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研究課題名(和文) An exploratory investigation of the foundations of environmental ethics: self and nature in Japanese philosophy

研究課題名(英文) An exploratory investigation of the foundations of environmental ethics: self and nature in Japanese philosophy

研究代表者

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研究成果の概要(和文)：この研究の成果として以下の4点が挙げられる。

1) 自然の価値は潜在的なものであるという立場 2) 自然の一部として、人間は自分の立場と自分を取り囲んでいる環境との間でバランスを保たなければならない 3) 環境倫理学を再構築するために、自己が常に自己即他者、自己即全てであるという立場に立たなければならない 4) 環境倫理学の脱人間中心主義に達するために、倫理的な規則は人間から発されるものではなく、自然そのものから自発的に生まれるものであるということを理解しなければならない。

研究成果の学術的意義や社会的意義

The main purpose of the project was to analyze the fundamental tenets of environmental ethics and examine the contributions Japanese philosophical ideas and concepts can make toward a new understanding of our relationship with nature, and toward a much needed re-framing of environmental ethics.

研究成果の概要(英文)：The four main areas and directions in which this project made significant contributions are:

1) understanding that the value of nature is intrinsic, i.e. it is not the result of any kind of attribution or projection from the realm of the human. Nature is valuable by the mere fact of its existence; 2) as part of nature, human beings need to find the balance between their own place within the world, and the rest of the environment. Philosopher Ninomiya Sontoku describes this in terms of the constant interaction between “the way of humans” and “the way of heaven”; 3) to reshuffle our understanding of environmental ethics we need to start from the premise that the human self is inherently a self-with-everything; 4) in order to de-anthropocentrize environmental ethics, we need to listen to nature. The PI argues that the only possible way to do that is to listen to what nature tells us, and that one of the few ways in which it is actually possible to do that is the imaginary.

研究分野：Philosophy

キーワード：philosophy ethics nature environment self environmental ethics deep ecology

基盤研究(C)20K00007

An exploratory investigation of the foundations of environmental ethics: self and nature in Japanese philosophy

1.研究開始当初の背景

This project started from the acute awareness that the current environmental crisis has become an existential crisis as well, as it threatens the very way we *are* in the world, and that “Western” philosophy has in a sense reached its limits and is no longer able to provide answers and solutions to the challenges humanity is facing. Thus, the PI’s approach was to move beyond “mainstream” environmental ethics / philosophy and nature, and to look for hints in Japanese philosophy.

2.研究の目的

The main purpose of the project was to analyze the fundamental tenets of environmental ethics and examine what kind of contributions Japanese philosophical ideas / concepts / notions can make toward a new understanding of our relationship with nature, and toward a much needed re-framing of environmental ethics. To that end, the PI started from the premise that in order to examine nature we first need to examine ourselves, i.e. any investigation into nature is also an investigation into the self, and therefore decided to focus on Japanese philosophical writings that deal specifically with the relationship between nature and human beings. The initial plan was to concentrate on Edo period texts by philosophers such as Ando Shoeki, Ninomiya Sontoku, Yamagata Banto etc., but as the project went on it became evident that in order to have a better grasp of the topic further analysis of later texts was also needed. Therefore, during the last year of the project the focus shifted (or rather, it was extended) to Meiji era thinkers, activists and practitioners such as Minakata Kumagusu and Eto Tekirei.

3.研究の方法

The field of environmental ethics is a relatively recent addition to the corpus of world philosophy, but it is a very active discipline. The banner of “environmental ethics” is, in fact, a very generous umbrella term that accommodates a variety of approaches and perspectives on the relationship between human beings and their (natural) environment. To mention just a few of these, environmental ethics deals with, for example, environmental justice, animal rights, societal attitudes toward nature, understanding ecological systems, actions and policies to protect biodiversity, ecological economics, the (moral, economic etc.) value of nature and so on and so forth. This variety of themes and approaches is testament to the vitality and diversity of the field, and yet it can also be problematic because it can become overwhelming and confusing. In addition, one of the biggest issues with the contemporary state of environmental ethics is the fact that most of it continues to be Western-centric and anthropocentric, with thorough explorations beyond these confines still remaining very few and far between.

