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Mark Meli

Translator's Introduction

Terada Torahiko (1878-1935) is primarily known as one of modern Japan's first great scientists.[1] As a physicist, he researched a broad field of phenomena such as acoustics, ocean waves, and X-rays in his younger years. After the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, he helped found the Earthquake Research Institute of Tokyo University, and from that point on, his research focused mainly on the study of earthquakes. His scientific work, numbering 226 essays in six volumes, written in English, German, and Japanese, was collected shortly after his death and re-published published (Terada 1939).

Although Terada's most singular accomplishments came as a physicist, he also possessed a strong literary bent. He studied under Natsume Soseki in high school, and was an avid haiku poet at various stages his life. He also was quite famous in his time as a writer of essays (*zuihitsu*), often published under the pen name Yoshimura Fuyuhiko, and it is those essays, as well as his books on literature, that were more likely to be known to the average Japanese than his scientific research. His collected works contain over 200 non-scientific longer essays and more than 300 short sketches.

"The View of Nature of the Japanese" (*Nihonjin no shizenkan*), in

which he ostensibly combines both scientific and cultural interests, was one of the last essays Terada wrote. It was published in *The Problems of Eastern Philosophy* (*Tōyō Shisō no Shomondai*), the 12th volume of Iwanami Shoten's series *Tōyō Shichō* (*Eastern Thought*), in October of 1935. Terada died of bone cancer on December 31, 1935.

The present essay contains the full English translation of "The View of Nature of the Japanese," along with notes to the text and a short bibliography. Due to space constraints, a critical essay accompanying this translation shall appear in *Bungaku Ronshū* Vol. 68 No. 1, in 2018.

The View of Nature of the Japanese
Terada Torahiko, 1935

Opening Words

The theme of "The View of Nature of the Japanese" that has been given to me seems quite obvious at first glance, but after some more thought, I have come to think that it is actually rather ambiguous. It necessitates some preliminary consideration and analysis before I can take up the brush for my main argument.

It is a question of how the Japanese have seen and responded to their environment, the "nature of Japan." Or rather, I think mainly it is about comparing that with the way that non-Japanese people of other lands have seen and responded to the nature of their own respective countries, and through this coming to see the special characteristics of the Japanese. And secondarily, it might also become an issue of how the ways in which foreigners see Japan's nature differs from the way that Japanese see it.

If nature put forth the same face everywhere on the earth, then the nature of Japan and the nature of other countries would be the same, and we would not need to undertake the kind of examination outlined above. But in

reality, everywhere we look, the face of nature presents various changes, to a shocking extent, so much so that it seems too complicated to use the single term "nature" to describe it all. When we consider things in this way, we even see that the term "nature of Japan" is far too vague. Even if we omit Hokkaido, Korea, and Taiwan, many kinds of problems emerge if we just try to treat as one the nature of Kyushu in the south with that of Northeast Honshu, so much so that we see it is not a correct approach.

Thinking in this way, next, we come to feel that even the meaning of the term "Japanese (person)" becomes a rather vain distraction. When we compare Kyushu people with Tohoku folks, even if we overcome the specific character of the individual, it is evident that each person is governed by the peculiarities of their native locale. So that means that we can clearly distinguish between the view of nature of the Kyushu person and the view of nature of the Tohoku person. However, it seems to me that the theme given to me here is to consider the view of nature of the "average Japanese," or the "normal Japanese," which encapsulates all of these local characteristics. In that case, we see that this is not an easy problem.

Normally, for convenience sake, we set up nature and humanity as opposites and think about their existence separately. This is the strong point of the modern scientific method, but it is also its shortcoming. Because these two poles actually constitute a single organic whole which is impossible to cut apart in order to consider each pole independently. Humanity, just like all other plants and animals, has been brought up at the bosom of nature for ages and ages, brought up so as to adapt to our environment, so that the particularities of each and every environment will, even if just to a small extent, have left their unique imprint upon the people who have been raised within it.

Setting aside the problem of where the ancestors of the Japanese

were born and from where they crossed to these islands, the Japanese who have been settled on this land for more than 2000 years since history began, whatever kind of genetic memory they might have once possessed, have harvested enough experience in this very environment of Japan to be able to cover up the majority of those deeper layers, and have striven to adapt to this place as perfectly as possible. And it cannot be doubted that, at least in part, they have been successful in doing so.

Because of this, if we are to consider the problem of the Japanese view of nature, I feel that we must first try to consider what kind of nature Japan has, and what characteristics it possesses. This problem would be much more complicated if the nature of Japan had undergone some sudden, drastic changes at some time in the past 2,000 years, but happily it seems no problem for us to conclude that the kind of great geographic and climatic changes that are thought to have taken place in previous geological eras have not occurred at all in historical time in Japan. So we can rest assured that our hypothesis, which is that the natural environment of Japan in the present time appears to us the same as it did in our ancestors' time, shall not lead us into any major errors.

So then below, I will first attempt to list the specific characteristics of nature in Japan in a very general manner. Next I will try to think about what kind of lifestyle the Japanese came to choose in response to that environment. In doing this, I think that I will have accomplished the major part of my assignment. As for any specific and profound consideration of how the nature which gave birth to the Japanese, and the life style that formed within it, is linked to the philosophy, religion, literature and arts of Japan, there are others who are better able to undertake that task.

The Nature of Japan

At the root of the various characteristic faces of the world of nature in Japan is Japan's geographical position, which is unique on earth. I think this is the fundamental principle which governs everything.

First of all is its climate.[2] Today's Japan rests upon the ring of islands running from the border on Kurafuto (Sakhalin) down to Taiwan, and includes the whole range of climate and milieu from the sub-tropical to nearly the sub-arctic. That is, however, a rather modern occurrence. The climate in which the original Japanese were brought up, before the Sino-Japanese War, is on the whole a temperate one. It possesses and includes every little specific gradation from the coldest area of the temperate zone to the warmest. Moreover, it is very interesting that all these aspects of climate, differentiated into every stage that might be accommodated in a temperate zone, are included within this narrow nation. In comparison we might wonder if there is even any portion of that huge continent of Africa wherein such varied climatic differentiation can be found.

The feature of the temperate zone is the annual cycle of the seasons. In the tropics, there are many locales were the concept of the seasons such as we possess has never even formed. In the South Pacific there are islands where it is always summer. In places like India, where they experience wet and dry seasons with the change of seasonal winds, the cycle is so different from the Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter of the temperate zone that it might even be called a regular long-term weather fluctuation. It is after all only in the temperate climates that the word "weather" has any meaning. We have "weather" precisely where there are various unpredictable changes. It is the same in the arctic. There they have "noon and evening" but not seasonal weather.

The seasonal changes of temperate areas and fluctuations in

weather cultivate human wisdom. In order to adapt to an environment which displays such complicated changes in its features, whether regular or irregular, humans must pay persistent attention and fashion various devises.

