

**Course No. 3507/3508**

**Contemporary  
Japanese Culture  
and Society**

**Tom Gill**

# Lecture No. 3

# ANTI- NIHONJINRON アンチ日本人論

# In the previous lecture:

- We looked at ‘Nihonjinron’ 日本人論
- “Theories of Japaneseness” – Attempts to define the unique, essential nature of Japan
- 日本の本質を探る学問

# 4 kinds of Nihonjinron 日本人論の4種類

- 1. Psychological 心理学的
- 2. Sociological 社会学的
- 3. Aesthetic 美学的
- 4. Intellectual 思想的

# Psychological Nihonjinron

**Ganbari/Konjo/gattsu 頑張り・根性**  
(guts, fight, challenge etc.)

**Gaman 我慢 – Endurance, fortitude**

**Amae 甘え – dependence, need to be indulged (Takeo Doi)**

**Haji 恥 – shame, as opposed to western-style guilt (Ruth Benedict)**

# Sociological Nihonjinron

- A group society 集団社会, individual subordinate to group 個人権利より集団の利益
- A 'vertical' society (Chie Nakane) (中根千枝、「縦・タテ社会」)
  - Juniors loyal to seniors; seniors take paternalistic responsibility for followers
  - 子分は親分に忠実、親分は子分を守る
  - Gaps in status, wealth, relatively small, so people sense fairness
  - Shared culture, language, values → harmony

# Aesthetic Nihonjinron

- Love of nature 大自然への憧れ
- Taste for simple, elegant things (wabi/sabi 侘び寂び)
- Sentimental awareness of the transience of life (mono no aware 物の哀れ)
- Tendency to miniaturize (bonsai, haiku, walkman, etc. 小型化: 盆栽、俳句、ウォークマン等)

# Intellectual Nihonjinron

Japanese intellect said to be based on intuition (*chokkan* 直感) rather than logic (*ronri* 論理), because Japanese are 'closer to nature'. E.g. Kitaro Nishida, Tetsuro Watsuji, Kinji Imanishi.

## 3 kinds of explanation 3種類の説明

1. Ecological (生態学的) – small, crowded country, unique climate influence  
agriculture → lifestyle → society 風土 → 農業 → 生活 → 社会

E.g. Tetsuro Watsuji, *Fudo* 風土 (1935)  
trans. Geoffrey Bowness *Climate and Culture* (1962)

## 2. Historical (歴史的)

250 years (c. 1600-1850) of isolation (*sakoku* 鎖国) lead to closed society, 'island mentality' (*shimaguni konjo* 島国根性) and unique culture, that can only be changed by 'external pressure' (*gaiatsu* 外圧).

E.g. Mayumi Ito *Globalization of Japan: Japanese 'Sakoku' Mentality and US Efforts to Open Japan* (2000).

### 3. Biological (生物的)

Japanese brains work differently from other peoples... e.g. using the right side of the brain for both logic and emotion.

Tsunoda, Tadanobu. *The Japanese Brain, Uniqueness and Universality*, 1985.

日本人の脳—脳の働きと東西の文化  
角田 忠信 (著) 1978年

# 10 Problems with Nihonjinron

日本人論の問題点、  
10個

- Assumes **homogeneity**

## **同質性の億節**

- **All Japanese are assumed to have some special characteristic –group consciousness, will to fight, desire to be indulged, that instinct to make small things...etc.**
- 「甘え」であろう、「頑張り」であろう、「小型化」であろう、日本人全員その特徴を持っているという億節...

. . . And to the  
same *degree*

しかも、日本人全員は同じ  
程度でその特徴を持っているとされる

. . . but that obviously  
isn't true



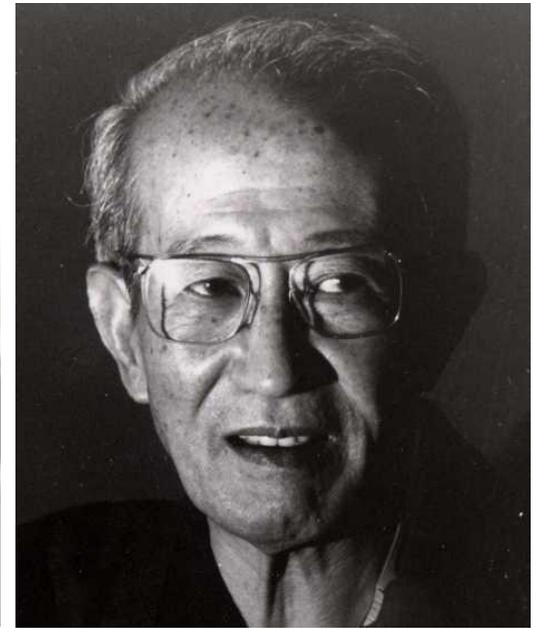
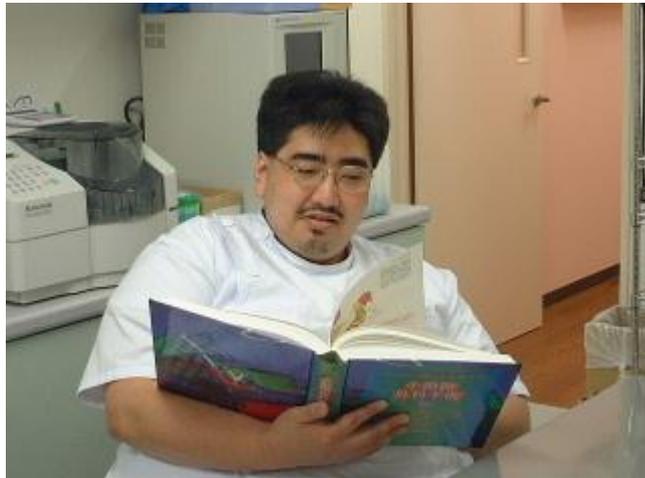


