

# Ecology and Japanese History: Reactionary Environmentalism's Troubled Relationship with the Past

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## Abstract

Much ecological thought today turns to Japan's past for inspiration. The reason, according to conservative Japanese ecologists, deep ecologists, and environmental philosophers, is that Japan's history of aesthetic "oneness" with nature provides a model for the world to emulate as it addresses the global environmental crisis. I critique this view by showing that conservative, or more accurately, reactionary ecology in Japan is closely intertwined with ethnic communitarianism, Japan's wartime ideology of the 1930s, and deep ecology. I suggest that these forms of reactionary ecology reflect a fascist desire to create or rely upon a nationalistic narrative of Japanese cultural uniqueness that conceals the excesses of capitalism and operates to sustain the socio-economic order that is today generating ecological catastrophe.

**Keywords:** Reactionary Ecology, Environmental Ethics, Deep Ecology, "Japanese View" of Nature, Pollution, Fascism

Japan's past has become an important resource for much contemporary ecological thinking both within and outside Japan. Conservative cultural critics and scholars within Japan, for example, speak of an enduring "Japanese view of nature" rooted in pre-modern Japanese animism and Buddhism. They locate the root of ongoing environmental destruction in the West's scientific, technological civilization, its view of nature as an object detached from humanity, and its will to dominate the natural

environment. The "traditional Japanese view," they suggest, provides a very different perspective, one in which the subject of the person and the object of nature are unified, a relationship characterized by reverence and harmony. Proponents of this kind of reactionary ecology in Japan uphold the "Japanese perspective" as a possible solution to the world's ecological problems. Meanwhile, scholars and activists in the fields of deep ecology and environmental ethics seek to overcome anthropocentric views of the person that sanction the exploitation of the environment for human benefit. They call instead for eco-centrism and the cultivation of a unity of individual self and all organic life. They too, in many cases, turn to Japan's past, drawing on Buddhism and Shinto in their efforts to articulate their ideal of the non-anthropocentric "Self".<sup>1</sup>

Why have Japan's historical religious and philosophical traditions become increasingly central to current ecological discourse? Ostensibly, the historical record confirms Japan's unique relation to nature and establishes a model for the world to emulate. Given the alarming series of environmental crises now confronting the world—greenhouse gas emissions and global climate change, the acidification of the world's oceans, biodiversity loss, industrial pollution, the ecological damage brought by an inadequately regulated nuclear power industry—these views should be taken seriously. Yet, I adopt a different approach to the above question by examining the conjuncture of the ecological views I address in this essay with an ongoing discourse on ethnic communitarianism, the deep ecology

movement, and Japan’s wartime ideology. This has important implications for how we might assess these ecological views.

First, reactionary ecology in Japan reflects a desire for ethnic community. This is manifested through fears of cultural loss and through essentializing and largely invented assertions about the aesthetic character and culture of the Japanese people. Thus, though reactionary ecology in Japan today warns of global environmental catastrophe, this is not really its primary concern. Instead, by shifting focus from the global environment to the particular landscape of Japan, then to the “unique” cultural values of the Japanese “folk” that were ostensibly shaped by this landscape, reactionary ecology in Japan hopes to reinforce a narrative of homogeneous cultural community and peoplehood. The purity of Japanese culture, in this narrative, is tied to the uncontaminated cultural and natural landscape, giving rise to discrimination targeting ethnic others and to an ahistorical and selective appropriation of the past whereby the concrete ecological disasters of Japan’s past and present are downplayed or concealed rather than placed front and center for analysis. Second, Japan’s reactionary ecology has much in common with so-called “radical” theories of deep ecology and environmental philosophy that take “the Japanese view of nature” as its starting point. Just as the former seeks community on the national level, the latter calls for a global organic community by way of an intuitive process of self-realization. The case of deep ecology, moreover, is important as it suggests that the problematic claims and dangers examined in this essay are not confined to Japan but are global and informed by global forces. And third, the ideological landscape of wartime Japan, and the works of philosopher Watsuji Tetsurō in particular, serve as a rich though problematic resource informing the views of both reactionary ecology in Japan and deep ecology.

This conjuncture taken as a whole may be called reactionary modernism, a term Peter Osborne and Mark Neocleous use to describe fascism in Germany under National Socialism.<sup>2</sup> While I do not define the current Japanese government as fascist, I do suggest that the conjuncture sketched out above and explored in more detail below reflects a fascist desire. This points to something more than a fixation on an invented cultural identity. The danger here is a desire, reminiscent of wartime Japanese ideology, to cultivate a hegemonic and patriotic nationalism, to conceal and contain the excesses of capitalism, and thus to sustain the very socio-economic order that generates the ecological crises we now face.

### The Narrative of Reactionary Ecology in Japan



**Umehara Takeshi, *Mori no shishō***

Reactionary ecology traces the world's environmental problems to a "Western conception of nature". In the West, according to this view, nature is seen as an object detached and separate from humanity and this conception of nature contributes to the tendency to dominate and exploit the environment. Philosopher Umehara Takeshi is representative of this perspective. From 1987 to 1995, Umehara headed the conservative Nichibunken, the International Research Center for Japanese Studies established by former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone. For Umehara, "the direct cause of present-day environmental destruction is modern scientific-technological civilization" informed by "dualistic thought separating humanity from nature" and organized around the belief that "the progress of civilization requires the subjugation of nature by man." This belief, he says, is anthropocentric, egocentric, and no longer viable.<sup>3</sup> Thus, he identifies the problem primarily in idealist rather than materialist terms, as a problem of ideas and beliefs rather than material conditions. This is a widely shared assessment among reactionary ecologists in Japan and deep ecologists.<sup>4</sup>

In contrast to this "Western view of nature" characterized by a subject-object (humanity-nature) dualism, reactionary ecology in Japan upholds a "Japanese view" in which humanity and nature are identified. As Economist Murota Yasuhiro explains, "the Japanese view of nature is quite different from that of Westerners...the Japanese people considered themselves to be so intimately integrated with nature that they could not identify it objectively as a separate entity..."<sup>5</sup> This humanity-nature unity, according to this view's proponents, is reflected in the Japanese people's reverence for and harmony with nature. Umehara, for example, states that in "East Asian religion, the concept of man subduing nature hardly exists."<sup>6</sup>

