

# Shakespeare in Translation: The Idea of Nature in *King Lear*\*

TANAKA Kazutaka

## I. Some Problems in Shakespeare Scholarship in Japan

I would like to begin today's lecture by pointing out a serious problem in Shakespeare studies in Japan. Japanese Shakespeare scholarship shows a strong tendency to follow and imitate recent trends in American and English as well as other Western studies of Shakespeare without considering how Japanese studies not only of Shakespeare but also of English Renaissance Drama in general could enrich the understanding of Japanese language and literature. I do not claim that following the trends of foreign scholarship is inappropriate in itself. To tell the truth, I myself accept blame for this. Since I entered graduate school in English literature and language I have written papers utilizing the framework of popular Shakespeare criticism of foreign origins, including New Historicism, Post-colonial Criticism, Gender Criticism, and Deconstructive Criticism. I think, however, that it is absolutely necessary for the Japanese studies of Shakespeare or foreign literature in general, for scholars to remould their studies into comparative studies between Japanese and foreign literature and languages with a view to a better understanding of not only foreign literature and language but also of Japanese language and literature.

The prevalent tendency of Japanese scholars of foreign literature and languages to imitate overseas scholarship is partially a result of the peculiar way in which academic societies are formed in Japan. In the fields of foreign literature and languages, academic societies tend to be formed into separate units by individual authors and their languages, except such a few instances as The Japan Comparative Literature Association. This shows that Japanese scholars have little sense of how their studies contribute to a better and richer understanding of Japanese literature and language in general. On this point, about a century ago, Soseki Natsume, an excellent literary critic as well as a famous novelist in the Meiji Era in Japan, had already made a suggestive and polemical argument in which he

claims the importance of an independent approach to Western literature and languages instead of the passive imitation of foreign approaches, recollecting a bitter memory of his overseas study in London:

Nowadays, Japanese scholars praise the scholarly works of Bergson [, Henri-Louis, 1859-1941] and Eucken [, Rudolf Christoph, 1846-1926] precisely because Western scholars praise them. They are blindly faithful to what Westerners say without employing their own critical judgements. There are many people who boast of their knowledge of Western scholarship. They think that it is praiseworthy to be able to offer up numerous Western names or ideas of popularity in the *kata-kana* characters. Here I am blaming myself rather than others. I myself have been such a scholar. Japanese scholars tend to place great value upon Western scholars' criticisms of Western authors without considering their validity or considering how correct their criticisms are in terms of their own evaluation. They proclaim these imported foreign criticisms, which could never have been of their own flesh and blood, as if they were their own inventions and creations. However, the trend of the present age to pursue scholarly fashion welcomes and admires such approaches....

Even though a Western scholar may praise an English poem saying that it has an excellent style, such a criticism is formed on the basis of his or her own judgement and it does not necessarily turn out to be relevant to another's critical appraisal of the poem. In other words, we should not proclaim such a criticism to be true if it does not conform to our own judgements. Since we are Japanese and not the slaves of the English nation, we should take pride in our own judgements as a nation. In the name of honesty which is a common virtue all over the world, we should not be forced to accept foreigners' views as uniquely valid judgements of literary works and abandon our own views. In spite of saying this, as a specialist in English literature and language, I cannot help feeling embarrassed when my own judgements differ from those of English scholars, which compels me to wonder why my judgements are contradictory to theirs. Difference in customs, manners of thinking and living, and national character must be involved in this difference. Mediocre scholars of foreign literature and languages tend to confuse the humanities with natural science by falsely presupposing that the literary taste of one nation must be the same as others and that the literary values of all nations should show a general conformity to common and general values. Such a way of thinking is a grave mistake. Even if I cannot overcome the fundamental differences or contradictions between our sense of literary excellence and that of scholars in the English-speaking world, I have come to think that I could attempt an explanation of how and why they are different and

contradictory and by doing so I might throw some light upon the present disordered scene in Japanese letters. You might say that I am rather tardy in arriving at such an obvious conclusion at such a late stage of my life and I heartily admit this because it is certainly true.

I began to read books which had nothing to do with English literature in order to strengthen, or rather create from nothing, the foundation upon which I would build my house of literary scholarship. I began to read intensively books in the fields of natural science and philosophy in order to verify the correctness of my independent criticism and studies of English literature and language...

I gained increasing confidence as I came upon the idea of independency and self-sufficiency. It was this idea of self-sufficiency that gave me the vigour and strength to pursue my study of English literature and language, and at the same time it also brought me the sunshine which eventually dissipated the cloudy intellectual mist hanging above my head.<sup>1</sup>

It is almost a century ago that Soseki Natsume presented his polemical argument against the Japanese literary scene of his age. It is certainly true that Japanese research on foreign literature and languages have greatly advanced since Soseki's time, and we can now argue against his claims in various ways. For instance, making a value judgement by pointing out the excellent style of a poem is now considered too simplistic to form an appropriate criticism of poetry and there are few cases in which Japanese scholars imitate foreign approaches without objective analysis. Moreover, however advanced Japanese studies of foreign literature and languages seem to have become over the past century, or however sophisticated the ideas and concepts of Japanese scholarship have become, there is no denying that what Soseki Natsume said a century ago is still relevant in the case of Japanese scholarship of Western literature and languages. The tendency to analyze literature in similar terms with natural science, confusing letters and nature, has become rather fashionable recently. Therefore, we need to turn our eyes again to the fundamental framework on which our studies of foreign literature are built. Soseki Natsume published a book entitled *Essays on Literature* in 1907 as a result of his independent and self-sufficient analysis of English literature. This essay is my response to Soseki's polemical argument.

## II. On Problems Caused by Translation

I would also like to refer to what Takeshi Onodera, a famous Japanese translator of English literature, especially British novels, has written concerning Japanese translations of English literature. He strongly argues against the common assumption that good translation wholly depends upon whether translators have sufficient ability to understand the language they are trying to translate, and points to a hidden aspect of translation which has a deep connection to how we should understand languages and cultures:

All translations are concerned with the translation of cultures. But merely to point this out is not helpful in understanding the nature of translation and how to deal successfully with the concrete and the specific difficulties which actual translations pose....

We might say that translation is to put into Japanese what is written in foreign languages. However, translation does not only mean to change sentences into Japanese, checking unknown words, phrases, and their meanings in dictionaries with the utmost use of one's knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. I have heard that tax officers presuppose that professional translators make use of only one dictionary when they translate. The words "check," "unknown," "meaning," used above, themselves have far more significance and meaning in the act of translation than ordinary people naively assume. To refer to a simple instance, there is much significance and implication in such seemingly simple words for colours as "white" and "black" and so on. The ideas invoked by these words are not only multiple but also carry various burdens of emotional suggestion. When we translate these words, we have to ascertain properly what meanings they convey in a sentence.

How should we look up words and phrases in dictionaries? We usually look them up with the expectation of finding appropriate words or expressions for their translation. However, our expectations are often not fulfilled when we encounter the subtle and unexpected significance behind the apparent and noticeable meaning of a sentence. In order to express clearly the most important meaning of a paragraph, we translators have to make use of all kinds of devices for conveying it, paying careful attentions to such multiple elements in a paragraph as the length of sentences or phrases, the softness or hardness of vocabulary, the phonological aspects of sentences and their sequences, and the atmosphere which is produced by these elements. These elements are of course at a deeper level closely connected with the overall idea or emotion which is invoked by the work itself. Professional translators have to judge

these multiple and multifarious points as they translate. We cannot call the ability to deal with such difficult and different problems simply "*gogaku-ryoku*" (「語学力」) or the ability to understand grammar and vocabulary. It is precisely because I am aware that translation involves such intricate and complex processes that I call the process of translating the translation of cultures.

