

Beyond the Struggle for Difference and Identity —Tagore’s Anti-nationalism and Illich’s “Vernacular Values”

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1. Introduction

Only some forty years since the birth of the term “multiculturalism”, change has been so rapid that already the term “post-multiculturalism” has been coined and the very foundations of multiculturalism’s existence put in question. For example, in his 2003 book *Community*⁽¹⁾, Delanty set out ten types of multiculturalism, the first three being “traditional multiculturalisms”, the next four being “modern multiculturalisms”, and the last three being “post-multiculturalisms”. To list them in more detail, his ten types are:

1. Traditional multiculturalism

1. Monoculturalism (Japan, Germany)
2. Republican multiculturalism (The French Republic)
3. Pillarization (Catholic and Protestant education in the Netherlands, not existing today)
4. Liberal multiculturalism (The model of the American constitution, the “melting pot” model)

2. Modern multiculturalism

5. Communitarian multiculturalism (Canada, Belgium, India—Charles Taylor)
6. Liberal Communitarian multiculturalism (England’s “salad bowl”)

model, Alain Touraine, Habermas, Kymlicka)

7. Interculturalism

3. Post-multiculturalism

8. Radical multiculturalism (today's USA, affirmative action, a kind of racism)

9. Critical multiculturalism (a stress on difference within ethnic groups, the rights of women and the disabled; Iris Marion Young)

10. Transnational multiculturalism (globalization, multiple nationalities).

It seems premature to say—following on from postmodern, post-structuralism, and post-colonial—“post-multiculturalism”. The appropriateness of Delanty's schematization is also debatable. However, it is necessary to recognize the reality that multiculturalism faces globalization-wrought changes of a scale far beyond that which it originally anticipated; at the same time, its theoretical contradictions and limits are becoming apparent.

It is not necessary to give, once more, concrete examples of how multiculturalism has changed in this age of globalization. It is possible to read the presentations given yesterday and today from this perspective; the same can be said for the presentations at this gathering over the past three years. To list the themes so far, the first symposium in this series was held in 2005 on “Multiculturalism and nationalism in Asia”, the second in 2006 on “Diverse multiculturalisms”, and the third in 2007 on “Social justice and multiculturalism”. With regard to my presentations, the titles were, respectively, “Multiculturalism and ‘neo’-colonialism”, “Globalization and multiculturalism”, and “The injustice of multiculturalism”. We have continued to think about pressing contemporary problems with reference to multiculturalism.

To diverge from my topic for just a moment, I was stunned when I first encountered the term “post-multiculturalism”, as it seemed to announce the end of multiculturalism. My reaction of shock possibly was quite unlike that which the young scholars and audience gathered here today might experience. I still recall with great clarity how deeply I was moved when I first encountered the neologism “multiculturalism”, and learned about the policy and philosophy of multiculturalism in Canada and Australia. Within a stifling Japanese society still dominated by the myth of monoethnicity, and also in contrast with my research area at the time, France, which proffered the slogan of a “single and indivisible Republic”, “multiculturalism” seemed a truly wonderful term. (Sadly, however, during the forty subsequent years, I have in fact strived to eliminate multiculturalism’s glowing aura, or to de-ideologize multiculturalism).

It cannot be denied that multiculturalism began as a means to achieve national re-integration in response to conflict between different peoples or ethnic groups in the vast settler states that developed out of former colonies of the British Empire. Thus it was a policy and ideology implicitly aimed at immigrant control. But at the same time, multiculturalism also aimed to change existing reality by overcoming conflict and realizing justice, and in that sense it was also a “term of struggle” (Hamacher ⁽²⁾). Conversely, when this struggle stops, multiculturalism will end. That multiculturalism has reached its limit means that it has come upon an object (difficulty) to overcome. (I think it is also possible to give the example of “human rights” as a “term of struggle” with the same ambiguity. “Human rights”, a concept originally used to try to protect the rights of a select and privileged few, was destined endlessly to have to expand its scope.)

