

## Imperial Nationalism and the Law of Singularity on Specific Identity and Cultural Difference

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### ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the theoretical and philosophical questions concerning how an individual identified him/herself as a member of an ethnic, racial, or national community in the context of Japanese Imperialist discourse during the 1930s. The central focus is Tanabe Hajime. Together with his mentor Nishida Kitaro, perhaps the most renowned philosopher of modern Japan. Tanabe established the so-called Kyoto School of philosophy which attracted the most intellectually astute students of the time. With his background in philosophy of sciences and modern European metaphysics, Tanabe attempted to create a philosophical argument for the multi-ethnic nation-state, and proposed the universalistic concept of Japanese national identity which positively evaluates and integrates the particular ethnic identities of Japan's subjects. He tried to construct the Logic of Species (*Shu no Ronri*) according to which a member of the Japanese Empire could identify with Japanese nationality precisely because she or he is of a particular ethnicity and can participate in the Japanese State which represents the whole, inclusive of all the ethnic groups. Relying upon the Hegelian concept of negativity, he explained the two different levels of belonging: particularistic belonging to the specific identity (*shu zhong*) such as ethnicity, and universalistic belonging to the generic identity (*rui-lei*). And he further demonstrated that ethnic identity is far from fixed, and is brought into the subject's self-awareness only insofar as the subject negates it and is free from it. In other words, the subject becomes aware of her or his ethnic origin only when she or he negates it, thereby participating in a higher order of social formation, the State, under which ethnic multiplicity is subsumed. Thus *the species* of ethnicity is constituted only insofar as it is negatively mediated by *the genus*, that is, the State. Tanabe saw the essential form of human freedom in this negative relation of the subject to her ethnicity, and understood a subject's belonging to a nation not as an individual's

positive and fixed essence but as a dialectic and negative process of mediation between the species and the genus.

While postwar Japan was built upon the premises of ethnic nationalism, Japanese imperial nationalism of the pre-war period was afraid of ethnic nationalisms which could challenge the Empire's rhetoric of multi-ethnicity and pluralism. It goes without saying that Tanabe's Logic of Species was a response to such needs of Japanese Imperialism and that it represented a philosophical attempt to undermine ethnic nationalism. Not surprisingly, it served as a metaphysical foundation for the idea of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperty Sphere.

### KEY WORDS

imperialist discourse  
Logic of species  
Kyoto School Philosophy  
*Shu* (Species), *ru* (genus)

mediation  
nationalism  
negativity  
organicism

## §1 East/West Dichotomy and Transference

In talking about nationalism and what is often referred to as the Kyoto School Philosophy, I should begin by drawing attention to a certain temptation which may haunt or seduce me into taking up the enunciative position of markedly exhibiting or showing off the conventional sense of justice. Indeed, it is difficult for me not to want to be justified in talking about this theme, not to wish to be agreed with by putative readers. And even if they cannot agree with me, I would probably want it to be understood as to why I would have to choose to disagree with them. But, how will I be justified? How will I demand to be understood about why I have to agree or disagree to argue in an underlying agreement with the putative audience?

Given the institutional framework, my wish to be justified or agreed with by putative readers would in all likelihood be perceived to be a wish to take a side in the opposition between the United States and Japan, the West and the East, the modern world and the Asian.

The discussions of Japanese thought and culture have been very much predetermined by the author's identification with positions defined within the configuration of these oppositions. In Japan the notion of Japanese culture (almost always in contrast to Western culture) has been used in so many arbitrary ways primarily in order to highlight the speaker's nationality. Needless to say, for such uses of the term "culture," there would not be the discourse on Japanese uniqueness or *Nihonjin-ron* in which, by figuring the image of Japanese people and culture as distinct from that of the West, the author addresses himself as one of the Japanese to the audience which is exclusively Japanese. To talk about Japanese thought or culture, then, not only involves the mode of the author's national identification in the discourse on Japanese uniqueness, but also serves as a mode in which the Japanese represent themselves to themselves and thereby constitute their national subjectivity, their "we," by figuring out their differences from the West through what elsewhere I called *the schema of co-figuration*.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, one must not assume that the discourse on Japanese uniqueness is

the exclusive property of the Japanese. On the contrary, the academic study of Japan in the United States is even more dependent upon the discourse on Japanese uniqueness. Not surprisingly, the majority of Japanese Studies' specialists in the United States have dwelt upon issues concerning Japan and have written from the perspective which confirms and asserts their US or "Western" peculiarities. Their own Westerner status is asserted just as often, if not more often, as the phrase "we Japanese" is repeated in the discourse on Japanese uniqueness. Their viewing of Japan invariably constitutes the "we" of the US or "West" as the subjective position of the observer. In other words, basically, the study of Japan has been a mode of national identification, a way for them to identify themselves with the US or the West by fantasizing about their distinction from the object of their observation in particular, and from the rest of the world in general. Thus they represent to themselves those exotics who are *distinct from*, are *not* them, that is, the negatives of themselves, but, since the negative is immediately turned into its symmetrical opposite through the schema of co-figuration, their representation of Japan and its people is a way to represent to themselves the negative of themselves, the negative in the sense of a photographic negative because of its symmetrical reciprocity. This is to say, that for most experts in the United States the study of Japan is a mode of self-portraiture, of their national or civilizational identification.

When combined, however, nationalism and the Kyoto School Philosophy seem to me to raise a number of important issues which would escape us if addressed solely within the framework of these oppositional stances. Yet, I am not saying that we must approach the issues from an unbiased and neutral stance, from some ubiquitous stance of a higher morality which transcends the particularity of either position. As I will show in the following pages, such a stance may well be necessitated in order to promote national identification up to the level of an imperialist one, and, indeed, we should be suspicious of such a claim to higher morality.

Rather crucial is the awareness that it is extremely difficult to evade our desire for national identification, and I would like to seek a way to address the issues, a way that is also one of national dis-identification. Otherwise, our effort at a critical assessment of the nationalism inherent in the Kyoto School Philosophy could be foreclosed by our need to endorse our own nationalism and to insulate our desire for national identity from such a critical re-assessment. There is always a danger for us to fall into either argument: our nationalism is all inclusive and non-discriminatory but theirs is exclusionary and evil; or, they are nationalistic just like us, and there is nothing inherently wrong about being proud of one's own country and identifying oneself with one's compatriots. As you can see, both types of argument are two variations of the

same defensive regiment in that, regardless of the actual process of the investigation, one's own nationalism will not be critically reflected upon or examined. Although a unanimous condemnation of nationalism is not presumed in this investigation, these types of arguments are put forth in order to refuse to engage in any critical re-assessment of one's own identification with one's nation. They both constitute a disavowal, but this disavowal is precisely the emotive component of nationalism in general.

Therefore, my discussion of nationalism and the Kyoto School Philosophy must be accompanied by an analysis or exposition of nationalism insofar as its emotive charge is continually reproduced in the institutionalized production of knowledge in Japanese Studies both in the United States and Japan.

The symmetrical opposition of these enunciative positions can also express itself in the contrast between universalistic dogmatism and the particularistic insiderism. On the one hand, one could easily argue that, whatever historical conditions there may have been during the 1920s, 1930s and early 1940s (when the Kyoto School Philosophers were most active and dominant in Japan), one has to assert one's conviction of universal and transhistorical justice according to which evil deeds must unanimously be condemned. Or, on the contrary, one could, just as easily, argue that "Once you were in that historical situation, you would never have been able to act otherwise. Then, if you understand the complexities and subtleties of the philosopher's expressions, you will be comprehending the situation. You must be sympathetic to the philosopher to the extent of identifying with her or him. Only then will you understand what was truly at issue."

First of all, I must caution myself about the deceptiveness of this choice which, in our present histories, neither brings about effects nor is an attempt to reach for some concrete sense of justice. Neither of these positions can account for its justifiability unless it grounds itself in a certain hubris or chauvinism. The first is easier to detect. It simply repeats the most obvious aspect of missionary style chauvinism which asserts that what "I" believe in is just and must be just because what "I" and "we" believe in is by definition universally valid. And the other position, whose hubris may not be as apparent as the first, insists on the insider's privilege: "unless you have experienced a particular history as it was lived through by the author, you are not entitled to make any judgment about it." Yet, the contemporaneity and historical affiliation because of which one can claim one's proximity to the philosopher is warranted by one's race, ethnicity, or nationality, as is most often the case with the discourse of Japanese uniqueness. Even though the person who claims such an affinity with the philosopher is, intellectually, culturally (in the old sense of this word of

whether or not the person is cultivated) and agewise, drastically removed from the philosopher, he would still demand that others should respect his proximity to the philosopher.

Because I definitely want to take a side in the debate over the possible connection between the Kyoto School Philosophy and nationalism, I must not choose prematurely. I do not want to get caught in the above-mentioned opposition, because to take sides in such an opposition is, in fact, to avoid and even repress what is most decisive in reading the texts by the Kyoto School Philosophers. In other words, in this paper, I refuse to address the problem of the Kyoto School Philosophy and nationalism within the framework of either the West vs. the East or the United States vs. Japan, while at the same time I do not hesitate to deal with the issues coming out of the fact that many intellectuals and political agents in the West or the East, Europe and North America or East Asia, could not and cannot think of their positionality without reference to such crude binaries. These binaries have been part of an overwhelming reality in the world for the last two centuries or so, but there is no reason for us to expect this reality to be eternal and therefore to continue to yield to it.

## §2 *Ko, Shu, Rui* (The Individual, The Species, The Genus)

### 2-1) *Shu* and Race

In affirming nationalism and disputing the prevailing critique of it among intellectuals, Yuasa Yasuo refers to the problematic of corporeity in modern Japanese philosophy and, particularly, to that of Tanabe Hajime. At issue in his reading of Tanabe's philosophic articles is the concept of 'the species' or *shu*. Around this concept of the species, Tanabe is known to have attempted to establish a certain social and religious philosophy which is often called 'the logic of the species' or *shu no Ronri*. In his book *The Body* and another article, Yuasa interprets the logic of the species in a particularly interesting way:

While I was thinking about the logic of the species in Tanabe philosophy, somewhat it occurred to me that what he called "the species" can be re-read "corporeity." As is exemplified, it goes without saying that, the problem of the nation (race) has a lot to do with corporeity. It is needless to look into a mirror, as I know my features and skin color are manifestly those of an Oriental person. It is in such a concrete corporeity that I as an individual exist as a human subject.<sup>2</sup>

Here, Yuasa is not hesitant to find justification for his own racial nationalism in

Tanabe Hajime's logic of the species. And his discussion of corporeity slides and shifts from the biological, physiological, and racial concepts of the body to sociological and philosophical ones rather continually (not to mention his confusionism among national, racial, ethnic, and cultural identities). And, as is shown in the above quotation, he reads Tanabe's argument about *shu* in a similar vein, as works about related issues by another Kyoto School Philosopher, notably, Nishida Kitaro. So if we were to accept his reading of the Kyoto School Philosophy which is deployed in the following chapters of his book, we would probably have to conclude that the Kyoto School Philosophy has a strong tendency towards racial nationalism. Apart from the fact that Yuasa is an extremely rare case in declaring himself to be a racist with rather astonishing frankness in the present post-World War II world—particularly after the revelation of what German national socialists did to minorities—where even reactionary nationalists would evade any reference to man's physiological features and skin color in talking about their political beliefs, there are obviously some grave problems in his reading of Tanabe and Kyoto School Philosophy in general.