Therefore we cannot help asking the fundamental question of what is verbal meaning and how we can understand it. Of course we need knowledge and experience as well as imagination to understand the meaning of words. But how far should we go before we can say that we completely understand the verbal meaning? It is impossible to answer this question. The activity of translation is endless especially when we try to convey appropriately not only meaning of individual words but also that of sentences, paragraphs, or an entire work with its complexity of verbal meaning and emotional nuances, retaining intact the integrity of the original. With the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary we can sufficiently deal with the translation of technical documents whose contents are made up of concrete objects and phenomena. But the translation of what we call generally a literary work or poetry cannot be sufficiently achieved without conveying the significance of its style even though the word *style* itself cannot completely express what I mean here. We cannot, I think, understand verbal meaning completely without grasping what the particular style of a literary work signifies in its specific context. It is precisely the significance of style which differentiates free or indirect translation from literal or direct translation.... But most people simply assume that good translation is wholly dependent on the translator's knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. I would like to call such a naive way of thinking an unenlightened commonsense assumption which is similar to the world view before the Enlightenment in the Meiji era. Most people never understand that the activity of translation is a difficult and therefore challenging task which requires us to understand not only cultural meanings of words and symbols but also the overall thought of an author who is expressing him/herself as a human being.<sup>2</sup>

We have not paid sufficient attention to what problems are involved when we try to translate foreign languages into our native tongue. It is true that the consciousness of them is very important for comparative studies of literature and culture. However, we have naively presupposed that all the problems posed in the act of translation are simply caused by the translator's lack of knowledge of languages, especially by their lack of the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. Takeshi Onodera calls into question this naive thinking,

identifying it as an "unenlightened commonsense assumption." I agree with Onodera. In this lecture I will focus on some of the concrete problems which are inevitably caused when we translate Shakespeare into Japanese, paying attention to cultural as well as linguistic aspects of Shakespeare in translation.

As Onodera has pointed out, similar difficulties almost always arise when we try to construct a two-way road between the separate territories of languages. For example, I have wondered how should I entitle today's lecture. I am still hesitating over whether I should title this lecture "Shakespeare in Translation: The Concept of Nature in *King Lear*," or "Shakespeare in Translation: The Idea of Nature in *King Lear*." Certainly there are many people who might say that the issue is not so important and you can put "idea," "concept," "notion," and even "sense" in your title. Certainly if you consult Japanese-English dictionaries, you can find that *gai-nen* and *kan-nen* (「概念・観念」) in Japanese have English equivalents of *concept*, *notion*, *sense*, or *idea*. In any case, however, I find it impossible to believe that we can use any of these words in translating the Japanese ideas of *gai-nen* or *kan-nen*.

What concerns us here is the fundamental issue of what is verbal meaning and how it can be appropriately translated into another language. Here I am concerned with the general issue of what is translation, which appears in the specific form of how I should render *gai-nen* or *kan-nen* into English. This particular problem was solved when I decided to translate them into "idea." In this lecture I will see how the idea of nature in Shakespeare's *King Lear* has been put across in Japanese translations. Finally in so doing I would like to demonstrate that the activity of translation not only includes putting English into Japanese or vice versa, and that it also involves the fundamental questions of what is verbal meaning itself and how we can convey meaning between different languages.

### III. *King Lear* and the Idea of Nature (1)

Let us begin with a brief quotation from *King Lear*:

*Glou.* These late eclipses in the sun and moon  
portend no good to us. Though the wisdom of (1) nature  
can reason it thus and thus, yet (2) nature finds itself  
scourg'd by the sequent effects. Love cools, friendship  
falls off, brothers divide; in cities, mutinies; in countries,

discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked  
 'twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under  
 the prediction: there's son against father. The King  
 falls from bias of (3) nature: there's father against child.  
 We have seen the best of our time. Machinations,  
 hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders  
 follow us disquietly to our graves. (1.2.103-14)<sup>3</sup>

This is a speech of Gloucester, one of Lear's vassals. In the speech he claims that the heavenly eclipses which had recently taken place are signs of the disasters which have struck the kingdom of Britain since it was divided by Lear. Gloucester's speech is framed within the traditional Western view of nature and universe, including human beings. However, what I would like to deal with in the present discussion is not the content of Gloucester's speech. Rather I wish to deal with the issue of how to translate into Japanese the word *nature* which is one of the key concepts in *King Lear*. To begin with, let us see how Japanese translators of Shakespeare have translated the word into Japanese over the past hundred years. The history of Japanese translations of Shakespeare began with Tsubouchi Shoyo (1859-1935), who is famous in modern Japan as a translator, dramatist, and critic as well as a novelist. For the convenience of explanation, I have underlined and numbered the three "nature"s in the above passage and their Japanese translations. I have ordered the Japanese translations according to the period when they were written. I have also included the English translations of the Japanese translations in parentheses. First, let us see how the first and the second "nature"s are translated into Japanese:

① Shoyo Tsubouchi (坪内逍遙) 「(1)理学者<sup>4</sup>ども(natural philosophers or scientists)は、あゝの、かうのと理屈を捏ねをるが、(2)自然界(the natural world)は彼の結果でヤッぱりいろいろ わざはひ種々の災害を受ける。」

② Takeshi Saito (齋藤 <sup>たけし</sup> 勇) 「(1)天地 (the heaven and the earth) の理法を知る者はそれをこれこれのわけと説明してはくれるけれども、天変があった後の成り行きはかならず(2)人心 (human mind) を乱すものだ。」

③ Junji Kinoshita (木下順二) 「(1)自然の理法 (the law of nature) から見てこうこうだと説明はつけられても、(2)人間のほう (human beings) はその結果の現象でひどい目に会うのだ。」

- ④ **Toshikazu Oyama** (大山俊一) 「(1) 自然科学 (natural science) 的にはこうだ、ああたと説明はつくが、現実には(2) 人間自然界 (the human world and the natural world) は次々に起こる災害に傷めつけられている。」
- ⑤ **Tsuneari Fukuda** (福田恆存) 「(1) 自然の理法 (the law of nature) によりかくかくしかじかと説明されては見ても、その(2) 自然 (nature) がもともと神罰を受けているのだから仕方が無い。」
- ⑥ **Kazuko Matsuoka** (松岡和子) 「(1) 自然に関する学問 (natural philosophy) ではかくかくしかじかと説明がつくのだろうが、その結果(2) 人間界 (the human world) は罰を受ける。」
- ⑦ **Yushi Odashima** (小田島雄志) 「(1) 自然界 (the natural world) を知る学者はこれこれしかじかと理屈をつけるが、(2) 人間界 (the human world) はたしかにその結果たたりを受けておる。」
- ⑧ **Hidekatsu Nojima** (野島秀勝) 「いくら(1) 自然の学問 (natural philosophy) がかくかくしかじかとその原因を説明して見せたところで、その結果が(2) 人の世の自然 (nature in the human world) に禍することには変わりはない。」
- ⑨ **Tetsuo Anzai** (安西徹雄) 「なるほど学者どもは、あれこれと理屈をこねて説明をつけてはいるが、(1) 天界 (the heaven) の異変が必ず(2) 人間界 (the human world) に凶事をもたらすことに違いはない。」<sup>5</sup>