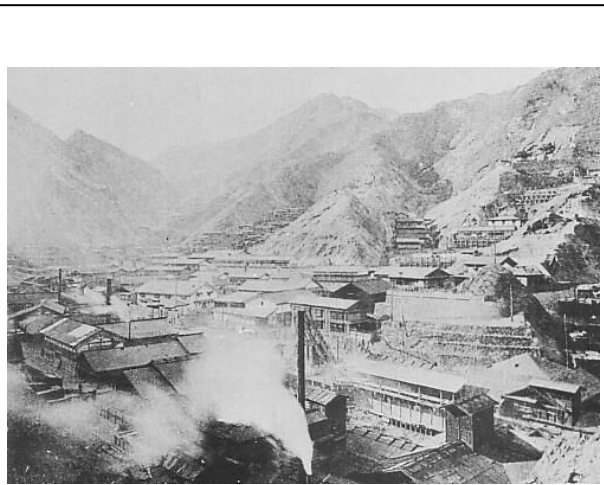
Such claims concerning the "Japanese view of nature" are basic to reactionary ecological discourse in Japan. Deep ecology's efforts—drawing upon Eastern religious traditions to overcome western dualism in the realization of organic wholeness—appear strikingly similar.<sup>7</sup> Contributors to this discourse on nature turn to a range of religious and philosophical traditions from Japan's past—Buddhism, Shinto, Shugen-dō, Confucianism—to substantiate their claims and to suggest that located within the history of this nature aesthetic is perhaps a solution to the world's ecological problems.<sup>8</sup>

In each case, Japan's pre- and early-modern past is drawn upon to assert the Japanese people's aesthetic relationship to nature as a unique and timeless cultural feature. Moreover, there is a clear binary opposition at work here. These ecological thinkers derive a "Japanese conception of nature" by way of an opposition to an ostensibly transparent and coherent "Western view". Implicit in such assertions is the conclusion that the latter must be overcome and the former cultivated if the world is to have any hope of addressing its current ecological troubles. But the ahistorical claims associated with reactionary ecology and its focus on aesthetic values rather than material conditions undermine its authority as the solution to today's global environmental crises.<sup>9</sup>

**Omissions and Distortions: Concealing Environmental Disaster**

A major problem with the narrative outlined above is not merely its essentialized representation of Japan and the West, but the ahistorical perspective underlying its presuppositions and claims. The view of the Japanese people as inherently and harmoniously at one with nature relies not only on the regulative idea of a nature-dominating West, but also on a serious and persistent misreading and distortion of the past.

Left out of reactionary ecology's narrative of Japanese history are a wide range of ecological problems including polluted air, soil, and water associated with iron manufacturing and mining operations from the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century;<sup>10</sup> the Ashio Copper Mine disaster; Japanese industry's role in deforestation, particularly in Southeast Asia;<sup>11</sup> Japan's well-documented "Big Four" industrial diseases of the 1950s and 1960s;<sup>12</sup> and Japan's ongoing struggles with water pollution (including the synthetic chemical perfluorooctanite or PFOA that recently contaminated the Yodo and Ai Rivers near Osaka) and pesticide pollution.<sup>13</sup>



**Ashio Copper Mine, circa 1895**

In the early 1970s, Japan's steps to address these serious pollution problems brought positive results.<sup>14</sup> But because the socio-economic order that generated these environmental problems was essentially unchanged, environmental degradation, together with reactionary ecology's efforts to ignore or downplay it, continued.<sup>15</sup> Thus, Japan's greatest ecological catastrophe in recent years, the disaster at Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant of 2011, also receives little attention among reactionary ecologists.

If Japan's past is to suggest a solution to the world's environmental problems, then it must

be the past without a cleansing away of Ashio, industrial diseases, PFOAs, and Fukushima. Yet, in Japan's reactionary ecological discourse where the argument is made that Japan and its environmental history holds the solution to today's ecological crises, Japan's disastrous environmental record receives little if any scrutiny.<sup>16</sup> We find much the same situation in works of the deep ecology movement: a great deal of attention to ideologies of Japan's "oneness with nature," often drawn from wartime Japan, but little attention to the ecological tragedies of Japan's past and present.<sup>17</sup> Clearly, reactionary ecology's "Japanese view of nature" has little to do with historical reality. How, then, do we account for its authority?

### **Alienation and the Desire for Community**

"Oneness with nature" is put forward as a timeless feature of the Japanese character but this assertion's emergence is in fact quite recent.<sup>18</sup> Of course, assertions of this kind were common in early twentieth century Japan, as noted above, yet a similar discourse emerged decades later at least in part as a response to the excesses of capitalism in Japan's postwar period. The industrial diseases of the 1950s and 1960s in particular, but also socio-economic unevenness, consumerism, and tensions of class, gender, and ethnicity, gave rise to a growing sense of dislocation and alienation and, in turn, a desire for community.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, many of the contributors to this discourse in the 1960s and 1970s, and today as well, speak of a sense of alienation (*sogai kan*).

Murota Yasuhiro, for example, speaks of the "serious problem" of "the feeling of homelessness that the Japanese people experienced" with changes of industrialization.<sup>20</sup> Sonoda Minoru, an anthropologist and Shinto priest, expresses a similar view, lamenting the loss of community associated with "kakyō," meaning "one's old home" or "one's homeland"<sup>21</sup> And Kitamura

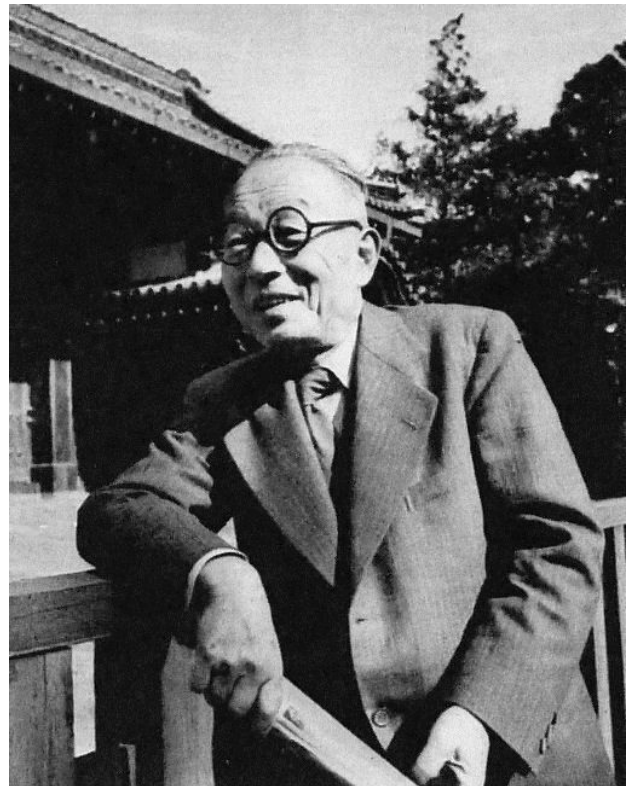
Masami, a scholar of agriculture, observes that while the introduction of the natural sciences to Japan spurred scientific thought among Japanese, “it also brought a detachment from nature. Probably the greatest loss from this was the feeling of unity with nature.” For Kitamura, this meant a cultural loss as well, because, he explains, “Japan’s traditional culture emerged out of this sense of unity... from flower arrangement and Japanese gardens to the tea ceremony, tanka and haiku poetry, and Noh and Kabuki, not one is produced detached from nature.”<sup>22</sup>

Thus, for some, alienation is experienced or understood as a loss of cultural tradition, as a detachment from nature to which the Japanese were once connected by “spiritual ties,” and as a longing for a “return” to traditional “homeland” or community.<sup>23</sup> This desire for a “return” contributes to a discourse on the overcoming of alienation in an imaginary community of Japanese people at one with nature and with each other. But this is a misdiagnosis of the problem, building on a very narrow view of alienation. By focusing on alienation as estrangement from culture and tradition, reactionary ecology loses sight of a more concrete form of alienation.