Perhaps the gravest problem of all is that, once his reading of Tanabe's concept of species is disproved, we would be led to believe that the Kyoto School Philosophy is free from the charge of racism. While I have no doubt that Yuasa's reading of Tanabe's logic of species is misleading in many important respects, to disagree with Yuasa would not necessarily guarantee either the Kyoto School's, my, or anybody else's innocence with regard to types of racism. For instance, I believe that the majority of nineteenth-century Liberalisms, such as that of John Stuart Mill, could hardly escape the charge of racism. Or we are all too familiar with the devastating effects on ethnic and race relations caused by the policies of country whose its national government once claimed itself to be "color blind." And let me introduce another example which may be relevant to our discussion of the Kyoto School Philosophy in more than one respect.

In 1943 during the fifteen year war, a book entitled *Daitoa Kensetsu-ron* (*On the Construction of Greater East Asia*) was published by a subsidiary company of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (then headed by Kishi Nobusuke).<sup>3</sup> In it the author, Murayama Michio, who was then secretary to the Planning Agency of the Japanese government, lays out the principles upon which the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere must be built. As a semi-official document, it expresses in a concise manner the views of the Japanese government over such issues as *iminzoku seisaku* (policies towards other nations or ethnic groups), colonialisms, race and racism, culture and the Japanese nation. One of the guiding concerns in this document is, in fact,

racism, and three chapters out of eight are devoted to the debunking of the fallacy which attributes the biological or physiological features of a people to their social status, as well as to the analyses of the various manifestations of racism in terms of colonial and political conflicts. While giving historical accounts of hostilities invoked among the natives by British colonialism in Ireland and India, by French colonialism in Indochina, and by Dutch colonialism in Indonesia,<sup>4</sup> he reiterates the Japanese government's determination that peoples in East Asia must appeal to neither racial differences to devise social constituencies nor to the notion of racial purity to prevent inter-marriages. Condemning the uncritical "imitators" of the West in Japan who proposed to implement racial policies similar to those of Japan's Ally in Central Europe even at the risk of officially offending its government—let me note in passing that Yuasa would be condemned as a rather uncritical "imitator" of the West even by the standard of war-time Japanese governmental policies as depicted in *On the Construction of Greater East Asia*—Murayama goes so far as to insist that inter-marriages must be encouraged in the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere and that the Japanese ought to reflect upon the low rate of inter-marriage among its population in comparison to the Chinese, for instance.<sup>5</sup> The only apology he could possibly find for Japan's European Ally's policies towards the Jews is that, as they lack in the feeling of patriotism and the sense of belonging to the nation, they do not want to integrate into the German nation. In other words, anti-Semitic policies as such are not justifiable on any grounds, but any group of people who refuse to identify with the nation can be excluded in due course. The Jews happen to coincide with those who are against the principle of patriotism in general, Murayama claims.<sup>6</sup>

According to Murayama, and the government on behalf of which he spoke, the idea of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere actively promoted the social formation which might be described as something like "a melting pot" in East Asia. The melting pot idea was most consistently promoted in policies such as the imposition of standard Japanese in the annexed territories, and particularly those policies towards Korea (*naisen ittaika seisaku*, policies to synthesize Japan proper and Korea into one). It goes without saying that what this idea promised and what went on under its auspices were wide apart. This disparity can be demonstrated even without referring to what was actually executed in Korea and elsewhere in the empire under the directives of the Japanese government. We can point out the conspicuously narcissistic self-positioning of the "we, the Japanese" in the narrative of this document. While demanding from the Japanese readership an attitude respectful of other cultures and civilizations achieved by other peoples, for instance, Murakami would not even try to defend the Japanese mission to

civilize them.<sup>7</sup> It is unambiguously assumed that, since Japanese civilization is more advanced, less developed peoples would naturally want to learn the Japanese ways of doing things unless they found it repulsive to do so as a result of Japanese coercion.<sup>8</sup> If they had been left alone, he continued, those peoples would naturally civilize themselves by following the Japanese models. Understandably then, Murayama strongly urged the reader to learn from Albert Schweitzer.<sup>9</sup>

As we know, many sorts of racial discrimination and racist violence against other ethnic groups as referred to in the film *Yuki Yuki te shingun* (*The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On*)<sup>10</sup> were committed by Japanese state and military forces in many parts of East Asia prior to and during the Fifteen Year War. Of course, a document such as *On the Construction of Greater East Asia* is undeniably a piece of state propaganda that was published at the moment—1943—when any hope of implementing the policies it preached was rapidly diminishing. Nevertheless, I do not want to regard this document merely as a verbal counterfeit which was to mask a given reality. Nor do I want to do away with it by attributing it to ignorance, stupidity or naiveté of its author and his office. I would rather hold on to a certain sense of anxiety which this document invokes in us, of an anxiety which obliges us to be skeptical about any facile denunciation of racism, particularly, about the claim that one can be and is securely outside it. Indeed this is because I want to read philosophical articles by Tanabe Hajime and Nishida Kitaro with the fate of this document in mind.

What is at stake here, therefore, is a rather general question. How can a work of a philosophical nature be responsible for histories? Or, more precisely, how can we come up with a reading of philosophical works in which the works are made responsible and responsive to the subsequent revelation of historical actualities? By posing this question, of course, we cannot evade making a retrospective judgment on them, from the privileged viewpoint of the present in which we are supposed to know what happened contemporaneously and consequentially. And the awareness of historicity in our own judgmental reading of past documents has to invite another question: how can our own argument be responsible and responsive to present histories? How can we be judgmental about the past or other people without ceasing to be judgmental about the present and “us”?

## 2-2) *Shu* and Organicism

Outside the discipline of formal logic, the term, “species” or *shu* is most often used in biological taxonomies as a median term in the series: individual (*kotai*)—species (*shu*)—genus (*rui*).<sup>11</sup> Individuals are always members of some class just as individual humans are necessarily members of humanity as a

genus. However, individuals are also members of the sub-set, species, of that genus, and each sub-set distinguishes itself by its specific difference from other sub-sets. Thus, an individual belongs to a genus, but it is also a member of a particular species.

It may appear, then, that the term *shu*, or species, coincides with the following classical definition by John Stuart Mill of "Nationality" which Fukuzawa Yukichi adopted as the guiding concept in building the modern Japanese nation-state and which he translated into the *kokutai* or national body.<sup>12</sup>

"A portion of mankind may be said to constitute a Nationality if they are united among themselves by common sympathies which do not exist between them and any others—which make them cooperate with each other more willingly than with other people, desire to be under the same government, and desire that it should be government by themselves or a portion of themselves exclusively. This feeling of nationality may have been generated by various causes. Sometimes it is the effect of identity of race and descent. Community of language, and community of religion, greatly contribute to it. Geographical limits are one of its causes. But the strongest of all is identity of political antecedents; the possession of a national history, and consequent community of recollections; collective pride and humiliation, pleasure and regret, connected with the same incidents in the past. None of these circumstances, however, are either indispensable, or necessarily sufficient by themselves."<sup>13</sup>

Then does the species signify a community based on nationality as defined above, that is, a national community? Or, as the term species suggests in common parlance, does it specifically refer to a community based on some of the biological features of its members?

Because of its association with biology, Tanabe Hajime has to establish in the domains of knowledge on the social and historical a new use of the term "species" which distinguishes itself from other uses in the biological sciences. In applying the term that is widely accepted in natural sciences to inquiries into the social, there are two main dangers which have to be warded off by deliberately demarcating his concept of "the species" from the ordinary comprehension of the term. The first danger is an obvious one, in that the social sense of belonging to a group must never be confused with the biological and physiological fact of some creature belonging to a specific class. In social formation, the individual's belonging to a group is an essential part of his own

self-awareness or *jikaku*, so that an individual can never be classified into a species unless he is aware of belonging to it. Furthermore, it is not a piece of speculative knowledge but a mode of acting in the social. "Self-awareness is not a lived experience (*taiken*); it is a mediation."<sup>14</sup> Self-awareness is primarily not an epistemic issue but a mode of practice. In contrast, the biological taxonomy classifies an individual into a species without any regard to the individual's self-awareness. This is to say that a subject (or *shukan*) who classifies individual things in a biological taxonomy does not return to the individual that is classified, and that the fact of the individual's belonging to a species is established irrespective of its freedom, of a freedom for the individual to refuse to belong to it. In this conception of belonging, there is no inner relation between the individual and the species so that the individual does not exert any influence over the way the species is. Being autonomous, the individual unwittingly does what it is accustomed to do. It simply obeys given dictates and it is not conscious of any gap between what ought to be and what is.<sup>15</sup> For the individual, therefore, the species is not a reality but a transparent irrelevancy.

The second danger is also related to the individual's freedom. Tanabe has to clearly distance himself from such a conception of the species in this way:

The notion of moral or collective personality in which "personality" has *proper analogical* value applies to the *people* as a whole in a genuine manner: because the people as a whole (*a natural whole*) are an ensemble of real individual persons and because their unity as a social whole derives from a common will to live together which originates in these real individual persons. Accordingly, the notion of moral or collective personality applies in a genuine manner to the *body politic*, which is the organic whole, composed of the *people*. (emphasized in the original)<sup>16</sup>

In this typically corporatist comprehension of national community and the state, heterogeneity or discontinuity hardly exists between the "real individual person" and "the body politic." An assembly of "the people" is supposed to form some communion and constitutes itself as an organic whole. Although he shares with this author many insights into the nature of the modern state formations, Tanabe decidedly distances himself from the organicist conception of the social whole or of the species as can be gleaned from the passages above and insists on an *essentially discordant relation* between the individual and the species. In this respect, Tanabe's social ontology from the outset assumes the undecidability inherent in modern subjectivity that is caused by the disappearance of the *body politic* in modern social formations,

undecidability by which Claude Lefort defines the term "democracy."<sup>17</sup> This undecidability is preserved in the term "negativity" and, as we will see, plays the central role in Tanabe's social ontology.

The individual does not belong to the species in the same way that a part is embraced by and absorbed into the whole: in the organicist conception of the social which is still under the spell of pre-dialectic and therefore pre-modern logic, Tanabe argues, the part and the whole are understood from the relationship between two terms which are continuous with one another, that is, between the particular and the universal.<sup>18</sup> But the individual is not the universal that is particularized; it remains essentially heterogeneous to the opposition of the universal and the particular. A human individual does not belong to a nation, for example, just as a cat belongs to the genus of cats or as a potato does to the class of tubers. By no means can the species be conceived of in an analogy to an organism or in terms of an analytical relation between two terms.<sup>19</sup> Then, how should we understand the state of affairs depicted about human agents and social formations by the statement "an individual belongs to a species"?

In this respect, it is important to keep in mind that, in one phase leading to a further elaboration on the concept of the species, Tanabe refers to the discussion of totemic organization by Emile Durkheim and gives high praise to Durkheim's insight that the reign of a society over an individual must be understood according to the logical relationship of the universal and the particular. In addition, he values the Durkheimian notion of the social species *oules especes sociales*<sup>20</sup> which introduced a dimension of the social that is reducible to neither the individual nor the genus. Yet, the point forcefully put forth by Tanabe is, contrary to Durkheim's sociologization of Kantian ethics, that the individual's participation in the species cannot be characterized by its conformity to the totemic belief of a given group, whether that group may be ethnic or national;<sup>21</sup> it must be premised upon the *negation* of it. Only where there is freedom on the part of the individual to negate and disobey the imperatives imposed upon it by the totemic beliefs, can it be said to belong to it. Therefore, for the individual to be in the species is to be *mediated* by its negativity, and what is misleading about the organicist conception of the species derives from the fact that it overlooks and suppresses negativity, without which the species would be a matter of no significance for the individual. What entails the transfer of the term from the domains of knowledge on nature to those on the social is that the social would be inconceivable without taking into account human negativity. Moreover, negativity could

imply the discursive mediation of antagonism from the viewpoint of social practice, so the social would be incomprehensible once deprived of negativity and antagonism.