The following are the translations of the third "nature":

- ① **Tsubouchi** 「王は(3) 性の自然 (the nature of things) に背いた振舞ひをなさるゝ…」
- ② **Saito** 「王は(3) 天性のおもむくところ (the course of nature) を離れ…」
- ③ **Kinoshita** 「王は(3) 自然の道 (the way of nature) にそむかれる…」
- ④ **Oyama** 「国王は(3) 人間自然の道 (the way of nature and humans) から逸れ…」
- ⑤ **Fukuda** 「王も(3) 人情の自然 (the nature of human love) に悖る…」
- ⑥ **Matsuoka** 「王も(3) 親としての道 (the natural course of actions for parents) をふみはずす…」
- ⑦ **Odashima** 「王も(3) 自然の情 (natural feelings) にそむかれる…」



⑧ Nojima 「王は(3) 自然の正道 (the right course of nature) からそれ…」

⑨ Anzai 「リア王までが、(3) 自然の条理 (the Law of Nature) にそむいて…」

It is noteworthy here that when they translate the idea of nature into Japanese, Japanese translators cannot manage only with the most common Japanese expression of the idea of nature, that is *shizen* (「自然」). This does not seem to deserve special attention since *shizen* is not the sole word which could be used as an equivalent of *nature* in English. But we should note the fact that *shizen* cannot always be used as an equivalent of *nature*. Indeed, almost all Japanese translators try to convey the meaning of *nature* in the above passage by dividing it into nature and human beings, but it is not necessarily self-evident that *nature* in English means both nature and human beings at the same time.

Here, let us examine in detail what *nature* means in Gloucester's speech. To begin with, the *nature* in the phrase "wisdom of nature" seems to mean "everything in the physical world that is not controlled by humans, such as wild plants and animals and rocks, and the weather"<sup>6</sup>, which is defined in a Japanese dictionary as "things or phenomena such as mountains, rivers, sea, trees, animals, rain, and winds, which exist without human power or control" (「山、川、海、草木、動物、雨、風など、人の作為によらずに存在するものや現象」)<sup>7</sup>. It is doubtful that *shizen* in Japanese could include heavenly eclipses in its meaning as *nature* does in English. The phrase "wisdom of nature" means natural philosophy, which one might call natural science in modern terms. There are a few cases in which Shakespeare uses the word *wisdom* to mean knowledge or science, and this is just one of the few cases. The meaning of the word *nature* in the sense of "everything in the physical world" is familiar to the Japanese as well, so it is variously translated into Japanese, such as "*shizen* (-*kai*)" (「自然 (界)」— the natural world), or "*ten-chi*" (「天地」— the heaven and the earth), or "*ten-kai*" (「天界」— the heaven), and so on. Gloucester calls into question the validity of the scientific and rational explanation of the heavenly eclipses which have lately occurred in Britain. His main concern is that throughout the kingdom, there are disorders in nature and he expresses a strong sense of irritation in the phrase of "[t]hough the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourg'd by the sequent effects." Gloucester's frustration bears a close connection with the meaning of the second and the third "nature"s.

Before proceeding to the examination of what the second and the third "nature"s mean, I would like to investigate the meaning of the word *nature* in terms of its etymological

origins.<sup>8</sup> The original meaning of the word is not that of the first "nature," that is, "everything in the physical world that is not controlled by humans, such as wild plants and animals and rocks, and the weather." The fundamental sense of the word *nature* is "the qualities or features that something has."<sup>9</sup> The word *nature* is a rather formal word derived from Latin *natura* which is a derivative of *nasci* (its infinitive form is *nascor*) meaning "to be born." *Natura* refers to the essential quality that somebody or something has from their birth. It is natural, therefore, that the word *nature* has the fundamental meaning of the essential quality of something or somebody, which is derivative from its Latin etymology. The sentence "it is the *nature* of fire to burn" has one of the most typical uses of the word *nature*.

In the vocabulary of the English language there is a word other than *nature* which shares a similar meaning with it. It is *kind*. *Kind* is a more familiar and ordinary word than *nature* because it is derived from the Old English or the Anglo-Saxon language while *nature* is a word of Latin origin. Shakespeare writes in *Measure for Measure* "[a] noble and renown'd, in his love toward her ever most *kind and natural*" (3.1.220-1, emphasis added). In *Henry the Fifth*, he also uses the expression "[w]ere all thy[England's]children *kind and natural*"(2.prologue. 19, emphasis added). These examples clearly show that Shakespeare's sense of these two words is almost the same, by which he means the essential quality of somebody or something. In view of the history of the English language, it is quite interesting that these two words which are similar in meaning but different in their origins have their places in Shakespeare's vocabulary.

The word *nature* expands its signification in the course of verbal development. The phrase *human nature* refers to the quality which humans have had since their birth. In the traditional, as contrasted to the modern, Western view, human nature is a quality which humans do *not* share with beasts, such as reason and intelligence, generosity, kind affection and love toward each other, and so on. When Lear says to Regan, one of his daughters, "[t]hou better know'st / The offices of *nature*"(2.4.177-8, emphasis added), he refers to "bond of childhood"(2.4.178), "[e]ffects of courtesy"(2.4.179) and "dues of gratitude"(2.4.179). These qualities are features which distinguish humans created in God's image from beasts and animals. Therefore, the second and the third "nature"s in Gloucester's speech strongly suggest the right and normative order in which rules and authorities are respected according to their values.

Shakespeare's *King Lear* portrays the ways in which the destruction of human nature is reflected upon the nature of physical phenomena. It is certain that the disorders of nature

including eclipses and tempests are caused by physical powers. But in the universe of *King Lear*, they are represented so that they may be perceived to have a strong connection with the disorder of the moral virtues which belong to human beings:

*Lear.* Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage, blow,  
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout  
Till you have drench'd the steeples, [drown'd] the cocks!  
You sulph'rous and thought-executing fires,  
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,  
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,  
Strike flat the thick rotundity o' th' world!  
Crack nature's mould, all germains spill at once  
That make ingrateful man!

*Fool.* O nuncle, court holy-water in a dry house is  
better than this rain-water out o' door. Good nuncle,  
in, and ask thy daughters blessing. Here's a night pities  
neither wise men nor fools.