# Some Japanese women





## Some Japanese men

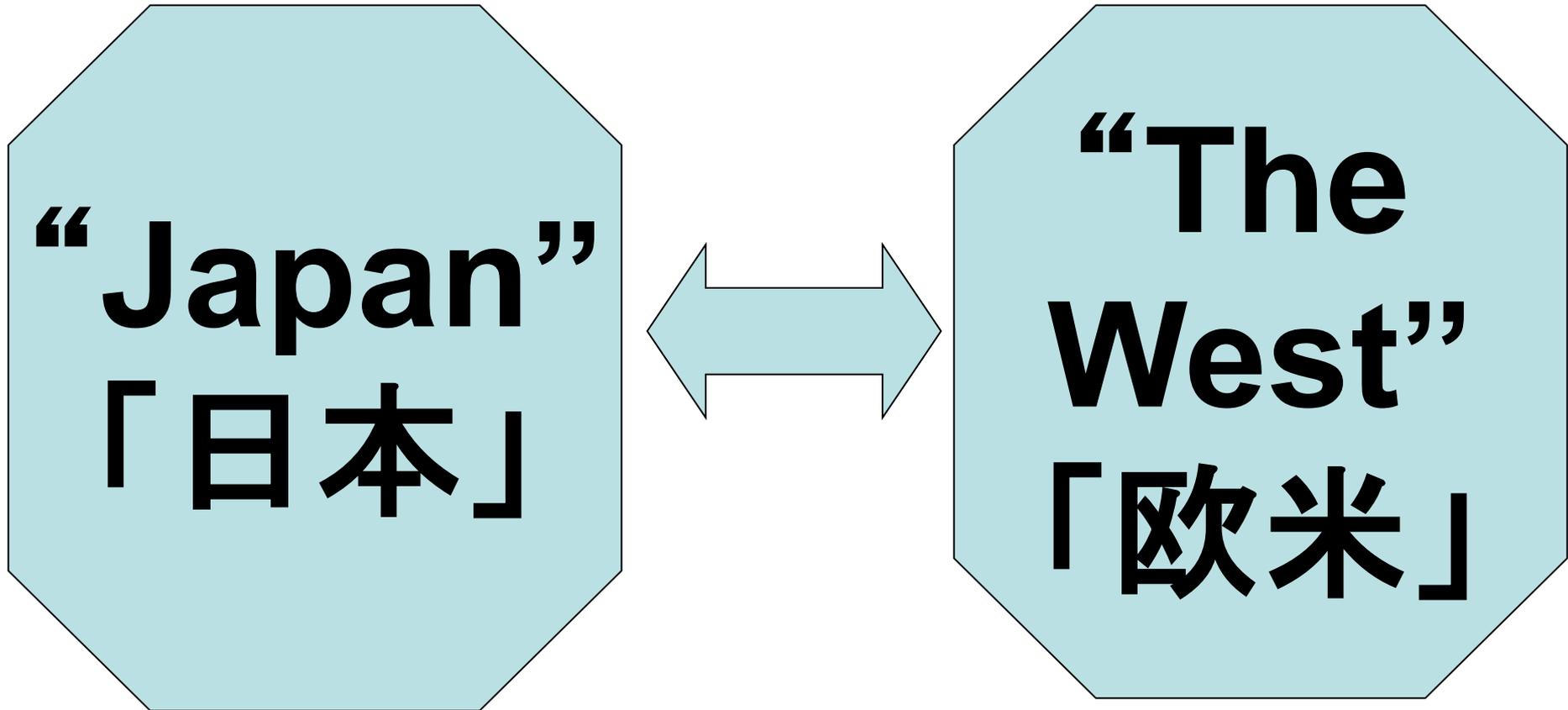


**当たり前なことですが An obvious point, I admit...**

**... and yet many Nihonjinron books contain sentences such as “the Japanese are like that” 日本人はこんなもんだ which casually and unconsciously assume that variation between individual Japanese is trivial enough to be ignored.**

**Since the writer is often trying to show that Japanese are homogeneous 同質, the argument can easily become circular.**

## 2. What are we comparing to? 日本を何処と比較する？



***What about the rest of the world?***

***他の国や地方は？***

**Often ‘Japanese’ things are actually found in a stronger form in other Asian countries, or in other parts of the world entirely. For instance, ‘respect for elders’ is much stronger in Korea...**

**例えば、「年寄りへの尊敬」は「日本的」だとされるが日本より朝鮮の文化に強い**

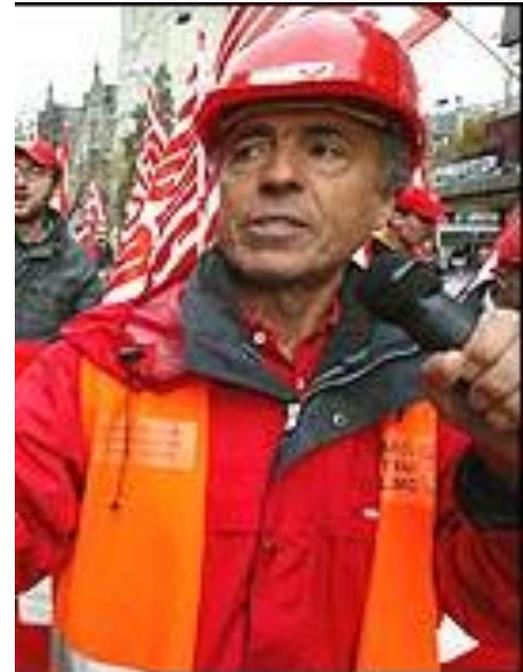
**... but Nihonjinron tends to ignore other countries outside the 'Japan vs. The West' paradigm...**

**... 日本人論は「日本対欧米」か「西洋」以外の国々を無視し勝ちである**

**... and to assume that all people  
in 'the West' are alike**



**... which isn't  
true either.**



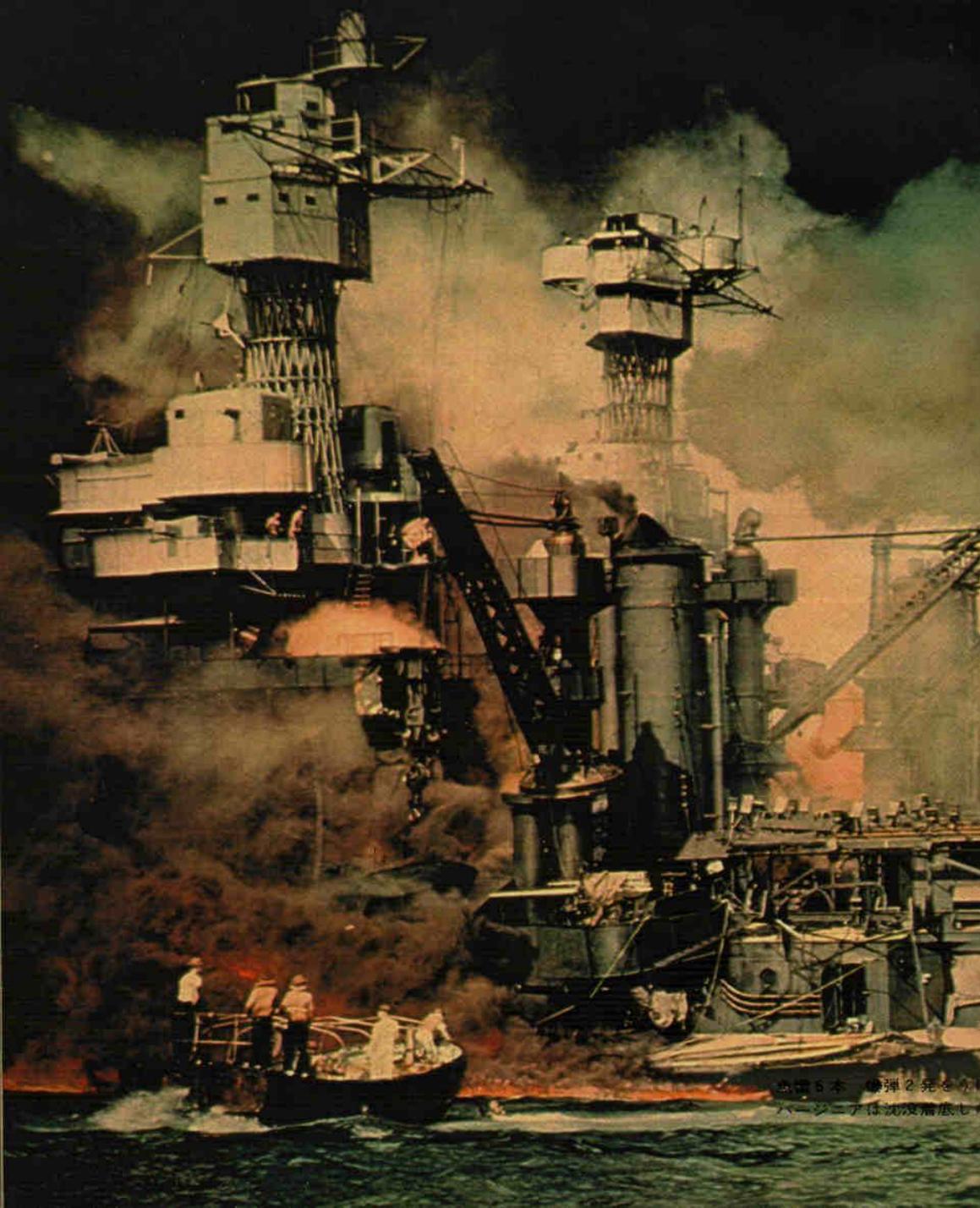
**3. Nihonjinron assumes that  
*other* societies do *not* have  
those special Japanese  
qualities**

他の国や社会は「日本的」な特徴  
を**持たない**とする。

. . . Sometimes with  
disastrous results



ひびく結果もあつた



**After Pearl Harbor, the Americans were expected to despair, because they lacked *ganbari* and *gaman*... the Japanese spirit would triumph...**

6本 弾2発  
バージニアは沈没船



***... wrong.***

## 4. Regional variation ignored

**Watsuji's 'climate' theory... there is no monsoon in Hokkaido... there is no winter snow in Okinawa... Strong regional dialects... strong regional cultures and traditions**

**地方性が無視される**

# Japanese regionalism is intense!

Consider Yamanashi prefecture. Proud tradition of Takeda Shingen 武田信玄... thought of as strong drinkers (heart of wine industry; numerous bars, often No.1 prefecture for traffic accident fatalities...), thought of as mean/greedy 'merchants of Koshu' (甲州商人)... regional identity is strong and a constant topic of argument.