The contradictions and limits of multiculturalism can be pointed out from the perspectives of both reality and theory. The rapid advance of

globalization has meant that today, the scale and speed of human mobility vastly surpasses those which multiculturalism originally anticipated, and it is no longer possible to deal with multiculturalism as a domestic issue to do with peoples and their culture. Even as migrant mobility increases, so too progresses cultural diversification between individuals and generations within migrant groups of the same region (cultural pluralization, individualization, complexity, the collapse of group identities). Also, assertions of cultural diversity have gone beyond being a matter of minority rights, and also circulate as ideologies of free market theory and of multinational corporations. The problems of regional disparities and inequality faced by peoples within a country must be also considered in relation to worldwide disparities and inequalities.

We need to modify our concepts of migrant and also of culture. The historical reality of globalization has demonstrated that the concept of culture which early multiculturalism was premised on—a pure and homogeneous and self-contained ethnic culture—was just a national fantasy. But this realization was also one of the fruits of multicultural theoretical inquiry. In that concept's place, we should rather stress that a culture, assuming such a thing exists, is interactive and complex, arising through relations with other cultures; a phenomenon that ceaselessly conflicts and accepts, exchanges and changes. And this means changing our concepts of difference and identity too.

Multiculturalism's future depends on what we foresee beyond globalization. Ultimately, the concepts of state, capital, and civilization constitute the limits to multicultural thinking. Even though multicultural thought asserts the rights of minority peoples, it leaves unquestioned the interstate system that produces those minorities. Even though it problematizes ethnic disparities and inequality, it accepts the capitalist system of exploitation. Even more of a problem is that most multicultural

thinking does not realize that the discourse of multiculturalism ultimately constitutes a defense of Western civilization. (On this point, see my presentation from last year on “Multiculturalism’s injustice”).

Below, drawing on the works of Tagore and Illich, two thinkers of different times and regions and who may at first glance appear unrelated, I would like to consider what lies beyond multiculturalism’s struggles over difference and identity. During the First World War, in nationalism’s heyday, Tagore travelled the world, including Japan and America, consistently opposing nationalism and critiquing the “nation” as the source of colonial domination. Tagore’s words were a response from India, the largest colony of the Age of Empire, and contained a severe critique of Japan. As for Illich, he opposed developmentalism just as globalization rose to prominence, and continually and radically criticized modern state systems such as national languages, schools and hospitals. Illich’s words constitute a self-critical response from the centre of Western civilization. Here I would like to focus on the philosophical similarities between Tagore and Illich, and especially on the “vernacular values” that bind them together.

2. Tagore

I cannot even begin to paint a full picture of such an immense figure as Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941). And to be honest, for a long time I avoided him deliberately, probably because of his immensely strong spiritualism. But I became able to approach him via his writings on nationalism. To make a further confession, another reason for bringing up Tagore’s nationalism here is to make up for the shame of not having been able to refer to Tagore’s nationalism or Sun Yat-Sen’s *The Three Principles of the People* in the first symposium in this series, the theme of which was “Multiculturalism and nationalism in Asia”. Notwithstanding

the fact that these two works are the most powerful and theoretically sophisticated counterattacks against the Great Powers' attempts to colonize Asia, Occidental Japanese scholars, thinking that they could discourse on nationalism without reference to them, ignored such Asian responses (of which there have been many).

Tagore's nationalism constitutes an unexpectedly surprising response in the sense that generally, anti-colonial responses tended to come out as nationalist calls for independence. However, Tagore, in contrast, condemned nationalism completely. Based on lectures given in Japan and America between September 1916 and January 1917, Tagore's *Nationalism* is made up of three parts: "Nationalism in Japan", "Nationalism in the West", and "Nationalism in India".

His first sojourn in Japan lasted over three months, during which time he traveled widely and was strongly impressed by people's frugal and disciplined lives, as well as their sense of harmony and sympathy with nature in a country that had been the first to break out of Asian backwardness and successfully modernize. But at the same time, he displayed a strong sense of crisis faced with the rapidly strengthening nationalism and nationalizing campaigns in Japan. His lectures at Tokyo Imperial University (A message to India from Japan), Keio Gijuku University (The Japanese spirit), as well as apparently at Japan Women's University, were expressive of this sense of crisis, frankly and directly warning of the dangers of the militarism and nationalism rising before his eyes. But his remarks greatly disappointed the expectations of Japanese audiences, which were still in ferment over participation and victory in the First World War; the feverish reception given to the first Eastern Nobel Prize winner subsided rapidly, and further, the book *Nationalism* that was based on these lectures was banned.

