Graduation Project
Thesis

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Japanese Emptiness: A cultural approach on sustainability

Process Book

Fiona Matsumoto
500731676
International Fashion & Management
Rebecca Breuer, Sander Schellens
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INTRODUCTION INTO THIS BOOK

Purpose and Content

This book consists of all gatherings of my research for the graduation project. It is a document out of collected articles, with comments of my thoughts on the information. In addition, it includes translated summaries or key points of Japanese articles, as well as key notes of books. It serves to understand my research development and validate decisions made. Also, it shows all tools which helped me to get to conclusions, such as images, mind maps or graphs.

Structure

Starting with first thoughts and inspirations, the research findings are categorized into subjects. At the beginning of every subject, the aim of the research, key words and questions are indicated to keep myself reminded of the research purpose. The research is chronologically structured, leading to occasional analytical conclusions.

Indications

The highlights in the articles indicate interesting research findings, which helped me to write the thesis, find further research or make conclusions. Comments in the text boxes are main thoughts on a specific article.
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Graduation Topic Finding

First thoughts:

Feel of discomfort - “Sustainability” came suddenly out of nowhere - seems like mega trend
-> coming from Japan, I feel that there is a sustainable mentality is rooted in traditions and
language -> but Japanese brands seems “behind” in sustainability
I feel some kind of gap between the ideology of Modern Western “sustainability” with
sustainable mentality rooted in diverse culture and history

Especially when talking about the fashion industry as one whole, I got educated on sustainability
within the complexity from an environmental, economic and social viewpoint. It seems to me, as
if there is one ideology on sustainability, which applies to every aspect and every involved party
in the fashion industry.

Western fashion brands are setting examples to be more sustainable, and showing how to
integrate CSR into company's activities. Brands with a sustainable reputation for instance
include Patagonia, Stella McCartney or Filippa K. This got me to question how the state of
sustainability actually is in the Japanese fashion industry in contrast. Knowing from my own
observations and after some brief research, it looks like Japanese fashion brands and Japanese
consumers are “behind” in the sustainability movement. The paradox is, that I experienced
friends or colleagues assuming that Japanese fashion brands must be somewhat “sustainable”,
whether it's a fast fashion or luxury brand, without them promoting themselves as being
sustainable. This got me interested in looking more into the cultural dimension of sustainability.

Aim: Approach “sustainability” from a different perspective

Look into:
- Relationship between sustainability and culture
- Cultural dimension next to the 3 pillars (ecological, economic, social)
- Neo-Colonialism
- Sustainability as term - definitions, linguistics, history, existence in every culture?
- Cultural concept of sustainability - consequences for fashion brands
- Modern Western culture vs. other cultures (e.g. Japan)
- History
INSPIRATION FOR GRADUATION TOPIC
CRITICAL VIEW ON THE WESTERN CONCEPT SUSTAINABILITY

Article: Understanding Sustainability Means Talking About Colonialism

I speak frequently about sustainability in fashion, whether at conferences or in an educational context, and I often hear the same question: “It seems that to have a sustainable ‘lifestyle’ — air quotes around the word lifestyle— one has to be rich. If you can’t afford $600 sweaters, how can you be sustainable?”

Whenever I’m asked this question I am reminded how the mainstream Western perspective on sustainability is focused on one small part of the problem, while ignoring most of the larger important global issues. Yes, clothing production with a priority to limit environmental and human-rights problems is much better than standard fast fashion (and is usually more expensive), but in fact sustainability is a spectrum, and doing less damage is still doing some damage. So you can’t solve sustainability by simply buying things. The game here is about reduction of harm, not binary solutions.

Sourcemap has traced supply chains for most major clothing and apparel manufacturers, and the data mapping it provides show that world trade routes are mostly the same as they were 150 years ago at the height of European colonial exploitation. In the same way that colonized nations provided cheap sugar, chocolate, coffee, and fruit to the West, “developing” nations now provide cheap semi-disposable clothes to the West and global economic upper classes.

Modern Western culture has tried to introduce solutions to sustainability, but those often miss the point, either by focusing only on a small part of the problem or ultimately encouraging more consumption at a higher price. The environmental slogan of the ’80s — Reduce, Reuse, Recycle — has mostly ignored the first two more important R’s and focused on recycling because it encourages consumption and continues to nourish and expand the disposable culture that drives the environmental destruction it is supposed to mitigate. The organic food movement grew from a global need to reduce chemicals and toxins in the environment and in our food, but has ended up at times just a marketing ploy to justify exorbitant pricing.

Some would argue that the solutions must be lab-grown, making them unattainable and expensive. But sustainability is a movement and a culture that has been around long before the West became aware or interested in the concept. Poverty and war create necessity. Let’s look to cultures in the Middle East, North Africa, Africa, and Asia that have practiced sustainability since long before it became a status symbol.

Joëlle Firzli is a Lebanese researcher and fashion curator, born and raised in Ivory Coast, which 200,000 displaced Lebanese people call home, most of whom are second- or third-generation African-Lebanese. She recalls, “For as long as I can remember, I’ve been sewing buttons back onto my shirts. As a little girl I would sew dresses for my dolls. I made clothing for them from
scraps that my mom would give me. For me, this is cultural, I learned it from my mother, who learned it from her mother. There is a certain pride in being able to take care of your things. It’s called craftsmanship. I’m proud of my culture, I’m proud of my African-Lebanese heritage which unconsciously is promoting mending and repairing thus a form of ethical consumption.”

And sustainability shouldn’t just be about making cleaner production, it must be about reducing consumption. By 2030 the world is projected to face 40 percent global water deficit — this means less water for both harvesting food and harvesting cotton. Each year over 80 billion pieces of clothing are produced worldwide, and after a short consumer lifespan, three out of four garments will end up in landfills or be incinerated. Only a quarter will be recycled. The International Labour Organization estimates that 170 million are engaged in child labor, with many making textiles and garments to satisfy the demand of consumers in Europe, the U.S., and beyond.

In fact, we may be entering a new era where luxury is redefined. Instead of being an elitist, unattainable dream reflecting colonial values, in the future luxury could also include respect for human rights and environmental values.

Being able to afford that $600 sweater is not what defines sustainability. It is a cultural movement based on the way you consume. Before you buy something new, think about swapping clothes with your friends, or buying vintage or from a secondhand store. When discarding your clothes, look for a place where they can be recycled instead of shipped to African countries where they are left to rot and damage the economy. Instead of buying a new sweater, why not alter the one you have, extending its lifetime?

In fact, extending the average life of clothes by just three months of active use per item would lead to a 5 to 10 percent reduction in each of the carbon, water, and waste footprints. We need to create a culture of pride around caring for your things.

**THOUGHTS:**
Western concept of sustainability is relatively new, but pushed globally. Is it not strange that West is supposed to be the front runner on sustainability? What is the role of culture in sustainable development of fashion brands?
First Research - *Broad research into culture and sustainability*

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Journal: Exploring the scientific discourse on cultural sustainability


There has been growing interest in policy and among scholars to consider culture as an aspect of sustainable development and even as a fourth pillar. However, until recently, the understanding of culture within the framework of sustainable development has remained vague. In this study, we investigate the scientific discourse on cultural sustainability by analyzing the diverse meanings that are applied to the concept in scientific publications. The analysis shows that the scientific discourse on cultural sustainability is organized around seven storylines: *heritage*, *vitality*, *economic viability*, *diversity*, *locality*, *eco-cultural resilience*, and *eco-cultural civilization*. These storylines are partly interlinked and overlapping, but they differ in terms of some contextualized aspects. They are related to four political and ideological contexts, conservative, neoliberal, communitarian, and environmentalist, which provide interesting perspectives on the political ideologies and policy arenas to which cultural sustainability may refer. Some of the story lines establish the fourth pillar of sustainability, whereas others can be seen as instrumental, contributing to the achievement of social, economic, or ecological goals of sustainability. The eco-cultural civilization storyline suggests culture as a necessary foundation for the transition to a truly sustainable society.

We suggest that one explanation of this new focus on culture is relatively recent acceptance of and openness to the geographical and cultural diversity of the world associated with globalization and localization. We also assume that this interest in culture in relation to sustainability and sustainable development reflects a recent interest in the new roles of culture in society (McGuigan, 2004) and the cultural turn in the sciences, which involves a new way of looking at causality (Ray and Sayer, 1999) and language (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 1994). The cultural turn is associated with the new role of language and discourse, which is seen as not only representing but also constructing realities. Therefore, the cultural turn is often called a linguistic turn, where language and representation as part of culture is questioned, particularly in poststructuralist thought. What do words do? Are our concepts able to represent reality? Or are they ways of seeing the world that reproduce existing power structures in society? Such ideas have influenced many environmental researchers, such as Hajer. These researchers have shown that concepts such as sustainable development are socially constructed and contested in a struggle about meaning, interpretation, and implementation (Hajer, 2005, Hajer and Versteeg,
As meanings and concepts are contested, it becomes obvious that a diversity of meanings exist and that there is no one authoritative interpretation.


Culture in, as and for sustainable development


This article focuses on the need for universities as teaching and research organisations, to recognise and act upon a more culturally inclusive interpretation of ‘sustainable development’ and ‘sustainability’. It argues for the valuing of indigenous worldviews as a means of achieving a more holistic and interdisciplinary way of thinking about the Earth as the home of all people and
as a complement to the beliefs of western science and rational objective thinking. At a more personal level, it challenges readers, especially academics, to re-examine their own ways of thinking and knowing for the sake of creating sustainable futures that are inclusive in its processes, contexts and outcomes.

https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11625-017-0516-3

Applying cultural evolution to sustainability challenges: an introduction to the special issue

Human activity at multiple scales is the primary driver of the environmental challenges humanity faces (Steffen et al. 2007). Numerous scholars have argued that addressing environmental problems will require large-scale change in human behavior and the institutional, social and cultural forces that shape behavior (Princen 2003; Speth 2008; Beddoe et al. 2009; Assadourian 2010; Kinzig et al. 2013). In fact, most definitions of sustainability and sustainable development implicitly or explicitly recognize the need for changes in human perspectives, aspirations, technologies, norms, or worldviews—in short, culture. However, calls for cultural change often stop short of proposing the precise mechanisms through which such change may occur precisely because the relevant mechanisms of behavioral and cultural change are not known. The multiple disciplines that comprise the social sciences and humanities have different and, often competing, theories of cultural change that operate at multiple levels of human organization. These disciplinary differences have been a challenge for sustainability science (Gardner 2013), and the absence of a robust, non-disciplinary, theoretical framework hinders progress towards a deeper understanding of when and how sustainable social-ecological systems emerge (Levin and Clark 2010). Recently, sustainability scientists have been explicit about the need to incorporate mechanisms of cultural change in their research (Beddoe et al. 2009; Caldas et al. 2015) and to clarify the exact mechanisms involved (Ehrlich and Levin 2005; Waring et al. 2015). Importantly, cultural evolution theory offers an integrative approach to studying the dynamics of cultural change based on causal models of the mechanisms through which individual and population processes interact.

Despite many examples of sustainable resource management, exploitative and unsustainable resource management are common (Steffen et al. 2007). However, cultural change may be important for driving the proliferation of sustainable practices. This is because, although evolved genetic mechanisms, ecological processes, and socio-cultural mechanisms all influence resource use, social conditions often change more quickly than ecological conditions and cultural evolution is more rapid than genetic evolution (Perreault 2012). As such, there is an urgent need for sustainability scientists to develop more holistic or inclusive models to explain
and integrate socio-cultural mechanisms of change at both individual and institutional levels (Borgerhoff Mulder and Coppolillo 2005). Such models are needed to inform sustainability policy solutions that can be applied cross-culturally and in divergent contexts. Currently, however, the dynamics of cultural change are not well understood in the context of sustainability. By focusing on applications of cultural evolution, we view this special issue as a starting point for determining how we can harness processes of cultural change (Wilson et al. 2014) to build more sustainable communities and societies.

The cultural multilevel selection (CMLS) framework recognizes the potential for evolutionary pressures to operate on multiple scales simultaneously. This framework is particularly valuable because it has been used to explain the evolution of cooperation (Wilson 1975; Traulsen and Nowak 2006; Wilson and Wilson 2007), which is an almost ubiquitous challenge in the context of sustainability and sustainable resource use. CMLS and related models also help explain the social transmission of altruistic behavior (Wilson and Kniffin 1999), resource conservation under climate instability (Safarzynska 2013), the emergence of economic institutions (Bowles et al. 2003), and the evolution of sustainable resource management institutions (Waring et al. 2017). As such, we see cultural evolution as a tool that allows sustainability scientists to incorporate cultural dynamics into their work, especially the emergence and spread of sustainable behaviors, practices, norms, and institutions.

“Such models are needed to inform sustainability policy solutions that can be applied cross-culturally and in divergent contexts. Currently, however, the dynamics of cultural change are not well understood in the context of sustainability.” (Wilson et al. 2014)

https://www.pnas.org/content/112/27/8157.short

Integrating the analysis of natural and social systems to achieve sustainability has been an international scientific goal for years (1, 2). However, full integration has proven challenging, especially in regard to the role of culture (3), which is often missing from the complex sustainability equation. To enact policies and practices that can achieve sustainability, researchers and policymakers must do a better job of accounting for culture, difficult though this task may be.

The concept of culture is complex, with hundreds of definitions that for years have generated disagreement among social scientists (4). Understood at the most basic level, culture constitutes shared values, beliefs, and norms through which people “see,” interpret, or give meaning to ideas, actions, and environments. Culture is often used synonymously with “worldviews” or “cosmologies” (5, 6) to explain the patterned ways of assigning meanings and interpretations among individuals within groups. Used in this way, culture has been found to
have only limited empirical support as an explanation of human risk perception (7, 8) and environmentalism (9).

**Culture and sustainability**

Packalén, Sture

**ABSTRACT**

Sustainability is only attainable if we regard it as a culture-transforming, creative project for the entire society. It is therefore important to discuss the potential of art and culture for shaping a desirable future. A vital culture and sustainable development go hand in hand. Sustainability can be seen as a constant, ongoing process of searching and self-reflection about our present and our future. The search must consist of a constant review of social norms, values, and practical approaches. The search and reflection need culture as a medium to give shape to the communication that is necessary in order for sustainable development to come about in the economic, ecological and social spheres. Copyright © 2010 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd and ERP Environment.

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**Keywords:** culture and sustainability; the cultural dimension of sustainability; cultural programming; concrete utopia; dialogue with culture; computer games and sustainability; intercultural communication

**Introduction**

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MEANS AND DEMANDS GREAT CHANGE FOR ALL OF US. THIS CHANGE CAN ONLY SUCCEED if we consider it a necessary undertaking for the whole of society, as a great, culturally transforming, creative task, as a kind of ‘concrete utopia’, to quote the German philosopher Ernst Bloch (1986). Apart from ecology, economics and the social fabric, it is therefore important to discuss the potential of art and culture in the shaping of a desirable future. A culture that is vital and a social development that is sustainable go hand in hand. Responsibility, ethics, and aesthetics go together. One can therefore see the debate about what sustainable development really is as a discourse about ways of thinking, values, culture and lifestyles. Everything we do is culturally determined and that includes economic, profit-motivated actions. Lifestyle patterns and the values of our society are affected to just as great a degree as science, technology, and education. The question now is simply how can the potential for change and development of our culture be accommodated in the context of a more comprehensive strategy for sustainable development?

It may be that we should not regard sustainability as a goal that is 100% attainable, like a catalog of demands which can be ticked off, but rather as a kind of compass which will help us to keep in the right direction on the course of a continually ongoing process of investigation and self-analysis regarding our own times and the future. As I see it, with regard to sustainable development there are no simple answers to the question of how we set about it, where we are going, and how we should get there. But in the process of looking for the way to go, which must by its nature be in a constant state of flux involving the revision of norms, value systems, and more practical approaches, culture is needed as a medium which can give shape to the communication and action that is necessary so that sustainable development can be achieved on ecological, economic and social planes. In other words, the cultural dimension, by means of reflection, development and changes in our values, forms the basis for sustainable development, but also produces new culture itself.

As I see, it is important to move from a one-sided panic-induced ecological worst-case scenario toward a broader evolution scenario which puts the shaping of our future society by means of culture in the foreground. Up until now there has been an overwhelmingly one-sided emphasis on the technical and
biological aspects of environmental questions (e.g., energy crises, emissions quotas, fossil fuels, dam-building projects, threatened species, deforestation of rainforests, and melting ice caps). The people involved in the debate about sustainability have often been politicians, environmental activists, forecasters, and experts of various kinds, but not ordinary people. But if the voices of ordinary people are to be heard, and if the ordinary person is to understand what sustainable development is about, then the cultural dimension must be given much more prominence than before. That the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize went to the climate group, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), with its many eminent researchers, is naturally evidence of the importance of science and the seriousness of the situation. But the question is whether it would have been awarded the prize if it hadn’t been for Al Gore’s book and Davis Guggenheim’s film, which highlighted the human aspects of the problems; their narrative power popularized and, not least, politicized the climate-change question.

As early as 1992, in paragraph 21 of the Rio Declaration it was urged that 'The creativity, ideals and courage of the youth of the world should be mobilized to forge a global partnership in order to achieve sustainable development and ensure a better future for all', and yet there was a failure to grasp the potential for development which culture and art have in our societies. In fact, the word ‘culture’ occurs only once in the manifesto and then only in connection with indigenous populations in paragraph 22. Things had changed by the time of the UNESCO’s World Conference on Cultural Policies for Development in Stockholm in 1998, i.e., six years later, when it was expressly emphasized that ‘Sustainable development and the flourishing of culture are interdependent.’

The cultural dimension and its interaction with social and economic parameters were also emphasized at the World Summit Meeting in Johannesburg in 2002. The problem is, however, that we live in a more and more specialized world where water-tight compartments separate areas of human endeavor, and as a result ‘culture’ never gets a fair chance. Thus, as a counterweight to the technocratic tendencies in society, we need to seriously consider the importance of history, literature, language, music, and art for human well-being and thus of sustainable development. We must seriously re-evaluate our lifestyle and ask ourselves: What is the ‘good life’ and how can it be integrated with an aesthetic content which consists of more than simply a beautiful surface?

What is needed is that the concept of sustainable development should be more thoroughly thought through and extended so that the cultural dimension is on a par with, or rather permeates, the ecological, economic, and social dimensions like a red thread running through a thick rope, clearly visible for all to see. This also means that we need to have a broad conception of ‘culture’ comprising both human beings and nature, that is to say that we do not regard culture as something that begins where nature ends, which is how we have tended to regard it in the past. It is important not to use the term ‘culture’ thoughtlessly, but to bear in mind, and keep separate the two major ingredients of the concept of culture. On the one hand culture is composed of all the traditional elements that make up cultural policy, i.e., theater, film, music, art, architecture, literature, museums, etc. On the other hand, culture is an anthropological and sociological concept, i.e., it comprises all that we mean when we talk about norms, values, assumptions, traditions, and practices. And it is this aspect of culture which we need to reconsider in every sphere, from politics and economics to our very own lifestyles. The reason why the cultural dimension has been so much overshadowed may be that the two different elements in the concept of culture have been confused with one another, and so the concept has become diffuse. What needs to be done, therefore, is to see how both aspects of culture – the traditional and the anthropological – can complement each other in a fruitful way. Communication, flexibility, and openness with regard to the unfamiliar, but also critical reflection on our ‘own’ culture, are important in this context.

This is, for example, where intercultural communication comes in as an important factor for seeing that the dialogue between the cultures of different countries is conducted on a proper level of mutual respect. Every fifth person in Sweden today is of foreign birth and there are more than 100 000 people of Iraqi background in Sweden. They are now the second largest immigrant group, after the Finns, with whom we share a long historical association. But how well prepared are we for meeting the Iraqis in our society?
What do we know of one of the world’s oldest culture, other than that it is in the process of being blown apart by car bombs? And what indeed do we even know about our own Swedish value system?

We can say that collectively we are programmed by our culture. But our individual ‘cultural programming’ never reveals itself at a conscious level, or, to use computerspeak: it never comes up on the screen but nevertheless controls the way in which we use our human documents. Finding out what these concealed mechanisms are is part of intercultural communication. This skill is, it seems to me, neglected, but it is extremely important for a socially sustainable development. Authors who have dealt with these questions are, for example, the Swedish writer Jonas Hassen Khemiri, the English author Zadie Smith, Chimo, who is French, and the German writer Feridun Zaimoglu. They write with insight and self-consciousness about life and about the ambivalences of existence; they have as their starting point that area between cultures where cultural differences are produced and where identity is constantly changing. By means of their books, these writers are excellent examples of how literature can arouse emotions and bring alive critical reflections about intercultural questions, something which is crucial for socially sustainable development.

This ability to arouse feelings and create emotional empathy is an especially important aspect of culture. If sustainable development is to be able to attract people and engage their interest, if it is to be able to appeal to our feelings and senses, then beauty, as aesthetics or design, as we often hear it described nowadays, must be a fundamental building block; otherwise sustainable development will have no future. Sustainability must not only appeal to our reason but also to our emotions; otherwise it will end up like those early Motorola mobile phones: they had everything except good design and aesthetic appeal so that Nokia won the race. The example of telephones is also illustrative of the fact that it is not always possible to produce desired behavior purely on the basis of rational planning; our actions are very often steered by underlying values, and it is these that we have to try to influence. Values precede planning: isn’t this how marketing consultants usually argue?

What then is the most important role of art and literature, nay of culture in general, in this context?

Sustainability presupposes that the creative human being is of central importance, for if we are to be able to come up with ideas for sustainable development then this presupposes flexibility and creativity in the human race. This does not mean, of course, that artists and writers should see it as their task to visualize ecological disasters or an author’s moral call for action. Nor should they have a merely decorative role, acting as a kind of ‘high’ cultural icing on the cake, and it is not their function to try to pass on the findings of technical or economic experts. It isn’t, therefore, a question of making art and literature into instruments for the use of others, or into kinds of communicative strategies for sustainable development. Art and literature are visionary; they are valuable in themselves and are not to be confused with commerce. If it were otherwise and the cultural dimension were to be seen as a kind of marketing then we would never be able create something with genuine appeal, i.e., a true engagement with the issue of sustainability.

What we must do is to try to bring about a dialogue, a common experimentation between writers, film-makers and artists on the one hand and those in civil authorities who are advocating sustainable development. Artists and writers, using their own ideas and thinking differently can help by working across artistic boundaries and genres, by seeing holistically and finding new perspectives. Artists and writers have the ability to communicate ideas, visions, and existential experiences by means of symbols and pictures. Everyone, for example, understands at once the message of Fredrik Reuterswärd’s ‘non-violence’ sculpture, the revolver with a knotted barrel, which stands outside the headquarters of the United Nations in New York, and whose image has spread all over the world. According to former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, it is a monument that no one who has visited the UN building ever forgets. In an open letter to the artist, Annan noted: ‘For those who come to visit the United Nations headquarters in New York, it is usually the first thing they see.’ ‘Non-violence’, wrote the Secretary-General, has ‘enriched the consciousness of humanity with a powerful symbol’ (Annan, 2001).