The individual cannot remain indifferent to the species because the species is primarily perceived as constraints and a resistance to its will. The existence of the species manifests itself negatively against the individual and, retroactively, as the state of being from which the individual has just emerged. The species is given as something which one has to shed, and, accordingly, the relationship between the individual and the species must necessarily be one of conflict. But for the conflict with what one is born with, one would continue to practice what one has unwittingly accepted as natural. To come to an awareness about one's habit and custom, for example, one has to encounter instances of disruption and hold onto a will to be autonomous in what one has been ordained to do. Only in the transition from one who has already been formed or what Nishida Kitarô called "*tsukurareta mono* (that which has been made)" to the subject who is capable of making or "*taukuru mono*" does belonging to the species pose itself as a significant issue for the individual. If there is no impulse to revolt against and transform the given, there will be no point in being concerned with one's belonging to the species. As long as the individual remains immediate with regard to the species, its belonging to the species is not called into question and consequently also remains immediate. But, it is essential to note that the fact that a social organization such as a totem can exert coercive force over its individual members should already indicate a movement toward its break up, a negative movement which divides and destroys the immediate symbiosis of the species and the individual. So when one negates it and finds oneself discordant with it, the species is brought into awareness as being that which binds and restricts one.

Most of Japanese philosophical discourse on the subject, the self, and the ego in the 1920s and 30s assumed the basic understanding of modern subjectivity, the Kantian formula of the split between the empirical and the transcendental subject: only as long as the "I", the knowing subject, cannot be determined as in the statement "I am dead," the "me" as an empirical subject can be known as an object of experience. At the cost of purging the "I" from the realm of knowable to that of things-in-themselves beyond experience can the modern subject announce itself. Although responses to this essential undecidability inherent in modern subjectivity were far from unitary, philosophers in Japan could not evade the problem of modern subjectivity itself. Hence, the proliferation of *Jikaku sonzairon* or ontology of self-awareness then. Tanabe was no exception. Tanabe approached this problematic mainly through his critique of the Heideggerian reading of Kant in *Kant and the*

*Problem of Metaphysics* as well as the elaboration of his idea "schema world,"<sup>22</sup> and tried to connect the issue of subjectivity to the Hegelian notion of negativity. And, of course, as we have already had a glimpse of it, he wanted to understand the individual's relationship to the species in terms of negativity.

Here, we can discern two moments without which no relationship between the individual and the species can be thought, and outside of this relationship the recognition of one's belonging to the species cannot ensue: the first moment is the individual's factual participation in the given species, and the second is its negation of it. And, indeed, this splitting of the moments is facilitated by negativity and a process of *mediation*.<sup>23</sup> At the same time, negativity opens up space for not a factual but an active participation in the species. But, at this stage, that to which the individual actively and wittingly decides to belong does not remain the species as it used to be. For, negativity and the first stage of mediation alters the nature of a social grouping in which one once was blindly and immediately placed.

Whereas, in immediacy, the individual would never constitute itself as a subject, it becomes a subject by returning to itself after reflecting upon and distancing itself from its immediate inheritance, through self-negation. As goes without saying, Tanabe's exposition of the self-negational contradictory and heterogeneous relation between the individual and the species is at the same time an attempt to construct a logic of social praxis by re-articulating the logical (not analytic but dialectic) relations among individuals, the species and the genus in terms of the Hegelian triplicity of individuality, particularity and universality. Yet, one would instantly note that, up to this stage of development, the individual has not returned to itself and that, therefore, mediation has not completed its circle. And it is at this stage that Tanabe introduces the concept of *rui* or the genus and thereby indicates how the one's belonging to the species inevitably leads to a participation in the genus of humanity.

Unlike the individual and the species which possess reality in their respective senses, the genus is not a positive institutional reality.

The individual can be said to be real because of its corporeity. Rather than the unificatory aspect of the body as an individual or indivisible *Gestalt* as is the case with the term *body politic*, what is essential in this notion of corporeity is that it makes it impossible to merge one individual with others. Corporeity imparts an inevitable otherness and a spatiality to the relation of one individual with another. An individual necessarily remains other to and spatially distant from another individual, and ultimately, because of corporeity, the individual is other to itself in the "world."<sup>24</sup> It is the impossibility of communion itself, or the possibility of communion only in fantasy. Therefore, corporeity designates the inalienable possibility of the social, which cannot be

erased even by the most ecstatic fantasy of communion. The individual is a social reality that is singular, the singularity of which, I think, Nishida Kitarô suggested by the rather ambiguous term "*kobutsu*" and renders it impossible for the individual to be exhaustively incorporated into the economy of universality (i.e. generality) and particularity or, more narrowly, of the imaginary.

On the other hand, the species is reality, but, of course, it is so in a very different sense, because its reality consists in the individual's refusal of and disobedience to it. It acquires reality only through the relation which Tanabe calls *jikohitei-teki mujun* or self-negational contradiction between the individual and the species. Yet, in restricting one's action and coercing one into acting in a predictable manner, the species is more like a milieu of imperative rules within which one's action is determined in terms of universals, just as Tanabe found the best explanation of the species' force to regulate and coerce its members in Durkheimian analysis of totemic societies. And, of course, we cannot help noticing a correspondence between Tanabe's concept of the species and Hegel's "ethical order" or *Sittlichkeit*. Apparently this conception of the species owes much to Nishida's conception of the topos or *basho*. Tanabe conceives of the individual in the species on a parallel with the subject in the sense of *shugo* (propositional subject) being determined or predicated in the topos in terms of the universals which Nishida calls *ippansha*. However, the topos is where determination occurs; so the topos itself cannot be posited as the subject, in the sense of the theme of *shudai* unless there is another topos of a higher dimension in which the previous topos is determined as a subject-*shudai*. It precedes thematic determination, so it cannot be posited as a theme of judgment until it is determined as such. The topos cannot be objectified and, consequently, is unrepresentable. In this respect, the species is *mu*, that is, a field of pre-ontologized rules which is non-being insofar as being means some item being predicatively determined in the form of judgement  $S \rightarrow P$ . This is to say the species is not the subject or *shugo* in this propositional form because it has yet to be thematized. In this sense, we cannot say that the species is a reality in the same way as is the individual which can at least be designated by the propositional subject or *shugo* in the form of  $S \rightarrow P$ . The species is not an entity, like a human body, a tree or a book, and one cannot designate it unless one mistakes its representative, or symbol or schema for it (I will come back to this point). In order to deal with the reality of the species, therefore, we must start with the process of thematization in which its reality is brought into awareness. And, of course, the process of thematization should coincide with the moment of negativity in a self-negational contradiction. One comes to an awareness of its existence by negating and calling into question what has been

taken for granted in one's own behavior and custom. The thematization of the species is accompanied by the self-awareness on the part of the individual that it has been nurtured and cultivated in it while it now wants to abandon it. For the individual, the species is *its own* past and another at the same time. Insofar as it is a past from which the present is distinguished, the past is another to and of the present. In this respect, the individual sheds its past and objectifies and distances itself from it.<sup>25</sup> But, as it recognizes the past as its own, it must subsume the species in itself. Accordingly, for the individual, the species is constitutive of its facticity or thrownness (*Geworfenheit*) in Heideggerian terminology in Dasein's "projective existence" (*Entwurf*) into the future. The thematization of the species is intertwined with the self-transcending or ecstatic *jikaku* or self-awareness as *geworfener Entwurf* which is a mode of social practice whereby to project oneself into the future and to bring about something which does not exist yet rather than a mere epistemic recognition.<sup>26</sup>

Thus, the reality of the species is an institutional reality par excellence. It manifests itself as an assemblage of the universals which regulate individuals' behaviors, and can by no means be ascribed to the whimsy of an individual. It is a reservoir not of individual but rather of collective habits. It is always of trans-personal and publicly-habituated rules just like a language. Yet, it is not ubiquitous or general in the sense of the genus that every member of humanity should be subsumed under in the definition "homo sapiens."

### 2-3) *Rui* and Humanity

It follows that it is pointless to talk about the individual's refusal of or disobedience to the genus. If the genus is discussed in this manner, as if it constituted a positive institutional reality, it would invariably suggest the absolutization of a particular species of which ethnocentrism is the best example, and would lead to denying the individual its negativity. In other words, the genus is not the positive reality one could revolt against or disobey. Nonetheless, it signifies an infinitely open society for the totality of humanity, the only society which encompasses every member of humanity. Yet, "To dissolve [into the genus] particular societies which oppose one another is to neglect the concreteness of the social being. It amounts to erasing the problems for social beings rather than solving them. History has proven how disrupting for the progress of humanity and how numbing to one's conscience it is to entrust all to religion's absolute affirmativeness."<sup>27</sup> (Here, I would like to add that history would prove the same point again particularly about Tanabe's own career in the 1940s and 50s.)

The genus is a moment in the self-negational contradiction between the individual and the species. The genus is not the universal that underlies a

specific difference between one particular species and another particular species as in Aristotelian logic. The genus is called for in the individual's refusal of and disobedience to the edicts of the given social institutions which have been internalized by individuals. So, the individual negates and deviates from the species by appealing to something higher than the rules whose validity is specific and limited.

If I live in a community in which, for instance, the locality of my residence is predetermined by my racial status, I could either take such a state of affairs for granted or call it into question. According to Tanabe, my belonging to that community becomes an issue for my self-awareness only when I act to disagree with or disobey such a custom. In other words, I do not belong to that community factually because of my birth or other accident, but rather only when I try to negate and change it will I begin to belong to it. But, I would have to appeal to an authority beyond the dictates which are immediately sanctioned by that community in order to call into question that custom; only by introducing and adhering to an imperative whose execution is impossible within the given dictates of that community and the implementation of which will bring about something which does not exist, can I act to change it. Yet the imperative thus introduced cannot be my own; even if I am absolutely alone in my commitment to it, the imperative I volunteer to abide by must be collectively valid. I would have to postulate the principle of equality with a validity I believe to be not only higher than the dictates of the community to which I factually belong, but also acceptable by everyone in the world in principle.<sup>28</sup> In the name of this principle I would engage in an antagonistic relation with the members of the community who refuse to agree with the transformation of the community in this direction. This is a struggle in which one can be destroyed by the majority of the community or can destroy them. It can be a struggle of life or death. Yet, one has to postulate beyond this given community a collectivity for whom this principle of equality is a rule to live by. But, as we can realize instantly, this collectivity is not a positive reality because we cannot find any factually existent community of people who actually live according to it anywhere in the world. Furthermore, I might as well postulate another principle. And equally there is no community where this principle is not an abstract but rather a concrete universality.

A collectivity defined by the dictate which one engages in to change the species does not exist positively, and it is the genus. The genus is not a positively existing institutional reality, but it exists in the individual's negation of the species. Furthermore, if each dictate positively demands a different collectivity, different dictates beyond any community could postulate different genera which could be the totality of humanity at the same time. In other words,

the genus must be mediated by the individual's negativity, but it cannot be a positive reality such as the species. The totality of humanity is thus inexpressible in any institutional form.