In America, beginning in Seattle and going on to Chicago, Boston,

New York, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and elsewhere, he lectured energetically in over twenty places. But the response, needless to say, was like that in Japan; the book *Nationalism* which was later published was violently criticized. It seems that criticism of Tagore continued in his native India. *Nationalism* was indeed a book against the times. However even today, after the 1990s, as a similar world situation is emerging, the response would surely be similar. ⁽³⁾

The major particularity of Tagore's theory of nationalism (I should say his superlative creativity) lies in the fact that he comprehensively critiques the nation, stating that anterior to the soldiers, officials and traders who invaded and colonized the Eastern countries, there stood the nations of the Western Powers. Also, as he claims repeatedly, the nation is the source of miserable wars and massacres like the First World War. Looking back at the religious and spiritual rather than political India with "no nations" and five thousand years of history Tagore said:

"It was upon this remote portion of humanity, childlike in its manner, with the wisdom of the old, that the Nation of the West burst in." (p. 50.) ⁽⁴⁾

Tagore's position in this work is that thus are we called upon to bear witness to "what our Nation has been to humanity" (pp. 50-51.). Though India had through its long history been dominated by kings and other races, it was the first time it had been ruled by a "Nation". Then what is this "nation"? Let me quote a few of Tagore's definitions of "nation".

"A nation, in the sense of the political and economic union of a people, is that aspect which a whole population assumes when organized for a mechanical purpose." (p. 51.)

“This process of dehumanizing has been going on in commerce and politics. And out of the long birth-throes of mechanical energy has been born this fully developed apparatus of magnificent power and surprising appetite which has been christened in the West as the Nation.” (p. 70.)

“I am not against one nation in particular, but against the general idea of all nations. What is the Nation?

It is the aspect of a whole people as an organized power. This organization incessantly keeps up the insistence of the population on becoming strong and efficient. But this strenuous effort after strength and efficiency drains man’s energy from his higher nature where he is self-sacrificing and creative. For thereby man’s power of sacrifice is diverted from his ultimate object, which is moral, to the maintenance of this organization, which is mechanical.” (p. 86.)

I think you can grasp the outlines of Tagore’s views on the “Nation” from the above, but I would like to continue on with several quotations from Tagore on nationalism.

“Are we to bend our knees to the spirit of this nationalism, which is sowing broadcast all over the world seeds of fear, greed, suspicion, unashamed lies of its profession of peace and goodwill and universal brotherhood of man?” (p. 40.)

“Nationalism is a great menace. It is the particular thing which for years has been at the bottom of India’s troubles. And inasmuch as we have been ruled and dominated by a nation that is strictly political in its attitude, we have tried to develop within ourselves, despite our inheritance from the past, a belief in our eventual political destiny.” (p. 87.)

“The truth is that the spirit of conflict and conquest is at the origin and in the centre of western nationalism; its basis is not social cooperation.” (p. 59.)

Nationalism is a “great menace” in colonies like India, but what about in the case of Japan, successful in nation-building? After mentioning the damage done by “the cult of nationalism” or “this fetish of nationalism” (nationalism was Tagore’s main theme in the USA, being the title of his lectures in Seattle, Los Angeles, Boston, Pittsburgh, New York, Philadelphia, and elsewhere), Tagore says in a truly penetrating prediction of the emergence of Japanese fascism that:

“I have seen in Japan the voluntary submission of the whole people to the trimming of their minds and clipping of their freedom by their government, which through various educational agencies regulate their thoughts, manufacture their feelings, become suspiciously watchful when they show signs of inclining towards the spiritual, leading them through a narrow path not towards what is true but what is necessary for the complete welding of them into one uniform mass according to its own recipe.⁽⁵⁾ The people accept this all-pervading mental slavery with cheerfulness and pride because of their nervous desire to turn themselves into a machine of power, called the Nation, and emulate other machines in their collective worldliness.” (pp. 62-63.)