Thus the dialogue with culture is extremely important, especially in view of the fact that the very concept, sustainable development, is normative and is therefore in constant danger of becoming fossilized and turning into an ideology. In order for that not to happen and in order that the concept of sustainable
development shall not be simply a kind of goldleaf that gilds a normative approach, openness to new and different perspectives is crucial.

The cultural dimension has so far not played a very large role in the discussions around sustainability. But, as said before, art, culture, and education have direct connections with the values that we hold in society and with quality of life. This means that only those who are insightful about the human condition can understand the causes of complex problems and are in a position to find solutions which are sustainable. It is thus my firm conviction that only a broadly based project that makes use not only of technical, economic, and legalistic strategies, but also of all the resources of culture at our disposal, can bring about sustainable development that has a future. In other words, it is not only in the external physical environment, but just as much in our cultures, i.e., in our heads, that change has to take place, if we are to have a world that is sustainable for the human race in the future.

Why is that important in the sustainability debate? First of all, because it explains to a large extent why it has proven impossible to deal with GHG emissions by means of a worldwide, ‘top-down’ treaty such as the Kyoto treaty or the UNFCCC. Every nation, every region, has a different perception of what needs to be done and how to do it. Whereas it was possible for nations in a phase of plenty to agree (as in Kyoto) on an ambitious goal, once circumstances changed (due to the 2008 financial crisis) the implementation of those promises became much more problematic because people’s perceptions of the challenges, their means and their economic structure differed too much. Although the challenge is global, finding potential solutions has to happen locally (or, as the case may be, regionally or nationally).

If we are to plan our future, we must adopt an ‘ex ante’ perspective, linking learning from the past to learning about the present and to learning for the future.

Finally, I would argue that it would greatly help if we complemented working on a national, regional or local scale by working on a global scale. Many of these issues are global, even if the solutions to be found are local or regional. Knowing the global context will help us deal better with the potential unintended consequences of our actions.

THOUGHTS:
- Researchers have been addressing the importance of culture in the sustainability discourse -> it is a relevant point
- It is important to define sustainability and culture, since every source has different concepts or connotations of both terms
- Not all articles are relevant, but I got an idea of what kind of research has been done
- Good source: Culture in, as and for sustainable development -> can be useful for defining culture
THOUGHTS:
- There have been debates about the role of culture in sustainability/sustainable development - this is not yet discussed in the context of fashion -> analyse myself what this means for the fashion industry!
- Personal feeling: There is a gap between “Sustainability” as Western ideology and cultural concepts of sustainability (e.g. in Japan)
- Japan had sustainable culture -> Westernization happened -> Economic growth -> lost sustainable culture to be global player -> Now West is showing how to be sustainable??
COACHING - 07.02.19

- Sustainability is a **container word**
- It is ok to start with intuition, but give examples and proof with research
- A culture can indicate fertile ground for creating a more sustainable industry
- **A word is culturally determined** (Saussere) -> Can there be one global term “sustainability” which means the same for everyone?
  - **To what degree does a culture influence the meaning of sustainability -> Case study**
- As long as the word “sustainability” exists, it is an ideology - not concrete

Can we continue using the term “Sustainability” without enforcing an ideology?

**TO DO:**
- Look into the history of the sustainability movement
- Research into sustainability as ideology
- Define sustainability
- Define culture

**THOUGHTS:**
- **Sustainability is so complex, it gets superficial - are you a sustainable brand because the word is used on your website? -> the word gets misused to make it easier for consumers**
- **Sustainability is so superficially used in fashion! - where is the depth?**
- **Can we appreciate different cultural meanings of sustainability instead of forcing on one meaning?**
### DEFINITION SUSTAINABILITY

**Aim** of research: understand the origin of sustainability and its definitions

Key words: sustainability, sustainable development

**Question:** How can sustainability be defined?

**Methods:** Journals, web articles, books

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The Circular Economy - A new sustainability paradigm?

The Brundtland Commission also provided the most commonly accepted definition of sustainability as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland, 1987).

The term sustainability itself originates in the French verb *soutenir*, “to hold up or support” (Brown et al.,1987) and its modern conception has its origins in forestry. It is based on the silvicultural principle that the amount of wood harvested should not exceed the volume that grows again. This conceptualisation was written down already in the early 18th century in “Sylvicultura oeconomica” (von Carlowitz, 1713), and there seem to be even older sources that follow the underlying principles in face of shortages in wood supply and the husbandry of cooperative systems (Mantel, 1990). Later, it was transferred to the context of ecology, as a principle of respecting the ability of nature to regenerate itself (Duden, 2015), from where the modern definition of being "able to be maintained at a certain rate or level" (Dictionary, 2010) developed.

Johnston et al. (2007) estimated that there are around 300 definitions of sustainability. To cite but a few, sustainability can be defined as a situation in which human activity is conducted in a way that conserves the functions of the earth’s ecosystems (ISO 15392, 2008 ), a transformation of human lifestyle that optimises the likelihood that living conditions will continuously support security, well-being, and health, particularly by maintaining the supply of non-replaceable goods and services (McMichael et al.,2003), or an indefinite perpetuation of all life forms (Ehrenfeld, 2010). The concept's uptake can be traced back to the increasing evidence on global-scale environmental risks, such as ozone depletion, climate change, biodiversity loss or the alteration of the nitrogen cycle. These risks have been systematically investigated since the 1960s, raising questions about whether present prosperity trends can be maintained in the future (Clark and Crutzen,2005; Rockström et al., 2009) and, consequently, revealing many sources of tensions. This includes, for example, the limited store of resources, its uneven geographical distribution and appropriation (e.g. Georgescu-Roegen, 1977), and the implications of the assimilative capacities of ecosystems over economic growth (e.g. Daly and Townsend, 1993).

Particularly relevant to the widespread diffusion of the term and its most contemporary understandings is the so-called **triple bottom line** (Elkington, 1997), the three pillars of sustainability: people, profit, and planet. After the World Summit in 2002, the triple bottom line has been referred to as the balanced integration of economic, environmental and social performance. The three spheres are systemically intertwined and continuously and cumulatively affect one another through mutual causality and positive feedbacks (Mckelvey, 2002). In other words, they act as “as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars” (UN General Assembly,
that can be adapted to a broad range of different contexts and time horizons (Wise, 2016).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origins of the term</th>
<th>Sustainability</th>
<th>Circular Economy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental movements, NGOs, non-profit and intergovernmental agencies, principles in silviculture and cooperative systems</td>
<td>Different schools of thought like cradle-to-cradle, regulatory implementation by governments, lobbying by NGOs like the EMF, inclusion in political agendas, e.g. European Horizon 2020</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Open-ended, multitude of goals depending on the considered agent and her interests</th>
<th>Closed loop, ideally eliminating all resource input into and leakage out of the system</th>
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<tr>
<th>Main motivation</th>
<th>Diffused and diverse reflexivity and adaptive -- past trajectories</th>
<th>Better use of resources, waste, leakage (from linear to circular)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What system is prioritised?</th>
<th>Triple bottom line (horizontal)</th>
<th>The economic system (hierarchical)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To whose benefit?</td>
<td>The environment, the economy, and society at large.</td>
<td>Economic actors are at the core, benefiting the economy and the environment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How did they institutionalise (wide diffusion)?</th>
<th>Providing vague framing that can be adapted to different contexts and aspirations.</th>
<th>Emphasising economic and environmental benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Agency (Who influences? Who should influence?) | Diffused (priorities should be defined by all stakeholders) | Governments, companies, NGOs |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe of changes</th>
<th>Open-ended, sustain current status “indeﬁnitely”</th>
<th>Theoretical limits to optimisation and practical ones to implementation could set input and leakage thresholds for the successful conclusion of the implementation of a Circular Economy</th>
</tr>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions of responsibilities</th>
<th>Responsibilities are shared, but not clearly defined</th>
<th>Private business and regulators/policymakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Commitments, goals, and interests behind the use of the term | Interest alignment between stakeholders, e.g. less waste is good for the environment, organisational proﬁts, and consumer prices | Economic/ﬁnancial advantages for companies, and less resource consumption and pollution for the environment |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### Culture in, as and for sustainable development

**Sustainability or sustainable development?**

In our work we have taken the Brundtland’s report on sustainable development and the pillar-approach to sustainable development as one of our principal starting point. The Brundtland definition of ‘sustainable development’ is world-famous: “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Although the definition talks about sustainable development, sustainability has also become popular. The two terms are often used interchangeably; are they therefore synonyms? Presumably not - a number of governments and global business corporations are prepared to discuss policies for sustainable development, but pull back from sustainability. It may be that for such governments sustainable development is ‘safe’ in its implication that any type of development can go ahead as long as it is mitigated usually in practice environmentally, occasionally in theory at least socially. ‘Sustainability’, in contrast, with its implication that an association with further development is not essential, can seem threatening to those sectoral interests for whom ‘growth’ (usually defined as economic growth) is the only way ahead. This would suggest that ‘sustainability’ is a term with a more reaching set of objectives and values, one that can support de-growth and no growth agendas as well as growth, one that might have social equity and justice not economic prosperity as its goal.

Sustainable development or sustainability is usually seen as a win-win-win solution between ecological (protection), social (justice) and economic (viability), hence the widely-used model of the three pillars, or axes [4]. Other pillars like institutional, cultural and other dimensions of sustainability have been proposed [5]. Our position is that, whilst acknowledging some shortcomings related to the pillar model (reduction of reality and
culture and leading to sectoral rather than cross-sectoral/disciplinary thinking), we also recognize their value as metaphors in sustainability debates, as relatively well-accepted and understood tools, and therefore as means to explore the role of culture in that framework and bring it to the policy debate.

DEFINITION CULTURE

Aim of research: Define culture for use in further research
Question: **How can culture be defined?**
Methods: Journals, web articles, dictionary

**Doing cultural studies: the story of the walkman**

What is culture (notes)
- “It is worth starting by acknowledging that this is a difficult concept”
- 1976: culture as one of the four or five key concepts in modern social knowledge; culture as the process of human development, civilization as synonym during the Enlightenment
- 19th century: culture as the way of life of particular groups, peoples, nations or periods
- Latter half of 19th century: acquired more restrictive meaning: state of intellectual refinement associated with the arts, philosophy and learning
- 19-20th century: definition emphasizes the relation of culture to meaning
- Williams, 1961: culture is a description of a particular way of life which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and the learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour. The analysis of culture, is the clarification of the meanings and values implicit and explicit in particular ways of life, a particular “culture”
- Close definition to “collective representations”: shared understandings which bound individuals together in society, referred to the shared or common meanings, values and norms of particular peoples as expressed in their behavior, rituals, institutions, myths, religious beliefs and art
- Culture is connected with the role of meanings in society
- Meanings are given through representation - language (words, photography, painting, speech, writing, imaging through technology, drawing) - use of set of signs

**National Culture**
https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/national-culture/19905

The set of norms, behaviors, beliefs, customs, and values shared by the population of a sovereign nation. Also refers to specific characteristics such as language, religion, ethnic and racial identity, and cultural history and traditions.
Culture in, as and for sustainable development

“Culture represents and creates wider relations between human and nature, past, present and future, the materialised and the imagined world.” [16]

**SUSTAINABILITY AS WESTERN MOVEMENT**

**Aim** of research: History of sustainable movement in fashion, understand where it comes from
Keywords: sustainability/sustainable movement in fashion, Ethical Fashion
Question: Where did sustainability in fashion come from and how did it develop?
Methods: Field research, Books

Summary of sustainable movement in fashion (SOURCE: FASHION FOR GOOD)
Industrial Revolution -> Mass production -> Outsourcing -> actions against sweatshops, activists put pressure on brands -> Fast fashion flourishes -> Clothing production increases, prices fall -> industry wide standards for environmental sustainability, awareness about chemicals -> Rana Plaza incident -> activist campaigns -> celebrities show sustainable fashion
When did the sustainable fashion movement begin?

Many scholars believe that the roots of the sustainable fashion movement can be traced back to the 1960s and 1970s, in correspondence to rising concerns over the environment. Yet issues surrounding topics such as labor relations, animal rights and the mass production of clothing have long been subjects of discourse. Designers today face problems that date at least as far back as the nineteenth century—when technological developments resulted in quickly produced but inferior textiles, for example. Mechanization and mass production have escalated into the manufacture of cheap, disposable clothing that has become all too common in the industry.

Problems related to fashion production escalated throughout the twentieth century. By the 1940s, a number of designers were experimenting with synthetic fibers, many of which will take hundreds of years to biodegrade. “Natural” fibers, especially cotton, were grown using large amounts of chemical fertilizer and pesticides, polluting both soil and water supplies. Despite ethical concerns, animal products, especially fur, became increasingly fashionable luxury commodities. Throughout the United States, garment workers’ unions formed to promote fair wages and healthy work environments. This has prompted a reactionary response of outsourcing of production to third-world countries, where workers are paid very little and labor conditions are often dangerous.

The need for significant change in fashion production was established by the 1960s. Often viewed as the foundation of the environmentalist movement, Rachel Carson’s book Silent Spring (1962) specifically referenced the use of pesticides in floor growth, as well as the damage caused by fabric finishes. By the end of the decade, the “natural” look of the hippies was associated with environmentalism. Several elements of their clothing choices—earth tones, hemp fabric and patchwork, for example—were considered prototypes for some of today’s sustainable fashions. Many of today’s chic styles, however, are a far cry from their early 1970s counterparts.

As environmental problems—and their possible solutions—have evolved, so has sustainable fashion. Today, there are a number of ways to “go green.” While the choice of organic fabrics seems an obvious method, others, including “investment” purchases of high-quality, long-lasting goods, are perceived as a way to slow consumerism. No matter the approach, the challenge for designers is to provide sustainable fashions that are affordable, diverse and accessible—and to do so without compromising aesthetic value. However difficult that may be, sustainable fashion provides opportunities for new, creative approaches to design, and industry experts feel optimistic about its future. A 2012 consumer study found that of over 6,000 people surveyed, two-thirds were aware of the importance of ethical fashion. Once viewed as a trend, sustainable fashion today is widely considered an influential part of the environmentalist movement. This book will examine and discuss fashion’s relationship with the environment—past, present, and future.

SUMMARY:

- roots of sustainability movement: 60s and 70s - reaction to environmental issues
- Prior to that, problems related to fashion production appeared and escalated throughout the 20th century (synthetic fibers, fur, chemicals in cotton)
- Foundation of the movement: “Silent Spring” (1962) explaining environmental damages
- End of 60s: Natural look of Hippies associated with environmentalism
THOUGHTS:
Sustainability movement in fashion started in West, shows that it is a modern Western concept.
Be critical: The ideology on sustainability is pushed on to other nations - especially visible in the fashion industry - e.g. Japanese are getting interested in sustainability because of the West and take Western examples on how to be more sustainable - there is a paradox in this because culturally speaking, Japan should have a more sustainable mindset rooted in history and traditions. The question arises: Does culture have no influence in sustainability?

SUSTAINABILITY AS IDEOLOGY

![Graph showing the frequency of use of the word "sustainable" over time.]

The word "sustainable" is unsustainable.
Throughout the research on the sustainability movement in fashion, I have noticed how the Western brands are always presented as the “frontrunner”, and “example”.

-> Lead me towards a search into the “Sustainability” category of WGSN
Aim of research: Proof the relevance of the issue with recent news
Question: What kind of opinion are there on the Western dominance, What are the words to describe this, what recent happening in fashion are visible
Methods: Journals, web articles, WGSN, fashion news platforms


In the world of sustainability, colonialism is not dead

Decades after the end of colonialism, Western domination in the areas of sustainable development and environmental protection threaten to undermine our efforts towards a more equal, sustainable future.

Last week, Scandinavian fashion label and global It-brand Ganni hardly caused a stir when it closed Copenhagen Fashion Week with a sustainability-themed showcase titled “Life on Earth.”

Considering that sustainability is now a consumer trend, it is no surprise that a luxury brand touted as “a magnet for cool girls all over the planet” aimed to boost its street cred with a show that put sustainability at its core.

The problem? Photographs of brown, underprivileged women in developing countries served as the backdrop for a runway of mostly white, European models decked in designer clothing, with no mention of their stories, and how these connected in relation to the brand, or sustainability for that matter. [...] 

Eco-colonialism?

The term eco-colonialism is practically unheard of in the mainstream conversation on sustainability. However, government agencies and civil groups worldwide have recently used it to refer to the behaviour and policies of developed, Western nations who currently serve as the loudest voices on environmental protection today.

Earlier this year, Malaysia’s Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) accused the European Union (EU) of “economic colonisation” for its move to ban palm oil in biofuels by 2020, in a bid to halt deforestation. The country has also claimed the ban to be “discriminatory” as it favours European-grown oils such as rapeseed and sunflower, while diverting attention away from domestic environmental issues.

In an interview, a spokesperson for FELDA said: “It’s the same colonial attitudes, the white man imposing their rule on us from afar.”

Palm oil contributes significantly to the economies of Asian palm-oil exporting countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia, where poor, smallholder farmers in these countries account for almost half of palm oil output and thus depend on the commodity for economic survival.

Europe, in this case, is only considering their own priorities and not those of people in Malaysia and Indonesia, while still using palm oil in everything else from soap and cosmetics to crackers and ice cream.

Putting a freeze on a crop that is most significant in accelerating social and economic development of many countries across Africa and Southeast Asia carries the shadow of
neocolonialism, which includes a powerful state exercising control over another through economic or monetary means.

Another issue that stinks of green imperialism is the plastic waste trade, which gained attention after China banned foreign waste imports in January last year to protect its environment. Forced to deal with their own rubbish, China’s move was met with backlash from British and American companies, even prompting a senior director at the Institute for Scrap Recycling Industries in Washington to say: “Do they (China) care about the global environment or only their own environment because we are land-filling perfectly good materials now because of the actions that they’re taking.”

Some also took the easier route, by redirecting their waste to Southeast Asia and swamping local ports and recycling plants across the region in the process. This led to a backlash from several countries such as Malaysia, Vietnam and Thailand, who subsequently banned plastic waste imports.

Thailand and Vietnam are among the five countries that were ranked as the most marine polluting countries in the world, making Asia the target of international criticism over their waste management practices and unsustainable consumer lifestyles, despite the fact they are usually at the receiving end of rich nations’ waste.

This has created an unequal picture of global waste, in which developed nations, who are more likely to engage in overconsumption, are deflected from blame. However, most media attention has focused on plastic-choked oceans in Asia while spotlighting environmental movements in the West that want to wipe out plastic straws and switch to more durable, dearer items—lifestyle practices that are out of reach for many in the developing world.

As this opinion piece by geography experts at the University of Guelph, Canada, puts well: “If we understand waste, not as something produced by the actions of a group of individuals, but rather a product of socioeconomic systems that contribute to making waste and encourages wasting, problems with these dominant explanations arise. We start to see that Western consumers are part of the problem and cannot be absolved of their responsibility.”

The most unsustainable societies are Western societies, but they make it an Asian problem. Chandran Nair, founder, Global Institute for Tomorrow

Chandran Nair, Malaysian founder of Hong Kong-based think tank Global Institute for Tomorrow, writes in his book The Sustainable State that the problem with today's sustainable development narrative is that it is understood from the perspective of advanced economies rather than developing ones. He notes that discussions are often led by Western experts who rarely confronted the unsustainable means by which their own economies had grown.

Speaking with Nair at Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, he weighed in on our shared view that the Western-dominated sustainability space often rang hypocritical and is reminiscent of colonial habits such as paternalism, victim-blaming and exporting problems.
This always seemed strangely ironic to me, that the West was leading the world into a sustainable future, after almost worldwide adoption of a Western economic model that thrives on overconsumption has resulted in the pillaging of the earth.

“The most unsustainable societies are Western societies, but they make it an Asian problem,” said Nair. “Now these societies are also providing us with solutions from their thought leaders. There’s something wrong with this picture.”

That conversation with Nair drove home the flaw in our current narrative: sustainability often focuses on the demands and desires of the developed, and largely Western world, while failing to address the more complex barriers that the majority of the world has towards achieving a sustainable way of life.

Real solutions lie in radically shifting the global conversation to one rooted in local needs and contexts, and coming up with knowledge-based ideas and policies that are independent of Western models. Sustainability has to furthermore be more inclusive of other voices outside of the Western mainstream—especially communities long marginalised by it—by striving for true representation that does not perpetuate damaging colonial mentalities.

Not doing so runs the risk of supporting a global structure of inequality that will do no good to our quest for sustainability.

**THOUGHTS:**
- Use “Eco-Colonialism” as heading
- Western economic model focused on growth has been major reason for overconsumption, leading to pollution, waste problem, etc.
- However, West is “leading” sustainability -> Also visible in fashion

https://oursecondskin.com

**GANNI FW 19 TONE DEAF by Anaa Saber**

I need to take a break from all this fashion week hype to talk about something that has made me feel extremely uncomfortable. Today, I attended The Ganni FW 19 show “LIFE ON EARTH” during Copenhagen Fashion Week, which was centered on “sustainability” and the “global Ganni girl”.

The set design used pictures taken by National Geographic photographer Ami Vitale, who travels to and photographs developing countries, such as India and Sri Lanka. Throughout the show, there was a slideshow of images in the background, depicting underprivileged women in these countries, while models gallivanted across the runway in their shiny clothes and thigh-high boots. How were these pictures of poor brown women aligned with the theme of sustainability and life on earth? How did this show benefit these women in any way? Was this part of a campaign to raise awareness regarding the issues these women may face?
The brand fetishized these women and used them as props and marketing tools for their fashion show. This was not a platform for these marginalized women to get representation; they were not treated as humans with agency and with stories of their own to tell. Instead, **they are shown through the ‘white’ gaze, reduced only to their aesthetic value.** It looked “cool” in the background, right? It “gelled well” with the aesthetic of depicting the “human spirit” and “the energy of life on earth in all forms”, right (This is how the brand justified its set design)? Wrong. My people are not your aesthetic.

It’s worrying how this got approved to begin with. From the photography to the set design, did this pass before any people of color? Did nobody in management realize how this would be perceived by non-white audience members? This is precisely why building diverse teams are so critical for our industry.

The **fashion industry likes to throw around buzzwords like “diversity, inclusivity, and sustainability”, without introspecting on how exactly they are promoting these causes. It is highly unlikely that the women in these photographs received any compensation for “participating” in this fashion show, where the brand probably benefited and monetized off this seemingly incredible and groundbreaking show.**

This is not just meant to call out Ganni for being problematic. This is a larger pattern of exploitation rampant in the fashion industry. The truth is, it is exactly women like the ones in these pictures that are worst affected by our industry: poor wages, unfair treatment, terrible working conditions in sweatshops that manufacture clothing for many western brands. This is particularly painful given how “progressive” the fashion industry likes to tell themselves they are.

This is how the fashion industry of the west treats women of color.