*Lear.* Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! Spout, rain!  
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire are my daughters.  
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;  
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children;  
You owe me no subscription. Then let fall  
Your horrible pleasure. Here I stand your slave,  
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man;  
But yet I call you servile ministers,  
That will with two pernicious daughters join  
Your high-engendered battles 'gainst a head  
So old and white as this. O, ho! 'tis foul. (3.2.1-24)

In the audience's perspective as well as Lear's, the disorder of physical nature in *King Lear* is perceived as having similar dimensions with the decay and destruction of human virtues. Natural "elements," or "winds," "cataracts and hurricanoes," "thunderbolts," and "thunders" are all reflexes of the unnaturalness of Lear's daughters. In Lear's mind natural phenomena are perceived as "servile ministers" which are in league with "pernicious daughters" to bully a man so old as Lear. It is as if the unnaturalness or "unkindness" of Lear's daughters embodies itself in the form of the disorder of the natural elements. Indeed, in Lear's agonizing mind, the disordered natural elements of earth, water, wind and fire are

acknowledged as sharing the same nature with his cruel daughters: "I tax not you, *you elements*, with unkindness; / I never gave you kingdom, call'd *you children*." (italics mine)

The word *nature* is the pivot on which *King Lear*'s dramatic universe revolves because its multiple significations suggest the strong correspondence between human nature and the physical universe, on which the play places its particular emphasis. In the play the disorders of the physical universe are the magnificent reflexes of the devastation of human virtues and it is precisely the word *nature* with its several meanings that makes the correspondence possible at all. The English word *nature*, unlike the Japanese *shizen* (「自然」), has a strong tendency to suggest the right and proper state of things. The primary meaning of what has been called "Law of Nature" or "Natural Law" in the Western world is not the physical laws which all physical phenomena of nature must obey. I understand that now this is the major meaning of the phrase. The phrase "Law of Nature" or "Natural Law" suggests the ethical or moral standards which human beings should obey by nature or naturally as God's creation.<sup>10</sup> When Hamlet says that "the purpose of playing" is "to hold as 'twere the mirror up to *nature*, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure" (3.2.20-4, italics mine), he means that the aim of playing is not to picture or represent faithfully things as they are seen by the eyes, but to make things show themselves in their real and ideal features or forms. Gloucester's second and third "nature"s refer to the right and proper state of things which comes directly from the primary meaning of *nature*, that is, the essential qualities of things. Gloucester asserts that the scientific explanations that natural philosophers may offer on the eclipses are not persuasive to him. The only thing he is certain of is the fact that nature as the right and proper state of things has completely collapsed as a result of these heavenly eclipses. Indeed, "scourge" in Gloucester's speech carries the strong suggestion of God's punishment. In Gloucester's mind, the events in which "[l]ove cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide; in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father" are all specific indications of collapsed nature.

What is signified by the word *nature* in *King Lear* is further complicated by the fact that the same word is also used for conveying an idea opposite in meaning to the proper and ideal state of things. Let us examine Edmund's speech:

*Edm.* Thou, Nature, art my goddess, to thy law  
My services are bound. Wherefore should I  
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit

The curiosity of nations to deprive me,  
 For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines  
 Lag of a brother? Why bastard? Wherefore base?  
 When my dimensions are as well compact,  
 My mind as generous, and my shape as true,  
 As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us  
 With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?  
 Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take  
 More composition, and fierce quality  
 Than doth within a dull, stale, tired bed  
 Go to th' creating a whole tribe of fops,  
 Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well then,  
 Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land.  
 Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund  
 As to th' legitimate. Fine word, "legitimate"!  
 Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed  
 And my invention thrive, Edmund the base  
 Shall [top] th' legitimate. I grow, I prosper:  
 Now, gods, stand up for bastards! (1.2.1-22)

Edmund's use of *nature* is one of the most traditional usages of the word. His "[n]ature" means a primordial power which gives rise to all physical nature including human beings. This nature is often personified as a Goddess to whom Edmund appeals, because he falsely supposes that she is the god of tutelage for bastards. Edmund proclaims that he is faithful to her "law" of "Nature." Here Shakespeare seems to intend to evoke an ironic difference between the Natural Law or the Law of Nature which has been the traditional foundation of human virtues and the law of nature, the force which engenders the physical universe, being indifferent to moral values. To suggest a contrast between Edmund's "Nature" and the traditional idea of the Natural Law, I would like to refer to a passage in *Troilus and Cressida*:

*Hect.* Paris and Troilus, you have both said well,  
 And on the cause and question now in hand  
 Have glaz'd, but superficially, not much  
 Unlike young men, whom Aristotle thought  
 Unfit to hear moral philosophy.  
 The reasons you allege do more conduce

To the hot passion of distemp'red blood  
 Than to make up a free determination  
 'Twixt right and wrong; for pleasure and revenge  
 Have ears more deaf than adders to the voice  
 Of any true decision. Nature craves  
 All dues be rend'ed to their owners: now,  
 What nearer debt in all humanity  
 Than wife is to the husband? If this law  
 Of nature be corrupted through affection,  
 And that great minds, of partial indulgence  
 To their benumbed wills, resist the same,  
 There is a law in each well-order'd nation  
 To curb those raging appetites that are  
 Most disobedient and refractory.  
 If Helen then be wife to Sparta's king,  
 As it is known she is, these moral laws  
 Of nature and of nations speak aloud  
 To have her back return'd. Thus to persist  
 In doing wrong extenuates not wrong,  
 But makes it much more heavy. Hector's opinion  
 Is this in way of truth; yet ne'er the less,  
 My sprightly brethren, I propend to you  
 In resolution to keep Helen still,  
 For 'tis a cause that hath no mean dependance  
 Upon our joint and several dignities. (2.2.163-93)

Hector's use of the word *nature* offers a vivid contrast to Edmund's. It is based upon the word's fundamental signification of the right and proper state of things. The Law of Nature of Hector's claim is identical with Aristotle's moral philosophy which gives moral and ethical principles to human behaviour. The law depends on "a free determination / 'Twixt right and wrong" and it is helpful to curb "the hot passion of distemp'red blood" or "those raging appetites that are / Most disobedient and refractory." The law is also similar to "a law in each well-order'd nation" called "moral laws / Of nature and of nations." On the other hand, Edmund's "Nature" is the primary and primeval source of all physical phenomena with emphasis on its autonomy and forcefulness. Edmund's "Nature" partakes of "more composition" and "fierce quality" and it also stands against "custom." Edmund's "dimensions," including not only his body but also his mind, are created in "the lusty stealth

of nature," which strongly suggest his sexual vitality. In *Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature: A Study of King Lear*, John F. Danby finds in Edmund's idea of nature a beginning which leads directly to the modern view of man as an entity with the autonomy and desires of free will without the moral obligations imposed by the Law of Nature.<sup>11</sup> I am not going to concern myself here with the challenging task of ascertaining the truth of Danby's argument because it needs far more wide reading and examination than I can offer in this lecture.

In *King Lear* Shakespeare intentionally makes use of two meanings of *nature* in creating a system of meaning which places the idea of nature as a moral standard in the ideological conflict with that of nature as a primeval force within the physical universe. We feel rather familiar with the idea of Edmund's "Nature" because it seems similar to the modern idea of nature. On the other hand, Gloucester and Hector's view of nature seems to be traditional and ancient. In this point the following dialogue between Edmund and Edgar his brother is also relevant:

*Edm ....*

Pat! he [Edgar] comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy.  
My cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh like  
Tom o' Bedlam. — O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! *fa, sol,*  
*la. mi.*

*Edg.* How now, brother Edmund, what serious  
contemplation are you in?

*Edm.* I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read  
this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

*Edg.* Do you busy yourself about that?

*Edm.* I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed  
unhappily, [as of unnaturalness between the child and  
the parent, death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient  
amities, divisions in state, menaces and maledictions  
against king and nobles, needless diffidences, banish-  
ment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches,  
and I know not what.

