

# Representing nature and nation: National-Land Afforestation Campaign and the production of forest in the 1960's~1970's Japan

Koji NAKASHIMA\*

## Prologue

The city I am talking about (Tokyo) offers this precious paradox: it does possess a center, but this center is empty (Barthes, 1982, p.30)

What Barthes called 'empty center' is the place of 'Kokyo' (Imperial Palace) in Tokyo. That is a kind of sanctuary where 'Tenno' (Emperor) lives, concealed beneath foliage and protected by moats. That is the place which is both forbidden and indifferent, where nobody can see inside, and around which the entire city turns. As Barthes (1982) notes, it hides the sacred 'nothing'. However, the color of this empty center is neither blank nor transparent. As Barthes (1970) correctly described as 'la verdure', it is green<sup>1)</sup>. 'Empty center' of Tokyo is both concealed from view and identified by the green nature.

As Figure 1 shows, there still remain several other forests than 'Kokyo', like green islands in the central area of Tokyo. They are 'Shinjuku-gyoen' (Shinjuku Imperial Garden), 'Akasaka Goshō' (Crown Prince's palace), 'Meiji-jingu' (Meiji Shrine), 'Meiji-jingu-gaien' (Outer garden of Meiji Shrine), 'Hamarikyu-teien' (Garden of Hama detached palace), 'Ueno-koen' (Ueno Park) and 'Shizen Kyoiku-en' (National Park for Natural Study). As Japanese writer Inose (1992) notes, most of those green islands were once, and even now partially are possessed by Tenno and the Imperial Household<sup>2)</sup>. That is to say, 'they are the detached estates of the "empty center"' (Inose, 1992, p.67).

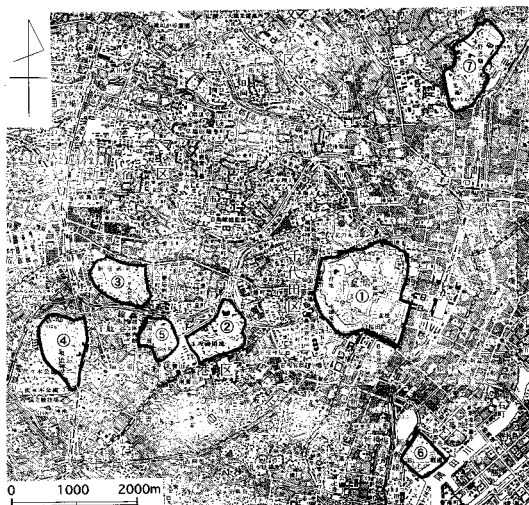
Japanese historian Amino said that it is prob-

lem that there remains nature only in *Kokyo* and shrine in contemporary Tokyo (Amino et al., 1988). He quotes an interesting episode that in the forest preservation movement in Zushi-city (Kanagawa Prefecture) against the plan of constructing US army residence in the forest, one political-economist proposed to bring the tomb of (a former) *Tenno* to that forest. This political-economist said to Amino, 'If we could do so, our nature would be absolutely protected'. Amino was surprised at this proposal by the political-economist who had been a more radical leftist than Amino himself (Amino et al., 1988, pp.260-261). This political-economist appropriated the taboo that the place of 'God' should be preserved without any interruption. In other words, the *Tenno* has remained as 'God' in the mentality of nature preservation. Thus this episode suggests the subtle connection between human-nature relation and the symbolic *Tenno* system in contemporary Japan.

This paper reviews the history of the representation of nature in the National-Land Afforestation Campaign in the 1960's ~ 1970's Japan, and aims to show an aspect of the relationship between nature and nation in modern Japan. The National-Land Afforestation Campaign is not just an activity to afforest a mountain but a national campaign to produce a new meaning and value of environment through the construction of 'second nature' (Lefebvre, 1990). As Harvey (1996) notes, the meaning and value of environment are diverse according to the positions of subjects who talk about an environmental issue. In the typical discourses by the wartime Japanese naturalists and historians on Japanese culture, an affiliation and a harmony with nature were understood as traditional and national features of Japanese culture

\* Department of Geography, Kanazawa University  
koji331@kenroku.ipc.kanazawa-u.ac.jp

空の中心と東京の森林



- ① Kokyo (Imperial Palace)      ② Akasaka Gosho (Crown Prince's Palace)  
 ③ Shinjuku Gyoen (Shinjuku Imperial Garden)      ④ Meiji-jingu (Meiji Shrine)  
 ⑤ Meiji-jingu gaien (Outer garden of Meiji Shrine)      ⑥ Hamarikyu-teien  
 (Garden of Hama detached palace)      ⑦ Ueno-koen (Ueno Park)

Figure 1 'Empty center' and the forests in Tokyo

Modified from 1:50,000 Scale Topographic Maps 'North-West Tokyo', 'North-East Tokyo', 'South-West Tokyo' and 'South-East Tokyo'

(ex. Wakimizu, 1939; Takase, 1942; Fujiwara, 1942). Though such a nationalistic environmentalism seems to have disappeared in the postwar Japan (Yasuda, 1992), it does not mean that nature became essentially a non-political and neutral object. In spite of its appearance of neutrality and purity, representation of nature have articulated with national and cultural-political issues in contemporary Japan.

Particularly, as described above, the connection between nature and *Tenno* seems to have become intimate in contemporary Japan: an emphasis of the profile of Showa *Tenno* as a botanist living with nature, the annual attendance of *Tenno* and Kogo (Empress) at the national afforestation festival, and the enactment of *Midorino-hi* (Green Day) which was formerly a birthday of Showa *Tenno*, to name just a few. The more Showa *Tenno* became a non-political existence under the symbolic *Tenno* system, the more he came to be connected to the nature as a non-political and a neutral object.

The paradox of the 'empty center' shows this ambiguous connection between *Tenno* and nature: the center subsists as a neutral and silent place which does not irradiate any political power but exerts an invisible centrality to the entire movement of the city. As Barthes (1982) notes, the system of imaginary (*l'imaginaire*) is spread circularly around an empty subject. The green islands remaining in the midst of Tokyo subsist both as actual places which are consumed as neutral and non-political object for rest and recreation and as imaginary places where the meaning and the value of nature and the nation articulate each other.

#### What is the 'midori'?

'The National-Land Afforestation Campaign' is an English name of '*Kokudo Ryokka Undo*' in Japanese. However, according to Japanese forestry expert Tezuka (1990), we don't have any English word strictly equivalent to the word '*ryokka*' (緑化). Though '*ryokka*' is generally translated as 'afforestation' in English, its straight meaning is 'to make green.' The letter 緑 is pronounced '*midori*' in the Japanese reading which means 'green.' However '*midori*' does not only mean the green as a color, but also represents 'nature' in general. Therefore '*Ryokka*' does not only mean 'to make green,' but also implicates 'to produce and preserve nature.'