Stop being tone deaf and blind to your own internalized colonial mentality. The fashion industry needs to do better. I’m disappointed in a brand I truly loved.
Research - Japan and sustainability

**Aim** of research: Validate graduation topic further on, find enough literature on the topic, find sources which validate relevance of the topic, define terminology.
Desk research with **key words**: sustainability, sustainable development, culture
**Question:** How is the Japanese culture connected to sustainability?
**Methods:** Journals, web articles, books

1. **Western sources**

**Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion: East Asia**

**Japan - The Japanese fashion industry’s impact on global markets (section)**

“There is a potential for Japan to become a leader in the rapidly growing movement toward sustainability. The country’s culture, which embraces the idea of being in harmony with nature and mottainai, provides basic values that encourage this trend. The Japanese people’s historical practices of making efficient use of kimono fabric throughout various recycled and reinvented uses from kimono, to children’s wear, to rags, and finally pieces for use as plaster mix, provides testimony that Japanese culture may already be vanguard of this movement. “

**THOUGHTS:**
- Not seen as leader - west is the leader
- But: Japanese culture might be forefront


Generally, the concept of Ethical Fashion has yet to become widely understood by Japanese consumers. Japanese consumers are known for their high standards for quality and most principles of Ethical Fashion traditionally exist in the Japanese culture as demonstrated by the Japanese term Mottainai. This term conveys a sense of regret concerning waste, and discreetly promotes maintenance and long-term use of an item. However in the recent years, and contrary to the principles of Mottainai, fast fashion has been commonplace in Japan and taken over such traditional ideas.
'Sustainability' in a Japanese way

BY STEPHEN HESSE

FEB 22, 2009

Takeshi Hara is an accomplished journalist, author and educator, and at 70 years of age he could easily choose to rest on his laurels.

But with the energy of a teenager and a “Never give up!” motto, he is dedicated to promoting environmental sustainability based on Japanese history and culture.

As fate would have it, Hara contacted me while I was writing my January column about environmental education and social change. He asked if I was interested in hearing about his latest project — and piqued my interest with mention of what he calls “Environmental Japanology.”

Hara graduated from the Waseda University law faculty and became a career journalist with the Mainichi Shimbun newspaper. He has published numerous books in Japanese on the environment, and in 1993 he won a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Global 500 Award for his work in broadcasting. In 1998 he became a professor in Waseda’s Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, and is now a visiting professor there and at the Tokyo University of Agriculture.

These days, however, Hara’s passion is Waseda Kankyou Jyuku. The English name, Waseda School of Environment (WSE), has a slightly different meaning than the Japanese, so when we met at his office I asked him why he called it a juku (cram school) rather than a Japanese equivalent of “institute” or “school.”

“The term juku is known commonly in China and Japan as a place where students study with a founder and study the founder’s philosophy,” explains Hara, who heads the school. “The idea is that it is a private school independent from societal constraints and restrictions. Our juku receives corporate support but it is nonprofit and transparent.”

The goal of WSE is to educate and inspire “active leaders” who are committed to innovation in order to promote the sustainability of Japanese society and the planet.

“Over the past 50 years, industrial Japan has gone through periods of destruction and renaissance, and WSE hopes to establish ‘Environmental Japanology’ as a means of uniting Japan’s modernization and cultural traditions, in pursuit of a sustainable society,” says Hara.

He believes that Japan can offer the world a valuable paradigm for sustainable development based on Japan’s own, often contradictory experience, including traditions of nature conservation and the modern challenges of severe industrial pollution.
WSE seminars are based on Hara’s belief that a sustainable society will need to synthesize three elements — nature, human beings and culture — and his students explore approaches to social development that harmonize with the natural environment, he explains.

“Communities consist of citizens, local governments and companies, and we need to infuse life into international efforts, such as the now-floundering Framework Convention on Climate Change, with help from our communities,” he notes.

Hara is proud of many Japanese cultural traditions, such as frugality and respect for nature, but he is quick to admit that Japan — like the rest of the developed world — has lost touch with many traditions of conservation that can help us deal with contemporary problems of waste and overconsumption.

“Humans are social creatures and our environment comprises the natural systems in which we live, human relationships that develop through industry in each local area, and our culture — which is most important, because without a clear sense of identity regarding our habitat and community, we cannot maintain values that are key to societal sustainability.

“Over the last half century, the Japanese have lost their identity and culture in chaos,” Hara says.

Most would argue that Japan is still far from “chaos,” especially in comparison with other societies around the globe that are crumbling under war, debt, drought and disease. Still, I understand his point that, often, local traditions offer sustainable alternatives to modern society, with its ethos of consumption, disposal and degradation.

The most common term used when talking about the creation of a sustainable society is “sustainable development.” As I wrote last month, the term is still debated by environmentalists, economists and scientists, because it is an attempt to reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable: environmental protection and economic growth, technology and nature, the different conditions of developing and developed nations and of women and men, and the different beliefs and philosophies of peoples across the globe.

The term is usually traced back to the World Commission on Environment and Development, and a book the commission published in 1987, “Our Common Future,” which is also known as the “Brundtland Report.” WCED defines sustainable development as: “Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Today the Brundtland definition is most commonly used, but there are numerous others. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has defined the term as: “Improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems.” This definition appeared in IUCN’s 1991 report, “Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living.”
IUCN is a global environmental network based in Gland, Switzerland, with members representing both governments and nongovernment organizations.

The Global Footprint Network offered this definition in 2007: “Sustainable development occurs when all human beings can have fulfilling lives without degrading our planet.”

Big ideas, mammoth challenges. Still, however it is defined, it is always about balancing human societies and the natural environment.

For this reason, Hara uses the environment as a starting point for study, discussion and action on sustainability at WSE. “Using the environment as a platform, the WSE program offers students a chance to examine how Japan and the Japanese have come to their present condition, in terms of human relationships, relationships with the environment, culture and traditional values. Environment is a good foundation, because it can be objective, scientific and firm, so it is easy to study and use as a basis for cooperative discussion among diverse people,” he explains.

The first term, which began in November and ends next month, covers five themes: What is the environment? — A look at local communities; The history of industrial pollution; Minamata disease; Ideas of nature — Environmental protection in Shintoism and Buddhism; and, from next month, The thoughts and actions of environmental volunteers.

Hara especially enjoys talking about environmental philosophies and culture in relation to sustainable development. From his work as a journalist, his academic research and his studies and travels, he has an amazing cache of experience and knowledge.

Comparing the environmental philosophies of Japan, Europe and the United States, he becomes quite animated.

The U.S. has primarily dealt with environmental issues from an economic viewpoint, manipulating the market to deal with problems. Europe has included the dimension of culture in dealing with environmental issues, focusing on lifestyle approaches, he believes. Japan got stuck somewhere in between.

“Japan did not adopt economic rationality like the U.S., nor did it adopt cultural aspects like Europe. Japan worked on environmental issues in half measures. Eventually we reached the point of thinking that even if environmentalism, green technology and environmental law prosper, the environment, practically, has been destroyed. We had shallow knowledge and unclear understanding of the environment,” he declares.

Waseda Jyuku is Hara’s effort to educate and inspire a new generation of activists who can move the nation forward. “Finally, Japan has started to recognize its faults and correct them,” he says.
If even a handful of WSE students have Hara’s energy and determination, then Japan has a fighting chance.

**Cultural relevance in corporate sustainability management: a comparison between Korea and Japan**
Lee, Ki-Hoon ; Herold, David


**THOUGHTS:**
- Interesting is: “While sustainability tools, techniques and strategies may be present, the levels of intention, integration and implementation vary because the fundamental culture of each nation and its context is different”
- Hofstede’s model used (model is not that reliable)
- Not how I want to conduct research: focus on CSR, analysing Asian culture from Western perspective, sounds generalized
- Focus on CSR/CSM does not seem the right direction

**2. Japanese sources**

Website of JFS (Japan for sustainability): Accelerating the Move toward a Truly Happy and Sustainable Future by Facilitating Communication between Japan and the World

…we have overlooked the things are truly important - connections with our inner selves, with society and with nature. This is a result of a short-sighted and blinkered obsession with efficiency. I believe that many social problems and global environmental degradation are the inevitable consequences of our having lost important connections.
To address these root problems, various efforts are taking place and spreading across Japan. Examples include initiatives to integrate traditional ideas and wisdom (like the concepts of “mottainai” (Don’t waste!) and “harmony with nature”) into corporate activities and community development. Or other initiatives utilizing advanced Japanese technologies to enhance sustainability. Or a wide range of efforts by national and local governments, grassroots movements by citizens and non-profit groups. Or efforts to bring back the connections among people and society.

The word "for" in "Japan for Sustainability" has two meanings. One conveys the "contribution" that Japan can make to create a more sustainable world, and the other conveys the "direction" Japan would like to go to be more sustainable. JFS hopes to serve as a "fountain of hope" for the world.
日本という国のサステナビリティと幸せ

「日本には世界に伝えるべき情報が豊富にあることに気づいたんです」と枝廣氏。このNGOは「持続可能で幸せな未来へ向かう日本の動きを、世界へ」をモットーとしています。つまり、健全なサステナビリティの考え方を輸入するだけでなく輸出もするということです。それでも枝廣氏は、JFSのウェブサイトで紹介されているように、日本に多くのすばらしい実例があるものの、日本のファッションやラグジュアリービジネスに関しては、サステナビリティを重視した活動が他の国に比べて少ないように感じています。

さらに三宅一生氏が取り組むブランド「132 5. ISSEY MIYAKE」の存在も無視できません。このブランドが主に使う素材はリサイクル素材や、リサイクルが可能なポリエステルです。

「（このブランドは）創造し続けるためには、環境に配慮した新しい方法を見つける必要があるという思いから生じたブランドです。日本国内の素材の生産地と一緒に取り組み、伝統的な職人高度な技術を取り入れることとは、三宅氏の研究の中心となってきました」と広報担当者は語ります。

Translation key points:
- There is a lot of information Japan should share to the world about sustainability
- There are a lot of sustainable examples in Japan, but when it comes to Japanese fashion businesses, sustainable movement lacks focus
- Example Issey Miyake - recyclable material use
SDGsで読み解くと、こんなに深い日本の「ワラ」文化
「精神的な意味づけ」がワラ利用を持続可能な文化にまで昇華させた

全世界が共通で取り組む目標として掲げられたSDGs（Sustainable Development Goals：持続可能な開発目標）。17の大目標からなり、経済、社会、環境という3つの分野が網羅されている。きわめて広範囲にわたるもので、各国はもちろん、企業や民間組織でもSDGsの達成に向けた動きが増えている。

「SDGsは、それ自体の達成はもちろん、物事を複眼的に見ることが未来の共存社会につながる」と話す国学院大学経済学部の古沢広祐（ふるさわ・こうゆう）教授。ワラが持つ価値とはどんなものなのか。SDGsを契機に「物事を複眼的に見ることが未来の共存社会につながる」と話す同氏に話を聞いた。

古沢広祐氏（以下、敬称略）　そうですね。これからの地球や社会、共存を考える上で、私たちは物事を時間的にも空間的にもさまざまなスケールで拡大・縮小して見る必要があります。これは人間に備わっている特別な能力であり、「魔法のメガネ」ともいえるでしょう。それらを呼び起こすために、SDGsは非常に有効なのです。

その際に大切なのは、3つの視点です。多様な角度から物事を捉える「複眼知」、事象の構造や関係性・矛盾を見極める「批判（洞察）知」、他と自分がつながり合う関係性を生み出す「共感（総合）知」です。

この観点を持って、ありとあらゆる事象を見直すべきです。すると、身の回りに、さまざまな知恵が凝縮された、あるいは未来の共存を考える上で参考にすべきものが隠れていることに気づきます。昔から積み上げてきた人間の宝物が見えてくるかもしれません。SDGsは、その視点をリードしてくれます。

——代表例として、先生は「ワラ」を挙げられました。どういう意味なのでしょうか。

古沢　日本人が伝統的に生み出してきたワラの利用法は、まさに持続可能な社会を築く上で参考になるのです。

ワラは本来、稲作の副産物として生まれます。基本的には、米を作る際に発生するもので、稲を刈り、脱穀して残ったものがワラとなります。米の生産という目的だけで見れば、脱穀して米のなくなったワラは「役目を終えた」といえますが、日本では古くから、そこにとどまらずワラを多面的に利用してきました。

たとえば、燃料や家畜の食べ物を毎年にも使いましたし、蓑（かや）の葉屋根とともに簡易の屋根葺き材や土壁の補強材としても活用されました。あるいは、草履（ぞうり）のひとつである“わらじ”や、敷物としての“むしろ”の材料にもなりました。
さらに、ワラを焼いた後の“ワラ灰”は、肥料や灰汁（あく）抜きにとどまらず、染物や刃物、焼き物など、多様な産業で利用されたのです。

——確かに、さまざまな形で展開されていますね。

ワラ文化のエコロジー的展開図。

拡大画像表示

古沢　ワラという素材を、米の生産という目的以外の形で大切に生かしていく文化が醸成されていったのです。自然が秘めていた潜在力を開花させる文化です。

現代社会の価値観では、物事の利用を目的だけに絞って効率化を図る単線的・単一的な概念で捉えがちです。狭いモノカルチャー的発想ですね。稲作なら「米の生産」だけを目的に、効率化や最大化を図る。結果、必要のないものはそぎ落とされます。

一方、近代以前に築かれてきたワラの文化は、「米の生産」の各段階で、副産物となるワラの利用価値を生み出しつつ、循環的・総合的に利用の輪を広げているのです。つまり、自然が生み出す力を多面的・総合的に受けとめるとめるマルチカルチャー的世界観があります。SDGsが目指す複合的効果そのものですね。
精神的な意味づけが、ワラのリサイクルを生んだ

——なるほど。確かに有効活用されていることが分かります。

古沢 さらに特筆すべきは、ワラが新年のしめ飾りや神社のしめ縄、相撲の土俵などにも使われてきたことです。相撲はもともと、五穀豊穣を祈願する神事でしたから、これらに共通する点として、ワラが神様への祈願のシンボルとして活用されていたことが分かります。日本各地の村には、今でも大きな藁人形の神さま（道祖神など）を祭っているところがありますね。

つまり、物的な素材としてワラを多面的に利用するとともに、精神的、宗教的な意味合いも同じく多面的に使われていました。これは非常に興味深いことでしょう。

実はこの「精神的、宗教的な意味合い」を加味した部分こそ、現代の私たちが学ぶべきことかもしれません。

——どういったことでしょうか。

古沢 SDGsの前から、3R（リデュース、リユース、リサイクル）と呼ばれる「環境に配慮した物の使い方」が重視されています。以前に、環境保護活動家としてノーベル平和賞を受賞した、ケニア人女性のワンガリ・マータイさんが日本の「もったいない」という言葉を世界に紹介して話題になりました。確実に、物を余すことなく使い、多面的に活用する意識は高まっています。

ただし、ワラの事例は、物質として余すことなく使うだけでなく、精神的な意味合いも付加しています。地域によっては、お盆に先祖の迎え火や送り火としてワラを焚くこともあります。また、生死の蘇りとして民話の「花さか爺さん」のお話でも、灰をまくと、花が咲いて生命が蘇ります。

先ほどのワラの活用展開を考えると、明らかに物質としての循環が実現していることはすぐ分かります。と同時に、新年のしめ飾り、送り火や迎え火、生命としての蘇りの象徴などを見ると、実は精神的な意味合いとしても生命循環が想起されるのではないかでしょうか。ワラの文化は、これらが表裏一体に形成されていったと考えられます。

つまり、物質としてだけでなく、精神的にもワラそのものを循環のシンボルにした、あるいは生命循環のアニミズム（霊魂）が宿っていると位置付けたのかもしれません。

——そこから学ぶべきこととはどんなことでしょうか。

古沢 物質的な循環、リサイクルなどはもちろん大切ですが、物質的な意味における「もったいない」という気持ちだけでは、どうしても継続性や定着性が生まれにくい側面があります。功利主義的なモノカルチャー的発想を抜けきれていない。
しかし、そこに精神的な意味合いが加味され、表裏一体の関係にすることで、ワラの循環的な利用の
ように継続的かつ多面的な拡がりへと繋がります。持続性が、自然認識の根底に結びついた文化と
して定着していくのです。実際、伝統文化や風習はさまざまな形で長らく根付いてきました。

物質的な循環は大切ですが、本当にそれを未来に根付かせて発展させるには、人々の継続性ととも
に精神的な意味づけが重要になります。これがないと、一時的なムーブメントで消えてしまうかもしれません。

これはリサイクルや循環だけでなく、すべてのことにいえます。物質的な便利さや豊かさ、あるいは論
理的な概念だけで物事を進めるのではなく、その根底に精神的な価値が付加されることで文化として
定着するのではないでしょうか。

物質世界の革新は重要ですが、本当にそれが未来の文化として展開するには、裏側の精神的な意
味づけが求められます。SDGsのような大きな理想と目標を達成して行く上で必要となると考えます。

物が豊かではなかった時代に、今に生かす知恵がある

——精神的な意味合いを付加することで、継続的な文化に発展するということですね。

古沢 はい。この考え方はこれからの未来で重要になります。というのも、人類は農耕文化のあと、産
業革命によって物質文化となりました。しかし、物質が中心となった時代は過ぎ、今はサービスや文化
産業などが中心となる「ポスト工業化社会」になりつつあります。

となると、物質そのものが持つ豊かさや便利さよりも、その上に付加する別の価値がなければ人は感
銘を受けにくい。その意味で、実はワラの文化を作った古き日本の人々の知恵が参考になるのです。

——SDGsの視点で考えても、過去の時代に学ぶべきことがあるのですね。

古沢 最近はAIを中心とした技術文明の論議が中心となっていますが、江戸時代のような、「鎖国」とい
う形で物質的に閉じられていた時代にも、今の私たちが必要とする知恵があります。その時代に形成さ
れた、あらゆるものを生かし切る知恵や文化、その世界観は次の時代を考える上での示唆になるで
しょう。

ですから、過去の伝統をただ伝統として見るのではなく、次の時代に生かせる知恵として、新たな革
新を生み出す要素として参考にしなければいけません。ワラの文化についても、ワラの文化を単体で
考えるのはなく、そこから多面的に洞察し総合的に応用できるものはないか、いわば「未来への種」
として見ることが必要です。日本の貢献という点では、SDGsの取り組みを新たな文化の再創造、新ル
ネサンスへと高めていく必要があるのではないでしょうか。
――分かりました。いずれにしても、SDGsを軸に日本の伝統文化が持つ可能性を垣間見た気がします。

持続可能な社会形成に役立つ日本の伝統的知恵の発掘と

TRANSLATION OF IMPORTANT PARTS

"Interpreting with SDGs, Japan's "Wara" culture is so deep
The "spiritual meaning" has made straw use sublime to a sustainable culture"
By Prof. Hiroshi Furusawa of the Faculty of Economics, Kokugakuin University, who studies environmental studies and a sustainable society

- Straw is originally produced as a by-product of rice cultivation
- Basically, it occurs when rice is produced, and the rice left after harvesting and threshing becomes straw. If you look only at the purpose of rice production, it is possible to say that wara that threshed and ran out of rice "has finished its role", but in Japan it has long been used in many ways without being limited to that.
- For example, it was used as a feed for fuel and livestock, and it was also used as a simple roofing material and a reinforcing material for earth walls along with thatched roof. Or, it was also used as a material for "jiraji", which is one of sandals, and "ruchi" as a rug.
- In addition, "wara ash" after baking wares has been used in a variety of industries such as dyeing, cutting, and grilling, as well as without fertilizer
- The meaning of the spirit has resulted in the recycling of straw
- From the front of SDGs, 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) called "use of environmentally friendly things" has been emphasized. Earlier, a Kenyan woman, Wangari Maathai, who received the Nobel Peace Prize as an environmental activist, introduced the word "Motai-Ichi" of Japan to the world and became a topic. Certainly, there is a growing awareness of using everything without waste and using it in many ways.
- However, the spiritual meaning is added to it, and by making the relationship between the two sides, it leads to the continuous and multifaceted spread like the cyclic use of straw. Sustainability will be established as a culture that is connected to the root of the perception of nature. In fact, traditional culture and customs have long taken root in a variety of ways.
- Material circulation is important, but in order to really put it into the future and develop it, it is important to make people's continuity as well as mental meaning. Without this, it may disappear in a temporary movement;
- This is true for all things, not just recycling and circulation.
- Rather than advancing things with only material conveniences, richness, or logical concepts, it may not be established as a culture by the addition of spiritual values to its roots.
- Innovation in the material world is important, but in order to truly expand it as a culture of the future, it is required to have the spiritual meaning behind it. It is a necessary idea to achieve the goals and goals like SDGs.
はじめに

第一に、これまでの経験から、欧米などの著名な環境専門家(例えば、エイモリー・ロビンス博士、ジョン・ガンマ元イギリス環境大臣、中国の環境政策担当者など)は、一様に日本の省エネやリサイクルなどの環境技術には関心を示し、しばしば賛辞を呈するが、そのような環境技術を生み出す基盤となっている日本人の思想、価値観、感性といったものには全くといっていいほど関心を示さないという事実である。そしてそれは、日本の技術の特性は誰にでも理解できるような形で海外にも伝えられてきたのに対して、日本人が長年にわたり育み継承してきた知恵については、外国人にも理解できるような形で伝える努力をして来なかったからと言える。

第二に、かつて有していた社会を持続させるための伝統的な知恵が、明治維新後、奔流となって日本に流れ込んできた西洋の価値観、思想、技術、政治体制などの圧倒的な力に押され、見失われてしまっているという事実である。特に戦後は、大量生産・大量消費の経済体制が圧倒的な力を持ち、経済のグローバル化が進展するにつれて、市場原理といわれる経済のロジックが全てを覆い尽くすようになり、日本人が持っていた「足るを知る」や「自然との共生」の知恵の重みが軽くなっている。そこで、その経過や原因を分析し、今一度これを掘り起こす必要があると考えたからである。

第三に、地球温暖化に伴う環境の異変が深刻化する一方、グローバル経済の進展と共に日本のみならず、世界中の国々が価値観のアイデンティティを求めて苦闘している中で、日本人の伝統的知恵が、世界の混迷状態を克服する有力な知恵の一つとなり得るとの確信が、私たちの間に深まったことである。

とはいえ、日本人でさえ忘れかけているこの伝統的な知恵を、様々な価値観が存在する世界に広めていくことは容易なことではない。しかし、こうした挑戦なくして持続可能な社会の創造はありえないことも事実である。

プロジェクトの趣旨、背景

1987年「環境と開発に関する世界委員会(ブルントラント委員会)」で提唱された「持続可能な開発」の考え方は、その後「環境と開発に関する国連会議(地球サミット)(1992年)」で世界的な合意事項となり、持続可能な社会の構築が21世紀の世界共通の目標となっている。しかし、我が国においては、「持続可能性」あるいは「持続可能な社会」についての社会的合意があるわけではなく、識者が「持続可能性(sustainability)」の概念の形成とその発展について論ずる際は、これまでのところ、もっぱら欧米の研究者・有識者などの主張や論説にその根拠を求めている状況がつづいている。
しかしながら、戦前までの日本社会、特に厳格な鎖国政策を実施していた江戸時代においては、平和で質の高い文化性を維持・発展させながら、持続可能な社会を長期にわたって形成していた歴史があり、これは世界史的にも極めてユニークで、世界に誇れる実例と考えられる。

こうした社会が形成された背景には様々な要因が考えられるが、特に、日本固有の自然条件と、それに裏打ちされた思想、宗教・倫理、教育、芸術文化、統治制度などが結びついた結果であり、いわゆる"人と人、人と自然との共生の精神"というもの日本の伝統的な知恵が、日本社会の持続性を維持発展させる精神的主柱になっていると考えられる。

しかし残念なことに、「持続可能性(sustainability)」という概念自体が世界においても比較的新しい概念である上に、日本固有の伝統的な知恵を、西洋のロジックを用いて表現することがはなはだ困難であるため、多くの人に、それを理解し、共有してもらうための努力をこれまで行い得なかったのも事実である。

Unfortunately, the concept of"sustainability"itself is a relatively new concept in the world, and it is difficult to express the traditional wisdom inherent in Japan by using Western logic, so it is also a fact that many people have not made efforts so far to understand and share it.