For example, Hiroko Tabuchi has shown the plight of Japan’s nuclear power labor force, part of a broader “two-tiered work force, with an elite class of highly paid employees at top companies and a subclass of laborers who work for less pay, have less job security and receive fewer benefits.” These contract workers, who made up 89% of the more than 10,000 workers at the Fukushima nuclear power plant in 2010, are routinely exposed to dangerously high levels of radiation.<sup>24</sup> It is this material form of alienation—in which workers, like those in the nuclear power industry, have little control over the labor process and their working conditions—rather than the ideal and imaginary loss of homeland, that must be the starting point for any assessment of Japan’s

environmental problems.<sup>25</sup> Yet, many within and outside Japan accept the idea that Japan’s past illustrates a unique nature aesthetic. In an effort to provide an underlying basis for this claim, they turn to older theories linking climate and culture. This has taken the form of a new discourse on “climate”.

### A New Discourse on Climate





**Watsuji Tetsurō  
Climate**

A key resource for much conservative and reactionary ecology today is philosopher Watsuji Tetsurō’s *Climate* (*Fūdo*, literally “Wind and Earth”) published in 1935. It is probably this text, more than the many others of this period dealing with nature and Japanese culture, that provides the clearest effort to link the natural landscape and “national character”. Watsuji’s text shares with present-day reactionary ecology the same objectives and problems: he sought to confirm a homogeneous folk community derived from Japan’s “unique” landscape.

*Climate*, according to Watsuji, affects “all the manifestations of human life” from food production, building materials and architectural style to “literature, art, religion, and customs”.<sup>26</sup> He demarcated the globe into separate climatic zones, arguing that each gave

rise to distinct cultural groupings. For example, the European “meadow zone,” Watsuji explained, with its grassland for livestock grazing, gave rise to a culture of control over nature, scientific epistemology, and rationality. By contrast, Japan, situated in a “monsoon zone,” developed an attitude toward nature characterized by resignation and submission rather than resistance. In this region, distinguished by its humidity, seasonal heavy rains and unpredictable weather patterns, the power of nature “is so vast that man is obliged to abandon all hope of resistance and is forced into mere passive resignation.”<sup>27</sup> Overall, this framework, in which regional differences in climate lead to commensurate cultural variation, allowed Watsuji to affirm the East-West binary opposition so prevalent in early twentieth century Japan and the uniqueness of Japanese culture. The culture and character of the Orient (and of Japan), he maintained, are distinct from those of the Occident. And these distinctions are rooted in nature itself.

Today, a new discourse on climate consciously informed by Watsuji’s thought, sometimes called *shin fūdo ron* in Japanese, has emerged. As scholar of Buddhist and social philosophy Matsuoka Mikio observes and as much recent environmental literature in Japan attests, “efforts to grasp Watsuji’s *fūdo-ron* as environmental thought have steadily increased from the end of the twentieth century.”<sup>28</sup> In *shin fūdo* discourse, the focus is not the global environment but the particular Japanese landscape. The aim is to assert the uniqueness of Japan’s nature aesthetic as one that sanctifies nature and reflects Japanese people and Japanese landscape as a single body. To naturalize these claims, *shin fūdo ron* turns explicitly or implicitly to Watsuji’s concepts and arguments, insisting that at a fundamental level Japanese landscape and culture are intertwined.

Sonoda Minoru explains that landscape (*fūdo*)—“a warm and wet monsoon climate” in

Japan's case—shapes culture. Landscape, he explains, “denotes not only the external, natural climatic and geographic features of a region, but also refers to an internalised nature, infused with a cosmological and spiritual *Lebenswelt* [lifeworld] construed by the people living in the region.” In other words, “landscape” is more than geography; it comes to be internalized by the people of the landscape who develop a common aesthetic relationship to it.<sup>29</sup>

“Forest culture” is another form of *shin fūdo ron*. In recent decades, the forest has emerged, for Japan's reactionary ecologists, as the symbolic and material essence of Japan's unique aesthetic relationship to nature. A fairly small number of scholars with strong political backing, Umehara Takeshi and Yasuda Yoshinori among them, have received a great deal of attention for their works on “forest culture,” “forest civilization,” and “forest thought”. The forest, in this discourse, represents the Japanese people's unique, eternal, and harmonious relationship with nature.

Like Watsuji, proponents of forest culture begin with separate climatic zones that are shown to have their respective impacts on culture. The geographic conditions of Japan as an island country “gave rise to a climate (*fūdo*) of oceanic warmth and humidity” well suited for forests, which provided an abundance of food and natural resources. Rice cultivation and fishing also developed out of Japan's climatic conditions. In the Occident, however, the domestication of animals generated a need for grazing land, which in turn led to the clearing of the forests. This, then, is the climatic and historical basis for the claim that European civilization is “forest-dominating” while Japan's, with its different conditions for subsistence, is “forest-protecting”. Ultimately, according to forest-culture theorists, religion, national character, and even views of history are determined by climate. Thus, climate explains

Japan's “tolerant polytheism” as opposed to the West's “intolerant monotheism” and its “character” (one with nature and forest-protecting, a society characterized by unity) versus Western character (anthropocentric and forest-dominating, characterized by individualism).<sup>30</sup>

Matsuoka Mikio also contributes to the rehabilitation of Watsuji's thought. In a recent work on Japanese philosophy and ecology, he suggests that the views of nature put forward by Kyoto-school philosophers Nishida Kitarō and Watsuji Tetsurō provide a “present-day significance”. He compares the Kyoto School's emphasis on the Mahayana Buddhist unity of subject and object, self and other, to theories of self-realization in deep ecology and sees the possibility of unifying the two. In this way, he hopes to contribute to the development of a new environmental ethic that integrates “East” (Kyoto School philosophy) and West (deep ecology) to “truly overcome modernity's nature-destroying views of the environment”. In Nishida and Watsuji's own efforts to unify views of nature of East and West and in their appropriation of “oriental thought to overcome the limits of Western modernity,” they can be seen as “forerunners,” says Matsuoka, of today's radical ecology. He concludes that “following in the footsteps of Nishida and Watsuji's hard work” is meaningful.<sup>31</sup> Yet we find much in Matsuoka's new environmental ethic that is consistent with wartime rhetoric on nature, subject-object unity, and overcoming modernity.