Table.1 Place of the 'Midori'

Rank	Place to be imaged	Percent.
1	Mountain, Hill	80.2%
2	Highland, Grassland	50.4%
3	Park	45.4%
4	Rice field, Crop field	39.3%
5	Street	25.1%
6	Shrine, Temple	24.0%
7	Riverside, Seashore	22.0%
8	Tropical forest etc.	20.0%
9	Garden, Veranda	18.0%
10	Slope or Cliff near the residence	9.4%

(Including plural responses)

Source : Prime Minister's Office (1994)

Table.2 The merits of the 'Midori' to be expected

Rank	Contents of merits	Percent.
1	To create a flavor and to make people feel relaxed	78.0%
2	To clean the air and to ease the noise	51.7%
3	To secure the habitat for birds and animals	50.5%
4	To prevent the disaster like flood and landslide	47.9%
5	To absorb the carbon dioxide and to prevent the global warming	44.7%
6	To secure the place in the shade of a tree for rest and recess	42.9%
7	To secure the place for wondering and relaxation in the forest	42.4%
8	To secure the water resource by maintaining the forest	33.3%
9	To arrange a scene around the facilities like buildings and roads	20.4%
10	To secure the place of refuge in the case of a disaster	17.1%
11	To secure the place for sports and recreation	16.2%
12	To produce the timber	13.7%

(Including plural responses)

Source : Prime Minister's Office (1994)

It is after the establishment of the National-Land Afforestation Promotion Committee (NLAPC) in 1950 that the word '*ryokka*' has become generally used in Japan (Tezuka, 1990, pp.51-52). The name of the afforestation campaign commonly used in the prewar Japan was '*airin*' = 愛林 which means 'to love the woods'. While the main activity of the prewar '*airin*' campaign was an afforestation in the sense of the forestry, the postwar '*ryokka*' campaign includes extensive and diverse activities such as the nature preservation, the tree-planting campaign in the city and so on.

According to the public opinion poll on the afforestation promotion<sup>3)</sup>, images of the '*midori*' people hold are very diverse. As shown in Table 1, while most people image the nature like 'Mountain, Hill,' 'Highland, Grassland,' a considerable rate of people image the artificial and urban environment like 'Park,' 'Rice or Crop field,' 'Street,' 'Shrine, Temple' and 'Garden, Veranda.' Thus the '*midori*' reminds people of the diverse environment ranging from wild and far-off nature to the ordinary and familiar environment. And as shown in Table 2, the expected merits of the '*midori*' are also diverse, ranging from 'To create a flavor and to make people feel relaxed' to 'To produce the timber.'

However, generally speaking, people commonly seem to expect positive and gentle characters to the '*midori*'. The words like 'feel relaxed,' 'ease,' 'rest and recess' and 'place of refuge' implicate a gentleness and a familiarity everyone feels easy to accept. In other words, the '*midori*' does not only have any negative meaning but also is easy to be accepted by everyone. Whether they are the leftist or the rightist, the liberalist or the nationalist, everyone are willing to admit and accept the '*midori*'.

#### Heritage of the Empire: Forest of *Meiji-jingu*

Figure 2 is a photograph of the gateway to the shrine of *Meiji-jingu* where big 'Torii' stands marked with the emblem of chrysanthemum flower, which is the family crest of the Imperial Household, and where the deep forest forms a subtle and profound passage to the sanctuary. And Figure 3 is an outside view of this forest many people can look from the main road. We can see two signboards on which impressive phrases are

put down:

#### Praying in the forest of God

Make your solemn supplication in the greenery sanctuary

Safety of the family, driving away an evil, prosperous trade, and success in the examination  
Any kinds of supplication are served at any time

*Meiji-jingu*

(Right signboard)

Meiji Memorial Hall<sup>4)</sup> warmly watches the future

(Left signboard)

The forest of *Meiji-jingu* is considered not as an ordinary forest but as a sacred forest where God is enshrined. However, as the left signboard and a last phrase of the right signboard suggests, the shrine seems to try to be opened and familiar to all the people. In fact many people including foreign tourists visit *Meiji-jingu* and worship God everyday. Thus we can find sacredness and familiarity simultaneously in the forest of *Meiji-jingu*.

*Meiji-jingu* was constructed in honor of Meiji Tenno (Emperor Meiji) in 1920 deifying Meiji Tenno and *Shoken-kotaigo* (Empress Dowager Meiji) as the enshrined deity. Its area including *Meiji-jingu-gaien* (Outer garden of Meiji Shrine) is more than a million square meter. In the midst of Shibuya ward crowded with office buildings, forest of *Meiji-jingu* occupies broad area by its deep green. Forest of *Meiji-jingu* was never naturally grown. It has been made of the trees donated from all over the domain of the Empire including Sakhalin, North and Northeast China, Korea, Okinawa and Taiwan (Meiji-jingu Gojun-en-shi Hensan linkai, 1979). The items of trees planted in the forest of *Meiji-jingu* were 95,559 trees donated, 15,951 trees of native kinds, 8,222 trees transferred and 2,840 trees purchased (Meiji-jingu Keidai Sogochosa linkai, 1980). Thus 78.0 percent of all trees planted were donated ones.

In constructing *Meiji-jingu*, the Cabinet organized the Research Committee for Enshrining whose member included three forestry experts, Seirotoku HONDA, Yoshitaro KAWASE and Itsuto FUKUHA. At first this Research Committee proposed to plant the needle-leaved trees in forest of