THOUGHT
So then, can we even generalise sustainability as Western ideology for everyone? Are we then not forcing on ne term from a Western perception?

本研究においては、1日本における持続可能性の理念を、代表的知識人(思想家、芸術家、政治家、宗教学家、事業家など)の著作物や、実際の暮らしの中から抽出整理するとともに、西洋人を含めた幅広い有識者により批判的に検討したうえで、日本における持続可能性概念の内容を明らかにする。また、2明治維新以降の西欧文明の流入とともに、その伝統的知恵がどのように変貌し軽じられるようになったかの経緯や原因を探る。さらに、21世紀に入って、人口、環境、資源、社会秩序、統治などあらゆる面で限界に直面し、そこからの脱却探求において混乱を深める世界の文明社会の中で、社会の持続性の確保に役立ってきた日本の伝統的知恵をどうしらべ、世界で活用するためには何が必要かを明らかにする。そして、4その成果を、日、英両語で出版し、人類共通の知的財産としてシンポジウム等を通じて国際社会に発信する。

これにより、欧米中心に発展してきたsustainability論議を拡充させるとともに、世界的な持続性の確保に貢献することを目指すものである。

プロジェクトの概要
主に江戸時代を中心に持続性の知恵を探ったが、その知恵の多くが今日では軽ん
じられ力を失っている。その原因が何かを探求すると共に、21世紀において、再び日本人の持続性の知恵を活かすための策について検討する。

日本の伝統的知恵に関心を有する外国人の意見を聞きながら、日本の持続性の知恵を国内外に発信する。

日本人の持続性の知恵

持続可能性あるいは持続性について、これまで多くの西洋人が述べてきたが、現代日本の中にも、伝統文化から引き継がれている持続性の知恵を見ることができる。

2004年に、環境分野の活動家としては史上初のノーベル平和賞を受賞したケニア出身のワングアリ・マータイ(Wangari Muta Maathai 1940年-)は、日本の「もったいない」精神に触発され、それを世界に発信したが、これは昔から日本人が受け継いできたものである。その意味はもともと、1(有用な人材や物事が有用に活かされず残念だ)、2(神聖なものが汚されて恐れ多い)、3(かたじけない)、4(あるべき状態から外れて不都合だ)(『大辞林』)である。最近は1の意味で使われることが多いが、もともとは、単にモノを大切にするだけでなく、人や自然に対する感謝や畏敬の念をあらわすものであり、モノや自然にも命があり、これらを人間と同等のものとして大切に扱っている日本人の持続性の知恵を現す言葉の一つである。

また、「アニメ(漫画)」はいまや現代日本を代表する文化となっているが、その中にも、社会の安定や生命の持続性について書かれたものが目につく。

手塚治虫(1928~1989年)は日本漫画の金字塔とも言われ、多くの日本人に愛された『鉄腕アトム』(1951年)の作者であるが、彼はその作品の中で、全ての生命の尊厳を一生のテーマとして、科学技術が極限まで発達した結果、人間自らが滅ぼした高度産業文明の後、千年余りが経過した未来が舞台となっている。この作品では、腐海のほとりにある小国“風の谷”の族長の娘ナウシカ、過酷な運命に翻弄されながらも、太古の昔から繰り返されてきた人間の業とも呼べる営み・争いと向き合い、折り合いをつけていくとする姿が描かれている。まさに宇宙の中に存在する全ての生命は継続するものであるという、命の持続性と輪廻を伝える作品である。このように、手塚が命の尊厳やその輪廻を一生のテーマとしている背景には、日本の伝統思想を基盤の上に、若いころの手塚の戦争体験と医師としての経験の影響があるといわれている。

『千と千尋の神隠し』(2001年)で2003年アカデミー賞長編アニメーション映画賞を受賞するなど海外でも高い評価を得ている宮崎駿(1941年-)の作品にも、「全てのものに命がある」として日本的な仏教の思想が色濃く反映されている。代表作の一つである『風の谷のナウシカ』(1982年-)は、科学技術が極限まで発達した結果、人間自らが滅ぼした高度産業文明の後、千年余りが経過した未来が舞台となっている。この作品では、腐海のほとりにある小国“風の谷”の族長の娘ナウシカ、過酷な運命に翻弄されながらも、太古の昔から繰り返されてきた人間の業とも呼べる営み・争いと向き合い、折り合いをつけていくとする姿が描かれている。まさに、自然と科学技術の対立の中で、いかにして文明の滅亡と再生が繰り返されてきたか、そしてその再生のための人間とあらゆる生命の知恵が描かれている。また『もののけ姫』(映画1997年)
は、日本の中世から近世に移行する時代を背景に、太古の森に住み人間の言葉を理解する“ものけ”と呼ばれる山犬や猪などの大きな獣たちや山神（荒ぶる神々）と、森を切り開こうとする人間の抗争が描かれている。この作品の中でも、宮崎は、人間と同じ命を持つ自然と共生してこそ、人的暮らしの安定が得られるというメッセージを送っている。

こうしたアニメの世界だけでなく、科学技術の分野でも、日本人は持続性に関連する様々な知恵を発信している。例えば、湯川秀樹（1907～1981年）は、原子核を構成する陽子と中性子を結びつける核力を媒介する中間子理論の功績により、日本人として初めてのノーベル物理学賞を受賞したが、彼は理系の科学者であるにもかかわらず、幼少の頃より中国の古典である四書を読むなど東洋思想に親しみ、また日本古来の文化である俳句を好み、その東洋的考え方が、湯川の素粒子論にも反映されているという。彼は原子爆弾を「絶対悪」とし、全世界の平和の継承のため、その使用に最後まで反対し続けた。その背景には核兵器の廃絶を世界に訴えたアインシュタインとの交友、被爆国の科学者としての責任とあわせて、「和」や「常に次の世代を考える」といった日本の伝統的な思想があったのだろうか。

また、建築界で世界的に有名な安藤忠雄（1941年～）の思想の中にも、持続性につながる知恵が見られる。安藤建築は、コンクリート打ち放しと幾何学的なフォルムによる独自の表現を確立しているが、その根本には、風土に根ざした建築への思いがある。安藤自身、著作の中で、「一つの建築のなかには地理的文脈や文化的文脈、さまざまな歴史、精神風土といったマクロな要素から個人的な体験や、何気ない一木一草が与える印象や記憶のような小さな要素に至る、風土や生活文化に根差した、人が五感で感じ取れるものが強く刻まれている」と述べている。実際、安藤の建築は、巧みに自然を建造物の中に取り込むことに長けており、これも日本人がもつ、「自然との一体感」や「精神の自由」を具体化した一つの好例と考えられる。

伝統文化に見る日本人の持続性の知恵

しかし残念なことに、日本の社会は、前述した持続可能な社会に役立つ知恵を千年以上 の長い間共有し継承してきたにも関わらず、わずかの一時期に巨変させてしまった。その変貌をもたらしたものは、19 世紀半ば以降に、日本に伝えられた西洋の科学技術力と軍事力が我がものとし、「富国強兵」の国家を創らんとした国民の強烈な願望である。この時期に生きた、文明開化期の知的リーダーであった福沢諭吉（1835～1901年）のいう「蒸気と電気」の讃美は、その象徴である。この「富国強兵」の野望は、20 世紀の中頃には無謀な第二次大戦の敗北によって潰えてしまったが、戦後は「強兵」を排し「経済成長」へとその目標を置き換えた。

そして、「経済の成長」がもたらされた過程で、短期間のうちに日本国民の価値観も大きく変わってしまった。今日の言葉で言えば、市場経済のグローバリゼーションの大波に由て日本の伝統文化は変貌し、消滅の危機に瀕しているとも言える。
しかし幸い、心ある日本人は、日本が持っていた伝統的知恵の価値を再認識し、混乱が予想される21世紀の社会にあって、それを活用することで、日本を錬えなおすだけでなく、世界に貢献できる可能性があることに気づき始めている。

表1 持続可能性を巡る日本 VS 近世の欧米

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>日本（明治維新前）</th>
<th>近世の欧米</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>像学に裏打ちされた官の指導・統制下で農業を主体とするも商工業も活発な経済</td>
<td>自由、平等な市民を主体とし、ルールや競争を取り入れた市場経済</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>・モノへの執着よりも心の平安を重視。</td>
<td>・納得のいくまで富の豊かさを追求。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>・モノへの執着よりも家や組織の存続を重視。</td>
<td>・個人の自立と公平・公正の尊重。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>・自然との調和・一体感を持ち、質素な生活を重視。</td>
<td>・神の代理者として自然の支配を管理。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>・政治的自由は厳しく制限されるもの、精神の自由は確保。</td>
<td>・人権の尊重と民主主義の発展。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>社会の特徴は</td>
<td>ユダヤ・キリスト教</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>仏教・神道・道教・儒学</td>
<td>一神教特有の選民思想。人間中心主義。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>基盤となる宗教とそこから派生する個々の特性</td>
<td>ギリシャ文明からの合理的、哲学的思考。</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

具体的な日本人的持続性の知恵

モノへの執着より精神的な豊かさや心の平安を重視していた

日本人の持続性の知恵の一つとして、モノへの執着より精神性を重視していた点が挙げられる。この他、千数百年に及ぶ日本の文化史の中で、今なお日本人の記憶に残る著名人の多くが、モノへの執着よりも心の平安が大切であることを説いている。一方実際の暮らしの中で、モノへの執着より精神性に重きを置いていた日本人的姿をみることができる。

例えば、ここ最近様々な場で「武士道」が注目を集めているが、新渡戸稲造（1862~1933年）の『武士道』（1900年）によると、武士道は「日本の象徴である桜花にまさるとも劣らない、日本の土壌に固有の華である。千年以上にもわたって、武士の生き方の有機的産物であった。武士階級の道徳体系であった武士道は、やがて国民全体の精神となり、それによって「大和魂」はこの国の民族精神を表わすに至った。」として、日本人の精神の基盤に大きな影響を与えていたことが述べられている。武士道の徳目として、「義」（正義の道）、「勇」（勇気）、「仁」（愛）、「禮」（礼儀）、「誠」（真実・正直）、「名」（名・面目・外見）、「忠義」（忠君に対する忠誠）の7つが挙げられるが、この德目の具体的な展開の中にも、モノより精神性を重んじていた武士の姿をみることができる。
できる。例えば、「武士の訓育的第一に必要とされたのは、その品性を高めることであった」ため、剣術、弓術、柔術、乗馬、槍術、戦略戦術、書、道徳、文学、歴史が訓育された。また奢侈は人格の形成にとって最大の脅威であるとして「武士道は損得勘定をとらない」ことを旨とし、厳格で質素な生活が要求されていた。武士道は武士の生き方に大きな影響を与えたが、江戸時代は、武士だけでなく全ての教育において、道徳や精神性を高める教育が行われ、それが「モノより精神性」を重んじる知恵に繋がっていたと考えられる。

かつての日本人の教育レベルの高さは多くの世界的な識者が賞賛するところだった。実際にそれは江戸時代において、寺子屋や藩校などの教育制度が確立されていたこと、そしてそうした教育機関では、儒学や仏教思想の影響から、学ぶことを通して道徳の実践者になること、すなわち人格の完成に主眼が置かれ、実用的な内容だけでなく、精神性を重視した教育が行われていたことによるところが大きい。この考え方は寺子屋などの教育機関だけでなく、商人、職人、農民という職業教育においても徹底していた。このことから、21世紀以降における持続性の知恵として、重要なポイントである。島国である上に鎖国制度のために他国からの物資の輸入が困難であり、物質的に貧しかった時代においては、モノへの執着より精神性や心の平安を重視せざるを得なかったことがある。しかし、有限な地球環境の中では、物質的な豊かさの追求には限界があることもあろう。しかし、有限な地球環境の中では、物質的な豊かさの追求には限界があることも事実である。そうした意味でも、モノの豊かさよりも精神性や心の平安を追求してきた日本人の生き方は、21世紀以降における持続性の知恵として、重要なポイントである。

自然と同化し、自然との共生の精神を基盤にしていた

日本の豊かな自然の中で育まれて来た文化は、自然との同化・一体感に溢れている。これは西洋のユダヤ・キリスト教の自然観と著しく異なる。ユダヤ・キリスト教の世界観においては、人間は神と人間以外の動植物との間に位置し、いわば神の代理人として自然を愛護し管理するという立場に立つ。それに対して、神道や仏教を基礎とする日本の伝統文化においては、人間は自然界の一員であり、上に立って自然を愛護、管理する立場ではなかった。そのことは、縄文時代の自然観から8世紀に編集された「万葉集」、さらに今日に至るまでの様々な日本の芸術作品に歴然と表れている。

こうした背景には、日本の自然・風土が大きく関係していると考えられる。日本には、四季の移ろいがもたらす豊穣な自然がある一方、暴風、火山、地震などによる厳しい自然災害が存在したことから、生きるためには、自然を知り、自然に逆らわず、自然の理に沿った暮らしや生き方をする必要があった。

さらに、こうした風土は日本人の宗教的基礎の形成にも関係し、それが自然との付き合い方にも大きく影響している。

...このように、風土や宗教的思考を背景に、自然の理に逆らわず自然と共生して生きることか

足るの維持に繋がるという知恵を、当時の人々は会得していたものと思われる。

足るを知る、自足の心を持っていた

足るを知る、自足の心を持って間、日本人の間で言い伝えられてきたものである。しかし戦後わずかな間に物質的に豊かになり、同時に主としてアメリカからもたらされた消費文化がまばゆいばかりの魅力をもって日本人の心を捉えるようになったについて、この重要な知
恵もかなり失われてきており、今日ではあまり聞かれなくなってしまった。

このような、「足るを知る」「自足の心」は、哲学的な意味からも、また実際に生活をする上でも様々な形で日本の持続的な知恵の源泉となっており、21世紀の世界を持続可能なものとする上で、中野が述べているように、おそらく極めて重要な倫理項目の一つとなるであろう。

輪廻、循環思想が根付いていた

循環思想は我々日本人にとって極めてなじみ深い思想であり、それは既に生活のリズムとなっている。春は桜が咲き乱れ、夏は蝉が鳴き、秋など穀物の実りが進む。秋になれば、その実りを収穫する喜びや、草木に鳴く虫の声、樹木の葉の色づく変化を楽しむことができる。そして冬になれば木枯らしや雪が舞う、いった具合に、日本の四季は変化に富み廻っている。実際、この四季の移り変わりや月の満ち欠けが、日本人の心に「全ては規則正しく循環していく」という観念を植え付けたことは間違いない。勿論日本以外でも多くの国にはさまざまな形で四季の変化も、月の満ち欠けもあるが、とりわけ日本人は、その変化を敏感に、そして深く感じ取り、そこに生活の知恵や文学・芸術の源を見出していたといえよう。

こうした伝統を支える職人の意識の中にも、循環思想は根付いていた。宮大工の棟梁として有名な西岡常一（1908~1995年）は、「木は大自然が生み育てた命ですが、木は物ではありません。生きものです。人間もまた生きものです。木も人も自然の分身ですが、この物いわぬ木とよう話し合って、命ある建物に変えてやるのが大工の仕事ですわ。木のあすか命と人間の命の合作が本当の建築でっせ。飛鳥の人はこのことをよく知ってました。」（『木のいのち木のこころ』1993年 草思社）と述べている。

また江戸時代のリサイクル事情はよく知られているが、ここにも循環思想を見ることが出来る。例えば古着屋のほかに、修繕屋、炊煙管を直す羅屋、錠前直し、錆の穴あきを直すタガ屋、そろばん直し、鍋や釜の穴あきを直すイカケ屋など、モノが繰り返し使われるよう様々な職業があり、すべてのものは最後の最後まで使われ、それでも使われなくなったものをを集めて交換し売りさばく市場が成立していた。その結果、江戸の町はごみが少なく、ごみといえば、ドブの汚れや家事の焼け跡からの残土や瓦、陶器のかけらなどごくわずかなものだけだったという。江戸の街並みが清潔であった理由も徹底した使いまわしの工夫のお蔭である。

農業の現場においても物質循環の知恵が根付いていた。例えば、いすは、重要な肥料として農村に還元され、江戸近郊の農村は、こうした肥料の供給を受けられるために生産効率がよく、野菜などの作物は大消費地の江戸で、すぐにはける循環の仕組みが出来上がっていた。また『会津農書』（1684年）の中では、農家の生活や役所の中から出たあらゆる廃物を無駄なく利用して農業生産に必要な肥料を得る様々な工夫が書かれている。その中、「便所の作り方」の項目には、自家から出た水も便所の作り方次第で肥料として充分に活用ができ、よそから買ってくる必要は無いというようなことが書かれている。これは農家的生活と農業生産を一体的にとらえ、内部で物質を循環利用することで外部からのインプットを極力小さくするという、まさに物質循環における持続性の知恵である。
このように仏教的な輪廻思想は、生活の中の循環思想にもつながり、少ない資源を有効に活用し、暮らしを維持していた江戸の人々の暮らしの知恵をここにもみることができる。

調和を大切にし、家や地域などの集団の存続を重視していた

日本文化の基礎を築いた聖徳太子(574~622年)は「17条憲法」(604年制定)の第一条で、「和を以て貴しとし、忤ること無きを宗とせよ。」と言っている。聖徳太子が生きた時代も様々な闘争があり、太子の死後、彼の一族は政敵に抹殺されるという運命にあっても、それだけに、「和」の重要性を身を持って説いたといえよう。そしてこの憲法が書かれてから約1400年の間、この教えは、いわば、DNAのように日本人の心の中に生きつづけている。

一方、家や地域など集団の存続を重視していたことは、幕藩制度の確立・継続やその背景にある武士道精神からも明らかである。戦乱であれ内乱であれ、内部的な紛争は持続可能な社会になり得ないことを考えれば、調和を保つとともに、集団の存続を重視することは、個人や社会の持続性にとって重要なことであり、江戸時代の人々はそれに先立つ長い戦乱の経験からもそのことを知りえていたものと思われる。

精神の自由を尊ぶ気風があった

江戸時代は、封建的で人々に対し圧迫的な時代であったとの印象が強いが、学びや精神性についてはかなりの自由度があったと言える。

こうしたことからも、持続可能な社会・文明の大きな要素として、「精神の自由」は不可欠なものであり、江戸時代の日本人はそうした活発な精神性も併せ持っていたものと思われる。

先祖崇拝や先人を大切にすることで命や暮らしをつないでいた

縄文時代から伝わり、神道や仏教などによっても鍛えられてきた日本人の先祖崇拝の姿勢もまた持続性を考える上で重要な点である。持続性という概念を考えた場合、人々が代々生まれ変わり、生き変わっていくことがその最も典型的な姿であるとすれば、自分たちをこの世に存在させてくれた先祖に感謝し、敬うのは自然な心である。そして他の徳目が日本人からかなり失われた中において、先祖崇拝の姿勢は連続と現在まで続いていると思われる。日本人が正月や盆に、出身地の故郷に親族や友人を尋ね、墓参りをする習慣は、今でも多くの日本人が実行している生活のリズムの一つとなっているが、これは、遠くは縄文時代から引き続いてきた先祖を敬う心の具体的な姿ではないか。

このように、仏教や神道、「目上を敬う」という儒教の影響、さらには(4)で述べた輪廻・循環思想などの影響も受け、先祖を大切にし先人を敬うことで、命をつなぎ、日常の暮らしや知恵や技を継承し、人と社会の持続性を保ってきたことも、日本の持続性の知恵として重要なポイントである。

教育の価値を認め、次世代を愛し育てることに熱心だった

江戸時代には、寺子屋、藩校、私塾などの教育機関のみならず、地域や労働の場でも、次世代を育てる学びの場が存在しており、そのことが持続的な人間教育を可能にしていった。封建社会の中でも全ての階層に様々な学びの場が与えられていたことは、江戸時代の人々が社会の持続性を維持するうえで「人を育てる、次世代を育てる」ことが何にもまして重要であることに気づいていた証である。また江戸時代は現在と異なり、勉学(学歴)そのものが身分的な上昇をもたらすことはほどはあり得なかったことから、学びが
競争原理に脅かされることなく、子弟の関係が金銭や損得で成立することなく、貨幣経済に翻弄されることもなく、確固とした位置を占めていたものと考えられる。

このように、江戸時代の教育へのゆるぎない信頼とその価値の高さ、そして親だけでなく地域ぐるみで、子供を愛し育てる習慣が、社会の持続性と人間の持続性を支えていたことは確かであろう。

様々な文献・事象に見る伝統的日本の持続性の知恵

「風土」や「暮らし」にみる持続性の知恵

日本人の感性や価値観は、日本の「風土」のもとで育まれてきた。風土論で著名な和辻哲郎(1889~1960年)は、「我々は風土において我々自身を見せ、その自己解明において我々自身の自由な形成に向かった」(『風土』和辻哲郎)と述べている。この考えに立てば、日本の「風土」を把握することで、日本人の感性や価値観をかなりの程度特徴付けることができる。そして、その感性や価値観を具現化している日本人の「暮らし」は、日本の「風土」と関連していると考えられる。そこで、「暮らし」の具体事例として、約300年にわたる持続的に発展を遂げた類まれなる都市である江戸時代の街づくりとコミュニティに焦点を当てた。
日本人の感性や価値観を育んだ風土

日本の風土の特徴

日本の風土に関する特徴の記述は、さまざまな識者によって試みられてきた。和辻は、日本の風土を大きく受容的・忍従的性格を有する「モンスーン的」と位置づけるとともに、その特殊な性格として季節的・突発的な性格を有する「台風的」性格と名づけている。寺田寅彦（1878~1935年）は、日本の風土の特徴は、「気候」と「天気」の多様性、つまり変化にとんでもない四季を有していること、急峻な島国であることおよび地殻変動に伴う地震・火山活動が活発であることにあるとし、「日本の自然界は気候学的地形学的生物学的あらゆる方面から見ても時間的並びに空間的に極めて多様多彩な分化のあらゆる段階を具備し、その多彩の要素のスペクトラムが、凡そ考へ得られるべき多種多様な結合をなして我が邦土を彩り、しかもその色彩は時々刻々に変化して自然の舞を絶え間なく活動させてゐるのである」（『風土と文学』寺田寅彦）（1950年）と表現している。民俗学の梅棹忠夫らは、日本文明を77のキーワードで説明する試みの中で、風土的特長を、群島、森林、四季の観点から整理している。民族学の喜多川忠一は日本人の風土に対する感性つまり自然観の特徴について、1）日本人は自然とくに四季の変化などに対して極めて繊細な感受性をもっている、2）日本人は自然に対して親和的一体感をもっている、3）日本人にとって自然は「なる」ものであり、「なる」のが自然である、と捉えている。