Compared with other countries within this temperate zone, Japan has various singular qualities. The main reason for this comes back to the fact that Japan is on the edge of a continent while also being a chain of islands surrounded by the sea. In this respect the British Isles are also in a very similar position, though meteorologists have long known that there is a great difference in the effects of atmospheric and ocean currents depending on whether one is situated on the west or east side of a continent. Of the two, being situated like Japan on the east side of a continent and on the western edge of an ocean brings about unfavorable climatic conditions. I think we can see this again if we compare Korea and Manchuria with the western European countries of the same latitude.[3)] Japan, however, on account of the small sea separating its land mass from the continent, is spared some of the most severe domination of the main atmospheric activities of central Siberia.

As proven by the fossils of elephants and rhinos, we know that Japan was connected to the continent through Korea in the area around Tsushima until a relatively recent geological age. Based on that, many scholars affirm that if the straights of Tsushima would be blocked off, and the warm currents from the south prevented from entering the Sea of Japan, some rather drastic changes would occur to Japan's climate. When we consider this, we see that Japan's climate only becomes possible because of its geographic position and its distribution of land and water. Consequently, among all the so-called temperate lands on the Earth, we can see that Japan's climate is completely unique.

On this account, both continental and marine aspects are complexly

intertwined within Japan's climate. Furthermore, besides regular, seasonal changes in the environment we also see irregular, sudden and lively shifts. That is to say that there is a diversity in "weather" and changes are frequent.

Just in regard to the way the rain falls, there is huge variation, and in the number of terms adapted to distinguish between various types of rainfall, Japan must be first in the world. For example, if we try to find adequate foreign language translations for *harusame* (spring rain), *samidare* (early summer rain) or *shigure* (autumn drizzle), I think we will run into no small amount of difficulty. It is even doubtful whether similar phenomena as *hanagumori* (hazy skies during cherry blossom season), *kasumi* (spring mist) and *inazuma* (lightning as the rice matures), can be seen in any country other than Japan. For example, even though the German *Wetterleuchten* (the reflection of lightning when the lightning itself is not seen) is basically the same physical phenomenon as *inazuma*, it does not run along the darkness of the rice paddies. I think that on account of such different circumstances attendant upon atmospheric conditions, the way they act upon human sensitivity differs completely from place to place.

And not only this, but because the intercourse between humans and nature that takes place within the organic whole which encompasses both humanity and nature is also itself organic, even if these phenomena are the same from a scientific and climatological standpoint, it goes without saying that the combination of the various elements which accompany these things take on completely different significances from place to place. In that sense, I can even say that *harusame* and *akikaze* (autumn wind) do not exist in the West. Moreover, it is within these very vocabulary that the fragments of the Japanese view of nature are contained in a densely compressed form.[4)]

The most remarkable of the unique climatic phenomena in Japan

must be the typhoon. This too is a phenomenon that is incidental to Japan's special geographical position. Terms like *nowaki* (typhoon winds which part the grasses) and *nihyaku tōka* (the 210th day of the year (September 1) as a day of strong winds) will seem empty to foreigners, sounding just like normal words.

After meteorological elements, the next most important are the geographical ones which emerge from the undulation of the land and the interaction of the land and water.

There are many theories regarding the cause of the Japanese island chain, but it is indisputable that the Japanese land is a splinter that has been broken off of the margins of the continent. This is closely connected to Japan's geological structure, and thus to the geographical complexity and variety, and intricacy of scale, which are governed and influenced by that structure. This will not be hard to imagine if you actually open up a geographical map of Japan and compare the mosaic you find, painted as it is into various distinguishing colors, with that of many continental countries of the same size. This kind of geographical diversity, on account of the tectonic activity which created it, and secondarily caused by differences in geological features, brought about a very complex distribution of terrain and interaction of water and land. On top of that, the frequency of the unique volcanic phenomena of this land has added another peculiar shade of color.

It is impossible that a complicated geography not extend a special influence upon the distribution of settlements of the inhabitants of such a land, and on the development of the transport network between these settlements. Small towns sprouted up in each geographical unit, separated minutely by mountain chains and the flow of rivers, and these formed the basis of the fiefs of the later feudal period. This kind of geography is not suited to a migratory folk; rather it results in a tendency towards a settled

people. Those settled residents, while adapting to all the various climatic features brought about by these geographical characteristics, each then came to differentiate and cultivate their own different regional features. At the same time, they also came to cultivate a deep-rooted attachment to the land in which they had settled.[5] When we compare them to the ethnic groups who wander the desert steppes or vast grassy plains, we can understand clearly the spiritual significance of Japan's geographic features.

The tectonic activity of past geological ages, which was the main factor in the complexity of these geographical features, transmits faint echoes even to this day. These are the phenomena of earthquakes and volcanoes.

If we speak of earthquakes just strong enough to be sensed by a seismograph, it is rare that a day goes by without one or two occurring somewhere in Japan, and not a month goes by without one or two obvious ones. One would not be mistaken in thinking that every three or four years, a devastating earthquake that destroys homes and claims peoples' lives will surely strike somewhere within the lands of our empire. This phenomenon has likely repeated itself with roughly the same frequency from the formation of our country down to this very day. In Chapter 16 of the *Nihon Shoki*, "earthquake" appears in the poem that the crown prince sang to Shibi no Omi,[6] and in the 29th chapter, there is a record of the earthquake in Tosa which occurred during the reign of the Temmu Emperor, and of the land cave-ins which accompanied it.[7]

Tsunami caused by these earthquakes often assault the seacoasts of this Great Country of Eight Islands,[8] squandering livestock and households once or twice in each generation.

It is not at all strange that those folk who have long held the experience of the earth at our feet, which we tend to think of as something immoveable, shaking so violently from time to time, would show such a

great difference in their concept of nature to those peoples who lack such experiences. Yet when we think that this terrifying seismic activity is just the faint echo of the large-scale earthquakes which were the driving force that created the complex beauty of landscape of Japan, we should really look more kindly upon the tremors which effect us even now from time to time.

We can say the same about volcanic eruptions. The influence of the existence of volcanoes on the spiritual life of our people is not simply one of intimidation.

It is common knowledge that the beauty of the Japanese landscape is in many ways due to volcanoes. It has already been pointed out by many people that very many of the landscapes selected to be national parks are connected to volcanoes. Volcanoes are often thought of as goddesses. Actually, there are no volcanoes which do not show a lovely curved beauty of line. It is not just that the shape of a volcano in itself is beautiful, it is also that they have the effect of adding many varied characteristics to the surrounding landscape, as lava flows always seek the low-lying valleys between mountains. And further, volcanic eruptions also bring about a spring-like renewal to the soil decrepitude which threatens the plant world.

In this way, while on the one hand, in our homeland of Japan the earth at our feet is our "Mother Land" which rears us with deep kindness, at the same time it also takes on the role of our "Strict Father," who from time to time brandishes the whip of punishment to reign in hearts which incline towards laziness. Only in a national character formed by the perfect balance of the discipline of a strict Father and the compassion of a loving Mother can we expect the development of the highest of human culture.