Watsuji's notion of *fūdo* also appears in contemporary environmental ethics as a conceptual resource for thinking through the relationship between humanity and nature. Presupposed here is an essentialized “Japanese view of nature” and an understanding of culture, national character and climate that suggests an uncritical acceptance of Watsuji's problematic claims. Philosopher Steve Odin, for example, in an article on the “Japanese concept

of nature,” calls Watsuji’s *fūdo* “one of the most suggestive Asian resources for environmental ethics...” in addressing the human-nature relationship.<sup>32</sup> James McRae, a scholar of Asian philosophy and religion, also draws upon Watsuji’s *Fūdo*, stating, “One’s natural surroundings play an essential role in the development of the person, to the extent that the different cultures of the world owe their distinct characters to the unique natural climates in which they make their homes.” Here, McRae presupposes the idea of unique cultural character informed by climate. “One is a fully developed human being only when one...embraces one’s context as an essential part of oneself.” The context here is climate or *fūdo*. The realization of this full development requires “a process of self-negation in which one denies the illusion of one’s “individual” self” and (here quoting Watsuji’s *Ethics*) “the individual’s surrender to the totality”.<sup>33</sup> He advocates an environmental ethics that does away with the conception of the rational, autonomous individual, that instead embraces Watsuji’s view of person as conditioned by climate.

As the above indicates, *fūdo*, though its use is sometimes qualified, is an important conceptual resource in current ecological discourse. This new discourse on climate, mediated by Watsuji’s climate theory in particular and by Japan’s wartime ideology generally, operates to substantiate claims concerning the unique aesthetic character of the Japanese people and carries with it the same potential for oppression as the climate discourse of the 1930s.

### National Landscape and Oppression

Reactionary ecological efforts in Japan to rehabilitate Watsuji and the wartime discourse on nature generally are matters of concern. Watsuji’s *fūdo-ron* contributed to the oppressive ideology and material conditions of wartime Japan by defining this community in

terms of absolute loyalty to the state.<sup>34</sup> Today, those who seek to draw upon Watsuji’s work as a source for environmental ethics are in many cases unaware of the oppressive potential in his theory of *fūdo*. Others suggest that Watsuji’s thought, though coopted by the state for fascist ends, was in fact benign or that “his intent was not to advocate tyranny or fascism”.<sup>35</sup> But intent is not the issue here. There is a logic to Watsuji’s thought whereby the imagined aesthetic character of the Japanese folk, which operates as a basis for homogeneous obedience and loyalty to the state by mystifying socio-economic tensions, must constantly be affirmed and enforced, and defended against a social reality that threatens to expose it as myth and as a basis of oppression. This logic is at work in his *Fūdo* and clearly visible in his other works as well.<sup>36</sup>

In Watsuji’s thought, the Japanese landscape is venerated as sacred, caused to be sacred by linking landscape, divinity, and state (“the divine land” or *shinkoku*). This sanctity itself, then, is held up as justification for reverence and loyalty to the state and employed as a means to, in Watsuji’s words, “regulate the individual from the standpoint of the totality.”<sup>37</sup> *Shin-fūdo ron* perpetuates this sanctification of nature and should therefore be a cause for concern.

Senda, for example, articulates such a view, naturalizing it as an essentialized and eternal feature of the Japanese character and linking it to the Japanese emperor. “Since ancient times the Japanese people have believed in a wide variety of deities which reside in all sorts of natural phenomena. The natural landscape itself is the visual expression of deified nature...even the Emperor was a deity of nature...”<sup>38</sup> Yoshida Kikuko, a specialist in Japanese philosophy, believes that among the Japanese people today a “feeling for nature’s divine life force” endures.<sup>39</sup> Umehara’s championing of an “animism that worships nature,” Yasuda’s many calls to “worship the



mountains,” and Shinto scholar Ueda Kenji’s emphasis on the “spiritual communication between nature and human beings” in Shinto provide further examples.<sup>40</sup> Finally, we see in deep ecology and Gaia theory (which, by some accounts, views the entire earth as a sentient organism) a similar tendency to sanctify nature, whereby “even the commonest sticks and stones have a spiritual essence which must be revered” and the merging of individual and nature culminates in “spiritual personhood”.<sup>41</sup>

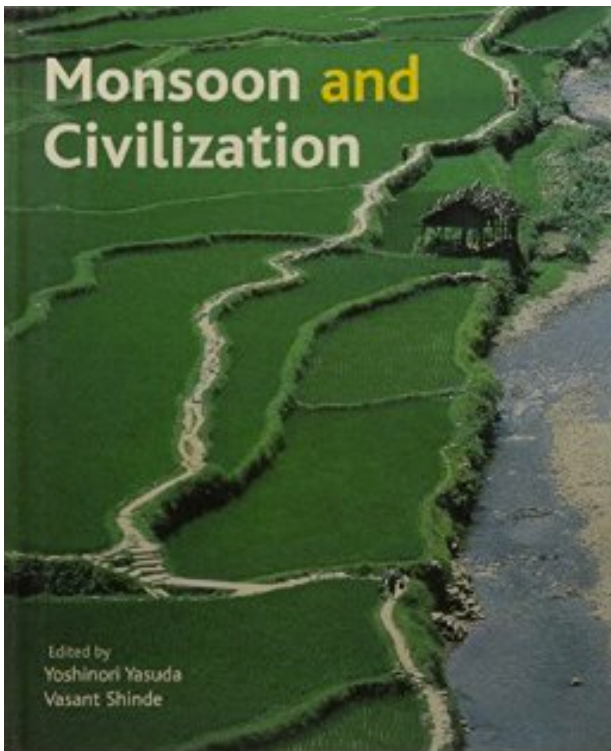
In his study of fascism, Mark Neocleous calls attention to a link between fascism and the sanctification of nature. “Ideologically,” he argues, “fascism does not merely ‘respect’ nature: it sanctifies and spiritualizes it.” This, he explains, is because “The sanctification of nature is simultaneously the sanctification of the nation as the natural collective unit. The integral connection between the idea of a national spirit and the spiritual concept of nature focuses attention on this nature, that is, the land of this nation, and the role it plays in shaping national character and identity.”<sup>42</sup> And as we have seen in Watsuji’s theory and in reactionary ecology today, “nature” consistently refers to the Japanese landscape rather than the global environment. This reverence for nature and the way it reinforces a reverence for the nation and culture of Japan suggest that Neocleous’s insights pertain here as well.

For those defending this ideological structure, the critique or questioning of what is deemed sacred is intolerable.<sup>43</sup> As a result, actual environmental degradation taking place in Japan, which by its very presence subverts reactionary ecology, becomes a problem of the other. That is, capitalism’s excesses—pollution, alienation, socio-economic unevenness—are dissociated from Japan, Japanese history, and Japanese culture by locating the problem elsewhere. Marilyn Ivy, discussing fascism in wartime Japan, suggests that capitalism’s excesses were “purged, assigned to the

outside,” that is, located outside “Japanese culture” (e.g. by attaching them to some “non-Japanese” other living or acting within Japan) or geographically outside of Japan itself (e.g. in the “West” or in China).<sup>44</sup>

Yasuda Yoshinori provides an example, setting up a clear opposition between “the soul of Japan” and those who threaten it. According to Yasuda, religion must play a large role in the resolution of the world’s environmental problems. “We must cultivate the soul of Japan, the heart of Japan by introducing religious education into the education of Japan’s young people, as they are the ones who will bear the burdens of the future.” He calls on Japan to create a group of “environmental-rangers” who can be sent to all regions in the country to further environmental protection and respond to natural disasters. “Further,” he states, “they would crack down on such things as the illegal development carried out by foreigners.”<sup>45</sup> Yasuda warns of “the buying up of Japanese territory by foreigners,” a practice he claims is linked to grave environmental harm.