# ***Foreigners exaggerate national identity...***

**... simply because when talking to a foreigner, a Japanese person may very well be thinking “I’m Japanese and he isn’t”. But when that same person is talking to a fellow Japanese (i.e. most of the time), s/he’ll be thinking “I’m from Yamanashi and the person I’m talking to is from Tokyo.”**

# Food habits vary...

- E.g. 'Natto' (納豆), fermented soy beans, is a very popular dish in the Tokyo region, and is cited as 'typical Japanese food'...
- Yet most people in Western Japan hate natto just as most foreigners do.



**Some  
natto...**

# Hirofumi Tsuboi, potato rebel

**Some archaeologists even say  
potatoes used to be more  
popular than rice...**

***Imo to Nihonjin* Potatoes and the  
Japanese, 1979**

**文献：『イモと日本人：民俗文化論の課題』坪  
井洋文著. 東京：未来社, 1979年**

## 5. Class and status ignored 階級・ステータスは無視される

• E.g. Karoshi 過労死



# Is it really caused by “too much effort/loyalty”??

- ... or does it reflect an imbalance in power relationships? People working themselves into the ground for fear of the sack, especially at times of high unemployment...
- 単なる「頑張りすぎ」？それとも「長い時間働かないとクビになるかも」という恐怖症？高失業率だし...

# **Nihonjin-ron assumes that Japan is a classless society**

**As for instance in Chie Nakane 中根千枝's theory of the "vertical society" (*tate shakai* タテ社会) in which workers feel far more loyalty to their companies than to their class. Yet there have been times when class struggle was common in Japan.**

# **Eg 1 Peasant Uprisings**

**During the Edo era (c. 1600-1850), there were many peasant uprisings and rice riots, in which poor commoners rose up and forcefully opposed their samurai rulers. Ultimately they helped to bring down the shogunate.**

# Ref: Anne Walthall (UC Irvine)

- *Peasant Uprisings in Japan* (1991)
- *Social Protest and Popular Culture in Eighteenth Century Japan* (1986)

**20<sup>th</sup> century: Ashio Copper Mine Riot (1907)**

**The *Ashio Riot of 1907: A Social History of Mining in Japan*, by Nimura Kazuo (1998)**

***Japan has a long history of class conflict, sometimes violent.***

# 1960: Miike Mine Strike

**A major, year-long strike at a coalmine owned by the mighty Mitsui trading house, finally ending in defeat for the workers.**

**Check out the award-winning movie Echoes from the Miike Mine (三池:終わらない炭鉱[やま]の物語) dir. Hiroko Kumagai 熊谷博子 監督.**

# **Ref: Matthew Allen, *Undermining the Japanese Miracle* (1994)**

- **Terrible punning title, but a fascinating look at the long slow aftermath of life in northern Kyushu after the closure of the Miike mine and others in the area. Any British reader will recall the 1985 British coal strike (Margaret Thatcher vs. Arthur Scargill)...**

# Today the unions are quieter

**But they still hold a “spring offensive” (*shunto* 春闘) every year, and collective bargaining in industrial sectors is the norm... So there *are* some horizontal ties of solidarity, *pace* Nakane, and some workers’ families have successfully sued employers of karoshi victims... so the vertical ties are not absolute.**

**This is an example of how Nihonjinron can have conservative political implications.**

# And what about 'bushido'?

## 武士道だって

- **“The Way of the Samurai” was a code of ethics for the aristocracy... a tiny proportion of the population. Most Japanese in the Edo era were NOT samurai... they were landless peasants, exploited *by* samurai...**

**江戸時代の日本人の多くは「侍」ではなく、侍にこき使われる「農民」だった**

...despite all that talk about 'honor',  
most samurai were parasites on  
the common folk of Japan.

**「武士道」と言ったら立派な感じだが、  
侍が農民たちを勝手に殺したりして、  
経済的にも抑圧していたのは歴史  
的な事実である。**

***And in case you're wondering...***



***No, it wasn't like in the movie.***

## 6. History ignored too 歴史も無視される

- As well as assuming that *all* Japanese have special characteristics, Nihonjinron also tends to assume that they've *always* had them.

**E.g.1 ‘Closed country  
consciousness’ – *sakoku ishiki***

## **例えば「鎖国意識」**

- **True, Japan was largely closed to the world, c. 1600-1868 – *but that ended 150 years ago!***
- **鎖国はもう、150年前で終わった！**

**Japan has been  
very 'open' since  
then...**

**それ以来、日本はずっと「開  
国」しているじゃないか...**

**Trading, visiting, negotiating,  
even fighting and invading  
other countries.**

**世界の国々と積極的に関わって  
いる... 貿易、観光、外交...  
戦争、侵略。**

**Yet some writers ignore the last 150 years... for them, the closed country mentality never went away...**

- でもある論者はこの150年間の歴史をむしして、まだまだ「鎖国」の意識が残っていると言う...**

*"This book is an insightful analysis of one of the cardinal problems of any New World Order."*

—Chalmers Johnson, President, Japan Policy Research Institute

# Globalization of Japan

Japanese *Sakoku* Mentality  
and U.S. Efforts to Open Japan

Mayumi Itoh



**Mayumi Itoh  
(2000) argues  
that Japan's  
diplomacy is  
still influenced  
by the 'sakoku'  
mentality to  
this day**

## **E.g. 2: 'Egalitarian capitalism'**

### **例2: 「平等的な資本主義」**

- Before WW2 Japan had big private landlords and most wealth was owned by a small minority. What caused relative equality in the country was the Occupation land reforms – NOT fundamental Japanese customs.**

# 7. Assumes smooth hierarchy

## 争いのないハイアラーキーの億節

**Minoru Kida – ‘The Rules of the Hamlet. In *As the Japanese see it : past and present* / ed. Aoki and Dardess.**

**Loyalty to the village outranks loyalty to the state. Protect neighbors from police. The state is not ‘one big family’ or ‘one big village’**

**きだみのる、「部落の規則」。部落への忠実は研とか警察とか国家などへの忠実よりずっと強い**

**日本国(天皇・政府)**

**State (Emperor/government)**

**市・県・島(県知事等)**

**City, pref., island (mayor)**

**部落・村(村長)**

**Village (headman)**

**家庭(父親)**

**Family (dad)**

日本国(天皇・政府)

State (Emperor/government)

Conflict!

市・県・島(県知事)

City, prefecture, island (mayor)

Pow!

部落(村長等)

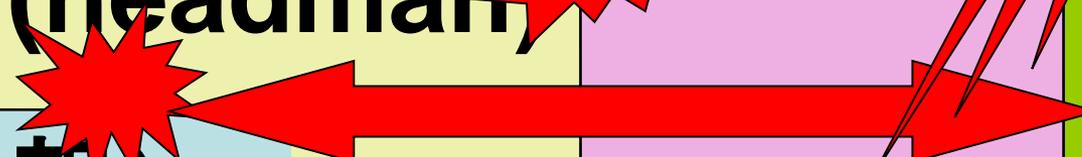
Village (headman)

Wham!