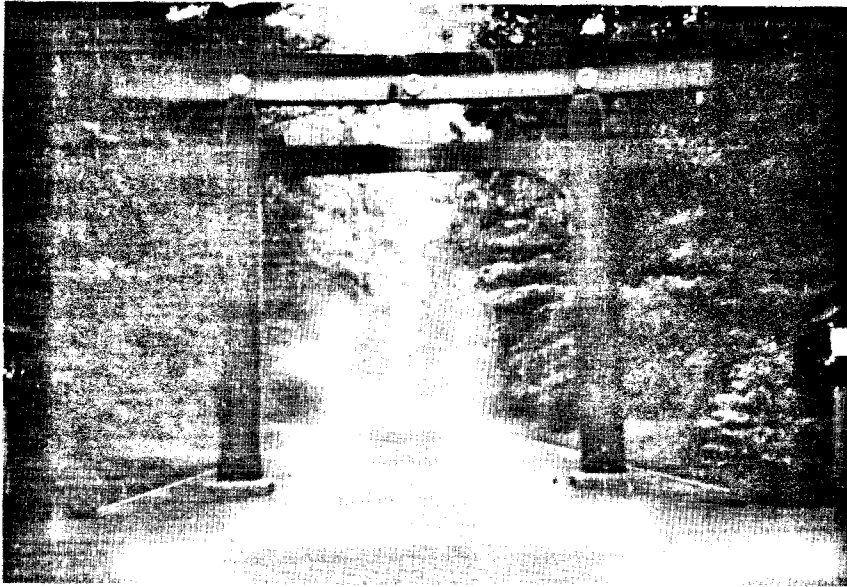


Figure 2 The big 'Torii' standing on the gateway to the shrine of *Meiji-jingu*

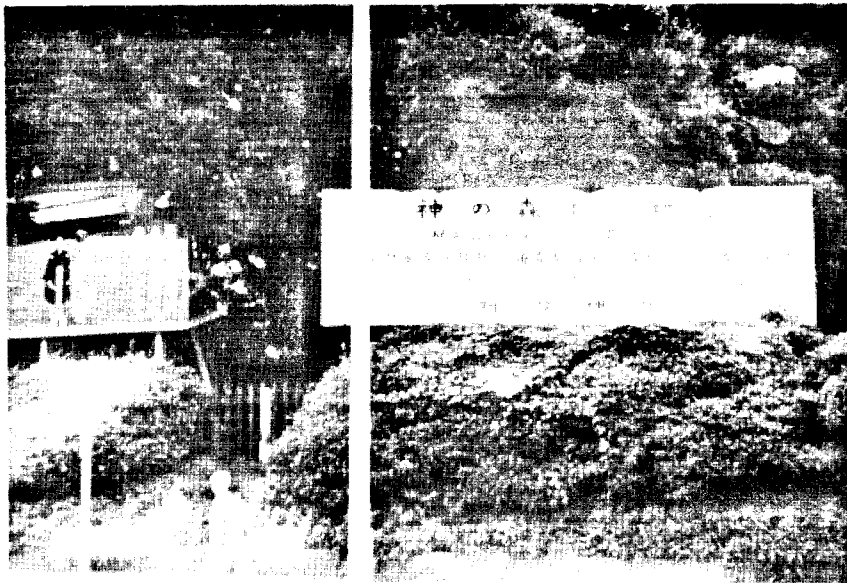


Figure 3 Impressive Signboards: outside view of the forest of *Meiji-jingu*

*Meiji-jingu* like Japanese cedar, Japanese cypress, Japanese hemlock, fir tree, Japanese yew and so on. These trees were expected to form a subtle and profound shrine forest composed of straight and well-proportioned big trees to make scenic beauty of nature (*Meiji-jingu Keidai Sogochosa linkai*, 1980, pp.7-8). However, as these kinds of trees were vulnerable to the polluted air of Tokyo, this forest plan was changed to another one which was to plant evergreen broadleaf trees like chinquapin, oak, camphor tree as the main trees of the shrine forest<sup>5)</sup>. According to the "*Meiji-jingu on-keidairin'en keikaku, kan*" (Garden planning of the shrine forest in *Meiji-jingu*, final edition)<sup>6)</sup>, those trees were considered to 'be suitable for climate and *fudo* (natural features of country) of the *kyodo* (home country), to be strong to various disaster or disease, and to form a subtle and profound shrine forest through a natural renewal without any caring (*Meiji-jingu Keidai Sogochosa linkai*, 1980, pp.8-9, parentheses mine).

In this change of the trees to be planted, we can find two basic concepts of the forest planning of *Meiji-jingu*. One is to make 'a scenic beauty of nature' (*tennen no fuchi*). Though most of trees in the forest of *Meiji-jingu* were artificially planted, the forest of *Meiji-jingu* had to be constructed as if it were a natural forest. For it was the necessary conditions of subtlety and profundity of the shrine forest that the beauty of the forest is not artificially produced but endowed by the natural power beyond the human ability.

The other is to 'be suitable for climate and *fudo* of the *kyodo*'. What was required of the forest of *Meiji-jingu* was not an universal nature, but the national nature which was deeply rooted in Japanese *fudo*. The evergreen broadleaf trees like chinquapin, oak, camphor tree were regarded as 'the native species proper to the temperate zone like Tokyo' (*Meiji-jingu Keidai Sogochosa linkai*, 1980, p.8).

A technical expert of the Ministry of Home Affairs, who was engaged in the maintenance of the forest of *Meiji-jingu* during 1925-1935, retrospects and describes the forest of *Meiji-jingu*: 'At the beginning of planting, we had expected, in twenty-five years to make a little scenic beauty of shrine forest, and in fifty years to form a thick forest handed down from our ancestors, ...now fifty years have passed, there is no knowing that the forest of *Meiji-jingu* was made of trees

planted and donated by the nation, and every worshiper regards it as a natural forest mainly composed of beautiful evergreen broadleaf trees handed down from our ancestors' (*Meiji-jingu Keidai Sogochosa linkai*, 1980, pp.9-10). Two basic concepts of the forest planning of *Meiji-jingu* seem to survive fifty years and be embodied in the scenery of the present forest. 'Therefore,' he concludes, 'I am sure that this (to preserve the forest of *Meiji-jingu*) is an important patriotic movement for Japan as a cultured nation having a peaceful Constitution, in order to protect and preserve nature and natural environment in the national land' (*Meiji-jingu Keidai Sogochosa linkai*, 1980, p.27, parentheses mine).

Remarks on the forest of *Meiji-jingu* suggests us a subtle connection between nature and the nation. It is not just a heritage of the past Empire, but the dynamic process of making meanings and values of nature and the nation through the production of a specific scenery of nature. We examine that process in the following chapters.

#### Nature for the memory: Meiji Centennial and the National-Land Afforestation Campaign

1968 was the year in which Japan marked the centennial of the Meiji Restoration. A lot of events, projects and festivals were held in memory of the Meiji Centennial by the national and local governments, and private groups. Among the memorial projects conducted by the national and local government, national-land afforestation and related projects were important ones. The prospectus of the Meiji Centennial Memorial National-Land Afforestation Campaign says:

The significance of conducting the National-Land Afforestation Campaign as the memorial project of the "Meiji Centennial" is, as well as to remind of the root of the development in the last hundred years, to develop further the good point of the nation that is an abundant sensibility to the *midori* even amidst the recent tendency to praise a machine civilization, and thereby to proceed for the new century (Prime Minister's Secretariat, 1969, p.290).