Therefore, it is in relation to the genus that the individual is independent of the species. "Unlike the species it [=the genus] does not directly oppose the individual; instead, it liberates the individual from the constraints of the species and lets it assume a free stance as an individual. Thereby the genus comes into being, mediated by the negativity of the individual's relation to the species."<sup>29</sup> So, the genus is neither a generalization of many species nor an ideal representative of them. It is the absolute totality (but not of a personal God, Tanabe warns us) which is expressed in human historical action but which cannot be represented conceptually. For it is an idea. Tanabe agrees with Max Scheller in that the individual's moral action expresses the eternal absolute and, therefore, that historical practice based upon the individual's autonomous will can be understood as an action contributing itself teleologically toward the absolute totality.<sup>30</sup> In this respect, we cannot think of the genus as commensurate with differences and commonnesses among species. By virtue of the fact that the genus is radically heterogeneous with and negative to the species, every individual can be recognized as equal under the genus (equality only in the negative sense, that is, of the absence of a hierarchical ordering), irrespective of its factual belonging to a particular species. For this reason, the ultimate totality of humanity must be *mu* in the sense of being an absolute negativity.<sup>31</sup>

#### 2-4) Subject and Substratum

Thus, the individual returns to itself only when it also participates in the genus and distances itself from the species. But, it does not follow that the individual would then cease to belong to the species. Negative mediation also transforms the species, so that the individual's negativity indicates the basic mode of social practice whereby to work on social reality. "Praxis (*jissen*) whereby the species is renewed puts the individual and the species in correlation."<sup>32</sup> (The liberal notion of voting in a general election which allows the individual to participate in the process of transforming social formation might fit this idea of praxis, but Tanabe does not specify it.) Accordingly, the sense of one's belonging must be altered. Through social praxis, which is negative with regard to the given formation, the individual belongs to the species by actively transforming it. To belong to a species no longer means to be in it factually or to be merely born in it; to belong to it is to transform it according to the dictates of universal humanity. Thus, only as a practical subject or *jissen shutai* can the individual belong to it. At the same time,

though, the species on which the practical subject works to transform cannot remain immediate.

Here too, Tanabe recognizes two moments inherent in the mediation of self-negational contradiction, this time from the viewpoint of the species, one concerning the ethnic and factual constraints no individual can escape from, and the other which mediates both antagonisms among the individuals within the same species and contradiction between the individual and the species. These two moments are explained in a variety of ways, for example, in reference to Tenny's distinction of *Gemeinschaft* (*shuteki kyōdō shakai*,) and *Gesellschaft* (*koteki keiyaku shakai*) and Bergsonian opposition of the closed society and the open society.

According to Tanabe, in this process, a clear distinction is made possible between the substratum as that on which the individual is and the subject which acts socially towards other individuals. But this distinction applies only within mediation. This is the point to be remembered in the following exposition.

In this regard, let me note the complexity of the term subject or *shutai* as Tanabe adopts it here since this term was used by many around that time in slightly different ways depending on each author.<sup>33</sup> As is the case with Hegel, the subject is not merely an individual. In history, an individual acts to transform the given community by believing in the universality of a certain idea. Therefore, insofar as an individual's action can be regarded as a historical practice (*rekishiteki jissen*) that embodies the conviction that its action will be justified not because it is an action based upon its particular whim but because it *ought* to be sanctioned by the genus, that is, the totality of humanity (which does not exist positively), it is also an action of that idea. Thus, an individual acts in history to constitute itself as a subject, but the same historical practice is the process in which the idea realizes itself as a Subject. Therefore, in historical practice, the subject's will to act is already and always the Subject's will<sup>34</sup> just as "The labour of the individual for his own needs is just as much a satisfaction of the needs of others as of his own, and the satisfaction of his own needs he obtains only through the labour of others."<sup>35</sup> "As the individual in his individual work already unconsciously performs a universal work, so again he also performs the universal work as his conscious object; the whole becomes, as a whole, his own work, for which he sacrifices himself and precisely in so doing receives back from it his own self."<sup>36</sup> Even if one is not sanctioned by anybody in the positive sense and has to act alone and in absolute isolation as was the case of Jesus, historical practice is the action of the Subject whereby the individual returns to itself.<sup>37</sup>

Thus, the reality which the individual obtains through negativity and historical practice is at the same time a species and a work as the Subject. And

Tanabe calls this reality the *kitai soku shutai* or "substratum that is Subject." Through the participation of the genus, a society, an ethical substance in Hegelian terminology, which is called the *minzoku kokka* or nation-state emerges, and this society is not directly the species because it embodies the dictates of universal humanity. It is the synthesis of the individual's factual belonging to a given community of customs and its belonging to the universal humanity. Therefore, the state in the nation-state in this formulation implies the moment of the agent as a Subject<sup>38</sup> while the nation in the nation-state means the unity of *the work* as a community which individuals create collectively by transforming the given social reality. And the nation must be formed out of cultural and historical constraints—as is most manifestly revealed in one's habits such as a preference for certain foods and language abilities—which individuals cannot simply discard but based on which they form a primordial feeling of their own "Nationality" in Mill's sense. According to Tanabe, the nation or *minzoku* (clearly the *minzoku* does not correspond to *ethnos* or race here) is not immediately the substratum of the nation-state, because *minzoku* is already mediated by the genus or the totality of humanity. In other words, the *minzoku* exists in World History. Thus it was possible for Tanabe to argue:

"To be a member of the State is the highest right and obligation] for the individual." If the subject of this proposition simply means that any individual is born and dies within the State or that the life of the individual becomes possible only when it is incorporated into the variety of state organizations, the proposition would not be able to take the predicate "the highest right." That it is thus predicated should mean that the proposition does not state a mere [observable] fact but that it refers to the state of affairs which has to be realized by the individual's will and action. In other words, it implies that, while the individual could will to refuse it, the individual is obliged to will and, following such a will, to promote the realization of such a state of affairs ... Therefore, membership in the State should not demand that the individual sacrifice all its freedom and autonomy for the sake of the unity of the species. On the contrary, the proposition would not make sense unless the State appropriates into itself individual freedom as its essential moment."<sup>39</sup>

Therefore, the view which equates the nation-state to one ethnic community cannot be accepted at all. "Hegel never completely rid himself of the tendency to regard the State as the ethnic spirit of an ethnic community."<sup>40</sup>

The claim that to be a member of the State is the highest right and obligation *for the individual* would not be easily accepted unless the individual negates the ethicality (*Sittlichkeit*) of a specific community and actively endorses the morality (*Moralität*) for the individual to transcend the particularity of a specific community toward the universality of the generic humanity. Absolute loyalty to the state can be legitimated only when the State is an actualization of the universalistic logic of mediation which goes beyond the ethnically specific and towards the State that grounds the individuality of the individual returning to itself through universality.

### § 3 *Shu* and Cultural Difference

#### 3-1) *Minzoku*, *Shuzoku*, *Kokumin* and the Multi-ethnic Nation-State

Some might argue that Tanabe Hajime's was and still is the most Christian of all the Japanese philosophical projects. Of course, there have been philosophers, social scientists, historians, and literary figures in Japan who were Christians, but we cannot think of any more systematic attempt to generate a philosophical discourse in which elements of Buddhist terminology and insights were deliberately grafted onto Christian theologies and teachings. Tanabe's is conspicuous for its almost obsessive emphasis on negativity and for its rather religious notion of universal humanity, which, one can sense, must have had a certain appeal to Marxist activists<sup>41</sup> and other leftists many of whom in the 1930s had to undergo a traumatic experience of conversion or what is known as *tenkô*. On the other hand, as the term *shu* clearly indicates, his was also concerned with the particular historical and cultural conditions of the times. Given these rough observations and the outline of his philosophical project, how should we understand the connections between his philosophy and nationalism?

In posing this question, we must remind ourselves that even today we tend to forget the elementary of historical background. In the 1920s and 30s, the Japanese Empire covered many overseas territories including Hokkaidô, Taiwan, Korea, the Pacific Islands, the Southern part of Sakhalin, and so forth. The population under the jurisdiction of the Japanese State could not be viewed as culturally homogeneous by any account. Although, as I will explain later, I have serious doubts about the validity of the distinction between mono-ethnic and multi-ethnic social formations, we may use the term multi-ethnic society in order to draw attention to the composition of the Japanese Empire at that time. It was simply impossible to assume a simple overlapping between the State and the ethnos or any "natural" community although those

minorities in the Empire were rendered somewhat invisible, just as many minorities were incredibly invisible until the 1960s in the United States. The State had to represent and incorporate a multitude of the populace which did not share any single national language or ethnic culture insofar as "language" or "culture" is understood to be a closed unity. Needless to say, at the outset, the unity of national language or ethnic culture itself is an extremely dubious discursive construct.

Tanabe never neglected this historical situation: his conception of the State in the nation-state reflected his awareness of it in the following: "The opposition of a species against another species necessarily contains a duality: it is the exclusionary relationship between plural species on the one hand, and, the opposition of the individual to the species on the other hand. The State is the synthesis of the individual and the species. Therefore, it must necessarily mediate the opposition between the conquering species and the conquered species and thereby sublimate that opposition into a generic synthesis by recognizing the freedom of the members of the conquered species *to a certain extent* and by appropriating the former enemy (my emphasis)."<sup>42</sup> Thus, Tanabe seeks the historical origin of the State in the conquest of one species over another. "Instead of a blood tie, the conquering species allows the conquered to survive, and unifies it into itself through the mediation of the shared land."<sup>43</sup> Ethnic conflicts are mediated by the State's recognition of a minority's freedom just as it recognizes the individual's freedom which facilitates collaborative economic activities among those opposing groups. (Or, since in modern times the species could signify the social class, interspecific conflict could be a class conflict.) But, this recognition must be limited; it is permitted only *nanrakano teidono* or *to a certain extent* because the ethical substance is also a political sphere where struggles cannot be eliminated. To present the relation between the conquering and conquered groups as if they were harmoniously accommodated within a whole would amount to nothing but a hypocritical sentimentalization of history.

First of all, it is evident that the species is not an historical entity. It is a moment in mediation which goes on in World History. But, the individual belonging to the conquered species can continue to negate a given social reality and work for its transformation. In this sense, it is not the immediate species but the State that provides the individual with opportunities for justice which is valid beyond the confines of a specific community. For the species, insofar as it is the ethical substance which is mediated by the genus, i.e., *kokkateki minzoku* or state nation, is always in a dialectic process in which it continues to split itself and appropriate other specific communities. But, by the same token, the existence of the State already implies that the society

reigned over by the State consists of a plurality of specific communities.<sup>44</sup> Unless there is ethnic or class conflict, the State would not be necessary. Internal antagonism dialectically gives rise to the State just as the individual's negativity invites the moment of universal humanity into the species. In the ambivalent hyphenation between the nation and the state, one thing is certain: unless the nation is multi-ethnic there is no necessity for the State. Therefore, in order for the nation-state of Japan to exist, the Japanese nation must be multi-ethnic though what is signified by multi-ethnicity in this instance is far from clear.

In this way, we now have a much clearer view of an economy which governs conceptual lineage among those terms, *jinshu*, *shuzoku*, *minzoku*, *kokumin*, and *kokka* and, accordingly, of what is at stake in the translation of these terms into English. Needless to say, we simply do not have any grounds on which to claim that the so-called Kyoto School Philosophers deliberately observed the conceptual consistency of these words, except perhaps in occasional publications such as Tanabe's articles collected under the title *Shu no Ronri* and Kósaka Masaaki's *Minzoku no tetugaku*, where those topics were thematically discussed.<sup>45</sup> As far as Tanabe's *Shu no Ronri* articles (and Kosaka's *Minzoku no tetsugaku—Philosophy of the Nation* which mostly repeats some of the arguments of Tanabe's *Shu no Ronri*) are concerned, the following outline seems plausible to me.