Discussion of the complexity of the structure of the earth's crust also implies issues related to the variety and abundance of the minerals held within it, but at the same time, if we focus on any special mineral, we may

come to sense how much that mineral is lacking. Even as we produce coal, oil, and iron, we will perhaps never produce as much as other producers in the world. While Japan was a closed country, forced to be self-sufficient, this was no big problem, but after embarking on the road to being a world power, this fact has come to have a serious effect on national policy. At any rate, we must say that the fact that Japan is endowed with small amounts of various different things is in every way a feature of Japan's nature.

Regarding the phenomenon of earthquakes as well, while large or small ones are occurring here almost unremittingly, the really huge type of earthquakes like those which occur in Central Asia are in fact rare. This is essentially related to the previous discussion of minerals. That is because the crustal structure of Japan forms a detailed mosaic, a miniature form wherein the various parts of the rest of the world are compressed into one narrow area.

A secondary effect of the complex terrain are the various differences in microclimate among places which, in terms of distance, are not all that far away from one another. Everyone knows that there are quite great differences in climatic elements on the two sides of a short range of mountains, due to differences in sunlight and rainfall. This influence is most clearly seen in the differences in plant life in the two areas. For example in Nagano Prefecture, the south slope of a valley running east to west will grow thick with broad-leaf trees, the likes of which are seen in Hokkaido, while the sun-exposed opposite side will be a mixed forest including conifers, like can be found in the tropics.

Besides microclimatological differences, the diversity of plant landscapes due to various changes in terrain also complicates the appearance of the land of Japan. For example, a mountain formed solely of weathered granite will not only take a different form to one made of lightly-eroded

Paleozoic rock layers, but the huge differences in the societies of plants which decorate them will also be conspicuous. The lower slopes of a volcano too, will show different types of flora depending on the time since eruption, and on whether the ground is covered with ash or is exposed igneous rock.

While recently reading Dr. Nakai's *Plants of East Asia*,[9] one particularly interesting aspect among many others I found is that in the plant worlds of different parts of Japan, plants that can be found in various nations from north to south in East Asia are all growing mixed up together in Japan. This perhaps also is one phenomenon that can be explained in relation to Japan's unique geographical position. Dr. Nakai describes another strange phenomenon that is not likely to be easily explained. For example, it is a fact that some of the flora from mountainous areas in Nagano can also be found in Korea and Manchuria, and yet are seen nowhere else on Honshu. Another is the fact that *Mitrastemon*,[10] a rare plant which one would have never dreamed to ever find in Japan, has in fact recently been discovered here. These facts all relate not just to plants, but they also throw meaningful light upon theories related to the origins of the various racial and ethnic elements that make up the Japanese race, and the routes by which they arrived in Japan.

As in the case of the diversity of naturally-occurring flora, the diversity of agricultural products in Japan is also great. At least from what I have seen with my own eyes, that of the various Western countries cannot compare.[11] However, as these are things cultivated by humans, this diversity will depend on whether the people of the nation eat mainly vegetables or mainly meat, and on the population density upon the land. However in any case, for the most part one can grow just about anything in Japan somewhere if one tries. As the basis of this fact is that Japan is equipped with the necessary condition of a diverse climate and milieu.

The diversity of crops also paints the mosaic-like landscape of Japan in various colors. The complexity of the terrain makes large-scale agriculture impossible, gives curved outlines to our fields and paddies, and breaks up the landscape into various vertical steps. When a director from Soviet Russia made the film *Japan* and showed in in Moscow, it is said that the crowds burst into laughter when they saw the Japanese farmers working in little partitioned fields as small as a cat's forehead. It seems that there are people who take that to heart and consider it a national disgrace. However, as for the Slavic peoples, who have seen no face of the earth other than the boundless plains of their great continent, there is little chance that they would grasp the profound significance of "the reflection of the moon in each and every rice paddy."[12] We can here see one basic, unscientific mistake of that group of intellectuals who think of Japanese and Russians as possessing the same basic humanity.[13]

Upon seeing the strings of rice paddies, mulberry orchards and potato fields, we may think that there is no part of Japan not put under the hoe or plow, but from there it is always just a short distance to where we find forests with grassy undergrowth or a desolate area alongside a riverbed. If we take a train ride we can see virgin forests which show no trace of an axe, or pastures with wild flowers swaying in the gentle wind. We can pick alpine flowers in snowy valleys, or collect specimens of short grasses growing around desert-like volcano craters.

We also see a great amount of differentiation within plants of the same species. Coming to a plateau in Nagano for summer vacation, just for experiment I tried in my amateur way to find the flowers and grasses I saw in my botanical guidebook. There were many great families of plants wherein each had roughly the same form, but with some slightly differing characteristics. Moreover, there were also not a few plants that seemed to

form a bridge linking one family and another. Just in regard to azaleas, when it comes to the great variety of differentiation, Japan must be top in the world, and within Japan, Nagano must be the most extraordinary case.

We are talking about plants. However, the same environmental variety in climate and milieu which gave birth to the great variety in differentiation of plants must also have brought some variety of psychological differentiation to the Japanese people, working through their physiology. This is at least a question which we cannot lightly deny without performing some serious research. At very least, we must not forget that this natural variety born of the environment must at least participate in our psychological life as a secondary influence.

The world of plants governs the world of animals. When the first seed of grass puts forth its buds on barren soil, it calls forth insects, and the insects then call forth birds, and the birds import the seeds of new plants in their droppings. There a variety of animals migrate and little by little manifest a society. The wide variety in the plant world of Japan includes within it the possibility of an abundant animal world.

As an experiment we can take up an extreme opposite example. Let's ask the slightly sly question, "What's the largest land animal that lives on that huge continent of Antarctica?" The correct answer is "A kind of moth with no wings." When you think about what exists in a country like ours, we have moths, and horses and cows, and moreover we lack tigers and lions, we must surely feel joyful that we were born in a country like Japan.

Now I am in a guest room at the base of Mount Asama, and while writing this manuscript I am familiarizing myself with the voices of warblers, cuckoos, small cuckoos,[14] and other singing birds. I also heard a song like that of a pheasant.[15] The knocking call of the water rail[16] also entered my night-time dreams for a time. The singing voices of these birds have been

sung about in waka and haiku since olden times as symbols of the seasons. Because of its geographical position, Japan is also the natural flyway for all kinds of migratory birds, and this too contributes greatly to the variety of seasonal landscapes. The comings and goings of geese and swallows acted as a kind of calendar to the ancient farmer.

I get the sense that we do lack a great variety of beasts, probably on account of the fact that Japan is divided from the continent by the sea. The elephants and rhinos that entered Japan back in the geologic eras when it was connected by land bridge to Korea probably went extinct as a result of climate change, and now nothing remains apart from a few fossils.