As suggested in this text, the Japanese nation is regarded as more sensible to nature than other nations. We can find similar remarks in other

projects. NLAPC requested a Japanese composer Toshiro Mayuzumi to produce a symphony for memorial forests as a part of the Meiji Centennial Memorial National-Land Afforestation Campaign. Mayuzumi chose four poems from the ancient Japanese anthology 'Man'yōshū', and composed a voice symphony 'Mori' (The Forest) using poems as the words. He said:

I think that the basic idea of "ryokka" is <to love>: to love the trees, to love the forest, and to love the nature. Those loves will develop into the love for the national land, the love for the nation and the great love for the human beings. And it will ultimately return to the love for ourselves. In that meaning, I used the 'poems' as texts, which are composed of the contemplation on nature and the affiliation to the forest Japanese nation have retained since ancient times (Mayuzumi, 1968, pp.7-8).

This kind of remarks is generally found in many other texts on the National-Land Afforestation

Campaign of those days as well as in the texts of the wartime intellectuals. Of course, there was no rational and logical relationship between the national-land afforestation and the Meiji Centennial. However, by connecting such different activities, it became possible to embody a history of the nation in the form of nature. In other words, the Meiji Centennial Memorial National-Land Afforestation Campaign made it possible to reify the history of a hundred years of modern Japan in a concrete form of forests as if it were as part of an eternal tradition of Japanese nation since ancient times. It reminds people of collective memory of the nation not by a political propaganda but by a scenery of nature with an appearance of neutrality and purity.

The projects of Meiji Centennial Memorial National-Land Afforestation Campaign are diverse and abundant (Table 3). We review some of those projects, and try to suggest an actual relationship between the nation and nature represented in the scenery.

**Table.3 Contents of Meiji Centennial Memorial National Land Afforestation Movement and other related projects**

Project Name	Auspices of Project	Remarks
<i>Ryokka</i> slogan, poster and badge contest	NLAPC	First prize: <i>Hyakunenno kinrenni bokumo kono naegi</i> (This seedling, also me in memory of the centennial)
Distribution of the <i>ryokka</i> Leaflets	NLAPC	'A guide to the Meiji Centennial Memorial National Land Afforestation Movement'
Memorial afforestation	Forestry Agency	Provision of afforestation subsidies to local governments, schools and other groups
19th National Festival of Afforestation	NLAPC and Akita Prefecture	At Mt. Omoriyama, Akita Prefecture, 14,500 people and <i>Tenno</i> and <i>Kogo</i> attended
Memorial symphony 'Mori'	NLAPC	Performed on the Shibuya Public Hall, broadcasted by NHK, and recorded by Toshiba Records
<i>Ryokka</i> monument	NLAPC	Constructed at Yoyogi Park in Tokyo
Memorial Forest Park	Ministry of Construction	Constructed at the Musashi Hill, Saitama Prefecture
Memorial Forest Park	Local government	Ten parks at seven prefectures and three cities
Forest of Meiji	Forestry Agency, Ministry of Health and Welfare	Constructed at Mt. Takao-san Hachioji-City, Tokyo Constructed at Mt. Mino-san Mino-City, Osaka
Forest of Nation	Forestry Agency	Constructed at eight areas of the national forest
Prefectural Forest	Local government	Constructed by twenty one local governments
Trees of Prefectures	NLAPC and Governor's National Conference	Planted at <i>Kotyo Higashi Gyoen</i> (Imperial Palace East Garden)

Source : Prime Minister's Secretariat (1969)

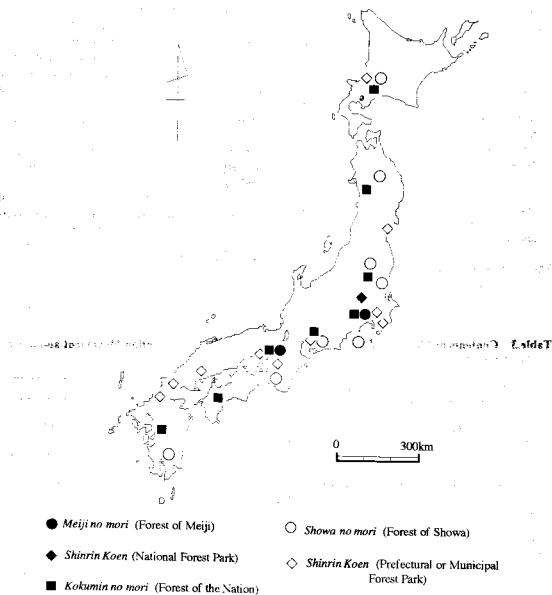


Figure 4 Distribution of the 'forest' produced during 1960's~1970's



### Reification of the history: *Meiji no mori* (Forest of Meiji) and *Showa no mori* (Forest of Showa)

'*Meiji no mori*' was founded as a joint project of the Forestry Agency (the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) and the Ministry of Health and Welfare. It aimed to develop a place for field recreation where the forest would be preserved and people could be in close contact with nature, and to provide it for the city dwellers lacking in nature ('*Kokudo Ryokka*', 1967, vol.2, no.1, pp.13-14). Two national forests and surrounding areas, Mt. *Takao-san* (Hachioji City, Tokyo) and *Minoo* (Minoo City, Osaka), were chosen as '*Meiji no mori*' (Figure 4). They were also designated as seminational parks: '*Meiji no mori Takao*' seminational park and '*Meiji no mori Minoo*' seminational park. These '*Meiji no mori*' have two different characters, one is a character as a natural park which is furnished with pavements, open spaces, educational facilities and exhibition facilities, and the other is a character as the forest where people are enlightened, educated in, and can practice, forestry. The Ministry of Health and Welfare was responsible for the former, and the Forestry Agency the latter.

Though the Forestry Agency had conventionally played an important role in the postwar National-Land Afforestation Campaign, in the project of '*Meiji no mori*', it was the Ministry of Health and Welfare that had taken the conceptual initiative. Michio Ooi, the chief of planning section of national park bureau in the Ministry of Health and Welfare, described the concept of '*Meiji no mori*' as follows:

When we designed '*Meiji no mori*,' our central concept was the embodiment of the purest

function of the natural park, a function to make use of the good point of nature by the unification of human and nature (Ooi, 1968, p.13).

He summarized the contents of '*Meiji no mori*' project into three points, (1) to preserve and protect nature remaining and to restore a part of the nature already lost, and thereby to recover the beauty and the fascination of nature in the suburbs of metropolis, (2) to convey the scientific, cultural and spiritual meaning of nature to people, and to ensure the effects of the intercourse between human and nature, (3) to exclude uncontrolled tourist exploitation and to establish the place for healthy field recreation, and thereby to show a model of a natural park that is to be (Ooi, 1968, p.14). As suggested in this summary, nature is regarded as an object not to be exploited but to be preserved, whose value is neither economic nor material, but a cultural or spiritual. And the recreation is understood as the embodiment of the unification between human and nature. In those days when 'recreation' was translated as '*kyuyo*' (rest or repose) in a Japanese dictionary, '*Meiji no mori*' project clearly defined 'recreation' as the unification between human and nature.