While Yasuda acknowledges that environmental harm does take place even within Japan, he suggests that “illegal development” is not carried out by “Japanese” but by “foreigners”. In this way, he draws upon a common discriminatory formula in which to be foreign in Japan is to be criminal and crime is a foreign matter.<sup>46</sup> In his vision, Japan’s youth, once religiously trained and armed with the “soul and heart” of Japan, will defend the environment by defending Japanese culture against the external threat.



**Yasuda Yoshinori**

***Monsoon and Civilization***

From this one example, of course, we should not expect to see activists on the streets of Japan congratulating themselves on their cultural oneness with the forest while at the same time chanting “down with foreigners”. But the two are not unconnected. Reactionary ecology contributes to the production of an exclusionary ideology of cultural identity and so is bound up with the oppressive conditions that this ideology generates. Yasuda’s comments on foreigners are delivered within a context of very troubling hate speech and hate groups. Historian Tessa Morris-Suzuki, discussing hate speech in Japan, calls attention to the “Citizens’ League to Deny Foreigners Special Rights” or “Zaitokukai” formed in 2007. “Zaitokukai protest actions,” she notes, “are most often directed at Korean residents in Japan...but the group’s list of other targets is long and eclectic...” The Zaitokukai is not the only such group. Another, the “New Social Movement” (Shinshakai Undō) assembled “some 150 to 200 far right demonstrators [and] staged a march through the busy main streets of Shin-Okubo [where many ethnic Korean and Chinese live], yelling vitriolic abuse [“Kill Koreans,” for example] and incitements to ethnic violence at inhabitants...”<sup>47</sup> “Non-Japanese” ethnic groups in Japan represent an internal threat; by their very presence they undermine the narrative of Japan as homogeneous racial community. And this notion of homogeneous community is at the center of the cultural discourse reactionary ecology helps to form.

Japan’s largest and most powerful right-wing group, the “Japan Council” (Nippon Kaigi), illustrates the close connections among reactionary ecology, patriotic communitarianism, and intolerance toward those who question its aims. Formed in 1997, the Japan Council promotes a standard list of right-wing imperatives: “respect the Imperial Family as the center of Japanese life;” nurture

patriotism; promote a new Constitution “based on our nation’s true characteristics;” nurture young people to grow up with pride and love for their nation; and establish a strong army and promote the nation’s status abroad.”<sup>48</sup> While the Zaitokukai will sometimes criticize the Japan Council for not going far enough, anthropologist Yamaguchi Tomomi points out that “it is organizations like Japan Council that incubate issues like the so-called military comfort women and xenophobia.”<sup>49</sup>

Moreover, the Japan Council has called for including a clause on environmental protection in a revised constitution. They write:

From ancient times, the Japanese people have believed that deities dwell in the mountains and the rivers, in the grasses and the trees. This is a matter of the spirit of ecology, the reverence for nature flowing within Japanese tradition. Isn’t it our obligation today to bring to life this Japanese tradition? Do we not have the obligation to incorporate environmental rights, or rather the duty to protect the environment, into the constitution and to resolve to protect the workings of nature for the future not only of humanity but all living things?<sup>50</sup>

Here, the Japan Council’s immediate aim of course is to use this ecological argument to open up the constitution for revision, ultimately in hopes of revising the “peace clause” article nine. But, like reactionary ecologists, its key concern is not environmental protection but rather the shoring up of “tradition” and a narrative of Japanese community.

This same communitarian ideology is now formally codified in Japan’s education system. The 2006 revisions to the Basic Law of Education reflect an effort by Prime Minister Abe and other conservative politicians to weave together reverence for nature, tradition, and culture with the call for environmental protection so as to legislate patriotism. This Law lays out education’s aim, according to the government’s provisional English translation:

“to foster an attitude to respect life, care for nature, and contribute to the protection of the environment.” But this worthy aim of (global?) environmental protection is offset by what immediately follows: “to foster an attitude to respect our traditions and culture, [and] love the country and region (kyōdo) that nurtured them...”<sup>51</sup> There is more here than the obvious effort to cultivate patriotism. Translating kyōdo as “region” is an obfuscation. Kyōdo conveys “one’s home” or “homeland” and is closely tied ideographically and semantically to Sonoda Minoru’s longed-for kakyō (discussed above) and to one rendering of furusato, another even more ideologically weighted term for homeland. Thus, care for nature and environment in the first passage becomes love of Japanese landscape in the second. Moreover, “homeland” in this revised law operates, as fūdo or “climate” does for Watsuji and shin fūdo ron proponents, as the wellspring of culture and tradition. Again, this emphasis on national landscape and community cannot be separated from ethnic discrimination: the one attests to the homogeneous aesthetic character of the Japanese people while the other is a response to the threat to this myth of homogeneity posed from the “outside”.

As we have seen, there is also an effort in reactionary ecology to locate environmental degradation (and the excesses of capitalism generally) geographically outside of Japan. For example, in the East-West (or Japan-West) binary discussed above, Japan is set apart from “Western civilization,” defined in terms of a monotheistic Judeo-Christian religious tradition and a will to dominate nature. By situating the roots of global environmental crises in an imagined “West” from which Japan is detached, reactionary ecology positions Japan outside the conditions of environmental exploitation. Yet, reactionary ecology seeks not only to distance Japanese culture from these problems, but to uphold and disseminate the “Japanese view” as the solution.

We see in this discourse an imperialist desire for the dissemination or proselytization of this view or narrative to the world. Nearly all of the reactionary ethical thinkers in Japan examined in this essay conclude by holding up the “Japanese view” as a model for the world’s emulation. Umehara, for example, states, “My hope now is to discover in the cultural origins of Japan not only a new value orientation which would benefit us as we forge the values our children can live by...but also to contribute to the whole of humanity a new value orientation...”<sup>52</sup> Yasuda, Senda, Odin, McRae, Tsurumi, Kagawa-Fox, Matsuoka, Yamauchi and others follow suit. Perhaps this in itself is no cause for concern, merely the contribution of a theory to ongoing debate about how best to respond to global environmental problems. Yet when so much of this narrative is so closely intertwined with wartime discourse, we might recall one of the highest aims to which Watsuji’s climate theory led: “the lofty ideal of causing all other nations to attain this sense of Veneration of the Emperor”.<sup>53</sup>

In his “Proposal for a solution to the world’s environmental problems based on Japanese civilization,” Yasuda Yoshinori puts forward a plan to “disseminate Japanese environmental ethics to the world.” Japan, he suggests, should:

organize a team for a ‘beautification of the earth’ movement. Dispatch this team to clean out toilets, particularly in China. This is the only way to change the spirit (kokoro) of the Chinese people.<sup>54</sup>

No doubt this proposal was put forward as a benevolent offer of assistance to help the people of China “improve” themselves. But imperialist desires are very often couched in the language of benevolence. Were Japan to take it upon itself to “improve” the defective “Chinese spirit” (after, of course, first ascribing a unitary and defective spirit to the vast and diverse population of China), how can we view

this as anything other than an imperialist desire, again resonating closely with the rhetoric of wartime Japan. How would the Chinese character be changed? Whose character or spirit would serve as a model for change?