Why is it that tigers, which exist in Korea, are not also in Japan, which has such a similar climate? I suppose it is because this animal entered into the Korean peninsula only after the land of Japan separated from the continent. It is said that cats were imported to the Heian Court from Korea. The brown bear of Hokkaido is probably much like the tiger. When Tohoku Japan was formed, the Tsugaru Strait was probably a land bridge. As a result of latter seismic activity this was then cut off, and the movement of tidal currents dug it out into a deep, wide channel. I imagine that it was sometime after that when the brown bear entered Ezo.[17] If it is really true that there are no foxes in Shikoku, this could hold the same kind of geo-historical significance. We can understand through these various facts the influences upon Japanese fauna which come from the fact that Japan possess the unique geographical condition of being very close to the continent, separated only by narrow straits.

It has been transmitted in documents such as the description of the reign of Emperor Yūraku in the *Kojiki* that deer and monkeys were once numerous in Japan and were hunted abundantly.[18] However, it is possible that as the human population increased, the availability of prey became more

meager, and this is reflected in the development of agriculture. This, along with the transmission of Buddhism, may have enabled us to barely avoid the extinction of such game[19] in our country.

In the variety and abundance of seafood, Japan is perhaps second to no other area in the world. The first reason is that the Japanese coastline is long and also encompasses a wide area of latitude. The second great gift is that, from many directions, hot and cold currents transport here water with various different temperatures, salt densities, and gas components, and flow around the coast, mixing together. While these currents beget to us every kind of delicious seafood, they also are a factor, secondarily, which influences land harvests as well.

Native inhabitants of Japan left behind shell mounds. Their fishing spots were probably limited to the seashore and the banks of rivers, but the development of boats and fishing tools enabled us to spread out our fishing grounds into the wide ocean, and with that, to take in a greater variety of species. Now, employing engines, refrigeration, and wireless radios, we have extended the range of our seafood from our shores out across almost a thousand nautical miles of ocean.

Not only seafood, but sea plants also liven up the trays of our citizens' daily meals. It seems that these contain more vitamins than a Westerner can dream of. Moreover, science knows nothing yet about the regenerative medical power contained in things like sea urchin and *shiokara*.[20] Hundreds of years before medical doctors recognized the effectiveness of medicine made from organs, such as cod-liver oil, Japanese were eating bonito liver and taking black snapper kidney.

When we look at the natural world of Japan climatologically, topographically, biologically, or in any other way, we thus see that it provides, both temporally and spatially, every little step of every type of

differentiation. This spectrum of various elements forms every thinkable kind of variety with which to decorate our Japanese soil. Moreover, the color changes from time to time, endlessly activating the stage of nature.

What kind of influence does such diversity and activity of nature extend to the ethnic groups who are brought up within such an environment? This is clear enough that we do not need to waste many words. The unremitting effort, whether conscious or unconscious, to adapt to the changes of a complex environment invites and cultivates minute and agile observation. At the same time, this results in the encouragement of a sensibility appropriate to the depth of nature's wonder and its profound mystery. The more humans know the mystery and might of nature, the more we become submissive to her, and rather than struggling against her, we learn from nature as our teacher, taking our experience of her since ancient times as our own possession, and striving to adapt to our natural environment. As I mentioned previously, nature is both a loving Mother and a stern Father. Submitting to our stern Father and fawning on[21] our loving Mother are both necessary to guarantee our well-being.

The effort to overcome nature by human power prompted the development of science in the West. The question of why, in this Oriental land of culture, Japan, science did not progress in the same way and at the same pace is a complicated problem, but among the various causes of this, we can imagine that at least one involves the particularity of Japan's nature, as was described above. That is to say, in the first place, in Japan the affection of our loving Mother Nature is deep, and it is easy for her to fulfill all of our desires. Because of this, her inhabitants are safely coddled at their Mother's breast. On the other hand, the fear of the severe punishment of our stern Father is also fully realized, and we know it is useless to go against his prohibitions. As a result, while we have been able to accept the full blessings

of nature, at the same time we abandoned any attempt to revolt against her, and have worked to gather up the experiential knowledge that has enabled us to submit to her. Such ethnic intelligence is certainly a form of *Weisheit* (wisdom) and scholarship. Yet it is a form of study that differs from that of analytical science.

For example, when Japanese of the past wanted to build a village and erect housing frames, the knew first of all to perform geomancy. Modern Japanese with their imported Western science ignore the fact that there are huge differences in the natural environment of the West and Japan, look in contempt upon the transmitted science of geomancy, and construct their artifices in places where they should not be built. Then with one lash of the whip of their strict Father of the nature they thought they had conquered, their buildings are destroyed in no time. I think that such occasions wherein people see this happen right in front of them, but fail to perceive their own mistakes, are becoming more frequent. We see more than enough proof in the history of the wind and flood damage of 1934-5.[22)]

One thing I felt as I walked around the countries of the West as that in these countries the compassion of Mother Nature was surprisingly lacking. I was surprised by the peat bogs and sand dunes, once seen as the relics of the great deluge, and by the prevalence of deforested mountains. But on the other hand, I was also made to sense the lack of the discipline of strict Father Nature. There were many countries were they did not know earthquakes and typhoons. I felt that this was a truly suitable place for the development of a science which tries to conquer nature without fearing it.

To the Japanese, who have effortlessly inherited the fruits of a Western science which was developed in this way, if they were to learn to use this instrument properly, deeply cognizant of the singularity of Japan's nature, then were to accept the bountiful blessings of heaven advantageously,

while at the same time making an effort to lesson the natural calamities peculiar to Japan, there would not likely be another country in the world in such a fabulous position. Therefore it is truly regrettable that modern Japan is simply enjoying its blessings in a dreamlike state while completely forgetting about trying to evade natural disasters.[23)]

Above, it has been my intention to consider the singularity of nature in Japan in an extremely general manner. Next, then, in a similar manner, I would like to go on to think about what kind of lifestyle was developed by these Japanese, as they adapted to their environment while being held in the bosom of nature.

The Daily Life of the Japanese

To begin with, of the daily necessities of clothing, food, and shelter, let's start with the most important one, food.

It is likely that the native inhabitants and early immigrants to Japan in ancient times ate seafood and the meat of birds and beasts as part of their regular diet. At some point, however, various agricultural methods were transmitted from China or Southeast Asia, and a plant-based diet developed, alongside a taboo on meat eating that was transmitted here with Buddhism. As everybody knows, from that point on rice became our staple food. However, we must not forget that the fundamental reason for this is that rice agriculture either originally suited the milieu of our country, or that it was adapted to that milieu as it developed.

The *na* of our word *sakana* means vegetable as well as fish.[24)] Our main side dishes came to be fish and vegetables. This was a natural result of the variety and abundance of these two things. Also, as these could be had in a relatively fresh state, or because our population tended to settle in places where they could easily be obtained, this gave a special influence to

our recipes. People did not bother using lots of spices which hide the original taste of the food. Instead they knew that the easiest and best way was to take in their food naturally, not impeding the deliciously fresh flavors and the precious vitamins that came with them.

In contrast, in the travelogue of a Westerner who was treated to dinner by a Chinese official during his journeys through Central Asia, he writes that of the dozens of dishes he was served, every last one shared the same kind of fermented aroma.