Furthermore, what is crucial in this project is 'to show a model of a natural park that is to be'. Since the late 1960's, a lot of natural parks have been established all over the country, for example, *Kenmin no mori* (Prefectural Forest), *Shimin no mori* (Municipal Forest) and *Ikoi no mori* (Recreational Forest). Common feature of those natural parks is an emphasis on the recreation in nature and the intercourse between people and nature. The project of '*Meiji no mori*' provided a model of contemporary natural parks.

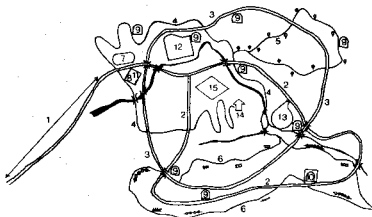
**Table.4 Summary of '*Showa no mori*' (Forest of Showa)**

Town or Village	Prefecture	Vestige of Tenno	Area (ha)	Ownership
Matsuo Village	Iwate	Site of the 25th National Festival of Afforestation in 1974	46	Communal
Inawashiro Town	Fukushima	Site of the 21th National Festival of Afforestation in 1970	56	Communal
Daigo Town	Ibaraki	Site of the 27th National Festival of Afforestation in 1976	47	Communal
Fujioka Town	Aichi	Site of the 30th National Festival of Afforestation in 1979	256	Communal
Iwade Town, Uchuta Town	Wakayama	Site of the 28th National Festival of Afforestation in 1977	50	Communal
Kobayashi City	Miyazaki	Site of the 24th National Festival of Afforestation in 1973	50	Communal
Ebetsu City	Hokkaido	Site where Showa Tenno had visited in 1936 and 1954	1604	National Forest
Amagi-yugashima Town	Shizuoka	Site where Showa Tenno had visited in 1930 and 1954	1195	National Forest

Source : Documents of the Forestry Agency

In 1976, after eight years of 'Meiji no mori' project, 'Showa no mori' (Forest of Showa) was established in memory of the 50th anniversary of the throne of Showa Tenno (the Emperor Showa). In the memorial project of 'Showa no mori,' eight forests which once had some relation to Showa Tenno were designated as 'Showa no mori' (Figure 4). Six of them were the sites of the National Festival of Afforestation in the last decade where Showa Tenno himself planted the memorial seedling in the festival. Other two forests were the 'honorable' sites where Showa Tenno had visited before (Table 4). The purpose of the establishment of 'Showa no mori' was to arrange the forest which had close relation to Showa Tenno and to create the recreational place where people could be in closer contact with nature ('Kokudo Ryokka', 1976, vol.11, no.5, p.4). Contents of the project are (1) an afforestation and an organization of the forest into 'forest of bird,' 'forest of insect' and 'forest of mushroom' in order to cultivate the thought of nature preservation, (2) a construction

of the road for the user to walk around the forest, (3) a construction of recreational facilities like camp sites, playing zones, open spaces and a forest museum. Those contents of 'Showa no mori' were schematized as a model of 'Showa no mori' by the Forestry Agency (Figure 5). As shown in this schema, centering around the trees planted by Tenno and Kogo, various recreational facilities like a camping site, playing zones and cycling roads are arranged. This schema shows, as well as a model of 'Showa no mori,' a prototype of other natural parks like Prefectural Forest and Municipal Forest and so on. For example, the arrangement of recreational facilities in Prefectural Forest are quite similar to this model. Centering around some monuments or exhibition center, camp sites, open spaces, resting places, walking (cycling) roads, observatories and other recreational facilities are arranged. Thus 'Showa no mori' inherited and developed the model of a natural park that 'Meiji no mori' had proposed.



1 Entrance road 2 Principal road 3 Cycling road 4 Walking road 5 Educational road  
6 Sports road 7 Parking place 8 Administrative house 9 Refuge hut 10 Resting hut  
11 Exhibition center 12 Playing field 13 Camp site 14 Observatory 15 The forest of  
'Otaue' (The forest of trees planted by Tenno)

**Figure 5 The model of 'Showa no mori' (The forest of Showa)**

Source: Reprinted from *Kokudo Ryokka* Vol.11 (1976), No.5, p.5

As a character of a forest suited for a natural park have become clearer, a connection between the forest and Tenno have also become strong. As

shown in Table 4, eight forests of 'Showa no mori' had already been marked as the memorial places where Showa Tenno had visited before.

Therefore, to establish '*Showa no mori*' at such memorial forests was meant to reinforce the connection between the forest and *Showa Tenno*.

We can see a similar connection in other cases. Since 1977, NLAPC has conducted the National Festival of Silviculture which *Kotaishi* (the Crown Prince) and *Kotaishihi* (the Crown Princess) attend every year. Most of the sites of that festival have been the places where the National Festival of Afforestation had been held before. In that same place, *Kotaishi* and *Kotaishihi* manure the trees *Tenno* and *Kogo* had planted before. In other words, the seedlings *Tenno* had planted before were inherited by 'the future *Tenno*' (*Kotaishi*) again at the same place (Nakashima, 1998). Such a continuity and repetition of the festivals at the same place made the connection between *Tenno* and nature stronger.

As suggested in two types memorial forests, *Meiji no mori* and *Showa no mori*, the history of *Meiji* and *Showa* has been fixed and reified in the forms of forests with the memories of *Tenno*. By enjoying the recreation at such forests, people have come into closer contact both with nature and nation.

### Consuming nature: the forest for mass-recreation

Until the mid 1960's, the main purpose of National-Land Afforestation Campaign was to develop the forestry and to produce more productive forests. However since the late 1960's, an importance of the campaign has shifted from a development of the forestry to the nature preservation and the greening of cities (Nakashima, 1998). As described in the previous chapter, the forest produced through the National-Land Afforestation Campaign has also shifted its meanings and roles in accordance with the National-Land Afforestation Campaign. In short, such a shift can be described as a shift from the forest for production to the forest for consumption, or a shift from the economic forest to the non-economic forest.

Furthermore, such a shift included an expansion of the number of people who consumed the forest for recreation. Change of the National-Land Afforestation Campaign has led not only to a qualitative change but also to a quantitative change of the number of forests produced. Since the late 1960's, various forests have been produced all over the country (Figure 4). They pro-

vided, as well as the places for mass-recreation, the nature to be consumed by the nation. Nature is no longer a naively given environment, but an object constructed nationally. This chapter exemplifies such recreational forests as nationally constructed nature.