*Edg.* How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

(1.2.134-51)

Gloucester's view of nature is formed out of the philosophy of astrology. In Gloucester's ideology the knowledge of astrology is set against the "wisdom of nature" or natural

philosophy. The idea of astrology is suggested in the phrase of "sectary astronomical."<sup>12</sup> It is quite ironic that Edmund, who flatly denies Gloucester's traditional astrological view of the universe, repeats his father's view of nature here. When Edmund is asked about the reason he is in a musing or pensive mood by his brother Edgar, Edmund answers that he thinks of "a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses." The prediction is written by "sectary astronomical." Edmund says that the heavenly eclipses are followed by "unnaturalness between the child and the parent, death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities, divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles, needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches" and so on. Although here Edmund intentionally disguises himself as a sectary of astrology, he might have so spoken for the sake of those in the audience who were more familiar with an astrological view of the universe rather than scientific explanations of natural phenomena.

Here I would like to go back to Gloucester's speech, which is cited at the beginning of this lecture. When we take the knowledge of astrology into consideration, we find that Gloucester's use of three "nature"s are contextually dependent upon an astrological view of nature in which physical nature is supposed to be an enormous mirror reflecting human nature. Gloucester's irritated awareness that there could be no persuasive explanations of the consequence of the heavenly eclipses other than the fact that nature itself is "scourg'd" by the heavenly powers, might have been shared by an Elizabethan audience.

#### IV. *King Lear* and the Idea of Nature (2)

In this section first we would like to examine the following passage, which, I think, is one of the most difficult, as well as the most famous, passages in *King Lear* because it includes a confusing mixing-up of the two meanings of the word *nature* as standard or criterion and as physical phenomena:

*Lear.* O, reason not the need! our basest beggars  
 Are in the poorest thing superfluous.  
 Allow not ( 1 ) nature more than ( 2 ) nature needs,  
 Man's life is cheap as beast's. Thou art a lady;  
 If only to go warm were gorgeous,  
 Why, ( 3 ) nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,  
 Which scarcely keeps thee warm. (2.4.264-70)



In this speech, Lear claims to his ungrateful daughters that necessity should not be the only test of the value of human life. First, let us examine the phrase "[a]llow not nature more than nature needs." Native speakers of English may easily understand the phrase, but if we translate the two "nature"s in this phrase into *shizen* in Japanese, native speakers of Japanese might not understand the passage at all. Why does this happen? It is probably due to the fact the two "nature"s in the phrase confusingly mix up the two meanings of the word *nature*, the ideal and proper state of things and the unaffected or intact state of physical nature. In the system of the English language, *nature* shares these two meanings without interfering with one other. In the system of Japanese, however, the word *shizen* does not share the two meanings.

It seems to me that in the above passage the first "nature" is likely to mean an ideal order which is formed by the essential qualities of all beings, including humans and physical phenomena, while the second and the third "nature"s signify the natural or unaffected state which is found in the physical world. In order to understand the idea of the latter two "nature"s, we might refer to such an expression as "the call of nature" in English, which means rather humorously the natural needs of the human body. Lear claims that if we ignored nature as the ideal and proper conditions in the life of human beings, we are likely to live the same life with that of beasts which are doomed to live according to the physical laws of nature without having their own free will. In the state of nature, wearing gorgeous clothes is meaningless precisely because it does nothing to satisfy the needs of the human body.

As we have already pointed out, we cannot write an understandable Japanese translation of the idea of nature in *King Lear*, by giving the three "nature"s *shizen*, which is the most common word for *nature* in Japanese. What does this simple fact mean? It means not only that the words *nature* and *shizen* do not necessarily carry the same meaning, but also that there lies a deep gulf between Western and Japanese views of nature.

Let us see how Japanese translators have tried to bridge the gap throughout the long history of Japanese translations of Shakespeare:

① Shoyo Tsubouchi (坪内逍遙) 「え、必要を論じるな。見るかげもない乞食<sup>こつじき</sup>さへも、其貧窮の極<sup>あ</sup>に在って、尚何か余計なものをもってゐる。(2) 自然 (nature) が必要とする以上を(1) 人間 (human beings) に許し与へん時には、人の生<sup>けだもの</sup>と獣類<sup>えら</sup>と扱<sup>あ</sup>ぶ所が無いわい。其方<sup>そ</sup>は貴婦人<sup>あ</sup>じゃ、もし只暖かくさへしてゐれば、それで貴婦人<sup>き</sup>の服装<sup>ら</sup>が足るものなら、(3) 自然 (nature) は決して其方<sup>そ</sup>が今着<sup>き</sup>てゐるやうな、そんな綺羅<sup>き</sup>びやかなものを必要とはせん

わい。それは暖を取る用には立たん。」

② Takeshi Saito (齋藤 勇) 「おい、要不要の議論はいらん。極度に窮している乞食ですら、極端につまらない物ながら何か余計な物を有っている。(2) 人間 (human beings) が本来必要とする以上は授けられないとすれば、人の一生がつまらないことは鳥獣と同然だ。お前は貴婦人だ、ところで、もしただ温かな服装をすることさえ贅沢なら、あまり暖かくなりもしないのに、贅沢にもお前が着飾っている物は、(3) 人間 (human beings) として何の必要があるんだ。」

③ Junji Kinoshita (木下順二) 「ええい、いるいらんの議論はやめろ！ いかにみじめな乞食でも貧しさの中に何か余分なものを持っておる。(2) ただ生きて行く (for bare living) に必要なもの以外許されずに生きるとしたら、人間の生活に畜生と違う何の価値がある。お前は身分高い女だろう。が、温かくさえあればすばらしいというなら、いいか、そんな温かくもないすばらしい衣装は(3) 生きて行く (for living) のに必要ないはずだ。」

④ Toshikazu Oyama (大山俊一) 「おお！ 必要一点張りの議論はやめてくれ！ どんなに卑しい乞食でさえ、つまらんものではあろうが、あり余るほど豊に持っている。(1) 自然 (nature) はわれわれに(2) 生きる (for living) に必要なもの以外は何もくれんというんなら、人間の生活などはけだもの同然まこと下らん限りだ。汝は貴婦人だ。もしただ暖かにしているだけで、それが汝に相応しい豪華だと言えるんなら、いいか、汝が豪勢に身につけているものなど何もいりません。それで少しも暖かくはならんからだ。」

⑤ Tsuneari Fukuda (福田恆存) 「おお、必要を言うな！ 如何に賤しい乞食も、その取るに足らぬ持物の中に、何か余計な物を持っている。(2) 自然 (nature) が必要とする以外の物を禁じてみるがよい、人間の暮らしは畜生同然のみじめなものとなろう。お前等は身分の高い女だ、が、もし温かくさえあれば、それで立派な衣裳と言えるなら、見ろ、(3) 自然 (nature) はそんなものを必要とはすまい、今、お前等が着ている立派な衣裳は、温かさのためとは言いかねるからな。」

⑥ Kazuko Matsuoka (松岡和子) 「ああ、必要を言うな。どんなに卑しい乞食でも、貧しさのどん底に何か余分なものを持っている。(2) 自然 (nature) が必要とするもの以外を禁じてみる、人間の生活は畜生同然だ。お前は身分の高い女だ。暖かく身を包むために豪華な服があるとすれば、(3) 自然 (nature) にとってはお前の豪華な服など無用の長物。そんなものでは暖かくなれいからな。」