A further recommendation Yasuda puts forward for disseminating Japanese environmental views to the world, what he calls an “effective measure,” is “to encourage Japan’s young people toward international marriages, then to transfer Japanese values to the children (and grandchildren) from these marriages.”<sup>55</sup> The values of the non-Japanese parent in such an arrangement are apparently of no value. Yasuda, together with his neo-imperialist recommendations, may be an outlier, but not a complete anomaly. His claims reflect the logic of reactionary ecological discourse within the material conditions of global capitalism.

### Reactionary Ecology as Fascist Desire

Markedly absent from reactionary ecology is a sustained critique of capitalism. The object of critique in these works is not the material ecological conditions of the socio-economic order but rather “the West” and its anthropocentric nature-dominating values, China and its people’s defective “spirit,” or the foreign presence within Japan. Thus, environmental excess is routinely located outside of Japanese culture, society, and history. Despite their impassioned assertions of concern for the global environmental crisis, environmental degradation is not the primary concern of the champions of “forest culture” and the “Japanese view of nature”. The key objective of reactionary ecology in Japan (and deep ecology contributes to this) is to bolster a narrative of a homogeneous ethnic community at one with a sanctified nature, where “nature” signifies the particular Japanese landscape and a unique Japanese culture.

This is a narrative clearly mediated by ideologies of wartime Japan. Both deep

ecologists and reactionary cultural critics in Japan reflect this in their sanctified views of nature; their rehabilitation of wartime thinkers, like Watsuji (and Heidegger), whose theories and statements have been at least tinged with wartime ideology but who now once again speak with authority; their longing for a retreat to a mythic past of cultural community; and their aesthetic desire to unify subject and object, self and nature, to overcome the alienation of the “Western ego” and attain “organic wholeness” through an intuitive process of self-realization.

Euro-American (and in some cases Japanese) scholarship on deep ecology and environmental ethics differs from reactionary ecology in Japan in that it is not usually framed within a narrative of one particular nation or culture. But it is driven by a similar logic. Because it uncritically appropriates Japanese history and because it reflects a largely reactionary view—a longing for a return to an idealized pre-industrial civilization, an endorsement of a kind of neo-vitalism (e.g. Gaia as “super-organism”), etc.—it contributes to the reactionary agenda in Japan. Above all, it is important to consider reactionary ecology within Japan together with reactionary ideologies and movements globally (deep ecology and certain positions in environmental ethics, for example, as well as reactionary ecological discourse in the United States) in order to emphasize that the reactionary tendencies unfolding within Japan are not unique to Japan; rather, they indicate a response to the tensions and contradictions of global capitalism. Indeed, the disturbing parallels with the United States today—an irrational denial of climate change and willful disregard for environmental degradation paired with a longing for an imagined former era of American “greatness” and a violent hostility to a wide range of “others” targeted for their ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation—is a telling example of this.

In this sense, the various features of

reactionary ecology within and outside Japan can be understood to reflect a fascist desire.<sup>56</sup> My use of this term is not to identify Japan today as a fascist regime, but rather to call attention to “a politics implicit in modern capitalism” and to “a permanent possibility inherent in the social forms of modernity itself.”<sup>57</sup> This is a reactionary desire to contain the material (and ideological) conditions—the excesses of capitalism—that threaten to destabilize the socio-economic status quo. Through a range of strategies (mystification, a selective and ahistorical reading of the past, an East-West binary to differentiate Japan from the West, a sanctified view of nature, efforts to aestheticize community and culture) these forms of reactionary ecology promise to restore community to those alienated by the capitalist system. But the real impact is to satisfy a reactionary desire to regulate society by subordinating the individual to the cultural whole, conceal environmental harm, and sustain the very socio-economic order that generates the ecological crises we now face.

The anthropocentric ideology that reactionary ecology rightly critiques (but fails to historicize) cannot be overcome while the material conditions generating it remain uncontested. If the current global environmental crisis is to be taken seriously, what is needed is neither cultural exceptionalism masquerading as environmentalism nor vitalism. There is indeed much we can learn from Japan’s environmental history, but only so long as this history is historical, materialist, and dialectical.<sup>58</sup> In contrast to the ahistorical and arbitrary accounts of Japan’s past in reactionary ecology, a careful, inclusive historical reading of Japan’s environmental record is essential, not only to reveal and address the ecological catastrophes in Japan’s history, but also to historicize and invalidate the narrative, concepts, and frameworks of reactionary ecology in Japan, to reveal their mediation by wartime discourse and their oppressive potential, to reveal what

reactionary ecology seeks to conceal. Moreover, it is important to move beyond oppositions between eco-centric and anthropocentric values, between the cultural, ecological, or religious attitudes in animism and Buddhism vs. Judeo-Christianity. Rather, a careful and sustained critique of the material forces producing environmental degradation, a critique of capitalism, is needed. A materialist assessment also reveals the socio-economic conditions that give rise to the alienation and the desire for cultural community that animates reactionary ecology within and outside Japan. Finally, in contrast to “the Japanese view of nature,” in which nature is reduced to the Japanese landscape, a fixed repository or wellspring for enduring cultural values, a dialectical view of nature and humanity’s relation to it is needed so that we can move beyond such cultural essentialism. Not only do our representations of nature shift over time; humanity acts on and changes the environment even as the environment acts on and changes humanity. Fukushima illustrates this most clearly.

Working to demystify and delegitimize reactionary ecology’s claims so as to focus critique squarely on the forces producing environmental degradation is an important starting point. But ultimately, critique is not enough. Radical change to the global socio-economic order is necessary; “green capitalism,” voluntarism (well-intended but insufficient efforts to address climate change such as the use of CFL light bulbs or recycling), and mere adjustments to the status quo, as R. Guha, John Bellamy Foster, Joel Kovel, and others have convincingly argued, will be insufficient. More than two and a half decades

ago, Ramachandra Guha wrote, “If colonial and capitalist expansion has both accentuated social inequalities and signaled a precipitous fall in ecological wisdom, an alternate ecology must rest on an alternate society and polity as well.”<sup>59</sup> Today, with the crisis of global climate change intensifying, the need for a post-capitalist order has become more urgent than ever.

