence of the self. That can be called “the evil” (Watsuji 1937: 222).

And “the good” is defined as follows:

The law of human existence is, however, movement of returning to the self of the absolute negation. One who rebels against one’s origin by deviating from certain communality wishes to return to one’s origin by negating the rebellion.

And this return takes place through the realization of some communality. The movement of this return is a human *action* that signifies the sublation of individual of personality, the realization of social communion, and the return to the original source of the self. Therefore, this is approved not only by those who participate in that communality, but also by the profound essence of the self. That is “the good” (Watsuji 1937: 224).

As suggested in these definitions, what distinguishes “the good” from “the evil” is an ontological distance from the “communality.” It is “the evil” for a person to rebel against his/her origin by *deviating from the communality* on which he/she is founded. It is “the good” for a person to return to his/her origin by realizing the communality on which he/she is founded. However, what is the “communality” in these ethical norms? We have already known this “communality (*kyodosei*)” as the concept of “mutual relationship (*aidagara*)” of existence. In chapter 1 of *Fudo*, Watsuji situates this concept of “mutual relationship (*aidagara*)” at the basis of understanding of *Fudo*. Watsuji (1935) explains the concept of “mutual relationship (*aidagara*)” in his famous phenomenological formulation of “the cold” as follows:

Thus, it is not “I” alone but “we,” or more strictly, “I” as “we” and “we” as “I” that are outside in the cold. The structure of which “*ex-sistere*” is the fundamental principle is this “we,” not the mere “I.” Accordingly, “*ex-sistere*” is “to be out among other ‘I’s’” rather than “to be out in a thing such as the cold.” This is not an intentional relation but a “mutual relationship (*aidagara*)” of existence. Thus it is primarily “we” in this “mutual relationship” that discover our selves in the cold (Watsuji 1935: 7).

Watsuji illustrates this “mutual relationship” by taking some examples of parent and child, husband and wife, teacher and student and so on. He looks

for the ethics in those relationships: one should hold his/her own position expected within the society he/she belongs to. That is to say, student should be studentlike, father should be fatherlike, and servant should be servantlike. These successive "mutual relationships" are ultimately integrated into the supreme relationship, namely, the "totality." "Value of the good is not realized on the basis of the sentiments of approving. An action is approved because of its direction of returning to one's origin. Therefore, it can be said as rejecting low value and devoting oneself to high value. The highest value is absolute totality, and an aspiration toward it is "the good" (Watsuji 1937: 224). As Sakai (1997) notes, Watsuji's ethics of totality has something common with Althusser's theory of ideology: as calling of the totality, ideology interpellates concrete individuals and transforms them into the concrete subjects (Althusser 1970). Sakai (1997: 90) argues, "his (Watsuji's) philosophy of praxis is an authentic humanism that determines Man as a subject owned by the totality, that is, the state" (parenthesis added). Ukai (1997) calls this type of humanism as "national humanism," which can be generally seen in modern nationalism both in the West and the East.

When we turn to the "geographical return" in *Fudo*, we can see the same structure with his ethics of totality. As Sakai (1997) notes, the return to one's origin situated within the absolute totality takes the form of move in geographical space. Watsuji (1949: 131) says, "When the human existence deploys as the socio-moral organization, it always realizes that organization as a spatial structure. And the movement of returning to the authentic origin entails the tendency of spatial expansion of socio-moral organization." Thus, return to the authentic origin as the ethical imperative is realized as the geographical return. However, where should one return? Of course, to the national-land of Japan! For Watsuji, it is the nation-state that integrates various socio-moral organizations into totality. And the nation-state is essentially connected to the national-land.

Thus, in Watsuji's *fudo-ron*, an ethical imperative

of returning to nation as an ultimate totality is interpreted as geographical return to the national-land. As a result, Watsuji's *fudo-ron* cannot help allowing demand for exclusive national territory. Watsuji explains the relationship of *fudo* with the national-land as follows:

Realization of national-land gives proper position, proper character, and proper significance to a part of uniformly spreading land. Then this land is publicly acknowledged as not substitutable for other land, and as having inseparable relationship with certain human existence in this position, this form, and therefore as excluding person who does not belong to this human existence. The structure this restriction of land causes within human existence is nothing but the problem of *fudo* (Watsuji 1949: 155).

Thus, the problem of *fudo* is understood as the restrictive land occupation and exclusion of others from there. It should be remembered that such an understanding of *fudo* was presented even after Japan's defeat in Asia-Pacific War. In 1946, Watsuji says "What is necessary at the present time, when we should construct peaceful nation and project culturally new development, is *to reflect our state, nationality and culture* under the new recognition of world history" (Watsuji 1946: 1, emphasis added). However, we can't see any fundamental reflections on the state, nationality and culture in the problem of *fudo* noted above. As Yonetani (1992) notes, even after Japan's defeat, Watsuji has maintained the theoretical framework of his ethics in which the totality of the nation is constructed on the basis of the historical and climatic structure of human existence. And this insufficiency of radical criticism of *Fudo* has affected the rise of the national environmentalism in contemporary Japan.