Another characteristic of the daily eating of the Japanese is the seasonality of food. As anyone who looks into the *Saijiki*, the catalog of seasonal words used in haiku, knows, the annual cycle of seasonal vegetables and seafood alone has added much variety to the daily life of the Japanese. Unlike Westerners and Chinese, who all year long are nibbling on their stored-up potatoes and onions, and chowing down on the meat of pigs and cattle along with dried or salted foods with no regard to seasonality, and unlike the inhabitants of the tropics, who munch the same types of fruits nearly all year long,[25] we Japanese, who delight in "*hashiri*"[26] and value "*shun*,"[27] have through our foods a very different daily life. And the differences do not end here.

We can think of many things related to clothing as well. For basically the same reason that a plant-based diet developed, cloth made from plants such as hemp and cotton became the main material of our clothing, while furs and woolen products were imported goods. It must be a fact that cotton and hemp fabrics are suited to the climate of Japan. Because silkworm cultivation was imported and it too fit in perfectly with our milieu, silk then became an export product.

While much of the style of our clothing was imported from China, it displayed unique development and became differentiated under the

domination of our particular climate and milieu, and our particular lifestyle conforming to that climate. In modern times Western-style clothing has spread widely, but it is hard to imagine a day will come when we will be left without a trace of our particular Japanese clothing. For example, if we compare the clothing which developed in Western Europe, with its humid winter and dry summer, with that of Japan, and ask which is more suited to Japan's dry winter and humid summer, we may not find out for certain which is better physiologically unless we conduct scientific research. But when we compare Westerners who have come to Japan and happily wear unlined summer kimono (*yukata*) with those who walk around Karuizawa in single-layered white business shirts, we see that there is evidence everywhere that Japanese clothing is not necessarily an irrational choice. However, it is a strange thing that we still do not hear of any Japanese scholars who have conducted detailed research into the climatological, physical, or physiological significance of Japanese clothing. And this is not just that I have failed to hear of any. The strange present academic atmosphere in Japan, which takes no delight in this kind of investigation is, I think, preventing the appearance of such research.

I digress, but the other day in the countryside I saw a farmer wearing a straw raincoat, and was again moved by the ingenuity of its design and the superiority of its performance. This may have originally come to Japan from somewhere around China, but it stuck because of the way it was suited to Japan's milieu. In the way that it allows for a good flow of air while at the same time keeping out the storms and rain, it is far superior to a Burberry raincoat. I suppose this shows an ingenuity of form which copied the natural design of the feathers and fur of birds and beasts. But today it has almost become a museum piece.

That Japanese houses are built mainly out of wood takes as its

primary reason the fact that high-quality wood is growing everywhere here, and also that in order to stand up to our frequent earthquakes and typhoons, we cannot really build more than two stories high. Things like five-story pagodas are something of an exception, but the engineering genius demonstrated by such architecture should amaze modern scholars.

In a hot and humid climate it is absolutely necessary to allow ventilation under the floors to prevent rot, so while the recent *Bunka Jutaku*,[28] which ignore this fact, show rotting joists in just a few years, we have country houses that easily stand for more than 100 years. Constructing eaves and a veranda to keep out the sun and the rain and snow is also a design feature that is cleverly adapted to Japan's climate. It is only after coming to the hot lands of the Orient that Westerners thought to make bungalows with verandas on them.

The *shoji* door made of paper and wood was also quite an ingenious invention. It has the effect of diffusing light without weakening it, just like a lampshade made of milk glass. In regard to wind, it reduces it strength while adjusting ventilation to a proper level.

There was a Westerner who came up with the theory that Japanese came from the tropics, on account that Japanese homes were like those of the tropics, built with summer in mind. While I cannot positively say that our houses were not originally influenced by those of the tropics, even if they were the Japanese homes of today evolved in order to adapt to Japan's climate, and in different areas of Japan they developed slightly differently in accordance with the character of the local climate. We can see particular differences in the slope of the roof and the depth of the eaves between houses in the north and in the south.

It seems that the number of ferro-concrete houses are increasing here lately. These leave nothing to complain about in their ability to resist

earthquakes, typhoons, and fires, but the problem is that those thick walls slow down the transmission of heat, so that generally, inside the house it is very humid in the first half of summer, and for half of winter it becomes too dry. This would be perfect if, like in the countries of Western Europe, you were in a locale with dry summers and humid winters. But Japan is the exact opposite, where in the summer, the high humidity enters the room and cools down, leaving it relatively humid inside, with the result that the more the walls cool down, the faster they erode, and the concrete walls come to act something like a distiller. Winter is exactly the opposite, where all the humidity inside is sucked right out.

In Japan, mud walls as the outside wall with siding panels attached seem to be the most suitable compromise, in that they protect from both heat and cold and are able to regulate humidity.

I have heard that in one area of Taiwan, there were ferro-concrete buildings that crumbled so thoroughly that in the end they were worthless. Even within Japan proper,[29] there is a limit to how long such buildings can last, and when that limit is passed, they require a lot of work. In the distant future, after various climatic experiments, concrete construction may at last become common in our country. The test is from now on, however.

The garden attached to our homes in Japan is again a unique thing, which is often mentioned as a good example in the attempt to explain the characteristic view of nature of the Japanese. Westerners mostly delight in making geometrical gardens wherein they forcibly fit nature into hand-crafted molds, but Japanese take pleasure in inviting the natural mountains and waters close to their homes without defacing them in any way, and delight in being themselves embraced by that nature, and in feeling that they have become one with it.[30]

Chinese gardens originally likewise followed the form of nature,

but then they become obsessed in making monstrous gardens with heaps of queerly-shaped stones and intricate shell-work. To the eye of most Japanese, those with pure Japanese taste, this appears as nothing but a violent attitude towards nature.

Bonsai and ikebana are for Japanese an extension of the garden, a microcosm of it. The *hakoniwa* is, just as its name implies, a miniature garden.[31] We can also think of the scrolls we hang in the *tokonoma*, with landscapes, flowers, and birds, as a variation on this theme. In the West, they stuff ornamental flowers into their vases, line up geraniums on their balconies, and place evergreens in their dining rooms, but this seems to be only to achieve a mass of color. Either that or a natural bottle of perfume. *Edaburi* is perhaps a word that cannot be translated into Western languages.[32] Every small house in every alley in Japan has in front of it a pot of morning glories. I continually think that as long we still see this, Japanese cannot fully become Westerners, and Western philosophy and -isms will be unable to become fully rooted in Japanese soil in their original forms.[33]

Among Japanese recreations, cherry blossom viewing and going to the mountains are also in a sense an extension of the garden. Those who bring nature into their gardens also spread their garden out into the mountain fields.

We gaze upon the moon. We celebrate the star festival. While it is a bit of a stretch, it is not impossible to say that in these too we are seeking to extend the nature of our gardens out into the universe.

There is a horticultural aspect to the fact that the productive work of the majority of the Japanese population is still to be found in the cultivation of plants. Aside from normal farming, we also have tea cultivation, silkworm cultivation and thread production, and these when compared to mining and more modern forms of production are more horticultural. Ears of

rice fluttering in the wind, potato fields wet with dew: it is the Japanese who also count these among objects of aesthetic appreciation in nature.

