

Symposium: Intercultural Philosophy on the Environment

Moderator: Murakami, Yuko (Rikkyo University)

Speaker: Kyle Michael James Shuttleworth (Rikkyo University)

Raphaël Pierrès (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

Commentator: Kono, Tetsuya (Rikkyo University)

90 mins.

Purpose:

As a consequence of global warming, linear precipitation zones will continue to become stronger and last longer. Again, this year, heavy rains caused a lot of casualties and property damage in Hakone, Shimane, and Kyushu. The need to control the effects of human activities on the natural environment is a pressing issue. Environmental science is an area of natural science that cannot be separated from human values, and environmental philosophy and ethics must provide the values and direction to lead that science. In this symposium, it is our intention to philosophically reflect upon the modern view of nature and self from a contemporary, intercultural perspective in order to link biodiversity and cultural diversity, which are considered key values in environmental ethics. Two researchers [Kyle Michael James Shuttleworth and Raphaël Pierrès] will present their work on environmental philosophy from an intercultural perspective, and comments on each of these presentations will be provided by Professor Kono.

Presentation 1: “Authenticity Beyond the Anthropocene: Self-realisation and Symbiosis in Naess and Watsuji” by Kyle Michael James Shuttleworth

The aim of this presentation is to develop an ecologically extended ethic of authenticity. To achieve this aim, I will put the Norwegian environmentalist Arne Naess into dialogue with the Japanese ethicist Watsuji Tetsurō. More specifically, I will seek to develop Naess’ concept of Self-realisation by supplementing and supporting it with Watsuji’s ethics of authenticity (本来性) and phenomenology of climate (風土). I will also reflect upon the ecological implications of this dialogical exchange upon Watsuji’s thought. In particular, from placing Watsuji in an ecological framework, I will consider how his ethics of authenticity and concept of climate can be developed to support ecological aims. I will also attempt to further develop the ecological potential of Watsuji’s thought by supplementing it with Naess’ ideas of human responsibility and symbiosis. The intended outcome will thus be to develop an ecologically extended ethic of authenticity through the thought of both Naess and Watsuji. However, a secondary aim will be to illustrate the benefit and importance of engaging in cross-cultural dialogue in order to advance philosophical thought and understanding.

Presentation 2: “From Egology to Ecology” by Raphaël Pierrès

In this paper, I propose to question the role of the ego as the foundation of knowledge, from the perspective of a renewal of phenomenology. It is necessary to draw all the consequences of the impossibility that the subject constitutes the world, as it was believed to constitute the object: the subject participates in the world, according to a modality similar to the participation of a living body in its environment (*Umwelt*), and does not determine its meaning in a univocal way. From the perspective of an epistemological investigation, it is important to criticise both the objectivist prejudice and the subjectivist prejudice that constitutes its other side, not its overcoming. This theoretical path is opened to us by a new theory of perception that profoundly questions the character of intentionality (Benoist, Romano). Here, I will confront the role of ego by appeal to the contributions of contemporary psychologists (Gibson, Varela) as well as Japanese philosophers (Ômori, Watsuji) to propose a shift from egology to ecology.

Comments: “Philosophy of biodiversity and cultural plurality” by Tetsuya Kono