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43-64, and "Völkerpsychologie and the Appropriation of 'Spirit' in Meiji Japan," *Modern Intellectual History* 7, 3 (2010): 495-522. rreitan@fandm.edu

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to the reviewers of this article for their comments and suggestions, and to Xinyu Liu, who worked with me as a student research assistant during the initial stages of this project.

<sup>2</sup> See Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time: Modernity and Avant-Garde* (London & New York: Verso, 1995), 162-68; and Mark Neocleous, *Fascism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 59-74.

<sup>3</sup> For these statements, see Wakabayashi Akihiko, "Kankyō shisō ni okeru rinrigaku teki aporōchi to etosu kara no aporōchi," *Japanese Association for Religious Studies*, n.d., 179-80; Umehara Takeshi, "The Japanese View of the "Other World": Japanese Religion in World Perspective," *Japan Review* 2 (1991): 189-90.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Murota Yasuhiro, "Culture and the Environment in Japan" *Environmental Management*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (1985): 105; Midori Kagawa-Fox, *The Ethics of Japan's Global Environmental Policy: The Conflict Between Principles and Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 35-36; Bill Devall and George Sessions, *Deep Ecology* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 1985), 43, 65-67.

<sup>5</sup> Murota, "Culture and the Environment in Japan," 105.

<sup>6</sup> Umehara, "The Civilization of the Forest," *New Perspectives Quarterly*, Vol. 16, Issue 2 (1999): 45.

<sup>7</sup> See Tsurumi Kazuko, "Animism and Science," in *Adventure of Ideas: A Collection of Essays on Patterns of Creativity and a Theory of Endogenous Development* (Kawaguchi: Japanime, n.d.), 288; Kagawa-Fox, *Japan's Global Environmental Policy*, 1, 31-2, 35; Masao Watanabe, "The Conception of Nature in Japanese Culture," *Science* Vol. 183, No. 4122 (1974): 279-82. On deep ecology, see Devall and Sessions, *Deep Ecology*, ix, 66-7.

<sup>8</sup> See Tsurumi, "Animism and Science," 288-89; M. Senda, "Japan's Traditional View of Nature and Interpretation of Landscape," *Geojournal*, Vol. 26, No. 2, History of Geographical Thought (Feb. 1992): 132, 134; Umehara, *Mori no shisō ga jinrui o sukuu* (Tokyo: PHP, 2015), 155; and Yamauchi Tomosaburō, "The Confucian Environmental Ethics of Ogyū Sorai: A Three-Level, Eco-Humanistic Interpretation," in J. Baird Callicott and James McRae ed., *Environmental Philosophy in Asian Traditions of Thought* (Albany: State University of New York, 2014), 338-39 and 354.

<sup>9</sup> On the prioritization of values over materiality, see Lynn White, Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science*, New Series, Vol. 155, No. 3767 (Mar. 10, 1967), 1205-1207, much-cited in Japan's reactionary ecology; A. H. Badiner ed., *Dharma Gaia: A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1990), xiv, 22; and Devall and Sessions, *Deep Ecology*, ix.

<sup>10</sup> Matsuoka Mikio, *Kyoto gakuha to ekorojii* (Tokyo: Ronsōsha, 2013), 56-57.

<sup>11</sup> See Derek Hall, "Japan's Role in the Asian Environmental Crisis," *Social Science Japan Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (April 2001), 96; Peter Dauvergne, *Shadows in the Forest: Japan and the*

*Politics of Timber in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge, MA & London: MIT Press, 1997), 1-2, 5, 165.

<sup>12</sup> On postwar pollution issues, see Imamura Tomoaki et al., “History of Public Health Crises in Japan,” *Journal of Public Health Policy* 28 (2007): 221-37. Also see Masano Atsuko, *Yondai kōgaibyō: Minamatabyō, Niigata minamatabyō, Itaiitaibyō, Yokkaichi kōgai* (Tokyo: Chūō kōronshinsha, 2013).

<sup>13</sup> Yasuda, “Jinrui to shizen,” 164, 170. In Yasuda’s text there is no mention of Fukushima, Minamata, PFOAs, Yokkaichi asthma, Ashio, etc. Pollution in this text only appears in reference to countries other than Japan. Also see “Suspected carcinogen polluting water supply: PFOA level especially high in Osaka: Study,” *Japan Times*, 22 May 2007; OECD, *Environmental Performance Reviews: Japan* (Paris: OECD, 2002), 100.

<sup>14</sup> Miranda. A. Schreurs, *Environmental Politics in Japan, Germany, and the United States* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 47. Also see Andrew De Wit, “Hioki’s Smart Community and Japan’s Structural Reform,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal* Vol. 14, Issue 15, No. 10 (Aug 2016). De Wit calls attention to the emerging “smart communities” in Japan, such as Hioki City, which reflect structural reforms for cleaner, more efficient, and less expensive energy production.

<sup>15</sup> For an overview of the environmental issues Japan faces today, see Ishibashi Haruo et al., *Gendai Nihon no kankyō mondai to kankyō seisaku* (Tokyo: Senbundo, 2012), 144-45. Ishibashi approaches these issues from an empirical standpoint outside of reactionary ecology.

<sup>16</sup> See Yasuda, “Jinrui to shizen,” 151-177; Umehara, *Mori no shishō*, 161, 198 (except for a brief acknowledgement that Japan, too, had environmental problems, Japan’s disastrous ecological history is absent in this work); Kitamura Masami, “Tōzai no shinrin-kan” (Eastern and Western Views of the Forest), in Yasuda Yoshinori and Sugahara Satoshi ed., *Mori to bunmei* (Tokyo: Asakura shoten, 1996), 19-28.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Callicott and McRae ed., *Environmental Philosophy*; Alan Drengson and Inoue Yuichi, *Diipu Ekorojii: Ikikata kara kangaeru kankyō no shisō* (Kyoto: Shōwadō, 2010). In J. B. Callicott and R. Ames, *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), we do find reference to mercury pollution in Japan in the Epilogue, but the focus of this work, as the title suggests, clearly lies elsewhere.

<sup>18</sup> Julia Adeney Thomas writes, “Much of the revolutionary recasting of the national ideology of nature occurred in the decade after the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5)...Japan’s “immemorial harmony with nature” is a twentieth-century product...” J. A. Thomas, *Reconfiguring Modernity: Concepts of Nature in Japanese Political Ideology* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 186-87.

<sup>19</sup> See Richard Reitan, “Narratives of ‘Equivalence’: Neoliberalism in Contemporary Japan,” *Radical History Review*, 112 (2012): 50-51.

<sup>20</sup> Murota, “Culture and the Environment in Japan,” 105.

<sup>21</sup> Sonoda Minoru, “Shinto and the Natural Environment,” in John Breen and Mark Teeuwen ed., *Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2000), 42, 44.

<sup>22</sup> Kitamura, “Tōzai no shinrin-kan,” 20, 21.