It is impossible to ignore the factors which are usually referred to by the phrase "blood and soil," factors such as kinship (*ketsuen* or blood relation) and the attachment to one's native place, in order to comprehend how people develop primordial communal bonds. These are "natural" factors due to which the primitive sense of community is formed. But, they are not 'natural' in the sense in which the concept of the race is sometimes mistaken to be, because "blood" here does not designate a physiological characteristic of a large collectivity<sup>46</sup>: it denotes a series of family resemblances. Rather it indicates nature not against history but in history, a nature that is historically cultivated. As the most extreme position in the conception of community one might postulate *shuzoku* or ethnos whose members belong to it merely on a factual basis and whose existence can only be determined as a being-in-itself. No existing social group, however, is entirely in this mode. Only the substratum of an existing social formation can one regard as an ethnos; only in contrast to the *minzoku* which always constitutes itself in the present, the *shuzoku* or ethnic communities refer to the pastness of a given social formation which has been overcome but is still retained in the present. In other words, ethnicity is a moment of *minzoku* or national community, a "cultural" moment which designates the historical past of the national

community or what the national community takes over from its past.

Here, we are forced to observe that the distinction between ethnicity and nationality is extremely unstable and shifts constantly and, partly for the sake of demonstrating the ambivalence and instability inherent in the concepts of ethnicity and nationality, Tanabe had to adopt the term, *shu*. The Word *shu* time and again forces us to keep in mind that ethnic and national identities are far from self-evident conceptually, historically and sociologically.

So far we have focused on the explication of the term "species," *shu*, in relation to the individual or *ko* and the genus or *rui*, but now it seems necessary to examine the unity of the species, to look at how a species is identified as distinct from other species.

### 3-2) The Co-existence of Species and Specific Difference

According to classical logic, the identity of a species is determined by its difference or diaphora from another species. Therefore, only in correlation with specific difference can the species be identified.

Then, is it possible to distinguish one species from another, following the classical format of logical taxonomy, with such a specific difference as is recognized in the difference of customs? More broadly speaking, can we assume that a species can be distinguished from another in its cultural difference in general, provided that *cultural difference* can be apprehended as exemplary of the specific difference? Are we not certain that differences in matrimonial rites, festivities, and everyday customs are immediately observable and serve to distinguish one species from another? Yet any of these differences implies no more than that two mutually distinguishable forms of matrimonial rites constitute two *specific* universalities within the *generic* universality of the matrimonial rite in general. In an observation of a specific difference as such can one expect no evidence that this difference is constitutive of the difference between one species as a unity of substratum and another. In other words, one cannot conclude from an observation of such a specific difference that that difference is fact marks the boundary between two different national or ethnic communities. In order for those specific differences to be appealed to for the constitution of the species or national community, other conditions have to be taken into account.

The recognition of difference at the level of specific particularity leads to the recognition of generic generality or universality under which the particulars are subsumed. Ethnographic and anthropological studies accumulate a great number of instances testifying to these specific differences, yet the unity of the species as *minzoku* (nation/ethnos) will not be discerned no matter how much of such data may have been collected. In principle there

can be an infinite number of specific differences, and there is no guarantee that generic generalities under which those specific differences are subsumed will converge to constitute the unity of a *minzoku*. It goes without saying that so-called culturalism is a set of unwarranted assumptions according to which specific differences are always and already predicated on as properties attributed to a single subject, which is most often the reified notion of a national or ethnic culture. (Such a critique of *minzoku* should apply to an identity called "the West" that shares many features with the idea of ethnos but seems even more overdetermined than the unity of an ethnos. Due to its instability and internal contradictions in its conception, various attempts to ground the identity of the West in terms of Judeo-Christian tradition, liberal values, individualism and so forth too often results in the naturalized identity of "Whiteness." What has to be called into question is the putative unity of the West itself.)

In other words, what Tanabe calls "*minzoku kokka*" (nation-state) must contain within itself the moment of specific difference, and if the species should be equated to the unity of *minzoku* (nation/ethnos), then the *minzoku kokka* could only be conceived of as a multi-national or multi-ethnic state. Even if we are to accept the requirement that the species as a whole is a continuous substratum, there would be no reason at all to claim that the nation-state must be homogeneous in respect to customs and other cultural traits since "the essence of the continuous whole lies in that, in whatever way it may be divided internally, any part of it can constitute a whole for itself."<sup>47</sup> "However particular the species may be, it is a continuum which contains within itself an infinite number of species,"<sup>48</sup> It is a stage for the deployment of species' differences. Thus, the culture of the nation-state or national culture in general must be comprehended in its essential structure as a patchwork, as an assembly of many pieces. No ethnic culture can be organically unified; neither can national culture. It follows that multi-culturality and multi-ethnicity are the condition for the possibility of the nation-state in this sense, too. But, then, we have to ask ourselves about what is implied by multi-culturality and multi-ethnicity. And, more fundamentally, what is meant by the concept of *minzoku* or national-ethnicity, as the term itself no longer appears self-evident?

First of all, the unity of the species as substratum can be found only in its representation, and this unity is not in a disjunctive relation to the multiplicity of national or ethnic culture because multiplicity is not the numerical plurality to which its unity is disjunctively opposed. It is impossible to conceive of the unity of the species in its immediacy since its unity comes into being only in the process of its *mediation*, and its unity is inseparably

bound up with the individual's negation of its substratum whereby the individual represents itself as a subject by positing its substratum as its other. Therefore, for Tanabe, in its obsession with a historical essence *minzokushugi* or ethnic nationalism manifests the reification or *spatialization* of the species in an alienated form with the identity of the species being divorced from the movement of negativity. Culturalism thus projects the predetermined unity into substratum and, at the same time, posits it not as substratum but as a unitary subject to which cultural particularities are uniformly attributed. And what is referred to as the homogeneity of Japanese national culture, for instance, is not an observable fact about Japanese society but merely an effect of this confusionism.

What Tanabe has disclosed implicitly is that culturalism and *minzokushugi* (ethnic nationalism) both mistake the species as substratum for the subject in the sense of the theme or subject in the proposition. The so-called tradition or culture which we customarily inhabit cannot be known to us thematically until we deny it, objectify it in discourse, and are distant from it in the process of thematizing it as 'our' tradition or culture. In its immediacy, neither "our" tradition nor culture is thematically posited, so that, only in the mediatory movement of negativity which severs our immediate adherence to it, can it be known as the theme or subject of our experience. This is to say, the unity of the species cannot be defined in terms of specific difference, tradition or culture insofar as these terms are already a particularity determined within the economy of individual—species—genus.

Although ethnology and anthropology are based upon the presumption that the unity of an ethnic community can be explained by describing the behavior patterns, cultural traits, belief systems and so on of which that community as an ethical substance consists, those academic disciplines are not capable of asking why its members belong to it and want to belong to it, for unity of an object community must somewhat be given to the researchers. It is no accident that these disciplines have always had to select some "distant" societies. The description of other peoples, in itself, is undoubtedly a mediatory action whereby a group of people is constituted as an object of their epistemic relation, but for researchers themselves the act of describing "other" people cannot be exhaustively epistemic. Primarily the unity of the species is not an epistemic matter; it is a matter not of knowing but of self-awareness for the individual. The unity of the species cannot be determined outside the negative and mediatory relationship between the individual and the species; the identity of the species cannot be given unless it is intertwined with the individual's negation of, and return to, its substratum.

One could note an infinite number of specific differences in everyday

life, yet only a very few of them are determined as those by which the individual has to abide in order to belong to the species. Some people might refuse totally to eat raw fish, and those who eat it and those who do not could easily mark the boundary of two different groups. Yet, it does not constitute itself as a marker of such a disjunction. Not being able to eat raw fish, one need not to worry about being expelled from a national community. On the other hand, the habit of covering one's hair with a scarf could be taken as a mark distinguishing two separate communities, as is the case among some immigrant populations in Western Europe today. And an individual faces an alternative with regard to such a custom in a particular historical context; she does not blindly accept it but confronts the possibility of not wearing a scarf and thereby negates what has been imposed upon her by her heritage. If, nonetheless, she chooses to wear a scarf, she then belongs to that species and reconstitutes her species in this mediation.

The unity of *minzoku* may be expressed in terms of specific differences in custom and culture, but it cannot be so determined unless a specific difference is re-articulated in relation to social antagonism and unless it coincides with the mediation of the species by the individual. Only when the vestmental custom is redefined because of a given antagonistic social relation is a mere specific difference brought forth as an indication of the individual's self-awareness of belonging to her species. It follows that the unity of the species is based on neither common culture nor hostility to other kins and tribes: cultural or kin heterogeneity of the other groups is not sufficient to give the species its unity. This is why, in reference to the problem of land ownership which causes disintegration and conflict within the species, Tanabe could argue, "if there were no mediation through property ownership at all, the species could integrate various species of different kinship organizations into a continuous whole; where the continuity of the species is disrupted by exclusionary conflict and opposition, the individual could, at least in principle, participate in the genus (*rui-ka*) through the organizations based upon autonomy and equality."<sup>49</sup>

### 3-3) The World Schema (*Sekai Zushiki*): Space of the Past and Time of the Future

Although, as Tanabe persuasively shows, difference in custom and culture is not sufficient to constitute the identity of the *minzoku*, why is it most acutely represented by a specific difference? Among a potentially infinite number of specific differences, one or a few of them are picked in order to mark one *minzoku* from another. Then how are those few differences selected?

The mediatory relationship of the individual's self-awareness to the species is deployed in two directions. The first points to the process in which one specific difference from another is brought into recognition; the second points to the process in which the individual negates and thereby transcends itself. Tanabe suggests that the first is of spatiality and the second of temporality. Of course, as he stresses it when he first introduces the term "schema world," space and time are opposed but mutually mediate one another, so they must not be viewed as two independent processes.

An outside observer such as an ethnographer or tourist can describe specific differences between two tribes or ethnic groups. But in such observations, the two groups that are compared are usually posited as two distinct entities, and observed traits are from the outset determined as ascribable to either entity so that the observer fails to thematize the problem of individual self-awareness within either group. However, for the individual who belongs to a group, difference between two groups does not manifest itself as an already objectified specific difference. For the individual must first objectify discursively the restraints immediately inherent in its own species in order to become aware that that specific difference lies between his own species and another species. Necessarily the process of determining difference as such is also a process in which the individual posits its substratum "for itself." The species as it is lived in its immediacy is not known to the individual, so that to become aware of the individual being constrained by its substratum is for the individual to negate its own species. Therefore, for the individual to know its specific origin is to negate its species and to recognize and return to it. Yet, knowledge about one's origin comes by way of knowledge about another species. Insofar as the identity of the species is represented in terms of its specific differences from another species, there is no knowledge of one's origin that is not mediated by the knowledge of another.

Then, we might as well discern two statuses of "the other" in that "the other" is at stake in self-negativity.