⑦ Yushi Odashima (小田島雄志) 「ええい、必要を論ずるな。どんな卑しい乞食でも、その貧しさのなかになにかよけいなものをもっておる。(2) 自然 (nature) の必要とするものしか許されぬとすれば、人間の生活は畜生同然となろう。おまえは貴婦人だ、あたたかい服を着ることがぜいたくであれば、あたたかためにもくれぬおまえのぜいたくな服など(3) 自然

(nature) は必要とせぬはずだ。」

⑧Hidekazu Nojima(野島秀勝) 「おお、必要がどうのこうのと屁理屈を言うな。どんなに賤しい乞食でも、たとえどんなに粗末な物であろうと余分な物を持っている。(2) 自然 (nature) が必要とする以上の物は許さぬということになれば、人生は獣同然、みじめなものになる。お前は貴婦人だ、暖かくありさえすれば贅沢な衣装だと言えるものなら、それ、いまお前が着ているその贅沢な衣装など(3) 自然 (nature) は必要とせぬわ、そんな物、暖かさの足しにはならぬからな。」

⑨Tetsuo Anzai(安西徹雄) 「必要? 必要だと? ええい、必要など持ち出すな! どんなに卑しい乞食であろうと、いかに下らぬ者であっても、必要以上の物は必ず身につけておる。(1) 人間 (human beings) から(2) 必要 (needs) 以外の物をことごとく奪ってみろ、人間の命は獣同然。お前は身分ある女。ただ体を温めておくだけで、立派に衣服の用を果たすものなら、貴様が身につけているその豪華な衣装、そんな物がなぜ必要だ。身を温めておく役にも立たぬ、無用の贅沢ではないか。」

It is noticeable here that Japanese translators tend to omit the first "nature." This might be because *nature* as an ideal and proper order of things is not easily translated into *shizen* or other Japanese expressions relating to the idea of nature. The only two examples which render the idea of the first *nature* are those of Tsubouchi and Anzai. However, both of them make use of the expression *ningen* (「人間」) which means human beings, instead of *shizen*, to refer to the idea of nature as a proper and ideal state. Tsubouchi and Anzai deal with the problem by invoking a modern ideological antithesis in which human beings are defined in opposition to physical nature. It is quite easy to blame them for adding an anachronistic antithesis between nature and humans to the early modern synthesis of the two ideas of *nature*. But how could we otherwise deal with this quite difficult problem which involves not only the meanings of words but also cultural differences between Western and Japanese views of nature and humans?

*Shizen* does not have the meaning of the ideal and proper order of things on which their essential qualities depend. The most fundamental function of the word is to refer to all things which come into being through their own natural growth without any human agency. *Shizen* is, therefore, often used as an antonym of *jinko* (「人工」), which means the act of human creation or things created by humans. We Japanese call all natural phenomena existing without human influence in terms of *shizen*. In the system of the vocabulary of the Japanese language, the meaning of *shizen* is almost identical with that of *ten-nen* (「天然」),

which emphasizes the spontaneous and self-sufficient quality of all physical nature which is maintained from its inception. Therefore it is evident that Japanese *shizen* means "mountains, rivers, seas, trees and grasses, animals, rains, winds, and so on," and that these natural objects share the spontaneity of their birth and growth as a common essence or quality.

On the other hand, in its etymological origin, *nature* in English is derived from the word *phusis* which carries with it many of the philosophical traditions of ancient Greece. The original meaning of the Greek word *phusis* is the inherent quality of things or persons which they have held from their birth. In the philosophical traditions of ancient Greece, pointing to all things in the universe in terms of *phusis* simultaneously means to examine or analyze their essential quality. For example, in *Metaphysics*, Aristotle speaks of *phusis* which is translated as "nature" in English:

'Nature' means ( 1 ) the genesis of growing, things — the meaning which would be suggested if one were to pronounce the *v* in  $\phi \acute{\upsilon}\sigma\iota\zeta$  long. ( 2 ) That immanent part of a growing thing, from which its growth first proceeds. ( 3 ) The source from which the primary movement in each natural object is present in it in virtue of its own essence. Those things are said to grow which derive increase from something else by contact and either by organic unity, or by organic adhesion as in the case of embryos.... ( 4 ) 'Nature' means the primary material of which any natural object consists or out of which it is made, which is relatively unshaped and cannot be changed from its own potency, as e.g. bronze is said to be the nature of a statue and of bronze utensils, and wood the nature of wooden things; and so in all other cases; for when a product is made out of these materials, the first matter is preserved throughout. For it is in this way that people call the elements of natural objects also their nature, some naming fire, others earth, others air, others water, others something else of the sort, and some naming more than one of these, and others all of them. — ( 5 ) 'Nature' means the *essence* of natural objects, as with those who say the nature is the primary mode of composition... Hence as regards the things that are or come to be by nature, though that *from which* they naturally come to be or are is already present, we say they have not their nature yet, unless they have their form or shape. That which comprises both of these exists *by* nature, e.g. the animals and their parts; and not only is the first matter nature (and this in two senses, either the first, counting from the thing, or the first in general; e.g. in the case of works in bronze, bronze is first with reference to them, but in general perhaps water is first, if all things that can be melted are water), but also the form or essence, which is the end of the process of becoming. —

(6) By an extension of meaning from this sense of 'nature' every essence in general has come to be called a 'nature', because the nature of a thing is one kind of essence.

From what has been said, then, it is plain that nature in the primary and strict sense is the essence of things which have in themselves, as such, a source of movement; for the matter is called the nature because it is qualified to receive this, and processes of becoming and growing are called nature because they are movements proceeding from this. And nature in this sense is the source of the movement of natural objects, being present in them somehow, either potentially or in complete reality.<sup>13</sup>

The *phusis* derived from Greek philosophical traditions comes directly to the English *nature* through Latin *natura* which is a translation of the Greek *phusis*. Therefore, it is quite normal that *nature* means both the essence of things and all things in the universe.<sup>14</sup> English has the expression "natural science" which in current usage means scientific knowledge and analysis of physical nature. According to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, the modern meaning of "natural science" appeared in the middle of the eighteenth century for the first time in the history of the English language. However, despite the modern invention of the idea and procedures of natural science or the scientific knowledge of nature, the idea of nature in English or other Western languages has a long tradition of philosophical investigation to seek the essence or proper nature of all creations which gives them their proper identities in the order of the universe. Therefore, it is quite suggestive that *phusis* in Greek, when it was first incorporated into the vocabulary of the English language, being translated as *physic*, had the meaning of the philosophical knowledge of physical nature, especially the science of the human body or medical science.<sup>15</sup>

On the other hand, the Japanese *shizen* (「自然」) does not have the philosophical tradition of seeking the essential nature of all creations like does *phusis* in ancient Greek. The word *shizen* is often used as an antonym of *jinko* (「人工」) which means the human activity of making things or the things made through such activities. *Shizen* refers to all things which exist independently of the human arts, emphasizing their spontaneity and voluntarily of birth and existence. The fundamental sense of *shizen* is clearly shown by the fact that instead of a noun it is often used as an adjective and adverb which carry the same nuances as *natural* and *naturally* in English. According to Akira Yanabu, a philologist who is interested in how foreign words and ideas were translated into Japanese in the Meiji era, points out that since *shizen* was used as the word for the translation of the English idea of *nature* in the 1890s in Japan, it has come to be used as a noun meaning all things in the

universe.<sup>16</sup> *Shizen* does not signify the essential or ideal state of things which is the primary meaning of the word *nature*. The sense of the right and proper is not likely to come in a word which emphasizes the spontaneous and voluntarily growth of all natural objects. On this point, Toru Sagara, one of the authorities on the history of Japanese ethical thoughts has noted:

*Nature* in English owes its meaning of the essential or proper quality of all things to the tradition of Latin *theoria*. *Shizen* in Chinese also signifies the essence of things in Chinese philosophical traditions called *kakubutsu-chichi* (「格物致致」) which is one of the significant teachings in Confucians' sacred writings. What is most important when we try to understand the meaning of the word *shizen* in comparison with Western and Chinese philosophical traditions is the fact that it does not signify the intrinsic and inherent quality of things they are supposed to possess in their natural state. *Shizen* in Japanese is a word which is derived from *onozukara* (「おのずから」)<sup>17</sup> which emphasizes the ways in which things exist or grow spontaneously and voluntarily without any external stimulus or constraints. It is often said that the lack of objective perspectives in Japanese culture has something to do with its tendency to see things not in terms of how things really are or what is their essence or nature but in terms of how they appear in every individual mind in their natural and intact forms without external constraints....

*Natura* in Latin has as its verb form *nascor* which means to be born. Greek *phusis* also emphasizes how things are generated and come into existence. For Aristotle *phusis* has the definitive meaning of the "essence of things which have in themselves.... a source of movement." It is certain that the Greek *phusis*, like the Japanese *onozukara*, includes the signification of generation or birth as a part of its meaning, but it cannot be disconnected from the meaning of "essence of things" which can have the powers of movement in themselves. *Nature* in English inherits the philosophical traditions of the Greek *phusis*. *Shizen* in Chinese, which can often be interpreted as "something to be born from itself," has also the meaning of generation or birth, but the meaning cannot be separated from the perspective on its essence or proper quality. In contrast to *phusis* in Greek and *shizen* in Chinese, the fundamental sense of *shizen* and *onozukara* in Japanese is based upon the spontaneous generation of natural objects and it offers no philosophical perspectives on their essential qualities.<sup>18</sup>

So far I have demonstrated that in spite of apparent similarities, there is a deep and

wide difference between the meanings of *shizen* in Japanese and *nature* in English. We also have seen that the difference involves not only linguistic aspects but also cultural and philosophical dimensions. With these differences in mind, let us examine the speech of Gloucester in *King Lear* which is mentioned at the very beginning of the present lecture. Unlike the first "nature," the second and the third "nature"s are differently translated by each translator. Some of them try to use *shizen* because it is the first choice when English *nature* is translated into Japanese: Shoyo Tsubouchi's *sizen-kai* (「自然界」 — the natural world) and *sei-no-shizen* (「性の自然」 — the nature of things); Toshikazu Oyama's *ningen-shizen-kai* (「人間自然界」 — the human world and the natural world) and *ningen-shizen-no-michi* (「人間自然の道」 — the way of nature and humans); Tsuneari Fukuda's *shizen* (「自然」 — nature) and *ninjo-no-shizen* (「人情の自然」 — the nature of human love); Hidekatsu Nojima's *hito-no-yo-no-shizen* (「人の世の自然」 — nature in the human world) and *shizen-no-seidou* (「自然の正道」 — the right way of nature). On the other hand, some translators attempt to invoke the ideological conflict between the human world and the natural world by making use of Japanese stock expressions: Takeshi Saito's *jin-sin* (「人心」 — human mind); Junji Kinoshita's *ningen-no-hou* (「人間のほう」 — human beings); Kazuko Matsuoka, Yushi Odashima and Tetsuo Anzai's *ningen-kai* (「人間界」 — the human world). What is noteworthy here is that all the translators have had some difficulties conveying the subtle nuances *nature* has with its suggestion of the essential and ideal state of things. The expressions of *ningen-shizen-kai* (「人間自然界 — the human world and the natural world」) and *ningen-no-hou* (「人間のほう」 — human beings) are meaningful only in the context of metaphor. *Nature* in English as well as *physis* in Greek do not invoke such an ideological conflict between nature and humans.

Gloucester's speech is framed by the astrological view of nature, in which the concordance or harmony between the macrocosm and the microcosm is emphasized. In Medieval Europe it was believed that there is a harmonious concord invisible to human eyes between the greater universe around us and the little universe in which we humans live. The following picture taken from Robert Fludd, an English physician's *Utriusque Cosmi, Maioris scilicet et Minoris, metaphysica, physica, atque technica Historia* (*The metaphysical, physical, and technical history of the two worlds, namely the greater and the lesser*), graphically illustrates this astrological view of the universe<sup>19</sup>:



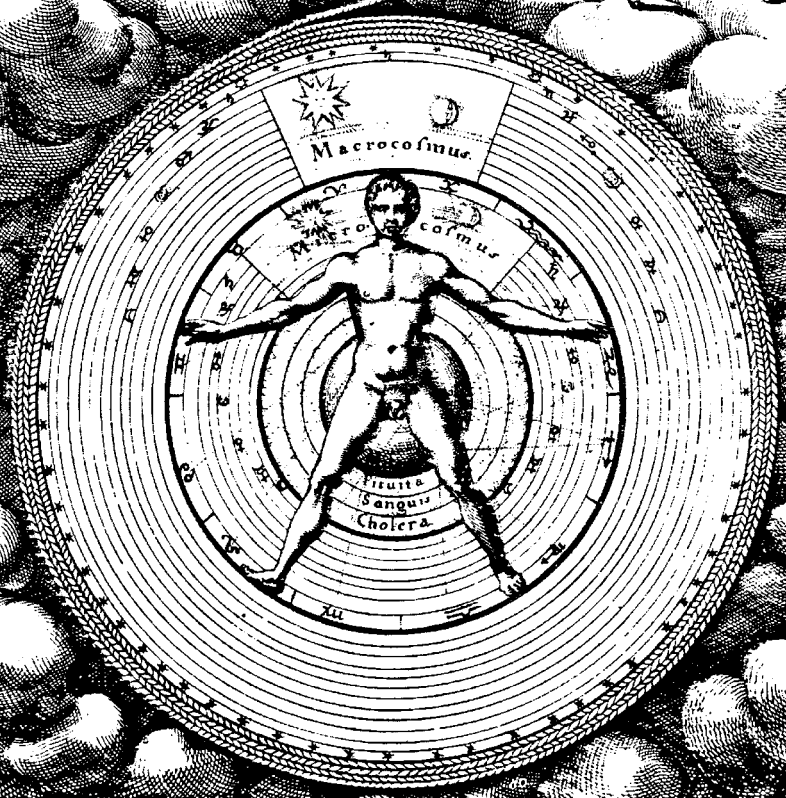
Utriusque Cosmi  
 MAIORIS scilicet et MINORIS METAPHYSICA, PHYSICA  
 ATQUE TECHNICA  
 HISTORIA

In duo Volumina secundum COSMI differentiam diuisa.  
 AVTHORE ROBERTO FLUD aliàs de Fluctibus, Argyero.  
 & in Medicina Doctore Oxoniensi.

Tomus Primus  
 De Macrocosmi Historia in duos tractatus diuisa.