Among all the professions, it is agriculturalists who have the most concern for the changing of the seasons, and who most fear abnormal natural events. This turns their ceaseless attention into the observation of nature, and leads them to strive both to escape the punishments of nature, and to gain her blessings, through submissively following her orders.

We will understand this better if he look at an opposite example. My friend, a businessman, is busy the whole year through. When once I commented to him about the beauty of some young leaves just in front of us, he replied, "(O)h yes, now is the time for budding leaves, isn't it?" and looked out over the garden as if he just now realized this. He is always so busy all the time that he has no chance to think about what time of the year it is. If everyone was like that, we could have no agriculture.

The fishermen who catch our seafood along the coastline, and the boatmen who sail from harbor to harbor are also keen observers and predictors of the daily weather in all seasons. The oldest among them have a keen intuitive insight into such subtle signs as the color of the sky, the smell of the wind, the appearance of the clouds, and the undulation of the waves, one that meteorologists still don't understand. This is a super-scientific knowledge gained from a long life of study, and it is through this knowledge that they are able to reap the blessings of the sea while avoiding its calamities. Even if the fishermen themselves, immersed as they are in daily life, are unable to consciously explain the nature of the sea, through them oceanic nature has surely infiltrated into the view of nature of the majority of our citizens, and helped to construct the unique view of the sea that the Japanese possess. Furthermore, as symbolized in the myth of Yamasachi-hiko and Umisachi-hiko, it is doubtless that the mixture of a sea-going life

and a land-based life has made the view nature of the inhabitants of our Great Country of Eight Islands both varied and rich.[34)]

The uniqueness of the nature of Japan, and the unique daily life of the Japanese which this nature has encoded in the ways pointed out above, also have had inevitable effects upon their the spiritual life. Regarding this side of things I am quite ignorant, but as our discussion is leading in that direction, I wish to be allowed to add a few points, even if that is like "adding legs to a snake."[35)]

The Spiritual Life of the Japanese

There was a person who once said that it was in the bleak, monotonous dessert that monotheism was born.[36)] In a country like Japan, which has a variegated nature packed full of transformation, it is only natural that Eight Hundred Myriad Gods would be born and continue to be worshipped. Mountains, rivers, trees: each one is a god, and is also a person. It is by worshipping these, and by following them that are lives are assured. Furthermore, as a result of the people's sedentary inhabitance of the land, in every little village we built forests for the gods.[37)] This is also a unique feature of Japan.

That Buddhism could come here from a far-off land, and yet become indigenous, then continue to develop here, is only because various factors in its doctrines were suited to the milieu of Japan. I think that one of those factors is that the notion of impermanence, which is at the root of Buddhism, harmonizes so well with the original view of nature of the Japanese. Without needing to quote from Kamo no Chomei's *Hojoki*,[38)] for people who live in a land where earthquakes and storms are so common and also so completely hard to predict, the notion of the impermanence of nature is a genetic memory passed down to us from our furthest ancestors, and has penetrated

right in to our internal organs.

I suppose there are various reasons why the development of science came so late in Japan. One must be related to the uniqueness of the Japanese view of nature which we have discussed above. Astronomy develops easily in a desert country with no rain, but it is hindered in a rainy country. As I said earlier, in a country where the blessings of nature are miserly and yet the tyranny of nature is also gentle, the desire to try to control nature is easily awakened. The Japanese, continually lashed by the whip of completely unpredictable earthquakes and typhoons, have inclined their wisdom towards trying to find concrete tactics to evade such disasters or lessen their destruction, rather than trying to investigate into the causes of such phenomena. Perhaps the nature of Japan was too variegated and too impermanent for Western-style analytical science to be born here.

Even though they did not know of science in its present meaning, the fact that, even when seen from a contemporary scientific point of view, our ancestors' manner of negotiating nature was extremely rational, was shown in the last section on the food, clothing, and shelter of the Japanese. I guess that the task of "proving" or "discovering" this rationality is a job left to future scientists.

At any rate, it is clear that the reason that analytic science did not develop in Japan is because of the domination of the environment, and not because the Japanese possess a low-grade intellect. As evidence for this there are countless examples wherein science has to its great shame ignored the wisdom of Japan's past.

Among the many phenomena of the spiritual life of the Japanese, nothing has summarized the nature of Japan, the view of nature of the Japanese, and the various phenomena surrounding the nature and people of Japan as one organic whole, and also recorded the various rules which

govern these things, as clearly as Japanese literature and art have.

To call the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon Shoki* literature may not be quite correct, but because I have previously written about the unique way in which physical phenomena of the earth are hinted at in the myths contained therein, I shall omit such a discussion here.[39)]

Among our fairy tales and legends, there are none which do not hint at the unique way in which people negotiated the nature of Japan. If we open up *The Tale of Genji* and *The Pillow Book*, we see that within these too is stored something like a catalog that we should consult if we wish to point out all the different faces of "Japan."

In this, waka and haiku poetry are more representative than anything else. Encapsulated within these two short verse forms, in many cases, we can see a record speaking eloquently of the organic whole of Japan, which emerged from the involvement of Japanese people with Japanese nature. The nature which appears in these poems is completely different from that treated by the scientist, which is separated from humanity. It is also not simply borrowed and brought in from somewhere as a background. Humans become one with nature; nature is digested by humans. It would not be a great boast to claim that this is like a kind of music which emerged as nature and humanity came to live and move together as one organic totality. In the poetry of Westerners and in Chinese poetry, there may be a bit of this quality as well, but to the shallow extent that I have seen, in foreign poetry the opposition of self and outside world is always obvious, and from there philosophy is born, morals are configured. It is extremely difficult to uncover the kind of harmonious fusion of humanity and nature that we find in *Man'yōshū* tanka and Basho's haiku.

As the most accessible catalog and index to the natural objects in tanka and haikai and the feelings that Japanese attach to them, we have the

Haikai Saijiki. If we investigate the historical development of the seasonal words used in haiku, they go back though renga, the father of haiku, and many can be traced back to ancient times, to *The Pillow Book* and *Tale of Genji*, back to the *Man'yōshū*. These seasonal words function as the necessary coordinates indicating time and space and deciding the concrete cross sections of the holistic world I am speaking of. Of course not a few renga do omit seasonal words, but if we look not at each and every poem, but instead look at a poet's body of composition as a whole, we will certainly be able to confirm that therein overflows the unique seasonal sense of the Japanese.

I feel that the strange and uniquely Japanese existence of pillow words has yet to be thoroughly explained. One key to explaining their mystery may be hinted at in the theory outlined above. It is not that I have tried to take statistics, but if we try to examine the vocabulary of pillow words, among them those which signify the natural landscape will be numerous, and those which are also used as seasonal words will be many. Although there is a view which says that these words, on the surface, are used simply as phonological chains, as a kind of simple word play, Japanese know that, in their true affect, the role of pillow words is more than just that. However it is not easy to explain just why that is. My furtive notion is that the world of association called up by pillow words opens up in advance a stage, and finally constructs an environment suited to the activity of the subject who will act upon that stage. In other words, they act as spells which bring about a special atmosphere. However, these are spells which are only valid for people who, like the Japanese, possess a unique view of nature. For ethnic groups who only know nature as seen from a logical, scientific standpoint, and feel no possibility of seeing nature in any other way, this sounds like complete nonsense, or even bad taste.