#### 1. *Shinrin Koen* (Forest Park)

During the late 1960's ~ early 1970's, eleven *Shinrin Koen* (Forest Park) were constructed by the Ministry of Construction and local governments. They were one national forest park and ten prefectural or municipal forest parks (Figure 4). Like '*Meiji no mori*', they were founded as part of the Meiji Centennial Memorial Projects. In its prospectus, the Ministry of Construction explains the aim of *Shinrin Koen* as follows:

This project of the Meiji Centennial Memorial Forest Park aims to commemorate the Meiji centenary and, in addition, to recover the nature largely inside and around cities lacking in the nature and to construct the forest park to remain forever as a memory, in order to secure places where city dwellers losing the nature could revive the humanity through the '*midori*' (Prime Minister's Secretariat, 1969, p.305).

Here the forest is defined as 'places where city dwellers could revive their humanity through the *midori*.' However, what is the humanity to be revived? Why could the *midori* revive the humanity? Without any clear explanation, the forest or the *midori* was interpreted as a heal-all for a loss of the humanity. Meanings and values of nature are completely transformed from a forestry resource for the industrialization and the modernization to a cure for a loss of the humanity as a result of the industrialization and the modernization.

One national forest park is located at the *Musashi Hill* (Saitama Prefecture), the northern suburb of the Tokyo metropolitan area about 60 kilometers distant from the center of Tokyo. In deciding its location, an easy access from Tokyo within one hour through the *Kan-etsu* Expressway was considered as an advantage. 'Considering these issues, it (the *Musashi Hill*) would hold an advantageous location to be able to meet the demand for a one-day recreation' (Prime Minister's Secretariat, 1969, p.302, parenthesis mine). The

forests produced in this project of *Shinrin Koen* were no longer a natural nature located at the mountain, but an artificial nature located at the city suburb. In other words, what was needed for the forest is not a wild and raw nature remote from the city but a familiar and tamed nature easily accessible to the city.

What was needed for the forest is not only the role of healing. The prospectus above quoted clearly prescribed to build a memorial square which would symbolize the Meiji Centennial Memorial Park and to organize a monument, a flower garden, a fountain and a pond etc. in the memorial square so as to coordinate it with its surrounding landscape (Prime Minister's Secretariat, 1969, p.305). The forest park was needed both as the place of healing the loss of the humanity and as the place of memorizing the history of nation.

## 2. *Kokumin no mori* (Forest of the Nation)

*Kokumin no mori* was founded by the Forestry Agency as part of the Meiji Centennial Memorial Project. *Kokumin no mori* consist of eight national forests each in the jurisdiction of one of the Regional Forest Offices of Sapporo, Akita, Maebashi, Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, Kochi and Kumamoto (Figure 4). Most of those forests are located near a large city or a local city and endowed with advantageous traffic conditions. The Forestry Agency explains the aim of *Kokumin no mori* as follows:

We aim to improve the national forest towards an excellent forest where a large number of the nation can enjoy its benefit forever, to preserve it so as to hand it down to posterity, to make the nation recognize an effect of the forest through a utilization of it, to promote the afforestation of national land and to spread the knowledge on the forestry, and to contribute to the beautification of the home country and the nourishment of love for it (*Kokudo Ryokka*, vol.2, no.2, p.16).

The management of the national forest had formerly focused on the development of the forestry. However, the project of *Kokumin no mori* introduced a recreational usage of the forest into the management of the national forest. For example, in the forest of each *Kokumin no mori*, five

districts were arranged, (1) conservation area: to be preserved from tree-cutting and to be conserved with the present scenic beauty, (2) scenic area: to be controlled so as to maintain the scenic beauty of the forest, (3) special afforestation area: to be afforested as the memorial forest and the exhibition forest for spreading the knowledge on the forestry, (4) roadside area: to cut down and to plant trees for the use of the roads, (5) facility area: to construct recreational and scenic facilities (*Kokudo Ryokka*, vol.2, no.1, p.14). The items of the recreational facilities are the camp site, the skiing ground, the public square, the mountain-climbing route, the walking road, the parking lot, the nest box and so on. Thus the project of *Kokumin no mori* mainly focused on the recreational role of the national forest. Nature of the national forest was preserved as the place to be observed, touched and played by the nation. In other words, nature was preserved so as to be consumed by the nation.

## 3. *Kenmin no mori* (Prefectural Forest)

*Kenmin no mori* was also founded in memory of the Meiji Centennial by prefectural governments. During eight years starting from 1967, twenty *Kenmin no mori* were created all over the country.

However arrangements of the facilities were almost the same as that of *Kokumin no mori*: monument, visitors' center, public square, camp site, walking (cycling) road, exhibition forest and so on (*Kokudo Ryokka*, vol.5, 1970-vol.7, 1972). Most of them were constructed rather for the recreational use of the forest than for the development of the forestry.

While *Kokumin no mori* was supposed to be used by the nation, *Kenmin no mori* was supposed to be used by the inhabitants of each prefecture. Just like the state provided the nature for the nation, the prefectural governments provided it for the inhabitants, and the municipal government did as well. In fact, a large number of municipal forests were founded by local governments after *Kenmin no mori*. They were for example, *Shimin no mori* (Citizens' Forest), *Chomin no mori* (Townfolks' Forest), *Sonmin no mori* (Villagers' Forest). From the state to the village, each scale of government produced its own nature and provided it for each scale of inhabitants. *Kokumin no mori* for the nation, *Kenmin no mori* for the

inhabitants of prefecture, *Shimin no mori* for the citizen, *Chomin no mori* for the townsfolk, *Sonmin no mori* for the villager. Production of the forest was always accompanied by the inhabitant's identity. Who could consume the forest? Who could enjoy the benefit of the forest? And whose nature is it? The production of *Kenmin no mori* implicates such questions.

Furthermore, the forest has been no longer a given natural resource, but a social resource produced and provided by the state and local governments, as well as water supply, electric power, gas supply, roads, school, hospital and so on. Those social resources enable the inhabitants to live healthy, comfortable and convenient lives. The forest was also incorporated into such social resources with which people could live a healthy and recreational lives, and thus 'revive the humanity,' the humanity of the nation of sound body and mind.