The PI’s demarche was to go back to the basics, so to say, i.e. to return to the classics and re-analyze some of the fundamental texts that contributed to the establishment of the field of environmental ethics. Thus, the first step of the project was to re-examine the propositions

and suggestions put forth by authors such as Aldo Leopold (“the land ethic”), Rachel Carson (*Silent Spring*), or Arne Naess (“deep ecology”). The analysis focused on unpacking the tenets of these approaches in an attempt to examine what their strengths and weaknesses, their merits and demerits, their scope and limits, are. To give just one example, when examining Aldo Leopold’s notion of “land ethic”, it became evident that, as revolutionary and influential for its time as this idea was, it still remains a fundamentally anthropocentric perspective on nature and the environment, as its main proposition is to extend and expand the scope of ethics from the human realm to the realm of all other living creatures and natural phenomena (i.e., the “land”). Arne Naess’s “deep ecology” seems to be a possible solution to overcome the impasse of anthropocentrism, but it remains extremely narrow-sighted as its approach and examples and mode of argumentation are all tributary to “Western” philosophy. Naess and the other proponents of deep ecology do indeed suggest that other philosophical traditions need to be examined as well, but their attempts in this direction are far from sufficient. This is where this project fits in.

4.研究成果

Summarized below are the four main areas and directions in which this project made significant contributions.

- 1) Understanding that the value of nature is intrinsic, i.e. it is not (and cannot be) the result of any kind of attribution or projection from the realm of the human. In other words, nature is not valuable because human beings see, or invest some value in it - be it economic or emotional; nature is valuable simply because it is, by the mere fact of its existence. It follows that the human being, as part of nature, is also valuable precisely because it is a part of nature (and not because it is superior to it or because it has power of dominion over it). This approach reverses the anthropocentric perspective into a nature-centric one.
- 2) As part of nature, human beings need to find the balance between their own place within the world, and the rest of the environment. Philosopher Ninomiya Sontoku describes this in terms of the constant interaction and interplay between “the way of humans” (jindo 人道) and “the way of heaven” (tendo 天道), and he uses the metaphor of the waterwheel to describe its functioning; just like the waterwheel needs to be at the same time submerged and above the water in order to work, the actions of human beings must, at all times, take into account the phenomena of nature and their consequences.
- 3) To reshuffle our understanding of environmental ethics we need to start from the premise that the human self is inherently a self-with-everything. By using the notions of “no differentiation” (*nibetsu naki* 二別ナキ) and “mutual embeddedness” (*gosei* 互性), Ando Shoeki conceptualizes the human self as a self-with-others, i.e. a self that cannot exist in isolation from other individuals as we are all deeply embedded within each other. Taking hints from Shoeki, the PI took this concept one step further and argued that, in fact, we need to understand our self as a self-with-everything because embedded within us is not just the humanity of others but also the totality of nature. In lay terms, the “I” is a human being because it is at the same time (a manifestation of)

all other human beings, and a tree, and a bird, and a rock, and a river etc., i.e. the natural environment in its totality.

- 4) In order to fully de-anthropocentrize environmental ethics, we need to listen to nature. Switching the focus from a view of the environment that places the human being in its center to a view where there is no center is no easy task, as it requires a considerable ideological shift: any ethic of nature / the environment cannot and must not emanate from the realm of humanity, but instead it has to be developed from within the realm of nature. The PI argues that the only possible way to do that is to take hints from nature itself, i.e. listen to what it tells us, and that one of the few ways in which it is actually possible to do that is the imaginary (the imaginary as a valid mode of knowledge, as defined by Appadurai). That, of course, requires an enormous amount of effort, time and empathy, yet it might be the only option before it is too late.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic also had a negative impact on this research project: traveling restrictions to and from Europe and Japan made it virtually impossible to organize and / or attend conferences and symposia, to conduct research abroad, or to connect and network with researchers with similar interests. This, in turn, affected the way in which some of the results of this research were publicized.

Below are some of the most important research achievements of this project so far. The most important results are yet to come in the form of three books, which are already at different stages of completion, to be published between late 2023 and late 2025.

Books

- 2021 *Vanishing Subjectivity: Flower, Shame, and Direct Cultivation in Asian Philosophies*, Milan: Mimesis International (“Asian Philosophical Texts” book series no. 3). Co-edited with Takeshi Morisato (180 pages)
- 2020 *Asian Philosophical Texts: Exploring Hidden Sources* (“Asian Philosophical Texts” book series no. 1), Milan: Mimesis International. Co-edited with Takeshi Morisato (311 pages)

Book manuscripts

- 2025 *Japanese philosophy and deep ecology*, edited volume (early stages of preparing the manuscript)
- 2024 *Fables, Fantasy and Philosophy, with a New Translation of Ando Shoeki's Works*. Co-author: Melissa Ann Kaul, University of Zurich (manuscript in preparation)
- 2023 *Nature, Self and Language: the Philosophy of Andō Shōeki* (completed, under review with the publisher)

Peer-reviewed articles

- 2021 “A portrait of the philosopher as a mature man: Andō Shōeki on nature, language, and himself”, *Vanishing Subjectivity: Flower, Shame, and Direct Cultivation in Asian Philosophies*, Milan: Mimesis International (Sep. 2021), 117-138