On the one hand, the individual posits its own species as "another" and negates it in order to arrive at the recognition of its own origin. Only by positing its own species as an object that is "other" to the subject who "conceptualizes it, can the individual objectify the restrictive conditions which it has hitherto lived in blindly. Therefore, even in the relationship of the individual to its species, the individual posits itself as a subject in the process of self-negation of the species.<sup>50</sup> So, the individual becomes aware of its own origin as it splits itself from its species and becomes incapable of living in it peacefully. As the Hegelian concept of negativity suggests, the

individual will then be free from and independent of its own species. Thus, as soon as the individual posits itself as a subject, its own species is an object and "another" for it. And this process of subjectification should coincide with the temporal structure of the subject's existence through self-transcendence which Heidegger outlined in his *Being and Time*.

On the other hand, we must not neglect a different passage through which one arrives at the knowledge of one's own origin. It is a process in which one is made aware of its custom and beliefs through an encounter with different people and species. In this process one comes to realize what one has taken for granted and unwittingly abided by through the recognition of differences. Here, let me introduce the term "cultural difference" which must not be confused with specific difference and which designates this *encounter* with the different. It is important to note that no symmetrical opposition between the self and the other is inscribed in cultural difference *as yet*. Hence, cultural difference should not be comprehended according to spatial tropes such as a meeting of one cultural sphere and another, for the spatial figuration of cultural difference is a product of a certain schematism by means of which cultural difference is rendered representable. In cultural difference, neither the self nor the other is determined as a particular opposed to another particular in terms of specific difference. Rather, cultural difference is the process itself, a process of practice in which both the self and the other determine themselves. And as one enunciates and "articulates" cultural difference, it is determined through a certain schematism as the specific difference between the self and the other. And, of course, Tanabe explicates this working of schematism in terms of "schema world."

Spatial direction is made explicit when the role of practice in the recognition of specific difference is repressed and as a result of which cultural difference is reduced to specific difference. In other words, when one fails to take into account that any specific difference has to be discursively articulated, cultural difference tends to be construed as if it were a purely epistemic fact of difference between two already formed unities. That is, when it is forgotten that the ethnic identity, for instance, is itself a trace of an articulatory enunciation, inscribed in the world as a correlate of the individual's self-positing as a subject, "cultural difference" is represented spatially as a collision of one unity with another. Then "cultural difference" would be comprehended by the trope of geographic figuration; it would be determined as a specific difference which assumes two contrasting particulars under the subsumption of a specific genus.

But "cultural difference" is a praxis (and it is also a practice). In due course, the spatial representation of "cultural difference" erases its practical

aspect, and represses its temporality which concerns itself with *what to do* in cultural difference, that is, with its futurity. "Time constitutes itself abruptly in the instance of the present. It is the existence of the individual that, through its action, allows time to constitute itself."<sup>51</sup> The temporal nature of cultural difference which would be inconceivable outside the individual's action is in fact expunged in its spatial representation. By figuring cultural difference out in terms of spatial tropes one would obliterate its futurity or openness which is inherent in every action. Consequently, as long as it is construed as a specific difference, an encounter of one *minzoku* with another would present itself in the past tense, in the tense which is sealed to the future.

Tanabe explains the mediation of reciprocal negation between time and space as follows;

How and through what moment of time does space enter into time? This moment is the past, the moment in time that, so to say, negates time. Through the past, space enters into time. As we have seen, space suppresses the mobility of time to its minimum and negates it. Now, the past as a mode of time is characterized to have a tendency to lose mobility and to be fixed to be immutable.<sup>52</sup>

This is to say, "The past is predominantly spatial and the future predominantly temporal."<sup>53</sup>

As the individual has to struggle with practical problems concerning what it must do in "cultural difference," the individual is primarily a practical participant in it. On the contrary, in specific difference, cultural difference is presented as if its practical problems had been done away with and as an already inscribed and fixed announced (*enoncé*). In specific difference, the individual is no longer a practical participant and consequently its relationship to cultural difference is speculative in nature. As a matter of fact, one has to identify with the position of the observer=subject (*shukan*), where one's relationship to cultural difference is deprived of its practical aspect and is re-constructed as a purely epistemic one, in order to establish national or ethnic identity culturally. This is why the sense of ethnic/national authenticity in culturalism cannot be obtained unless the native wants to occupy the perspective of a foreign ethnographer or tourist who observes the ethnic culture from outside. What culturalism expresses, in fact, is a wish on the part of the natives to be seen by the foreigners, to view their own reflections in the eyes of the foreigners. Therefore, to identify oneself with one's own species in terms of specific differences is to repress the moment of self-negation in the mediation of the species by the species by the individual; it is to repress the

individual freedom in cultural difference, for self-identification without self-negativity is nothing but the disavowal of time.<sup>54</sup> It follows that culturalism and traditionalism, both of which posit the identity of the nation or national culture without going through the moment of the individual's self-negation, will indispensably neglect the individual's negativity with regard to the species and thereby deny the individual's freedom from the species.

Once we accept that nationality and culture are a-temporal and a-historical entities, we will be forced to adhere to the old view of the species which Tanabe had to criticize before he introduced his concept of the species, a view that is based on biological or physiological taxonomy of the individual, the species and the genus. This means that the concepts of ethnicity and culture sanctified by culturalists are homologous to the biological concept of the species. Accordingly, culturalism is an attempt to redefine the social categories, *inzoku*, nation, and culture into ahistorical ones, such as "race," which cannot be negated, refused, or transformed by the individual. At the same time, inscribed in race is social identity insofar as it is deprived of its historicity.<sup>55</sup> What is disavowed in the concept of race is the movement of the individual's self-negativity and self-transcendence. "So, by the spatiality of the species which suppresses its temporality and keeps its mobility at a minimum level, I mean, in short, that the past represses the future and arrests its movement. Thus, as room for absolute negativity of the present diminishes, temporality disappears as well."<sup>56</sup> When the possibility for the individual to act to negate its own species is suppressed, the culturalist and, implicitly the racist, notions of *minzoku*, nation, and culture would prevail. As temporality recedes and as the individual's negativity is neglected, "cultural difference" as practice will then be reduced to "specific difference," with the practical aspect of cultural difference being erased. Implicit in Tanabe's exposition based on his "schema world" is that culturalism and racism serve to repress the negative relationship of the individual to the species. But it also explains why these ideologies prevail most where the prospects for the individual to negate and transform given social formations, and thereby transcend itself, are lost.

What is at issue in the spatiality of the species is not only that spatiality should express its historical past; since the creation of the historical past itself is a historical practice, the culturalist representation of the species serves to conceal the fact that national, ethnic, and racial identities have to be continually reproduced. In this respect, culturalism tries to deny historicity. Thus Tanabe's formula of the *schema world*, which aims to demonstrate that the spatiality of the species negates its temporality whereas the self-ekstatic temporality of its self-negativity negates its spatiality, helps us understand that

his Logic of the Species was devised to undermine the spatial comprehension of the social relations as is best exemplified by Watsuji Tetsurō's concept of "*aidagara*" of the relationality of subjective positions.<sup>57</sup>

### 3-4) Antagonism and Multiplicity

As long as it is understood in terms of specific difference, therefore, the antagonism implicit in "cultural difference" cannot be addressed. For, two specific particulars, the distinction of which specific difference marks, are from the outset subsumed under a higher and generic particularity. It follows that these two particulars are different from one another but commensurate and continuous with each other. In this event, "Certainly we recognize the identity of a concept which corresponds to the identity of the species as distinguished by the specific difference]. But the species itself does not need to be aware of its identity."<sup>58</sup> Only when there is discontinuity as lack of commensurability, does an antagonism emerge which necessitates the movement of self-negativity whereby the identity of the species is posited. "If the species is juxtaposed with another species spatially, they are merely opposed to one another. Yet they are often put in an antagonistic relation with one another. This happens because the temporality of self-negativity inherent in one species is negated by the spatial domination of another species."<sup>59</sup> The opposition of two species which is represented by a specific difference becomes antagonistic "in cases where, as two species existing externally to one another enter into a relation of incompatibility, they begin to negate one another."<sup>60</sup> But the relation of incompatibility is immanent in any society. "The occupation of land marks the inaugural moment of the split of a primitive community,"<sup>61</sup> and only after this split which is caused by one species invading the land already occupied and inhabited by another species does the identity of the species become an issue. For the identity of the species is constituted by its self-negativity which requires two species to be "in contact" but in a relationship of incompatibility. This is to say that unless a species is antagonistic with another, it cannot identify itself. Of course, the expression "antagonistic relation between two species" is rather abstract, and what occurs in the contact of this sort is a violent encounter of an individual belonging to one species with another individual belonging to the other. And in this "antagonistic encounter" or "the state of violent self-negation (*gekidō-teki jikohitei-tai*),"

The negating subject in the action of self-negation must not merely be the general concept of a negating agent but a species with particular and positive content. Yet, the other species that negates

a species should not exist externally outside that species being negated: the negating species must erupt from within the negated species, and *its negative conflict must still be contained within the overall unity of the whole species* in such a way that the negating species may return and relate itself internally to the whole. When two species are rendered continuous, one species does not exist extrinsically outside the other but it should penetrate the other in the manner which may be comparable to the structure of Bergsonian duration. So, the unity of mutual penetration in duration is nothing but the structure of self-negativity for the species.<sup>62</sup>

As I will come back to the italicized passage, namely, "its negative conflict must still be contained within the overall unity of the whole species," let me in the meantime concentrate on Tanabe's remark that antagonism between two species that happens within a species *may be* comparable to Bergsonian duration (I have a strong doubt that negativity can be attributed to duration). Henri Bergson distinguished "qualitative multiplicity" from "quantitative multiplicity," and ascribed to "qualitative multiplicity" incommensurate difference and "mutually penetrating" heterogeneity which cannot be reduced to difference among indivisible individual things. Duration is a difference that changes in kind in the process of differentiation; it is a difference without being countable or numerical. It is actualized without being separable from the movement of its actualization, a difference that differentiates itself, or a heterogeneity which is actualized through differentiation.<sup>63</sup> And Tanabe argues that difference as duration must be explained in those oxymora because this difference is implicated in temporality and the negativity of the subject.

In his *Essay on the immediate data of consciousness* Bergson discusses duration and multiplicity while criticizing the conception of time in Kant's transcendental aesthetic. Tanabe approaches the problem of time through Heidegger's reading of Kant's schematism and attempts to disclose the essential affinity between duration and Hegelian negativity. Difference in negativity which Tanabe reformulates as duration is multiplicity that "is neither numerical nor spatial," and, as Bergson repeatedly stresses that time is that which cannot be represented spatially, this multiplicity is temporal.<sup>64</sup> Then, in the context of our argument, we should be able to conclude that, whereas specific difference is spatial, "cultural difference" is temporal precisely in the above sense, and that the positing of the identity of the species through its self-negativity is performed by the individual through

*cultural difference as its action.* Moreover, the action of cultural difference is performed as antagonism between separate *minzoku* within the species of the multi-ethnic nation-state.

"On the one hand, the species is conceived of as a continuum upon which one unity of species differs from another. On the other hand, one species is in conflict with another heterogeneous species. This contradiction consists in *discontinuity within continuity*, and it indicates that the species is mediated by the temporal determination of space."<sup>65</sup> The "cultural difference" of an antagonistic relation exists as heterogeneity that differentiates and as an incommensurate difference. "The self-negativity of the species arises at a point where a certain space is deprived of its mobile temporality as a result of which it can no longer relate itself with another in a free and equal manner, that is, at a point which is transformed into what is called "singularity" in mathematics."<sup>66</sup> This is to say that we confront "cultural difference" not as a speculative or epistemic problem but as an actional, practical, and ethical one.