<sup>23</sup> Much of this parallels early Showa era efforts to conceptualize and disseminate a subject-object unity of self and other, national subject and nation-state, humanity and nature which took shape as a desire for community and as a means to address increasingly serious social



problems generating alienation and social dislocation.

<sup>24</sup> Hiroko Tabuchi, "Braving Heat and Radiation for Temp Job," *New York Times*, 10 April 2011.

<sup>25</sup> See Paul Jobin, "Dying for TEPCO? Fukushima's Nuclear Contract Workers," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 9, Issue 18, No. 3 (May 2011).

<sup>26</sup> Watsuji Tetsurō, *Fūdo: Ningengaku teki kōsatsu* (Tokyo: Iwanami shinsho, 2006), 17.

<sup>27</sup> Watsuji Tetsurō, *A Climate: A Philosophical Study*, trans. Geoffrey Bownas (Tokyo: Ministry of Education, 1961), 19. Cf. Watsuji, *Fūdo*, 31.

<sup>28</sup> Matsuoka, *Kyoto gakuha to ekorojii*, 340.

<sup>29</sup> Sonoda, "Shinto and the Natural Environment," 33, 35.

<sup>30</sup> See Yasuda Yoshinori, *Mori o mamoru bunmei, shihai suru bunmei* (Tokyo: PHP Shinsho, 1997), 217-18, 220-225.

<sup>31</sup> Matsuoka, *Kyoto gakuha to ekorojii*, 2, 379-80, 402, 411.

<sup>32</sup> Steve Odin, "The Japanese Concept of Nature," in Callicott and McRae ed., *Environmental Philosophy*, 252-253.

<sup>33</sup> James McRae, "Triple-Negation: Watsuji Tetsurō on the Sustainability of Ecosystems, Economies, and International Peace," in Callicott and McRae ed., *Environmental Philosophy*, 362.

<sup>34</sup> See Watsuji, *Fūdo*, 170-81, where Watsuji discusses Japan's *ie* (household) society and the individual. Also see Tetsuo Najita and H. D. Harootunian, "Japan's Revolt Against the West," in Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi ed., *Modern Japanese Thought* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 242.

<sup>35</sup> See McRae, "Triple-Negation," 373, n.15.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, Watsuji Tetsurō, "The Way of the Japanese Subject," in David Dilworth et al. ed., *Sourcebook for Modern Japanese Philosophy* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998), 285-287. See also the "Fundamentals of Our National Polity," co-authored by Watsuji and published by Japan's Ministry of Education: Monbushō ed., *Kokutai no hongii* (Tokyo: Monbushō, 1937).

<sup>37</sup> Watsuji, *Fūdo*, 177.

<sup>38</sup> Senda, "Japan's Traditional View of Nature," 131.

<sup>39</sup> Yoshida Kikuko, "Kagaku gijutsu bunmei to Nihonjin no shizenkan," *Ningen to Kankyō* (Journal of Human Environmental Studies) 2 (2011): 13.

<sup>40</sup> See Umehara, *Mori no shisō*, 51, 84, 124, 155, 211; Umehara, "The Japanese View of the 'Other World'," 189; Yasuda, "Jinrui to shizen," 152; Ueda Kenji, "Shinto's View of the Human," in Heisig et al. eds., *Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), 544.

<sup>41</sup> Joan Halifax, "The Third Body: Buddhism, Shamanism, and Deep Ecology," in Allan Hunt Badiner ed., *Dharma Gaia: A Harvest of Essays in Buddhism and Ecology* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1990), 24; Devall and Sessions, *Deep Ecology*, ix, 67, 76.

<sup>42</sup> Neocleous, *Fascism*, 76, 77.

<sup>43</sup> Consider the severe retaliation toward those who refuse to whitewash Japan's wartime history and demand an honest account of the "comfort women" issue. See Katsuya Hirano, "A Reflection on Uemura Takashi's Talk at UCLA," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 13, Issue 33, No. 4 (Aug. 9, 2015), 1-3.

- <sup>44</sup> Marilyn Ivy, "Foreword: Fascism, Yet?" in Alan Tansman, ed., *The Culture of Japanese Fascism* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2009), viii-ix.
- <sup>45</sup> Yasuda Yoshinori, "Nihon-teki bunmei ni yoru chikyū kankyō mondai kaiketsu e no teigen" (A Proposal for the solution to the world's environmental problems by way of Japanese civilization), *Kikan seisaku keiei kenkyū*, Vol. 4 (2009): 54, 58-59.
- <sup>46</sup> See, for example, Apichai W. Shipper, "Criminals or Victims? The Politics of Illegal Foreigners in Japan," *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Summer, 2005): 299-327.
- <sup>47</sup> Tessa Morris-Suzuki, "Freedom of Hate Speech: Abe Shinzo and Japan's Public Sphere," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 11, Issue 8, No. 1 (Feb. 25, 2013), see 3-5.
- <sup>48</sup> David McNeill, "Nippon Kaigi and the Radical Conservative Project to Take Back Japan," *Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 13, Issue 48, No. 4 (Dec. 2015).
- <sup>49</sup> Sato Kei et al., "Japan's Largest Rightwing Organization: An Introduction to Nippon Kaigi," trans. J. Victor Koschmann, *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 13, Issue 48, No. 5 (Dec. 2015), 3.
- <sup>50</sup> Nippon Kaigi, "Kempō mondai shiryōshū: gen kempō o shiru tame no 12 shō," 11 July, 2000. From <http://www.nipponkaigi.org/opinion/archives/882>, accessed June 2 2015.
- <sup>51</sup> See the text of this document at the website of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology: [http://www.mext.go.jp/b\\_menu/kihon/about/index.htm](http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/kihon/about/index.htm). Also see David McNeill and Adam Lebowitz "Hammering Down the Educational Nail: Abe Revises the Fundamental Law of Education," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 5, Issue 7, No. 0 (July 2007).
- <sup>52</sup> Umehara, "The Civilization of the Forest," 41.
- <sup>53</sup> Watsuji Tetsurō, "The Way of the Japanese Subject," 285.
- <sup>54</sup> Yasuda, "Nihon-teki bunmei," 59.
- <sup>55</sup> Yasuda, "Nihon-teki bunmei," 59.
- <sup>56</sup> Ivy, "Foreword: Fascism, Yet?" viii. Also see Slavoj Žižek, *Tarrying with the Negative: Kant, Hegel, and the Critique of Ideology* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 210.
- <sup>57</sup> Neocleous, *Fascism*, xi and Osborne, *The Politics of Time*, 161.
- <sup>58</sup> Foster et al. use this formula to understand "nature". John Bellamy Foster et al., *The Ecological Rift: Capitalism's War on the Earth* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2010), 261.
- <sup>59</sup> See R. Guha, "Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation," *Environmental Ethics* Vol. 11 (Spring 1989): 71-83; Foster et al., *The Ecological Rift*, 47, 436-42; Joel Kovel, *The Enemy of Nature: The End of Capitalism or the End of the World?* (London & New York: Zed Books, 2007), 162.