家庭(父親)

Family (dad)

闘争あり！  
摩擦あり！



## 8. Exceptions and contradictions

日本人論のテーマは必ず例外・矛盾あり

- E.g. If love of nature is so important in Japanese culture, how come the environment is in such a mess?
- 本当に「大自然と一緒に暮らす」のは美德なら...

# Tetrapods

# テトラポッド







# Abandoned cars...



**Vast quantities of rubbish...**





**Much of it being burned...**

**...creating a serious dioxin  
problem.**

**Last slide: a garbage-burning  
facility at Tokorozawa, on the  
outskirts of Tokyo**

**ダイオキシン汚染問題で有名にな  
った所沢の廃棄物焼却施設 でした**

**There are 16 furnaces in a 500-meter radius... 30 furnaces in a 2-km radius around Mount Kunugi in Saitama prefecture.**

**埼玉県くぬぎ山には現在半径500m以内に16炉が密集している。  
(周辺半径2kmに広げると30炉近くになる)**

It was a beautiful  
mountain... **once.**

美しい山. . .  
. . . **だった。**

**Japan pours as much  
concrete over her  
land each year as the  
USA... 30 times  
more per hectare**

***Dogs and Demons: The Fall of  
Modern Japan by Alex Kerr, 2002***



"Provides keen insight into the unique causes and disastrous results of the once-becalled 'Japan Model' of development... A must read for anyone with even a cursory interest in the rise and continued fall of postwar Japan."  
— Michael Judge, *The Wall Street Journal*

# Dogs and Demons

TALES FROM THE DARK SIDE OF JAPAN  
Alex Kerr



アレックス・カー



# 犬と鬼

知られざる日本の肖像

講談社

**See also Peter Kirby's book:**

***Troubled Natures (2010)***

**9. Nihonjinron is usually loaded with value judgments**

**日本人論には価値判断が  
だいたい付きます。**

# Positive or negative

Nationalistic writers proud of Japan's culture + tradition write **positive** Nihonjinron.

Those who find Japan an oppressive, over-disciplined society write **negative** N-ron.

**(Here's a particularly  
radical example of  
negative Nihonjinron.)**

**"The Japanese are perhaps physically the least attractive people with the exception of the pygmies and Hottentots."**

**“Members of the so-called Mongolian race to which the Japanese belong have flat, expressionless faces, high cheekbones, and oblique eyes.”**

**Their figures are also far from being shapely with a disproportionately large head, an elongated trunk, and short often bowed legs."**

**Ichiro Kawasaki, *Japan Unmasked* (Tuttle, 1969)**

# Foreigners are no better.

A generation of foreign scholars admired Japan's mighty economy and harmonious society and wrote **positive** Nihonjinron. For others, Japan's growth posed a danger... and her society seemed repressive. They wrote **negative** Nihonjinron.

But it's very hard to find  
*neutral* Nihonjinron.

「ポジティブ」でもなく、「ネガティブ」でもなく、「中立」な日本人論は殆ど見当たらない。

データ→結論？ 結論→データ？

Either way, when you read a study that implies a strong value judgment, you should ask whether that judgment is the logical outcome of objectively analysed data; or whether the judgment came first and coloured the selection and interpretation of data.

*That is true of ALL social science, not just Nihonjinron.*

# 10. Many Nihonjinron theories contradict each other

**Example 1: *Shudan ishiki* vs. *Wabi/Sabi***

**Groupism vs loneliness**

**集団意識対侘び錆び**



**If Japanese people are so determined to do things in groups, then how come their culture reveres hermits and solitary wanderers?**

*Hermit with Wand and Chrysanthemums  
Signed by Shohaku Soga (1730-1781)  
Edo Period, 18th century*

「仙人」も、集団意識を持っているのでしょうか？

**How come  
Japan's most  
popular movie  
character is a  
wandering  
salesman who  
can't get  
married?**

**「寅さん」は集団意  
識を持っている？**



# Tora-san hangs out with gaijins



外人との付き合いも



恋人関係は長く続かないなああ

**Love never lasts long for Tora-san...**

**One moment he's involved with a  
younger woman...**



自分より年下の女と気が  
合いそうだが...

***... but in the end he has to watch  
her find love with a younger man***



**でも結局若者に負けて  
しまう。**



一人ぼちで歩く人

**And he  
wanders  
off alone,  
as in this  
statue**

松竹映画サウンドメモリアル

# 男はつらいよ

サウンドトラックヒストリー

その一



原作・監修 山田洋次/音楽 山本直純

Key  
phrase:  
“*It’s hard  
to be a  
man*”



**Memorial  
service for  
Kiyoshi Atsumi,  
who played  
Tora-san in 48  
movies**

**渥美清のお別れ会  
(1996年)**



**Tora-san: loner**

**Wabi/sabi: 10**

**Groupism: 0**

**寅さん、一匹狼**

**侘び寂び: 10点**

**集団意識: 0点**

## **9. Many Nihonjinron theories contradict each other**

### **Example 2: ‘Ganbari’ vs ‘Amae’**

**To fight to the last... and to have  
one’s irresponsible behavior  
indulged**

**例2：「頑張り」対「甘え」**

**Hitoshi Ueki**  
**植木等**



# Is this the world's most irresponsible man?



この世の一番  
無責任男？

**As a smiling salaryman always on the make...**



# As a gambler in a samurai comedy



# Sweet-talking his way out of trouble





**With  
his  
band,  
the  
Crazy  
Cats**

**Ueki loves to take it  
easy... no 'ganbari'  
for him!**

**「頑張り」より「リラックス気分」**



# 無責任一代男

作詞：青島 幸男  
作曲：萩原 哲晶

***The Lifetime of an Irresponsible Man (1962)***

***I've been called the world's  
most irresponsible man... ever  
since I was a kid I've been a  
smooth-talking guy who makes  
money without effort***

**おれはこの世で一番 無責任と云  
われた男  
ガキの頃から調子よく 楽しんでもう  
けるスタイル**

**Wangled a scholarship to get  
through school... used my  
connections to get a job...**

**学校に入ってからも ヨウリヨウは  
クラスで一番  
月謝はいらない特待生 コネで  
就職かヤOK**

**Joined the company, flattered  
my boss every day, played golf  
with him, the karaoke, games of  
go ... and wound up as section  
chief**

**会社に入ってから 上役に毎日ごま  
すりゴルフに小唄にゴの相手 なんと  
か課長になった**

**Every time I fancied a girl I'd  
sweet-talk her into bed by  
talking about marriage... of  
which I had NO intention...**

**いかした女を見れば 手当り次第  
に口説き 結婚の約束ヤロだけさ  
もともとその気はない**

I showed up for work every day, just  
sat at my desk doing nothing... having  
a little nap now and again... still  
wound up as **PRESIDENT!**