“What is dangerous for Japan is not the imitation of the outer features of the West, but the acceptance of the motive force of western nationalism as her own.” (p. 36.)

“I am just coming from my visit to Japan, where I exhorted this young nation to take its stand upon the higher ideals of humanity and

never to follow the West in its acceptance of the organized selfishness of Nationalism as its religion, never to gloat upon the feebleness of its neighbours, never to be unscrupulous in its behavior to the weak, where it can be gloriously mean with impunity, while turning its right cheek of brighter humanity for the kiss of admiration to those who have the power to deal it a blow.” (pp. 70-71.)

Most Japanese ignored Tagore’s warnings, and I also think that Tagore did not understand about the resistance of weak languages. Let us listen to Tagore’s expectations and warnings about Japan a little further.

“Japan has imported her food from the West, but not her vital nature. [...] The whole world waits to see what this great eastern nation is going to do with the opportunities and responsibilities she has accepted from the hands of the modern time. If it be a mere reproduction of the West, then the great expectation she has raised will remain unfulfilled. For there are grave questions that western civilization has presented before the world but not completely answered. The conflict between the individual and the state, labour and capital, the man and the woman; the conflict between the greed of material gain and the spiritual life of man, the organized selfishness of nations and the higher ideals of humanity; the conflict between all the ugly complexities inseparable from giant organizations of commerce and state and the natural instincts of man crying for simplicity and beauty and fullness of leisure—all these have to brought to a harmony in a manner not yet dreamt of.” (pp. 21-22.)

The issues and difficulties that Tagore raised 90 years ago are still before us in today’s even more critical circumstances. But if, as Tagore

said, the solutions cannot be achieved by nations, what on earth are we to do? Tagore often repeats the phrase “no nation” or “no nations” in his work, in opposition to “Nation”. As noted in the Japanese translation, this can be thought to refer to the residents of regions prior to national integration, thus to residents of colonies and of the so-called Third World. But I think this “no” should be considered to indicate not just simple negation and a pre-national condition, but also a strong intention to reject or refuse the idea of nation. In other words, it refers to residents of countries and regions who refuse to become “nations”. And I would like here to see Tagore’s hopes for the future.

I think it is possible for us to find Tagore’s ideal of “no nations” in his writings on the history of India and Japan prior to their invasion by “nations” or even afterwards in peripheral spaces and in the East Asian region that encompasses them.

“Through all the fights and intrigues and deceptions of her earlier history India had remained aloof. Because her homes, her fields, her temples of worship, her schools, where her teachers and students lived together in the atmosphere of simplicity and devotion and learning, her village self-government with its simple laws and peaceful administration—all these truly belonged to her. But her thrones were not her concern. They passed over her head like clouds, now tinged with purple gorgeousness, now black with the threat of thunder. Often they brought devastations in their wake, but they were like catastrophes of nature whose traces are soon forgotten.” (p. 50.)

“[India’s] problem was the problem of the world in miniature. India is too vast in its area and too diverse in its races. It is many countries packed in one geographical receptacle. It is just the opposite of what Europe truly is: namely, one country made into many. Thus Europe in

its culture and growth has had the advantage of the strength of the many as well as the strength of the one. India, on the contrary, being naturally many, yet adventitiously one, has all along suffered from the looseness of its diversity and the feebleness of its unity. A true unity is like a round globe; it rolls on, carrying its burden easily. But diversity is a many-cornered thing which has to be dragged and pushed with all force. Be it said to the credit of India that this diversity was not her own creation; she has had to accept it as a fact from the beginning of her history. In America and Australia, Europe has simplified her problem by almost exterminating the original population. Even in the present age this spirit of extermination is making itself manifest, in the inhospitable shutting out of aliens, by those who themselves were aliens in the lands they now occupy. But India tolerated difference of races from the first, and that spirit of toleration has acted all through her history.

Her caste system is the outcome of this spirit of toleration. For India has all along been trying experiments in evolving a social unity within which all the different peoples could be held together, while fully enjoying the freedom of maintaining their own differences. The tie has been as loose as possible, yet as close as the circumstances permitted. This has produced something like a United States of a social federation, whose common name is Hinduism.