CONCLUSION

In 1999, a book titled "*Yomigaeru Watsuji*

Tetsuro" (*Reviving Tetsuro Watsuji*) has been published by a few Japanese moral philosophers (Sato et al. 1999). It attempts to reevaluate Watsuji's ethics in contemporary society. This book consists of five large parts, (1) Watsuji's ethics and the present times, (2) pluralistic cultural theory in Watsuji, (3) Watsuji in Japan theory, (4) Watsuji whom foreign researchers see, (5) contemporary significance of Tetsuro Watsuji. Some articles in this book propose questionable arguments. For instance, Tanaka (1999: 68-69) says, "Watsuji's *fudo-ron* was originally aimed at comparative cultural examination of each nationality" and "it will develop its theory to the extent that it can grasp the cultural dynamics beyond nation or ethnicity." And another article says that Watsuji's viewpoint of attaching importance to the totality is also the Asian sense of value that is opposite to the Western sense of individualistic value, and this enables to deepen mutual understanding between Japan and other Asian countries (Ben 1999: 205). In the afterword of this book, editors explain their aim of publishing as the inheritance and the development of various problems existing in the issues proposed by Watsuji.²⁾ There are other several studies which attempt to develop new possibility of reading Watsuji's works (e.g. Sakabe 1986; Notomi 1999).

Though these understandings of Watsuji have a possibility to open the new fields of studying Watsuji, the relationships between ethics and *fudo-ron* in Watsuji are not fully examined. Especially in the context of environmentalism, Watsuji's *Fudo* has been repeatedly mentioned without any critical examinations of its ethical implications. It would be necessary for us to examine *Fudo* in the context of history of modern Japanese thoughts and its politico-cultural implications.

Tsuda (2001) points out the continuity of Sigetaka Shiga's "*Nihon Fukei-ron (Theory of Japanese sceneries)*" (Shiga 1894) with Watsuji's *Fudo* by arguing that the former leads to the latter as a geographical interpretation of Japanese climate. "It

(*Nihon Fukei-ron*) is an eloquent assertion of the national and cultural identity through the interpretative reality of climate, and it suggests the point where Watsuji's *fudo-ron* would return" (Tsuda 2001: 35, parenthesis added). In that sense, the national environmentalism has played a role of discursive apparatus that has continued to produce the desire for "Japan" by articulating national identity with its climate. This national environmentalism as a specific environmentalism, that was produced in the beginning of Japanese modern nation-state and arbitrarily articulates nature with nation, has continued to be produced in the various forms even in contemporary Japan.

Though Yasuda (1992: 46) expects the *fudo-ron* to become new field with having a possibility of saving nature and human beings from its crisis when it is established on the basis of the universalism, humanism, and Oriental relativism. However, as suggested in our examinations, *fudo-ron* in modern Japan could not break through the framework of national environmentalism, and whether we could overcome it or not would depend on how critical we can become to our own nature and how sensitive to other nature.

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Notes

- 1) The English translation of "*Fudo*" was published by the Ministry of Education in 1962 under the title of "*A climate: a philosophical study*" (Watsuji 1962). As noted in the foreword of the English translation, this translation was published as one of the programs of publishing modern Japanese philosophical works into foreign languages conducted by the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO. Editor notes this program's aim, "this programme will prove to be a contribution to

the development of mutual understanding between the peoples of the world, as well as a closer cultural link between the East and the West" (The Japanese National Commission for UNESCO 1962: not paginated, emphasis added). In the revised edition of English translation published in 1971, however, its title was altered from "A Climate" to "Climate and Culture." The editor of revised edition, Ryoji Ito (Secretary-General of the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO), notes its aim, "this edition will be of use for those who are engaged in the studies of Japanese culture and thought" (Ito 1971: not paginated, emphasis added). These slight alterations of the title and the aim suggest subtle changes of context in which Watsuji's *Fudo* is read in Japan, that is to say, the emphasis of necessary ties between climate and culture, and the rising desire of constructing "Japanese culture and thought." In that sense, the processes of publishing and revising "*Fudo*" implicate an intellectual terrain for the cultural politics of Japanese nationalism.

- 2) On the other hand, they explain the aim of subtitle (Reviving Tetsuro Watsuji) of this book as a sense of modest resistance against recent trend that criticizes Watsuji as a protector of the nation-state. It seems to me that the latter aim is strongly implicated through this book.

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