Primus de  
 Quorum  
 Secundus de Arte Naturae  
 summa Macrocosmo producta  
 & in coelestia & multiplicata,  
 cuius filiae praecipuae: hic  
 anatomia viva recensentur; nemo  
 OPPENHEMII.  
 AERE JOHAN- THEODORI DE BRY  
 Typis HIERONYMI GALLERI  
 ANNO MDCCXVII.

Metaphysico Macrocosmi  
 et Chalcivari illius orbe.  
 Physico Macrocosmi in generatione  
 & corruptione progressu.  
 Arithmetica.  
 Musica.  
 Geometria.  
 Perspectiva.  
 Artem Pictoriam.  
 Artem Militarem.  
 Motus Scientiam.  
 Temporis.  
 Cosmographiam.  
 Astrologiam.  
 Geomantiam.





The picture vividly represents an image in which the earth, including a human body, is located at the centre of the universe around which a number of spheres circle. In the Ptolemaic System of the universe, spheres are hollow globes in which heavenly bodies, including planets and stars, have their places. Fludd's image pictures the astrological view of the universe in which the course of heavenly bodies directly influences the earth and the humans on it. Gloucester refers to an ominous agreement between the eclipses of heavenly bodies and the human events that take place under them. As he suggests, the essential and ideal order of human nature, such as kindness between parents and children and the humane qualities of love, reason and order is in complete confusion and this confusion perfectly reflects on the disorder of the physical universe. In *King Lear* Shakespeare tries to make the suggestive use of the word *nature* in order to give a strong hint of the concordance or agreement between the macrocosm and the microsome.

I would like to end this lecture by raising a question. I would like to ask if all Japanese translations of the idea of nature in *King Lear* from Shoyo Tsubouchi to Tetsuo Anzai have succeeded in conveying the sense of the astrological world picture which Shakespeare tries to suggest by his use of the word *nature*. I will not evaluate each translation because I am not a professional translator. However, if there are some unsuccessful instances, can we blame the translators for their lack of linguistic abilities? I think that we should not blame them. The questions of translation between different languages cannot be successfully solved by accusing or approving the translators' works. They are far more deeply rooted in the cultural differences between the West and the East than we supposed them to be.

\* This paper is composed of the lectures presented at The College of Humanities and Fine Arts, The University of Tennessee at Martin on 18 September and 2 November, 2008. I would like to express my gratitude to members of the Faculty for the useful comments and advice they gave me. I would especially like to thank Dr. Lynn M. Alexander, Interim Deal of the Faculty, who presided at my presentations. I also feel grateful to Sandra Baker, the Director of The International Programs, The University of Tennessee at Martin, for inviting me as visiting professor and providing me with opportunity for me to study and teach at the prestigious academy, The University of Tennessee at Martin.

These lectures are an English version with slight corrections and additions of my Japanese article entitled "*King Lear* and the Idea of Nature: On the Translation of Shakespeare," which was originally published in *Language and Communication: Cultural and Ideological Studies*, a collection of essays written by several authors in 2007 with the

financial assistance of Dean of Faculty of Humanities, Hirosaki University.

I am grateful to Victor Lee Carpenter, Professor of International Politics at The Faculty of the Humanities, Hirosaki University, who kindly took pains to make stylistic improvements in my essay.

## Notes

1. Soseki Natsume, "On My Self-sufficient Stance," which was originally a talk he presented at Gakushuin University in Tokyo in 1914. The reference is to *On My Self-Sufficient Stance and Other Essays* (Tokyo: Kodansha Press, 1978; my translation).
2. Takeshi Onodera, "On Translation," *The Rising Generation* 142 (1996): 410-11; my translation.
3. *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997). All quotations from Shakespeare are from this edition, cited by act, scene, and line.
4. Strictly speaking, Shoyo Tsubouchi's *rigakusha* which means natural philosophers or scientists is not a literal translation of "wisdom of nature" and so *nature* is not translated in this expression. However for the purpose of avoiding confusion, I underlined it.
5. All Japanese translations of Shakespeare except those of Nojima and Anzai are taken from *A Complete Collection of Shakespeare: CD-ROM Version*, ed. Yoshiko Ueno, Kazuko Matsuoka, Yukio Kato, and Arata Ide (Tokyo: Shinchyo Press, 2003). Hidekatsu Nojima's translation are cited from *Ria-ou* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten Publishing Co., 2000) and Tetsuo Anzai's from *Ria-ou* (Tokyo: Kobunsha Press, 2006).
6. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, fourth edition (London: Longman, 2004).
7. *Shogakukan's Japanese Dictionary*, 2nd edition (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 2002). This is the most comprehensive dictionary of the Japanese language available now.
8. As to the historical development of the idea of nature, see C. S. Lewis, *Studies in Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960); Arthur O. Lovejoy, *Essays in the History of Ideas* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1948); Robin George Collingwood, *The Idea of Nature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1945); Basil Willey, *The English Moralists* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1964).
9. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, fourth edition (London: Longman, 2004).
10. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1943), pp. 3-7. As to the idea of the Natural Law, see A. P. D'Entreves, *Natural Law: An Introduction to Legal Philosophy* (Hutchinson's University Library, 1951); Leo Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: Its Basis and its Genesis* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1936); Francis Oakley, *Natural Law, Law of Nature, Natural Rights: Continuity and Discontinuity in the History of Ideas* (New York and London: Continuum, 2005).
11. John F. Danby, *Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature: A Study of King Lear* (London: Faber and Faber, 1948).
12. In contemporary English the idea of astrology is differentiated from that of astronomy. However in the Renaissance period both words were used interchangeably as words for philosophy of the stars. See *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), s. v. "astronomy" and "astrology."
13. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book V, Part 4 translated by W. D. Ross, 2nd Edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928).
14. For a detailed explanation of this development of the idea of nature, see C. S. Lewis, *Studies in Words*, pp. 24-74.

15. For example, see Chaucer's introduction of "a Doctour of Phisik" in "General Prologue" of *The Canterbury Tales*. It is quite interesting that Chaucer refers to the doctor's profession of "phisik" and "surgerye" in relation to the astrological view of the correspondence between the macrocosm and the microcosm. Quotations from Chaucer are taken from *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. F. N. Robinson (Oxford, New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1957) .
16. Akira Yanabu, *How Japanese Coinage for Translation Was Made in the Meiji Era* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten Publishing Co., 1982).
17. The idea of *onozukara* is a purely Japanese concept which is normally written by *kana* characters instead of *kanji*, whose meaning is "from oneself" or "independent of others." It is often claimed that the idea of *shizen* in Japanese is constructed on the basis of the idea of *onozukara*.
18. Toru Sagara, "The Idea of Nature in Japanese Culture," *Literature* 55 (1987): 100-1; my translation. For the idea of nature in Japanese culture, see also Toru Sagara, *Japanese Aesthetics* (Tokyo: Pelican Publishing Co., 1978); Michitaro Tanaka and Ryojin Minamoto, "Natural Things, Nature, and Natural World," in *Idea of Nature: Comparative Studies between the East and the West* ed., Congress on Japanese Culture (Tokyo: Kenkyusha Publishing Co., 1974); Shuntaro Ito, *A Dictionary about One Word: Nature* (Tokyo: Sanseido Shoten Publishing Co., 1999).
19. The picture in Fluid's work is taken from Maurice Hussey, *The World of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries: A Visual Approach* (London: Heineman, 1971).