India had felt that diversity of races there must be and should be, whatever may be its drawbacks, and you can never coerce nature into your narrow limits of convenience without paying one day very dearly for it. In this India was right; but what she failed to realise was that in human beings differences are not like the physical barriers of mountains, fixed for ever—they are fluid with life's flow, they are changing their courses and their shapes and volumes." (pp. 88-89.)

I think it is possible for us to see in the above passages a vision of Tagore's probably Hinduistic ideal society, as well as a context and possibility of multiculturalism that differs from the Western principles.

No doubt I have left a lot unsaid concerning Tagore, but finally, I would like to return to Tagore's message that "nations" cannot be overcome by "nations", and that we must not respond to nationalism with nationalism. When we think about Japan's present, or about the actuality of the new states that gained independence in the post-war period, does not this message pierce us with its contemporaneity?

3. Illich

Ivan Illich (1926-2002), like Tagore, was an extraordinary and complex figure of whom my understanding is still far from adequate.⁽⁶⁾ Here, I will focus on his notion of "vernacular values". This concept, as well as being my short-cut into Illich's world, also constitutes the glowing thread that joins Tagore and Illich at a profound level. As I was reading essays contained in his *Shadow work* such as "Vernacular values" and "The war against subsistence", I was constantly relating it to the lives of the people of India that Tagore had evoked—lives that continue in the present—and I think that this is by no means the wrong way to read Illich.

"Vernacular values" is a surprising and very interesting essay. Rather than writing about "vernacular values *per se*", Illich writes about Elio Antonio de Nebrija [Lebrija] (né Antonio Martínez de Cala, 1444-1522), a contemporary of Columbus, and engages in a detailed commentary on almost every sentence of Nebrija's "Dedication" to Queen Isabella in his *Gramatica de la lengua Castellana* (*Grammar of the Castilian Language*, 1492). This work of Nebrija's was published exactly 15 days after Columbus' departure for Zipang, in other words Columbus' departure

towards the “discovery” of the New World (3 August 1492). And it is Illich’s view that rather than Columbus’ voyage, it was Nebrija’s publication that held much greater significance for modern history.

In his own rather idiosyncratic words, Illich explains why Isabella, who had initially refused to aid Columbus’s adventure, finally assented:

“She, who had driven Islam from Europe, could not refuse her Admiral who wanted to plant the Cross beyond the Ocean Seas. And, as we shall see, the decision for colonial conquest implied the challenge of a new war at home—the invasion of her own people’s vernacular domain, the opening of a five-century war against vernacular subsistence, the ravages of which we now begin to fathom.” (pp. 33-34.)⁽⁷⁾

What exactly was the significance of Nebrija’s *Grammar*?

“During the time Columbus cruised southwest through recognizable Portuguese waters and harbors, in Spain the fundamental engineering of a new social reality was proposed to the Queen. While Columbus sailed for foreign lands to seek the familiar—gold, subjects, nightingales—in Spain Nebrija advocates the reduction of the Queen’s subjects to an entirely new type of dependence. He presents her with a new weapon, grammar, to be wielded by a new kind of mercenary, the *letrado*.” (p. 33.)

As Illich continues his commentary on the “Dedication”, he makes the following point:

“The Conqueror of Granada receives a petition, similar to many

others. But unlike the request of Columbus, who wanted resources to establish a new route to the China of Marco Polo, that of Nebrija urges the Queen to invade a new domain at home. He offers Isabella a tool to colonize the language spoken by her own subjects; he wants her to replace the people's speech by the imposition of the queen's *lengua—her language, her tongue.*" (p. 34)

As we read Nebrija's "Dedication" with reference to Illich's commentary, we start to realize just how frightening a document it is. Before Nebrija's proposal, language belonged to the realm of the vernacular, and no one even thought about sovereign power intervening in the language of residents (subjects). Nebrija proposed to make an artificial language out of the language of a particular set of residents, and to enforce that language upon all residents under the Queen's rule both internally and externally. Thereafter, it would become something to be taught, something to be managed by the state. What is most astonishing in these words that date back to 1492 is that in them we can see already clearly articulated the concept of the "national language" that we hold unconsciously today. Illich mentions the colonization of the "language spoken by her own subjects"; the concept of national language contained a colonialist desire from its inception. Nebrija also argues for the necessity of a national language so that people do not waste time on novels and stories written in the vulgar vernacular; in short, the concept of "national language" contained from its inception the intention to ban books and govern speech.