毎日会社に来てもデスクにじっとして  
るだけ。居眠りしながらめくらバン  
それでも社長になった！

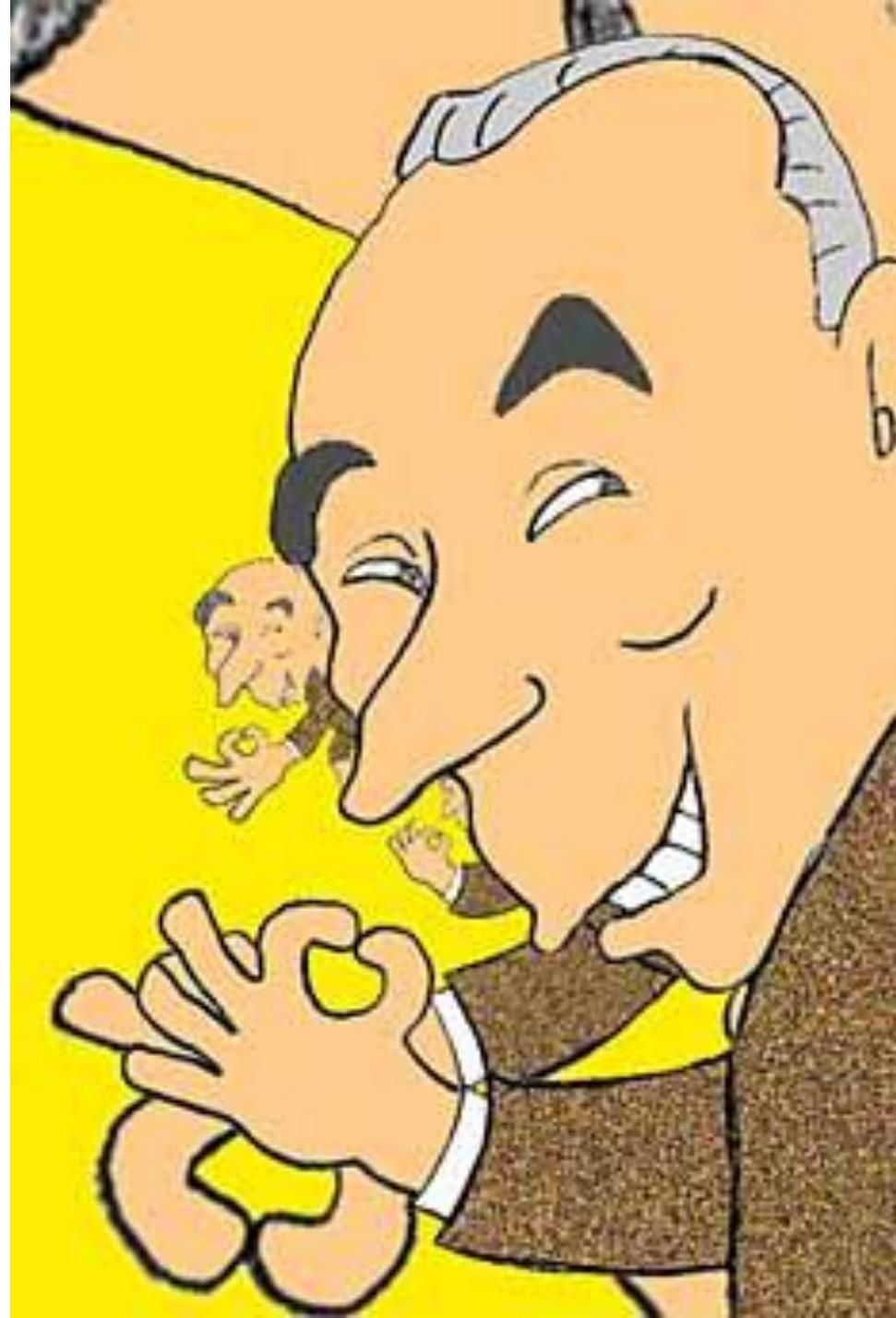
**The key points of life are: timing,  
sweet-talking, and  
irresponsibility...  
Especially irresponsibility!**

**人生で大事な事は  
タイミングにC調に無責任**

**Many thanks to you poor  
hard-working saps who  
make it all possible for me!**

**とにかくこの世は無責任**

**こつこつやる奴はごくろう  
さん！**



**Hitoshi**  
**Ueki**  
***Ganbari:* 0**  
***Amae:* 10**  
**植木等**  
**「頑張り」 0**  
**「甘え」 10**

**Ueki Hitoshi, 1927 ~ 2007**

***... sorely missed.***



**Ueki goods:  
‘The Power of  
the Musekinin’  
Musekinin =  
無責任 =  
Irresponsible**

**One last thing about  
“The World’s Most  
Irresponsible  
Man” ...**



**Comedian  
Yukio  
Aoshima  
wrote the  
Lyrics**

**作詞：  
青島幸男**



**(Aoshima cross  
dressing as the  
'spiteful granny')**

**Ijiwaru baasan**

**いじわる婆さん**



**Yukio Aoshima,  
Governor of Tokyo  
(1995-99)**

And wound up  
as **GOVERNOR  
OF TOKYO!**

それでも東京都  
知事に  
なった！



**2 more  
irresponsible  
guys?  
Former Osaka  
governor  
'Knock'  
Yokoyama  
with Arnold  
Schwarzenegger**

**The present  
governor of  
Tokyo... also  
kind of  
irresponsible**



# *Question*

- **If Nihonjinron has so many things wrong with it, how come it's so popular?**

***Reason #1*** Japan breaks the colonialist mold: an Asian country that achieved military power and industrial advancement... and that seems to demand explanation. It was good for Euro-Americans to meet the idea that some other country knows better than them.

***Reason #2*** More recently,  
Japan's economic success  
demands explanation...  
and makes people wonder  
what is so special about  
Japan... and can we copy  
it?

# The 'Halo Effect'

## 後光(ごこう)現象

- **Economy is working well, therefore whole society and everything else is assumed to be working well too.**
- **日本の経済はよく機能しているから、社会・文化全体は機能的だとされる**

エズラ・フォヴォーゲル、  
ハーヴァード大学教授

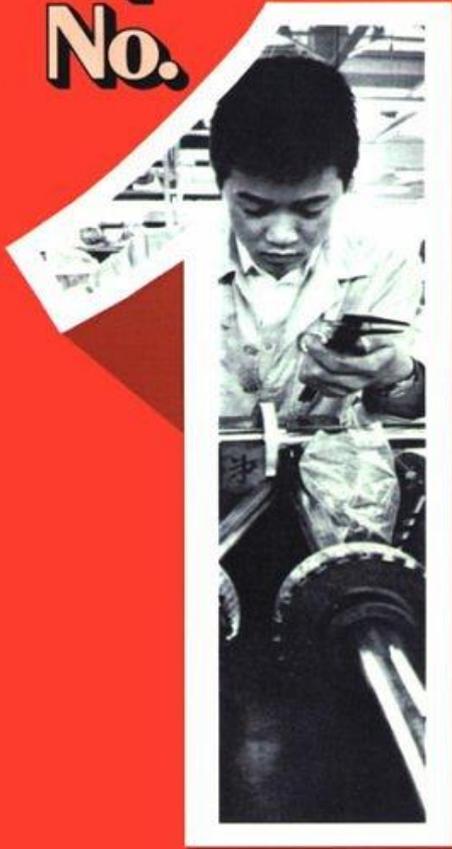


**Prof. Ezra  
F. Vogel,  
Harvard  
University**

1979

ジヤパンアズナ  
ンバーワン  
アメリカへの教訓

Japan As  
No. 1



Lessons  
for  
America

Ezra F. Vogel

# Vogel's 'Japanese Successes'

- 1. 'Group learning' 集团学习
- 2. Administration 行政
- 3. Politics 政治
- 4. Big companies 大型会社
- 5. Education 教育
- 6. Welfare 福祉
- 7. Crime control 犯罪管理

「日本の成功例」

Jon Woronoff

**Japan as**  
*anything but*  
**Number One**

**Jon Woronoff**

(M.E. Sharpe 1991)

『日本はナン  
バーワン...  
じゃねえよ！』

ジャパンアズナンバーワン  
それからどうなった

# Japan as No.1?

エズラ・F・ヴォーゲル著  
福島範昌訳

たちばな出版

エズラ・ヴォーゲル

The Heisei  
Recession  
forces  
Vogel to  
Rethink

# Reason #3

**The long list of special key words makes good books... and lectures... much better than just saying 'Japanese people are much the same as other people'**

# Reason #4

**It is easy to criticize Nihonjinron as a form of cultural essentialism (文化本質主義)... but still and all, everybody sometimes thinks “that’s very Japanese.” There has to be some meaning there.**