これら文献を踏まえ、以下に、四季、森林、水、島国、火山・地震をキーワードに日本の風土の特徴を浮き彫りにする。

1) 四季　日本の風土の特徴は、四季の変化が明瞭である点にある。これは、モンスーンの影響で、

夏には南西風が、冬には北東または北西の卓越風が吹く。それに加え、日本列島は、南北、そして東西に約3000kmにわたって細く連なる地形から、季節の多様性はさらに増す。なお、北海道の北端は北緯45度、最南端の沖ノ鳥島は北緯24度に位置する。夏季は雨季があり、南方の太平洋高気圧からきた暖かく湿った空気が梅雨前線を作り出し、停滞して豊富な雨をもたらす。また、夏季の終わりには台風と呼ばれる特殊な気候現象が起きる。台風は、赤道近くで生じた熱帯性低気圧が発達したもので、日本列島に大きな被害を与えるとともに、膨大な雨量をもたらす貴重な現象でもある。冬季は、大陸性の冷たいシベリア高気圧に覆われる。冬季の冷え込みは非常に厳しく、日本より北部に位置するヨーロッパの都市の冬はもとより日本全土が寒さに満ちている。厳しく激しい夏、冬季の合間の春季と秋季は、大陸性と海洋性の気団が交互に顕現を出し、気候の変化は激しいが、比較的緩やかで温暖な気候となる。この季節が最も過ごしやすい季節でもある。

「春は花夏ほととぎす秋は月冬雪さえて冷しかりけり」と道元禅師（1200~1253年）が歌ったように、そしてその道元を深く慕っていた良寛禅師（1758~1831年）も「春見として残すら春は花夏ほととぎす秋はみちび」と詠んだように、日本人は、四季のもたらす季節の移ろいを愛で、心から楽しんだ。四季の移ろいに応じて、衣装や家具をかえ、旬の食べ物を食するなど季節にかかわる楽しみは、数限りない。また、芸術面でも、俳句和歌はもちろん、生け花や茶の湯でも、季節を感じさせることが非常に重要な
要素であるとされてきた。このように、四季の存在が、日本人の感性や価値観に大きな影響を与えたことは明らかである。

2) 森林

森林と暮らしとのかかわりは多様であり、深い。かつて、森林は、日本人にとって、必要不可欠の材料かつエネルギー源であった。森林は、単に木材を産出するだけでなく、木工品の素材としていしかたり、茸や山菜、木の実等を生み出したり、大事な狩猟の場として機能してきた。そして、貴重な水源である。また、日本の山村での労働は二つの意義を生み出すといわれた。ひとつには労働と自然との交流であり、もうひとつは人と人との交流である。山の労働は、下草刈りや枝打ちに始まり、茸の栽培、薪生産炭等に加え、山道や橋の整備なども含み、こうした労働の積み重ねが、結果として山の手入れにもつながっていた。また、労働の下準備、用具の手入れ、山道や橋の補修、冬支度、一日の合間の息抜きなど、これらの全てが人々の交流を生み出し、コミュニティの形成に役立てられてきた。

3) 水

森林と並んで日本の風土を特徴付けるものとして、湿潤がもたらす、水の循環がある。日本は、豊かにして変化に富む水と川に満ちている。この特徴は、森林とともに「山紫水明」という表現に象徴される。「山紫水明」とは、山は日に映えて紫色に見え、川の水は澄んで清らかであること、つまり山や川の景色の美しさを指している。

日本人は、この川の水をふんだんに利用し、水田を築くことで、生命の基盤である稲作を行ってきた。この豊富で変化に富む水の流れは、和歌や俳句の中で詠まれてきた他、一般的に日本人が思い浮かべる日本の風景を、もっとも想うされるものである。また水は、水運として人と物資の輸送にも、そして漁業を通じて日本人に貴重なタンパク質を提供していた。

このように、水も、日本人の感受性と生活のあり方に大きな影響を与えてきた。

4) 島国

日本の地形は、北海道、本州、四国、九州を中心とする大小の島々が大陸の脇に弧状に連なっている。日本は、周りを海で囲まれ、大陸と海で隔てられている。この特徴から、「日本は200キロメートルの朝鮮海峡をはさんでいたため、大陸からの圧力を直接にうけることは、十三世紀のモンゴル遠征軍の襲来をのぞいて、なかった。しかし、使者をおくり必要な情報をもちかえるという、自発的な接触によって、自国の文化をたしかめる行動はただすことがなく、決して孤立していたわけではない。海上の適当な距離は、大陸からの侵略、大量移民などの圧力を弱め、学問、技術などの情報をとりいれるためには、ちょっとよかったのである。」(『日本文明77の鍵』梅棹忠夫編著)”

日本が、島国であり、人口の大多数を単一民族で構成する国家であったことは、その感性や価値観にも影響を与えた。特に、限られた地理的条件内で暮らしていく術として、循環を基調とした調和が重んじられてきた。

5) 火山・地震

プレートテクトニクス理論によれば、アジア大陸を支えているユーラシアプレートの下に、それよりも比重の重い太平洋プレートがもぐりこんでいる。そのため、日本で"は火山噴火並びに地震が頻発し、日本人は、絶えず火山と地震に脅かされてきた。"
方で、「日本の山水美が火山に負ふところが多い」ことは周知のことであり、火山や地震は、多様な地形を生み出す原動力でもあった。

こうした特徴は、次のような記述につながる。

「噴火活動がどれほど古代日本人の恐怖心を呼び覚ましたかは想像にあまり見る。しかし、概して、日本人は山々を崇敬するばかりでなく、愛してもきた。（『果てしなく美しい日本』ドナルド・キーン）」

「日本に於ては脚下の大地は一方に於ては深き自愛をもつて我々を保育する“母なる土地”であるときに、又願々刑罰の鞭をもって我々の観角遊情に流れ易い心を引き締める“厳父”としての役割も勤める。（『風土と文学』寺田寅彦）」

つまり、日本人は、自然に畏敬の念を抱きながらも、それを愛で、生を送ることを忘れずに過ごしてきた。

2. 日本の風土の上で育まれてきた日本人の「暮らし」

(1) 街づくりに見る日本人の知恵

1) 都市構造

日本の都市構造は、自然の理に沿うように発達してきた。

この特徴は、治水の仕方ひとつにも如実に現れている。『信玄堤』として今もその跡をとどめる武田信玄（1521~1573年）の治水法は、洪水流を岩に衝突させ、あるいは洪水をどうしを二つの川の出会いで衝突させるなどしてその勢いをそぎ、さらに霞堤（一定の角度で雁行状に堤防を断続させるもの）を配して洪水を川の外へ逆流させるものであった。また、加藤清正（1562~1611年）は、洪水が一定の水位を超えるとき、堤防の一角から水を外へ溢れ出させる堤を故意に低くした部分を設ける、乗越堤による越流方式をとった。自然を水系全体で捉えようとした思想と、自然法則に逆らうことなくその力を利用しようとした日本人の自然に対する謙虚さと賢明さが、後世に残る治水作業を可能にしたのみならず、山林の育成、新田開発、農業用水の確保、水の輸送といった江戸の文化を形作ったと言われる（『環境と文化に関する調査報告書』環境文明研究所 1994年）。

さらに、日本の「風土」がもたらす複雑な地形は、集落の分布や町の骨格、そしてその相互通じのための交通網の発達に大きな影響を与えた。そのことは、例えば、次のような記述からも伺える。

「城郭は西洋のように幾何学的な形態こそ持たないが、自然の地形と水系を描写した原理を持ち、都市であった城下町も自然の地形と水系を都市的に構造化する原理をもっていた。（『日本の都市 その伝統と近代』篠原修 2006年）」「山脈や河流の交錯によって細かく区分された地形的単位毎に小都市の萌芽が発達し、それが後日の封建時代の割拠の基礎を作ったであろう。『風土と文学』寺田寅彦）」

ちなみに、大陸の文化を模して作られた京都でも、はじめこそ条条里ごとの発達が見られただが、最終的には、鴨川の流れや美地形に影響を受け変形的に発達していったといわれる。

2) 街並み 日本の街並みは、「崇高（sublime）、壮大（grand）よりも、清潔（clean）、美（beauty）を好む（『日本の都市 その伝統と近代』篠原修）」傾向があった。「幕末から明治にかけて来訪した欧米人が何よりも驚いたのは日本の都市の清潔さであり、庭づくりや屋内における肌理やかな美の感覚であった。」江戸の街並みを見物したドン・ロドリエゴは、
「江戸の町は、まだ誰も歩いていないようにきれいで清潔である」と述べている。イツの世界的建築家ブルーノ・タウトは、「都会の中で、人々が各自の店先の道路を掃除し、絶えず水を打ち、なお、その上、篋などで自動車の埃を防いでいるのは、実は驚嘆に値する。」と述べている。また、幕末にイギリスの初代駐日公使となったオールコックは、「江戸の道筋はよく整備されており、・・・私がかつて訪れたアジアやヨーロッパと、実際に水を打ち、なお上、篋などで自動車の埃を防いでいるのは、実に気持ちのいい、いい対照をなしている」と書いている。さらに、明治初期に江戸を訪れたE.モースは、「わが国で悪い排水や不完全な便所そのほかに起因するとされている病気の種類は、日本には無いか、あっても非常にまれであるらしい。」とその衛生状態の良さにふれている。

江戸の街並みが清潔であった理由は、次節で述べるリサイクルが徹底していたことともつながる。江戸ではリサイクルが徹底されていたため、ゴミの形で排出されるものは極めて少なく、ドブの汚泥や家事の焼け跡からの残土や瓦、陶器のかけるのみだった。このようなゴミは、川や堀に捨てられることもあったが、たびたび禁止令が出された。また、当時、ロンドンやパリで問題となっていた尿の処理システムも江戸では確立されていた。し尿は、昭和30年頃まで重要な肥料として農村に還元されていたが、江戸は最大の消費都市であることから、尿を有効に利用する施設が確立されていた。現代的な見方を立てば、尿に経済的価値を付与し、環境を汚染することなく循環させる、合理的なエコシステムが確立されていたといえる。(『環境と文化に関する調査報告書』環境文明研究所)

3) 武家屋敷、町屋、長屋

江戸では、階級ごとにそれぞれ自然を内に取り込む装置を有していた。江戸の街並みは、その階級によって武士の武家屋敷と町人の町屋・長屋によって形成されていた。迎賓館、後楽園、東京大学、新宿御苑など、現在広大な敷地を持っている公共施設の多くは、もともと江戸時代の大名屋敷であった。大名たちは江戸の各所に上・中・下の屋敷地を拝受した。江戸の7割がたは武家地であったと言われているが、これら広大な敷地には、四季折々の景観を生み出す庭園が整備され、江戸の町の名所となっていた。

江戸の人口の半数以上を占める五十数万の商人・職人らが、15%程度の町地に押し詰められ、多くが町屋・長屋住まいをしていた。「いわゆる“九尺×二間”のせまい借店が並び、通りに面して商いをされ、そうやや広い個所があり、奥は長屋となっている。」(中略)この大たい三坪(六畳)ほどの貸間に、平均3.8人が住んでいたようであり(渋谷宮益坂の長屋の例、夫婦と子供1.2人の家族が、長屋の住宅の平均像というところであろう(『百万都市江戸の生活』北原進)。こうした狭い家屋の中でも、路地には、庭が整備され、自然を愛でることはずがあった。また、庭がない家屋でも鉢植えをするなど、自然を生活に取り組む努力は惜しまなかった。

こうにして「日本民族は、この優しい自然を暮らしの中に取り込み、また逆にその自然の中で暮らしを浸透させて、文明的、文化的親和関係を築いていた(『日本の都市その伝統と近代』篠原修)」

4) 社寺
日本の社寺は、信仰の拠点であるとともに、暮らしと自然との調和を保つ仕掛けとして機能していた。前述のブルーノ・タウトは、日本の社寺について、次のようなコメントを記している。

「多くの社寺において、印象の美しさは、建築そのものよりも、むしろ建築が自然といかに分ち難く結合されているかという点から生じている。（『ニッポン』ブルーノ・タウト 1991年）特に顕著な事例として、将軍のために植えられた日光杉並木、比叡山の雄渾なる杉林の自然を賛美している。

E.S.モースも同様に日光の社寺と自然との関係を賛美し、「建物全体が山の険しい斜面に、原始的で松柏科の森林に囲まれて建ち、この上もしくは下も、藤や蔓性植物や花の下生え上がり、人の手による精巧極まる仕事の豊かな骨組みをなしていることは、日光をして一層感慨深いものにしている。（『日本その日その日』 E.S.モース 1978年）」

自然と調和がはかられているのは、大きく有名な社寺に限ったことではない。身近な社寺における自然との親和関係は、いたるところでみられる。これは、現在の日本にも引き継がれて、都市の中の貴重な自然として存在している。

また、たいてい神社の境内には一本の巨木が備えられている。その選ばれた木が生木の場合には、悪霊の影響を防ぐために注連縄が張られる。そうすることで、巨木は、人々にとって自然への畏敬の念を感じさせる装置として機能していた。

5) 伊勢神宮

伊勢神宮の美しさに代表されるように、日本人は、自然との調和をもたらすことで、簡素の中に美を見出す自由な精神を持ち合わせていた。伊勢神宮は、神道のもっとも重要な聖地のひとつである。著名な日本人論者の一人であるドナルド・キーンは、「それは、世俗的な不純さな神々への信仰が呼び覚まされるようなすばらしい美景の地に位置している。そこを訪れると、まず第一に、五十鈴川の流れが目に入る。嵐の後の水でも清く澄み切ったその水で、巡礼たちは神社に近づく前に、禊を行う。神社への道は、生い茂る壮麗の檜の大木に囲まれ、真っ直ぐに追いかけていた木々の素朴な状況、大きさが日本の自然を象徴しているかのようである。建物自体は古くないが、それは古代の伝統の姿を、まったくありのままにとどめている。二十年ごとに新しい建物が建てられている。新しい建物は古い経緯をなすものである。新しいものは古いもののに、順に新しいものは古いものの完全な複製である。（『果てしなく美しい日本』ドナルド・キーン 2002年）と述べている。また、ブルーノ・タウトは、建物に関する率直な感想を次のように述べている。「絵で

見るとこれらの建造物は単に簡素に見えるので、それに捧げられる尊崇の念が不思議にさえるほどである。それは農家を想起させるものであり、たまたま田園の真ん中に薬草を極める素朴な作事小屋をみると、伊勢のあの古典的建築が本質的には同じものであるかのような印象が受ける。（『ニッポン』ブルーノ・タウト）」

さらに、「その構造は完全に澄明で曇りなく、外形がそのまま構造であるほどに開放的で簡素である。同様に、香り高く美しい檜財、屋根に用いられている藁、屋上木部の端にあたる金冠、そして最後には建造物の土台となっている整然たる礎石、これらの材料はあくまで純潔を極め、あらゆる点で清楚である。（『ニッポン』ブルーノ・タウト）と簡素な美を表現している。

(2) コミュニティに見る日本人の知恵

1) 町の世話役、大家制度
江戸幕府は、日本の伝統を上手に使い、無理して強権的官僚組織を作らず、庶民の暮らしが密接した大家を行政者として現場に配置した。このあたりは、調和を重んじる日本人の得意とするところであった。(『江戸の助け合い』芳賀登他、『お江戸でござる』杉浦日向子)

2) 災害救助活動の花形、鶴の活躍

このように、江戸時代には、災害時に、今でいうボランティアの形で相互扶助する仕組みが確立されていた。火消しはその一例である。(『江戸の助け合い』芳賀登他)

3) 子育てを重んじる

江戸時代の長屋での子育ての様子を見ると、まず長屋の若いかみさんが妊娠すると、岩田帯という腹巻をする。これは、一種のお祝い事で、周りに妊娠していることを広く知らせる働きがあった。町内には、何かと世話好きな経産婦がおり、助言をくれたりする。このような近所の相互援助の環境が整っており、生まれた子どもを歓迎する用意で出来上がっている。出産後は、「お宮参り」を行い、無事に生まれたことを近所に知らせ、助け合いの環境を維持していた。日本人には、6歳までは「子は神の使い」と考える風習があった。これは、死亡率のもっとも高い6歳までの時期には、親のみだけではなく、近所ぐるみで大切に育てていくという気持ちの表れであったようだ。(『江戸の助け合い』芳賀登他)

4) 徹底的なリサイクル文化

江戸では、使えるものは徹底的に再利用されていた。衣類は貴重品であったため、古着商人という流通業が成立しており、高価な振り袖も古着屋にまわった。浴衣が古くなると XSの布で、灰が「灰取り」によって回収された。灰には多くの用途があり、例えば、江戸の名物練馬大根の栽培には、灰が欠かせなかったという。酒の空き樽は回収ルートにしたがって何度も利用され、町人が酒を買うときは、酒屋の名入りの徳利を借りて何度も利用が普通だった。これらの不用品は、古着屋を始め、不用品の通信を通じて新しい使い手を求めて回転する仕組みができていた。修繕屋は種類も多彩で、屋軒の直し、桶のタガを直すタガ屋、そろばん直し、鍋や釜の穴あきを直すイカケ屋などが町中を回っていた。

和紙はコウゾなどの植物を原料とするが、毎年成長する一年生の枝しか使わないため、木を切るというよりは穀物や野菜のようにその年の作物を収穫するのと同じように扱われた。その紙が紙屑になれば、屑拾いによって丹念に拾われ、問屋に集められて再生紙として利用された。

このように、江戸は大都市でありながら、徹底したエコシティであり、すべてのものは最後の最後まで使われ、それでも使われなくなったものを集めて交換し、売りさばく市場が成立するほどであった。(『環境と文化に関する調査報告書』環境文明研究所)
3. 日本の風土や暮らしに見る持続性の知恵

これまで述べてきたように、日本の「風土」の特徴として、第一に、四季があり森と水が豊富に存在し、そのため、多種多様な自然環境、生物、風景に恵まれていることがあげられる。そして、四季の移ろいは、森や水を循環させ、さらにその循環は、稲穂に代表される食料を日本人にもたらしてくれている。第二に、日本は島国であり、火山や地震が発生すること、島国であり閉鎖系の国土であるため海によって他国から隔離されていること、さらに火山や地震による大規模な自然災害が頻繁に起きるため結果として起伏の激しい複雑な地形となっている点である。

このような日本の「風土」で育まれた日本人の感性や価値観は、次の4つに集約できる。

第一に、日本人は、自然を愛で、それに生をおく感性や価値観をもっている点である。そして、四季折々の自然を心から楽しむだけでなく、「山川草木悉皆成仏」に代表されるように生きとし生けるものに抱く畏敬の念をも合わせ持っていた。

第二に、日本人は、自然への畏敬を抱きながらも、それを受け入れる感性や価値観をもっていった点である。日本には、四季の移ろいがもたらす豊穣な自然がある一方、台風と呼ばれる暴風や火山、地震のような厳しい自然災害が存在したため、その厳しさに畏敬を持つつも、それを受け入れる心を日本人は持っていた。そしてそれは、自然災害後の惨状を一種の無常観として受け入れる価値観にもつながっていた。

第三に、日本人は、祖先や子孫を大切にし、隣人との調和を重んじた点である。循環を基調とする考えは、一世代一世代のつながりを無意識のうちに伝え、祖先や子孫を大切にすることが現代世代の当然の行いと考えられていた。また、日本人は、閉鎖系の国土のもとでの暮らしが余儀なくされていたため、限られた地理的条件の中では、他者との調和が生きるための知恵でもあった。

第四に、日本人は、足るを知り、簡素を尊ぶ感性や価値観を持っていた点である。これは、限られた地理的条件の中で、資源も限られた中で生活することを余儀なくされていたことにもなる。

こうした日本独特の風土とそれに育まれた日本人の感性や価値観から、次のような日本の持続性の知恵が見えてくる。

1. 日本人の「暮らし」は、日本の「風土」に根差したものであり、「風土」に合う「暮らし」することで、環境の持続性を確保してきた。

江戸時代の街づくりやコミュニティは、日本の「風土」を最大限活かしたものであり、多種多様で豊穣な自然をふんだんに「暮らし」に取り入れ、生活を豊かなものにしていた。その一方で、災害をもたらす自然に対しては、畏敬の念を持つつも、それを受け入れていった。すなわち、豊穣な自然を最大限活かす一方で、脅威となる自然を受け入れるように、街づくりに工夫が注がれており、その結果として、江戸時代は、環境の容量(キャリインク)を越えることのない適正規模の「暮らし」を実現していたと考えられる。

具体的には、日本の都市構造は、自然の理に沿うように発展してきたこと、街並みは、自然を愛でることに注力がおかれた、清潔であり、美しさを追求していたこと、さらに武家屋敷、町屋、長屋といった住まいでは、自然を内に取り組む装置を有し、街に点在する社寺は、暮らしと自然の調和を保つ仕掛けとして機能していたことなどから、そのことがう
かがえる。伊勢神宮に代表されるように、簡素の中に美を表現する建物が多く建てられてきたこともその一つの現れである。

2限られた「風土」の中で、「暮らし」を成り立たせるために、循環や調和といった知恵を培い、社会の持続性を確保してきた。環境のキャリリング・キャパシティを超えることのない「暮らし」は、一方で、限られた地理的、物的資源の中で生活することを意味する。ある意味で閉鎖的な社会の中で暮らすために、江戸時代の日本人は、奪い合いをするのではなく、循環を基調とした調和を重んじる道を選んだ。それは、結果として、社会の持続性を確保することに大いに役立った。

それは特に、循環を基調とし、他との調和を重んじた江戸のコミュニティからうかがい知ることができる。例えば、大家制度は、無理して強権的な官僚組織を作らず、庶民に密接した行政官として機能していたが、これは、町人の間の調和を重んじればこそ生まれた制度である。また、災害時には、相互扶助の仕組みが確立されていたし、老人への思いやりや子育てを重んじる風潮もあった。そして物理的にも、物を徹底して循環利用するリサイクル文化が根付いていた。このように、精神的にも物理的にも「循環」や「調和」を重んじる暮らしを実践していた。

持続性につながる先人たちの精神性の知恵～岡倉天心・新渡戸稲造・内村鑑三、および、中村元の思想から～

1. 「日本の知恵」をどのような視点でみていくのか

日本人の精神性は、近代国家を樹立した明治時代以降とその前との間には断絶があり、明治維新前の長い歴史の中で培われてきた日本人の精神性の連続が、明治時代以降は途切れてしまったようにみえる。そのことは、ここで対象としている「日本人の精神性の知恵」と呼び得るものは、明治の近代化以降はほとんど形成されておらず、むしろ失われる一方なのではないかと言えるようと思われる。そこで、「日本人の精神性は果たして明治の近代化以降変わったのか、変わったとすればどう変わったのか、変わる前はどうだったのかをみるとことにより、「日本人の精神性の知恵」と呼び得るものはどのようなものなのかを考えていきたい。このような観点に立って、ここでは主に明治前の日本人の精神性についてみていく。