According to Tanabe, let us remember, the most elementary definition of the species is that the species exerts its power of coercion over the individual through the analytic relationship of the universal to the particular. The singular nature of discontinuity opens up a new possibility of action for the individual engaged in "cultural difference," a possibility of action that is not dictated by imperatives premised upon the economy of analytic opposition: general=universal versus particular=individual; it demands a comprehension of morality that differs from the one prescribed by the view of morality based on the analytic subsumptive relationship of the specific species under the specific genus.

The new morality interdicts one to apply the law customarily accepted in one group on "cultural difference" and demands one to act ethically according to the law that is universal in neither of the groups involved.

If one adopts the law of one group and rejects the law of the other in antagonistic relation, such an action will place the other group whose law is rejected under the domination of the one whose law prevails, and thereby establish between them a relationship of one specific genus and one specific species. Consequently, the moment of self-negativity will not obtain for the group occupying the position of the specific genus. If those groups are ethnic communities, the community in the position of the particular will undergo the process of mediation in which its identity is constructed in its relation to its other. But the other community occupying the position of the universality will, in all likelihood, remain immediate and caught in its own universal ethnocentricity while regarding its laws and customs immediately valid everywhere. In such an ethnocentric community, what has been habitually

accepted and what the individual must abide by in spite of its heritage remain undifferentiated. Since subject and substratum are not split from one another, the individual in such a community will continue to live in the communionist fantasy of the body politic.

If, instead, one adopts the law that is accepted by, and common to, both of the groups and abides by it, this will be justified only on the ground of continuity, of determining "cultural difference" in terms of specific difference. The law acquired in this procedure will be that of a specific genus, and the moment of self-negativity will then be lost for both species.

To conclude, according to the new morality, the individual must negate itself by negating both species, and act for the universality of the *continuity of discontinuity*. Here, universality should be distinct from generality that is supposed to be ubiquitously valid, because nowhere should it be proven valid: universality here means impossibility within given social formations. To act in the midst of "cultural difference" is, therefore, to objectify the rules and imperatives of both species, and negate them, and articulate antagonism anew. Universality emerges only when there is a clear cognition that the laws that have been taken valid no longer oblige those who participate in "cultural difference." And, Tanabe calls this instance of universality "the absolute genus" (*zettai-teki rui*) that never falls into a specific genus.

### 3-5) The Nation-State and Imperial Nationalism

Finally I am going to return to the problems the examination of which I have so far postponed. Let me draw attention again to the passage "its negative conflict must still be contained within the overall unity of the whole species" as well as to the fact that, as Tanabe thought of antagonism between species as discontinuity within the continuity of a species, the identity of the species is necessarily split between the levels of the opposing species and the integrating species. No doubt, as we have seen, this multifaceted use of the term "species," which is no accident but in fact demanded by its conception, made Tanabe's discussion of the Logic of the Species exceedingly complicated. And, as I have so far suggested, this duality and internal split is symptomatic of the structure of modern subjectivity, of a structure which Michel Foucault characterized as "empirico-transcendental double."

In talking about the identity of the species, Tanabe is particularly concerned with the process in which the species as totality posits itself as subject through self-negation, but he does not seem as attentive to another aspect of the same process in which the species as part of the whole obtains its identity through antagonism. Insofar as a part species (a part of the whole

species) becomes aware of its identity through a struggle with other species within, its existence is similar to that of a social class. Where there is no other class with whom one struggles, the individual would never come to the self-awareness of its social class origin. Likewise, multi-ethnic/national environment sustained by the multi-ethnic nation-state is necessary in order for a *minzoku* to become aware of itself.

Nevertheless, it is only after 1936 that Tanabe began to deal with class and ethnic struggles within the nation-state as essential conditions for the formation of self-awareness on the part of Japanese imperial *minzoku* or nation. Until then, he was much more interested in the individual's emancipation from the constraints of the ethnic community (*shuzoku*) and had not paid much attention to the thesis that the emancipation of the individual from his own species also entails the emancipation of the species from other species. Here, it is important to note the ambiguity of the term "*shu*" (species) reproduces itself in the duality of the use of the character "*shu*." On the one hand, "*shu*" designates a tribal and ethnic substratum for the individual, as is evident in its use in the compound "*shuzoku*." On the other hand, it designates a larger communal organization in the compound "*minzoku*," which, in this essay, has been rendered either as "ethnos" or "nation." After 1936, however, Tanabe seems to have focused on inter-ethnic antagonism and begun to construe the internal split of the species in terms of the conflict between Japanese *minzoku* and Korean *minzoku*, for example. And an antagonism of the Korean species against the Japanese in the narrower sense, that is, the Yamate *minzoku*, was understood to be a moment of negativity in the formation of the imperial nation of the Japanese *minzoku*.

Here, it should be possible to discern how, as Tanabe envisioned it, the individual comes to a self-awareness within the multi-ethnic state of the Japanese empire. In an antagonistic encounter between the Korean and Japanese species, the individual objectifies and negates the rules and customs that have been sanctified by each of the two species but that cannot be implemented at the same time because of their incompatibility which gives rise to an antagonism to begin with. To create a new morality by acting according to dictates that are of neither species is to establish continuity in the midst of discontinuity. And to mediate the disparity between the two species is to mediate the individual's self-transcendence by the whole species of the Japanese state. It is a process in which the individual who has been merely Korean and Yamato transcends him or herself into a Japanese subject and realizes justice that is not particular to either species but rather universal. But this is also a process in which the individual's specific origin is recognized and thereby he or she returns to his or her authenticity. In this mediation of

specific antagonism by the universality of the state, the individual's past and particular origin is at the same time negated and preserved. So the argument should go this way: by believing and participating in the universality of the state, the individual realizes itself by identifying with the genus of the Japanese state as well as with the species of specific origin. By being authentically Okinawan, for example, one can be an equally authentic Japanese subject. To be Japanese then is not a matter of being culturally Japanese at all: it is a matter of engaging in the mediatory process of the individual's self-transcendence in terms of the generic universality of the State. And, the faith in the possible continuity in discontinuity and eventually in the State as the locus of generic universality is absolutely essential in order to sustain the temporal futurity of self-negativity without which the multi-ethnic State will turn into an ethnocentric imperial nation. In other words, patriotism in the sense of unconditional faith in the idealized State would have to be accepted, and through this faith a certain subject that can be characterized as an imperial subject (*kōkoku shutai*) was produced.

This sentiment is best expressed in the following quote from Hegel. Perhaps here we find why Tanabe could not withdraw from his commitment to the State in the late 1930s and early 1940s when the disparity between the State of the Japanese Empire and the State as a generic universality was undeniably obvious, and why he could never take a critical stance toward his own patriotism or laugh at it.

The basis of the state is the power of reason actualizing itself as will. In considering the Idea of the state, we must not have our eyes on particular states or on particular institutions. Instead we must consider the Idea, this actual God, by itself. On some principle or other, any state may be shown to be bad, this or that defect may be found in it; and yet, at any rate if one of the mature states of our epoch is in question, it has in it the moments essential to the existence of the state. But since it is easier to find defects than to understand the affirmative, we may readily fall into the mistake of looking at isolated aspects of the state and so forgetting its inward organic life. The state is no ideal work of art; it stands on earth and so in the sphere of caprice, chance, and err, and bad behaviour may disfigure it in many respects. But the ugliest of men, or a criminal, or an invalid, or a cripple, is still always a living man. The affirmative factor which is our theme here.<sup>67</sup>

### 3-6) Imperial Nationalism and Colonial Order

Given such a commitment to imperial nationalism in the Logic of the Species, we must return to Tanabe's peculiar formulation about the conquering species and the conquered species. "[Temporality is negated because] a newcomer *minzoku* that moves into the land which was occupied by the old *minzoku* is unable to develop itself."<sup>68</sup> It is rather difficult to decide whether Tanabe is talking about the domination of a *minzoku* by another inside or outside the territory of the same nation-state. Furthermore, his formulation is rather surprising in that a newcomer *minzoku* is dominated by an old and resident *minzoku*: His is a formulation exactly opposite to the most common colonial situation where a newcomer *minzoku* dominates and usurps the land inhabited by an old *minzoku*. This point cannot be neglected in considering the possible implication of the Logic of the Species in the administration of Japanese imperial nationalism.

What is evident in this formulation of inter-ethnic antagonism is that a newcomer *minzoku* is justified in asserting its futurity by usurping the land occupied by an old *minzoku*. Needless to say, underlying this rhetoric of historicism is the principle of historical progress. Furthermore, Tanabe always speaks from a position which, unwittingly perhaps, privileges the viewpoint of the conquering species. Let me note that, throughout his career up to the time when Japan's defeat became too obvious, he had never articulated the social ontology from the viewpoint of the conquered species. So, when we see this relationship between newcomer and old species in an analogy to conflicts between land owner class and tenant farmer class, we might recognize an element of progressive politics which would be connected to the postwar land reform. But, when we take into consideration the history of the Japanese Empire from the Meiji period until 1945, a different implication would disclose itself. The territory of the Japanese Empire had shifted and expanded all the time until 1945 so that the movement of the newcomer species can hardly be dissociated from the expansion of the Japanese Empire. Under this light, how could one possibly deny that, already in the early 1930s, Tanabe provided the most sophisticated explication for an imperial nationalism and the recipe for its subject formation.

The Logic of the Species analyzes how ethnic nationalism and cultural nationalism have to be brought forth in certain historical conditions and helps to trace these formations to specific historical causes. Yet, in the final analysis, the Logic of the Species had to sanction the violence required by nationalism that is not merely ethnic. In the Fall of 1939 just before the outbreak of the Second World War, Tanabe published an essay entitled "Logic of the State-Being" (*kokka sonzai no ronri*) in which he did not hesitate to expand the

scope of his Logic of the Species as follows;

[Many regions in the world] are continuous with one another, so that it is impossible to draw a boundary to isolate one region from its outside. But, at the same time, it is equally possible to recognize an infinite number of different phases within a single region and to divide that region into an infinite number of sub-regions. However, in the historical world, homogeneity based on the continuity of the world is particularized by the qualitative differences of the species, and these particularities are sublated into the order characteristic of each historical era, into an order emanating from the center of a powerful state or group of states to weak states at the periphery. Assuming that the dominant tendency of each era is comparable to the curvature of a historical world, we must note that, as the subject of that world, the leader state of each era which represents this curvature is responsible to structure the historical world. The historical world with such a center and periphery is infinite in potentiality, but it expresses a finite unity in its actuality. While, as humanity is a universal in potentiality, it is infinite and no more than an idea, the leader state expresses concrete universality. Following the essence of history, the historical world must be an actuality which contains potentiality in it. And the structure of the historical world must necessarily accommodate the leader state as its center.<sup>69</sup>

Does Tanabe still claim that the state is a generic universality that is not specific and general universality? Is this formation any different from an all too familiar ethnocentrism which claims its own specificity as symbolizing its universal validity? Is this nothing but a forgetting of singularity? And, finally, is any imperial nationalism compatible with a universality that is not a generality and that is possible only in the site of singularity?

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed exposition of this phrase, see: my "Nihon Shakai Kagaku Hoho Josetsu: Nihon Shisô no Mondai" in *Iwanami Kôza Shakai no Hôhō*, vol. 3, [Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993]: 1-38, Its English version *Discourse on Method for Japanese Social Sciences: The Problem of Japanese Thought* will be included in *Translation and Subjectivity*, (forthcoming from University of Minnesota Press).

<sup>2</sup> Yuasa Yasuo, *Shintai*, Tokyo, Sôbunsha, 1977. p. 7. In the original, the nation (race) is *minzoku* (*jinsu*). This part is replaced by a new introduction in the English translation of the same book. Yuasa put forth a similar argument in his article in *Shiso*.