# Leading Critics of Nihonjinron 日本人論反対派

**Harumi Befu ベフ・ハルミ (別府春海)**

**Yoshio Sugimoto (杉本良男)**

**Peter Dale (ピーター・デール)**



**Yoshio Sugimoto**

杉本良男

# Recommended reading:

**Yoshio Sugimoto, *An Introduction to Japanese Society*, Cambridge University Press, 1997 (new edition 2003)**

**See especially Chapter 1: 'The Japan Phenomenon and the Social Sciences.'**

別府春海

Harumi Befu





Hegemony of  
Homogeneity

Harumi Befu

**HEGEMONY OF  
HOMOGENEITY: AN  
ANTHROPOLOGIC  
AL ANALYSIS OF  
NIHONJINRON  
Harumi Befu  
「同質性の覇権」  
別府春海**

# Recommended reading:

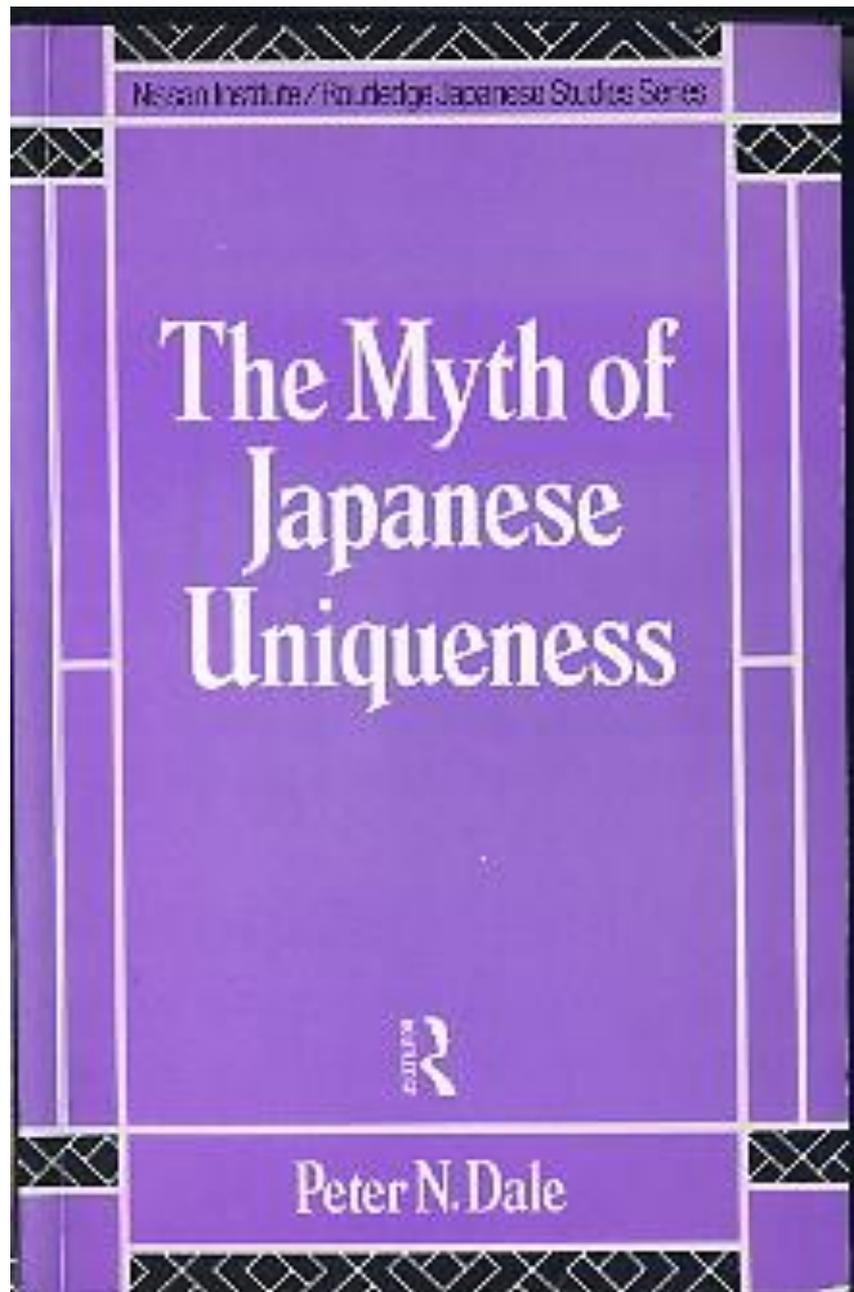
**Harumi Befu, *Hegemony of Homogeneity* (Trans Pacific Press, 2001)**

**See especially Chapter 4,  
'Premises, Models and  
Ideologies.'**

# **Befu theory**

**Nihonjinron as a “secular religion”  
plus “political ideology  
masquerading as cultural theory”**

**... defeat in WW2 made it difficult to  
advocate nationalism or to place  
much confidence in religion.**



DO THE JAPANESE DIFFER  
FROM OTHER NATIONALITIES?

HOW SCIENTIFICALLY SOUND  
ARE THE INTELLECTUAL  
ARGUMENTS THAT THEY DO?

# 『日本人の独自性という神話』

ピーター N. デール

**The Myth of  
Japanese  
Uniqueness  
by Peter N. Dale**

**(Croom Helm, 1986)**

**ピーター・N・デール**

『日本人の独自性  
という神話』

# Recommended reading:

**Peter N. Dale, *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness*  
(Croom Helm, 1986,  
Routledge 1988)**

**See e.g. Chapter 3 on Nakane,  
Chapter 8 + 9 on Doi, Chapter  
10 on Benedict.**

# Dale, Chapter 4 第4章

## The Dialectics of Difference

## 相違の弁証論

# Analyzing the 'key words'

## 日本人論のキー概念の分析

'Japan' + 'the West' are fictions, constructed on these bases. 「日本」と「西洋」はフィクションであり、7つの群集で日本人論を整理する:

1. Geoclimatic base 地理・気象の基盤
2. Racial base 人種的な基盤
3. Productive base 生産的な基盤
4. Social base 社会的な基盤
5. Socio-cultural mode 社会文化的な様式
6. Intellectual style 知的スタイル
7. Indigenous Efflorescence 内発的な文化開花

# Geoclimatic base 地理・気象の基盤

<b>The 'West' 「西洋」</b>	<b>'Japan' 「日本」</b>
1 Continent 大陸	1' Island 島国
2 Desert + pasture 砂漠+牧場	2' Forest + paddy 森+稲田
3 Nature poor, man dominates 人間が貧しい自然を支配する	3' Nature rich, prevails over man 豊かな自然が人間を支配する
4 Temperate, regular climate 温帯・不変な気象	4' Variable, monsoon climate 変わりやすい季節風の気象

## 2. Racial base 人種的な基盤

'West'	'Japan'
5 Miscegenation of races 人種の混血	5' Blood purity, one race (血 の純粹な民族、 単一民族国家)

### 3. Productive base 生産的な基盤

'West' 「西洋」	'Japan' 「日本」
6 Nomadic-pastoral 遊牧民的	6' Settled agricultural 農耕 (こう) 民的
7 Animal flesh food base 動物的・肉食	7' Vegetable/rice diet 植物的・米
8 Slave labour 奴隸 制	8' Communal labour (共同的な協力)

# 4. Social base 社会的な基盤

<b>‘West’ 「西洋」</b>	<b>‘Japan’ 「日本」</b>
<b>9 Society</b> 社会 ( <i>Gesellschaft</i> )	<b>9’ Community</b> 共同体 ( <i>Gemeinschaft</i> )
<b>10 Individualism</b> 個人主義	<b>10’ Groupism</b> 集團主義・間人主義
<b>11 Horizontality</b> 橫	<b>11’ Verticality</b> 縱
<b>12 Egalitarianism</b> 平等主義	<b>12’ Hierarchy</b> 階級性
<b>13 Contract</b> 契約	<b>13’ ‘Kintract’</b> 緣約