そのため、明治時代に日本人の精神性の高さを欧米に向けて発信するため、英文で著述された岡倉天心著『日本の目覚め』、新渡戸稲造著『武士道』、内村鑑三著『代表的日本人』を取り上げ、日本のよさとしてどのような点を欧米に向けて発信しようとしたのかをみることにより、かつて日本の先人たちが築いてきた「日本人の精神性の知恵」というものを探っていきたい。また、それらをみると当てはまる、比較文明・比較文化的立場から日本の宗教・文化的の歴史を通じて日本人の思惟の特徴を分析した中村元著『日本人的思惟方法』を参照しながら検討していきたい。なお、『日本人的思惟方法』は早くに英訳され、日本人観を知る好書として諸外国で読まれているものである。

『日本の目覚め』、『武士道』、『代表的日本人』が著述された年および時代背景は以下の通りである。

◇時代背景
・日清戦争:1894(明治 27)~1895(明治 28)・日露戦争:1904(明治 37)~1905(明治 38)

◇著述された年
・1900 年(明治 33) 新渡戸稲造『武士道』(『Bushido The Soul of Japan』)
(ここでは、新渡戸稲造『武士道』＜奈良本辰也訳、三笠書房、2006＞を用いた。)・1904年（明治37）岡倉天心『日本の目覚め』（『The Awakening of Japan』）

(ここでは、岡倉天心『日本の目覚め』＜PHP研究所、2004＞を用いた。)・1908年（明治41）内村鑑三『代表的日本人』（『Representative Men of Japan』）

(ここでは、内村鑑三『代表的日本人』＜鈴木範久訳、岩波文庫、2001＞を用いた。)また、「日本人の思惟方法」については以下の通りである。

・1948年（昭和23）中村元『東洋人の思惟方法』初版（ここでは、中村元『東洋人の思惟方法』III-「日本人の思惟方法」＜中村元選集＞〔決定版〕第3巻、春秋社、1994＞を用いた。)

2.岡倉天心『日本の目覚め』

「日本が飛躍的に発展する光景は、外国の人たちにとっては非常な驚きであった。彼らにとって日本といえば、“桜をこよなく愛する国”であり、一方で“軍艦の建造に突き進む国”でありも、西洋では最近まで日本をまともとにとらえていなかった。その結果、多くの西洋人にとって日本という国は、キリスト教国に対する脅威として映ってしまった。「私たちは西洋から入ってきた新しい教えに感謝する一方で、私たちのおおもとはアジアにあるのだということを、私たちはおさえておく必要があります。私たちに古代の文明を伝え、私たちに再生の芽を植え付けてくれたのも、すべてアジアである。」

当時アジアの国々は西洋のキリスト教国に侵略され、悲惨な立場に置かれていた。そのような中で、西洋は維新後の日本の力と発展をみて、異教徒の国・日本が今度は侵略国になると言いつつあったのである。これに対して天心は、日本の文明の歴史から見て、本来の日本精神には他国を侵略する意図など存在しないということを世界に発信しようとしたのであり、また西洋文明になびき始めている日本人に対して、日本の発展の源はアジア文明にあることを自覚させようとしたのである。

3.新渡戸稲造『武士道』

1 武士道とは何か 武士道は、日本の象徴である桜花にまさるとも劣らない、日本の土壌に固有の華である。その起源は封建制と一致する。それは武士階級の「高い身分に伴う義務」であり、成文法ではない。一個の頭脳が創造したものはでなく、何百年にもわたっての、武士の生き方の有機的産物であった。武士階級の道徳体系であった武士道は、やがて国民全体の精神となり、それによって「大和魂」はこの国 の民族精神を表わすにいたった。日本の知性と道徳は、直接的にも、間接的にも武士道の所産であった。

2 武士道の徳目

次の7項目が挙げられている。

「義」(正義の道)、「勇」(勇気)、「仁」(愛・寛容・憐憫の情)、「礼」(礼儀)、「誠」(真実・正直)、「名誉」(名・面目・外聞)、「忠義」(主君に対する忠誠)

今、日本において武士道精神の復活に関心を寄せる人も多い。「武士道の徳目」には「日本人の精神性の知恵」として現代に生かすべきことも多く含まれれているので、明治前と明治以降の武士道精神を明確に区別し、中味をよく精査した上で、民主・平等・平和を掲げる現代社会に適合できる仕方で取り上げていくのがよいと思われる。
6.まとめと今後の課題

1 日本文化の基盤に立った、日本人としての誇りと自信の回復

持続可能な社会を築いていくためには、現在の日本の精神的荒廃に歯止めをかけなければならないことは明らかである。本稿で取り上げた方々は、自分が生まれ育った日本という国に文化誇りをもち、日本人としての精神的拠り所を確立して、世界で活躍し、世界へ向けて日本という国を発信してきた。現在の日本人が失ってしまったのは、これらの方々にみられる確固とした精神的基盤に基づく誇りと自信ではないだろうか。岡倉天心が「私たちは私の理想に常に忠実であってこそ、他からの尊敬も得られるのだ」と言うように、欧米の文化を崇め、それへとなびく無国籍的な人々からでは、日本人の精神的荒廃に歯止めをかける知恵を学ぶことはできないであろう。本稿で述べたような先人たちがいったことを再認識し、これらの方々の精神性を学んでいくことは大事なことであると思われる。

2 東洋経済についての再認識

内村鑑三是「東洋思想の一つの美点は、経済と道徳を分けて考えない考え方です。東洋の思想家たちは、富は常に道の結果であるとみます。」と言い、上杉鷹山と二宮尊徳における実例をもってそれを示し、岡倉天心は「東洋は手段と目的を区別する。生産効率を上げる機械は手段であって目的ではない。」と言う。両者はこれを欧米へ向けて発信すると同時に、日本の経済も西洋化していくことに対して警鐘を鳴らしたのである。現在のグローバル化した経済の非人間性を是正していくためにも、日本の歴史の中で実現されていたこのような東洋経済の思想を、復活させていくことは重要であると思われる。

3 普遍的な思惟を育てる宗教教育の必要性

ここで取り上げた著作に感銘を受けるのは、それらの中に時代や場所を超えた普遍的な慈悲や正義の心が読み取れるからである。日本人の思惟傾向として全体的にいえる顕著な特徴は、具体的・個別的な事象や人間関係を重要視するあまり、人間関係を超えて心を向けるものがおり、生きる価値基準を与えてくれる普遍的な理法があることを、みることかできないことである。現在の日本社会でみられるトップ指導者のモラルのなさ、子供たちの間のいじめや凶悪事件、親殺し・子殺し、働き盛りの自殺などは、自分が属する家族・仲間・組織という人間関係だけしかない精神世界で生じているものである。このような問題は、小手先の処方箋では解決できないと思われる。

普遍的な理法とは世俗の人間の価値判断を超えたものであり、それは宗教の真理である

ことから、普遍的な思惟を育てていくためには、宗教教育が不可欠であると思われる。

「宗教」という日本語は、明治初期に日本へ西洋文明が移入された時に、religionの翻訳語として、仏典で使われていた「宗教」という語句が当てられたものである。中村元によると「仏典で『宗教』とは、『宗』と『教』に区別して考える。『宗』は普遍的な真理であり、人間が基づくべき根本の理法である。『教』というのは抽象的な『宗』を具体的な言葉で表わしたものであり、根本へ導く手段であって、いつあってもかまわない。」と言う。したがって、普遍的な理法を体得させるという宗教教育の立場に立てば、仏教・神道・キリスト教など、教育の宗教・宗派はいくつあってもかまわないことになる。それはキリスト教徒であった内村鑑三や新渡戸稲造をみれば明らかである。現在の社会における宗教に対する誤解や偏見を取り除いて、高い精神性をもったこれらの日本人を育てる努力を、われわれはしなければならないと思われる。（小林節子）
TRANSLATION OF IMPORTANT PARTS

The discovery of Japan’s traditional wisdom to help create a sustainable society
Research first report for its international contribution

Western environmental specialists were interested in Japanese environmental technologies such as energy conservation or recycling, but did not show interest in the Japanese philosophies, values and sensitivity which are the foundation of these technologies. This is because Japanese wisdom was never explained in an understandable way for foreign people.

It is a fact that the traditional wisdom for sustaining a society that had once existed has been lost after the Meiji Restoration due to the overwhelming power of Western values, ideas, technology, and the political system that had flowed into Japan on an on-going basis.

In 1987, the idea of "sustainable development" proposed at the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Committee) was subsequently published in the "United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit)” (1992) It is a global agreement and the creation of a sustainable society is a common goal in the 21st century. In Japan, there is no social consensus (general agreement) on ‘sustainability’ or ‘sustainable society’, and when an expert discusses the formation of the concept of 'sustainability' and its development, so far, there have been situations in which the opinions and theories of researchers and intellectuals in Europe and America are seeking the basis.

However, in prewar Japanese society, especially in the Edo period (1603 – 1868) when strict seclusion policy was implemented, there was a long history of sustainable society while maintaining and developing a peaceful and high quality culture, and this is considered to be a very unique and proud example of world history.

The background behind the formation of such a society can be thought of as various factors, but in particular, it is the result of the combination of the natural conditions inherent in Japan and ideology, religion and ethics, education, art and culture, governance system, and so on, and the so called “the spirit of coexistence of people and people and nature”is considered to have become the main spiritual pillar of the maintenance and development of the traditional Japanese society.

Unfortunately, however, the concept of “sustainability” itself is a relatively new concept in the world, and it is still difficult to express traditional Japanese intrinsic wisdom using Western logic. Because it is difficult, it is also a fact that many people could not make efforts to understand it and share it until now.

SO, CAN WE EVEN GENERALISE SUSTAINABILITY AS WESTERN IDEOLOGY FOR EVERYONE? ARE WE THEN NOT FORCING ON ONE TERM FROM A WESTERN PERCEPTION?
This paper aims to **expand the sustainability debate that has been developed mainly in Europe and the United States**, contribute to ensure a sustainable world and to remind the Japanese of their lost identity and culture.

**Japanese wisdom of sustainability is rooted in traditional culture.**

In 2004, **Wangari Maathai**, who was born in Kenya and received the Nobel Peace Prize for the first time in history as an environmental activist, was inspired by Japan's "**Mottainai**" spirit and introduced it to the world, but this word was handed down from long ago by Japanese people. Its meaning is originally 1(useful human resources and things) it is a pity that it is not utilized useful, 2 (sacred things) it is often feared that it is ok, 3 it is not easy, 4 it is inconvenient ("Obayashi") it is out of the state that should be. Recently, it is often used in the sense of 1, but it was originally one of the words to show the **wisdom of Japanese people that not only value things, but also expresses gratitude and reverence for people and nature, and that there are lives in things and nature, and treat these things as human beings**, and treat them with the same importance as human beings.

Examples of the Japanese philosophy translated into nowadays: In anime, the Japanese traditional philosophy is discussed as subject and used as inspiration. Messages about **spirit in things** and **living with nature in harmony** are conveyed.

Not only in the world of anime, but also in the field of Science and technology, the Japanese have a variety of wisdom related to sustainability. Traditional Japanese thought such as "**WA**" and "always think about the next generation" are even visible in the world of science.

In modern Japan, even in indirect ways, it is possible to see the wisdom and message to maintain the **sustainability of people and society based on the spirit of Japanese Buddhist thought and Shinto**.

Unfortunately, however, Japanese society has drastically changed in the last century or so, although the above-mentioned wisdom useful for sustainable society has been shared and passed on for a long time over a thousand years.

In the process of **economic growth**, **Japanese people's sense of value has changed dramatically in a short period of time**. In today's terms, it can be said that Japanese traditional culture has been transformed by the global wave of the market economy, and it is on the verge of extinction.

However, fortunately, **Japanese people are beginning to recognize the value of traditional wisdom that Japan had**, and realize that it is possible not only to train Japan but also to contribute to the world by utilizing it in a society in the 21st century where confusion is expected.

**Concrete Japanese sustainability wisdom**

- Rather than obsession with things, value spiritual wealth and peace of mind - Living on an island and experiencing the limits of environments, the Japanese learned to pursue spirituality and peace of mind more than the richness of things
- **Assimilation and unity with nature** - in traditional Japanese culture based on Shinto and Buddhism, man was a member of the natural world, and he was not in a position to protect and manage nature standing on top - appreciate nature and do not oppose
- Focus on what is there/enough, rather than what is not there - **Be grateful for the available things and do not seek for more**
- **Circularity of life** - the Buddhism-like reincarnation concept is connected to the circulation thought in the life, and it is possible to see the wisdom of the life of the people of Edo who have maintained their lives by making effective use of fewer resources
- Put emphasis harmony and value home and regional environment - Collective survival leading to sustainable and harmonious togetherness
- Cherish ancestors - thank and honor ancestors
- Acknowledge the value of education and be passionate about loving and nurturing the next generation

**8 point Traditional Japanese Wisdom on: Community Wisdom Bank by JAES21**

**THOUGHT**
Use as summary for the Japanese cultural behavior and philosophy
**Mottainai Spirit**

“Mottainai”- a lifestyle deeply rooted in traditional Japanese philosophy: a cultural practice of minimizing waste!

"Mottainai" is a Japanese word translated as “what a waste!” It is used to express regret when a resource or once possession is wasted. It is also a Buddhist philosophy embedded into Japanese cultural DNA for centuries, to have respect for and not to waste the resources, and to use them with a sense of gratitude. As one Japanese put it, "In mythical stories there are stories about Mottainai ghosts that will come and get you if you waste food or mistreat objects".

Some argue however that, the culture of mottainai is in decline in modern day Japan with the exponential growth of a consumer society. Nonetheless, mottainai is listed as the second out of 7 best words/cultural practices that best describe the unique eco-cultures of present day Japan. Some examples of Mottainai include the use of wastewater, in modern metropolitan cities like Tokyo, to flush toilets in modern buildings. The mottainai culture extends to a table manner as well, where wasting even a single grain of rice is considered as being disrespectful! The respectful practice stems from the Shinto belief that hundreds and thousands of Gods and spirits exist in every single object. Treating objects with care is very important as objects are believed to have souls and therefore should not be discarded.

Japan as a small island nation, with almost no significant natural resources, depended largely for its development on its human capital. Especially following the years after World War II, Japanese have learned to live in harmony with their environment using the small resources in a very efficient way. People recycled everything and wasted nothing.

**The Mottainai campaign in Japan**

The most popular Mainichi newspaper has been calling on Japanese “to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to prevent Global Warming, like for example by not driving their cars for distances they could easily walk, turning off lights when they aren’t in-use, using energy conserving home appliances and bringing their own reusable shopping bags instead of using unrecyclable plastic bags. Many people across Japan have shown their support for the concept of MOTTAINAI, with a recent poll showing that 80 percent of Japanese are aware of the MOTTAINAI Campaign”(source, MOTTAINAI.com).

**The “Mottainai” Campaign beyond Japan**

Prof. Wangari Maathai founder of Africa’s Green Belt Movement and a Nobel laureate, helped to bring the concept of mottainai across the globe. At a session of the United Nations in 2005, Prof. Maathai introduced the word mottainai as a slogan for environmental protection. She wore a T-shirt with the word "mottainai" printed on it. Prof. Maathai "explained that the meaning of the term mottainai encompasses the four R’s of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Respect." Prof. Maathai has worked to popularize the concept of mottainai in places outside of Japan. She has been speaking about the concept in Africa, Asia, Europe and the United States to create a more global environmental consciousness to promote ethical consumerism and to encourage people do more in terms of sustainable thinking and innovation.
Mottainai is a very powerful mindset that we all need to adopt to build environmentally responsible society. Let’s be reminded that most of the resources that are essential for our very survival are limited. Using innovative technologies and practices to reduce, recycle, and reuse resources are inevitable.

I encourage the readers of this article to try to incorporate the mottainai lifestyle into your own lives and pass it on to your children, as habits developed in childhood tend to last a lifetime. By doing so we will achieve the goal of transforming the mindsets of the society at influential stages of early learning.

*Be part of this great campaign to reduce waste, reuse finite resources, and recycle what we can with respect for nature and its finite resources (MOTTAINAI!)*

**MUJI**

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**THOUGHT**

Muji seems very fitting to Japanese sustainability - research into Muji to find inspiration in the way Japanese brands see sustainability

https://ryohin-keikaku.jp/csr/interview/003.html

Interview between CEO of HAKUHODO DESIGN, Nagai and Chairman and Representative Director of MUJI, Kanai

一般的な小売業であれば、お客様が欲しいとおっしゃれば、何でも売ろうと考えます。でも、無印良品というのは、最良の生活者、豊かな生活、私たちは「感じ良いくらし」と置き換えていますが、より良いくらしに合わないものは売りたくないし、開発する必要もない。より良いくらしの方向にたながる商品を、生活者の目線で開発し、提供していく、と。

なぜかというと、世の中の商品が過剰な競争の中で本質を失い、生活者にとっての自由が失われていると考えたからです。消費社会での企業間競争は、結局、コマーシャリズムという構造で競い合うわけです。低価格を武器に需要を拡大しようとする企業と、表層的なデザインやテレビCMなどで常にスタイルチェンジを行い、需要を拡大しようとする企業との二極化が進みました。

無印良品はそうではなく、生活の基本となる本当に必要なモノを、飾ることなく、必要の本質を商品にするコンセプトでスタートしました。

ただ、一方では、無印良品のデザインは、デザインを否定したデザインとも言えます。当時は、モノを売るた
めに、次々と消費される形がデザインだと呼ばれていたことに対し、デザインの本質や本来の役割は何かといった批評を内包しながら、無印良品はスタートしました。

最初はモノの有り様でした。売ろうとするために本質以外のコマ-シャリズムなところにデザインが加担しながら、いかに売れるものにするか、世の中の多くが売るためのものとして変容される中で、それに対する反体制商品と言いますか、アンチテーゼとして無印良品は誕生しました。そのため、商品パッケージについても同様に簡素化を目指しました。一般的な商品パッケージというものは、スーパーなどの売り場では競合商品よりも目立つデザインを施されていると思いますが、そのデザインはひとたび家庭に入ると、まったく不要なものであることに気づくのです。そのことから、最初からパッケージには過剰なデザインや工程を入れず、できるだけ簡略化しましょうという考え方を総合すると、結果的に無彩色なパッケージの商品群になったというわけです。

昔、堤さんがカニの缶詰を作る工場を見たときのことです。缶にカニの身を入れた後、カニの足の部分を2本必ず載せる作業をしていたのです。なぜそのようなことをするのかと尋ねると、このカニの缶詰は本物のカニを使っているという証のために入れていたとのこと。おそらく、戦前戦後も含め以前は‘カニの缶詰’だと謳いながらもカニの身を使っていない缶詰が市場に多数出回っていたのかもしれません。そこで、自分たちもパッケージに‘カニ缶’と書いて売る以上は、当社の缶詰は本物のカニを使っていることをお客様に信用して欲しいので、少し手間はかかるけれど本物であることの証明としてわかりやすく足を2本入れることがどうしても必要だったのです。

しかし、無印良品のカニ缶は、その信用を得るために行っていた足を2本入れるという‘ひと手間’は省くけれど、その分リーズナブルな価格にすることを目指しました。しかも、必ずパッケージには、どこの海で獲れた、何というカニの身を使用しているのかということはしっかりと明記しようと、これは最初から決めていました。

その感覚を、堤清二さんは1980年の当時から持たれていたということが、今思えばとてもすごいことだと思います。

日本の美意識に根差して、生活の質を上げる

金井

実は、この会社では、エコロジーという言葉を1回も言ったことがないんです。創業当初から再生紙を使ったり、捨てられていたようなシイタケの割れている部分や小さいものも混ぜて、その理由とともに販売した会社ですが、1回もエコロジーと表現したことはない。とても日本らしいですよ。「自分がこんなことをやっています」ということ自体が、無印良品の美意識ではないわけです。

でも、消費社会や資本主義はまったくそうではない世界ですよ。モノは日本の家庭に大体行き渡ったわけですから、今年のカラーは、こんなデザインはと、どの会社も欲しい理由を訴求した時代に、無印良品は対極の姿勢、個性や嗜好性を押し、むしろ個性はお客様の1人ひとりに委ねるという、生活者に押し付けない自由な商品を作っていました。これは欧米人にはない発想ですよ。できるだけそぎ落として、むしろマイナスの美学を追求するわけですから。
MUJI started with the concept of making the essence of the goods necessary, without decorating the things that are the basics of life.

Muji’s design can be said to be a design that has denied design. At that time, in order to sell things, the form that was consumed one after another was called design, while the inclusion of critiques such as the nature of the design and the original role led to the launch of MUJI.

We wanted to act against the commercialism, designing unnecessary things just to sell.

From the beginning, complete transparency on the label was important to us.

In this company, we never used the word “Ecology”, not even once.

We do not want to express “We are doing so much good”, this is a very Japanese way of thinking, promoting Ecology would go against our sense of aesthetics.

MUJI’s non-polarity attitude, personality and preference omitted, rather making a product which does not force anything on the individual consumer.

This is an idea that Westerners do not have. I try to go as far as possible, but rather pursue negative aesthetics.

THOUGHTS

- Promotion of eco, sustainability goes against Muji’s aesthetics -> very Japanese

MUJI goes to great lengths to prove that generic is actually better


The practice

Japanese lifestyle brand MUJI started as a revolt against heavily-branded imported goods so common in the 1980s. It originated from the supermarket chain called Seiyu, which introduced a line of nine household products and 31 food items called Mujirushi Ryōhin or No Brand Quality Goods with the tagline “Lower Priced for a Reason.” The common items—an odd assortment of oils, canned goods, and cleaning supplies—were plainly packaged in a manner that demonstrates the company’s core philosophy: Generic goods can be great, and good for the planet.

Unlike many companies that trumpet their planet-saving efforts through grandiose promotion campaigns, MUJI’s brand of green activism is quiet and introspective. Instead of preaching to consumers, the company focuses on making sure its internal operations live up to the founding philosophy.

MUJI’s holy trinity of product development involves using design as a problem-solving strategy,
scrutinizing materials and production, and radically simplifying its product packaging true to its
generic “no brand”-brand ethos. As EcoSalon points out, its founding philosophy is based on
traditional Japanese values of simplicity, prudence, and self-restraint—or what they call “this is
enough.”

Over the last 36 years, MUJI has been experimenting with various programs that companies are
just beginning to dabble with today. Among its first products, canned salmon made from
undesirable parts of the fish and imperfect U-shaped spaghetti, predate today’s anti-food waste
efforts.

There are no easy, save-the-planet gimmicks at MUJI stores. You can’t compost their bags in
your garden to grow trees; there are no parsley seeds embedded in the pulp of their stationery;
they won’t make a donation to some charitable foundation in your name or hand you a discount
voucher for products you recycle at their stores. MUJI’s sustainability plan wrestles with the less
glamorous elements of their supply chain.