Thinking only about poetic language such as seasonal words and pillow words, we can see that simply by translating waka into foreign languages, we cannot hope to get foreigners to understand them. And also we can see just how artificial are the new movements that attempt to compose haiku without seasonal words.

I think that the movement which further differentiated the singularity of the Japanese people's singular view of nature, and which developed it greatly, was the growth of popularity of haikai among the general masses. The tanka was in ancient times originally a popular poetic form, but later, it little by little became a tool for the intellectual games of courtiers or for reciting the philosophy of seclusion of Buddhist monks. Tanka later evolved again from the renga form into haikai and hokku, which threw off the restraints of social class and thereby greatly expanded its world of activity and made its rage of poetic contents much more abundant. We can imagine that in so doing, this poetry also broadly propagated the particular view of nature of the Japanese, which had been developed by ancient poets, among the common masses. In the words of a Frenchman who researches haiku and has some understanding of it, "(T)he Japanese are without exception a nation of poets." We must not think that this is simply because the haiku is a short form and thus easy for anyone to imitate. We must not overlook that basic fact that the crucial principle that makes such a poetic form possible exists within the singular form of the Japanese view of nature, and is based upon it. We must not forget the fact that this kind of unique view of nature has penetrated though the people as a whole, perfectly satisfying the necessary conditions for all of them to be poets.

We might not go so far as to rebuke those who dream that we should discard or fundamentally reform tanka and haikai simply because they have gotten old with use. I would advise such people, however, that

before moving forward with such a job, they should first thoroughly study and recognize the so-called holistic Japanese anatomy and physiology that I am here laying out. Should they fail to do so, I am concerned that their grand plans with end in nothing more than fruitless effort.

The influence of the Japanese people's view of nature as reflected in their art and crafts can also be found everywhere.

Looking at Japanese painting in general, besides the aspect imported from Buddhism and Chinese poetry, we can recognize a triangular opposition, with the other two sides being waka and haiku, and I think that within the 3-way coordinates of this triangle we can situate the position of every single painter. For example, could we not say that the Kano School, the Tosa School, and the Shijo School would be situated near to the three respective corners of the triangle?

At any rate, what we can say in regards to the paintings of these various schools is that, in the painting that Japanese have imported, or invented and then developed, whether the painted subject is humanity or nature, it is by no means simply an object which is opposed to the subjectivity of the painter. Rather, this art is the expression of a holistic world in which both subject and object are joined and blended together. The fact that in relatively recent years, Western painters have also discovered that in such painting lies the original mission of art, has been explained by the theory which says that just at the time when their original objective and analytical style of art became threatened by the scientific technology of mass reproduction, they suddenly were able to find a hint of an escape route through Ukiyo-e and other Japanese arts.

Next, what about music? Among popular Japanese music we have *sankyoku*,[40] which uses the simplest of instruments, and has not much of a focus on lyrics. What it often tries to express are the sounds of the world of

nature. To describe the delightful sounds of these instruments, they are often compared to the sounds of nature. I think that the Japanese are trying to become one with nature through sound.

Conclusion

To summarize the preceding remarks, the world of nature in Japan is both spatially and temporally complex and diverse. It affords its inhabitants limitless blessings while at the same time dominating them with an unavoidable might. As a result, they have learned to enjoy its full blessings by submitting to nature, and this special attitude towards nature has had a particular influence upon every aspect of the material as well as the spiritual life of the Japanese people.

This influence has its positive points as well as its shortcomings. It was unfavorable for the development of natural science. We may also have to accept that it has restricted the breadth of the message of our arts. However, this was unavoidable. In the same way in which Japan's milieu and living species did not become free as a result of the power of humans, this is a natural phenomenon over which we have no power.

That Japan, which on account of geographical conditions preserved a long period of isolation, finally came into contact with other parts of the world, is in part the result of the continuing development of transportation facilities, which has come with the progress of science. In truth, the growth of transport is shrinking the size of the earth, and adding profound changes to our geographical relationships. Certain faraway places have become easier to access than some much closer places, as if space itself has been warped. Scales of distance and time have come to show various discrepancies. Humans have gained the power to see around the earth and predict happenings in the future, and, as they once only dreamed, have gotten hold of

wings like birds. If in this way nature has changed, and humans have become different from the humanity of old, then we should expect that the view of nature of the Japanese will come to show considerable changes as well. It may take a considerable length of time and training until these new Japanese learn to adapt to this new nature. They will likely need first to build up many bitter experiences of error and misunderstanding. Truly we are today already coming to taste such experiences everywhere.

Nevertheless, Japanese are after all Japanese, and the nature of Japan is almost the exact same Japanese nature as that of olden days. Even with the power of science and a remodeling of the racial characteristics of the Japanese people, it is impossible that they can freely control the whole of the Japanese milieu. Even so, we sometimes forget this easy-to-see principle. It is errant to think that if we go on copying the food, clothing, and shelter of the Westerners and inheriting their philosophies, it would cause the anatomical specificity of the Japanese to change, or that our climate and milieu would come to be replaced.

I go on a tangent, but it seems to me a meaningless classification to draw distinctions between races based only on skin color. Viewed from the organic whole as humans living within nature, it seems to me that Japanese and Chinese are not very close races at all. Even to refer to "Orientals" as one group seems fictitious. The milieu and people of Japan, while situated within that broad expanse called "The East," after all form an "island" that is completely separate from the areas surrounding it.

As for me, I believe that it is the destiny and *raison d'etre* of the Japanese people, and will be a contribution to the healthy progress of humanity, for them to recognize every peculiarity of this land of Japan and, making the most of them, adapt them to the environment in lands surrounding our country. Should the cherry blossom disappear from the

world, the world will be that much lonelier.

Postscript

As I was writing the above essay, the special August issue of the journal *Bungaku*, concerning "Nature and Literature" was published. There, the relationship between Japanese literature and Japanese nature is argued in detail by various authors from every possible direction. I wish my readers to consult these useful theses. I would also direct you to Watsuji Tetsuro's article "The Phenomenon of Milieu," published at the beginning of that collection, as well as to the extremely original, organic view of nature shown in his recently published book *Climate and Culture*, to which that article is the introduction. In my preceding explanation, I believe that there are many points in which I have been influenced by Watsuji's previously published theories of the relationship between nature and humans. I also think I received many hints from the writings of my friends Koyama Toyotaka and Abe Yoshishige.

Finally, I would also be overjoyed if you should see my theories of haikai and renga that have been published in "Johatsuzara" (The Evaporation Dish),[41] and the section on natural disasters on *Keikoban* (The Florescent Plate).

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Note

1) Research on this essay was made possible by a single-semester sabbatical (*kenshū*) and funding, given by Kansai University in Spring, 2016.