# Social base (cont)

<b>‘West’ 「西洋」</b>	<b>‘Japan’ 「日本」</b>
14 ‘Private’ 私的	14’ ‘Public’ 公的
15 ‘Guilt’ 罪	15’ ‘Shame’ 恥
16 Urban-cosmopolitan (都市・世界主義)	16’ Rural-exclusive (田舎・閉鎖主義)
17 Rights 権利	17’ Duties 義理・恩など
18 Independence (inner-directed) 自立・独立	18’ Dependence (other-directed) 甘え・他立

**This series of terms gives away much of the *nihonjinron* game. For what are here depicted as contrasts in cultural style or social structure are more or less identical with differences between industrial and preindustrial (feudal) civilisation in the West. All it tells us is that 'modern' Japan is conceptualized in terms of feudal categories which social development in the West outgrew and transcended. (43-44)**

**Feature contrasts 9,9', for example, derive from Ferdinand Tonnies' analysis (1887) of the transition from rural community to social, urban industrial life. The *tate-yoko* opposition, associated wrongly with the name of Nakane Chie, along with the egalitarian-hierarchy contrast, stem from Alexis de Tocqueville's critique in *Democracy in America*. (pp. 43-4)**

‘West’ 「西洋」	‘Japan’ 「日本」
9 Society社会 ( <i>Gesellschaft</i> ) ゲセルシャフト	9’ Community共同体 ( <i>Gemeinschaft</i> ) ゲマインシャフト

**Eg #9 derives from Ferdinand Tönnies’ famous C19th work on urbanization.**

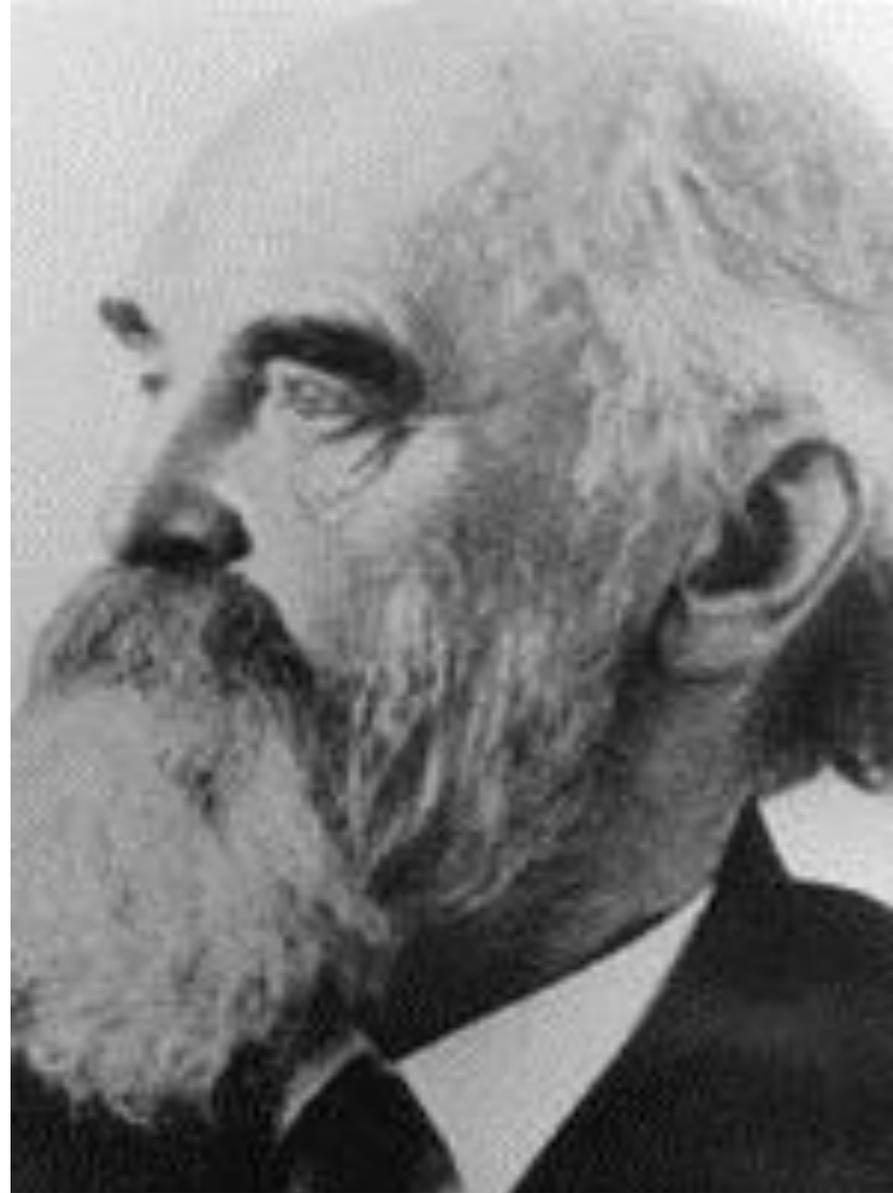
**例えば、リストの9番はファーディナンド・テンニエスの田舎共同体から産業都市の生活への移行に関する分析(1887年)を元に行っている。**

# Ferdinand Tönnies

(1855~1936)

Pioneering  
German  
sociologist

*Gemeinschaft und  
Gesellschaft*, 1887



**Ferdinand Tönnies**

**ファースティナンド・テンニェス**

# *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (1887)

***Gemeinschaft* ゲマインシャフト:**

Traditional rural community.

Groupism. Natural law. 伝統的な田舎の共同体。団体主義。「自然法」。

***Gesellschaft* ゲゼルシャフト:**

Modern urban society. Individualism.

Man-made law 現代的な都市の社会。個人主義。「人工法」。

# An example

**April 2008: At a public high school in Osaka, 2 new students are refused permission to take part in the entrance ceremony because their parents had not yet paid the admission fees (about 200,000 yen). The 2 students had to wait in the principle's office while all the others took part in the ceremony.**

**Was the school RIGHT or WRONG?**

- **RIGHT:** Rules are rules, students and their parents must learn to comply. It will be a good lesson for the 2 students.
- **WRONG:** The parents will probably pay up by and by, so why spoil the students' big day?

*What do **you** think?*

# *Gesellschaft*

**RIGHT:** A *gesellschaft* way of thinking, supposed to be more 'modern,' more 'urban,' and, in Japan, more 'western.'

**There is a CONTRACT between the students' families and the school.**

**If the students break the contract, they should not enjoy the benefits of the contract.**

# *Gemeinschaft*

**WRONG:** A *Gemeinschaft* way of thinking.

The community is like a big family, and friendly family relations are more important than rules or contracts.

Instead of punishing the families, the school should see if there are any financial problems, and if necessary arrange an easy payment plan.

# FUJI TV POLL

- **Finds 90% of Japanese respondents say the school was RIGHT.**
- **Finds 64% of foreign respondents say the school was WRONG.**

**Announcer's comment: "How interesting – the foreigners respond like Japanese used to, the Japanese like foreigners used to."**

**「面白いですね！外国人は昔の日本人のように、日本人は昔の外国人のように、答えています。」**

**He is surprised because  
the results contradict  
Nihonjin-ron expectations.**

<b>‘West’ 「西洋」</b>	<b>‘Japan’ 「日本」</b>
<b>11 Horizontality 横</b>	<b>11’ Verticality 縦</b>
<b>12 Egalitarianism 平等主義</b>	<b>12’ Hierarchy 階級制</b>

**Dale traces Nakane’s theory of vertical and horizontal societies 縦・横社会 back to prewar rural sociology by Kizaemon Aruga 有賀左衛門 and 50s work by Takeyoshi Kawashima 川島武宜 and Shu’ichi Kato 加藤周一, who often used the terms ‘tate’ 縦 and ‘yoko’ 横.**

# These in turn he traces to Alexis de Toqueville

アレクシス・ド・トクヴィル  
フランス人の  
政治学者  
1805～1859  
*Democracy in  
America,*  
1835年



# Japan = Feudal Europe?

In De Tocqueville's analysis, medieval Europe is portrayed as a vertical society, oddly similar to Nakane's depiction of Japan.