I do not have time to go through Nebrija's words⁽⁸⁾, so next I would like just to quote from Illich's conclusion.

"Nebrija frankly states what he wants to do and even provides the

outline of his incredible project. He deliberately turns the mate of empire into its slave. Here the first modern language expert advises the Crown on the way to make, out of a people's speech and lives, tools that befit the state and its pursuits. Nebrija's grammar is conceived by him as a pillar of the nation state. Through it, the state is seen, from its very beginning, as an aggressively productive agency. The new state takes from people the words on which they subsist, and transforms them into the standardized language which henceforth they are compelled to use, each one at the level of education that has been institutionally imputed to him. [...] The switch from the vernacular to an officially taught mother tongue is perhaps the most significant—and therefore the least researched—event in the coming of a commodity-intensive society. The radical change from the vernacular to taught language foreshadows the switch from breast to bottle, from subsistence to welfare, from production for use to production for market [...] Both the citizen of the modern state and his state-provided language come into being for the first time—both are without precedent anywhere in history.” (pp. 43-44.)

This passage clearly demonstrates Illich's positions on the modern world and Western civilization. Not just indicating the border between the pre-modern and the modern, Nebrija's thin grammar book presented to a Queen Isabella who had just finished the *Reconquista* also gives a foretaste of the nature of the modernity to come. If you read Nebrija's "Dedication" and Illich's analysis, you get an immensely powerful sense of the epochal continuity of the five hundred years after the Age of Exploration. The Age of Exploration can be called the first Age of Globalization, but the five hundred years after Columbus and Nebrija are also the age when war was declared on vernacular domains and vernacular values, destroying them.

This was the age of nation-state formation and colonial rule domination, of domination and exploitation and development. If we set aside the difference that Tagore spoke from the side of those colonized by Western Civilization whereas Illich spoke from the centre of the Western Civilization that dominated the colonies, Illich's take on Western Civilization and Tagore's critique of "nation" and of Western Civilization fit together remarkably well.

So what are these "vernacular values" that Illich stresses, and which it is likely that Tagore also was thinking about, albeit in somewhat different terms? In Illich's essay entitled "Vernacular values", they are evoked as that which is invaded and destroyed, he gives no positive concrete details. To answer this question, then, let us look at Illich's subsequent chapter on "The war against subsistence".⁽⁹⁾ In this section, Illich begins with the etymology of the term "vernacular" (Indo-Germanic "to be rooted", "to reside"), then looks at the Latin "vernaculum" ("raised at home", "spun at home", "home-made", etc.), and considers how it entered into the English and French languages, going on to make the following remarks:

"Vernacular came into English in the one restricted sense to which Varro has confined its meaning. Just now, I would like to resuscitate some of its old breath. We need a simple, straightforward word to designate the activities of people when they are not motivated by thoughts of exchange, a word that denotes autonomous, non-market related actions through which people satisfy everyday needs—the actions that by their own true nature escape bureaucratic control, satisfying needs to which, in the very process, they give specific shape." (pp. 57-58.)

"By speaking about vernacular language and the possibility of its recuperation, I am trying to bring into awareness and discussion the

existence of a vernacular mode of being, doing, and making that in a desirable future society might again expand in all aspects of life.” (p. 58.)

I think the above quotations make clear the hopes and intentions that Illich pins on the term “vernacular”. The vernacular world, in the original sense of the word, was a multilingual, multicultural world (as were indeed the entire lives of both Columbus and Nebrija, as Illich stresses). But are the multilingualism and multiculturalism that we face today, both born out of the contradictions of Western Civilization and the nation-state, likely to lead to the regeneration of such vernacular values, or are they likely to stand in opposition to them? This is the urgent question before us, at least for me.