2) Throughout this text, I shall translate as "climate" the Japanese term *kikō*, which is closest to the usual significance of the English word. Following geographer Augustin Berque's use of the term, I shall translate *fūdo*, which carries a broader meaning including geographical features as well, as "milieu." I translate the compound term *kikō fūdo* as "climate and milieu." The exception to this rule will be when referring to Watsuji Tetsuro's work *Fūdo*, for which I will use the accepted English translation *Climate and Culture*.

3) In *Climate and Culture*, Watsuji Tetsuro makes a similar argument that the climatic conditions of Japan make life much more difficult than in Europe. See e.g. Watsuji 1961 202-2.

4) This discussion is reminiscent of the opening chapter of Kuki Shuzo's *The Structure of Iki* (1930), where he claims that even terms signifying the sky carry different cultural nuances in Japan, the US, France, and Germany, so that of course aesthetic terms like *iki* are bound to be culturally specific. See Nara 2005 13-6.

5) A rather common *Nihonjinron* trope is displayed here: stressing the great regional differences in Japanese culture while still insisting upon the homogeneity of the group as a whole.

6) In Aston's translation: The Eight-fold fastening fence / Of the Omi's child / Should an earthquake come, shaking / Reverberating below / 'Twil be a ruined fastening fence

(Aston 1972 401).

7) "At the hour of the boar, there was a great earthquake. Throughout the country men and women shrieked aloud, and knew not East from West. Mountains fell down and rivers gushed forth; the official buildings of the provinces and districts, the barns and houses of the common people, the temples, pagodas, and shrines were destroyed in numbers which surpass all estimate. In consequence many of the people and of domestic animals were killed or injured. The hot springs of Iyo were dried up at this time and ceased to flow. In the province of Tosa more than 500,000 shiro of cultivated land were swallowed up and become sea. Old men said that never before had there been such an earthquake..." (Aston 1972 365).

8) Here he uses an ancient name of Japan, *Ōyashima no kuni*.

9) Nakai Takenoshin's (1882-1852) *Tōa Shokubutsu* was published by Iwanami in 1935, the same year as this essay. Nakai was professor of botany at Tokyo University and the head gardener at Koishikawa Botanical Garden.

10) A parasitic plant which grows on the roots of beech and oak trees. There are two species, one in Central America, the other in Southeast Asia and Japan.

11) One of several generalizations Terada makes based upon personal, anecdotal evidence, again reminiscent of Watsuji in *Climate and Culture*.

12) *Tagoto no tsuki*. The full moon in May reflected in the water of all the soon-to-be-planted terraced rice paddies. Famous at Obasute in Nagano Prefecture.

13) *Nihonjin wo Roshiajin to onaji ningen to kangaeyou to suru*.

14) *Uguisu* (*Horomis diphone*), *kakkō* (*Cuculus canorus*), and *hototogisu* (*C. poliocephalus*).

15) *Kiji* (*Phasianus versicolor*).

16) *Kuina* (*Rallus aquaticus*).

17) *Ezochi*, the name for Hokkaido until 1869.

18) The Emperor Yūryaku is described in *Kojiki* as hunting boar. No mention is made of deer or monkeys (O 2014 166-7).

19) He uses the Japanized English word.

20) The salted, fermented innards of fish such as squid.

21) The word here is *amaeru*, another favorite of the *Nihonjinron* writers as typified by the best selling *Amae no Kozo* (Translated *The Anatomy of Dependence*) by psychoanalytic psychologist Doi Takeo. The claim is that, unlike Westerners who are encouraged to develop independence and responsibility at a young age, Japanese are expected to fawn on their parents into adulthood, depending on them for economic as well as emotional support (Doi 1973). Terada's fitting use of the term here predates Doi's work by some 36 years.

22) He is referring to the Muroto Typhoon of September, 1934. In one of the three worst typhoons of the Showa era, more than 3,000 people were killed or missing, and some 92,000 houses were partially or totally destroyed, with another 400,000 sustaining flood damage.

23) Terada here shares some of the concerns he felt as a founding director of the Earthquake Research Institute at the University of Tokyo.

24) *Sakana*: today normally used for "fish," (魚) but originally it meant side dishes (肴), particularly those meant to go with alcohol. Fish was originally called *uo*, and came to be called *sakana* starting in the Edo period. *Na* 菜 is a plant wherein the leaves or stems are used as food.

25) This sentence displays one of Terada's more egregious examples of racial prejudice attached to ignorant generalizations. To deny seasonality in European, Chinese or tropical diets is simply ludicrous, and the verbs he uses for eating are also insulting.

26) *Hashiri*: the first fruits in the season of a fish, fruit, or vegetable, the first release.

27) *Shun*: the season when a food is freshest and tastiest.

28) The so-called "Culture Housing" that developed in the Taisho era and became popular with the young, urban middle class. This "was a new, functional style of residential facility that introduced Western elements into it appearance, while the inside structure consisted mainly of Japanese components" (Ishikawa 2007 150). It is not clear that they deserve Tarada's sharp criticism if they had the same basic foundations as traditional houses.

29) *Naichi*. At the time of writing, colonial Taiwan was officially part of Japan, although with a lesser status than the home islands.

30) A relatively early example of this stereotypical assertion, now become common sense in Japan, which ignores much of the factual history of garden art not only in Europe, but also in Japan.

31) These "box gardens" are generally made on trays inside the house, often using natural stones and plants.

32) Literally "the swinging of the branch." It refers to the importance that the shape of the limbs or stems have in ikebana.

33) Terada's comparisons here closely echo Haga Yaichi in "Ten Theses on National Character."

34) In a story from the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*, two brothers, Yamasachi-hiko (Mountain Fortune Boy), a hunter and and Umisachi-hiko (Sea Fortune Boy), a fisherman, trade tools and each attempt to succeed at the other's specialty.

35) *Dasoku*, a redundancy. A snake needs no legs.

36) He seems to be referring to Watsuji Tetsuro, who makes such a claim in *Climate and*

Culture. Though published in book form in 1935, his chapter on desert climate was first published in the journal *Shisō* in 1930 (Watsuji 1961 52).

37) *Chinju no mori*. These are the forests surrounding Shinto shrines. Much has been written on the ecological significance of these, as well as the eco-friendly nature of Shinto thought. For a comprehensive critique, see Rots 2017.

38) Kamo (1153 or 1155-1216) was a Buddhist priest as well as a poet and author. *Hojiki* (An Account of a Ten-Foot Square Hut, 1212) is his most famous work, wherein he bemoans the impermanence of existence in his descriptions of the earthquakes, storms, and various other disasters that have befallen his native Kyoto.

39) One essay wherein he dealt with these myths is "Myth and Geophysics (*Shinwa to Chikyū Butsurigaku*)," published in the journal *Bungaku* in 1933.

40) A kind of chamber music usually played by the three instruments *koto*, *shamizen*, and *shakuhachi*. It is often accompanied by vocal singing as well.

41) Published in *Chōū Kōron*, June 1933.