13 Contract 契約

13' 'Kintract' 縁約

**Henry Maine, in his masterpiece *Ancient Law* (1861), finds that interpersonal relations in feudal Europe were determined by ties of mutual obligation among kin – somewhat similar to “giri.”**



**Henry Maine,  
1822-1888**

***Ancient Law***  
**(古代法)**

**1861**

# Maine → Hsu

In the 20th century, Francis Hsu takes up Maine's model and applies it to China and America. He invents the term 'kintract' to describe Chinese society with its stress on kin-based obligation. シューがメインの概念を中国とアメリカの社会の比較に適用して、アメリカ社会のcontract(契約)人間関係に対して中国の親戚ベース人間関係を描写するために“kintract”(「縁約」)という造語を作り出す。

# Hsu→Hamaguchi

**One of Hsu's students is Eshun Hamaguchi, who slightly adapts Hsu's theory, replacing China with Japan as the kin-based society to contract with US contract society. Result: Hamaguchi's 'kanjin' theory. 浜口恵俊(シュューの教え子), 『間人主義の社会日本』(1982年).**

**Again, Nihonjinron is shown  
to be**

**a) unoriginal and**

**b) conservative/nostalgic**

# 日本人論のノスタルジー

**If this is the *essence of Japan*, then attempts to change traditional ways may appear “un-Japanese” or even treacherous.**

**同時に、日本人の眼で見るとこの伝統的なイメージは保守的である。見方により、社会の改革・変化は「非日本的」ように捉える。**

**(Indeed, that is how the far right in Japan tends to view social or political change of almost any kind.)**

# 5. Socio-cultural mode

## 社会文化的な様式

<b>‘West’ 「西洋」</b>	<b>‘Japan’ 「日本」</b>
<b>19 Masculine / paternal 丈夫ぶり (ますらおぶり)</b>	<b>19’ Feminine / maternal 手弱女ぶり (たおやめぶり)</b>
<b>20 Bellicose 好戦的</b>	<b>20’ Peaceful 平和的</b>
<b>21 Monotheistic 一神教的</b>	<b>21’ Polytheistic animism 多神教的 アニミズム</b>

## 5. Socio-cultural mode

<b>‘West’ 西洋</b>	<b>‘Japan’ 日本</b>
<b>22 Unstable</b> 不安定	<b>22’ Stable</b> 安定
<b>23 Intolerant</b> 不寬容	<b>23’ Tolerant</b> 寬容
<b>24 Materialistic</b> 物質的	<b>24’ Spiritual</b> 精神的

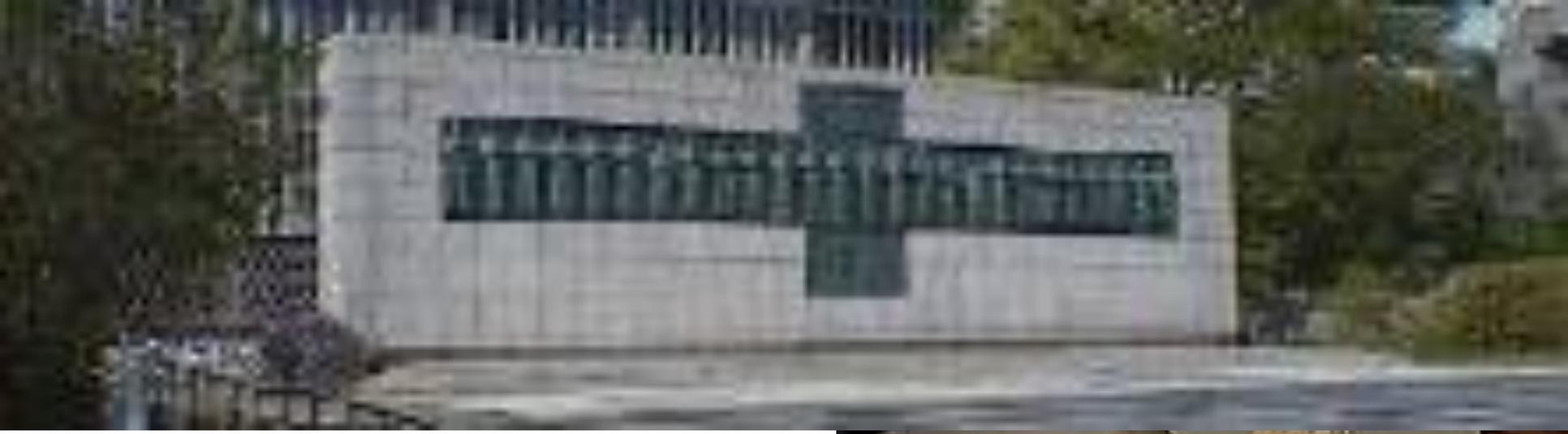
# Assumes racial homogeneity

Europe: **Multiethnic** → **unstable** → **warlike**  
→ **monotheistic** 一神教 (fighting people stress exclusive value of own god, reject all others. Christian god implicitly masculine, strong enough to defeat other gods/religions) → **intolerant**.

Japan: **Monoethnic** → **stable** → **few wars**  
→ **peace-loving** → **polytheistic** 多神教  
willing to respect other people's gods...  
feminine deity (Amaterasu Omikami 天照大神) → **tolerant**. 寛容

# Ignores historical facts

**Japan has a long history of internal warfare, but some N-ron characterize this as a mere “family quarrel” since it was an all-Japanese affair, rather than war against another people.**



**Nagasaki  
martyrs  
Jin'ō 仁王**



## 6. Intellectual style 知的スタイル

<b>'West' 「西洋」</b>	<b>'Japan' 「日本」</b>
<b>25 Logic, either/or</b> 論理、二者択一	<b>25' Ambivalence</b> 両価性
<b>26 Rational</b> 合理的	<b>26' Emotional</b> 感情的
<b>27 Objective</b> 客観的	<b>27' Subjective</b> 主観的

# Illogical Japanese?

Japanese have “a mentality unfit for abstract thinking” (Yukawa Hideki) ... and “a weakness in ability to think in terms of logical consequences” (Nakamura Hajime),

日本人は「抽象的に考えることに向かない」  
(湯川秀樹[?])、「論理的な因果関係で考えることは不得意 (中村はじめ[?])

出所: *The Japanese Mind: Essentials of Japanese Philosophy and Culture*, ed. Charles Moore (1967), p. 56 (湯川) p. 143 (中村)

# the Japanese Mind

*Essentials of Japanese Philosophy and Culture*

Edited by CHARLES A. MOORE



# 6. 知的スタイル(続)

<b>‘West’ 「西洋」</b>	<b>‘Japan’ 「日本」</b>
<b>28 Rigid principle</b> 硬直的原理	<b>28’ Situational logic</b> 状況論理
<b>29 Talkativeness</b> おしゃべり	<b>29’ Silence</b> 沈黙

**Outsiders  
can't  
understand**

**Isshin  
denshin**

**Rice farmers  
Know their  
work**

**One race  
One way of  
life**

**Speech silver,  
Silence golden**

**Haragei**

**Down with  
logic!  
Intuition and  
Emotion rule**

亮

# Coming up next...

- **Lecture #3 – How ethnically and culturally homogeneous *is* Japanese society?**
- **日本の社会は「同一民族」・「同一文化」だと言える？**