<sup>3</sup> Murayama Michio, *Daitoa Kensetsu-ron*, Tokyo, Shôkô Gyôsei-sha, 1943. Murayama was the secretary to the Governmental Planning Agency. Kishi Nobusuke was Minister of Commerce and Industry in the Tojô Hideki cabinet (October 18, 1941 until October 18, 1943) and then one of the Ministers of the newly formed Ministry of the Great East Asia (October 18, 1943 until July 22, 1944). After the defeat of Japan, Kishi was arrested as one of the A class war criminals by the Allied forces, but in 1955 he was released from prison and became the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Ishibashi Tanzan cabinet (December 23, 1956 until February 25, 1957), and then formed his own cabinets for two successive terms (February 25, 1957 until July 19, 1960).

<sup>4</sup> *Daitoa Kensetsu-ron*, op. cit. pp. 47-89

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.* pp. 90-119

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.* pp. 107-113

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.* pp. 199-217

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.* pp. 263-269

<sup>10</sup> The series *kotai—shu—rui* can be rendered particular—specific—universal. However, in order to emphasize the associations genus—*rui*, species—*shu*, and individual—*kotai*, I adopt the translations of *huhén* into universal and *tokushu* into particular.

<sup>11</sup> Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Bunmei no gairon* (An outline of the theory of civilization), Tokyo, Iwanami Shoten, 1931, (originally 1877) In the English translation, the terminological correspondence is erased.

<sup>12</sup> John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, in *Utilitarianism, Liberty, Representative Government etc.* H. B. Action ed. London, J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, Rutland, Charles E. Tuttle Co., Inc. 1972 (originally 1861) p. 391.

<sup>13</sup> Tanabe, Hajime. *Shu no Ronri to Sekai Zushiki*, (originally 1935), *Tanabe Hajime Zenshu*, vol. 6, Tokyo, Chikuma Shobô, 1963. p. 185.

<sup>14</sup> "We are born into a society where already many maxims regulate the will and action of the individual, so we regulate our own will and action according to the generally accepted maxims before we experience our action and its consequence." *Hegel tesugaku to benshôhō*, in *Zenshû* vol. 3, p. 214, Tokyo, Chikuma Shobô, 1963 (originally 1931). However, Tanabe argues following Kant in that those maxims cannot be moral maxims for the

individual. Moral maxims are moral laws only for the autonomous subject who institutes these laws by itself. (Ibid. pp. 195-210).

<sup>15</sup> Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1951, p. 16

<sup>16</sup> As to continuity and discontinuity, see: Nishida Kitarô. Also important is the question of discontinuity which is closely related to the problems of singularity in mathematics.

<sup>17</sup> Tanabe Hajime, *Shakai sonzai no Ronri*, (originally 1934-35) op. cit. p. 55f.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.* p. 54

<sup>19</sup> The most important aspect of the totemic belief is that it consists of a set of universals according to which members of a tribe are classified and determined as a particular. What is most clearly demonstrated by the example of the totemic belief is that the basic mode in which the social group such as the state rules its members is reducible to the logical relation of the universal and the particular, a relation in which the universal subsumes the particular under it. *ibid.* p. 53-56.

<sup>20</sup> *Zushiki "Jikan" kara Zushiki "Sekai" e (From the Schema of "Time" to the Schema of "the World")*, op. cit.

<sup>21</sup> Alexander Kojeve

<sup>22</sup> For a more detailed discussion about the other in social relation, corporeity, and the world as a schema of mediatory contradiction between time and space, see: Tanabe, Hajime, *Zushiki "Jikan" kara Zushiki "Sekai" e (From the Schema of "Time" to the Schema of "the World")*, op. cit. pp. 27-31.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.* pp. 25-28

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.* pp. 11-18. Tanabe believes that Heidegger's reading of Kant successfully captured the aspect of the individual's indebtedness to the species as part of Dasein's thrownness. However, he claims, Heideggerian Entwurf lacks in a practical aspect and essentially remains speculative as he failed to recognize the spatiality of social practice. To supplement this shortcoming, Tanabe proposes to introduce the schema of the world. A similar critique of Heidegger was offered by Watsuji Tetsurô about Heidegger's neglect of spatiality, but Watsuji's reading where the temporality of Dasein is completely eliminated is no match for Tanabe's in terms of rigor, and these two critiques of Heidegger's Kant Book must not be confused.

<sup>25</sup> *Shakai Sonzai no Ronri*, op. cit. p. 69.

<sup>26</sup> Here we might note that Nishida Kitarô tried to introduce two different conceptions of universality, *fuhen* in the sense of the universality of the Kantian idea, and, *ippansha*, generality in the sense of the universality of

the Kantian concept.

<sup>27</sup> *Shu no Ronri to Sekai Zushiki*, op. cit. p. 198

<sup>28</sup> *Hegeru tetsugaku to beshōhō* (Hegelian philosophy and dialectic), *Zenshū*, vol. 3, op. cit. p. 124

<sup>29</sup> The term *mu* was introduced by Nishida Kitarō particularly in the context of the ontology of self-awareness or *jikaku*. It has often been translated into "nothingness." But it primarily designated the undecidability of the transcendental subject in opposition to the decidability of the empirical ego in the Kantian formula. See: Nishida Kitarō, *Basho*, in Nishida Kitarō *Zenshū*, vol. 4 (originally published in 1926) [Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965]: 208-289, and *Mu no jikaku-teki gentei* (Self-determination of Mu), in Nishida Kitarō *Zenshū*, vol. 6, (originally published in 1930-32) op. cit.

<sup>30</sup> *Hegeru tetsugaku to beshōhō* (Hegelian philosophy and dialectic). p. 199 op. cit.

<sup>31</sup> The most obvious case is Watsuji Tetsurō who followed Tanabe's argument in his *Ethics* to a great extent, but he deliberately eliminated negativity between the individual and the state, so that the state is positively immanent in the individual. In other words, the nation is continually the state without the mediation of the individual's negativity. In this respect, in Watsuji's *Ethics*, the state does not guarantee the individual's right of refusal to accept the dictates of a given community. See: Naoki Sakai, *Return to the West/Return to the East*, in *Boundary 2*, Masao Miyoshi ed. vol. 18, no. 3, Fall 1991, pp. 157-190

<sup>32</sup> Tanabe explains this relationship between the subject and the Subject in reference to Shinran's Shin Buddhism. Perhaps the most explicit reference to Shin Buddhism can be found in his *Zangedō no tetsugaku, Zenshū*, vol. 9, Tokyo, Chikuma Shobō, 1963 (originally 1946) (English translation, *Philosophy as Metanoetics*, Takeuchi Yoshinori, Valdo Viglielmo and James W. Heisig trans. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1986)

<sup>33</sup> G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, A. V. Miller trans. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977 (originally 1807), p. 213 (italics in the original).

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> See: "The state in and by itself is the ethical whole, the actualization of freedom; and it is an absolute end of reason that freedom should be actual. The state is mind on earth and consciously realizing itself there. In nature, on the other hand, mind actualizes itself only as its own other, as mind asleep. Only when it is present in consciousness, when it knows itself as a really existent object, it is the state. In considering freedom, the starting-point must not be individuality, the single self-consciousness, but only the essence of

self-consciousness; for whether man knows it or not, this essence is externally realized as a self-subsistent power in which single individuals are only moments. The march of God in the world, that is what the state is." (Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, T. M. Knox trans. [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967] p. 279.

<sup>36</sup> Hegel called this work "spiritual essence as ethical substance." "Spirit, being the substance and the universal, self-identical, and abiding essence, is the unmoved solid ground and starting-point for the action of all, and it is their purpose and goal, the in-itself of every self-consciousness expressed in thought. This substance is equally the universal work produced by the action of all and each as their unity and identity, for it is the being-for-self, the self, action. As substance, Spirit is unshaken righteous self-identity; but as being-for-self it is a fragmented being, self-sacrificing and benevolent, in which each accomplishes his own work, rends asunder the universal being, and takes from it his own share." Ibid. p. 264.

<sup>37</sup> *Shakai Sonzai no Ronri*, op. cit. p. 157 (the brackets by Sakai) 40. Ibid. p. 155

<sup>38</sup> *ibid* p. 155

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Tosaka Jun, for example, criticizes Nishida Kitarô's philosophy as a typical form of bourgeois idealism. Yet, his critique of Nishida seems to coincide with Tanabe's critique of him in many respects. See, his *Nihon ideologi-ron*.

<sup>40</sup> *Shakai sonzai no Ronri*, op. cit. p. 160

<sup>41</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>42</sup> "The nation-state contains within it the conquering ethnos (*shuzoku*) and the conquered ethnos." *ibid*.

<sup>43</sup> Tentatively I present the title of this book *Philosophy of the Nation* (Tokyo, Iwanami Shoten, 1942.)

<sup>44</sup> Kôsaka argues that *shuzoku* therefore is not the race. *ibid*. p. 6-18

<sup>45</sup> *Ronri no Shakai Sonzairon-teki Kôzô* Tanabe Hajime Zenshu, vol. 6, op. cit. p. 305

<sup>46</sup> *ibid*. p. 358

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*. p. 373 Also see: "In ancient societies, tribal communities unified by blood ties are at the same time communities unified by land ties. We may be able to apprehend why the view of society promoted by recent nationalism puts emphasis on the primordiality of community based on blood and soil." (*ibid*. p. 364). Here it does not seem that Tanabe differentiates adequately between the two senses of the term "blood": blood in the sense of kinship and blood in the sense of racial similarity. Unless this difference is strictly observed, ethnicity could easily slide into race. Generally speaking Tanabe

rarely naturalized national or ethnic identity, but he did not emphatically distinguish nationality and ethnicity from race, either. For historical linkage among the terms, blood, class, nation, and race, see: Robert Miles, *Race and "Race Relations"* [London: Routledge, 1993] pp. 80-104.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. "Shu no ronri to sekai zushiki" op cit. p. 191

<sup>49</sup> "Ronri no shakai sonzai-ron-teki kozo." op. cit. p. 360

<sup>50</sup> ibid. p. 361

<sup>51</sup> ibid.

<sup>52</sup> "Self-identification without self-negativity is the denial of time." ibid.

<sup>53</sup> "Kokka-teki sonzai no ronri" Tanabe Hajime *Zenshū*, vol. 7. pp. 28-

29

<sup>54</sup> "Ronri no shakai sonzai-ron-teki kōzō" op. cit. p. 361

<sup>55</sup> See Tanabe's critique of Watsuji, ibid. p. 302

<sup>56</sup> ibid. p. 319 (bracketed by Sakai)

<sup>57</sup> ibid. p. 369

<sup>58</sup> ibid. p. 322

<sup>59</sup> ibid. p. 362

<sup>60</sup> ibid. p. 321

<sup>61</sup> See: Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam trans. [New York: Zone Books, 1988]: 37-49.

<sup>62</sup> Henri Bergson, *Essai sur les donnees immediates de la conscience*. Paris: PUF, 1927] pp. 56-104.

<sup>63</sup> "Ronri no shakai-teki kozo" op cit. p. 368

<sup>64</sup> ibid. p. 367

<sup>65</sup> Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, T.M. Knox trans. [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967] p. 279.

<sup>66</sup> "Ronri no shakai sonzai-ron-teki kōzō." op. cit. p. 319 (bracketed by Sakai)

<sup>67</sup> "Kokka sonzai no ronri" op. cit. p. 55.