By being in the mainstream, MUJI is trying to position sustainability as normal everyday
behavior for the greatest number of people instead of bursts of activity from a few activists.

**THOUGHTS**
- MUJI is the ultimate brand reflecting Japanese sustainability whilst being relevant on
  an international level
- Take MUJI as example for Japanese sustainability

**DESIGNING DESIGN - HARA KENYA**

Aim of research: Understand the philosophy of Hara Kenya, connect Japanese culture to
aesthetics

The Aesthetics of Invisibility
John Maeda
(Associate Director of Research, MIT Media Lab)
p.12,13

- Exformation: “the word describes a kind of unwritten spirituality with respect to
  information that implicitly underlies the animist culture of Japan”
- Culture of perceived “Japanese simplicity” -> “what lies at the heart of a Zen-like nothing
  is an incredibly deep, complex, and meaningthing something”

Connect & analyse “Japanese philosophy” - visible in design to sustainability
RE-DESIGN Exhibition

Shigeru Ban and Toilet Paper
p.26
- paper tubes for designing buildings -> paper appears fragile, but has strength and durability to be used in permanent buildings -> good for simple, inexpensive facilities
- No longer needed, can be recycled
- Expo 2000: Japanese pavilion with paper tubes -> concept was to recycle after expo
- Vision: “realizing necessary architecture based on universal and rational ideas while avoiding the squandering of resources

P.27
- Toilet paper: paper tube is square -> pulled out for use, square roll resists -> generates resistance, functioning to reduce the consumption of resources and also deliver the message: economize

P.28
- Packaging: saving space in transportation and storage

Sustainable ideas -> economically beneficial, not luxury

WHITE

The Implicit Color
P.215
- “Traditional Japanese Colors”: book expresses the subtle emotional aspect of color, traditional colors are a way of treating color, a way of savoring color that has been retained, as the words that name them, within a particular culture
- Traditional colors of Japan originated in the court culture of the Heian period (794-1185)
- People carefully observed the transition of nature, made these a pretext in the colors of clothing, goods, and furniture, as well as in common expressions and greetings
- Transitions of natural phenomena in a year - divided into 24 solar terms - setsugetsuka (snow, moon, flowers)
- “Words depicting nature’s changing hues in grass and trees sound dainty and weak, but that very fragility is what allows the perfect infiltration into the innermost recess of human sensibility”

MUJI
Nothing, Yet Everything

P. 228
- Hara Kenya: art director since 2002
- Born into the Japanese market in the 1980s
Communicate and empower Muji’s concept to meet today’s global context, in which a wiser way of dealing with manufacturing, resources and the environment has begun to arise

P.229
- “Muji’s perspective is unique; in the MUJI concept, design intervenes in the making of things”
- “This counters the rest of the world, which runs on the fuel of capital and appetite. Japan, looking upon the world from its detached location at the eastern end of Asia, has built an aesthetic that is infinitely attractive to human rationality, not within luxury and extravagance, but simplicity.

MUJI’s Origin, MUJI’s Challenge

P.231
- Concept is offspring of graphic designer Ikko Tanaka and vision of Seiji Tsutsumi

P.232
- Basic concept: creation of a group of extremely straightforward, low-cost items by thoroughly simplifying the production process
- Initial slogan “Lower Priced for a Reason”
- Rationalizing production process - “MUJI’s simplification has never resulted in cheapening - instead, it has led to the manifestation of aesthetics

P.233
- “MUJI’s fresh, pure products were the result of product development in the service of quality and function, as well as simple packaging and the use of unbleached paper
- Example: “Broken Dried Shiitake Mushrooms”

P.234
- Consumers: highly conscious of their living environment

“MUJI’s succinct design reveals a Japanese aesthetic which values sustaining simplicity by completely discarding all worthless decoration.” - Tadao Ando

P.235
- Problem: beginning, rationalized production process let to price advantage -> but today: low labor costs lead to low prices - price advantage difficult to hold
- MUJI concept is not based on cheap: “producing in a country with lower labor costs and selling them in countries with high labor costs us not sustainable

p.236
- “must appeal to consumers not with relentless pursuit of cheapest things, but with the very most compatible price range”
- “Omitting production processes does not automatically lead to good products.”

p.237
- “MUJI ideal is a product so enlightening that by simply touching itm we will gain a new consciousness of life and living.”

66
- “Specific substraction or omission leads to the exposure of the object’s very essence, through the search for the optimal shape and optimal material, **screening out the egoism** of the creator and the designer.”

**Acceptance, not Appetite**

P.238

- “We don’t want to be the thing that kindles or incites intense appetite, causing outbursts like, “This is really what I want,” or “I simply must have this.”
- But opposite: “We want to give customers the kind of satisfaction that comes out as a “this will do”, not “this is what I want”
- Not appetite, but acceptance
- "Management of desire is democracy, and the competition of desire, the free market economy"

P.239

- Desire sometimes involves obsession or egoism
- Consumer society and individual cultures, chasing after desire and driven by appetite, are hitting a wall - today we should value the qualities at work in acceptance: moderation, concession, and detached reason
- To generate “this will do,” by creating this very dimension of acceptance, one that is clearly self-confident and also truly competitive in a free economic society: this is MUJI’s vision - extremely useful concept for the entire world in the days ahead -> call it: “global rational value,” a philosophy that advocates the use of resources and objects according to an exceedingly rational perspective
- “A critical spirit and conscientious actions” - in order to balance the world we need a flexible rationality
- This efficiency, or rationality, has been incorporated within the MUJI concept

**Ego can not continue for true sustainability, harmony has to be reached**

P.240

- Products fall into two categories: idiosyncratic + expensive and ordinary + cheap - MUJI belongs to neither
- Searching for the most compatible materials, production methods and forms, MUJI gives birth to a new sense of value or aesthetics from within “simplicity”, omit any unnecessary production process, introduce rich and varied materials and processing technologies
- Naturally low cost of affluence and the inexpensive range of good judgement
- MUJI concept: point out the “basics” and “universality” of everyday life

**Emptiness**

P.241
MUJI’s advertising is emptiness - offers an empty vessel to the audience
Communication - not dispatching information from one entity or person to another but facilitating the mutual exchange of information
Example Japanese flag: people supply meaning of red circle

MUJI advertising concept is recognition of this fact, developed into a methodology - communication only becomes effective when an advertisement is offered as an empty vessel freely to deposit into it their ideas and wishes

MUJI admirers reasons: MUJI products are ecologically sound, urban aesthetic, inexpensive, simple design, habitual use

"Japan is not greatly blessed with natural resources. And so we have been able to become even more conscious, and at an earlier stage, of the limitations of the earth’s resources, and have practiced moderation and contrived technological methods to help sustain the environment."

What is **Quality in Simplicity**?

What is the simplicity that acts as the backdrop of the MUJI concept? What's good about simplicity? How is simplicity related to the quality of a product? - 2005 ad campaign touched on these themes, and also helped delve into the Japanese aesthetics, which look for beauty within simplicity

Simple = adjust to a variety of living environments, suitable to any stage of life -> this is “quality” as MUJI sees it

The Future of Design

Naturally, MUJI contends with the world economy. Design, too.

Education of Desire

Often hear: Japanese cars criticized as lacking aesthetically and philosophically in comparison to those from other countries - European cars are powerful in terms of self-expression. Manufactured to suit Japanese desires, they have no ego at all, but are quite mild and obedient. They are economical, perform superbly, and develop fewer problems
- Japan cars look gentle because they reflect perfectly a precise scan of the desires of the Japanese when it comes to cars. Therefore, whether it's a good thing or a bad thing, Japanese cars exhibit the Japanese "level of desire" for a vehicle.

Fertilizing the Soil

P. 289
- Economy in the days ahead: competition on a cultural level will join the competition in production technology and production cost on a cultural level - competitive performance of cultures supported by locality makes the world richer. Competition to create products or ideas that are based in one's own culture or market but can inspire other markets

P. 291
- Used the word Japan many times so far, but my remarks indicate neither intolerance nor petty nationalism - because of a global perspective, we must face the world and boldly assert our localism. We don't need to lose our individuality to become global."

THOUGHT
Maybe this idea of Hara Kenya keeps MUJI from shouting sustainability as well

- In the global context, distinction is valuable
- The basic market for marketing is the “field” at our feet. In MUJI’s case, the field is Japan

P. 295
- “Our originality comes from the fact that in our work, the logic of capitalism is surpassed slightly by that of humanity."

Viewing the world from the tip of Asia

P. 306, 308
- Japanese concept of contentment with simplicity and emptiness
- Whence comes our sensibility for such things as suki (aesthetic appeal), sabi (elegant simplicity) and ma (negative space)?
  - Our ancestors came up with the idea of stopping the extreme hybrid of all cultural flows, negating them with the utmost simplicity: zero
- They must have arrived at the sensibility of balancing everything with nothingness
- The Japan of today exists thanks to the combination of three components, namely, a position on the edge of Asia, the special cultural sensitivity nurtured there, and a stance capable of calmly facing the world, encouraged by our grave experiences with the process of modernization

Tradition and Universality

P. 309
In Praise of Shadows: attempts to disclose to the world of the possibility of Japanese-oriented design that would have evolved, not under the far-too-intense lighting of Western modernity, but within our own dark and shadows - written 70 years ago but hypothesis valid today

- I am not writing from a standpoint of anti-globalism

The Original Idea and “Nature’s Wisdom”

P.330
- Initial concept of the Aichi Expo: the view of nature within individual cultures, the situation of ecology today...
- Since ancient times, the Japanese have believed that wisdom resides in nature and human beings live by basking in the wisdom of nature

P.331
- This differs from the Western conceptual climate, which posits wisdom on the part of human beings and states that nature, an undomesticated wilderness, should be controlled by human intellect. This Western idea, which puts humans at the center, functions to express the will and responsibility of this living nucleus, the human being. - Certainly, it can be said that modern civilization has been built on the human-centered view. But do we call this controlling or managing nature, what today’s civilization does? No, we’ve done nothing but destroy it, wounding both nature and our own living environment.

“Beyond Development: Rediscovering Nature’s Wisdom” by Shinichi Nakazawa (see picture)

P. 332

Add this with Muji interview and article about sustainability and explain how it connects to Japanese philosophy, values, aesthetics

THE BEAUTY OF EVERYDAY THINGS - SOETSU YANAGI
Philosopher and Japanese folk-craft pioneer

Aim of research: Understand Japanese aesthetics and how everyday objects are treated
Everyday objects should be made with care and built to last, treated with respect and even affection

The Japanese perspective (1957)

P.141
- Western perspective is often seemingly the Modern perspective
- Why can't we point out what is lacking in the Western view and indicate how the one could augment the other

p.142,143
- Japan has learned many things from the West
- Having a modern outlook should not mean just borrowing a Western perspective
- Why does “modern” have to be seen through Western eyes?

P.144
- Japan should divest itself of Western hero worship and begin returning of what it has received
- 2 major ways: one is through the teachings of Mahayana Buddhism, other through the special qualities of Asian art

p.146
- What can Japan offer? - Japanese aesthetic, its eye for beauty backed by a long history of development
- Western perception of art has its roots in Greece, goal was perfection, contract to Japanese beauty of imperfection

P.147
- Tea ceremony - rare way of perceiving beauty - forms the aesthetic foundation of all Japanese today

p.148
- What was the fundamental principle underlying the beauty of tea (chabi)?

P.149
- Wabi Sabi concepts used in concrete objects
- Sabi literally means “loneliness” - Buddhist term: originally refers to the cessation of attachment
- Ultimate Buddhist goal: “Nirvana is true peace” through the cessation of self, cessation of greed, and the superseding of dualism
- The beauty of tea is the beauty of sabi - the beauty of poverty - the beauty of simplicity
- Tea masters - sukisha - masters of enjoying what was lacking
- Beauty of tea - not pursuit of perfection (Tenshin Okakura: “beauty of imperfection”, Shinichi Hisamatsu: “rejection of perfection”)
- Zen terminology: natural (buji) beauty, beauty of everyday life (byojotei), of egoless freedom (muge)

P.151
- Japanese perspective: natural beauty, nothing more, nothing less
- not conscious seek for the strange and extraordinary by intentional deformation

P.152
- Japanese perspective: find beauty in cracked ware - can’t be found anywhere else

P.156
- Shibumi (simple, subtle, and unobtrusive beauty)

P.157
- Shibumi - harbors deep Zen significance, represents a natural beauty that is described with the word buji
- Standard aesthetic vocabulary in Japan - only country even in Asia
- Japanese sense of beauty is bolstered by a profound backdrop, not to be found in West, can augment failings of Western culture

P.159
- Beauty of muji (no ground)
- Muji essentially means a ground that is plain, solid-coloured, and unpatterned
- Japanese view, compared to Western, sees beauty of the plain and the unadorned as ultimate goal - This perception has its roots in Buddhist precepts that all things are empty of intrinsic existence (ku) and that all is void (mu)

P.160
- The appreciation of muji may be simplicity itself, but at the same time it involves the highest level of sensibility
- Wabi, sabi, shibumi are different approaches to muji
- Muji is an expression of the limitless existence (yu) that is encompassed by the void of mu

P.162
- The keen attention given plain muji ware is one of the characteristics of the Japanese perspective

P.164
- Muji can be called simplicity, in religious terms, it might be the virtue of honest poverty, a poverty that is replete with riches
- The beauty of muji is the beauty of poverty
- “Roughness” and “quiet appreciation” characterize this beauty
- Mu remains the most important, the deepest, the most fundamental of artistic principles
- Mu + the beauty of odd numbers = Japanese sense of beauty

Research Mindmap
**COACHING - 18.04.19**

- Be more riskful - do not be too humble, be more enthusiastic
- Validate Japan as choice
- Be more creative in titles
- Give answers in the introduction
- Implicate consequence for other cultures at the end
- Rethink main research question
- Bridge chapter 3+4
- Rewrite structure based on content
- Chapter Two: put introduction into context
- Over Explain everything
- Repeat quotes in own language
- Give sub conclusions

Additional opinions of Japanese researchers and educators on the relationship between Japanese culture and sustainability
本来の日本はサスティナブルな社会だった

日本人の美意識

私は、日本人が独特の感性で表現している色の言葉が好きだ。
萌黃色、若草色、翡翠色、藍色、群青色、茜色、黃金色、朱色、浅葱色、琥珀色、、、、、
日本語で表現される色の言葉には、色の揺れ幅が含まれている。
日本語の色彩表現は、人的感情をも内包しているように思う。
イエロー、グリーン、レッドでは伝わらない、微妙な光の波を感じる感性を本来日本人は持っていたのだろうと思う。

日本には昔から「わび・さび」(侘び寂び)の文化があった。
日本人の美意識は、古来、自然なもの、朽ち果てゆくものがもつ美しさを基本としてきた。
この美意識をあらわしたのが、「わび」と「さび」という言葉だ。
とても日本らしくて深みのあるこの言葉だと思う。
日本人の自然に対する美意識には、散りゆく桜、落ち葉、こけに覆われた岩など、
自然界でも生き生きとした自然より、むしろ命が終わる様に情緒を見出してきた面がある。

石庭の代表的なつくりに「枯山水」がある。
最小限の素材を使用し、ほとんど何ものない状態にすることによって、水や山などの自然を感じさせる空間をつくりだす。
「何もないからこそ、最高の美を感じる」という世界である。
茶道の世界を究極まで高めた千利休の「侘び寂び」の思想は、日本人の感性の中に今なお息づいている。

前回のブログで世界的な潮流になるつつある「SDGs」について書いた後、何か私の中にモヤモヤするものが生まれていた。
「SDGs後進国」と言われる日本は、もちろん現実の問題には直面しなければならないと思う。
でも、こう思うのだ。
ただ忘れてしまっただけなのではないか、置き去りにしてしまっただけではないのか、日本は。
日本人の元々の感性を、美意識を、自然観を、と。

モノが増えていくことが豊かさの実感だった
SDGsへの世界的な取り組みを見て、北欧が次の社会モデルであるというような事例などを書きに連れ、私の中で微かな違和感が生まれてくるようになった。
確かに日本は戦後の焼け野原から驚異的な復興を遂げ、経済的にも物質的にもこれだけ豊かになった。
アメリカ人のような豊かな暮らしは、幸せな人生のモデルだった。
あんなライフスタイルが手に入るのならいくらでも頑張れた。
「努力！根性！我慢！頑張る！」
が豊かさと幸福を手に入れるための国民的合意、コンセンサス・リアリティだった。
家の中には家電製品が増え続けた。豊かさを実感できるモノが増えるにつれて、幸せも増えていくかのように思えた。

世界ワーストランキングに名を連ねる日本
ところが、この物質の繁栄と引き換えに、昨今の日本の状況は何を物語っているのだろう。
自殺率の高さは、世界１３位、
世界幸福度ランキングでは、日本はG7中最下位。
鬱病などの精神疾患で医療機関にかかっている患者数は、この１０年で急増し、今や３２０万人(厚生労働省データ)に達した。
この数字の背後には、薬漬けになることを怖れて、医療機関には通わず、民間のカウンセラーなどに通っている人も相当数いることが推測されているので、実質はもっと多いだろうと言われている。
病院経営冬の時代と言われているのに、精神科や心療内科は患者でいっぱいの国になってしまった。
引きこもりが年齢に関係なくどの世代でも増えている。
これらはメンタルが弱い人間が増えたなどという表層的な問題ではなく、社会システムそのものの崩壊と連動していると考えられる。
農薬の使用率や薬の消費量の多さや食品添加物の多さは、毎年世界ワーストランキングに名を連ねている。
食が工業化、欧米化するにつれて、癌やアトピー性皮膚炎がどんどん増え続けていた。
自我(エゴ)の欲望をただひたすらに追いかける社会は、地球環境だけでなく、
人の心や人間関係をも砂漠化してしまったのだ。
一方で、何かおかしい、どこで道を間違えてしまったのか、私たちのこの国は、と感じ、
新しい社会のパラダイム・シフトに向けてメッセージを発信する人も増えている。

日本はどこで道を間違えてしまったのだろう
前回のブログで世界的な潮流になるつつある「SDGs」について書いた後、何かすっきりしないためも同時に感じるようになった。
前回のブログはこちら
資源枯渇や環境汚染がより深刻になり、「持続可能」「サステナブル」「SDGs」といった言葉が最近あらゆる世界のキーワードとなりつつある。
日本は、「SDGs後進国」と言われている。もちろん現実の問題には直面しなければならないと思う。
たしかに日本は悲しいかな、世界ワーストランキングに様々なもの、ことがリストアップされている。
でも、こうも思うのだ。
ただ忘れてしまっただけなのか、置き去りにしただけではないのか、日本は。
日本人の元々の感性を、美意識を、自然観、世界観を、と。

お天道さまが見ている
元々の日本は非常にサスティナブルな社会だったのに、という思いがしてきた。
私たちのおばあちゃん世代は、ものを大切にした。
五穀豊穣に感謝する心もあった。
日本の的な自然観として、
人間は、自然の一部であるという考え方も一般的だった。
行動の基準の中に、
「これをすることで、自然がどうなるのか」「お天道様が見ている」「自然との共生」や「自然との一体化」を考えていく中で、
自分自身をみつめ、他を思いやり、いつくしむ心が養われていた精神文化があった。
それはまさしく今世界的な潮流になりつつあるサスティナブルな世界観ではないか。
昨今、「縄文文化」がキーワードになっているが、縄文時代は争いがなく、平和な時代が1万年以上続いたのだ。
母系社会で女性は尊重され、社会の中で重要な役割を持っていた。
日本人の本来の精神文化、生活文化、美意識、自然観は、
実は、今世界の潮流になりつつあるサスティナビリティにあふれていたのだ。

本来の日本精神
2月10日に中野サンプラザで私とコラボトークする、
作家であり呼吸法や瞑想指導家である清水友邦さんはこう言います。
本来日本人は自然と調和しながら、自然の中に神々を見出し、自然を尊重しながら世界一のサスティナブル社会を実現してきた民族だと思います。
本来の日本精神を日本人が見直せるといいと思うのは私だけでしょうか？
元来日本人には、自然を支配しようとするのではなく、
自然に従い、自然を怒らせないようにするという基本的な考え方がありました。
これは西欧の自然を支配しようとする考え方とは根本的に異なっています。
言いかえれば、日本人にとって自然は人間を包み、人間と共存していくものであるという価値観があったのです。

その考えが神道へとつながっていったのです。

神道とは日本で一番古い宗教であり、シャーマニズムやアニミズムといった自然崇拝、精霊崇拝である多神教に基づきます。

神道では神がどこにでも存在すると考えます。
山、岩、川、木、鳥、動物、そして、人間にも･･･。
これが八百万の神です。このような自然観、感性を日本人はもともと持っていたのです。

自然への畏怖という感覚

昨今の神社ブーム、表層では開運願望の自我の欲求の一つのようだが、
深層心理には、自己の本質である神性、仏性に出会いたいと思う人達の想いの表れなのではないだろうか。

神社は、本来、神と人間とを結ぶ具体的作法の祭祀であり、
その祭祀を行う場所が神社でありそこは聖域とされていた。
多彩な日本人の美意識はこのような自然観に由来するものが多いので、
自然観を抜きにして日本人の美意識を理解する事は不可能と言える。
西洋の自然観は、人間と自然を対立的に捉える。
西洋人の生活手段であった「牧畜」は、自然環境に影響されることはあまりなかった。
また、大地震などのように自然環境が大きく変化するようなこともほとんどなかったのだ。
そのため自然と向きあったり、自然を深くみつめたりする必要がそれほどなかったと言える。
必然的に、西洋の人々は、自然は人間の都合で変えたり、コントロールできるものといった認識になっていくのであった。
それに対して日本では、地震や台風や干ばつなどの自然災害が頻繁に起きた。
そのたびに農作物は被害を受ける。
農作物を守るためには、暑さや寒さ、温度や湿度、雨や雪、風の流れなど刻々と変化する自然の全てを深く観察し、つねに自然と向き合う必要があった。
そして、人間の意志では、どうにもならない自然を目の当たりにすることで、自然に対する特別な感覚が生まれた。
自然への畏怖という感覚、感情である。
そこから自然というもの、神のような存在という認識が当たり前のようになっていったのだ。
西洋の「人間は自然をコントロールできる」という自然観は現代科学につながっていく。
また日本的な「人間は自然の一部である」という自然観は、科学というよりは、芸術的感性や感覚とつながっていく。
それが、日本に昔からあった「わび・さび」(侘び寂び)の文化につながっている。

TRANS bull IMPORTANT PARTS
Japan was originally a sustainable society

Japanese aesthetics

- Japan has always had a culture of "wabi sabi".
- Japanese aesthetic sense has been based on the beauty that has natural things and decaying things from ancient times.
- The words "Wabi" and "Sabi" are what expressed this sense of beauty.
- Japanese aesthetic sense for nature includes falling cherry blossoms, fallen leaves, rocks covered with moss, etc.
- In the natural world, there is an aspect that has found emotions to end life rather than lively nature.
- A typical example of a stone garden is "Rui Sansui".
- By using minimal materials and leaving almost nothing, it creates a space that makes you feel nature such as water and mountains.
- It is a world where you feel the best beauty just because there is nothing.
- The idea of "Sabibi", which has enhanced the world of tea ceremony to the ultimate, is still alive in the Japanese sensibility.
- After writing about the "SDGs" that is becoming a global trend in my last blog, something was going on in my mind.
- Japan, which is said to be a "SDGs underdeveloped country," of course, must face real problems.
- Japan may not have just forgotten, or may it just be left behind, Japan.
- Japanese traditional sensibility, aesthetics, natural views, and so on.