### National event and the 'network of sacred forest'

Since the late 1960's, as described above, various forests have been produced all over the country. Those forests were not only used for the recreational purpose, but also appropriated for the place of a national event. Table 5 shows the history of the National Festival of Afforestation since the 1970's. Since the 1980's most of the festivals have been held at *Shinrin Koen* or *Kenmin no mori* and other public forests. Before the 1970's, most of the festivals were held at a mountain or a hill not particularly prepared. However, as the various public forests were produced all over the country, the National Festival of Afforestation come to be held at such a public forest.

**Table 5** The National Festival of Afforestation since the 1970's

No.	Year	Prefecture	Theme	Remarks
21	1970	Fukushima	Forest of the successor	
22	1971	Shimane	Multipurpose development of the forest and the environmental afforestation	
23	1972	Niigata	Preservation of the prefectural land, Creation of the greener environment	
24	1973	Miyazaki	Protection and creation of the nature	
25	1974	Iwate	Creation of the affluent <i>midori</i> harmonizing the nature with the industry	<i>Kenmin no mori</i> (Prefectural Forest)
26	1975	Shiga	Creation of the home country full of the <i>midori</i> and the water	
27	1976	Ibaraki	Raise the nature, Protect the land	
28	1977	Wakayama	Raise the green home country all together	
29	1978	Kochi	Creation of the home country and prevention of the disasters by the <i>midori</i>	<i>Shinrin koen</i> (Forest Park)
30	1979	Aichi	Connect the village and the city through the <i>midori</i>	
31	1980	Mie	The <i>midori</i> and the sun, affluent livelihood	<i>Kenmin no mori</i> (Prefectural Forest)
32	1981	Nara	Construction of the city in which the cul-tural heritages are protected by the <i>midori</i>	
33	1982	Tochigi	The <i>midori</i> to be planted, to be raised and to be protected	<i>Kenmin no mori</i> (Prefectural Forest)
34	1983	Ishikawa	Protect and raise the tiny <i>midori</i> , and affluent home country	<i>Shinrin koen</i> (Forest Park)
35	1984	Kagoshima	Let's inherit the shining <i>midori</i> towards 21st century	Forest of the natural education

36	1985	Kumamoto	Diffuse the <i>midori</i> culture	Everybody's Forest
37	1986	Osaka	Trust the future of the city to the <i>midori</i>	Daisen Park
38	1987	Saga	Let's enhance the power of the <i>midori</i>	Ureshino Sports Park
39	1988	Kagawa	Now, the intercourse between the human and the <i>midori</i>	<i>Shinrin koen</i> (Forest Park)
40	1989	Tokushima	The <i>midori</i> of the relaxation, to the future	<i>Shinrin koen</i> (Forest Park)
41	1990	Nagasaki	The affluent <i>midori</i> , it's the energy for tomorrow	<i>Shinrin koen</i> (Forest Park)
42	1991	Kyoto	Fill the earth's future with the <i>midori</i>	Prefectural forest for the intercourse
43	1992	Fukuoka	We like this town and this <i>midori</i>	
44	1993	Okinawa	Let's raise the <i>midori</i> of the earth and the affluent future	<i>Shinrin koen</i> (Forest Park)
45	1994	Hyogo	Affluent mind with the <i>midori</i> of the forest	Forest of the intercourse with nature
46	1995	Hiroshima	Creation of the forest which we can see the peace from the universe	Central Forest Park
47	1996	Tokyo	Livelihood the forest supports, <i>Midori</i> the city raise	Metropolitan Forest, Marine Park, reclaimed land

Source : Kokudo Ryokka Suishin Kikou (1990), Tokyo Metropolitan Government (1996)

The main event of the National Festival of Afforestation is 'Oteue' (hand-planting) by *Tenno* and *Kogo*. The trees they had planted were carefully raised and protected, and the area centering around those trees were marked with monument and fences (see Figure 5). Thus the public forests have been endowed with the sacred hallmark by the National Festival of Afforestation. It is no longer an ordinary forest but a sacred forest.

Furthermore those sacred forest has been

marked with 'Oteire' (manuring) by *Kotaishi* (the Crown Prince) and *Kotaishihi* (the Crown Princess) in the National Festival of Silviculture. As noted in the previous chapter, most of the sites of the National Festival of Silviculture were the same places with those of the National Festival of Afforestation (Table 6). In that festival, the forest has been endowed with the sacred hallmark again by *Kotaishi* and *Kotaishihi*.

**Table 6 The National Festival of Silviculture since 1977**

No	Year	Prefecture	Theme	Remarks
1	1977	Oita	Creation of the home country full of the <i>midori</i>	Site of the 9th National Festival of Afforestation in 1958
2	1978	Akita	Let's create the green home country by way of silviculture	Site of the 19th National Festival of Afforestation in 1968
3	1979	Fukuoka	Let's raise the home country full of the <i>midori</i> and the water	<i>Kenmin no mori</i> (Prefectural Forest)
4	1980	Fukui	Let's create the affluent future by the <i>midori</i>	Site of the 13th National Festival of Afforestation in 1962
5	1981	Niigata	Let's raise the <i>midori</i> , the human and the affluent mind	Site of the 23rd National Festival of Afforestation in 1972, Prefectural Forest of the Youth
6	1982	Nagano	Let's diffuse the <i>midori</i> raised by an affluent mind	Site of the 15th National Festival of Afforestation in 1964

7	1983	Toyama	Bright future in the <i>midori</i> to be raised	Site of the 20th National Festival of Afforestation in 1969, Prefectural Park
8	1984	Iwate	Power to the <i>midori</i> , Dream to the future	Site of the 25th National Festival of Afforestation in 1974, <i>Kenmin no mori</i> (Prefectural Forest)
9	1985	Chiba	Let's enlarge the circle of love to raise the <i>midori</i>	Site of the 4th National Festival of Afforestation in 1953
10	1986	Miyazaki	Let's raise the affluent forest and the culture of the wood	Site of the 24th National Festival of Afforestation in 1973
11	1987	Hokkaido	Creation of the forest by connecting the planted dreams	Site of the 12th National Festival of Afforestation in 1961, <i>Shinrin Koen</i> (Forest Park)
12	1988	Yamagata	Power and dream to the home country by way of silviculture	Site of the 11th National Festival of Afforestation in 1960, <i>Kenmin no mori</i> (Prefectural Forest)
13	1989	Ibaraki	May a breath of the <i>midori</i> reach to the future	Site of the 27th National Festival of Afforestation in 1976, <i>Ikoi no mori</i> (Forest of relaxation)
14	1990	Yamana-shi	Let's raise the affluent <i>midori</i> to be connected to the future	Site of the 1st National Festival of Afforestation in 1950
15	1991	Shimane	May the circle of the silviculture develop to the world	Site of the 22nd National Festival of Afforestation in 1971
16	1992	Kochi	The home country is a place of departure for the <i>midori</i> of the earth	
17	1993	Mie	The affluent <i>midori</i> which brings the grace and the gentleness	Site of the 31st National Festival of Afforestation in 1980, <i>Kenmin no mori</i> (Prefectural Forest)
18	1994	Ishikawa	Have an affluent tomorrow by raising the <i>midori</i> hand in hand	Site of the 34th National Festival of Afforestation in 1983, <i>Shinrin Koen</i> (Forest Park)
19	1995	Shiga	The shinning water and the affluent <i>midori</i> in the home country	Site of the 26th National Festival of Afforestation in 1975, <i>Kenmin no mori</i> (Prefectural Forest)