- 2020 “From the grain of rice to the single truth: The ontology of human existence in Andō Shōeki’s philosophy”, *Annals of “Dimitrie Cantemir” University - Linguistics, Literature and Methodology of Teaching*, Vol. XIX, No. 1/2020 (Aug. 2020), 68-85
- 2020 “The Self-with-others and environmental ethics”, M. Kirloskar-Steinbach & M. Diaconu (eds.), *Environmental Ethics: Cross-cultural Explorations*, Verlag Karl Alber, 101-114

Conference presentations, lectures

- 2020 “Rethinking nature, rethinking humanity”. Presented as part of the Conversations with World Philosophies online seminar co-organized by ALAFI and ENOJP, Sep. 17 (Invited lecture)
- 2019 “The lexicon of nature in premodern Japanese philosophy”. Presented at Seminario Internacional de Filosofía Japonesa. Colegio de Filosofía & Programa Universitario de Estudios de Asia y África, National Autonomous University of Mexico. Mexico City, Nov. 25-28
- 2019 “When one thing is many things - Translation as philosophical inquiry”. Presented at the 2nd Asian Philosophical Texts Conference. Kanda University of International Studies, Chiba, Sep. 9-10
- 2019 “First Steps on the Tetsugaku no Michi: Constructing an Introductory Course in Japanese Philosophy”. Presented at the 5th Conference of the European Network of Japanese Philosophy. Nanzan University, Nagoya, Aug. 29 - Sep.1
- 2019 「エキゾチックと未知の間: 東ヨーロッパから見た日本哲学研究の意義と課題」. Presented at 比較思想学会第41回大会. Kanazawa, Jun. 15-16

5. 主な発表論文等

〔雑誌論文〕 計2件（うち査読付論文 2件/うち国際共著 2件/うちオープンアクセス 1件）

1. 著者名 Pasca, Roman	4. 巻 3
2. 論文標題 portrait of the philosopher as a mature man: Ando Shoeki on nature, language, and himself	5. 発行年 2021年
3. 雑誌名 Vanishing subjectivity. Flower, shame, and direct cultivation in Asian philosophies	6. 最初と最後の頁 117-138
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オープンアクセス オープンアクセスではない、又はオープンアクセスが困難	国際共著 該当する

1. 著者名 Pasca, Roman	4. 巻 XIX, 1
2. 論文標題 From the grain of rice to the single truth: The ontology of human existence in Ando Shoeki 's philosophy	5. 発行年 2020年
3. 雑誌名 Annals of "Dimitrie Cantemir" University - Linguistics, Literature and Methodology of Teaching	6. 最初と最後の頁 68-85
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オープンアクセス オープンアクセスとしている（また、その予定である）	国際共著 該当する

〔学会発表〕 計3件（うち招待講演 1件/うち国際学会 3件）

1. 発表者名 Pasca, Roman
2. 発表標題 Ando Shoeki 's Philosophy of Language
3. 学会等名 8th Annual Conference Japan: Pre-Modern, Modern, Contemporary (国際学会)
4. 発表年 2021年

1. 発表者名 Pasca, Roman
2. 発表標題 Nature, Ahistoricity, and Environmental Ethics
3. 学会等名 6th Annual Conference of the European Network of Japanese Philosophy (国際学会)
4. 発表年 2022年

1. 発表者名 Pasca, Roman
2. 発表標題 Rethinking nature, rethinking humanity
3. 学会等名 Conversations with World Philosophies, organized by ALAFI and ENOJP (招待講演) (国際学会)
4. 発表年 2020年

〔図書〕 計2件

1. 著者名 Takeshi Morisato, Roman Pasca	4. 発行年 2021年
2. 出版社 Mimesis International	5. 総ページ数 182
3. 書名 Vanishing subjectivity. Flower, shame, and direct cultivation in asian philosophies	

1. 著者名 Takeshi Morisato, Roman Pasca	4. 発行年 2020年
2. 出版社 Mimesis International	5. 総ページ数 170
3. 書名 Asian Philosophical Texts: Exploring Hidden Sources	

〔産業財産権〕

〔その他〕

<p>Asian Philosophical texts book series https://mimesisinternational.com/vanishing-subjectivity-flower-shame-and-direct-cultivation-in-asian-philosophies/</p>

6. 研究組織

	氏名 (ローマ字氏名) (研究者番号)	所属研究機関・部局・職 (機関番号)	備考
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7. 科研費を使用して開催した国際研究集会

〔国際研究集会〕 計0件

8. 本研究に関連して実施した国際共同研究の実施状況

共同研究相手国	相手方研究機関
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