- Inevitably, people in the West became aware that nature can be changed or controlled by human convenience.
- In Japan, on the other hand, natural disasters such as earthquakes, typhoons and drought frequently occurred.
- In order to protect agricultural products, it was necessary to observe all the ever-changing nature, such as heat and cold, temperature and humidity, rain and snow, and the flow of wind, in depth, and always face nature.
- The Western view of nature that "people can control nature" leads to modern science.
- In addition, the Japanese view of nature that "people are part of nature" is connected with artistic sensibility and sense rather than science.
- This is connected to the culture of “wabi-sabi” that has always existed in Japan.
Presentation by professor Maeno on: Japan as a sustainable country full of harmony and peace

https://logmi.jp/business/articles/319126

Model of MU

TRANSLATION

- At the center of America, there is Love and Freedom
- At the center of Japan, The is Uncertainty, Selflessness
- Amerika: Paradigm of competition, because there is love and freedom at center
- Japan: center is filled with emptiness, accepting influences

ですから、つまり日本とは既に述べたように、無常、無我、無私があるからこそ、あらゆるものを受け入れて自分ごと化し、常に進化することができる、世界一サステナブルな調和・平和の国なのではないか。日本（の歴史）は2000年、実際は1500年ぐらいだと思いますけど、過去のものをずっと維持しつつ、現在までそれがあるという、最もサステナブルな国です。

**TRANSLATION**

- So, as I already mentioned, Japan is the world’s one of the world’s most sustainable harmony and peace countries that can accept and self-organize, and evolve constantly, because there is invariance, selflessness. Is not it? Japan (the history of) thinks that it is around 2000 in 2000, actually, but it is the most sustainable country where it keeps it while maintaining the past thing.

*Japanese aesthetics and contemporary design*
Miho Fuji: founder and journalist of Zero = Abundance, a platform introducing the Zen philosophy of Japan and contemporary designs and architecture

**NOTE**
After finding the website full of interesting articles on contemporary Japan design and the explanations of Japanese aesthetics, I sent her an Email about my thesis topic, asking her opinion on it. The answer validated my conclusions and led to another new inspiring article on Japanese architecture

Hi Fiona-san,

Thanks for your email. Sound like you are working on a fascinating topic. I am just writing about Japanese version of sustainability, which is an aesthetic issue whereas Western one is scientific. But it's related to architecture. I am not sure what aspect of sustainability/fashion you are looking at (many approaches could be possible), but this lecture by Kenya Hara (graphic designer and producer, and brand director MUJI).

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PG4uRmTJUU8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PG4uRmTJUU8)

Good luck with your studies!
Mihoyo Fuji

**Japanese architecture: Is it really natural and sustainable?**

Japanese architect Kengo Kuma, who recently designed the V&A Dundee Museum in Scotland leveraging locally sourced stones, is known for his extensive use of natural materials such as wood, paper and stones. In his book “自然な建築 (meaning ‘natural architecture’)”, Iwanami Publishing, 2008, he shared his amazement when he was met with audience who were enthusiastic about “natural” Japanese architecture. Those people were not only interested in simple and minimalist Japanese design, Kuma observed, but also held high level of expectation that Japanese approach was uniquely sustainable and in harmony with nature, therefore had new potential to become an alternative to Western and modern architecture – which was, obviously, critical part of modern economy that caused serious environmental degradation. So people ask Kuma to find out how sustainable his projects are: “I get a lot of questions such as ‘you use a
lot of wood in your projects, but are you taking into account the risks of deforestation?’, ‘using paper as part of walls seems very energy-inefficient, because it would increase fuel consumption in order to keep room temperature moderate’ or ‘I don’t agree with the use of plastic (which Kuma used in projects such as the “water branch”), it’s a petrochemical product that doesn’t biodegrade easily.’"

Curiously enough, instead of helping us get definitive answers how sustainable Japanese architecture is, those questions wind up questioning where the notion of “sustainability” – a discipline of exploring an appropriate nature-human relationship – belongs to, and where you belong to. If you thought it undeniably belonged to the world of science, you belong to the Western/modern world.

It may have sounded odd, but as much as sustainability is part of environmental science that deals with subjects such as CO2 reduction, biodiversity or the technicality of recycling, it is also about something else. At least it is for Kuma, who was born in Japan in 1954 when the country was still coming back from serious post-war resource shortage. Kuma admits that he felt a bit uncomfortable responding to those questions because “scientific sustainability” was not really the kind of nature-human relationship he has been pursuing through his architecture.

So he mixes and matches his answers: sometimes he gives answers using the same scientific platforms used in the questions: “Sure, it’s best to harvest/use/recycle woods in a way that results in the least impacts. I would try to leverage the closest/most environmentally friendly supply sources.” But he also admits that he feels like mixing them in other occasions: “I do not 100% trust scientific methods that compute environmental impacts, such as energy efficiency of an architectural project, because you could get different results if you change any assumptions or variables used in the calculations.” Alternately, he tries to explain it by relying on different lifestyle: “the threshold for comfortable room temperature is different in regions. Maybe Japanese people are okay with lower indoor temperature and rely much less on heating system to begin with.”

If it felt like he was dodging science-oriented questions, what he actually did was something much more fundamental: he was implicitly telling that science was not the only place where sustainability belongs to, and that those questions did not best capture the essence of the kind of “sustainability” embraced by Japanese architecture. In traditional Japanese (or Asian) philosophy, nature-human relationship has been an aesthetic issue, long, long before it was a scientific one. If you’ve never quite comprehended the viability or practicality of Japanese-style naturalism, it must have
been because you missed this subtle but critical point. Scientific or aesthetic, that is the question.

**Sustainability as an aesthetic issue**

But how come sustainability is an aesthetics issue? In order to answer this question, we need to review what nature-human relationship really is, and what “aesthetics” mean.

Even though modern people almost forgot, nature is about an overwhelmingly large whole that embraces every single element/phenomenon that surrounds us. It’s far bigger and deeper than mountains and lakes we visit during weekends. As it is mesmerizingly big and holds potential energy that could either foster or jeopardize peoples’ lives, nature is also a “chaos system,” which refuses to be predicted, tamed or controlled. **All in all, it had been something beyond humans’ ability to apprehend, therefore to be feared, admired and worshiped.**

In such a world, humans had to mobilize every single ability they had in order to adopt to often harsh environment. After tens or hundred thousands years of efforts, our ancestors accumulated enormous amount of wisdom to make progress and thrive. It is called **resilience**.

But as history evolved from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance era, science and technology emerged to completely and irreversibly change the name of the game. They pushed the envelope to invite modern era, in which nature was no longer something to fear. With a wide range of new applications powered by fuels, **nature was now something to conquer and alter so that it served humans’ needs.** It was a Copernican Revolution that made impossible possible; to completely change the way people lived, thought and behaved. As technology kept advancing, we felt that we’ve acquired mighty sword, which quickly overwhelmed our own wisdom and resilience.

Feeling victorious, we underestimated the unpredictability of the chaoticness of the natural system. While we were busy enjoying the affluence technology brought to us, nature was quietly reacting to the changes we made to it in ways we never expected, and before we knew, many serious damages were done. That’s where we are today. As we are increasingly made aware that technology is a double-edged sword that could backfire when misused, we are finally starting to correct our course. **And since the problems were created from science and technology, our correction methods are also based on science and technology. That’s what we call sustainability.**

However, Albert Einstein once said: “We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.” If science and technology were the Goliath that created environmental problems, how can they be the problem solver? In that
sense, the reservation Kuma has toward scientific sustainability seems legitimate. But is that the reason why sustainability should also be an aesthetics issue?

If you step back, humans already knew how to live sustainably by fearing, respecting and adapting to nature before modern technology started sweeping the planet and degrading the environment. The answers were already inside us, in the breadth of wisdom and profound resilience our ancestors developed spending enormous amount of time. But obviously, going back to pre-modern life style was a non-starter. We wanted nothing but science and technology at the front line in our fight against natural threats in order to thrive. The idea of going back to pre-modern era terrified us because it meant losing the entire front line and be brought back to defenseless, helpless situation. Even when working on subjects like sustainability in which science and technology were the very culprits that created the problem, there was no way we could sideline them.

But what if this assumption of “technology/modern or no technology/pre-modern” was wrong? Because it is. Even when there was little technology, the front line of our fight was never vacant; it was always upheld by indomitable people. It was maintained by humans’ wisdom and resilience. Remember what our ancestors accomplished by leveraging nothing but their own physical abilities, five senses and brains only – even no notepads, calculators or motor engines. Not only have they left miracles such as pyramids or the Mayan calendar, they also cultivated/irrigated soil by reading local topology and climate; sailed (or “star navigated”) thousands of miles in a hand-crafted small boat; built high-rise towers from timber even without saws, and oriented across large masses of indistinguishable tundra. They also compiled extensive mythology systems that reflected mesmerizing/complicated universe even before they invented letters, and developed transcendental dances and rituals that were deeply rooted to the local environment.

Those works of resilience were the art of living – aesthetics. (Do not confuse them with primitive/poor technology.) They were about finding beauty, happiness by making most of what they were bestowed, by unleashing every single ability they had and by challenging their limits. In regions where people traditionally lived very close to nature, including Japan, aesthetics were not just design philosophy – they were people’s “code of conduct,” as you could infer from the way how ancient people lived with mythologies. They were their personal/collective guideline to behave gracefully toward nature (to which people had one sided love-like passion) – to be adequately conscious about the surrounding environment; find things that would help them thrive; learn to leave nature alone when needed; and become creative to produce beautiful things that would make their lives happier and fuller.
The right question to ask in order to determine where sustainability belonged was not “technology or no technology;” it had to be “technology and/or aesthetics.” As long as sustainability is about striking the right balance between people and nature, aesthetics had be the David that can counter Goliath, and the mental North Star that would guide science and technology by constantly reminding us how to behave beautifully toward nature. If science was about relying on external knowledge/power developed by a handful of smart people to deal with nature as “externalities”, aesthetics is about relying on each individual’s internal potential. If science was about trying to define chaotic nature, aesthetics is about embracing the chaos as is. If science was about pursuing efficiency and stability, aesthetics is about exploring beauty and happiness that would define your life.

Science and aesthetics have almost opposing roles and benefits. None of them had to be missed to pursue sustainability.

Is paper sustainable construction material?

Kuma has been using "washi (traditional Japanese paper)" in his projects, which is very unconventional, even in Japan. But it is an important material that defines his “natural” architecture. In his book, he remembers: “When I re-discovered that Japanese houses didn’t use flat glasses at all till 1907, which is not that long ago, I was almost shocked. Just hundred years ago, thin and subtle paper screen doors were almost the only partitions that separated inside of the Japanese houses from the outside environment. What a gentle and delicate way to leverage wisdom.” Traditional Japanese houses rely on pillars and beams, rather than walls as structure, and paper was primarily used in shoji and fusuma, removable screen doors placed between pillars. When it was nice outside, people would open them wide so that the entire room became a semi-terrace.

Paper used for shoji and fusuma had to be strong enough and come in great texture and translucency. In order to achieve high quality, people traditionally grew specific plants (both for paper and coating), harvested and processed them properly, and applied highly specialized skills to finish them. Papermaking was a labor-intensive work of craftsmanship that required a lot of experience, and the end result was unbelievably high quality that was used even as a material for airborne bombs during WWII.

What Kuma sees in “washi” is aesthetic sustainability – the art of producing something extraordinary and resilient by making most of what’s available in natural environment and human wisdom/skills, and the art of resilient living right next to nature, and finding beauty and happiness through such a lifestyle. He sees completely different opportunities in this kind of “natural architecture,” which re-discovers what we’ve lost as
we got too used to concrete and steel-dominated architecture that separates people from the environment.

Unfortunately, those opportunities are difficult to pinpoint or define if you only rely on science. Cut and dry life cycle analysis cannot tell how people behind shoji screen doors can stay aware of the weather and adjust their activities accordingly in order to make most of it, as paper screen lets the sunlight go through it to produce semi-opaque, subtle but beautiful shades that softly tells you where the Sun is or how windy/rainy it is. CO2 emissions calculator does not have line items to take into account the benefits of super localized, small and often mobile traditional Japanese heating devices such as kotatsu or hibachi, which can give warmth only when/where it's needed. You could almost imagine how aesthetic-based sustainable architecture may fail to become LEED-certified.

Science is an act of defining. It’s inherently imperfect in front of mesmerizingly chaotic nature, and it is exactly the question Japanese architecture brings up. The whole reason humans had to become resilient was because nature was so unpredictable and overwhelming. Even advanced technology cannot change it: it’s impossible to alter weather to our favor, for example. If that’s the case, should we focus on developing technologies that create the most efficient “isolation rooms” that shut down all kinds of “bad” things happening outside so that people could live easily and comfortably? Or, should we open up toward nature – good and bad – and try to learn how to make most of “good” part and avoid “bad” part, in order to live resiliently?

It’s not easy to behave beautifully and sustainably. One of the reasons why aesthetic sustainability is unpopular is because it’s not easy. But then, life was never easy for anyone, and what humans do – either produce or consume – was never completely natural. We are always up against something, but the true beauty is in our fight to overcome it. Kuma concludes the book with such reality acceptance: “...no matter how much I emphasize on aesthetic goals, having to use petrochemical products, for example, doesn’t make me feel 100% proud. But then, are there 100% sustainable buildings, when you take into account the impacts associated with each and every material used, transportation, construction and/or demolishing? The answer is no. I believe that it is important to acknowledge the fact that what humans make can never be completely natural nor sustainable. We should accept it as reality and start from there. Always remember to feel guilty about what we create, and keep asking a humble question: ‘Yes, our reality is imperfect. How can we do better tomorrow by making the best of what we have?’ That’s the only way we can achieve truly ‘natural’ architecture.”
Sustainable architecture according to Japanese architects

The notion of “aesthetic sustainability” is something natural and intuitive for many Japanese creators, including architects. While its manifestation in their works may often be elusive and sensorial, it becomes more obvious and tangible when they write. As many architects are inspiring writers, enjoy some of the excerpts from their books, in which they talk about their take on truly beautiful nature-human relationships.

**THOUGHTS**

Explanations on aesthetics are useful to add into thesis -> make new paragraph on that
Include architecture as examples for chapter 5

Important point: But Japanese culture accepts and cherishes unpredictable and overwhelming nature, resulting in an aesthetic approach on sustainability. It is “natural and intuitive for many Japanese creators”

**WGSN: Sustainability -> Asia**

**Biodegradable Material Innovation: Studio Membrane**

I believe that it is essential for designers to collaborate with engineers and environmental ethics professionals for the future of an authentic, fundamental eco-fashion.

Hiroaki Tanaka
Designer, Studio Membrane

Studio Membrane's clothes use biodegradable fabrics, primarily wool, woven together in a process inspired by the Japanese technique kumiko, the art of joining wood without using nails. Designer Hiroaki Tanaka is currently interested in research into protein resin. This material is made through compressing wool cloth, while applying heat to it, causing the keratin contained in the wool to become a resin. Since keratin is an organic molecule, the resin is biodegradable, preventing products from forming harmful waste substances. Tanaka is researching how the latest technology can be used to improve the wasteful nature of the fashion industry. He hopes to change the fundamental methods of making clothes.

**Studio Membrane:**
- Represents Japan in sustainable fashion on WGSN
- Look into designer Tanaka -> his inspiration for sustainability
Hiroaki Tanaka, the designer behind 'Studio Membrane' talks about anthropomorphism and its relationship with fashion.

**How has your Japanese culture and heritage influenced your work as a designer?**

I think that being born in Japan has, to a certain extent, had an influence on my sensibility. For example, I have the idea inside of me that I feel it is strongly Japanese, to "anthropomorphise" inanimate objects.

I define clothes as the most familiar 'others'. The reason is that I feel clothes are identities that have lost their bodies. Clothes are actually seeking the real feeling of living and life themselves; that is, they are in search of a body. This idea of clothes as a subject and as having subjectivity is quite natural for me, but I recognise it is a strange idea when I think about it carefully. I have been anthropomorphising clothing right from the beginning.

When we look back into the past, we can see that the Japanese have made great use of anthropomorphism since ancient times. Even our national treasure painted in the Heian period, Choju-giga, also referred to as the ‘Scrolls of Frolicking Animals’, depicts illustrations of animals behaving like humans. Furthermore, I think that "Yokai", Japanese monsters or ghosts, are essentially anthropomorphic ethical or cultural concepts. Anthropomorphism is perhaps a specifically Japanese way of recognising the existence of spirit in the universe.

**Boro**

![Historical Boro Kimono](image)
Boro Jacket and Boro Tote Bag from Kapital

Own analysis
**JAPANESE BRANDS AND LITERAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Aim: Understand how sustainability is literally used with Japanese brands  
Method: Search for “Sustainable Japanese Brands”, own observations at global companies

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**MES VACANCES**

Key Words from “Concept”

- 世の中に新たな価値観を示すもの作り。-> Creating new value  
- サステナブルな思いと、デザインを。-> Sustainable thought and design  
- 『環境負荷ゼロを目指すブランド』として -> A brand aiming for zero environmental impact  
- 上質な素材』(サステナブル・環境配慮・循環型素材) -> High quality materials (Sustainable, Considering the environment, Recycled materials)

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**THOUGHTS**

New brand (2018, autumn)  
Concept built around “sustainability”  
Emphasis on: a NEW lifestyle, a NEW value proposition

---

**UNIQLO**

**THOUGHT**

Clear promotion of sustainability  
Use of buzzwords

---

**ACICS**
“OUR APPROACH: MAKING SUSTAINABILITY PART OF EVERYTHING WE DO”

THOUGHT
Clear promotion of sustainability
Use of numbers to convince

Own analysis:
Western countries

- Foundation is: Western culture/ Western civilization
- New concept of "sustainability", "sustainable development"
- Concept of sustainability derived from West (mainly Northern Europe) spread to Japan through globalization
- First time the concept and therefore also the word itself exists in Japanese language
- Ideology is defined by Western standards

Japan

- Foundation is: Japanese culture (founded on Jomon and Chinese civilization)
- Determines unique view on nature, relationship of humans and their environment
- Values, philosophies, sensitivities aesthetics can be now described as showing "sustainable" aspects
- Concept of sustainability did not exist = no general agreement on sustainability or sustainable development
- Concept of sustainability did not exist = no general agreement on sustainability or sustainable development

"Sustainability" as concept can only be defined from the Western view, but now serves as standard for every culture
Own analysis:

- Bridge chapters better
- More in depth conclusions
- Give glimpse of conclusions in the intro
- Link culture and aesthetics
- Remember: Sustainability leads to money, no definition (umbrella term)
- Define Western culture

Inspiration on Layout of Thesis
Layout design:
- Japanese aesthetics
- nothing unnecessary
- Simple, white and black
- Use of empty space
- Careful placement
- Image placement: Inspired by Muji - On top or bottom, with some space in between images

First layout draft:
Methodology

Qualitative research methods
Mainly literature
Complex character of culture in general, especially ambiguous personas of Japanese culture
Statistical research is not fitting
For the first sub-question, academic papers and theoretical models will be analyzed to understand the general relationship of the two concepts and its interpretations by researchers. Since there is not much relevant literature about the relationship in the context of fashion, other sectors such as the educational one will be explored. Thus, analysis of literature and data will be used to find parallels and draw conclusions which are relevant for the fashion environment.

For the second sub-question, recent global developments on sustainability in the fashion industry have to be researched. Mainly secondary data from journals and web articles will be carefully analyzed. In order to answer this question, it is necessary to understand the global sustainability debate that has taken place in Japan, and how the industry is evolving within or with it. It is of great interest to recognize the role Japan has played, and therefore, on a micro level, how the industry is evolving in the region.

Hence, both Western and Japanese sources were used. My own observations will provide valuable insight into the Japanese fashion industry. Regarding the third sub-question, firstly, the inclusion of the word “Sustainability” in Japanese lifestyle, fashion, and culture needs to be investigated. Secondly, the use of traditional and cultural values linked to sustainability. This is to understand how Japanese fashion is being linked to sustainability. Finally, it has been observed that these values are integrated into the fabric of Japanese culture. Therefore, our research has to reflect relevance to the current state of the fashion industry.

To answer the fourth sub-question, the procedural influence in the values, visions and operations on internal or external levels will be investigated by relating the previously analyzed cultural values to companies, chosen to interview as multiple-case studies.

Japanese Emptiness: A cultural approach on sustainability

Fiona Matsumoto
500731676
International Fashion & Management
Rebecca Breuer, Sandra Schellens
21.05.19
- Layout is made according to final printed version
- Print will be a bound book -> some space in between is left for better readability when bound
- Also space in middle -> inspired by Japanese aesthetics -> unbalance, appreciate empty space
- Some use of red for accent on cover
- Printed on: Japanese paper (Washi), off white
- Cover: Convey “emptiness” message -> aesthetic, no images, just simple word with fine lines
**Product - Validation of choice**

**What:** Article about culture in sustainability with example of Japan  
**Decision question:** Focus on Japanese culture as good example or culture general?  
**Answer:** Japan should not be the only focus, since the main message is about the importance of a dialog with culture, and Japan was rather used as a case study.

**For:** Some kind of news platform with space for critical articles  
**Decision question:** Focus on academic or more commercial platform?

**Options**

Business of Fashion or Fashion United:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro</th>
<th>Contra</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Professional, aimed to industry</td>
<td>- Focus on business, topics are mainly about brands, news</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Broad reach</td>
<td>- Sustainability usually discussed from economic viewpoint</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Does not seem like the right frame for the aspired tone of voice</td>
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Vestoj:

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<th>Pro</th>
<th>Contra</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Platform fits best to the tone of voice</td>
<td>- Annual magazine, slow impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Critical Thinking in fashion</td>
<td>- Not so wide reach</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No advertisement</td>
<td>- Would not be recognized</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Education involved</td>
<td>- Focus on Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Academic</td>
<td>- Every article has to be sartorial - has to question why we wear what we wear</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Theory mixed with industry</td>
<td>- Has to be very much linked to fashion</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Very little focus on sustainability topics</td>
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New York The Cut:

<table>
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<th>Pro</th>
<th>Contra</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Article of Celine Semaan published</td>
<td>- Commercial, Not academic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Possibility to refer to her article</td>
<td>For “woman”</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wide reach, international</td>
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<tr>
<td>Possibility to be seen by impactful people who can spread the message</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sequence idea possible</td>
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**Decision:** The Cut might not be the most fitting platform, but it was chosen from the possibility to reference Celine Semaan. Her recent Study Hall in London is linked to my topic as well, so might gain awareness in the same kind of frame. Also, commercial can actually be a positive factor, since I should not focus on a niche target group.