Source : Kokudo Ryokka Suishin Kikou (1990), 'Kokudo Ryokka' vol.27 (1991)~32 (1996)

As shown in Table 5 and 6, the word '*midori*' has always been used in the themes of both festivals. 'Home country full of the *midori*,' 'the affluent *midori*,' 'raise the *midori*.' The meanings of the '*midori*' are various: for example the nature itself, the trees or the color of green. But the word has been consistently used in the themes. The word '*midori*' has been connected to the National Festival of Afforestation, the National Festival of Silviculture and *Tenno* who is an essential hero of the festival.

The public forest produced since the late 1960's was not just a social resource to be consumed by the citizen, but also the stage where national event was conducted and the hero *Tenno* obtained an identity of '*midori*.' Therefore those forests have been distinguished from other ordinary forests and preserved as valuable and precious nature.

Production of the public forests like *Shinrin Koen* or *Kenmin no mori* all over the country did not only provide nature as an object of recreational practices, but also organized the 'network of sacred forests' (Ooiwa, 1993) where the hallmark of *Tenno* was engraved all over the countryside.

Japanese political scientist Sakamoto (1989) defines, as well as the National Athletic Meet, the National Festival of Afforestation as 'a circulating-type of event system' which could periodically objectify the legitimacy of the symbolic *Tenno* system. That is to say, various public forests are interpreted as 'the constructed stages where an integration of the nation could be expressed' (Sakamoto, 1989, p.262). The nation and nature are inseparably intertwined each other through the production of forests.

## Epilogue

In the summer of 1997, I had an opportunity to observe the 39th Natural Park Festival at Handa Plateau in Oita Prefecture. That festival is held every year at national parks or seminational parks in each prefecture<sup>7</sup>. On one day of July, I could attend that festival as one of the spectator (even the spectator could not attend without the invitation letter!). The place of the festival was located in the midst of Aso-Kuju National Park, and surrounded with beautiful grasslands and forests. Going through the gate with the slogan 'Can you

see the heart of nature?' I saw a large crowd of people waiting the opening of the festival. Soon a black painted high-class car entered into the meeting place with an excited announcement 'Here comes the Prince and Princess Hitachi!' Then bustle and confusion occurred in the crowds. Most of the spectators stood up and cried the name of the Prince and Princess Hitachi with waves of their hand. Women standing beside me talked with each other excitedly 'Did you look at Princess Hitachi? She's so beautiful!' They looked so excited and delightful. Then I became aware that the real hero and heroin of this festival were Prince and Princess Hitachi. They did nothing other than offering their congratulations in the ceremony. However their existence enabled a transformation of the crowd's experiences in the green nature from a local and private one to a national and public one.

Most of the forests examined in this paper were produced during the late 1960's and the early 1970's. It has already been two or three decades ago. Even now, however, a subtle connection between nature and the nation is still continuing in each forest all over the country. And such a connection evolves in the more non-political and innocent modes of representation. Certainly nature itself does not have any political or nationalistic roles. However when nature was represented through a campaign or a movement like the National-Land Afforestation Campaign, it would carry a national implication.

When we say 'Let's preserve the *midori*,' the meanings a word *midori* connotes are manifold. As suggested in prologue, the *midori* is manifested in both of the discourses of the leftist and the rightist. What the *midori* means depends on the structure of the place where the *midori* is represented, and on the position of subjects who talk about the *midori*. We have examined such structure (of the forest) and position (of the NLAPC and other governments) in this paper. Those structure and position are ones of the hegemonic place and subject in contemporary Japan. However those place and subject have also been contested by other places and subjects which have different structures and positions from those of hegemonic ones. Protest or opposition movements against the National Festival of Afforestation at Okinawa (in 1993) and Fukuoka (in 1992) suggest potentials for 'other natures' which has been

excluded from the 'Nature' for the nation.

'Empty center' Barthes (1982) called is not limited to the place of *Kokyo*. It also suggests the place of the forests all over the country which are both the neutral resources for recreational practices and the imaginary places where a symbol of the nation is objectified into the concrete form of nature. Because of its appearance of neutrality and purity, nature has not been critically considered. Perhaps, as well as 'empty center,' nature itself does not irradiate any power, but gives to the nation an invisible and empty centrality around which they are obliged to turn forever.

It is necessary for us to examine what we Japanese have left unreflected in the depth of nature since 1945.

### Notes

- 1) Though Barthes (1970) described *Kokyo* as 'de-meure masquee sous la verdure', in its English edition (Barthes, 1982), the word 'la verdure' is translated as 'foliage', and the nuance of 'green' has been erased.
- 2) Public name of Ueno park is 'Ueno-onshi-koen' (Ueno Imperial grant park) which was once the Imperial estate and bestowed on Tokyo-city in 1924. 'Shizen Kyoikuen' was also the Imperial estate and bestowed on the Ministry of Education in 1949.
- 3) This public opinion poll was conducted in January 1994 by the Prime Minister's Office. Three thousand of people over 20 years old were randomly sampled, and the rate of effective responses was 69.4 percent.
- 4) Meiji Memorial Hall, now used as a wedding hall, formerly was the place where Emperor had an audience with a foreign envoy, and where the Meiji Constitution was deliberated.
- 5) Forest planning of *Meiji-jingu* the Committee for Enshrining proposed was succeeded by the Department of Construction of *Meiji-jingu* in the Ministry of Domestic Affairs, and the latter changed the kinds of trees to be planted.
- 6) This document was written by Takanori Hongo, a technical expert of the Department of Construction of *Meiji-jingu*, dated 20 October 1921. However I could not find this original document, and quoted its contents from *Meiji-jingu keidai sogochosa iinkai* (1980, pp.8-9).
- 7) The Natural Park Festival is a central event of the



'living with nature' campaign advocated by the Environment Agency (Prime Minister's Office). The festival consists of the ceremony, camp fire and the field recreation. The Crown Prince and Crown Princess attend this festival every five years and Prince and Princess Hitachi attend other years.

### iii)

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