Despite my intentions, my talk today may have given you all a rather negative and pessimistic impression. To end, I would like to quote from a more positive recent work which made a very strong impression on me. This relates to multiculturalism as a “term of struggle”, which I mentioned at the beginning.

“Democracy must be democracy for *another*, more just democracy, and multiculturalism has a real political chance only if it acts as the representative of this other democracy—that is, if it acts not only (but only *also*) as the slow revolution of the third worlds within the first.”⁽¹⁰⁾

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Notes

- (1) Gerard Delanty, *Community* (Routledge, 2003).
- (2) Werner Hamacher, *Heterautonomien – One 2 Many Multiculturalisms* (Berlin, 2003).

- (3) This kind of confusion towards, negative reaction against, and non-understanding of Tagore's anti-nationalism extends even to the commentary by Ichii Saburo contained in *The collected works of Tagore*, vol. 8 (*Tagore zenshu*, Daisan Bunmeisha, 1981). I am not keen on dragging out something that was written over twenty years ago, but this commentary displays the weakness of Japanese liberal intellectuals with regard to the problem of nationalism. This commentator makes no effort to try to understand Tagore's theory of nationalism. In stark contrast, Sun Ge (孫歌), to my knowledge, shows the deepest understanding of Tagore's theory of nationalism in her "Twilight of an idealist". In this piece, which is more an essay than an academic monograph (contained in *Ajia wo kataru koto no jirenma, The dilemma of narrating Asia*, Iwanami Shoten, 2001), Sun Ge perceives in Tagore's theory of nationalism today's most urgent problems, and connects them to history's future possibilities. We could see here Sun Ge's distinctive take on nationalism, shaped by long struggles between the nationalisms of China and Japan, while her reference to *A room of her own* shows her way of taking position with regard to the feminism of Virginia Wolff and is of considerable interest.
- (4) In the following section, all quotations are from Rabindranath Tagore, *Nationalism* (Rupa, 1994).
- (5) The Japanese translator of *Nationalism*, Royama Yoshiro, adds the following note to this passage. "Subsequent to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, the Japanese government began fostering youth groups, and conducted preparatory education of youths who had completed their compulsory education for joining the military, trying to instill them with the philosophy of nationalism. To this end, district heads, school inspectors, and primary school headmasters, and so on were installed as the leaders of these youth groups. Further, two years after the break-out of the Second World War, in 1916, a new system known as the auxiliary officer system was introduced to enlist and train youths for three months of the year during two years. Also in 1916, to bring about the country-wide union of industrial capitalists, the Japan Industry Club was formed. In contrast to the Chambers of Commerce that mainly represented the interests of small and medium-sized businesses, this organization represented the interests of big capital. Thus through the Taisho and Meiji eras, the national organization of the people was advanced rapidly both by the state and by the private sector." (p. 521, f.n. 7)
- (6) On Illich's life, see David Cayley, *The rivers north of the future. The testament of Ivan Illich* as told to David Cayley (Foreward by Charles Taylor, House of Anansi, 2005).
- (7) All citations are taken from Ivan Illich, *Shadow work* (Marion Boyars, 1981).
- (8) There is a Japanese translation of this *Grammar*, including the Dedication, by Nakaoka Shoji; it is published as Volume 14 of the Osaka University of Foreign

Studies Research Publications series. On Nebrija's "Dedication" and the problem of "national language", see my "Vernacular language and the language of education (national language)—language and identity in globalization", Key Note Presentation to the Applied Foreign Languages Research Group at National Kaohsiung First University of Science and Technology, 7 December 2007.

- (9) The English title is "The War Against Subsistence", whereas in the French edition of *Le travail fantôme* (Seuil, 1980), the title is "La repression du domaine vernaculaire" (The repression of the vernacular domain). The Japanese title, "The autonomy and autonomous existence (自存) of human life" is a phrase continually used in this book, and is considered almost to be a definition of the vernacular. There are many additions and changes in the French version, and it seems that Illich preferred it to the English one.
- (10) Werner Hamacher, "One 2 many multiculturalisms", in Hent de Vries and Samuel Weber (eds.), *Violence, identity and self-determination* (Stanford, 1997), p. 324.