began research on how and where to dispose in 1962. In 1999, the geological disposal method was confirmed technically possible. In 2000, the year when Eurayoki Municipality was selected as a top candidate for the final disposal, the NUMO officially recruited candidates for final disposal site. At this time, NUMO's plan was divided into three stages: site selection, boring survey, and underground construction through scrutiny. Regarding the site for disposal, a suitable site is to be selected among the candidates from the municipalities. If a selected municipality disagrees at a certain stage, it never goes ahead. Consequently, 40 years have been wasted because the NUMO prioritized the municipality's opinions.

In 2015, the NUMO again recruited a candidate for the final disposal site, but, so far, no municipality has applied for it. Currently, the waste fuel (including low-level, intermediate-level) stored temporarily at the utility's yard, is occupying some 70% of all the storage space. According to the METI, it planned to select a "scientific candidate" in 2016, but no site has been designated. Even worse, there has no public discussions held between the government and municipalities on this matter.

On May 30, 2016, the Nuclear Energy Authority (NEA) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) advised Japan hold a dialog among the government, the public, and regulatory authority as soon as possible to continue open communication. In other words, OECD urged the Japanese government and people to talk face-to-face, but not using traditional Japanese methods whereby the government outlines the national policy and private utilities put it into practice by constructing nuclear facilities (KOKUSAKU MIN-EI) or by negotiating behind-the-scenes with municipalities (NEMAWASHI). Interestingly, OECD's recommendation indicates the fundamental difference between Finland's and Japan's energy policy.

Concluding Observations

Japan's government–led energy policy backed by private electric utilities has only given a small chance for municipalities to participate in the public discussions. Moreover, the lack of open communication became apparent when no municipality accepted to be a candidate for the final disposal site, a place the mounted stockpile of spent nuclear fuel needs to go. On the other hand, Finnish bottom-up energy policy, where private utilities (i.e., TVO and Fortum) initiated the disposal project, followed by the approvals from government and parliament, offered a bigger chance for open dialogue and discussions—a typical model of democracy. The fundamental difference between the two nations lies in their respective political circumstances. Japan, as one of the US allies, is closely connected to the US energy strategy, whereas Finland is solely independent related to energy policy. In principle, the Finnish way of establishing a nuclear waste management project is a role model Japanese people should follow.

Cross-cultural Environmental Ethics and Activism in Japan and Taiwan

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The global environmental crisis confronts us with the need to build a global normative motivational structure for environmental ethics. I attempt to contribute to drafting it by showing how environmental activists in Japan and Taiwan harmonize their activism with the traditional cultural values. Environmental activists are willing to change their behavior and the society itself in order to "sustain" the environment. In doing so, they might enter into conflict with some East Asian ethical values, such as the importance of "harmony", or changing the self in order to adapt it to the world instead of changing the world itself.

First, I show that despite the threat of social disapproval and, activists claim to achieve a better quality of life through gaining a strong sense of purpose. Second, I show how social media contribute to building a "community of activism" by bringing together like-minded people from various socio-cultural backgrounds. Yet, convincing people to change their behaviours usually takes one-to-one conversations and exchanges on a very personal and emotional level. At this level, we are all confronted to our human vulnerability to environmental changes. This common vulnerability lies the foundations for a global environmental ethics.

Introduction

On March 11th 2012, exactly one year after the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, I was walking along with around 8000 people towards Mühleberg's nuclear power plant in Switzerland, one of the world's oldest nuclear reactor still in operation[1]. The march was urging the Swiss government to phase out nuclear power and demonstrators observed one minute of silence in solidarity with the victims of the disaster in Japan.

This is just one example of how environmental issues are taking global significance in our contemporary world. The many ways (physical, economical, through the media, etc.) in which we are connected to the events affecting other people and their environments all over the world confront us with the question of *what we should do* in response or in prevention to them. This question brings us to the difficulty of making normative judgements about other people's lifestyles and cultures, especially when we know little about each other's socio-cultural backgrounds. This sheds light on the need to discuss a culturally sensitive environmental ethics.

This discussion is already going on between theories and ideas in the intellectual world, and between various stakeholders in the public sphere. In order to draft an ethical framework sensitive, at least, to the East Asian cultural background, I illustrate the debate

[1] This article is to be presented at the *International Conference on Multicultural Democracy*, on May 11-12, 2018 in Fukuoka, Japan. I am grateful to all the interviewees for exchanging with me on so personal subjects. I also would like to thanks the active members of Kiko Network and Green Action, two environmental advocacy NPOs in Japan for having me as an intern and for letting me take part in discussions and meetings. Finally, I want to thank the communication team and the members of the secretariat of IPBES (UNEP) in Bonn, Germany, for the precious insights and training they gave me on the use of social media by international (environmental) organizations such as the United Nations.

in environmental ethics with voices from environmental activists in Japan and Taiwan. By willing to change their behavior and the society itself in order to "sustain" the environment, environmental activists often enter into conflict with some of their traditional ethical values, such as the importance of "harmony".

When taking part in their activities and discussing with environmental activists in Japan and Taiwan, I am perceived simultaneously as an "insider", as I share some of their values and also participate in some kind of activism, and as an "outsider", as I am a foreign woman coming from a completely different cultural background. About the methodology, I did participatory observation and non-direct interviews while taking part in activities of various environmental advocacy groups in Japan and Taiwan over the last three years. Besides, I conducted semi-structured interviews during this last year with some environmental activists I had the chance to meet, while others preferred to reply anonymously on an online survey (translated in Japanese and traditional Chinese).

First, I explore the idea appearing often in intellectual debates about ethics in East Asian traditions that speaking up is discouraged as it threatens the harmony of the community. I contrast it with environmental activists' perceptions of social mechanisms of exclusion and show that instead of struggling to harmonize their own values with the cultural expectations, they tend to achieve a better quality of life through gaining a strong sense of purpose.

Second, I show how social media contribute to building a "community of activism". Indeed, while being essential tools for raising awareness to a wider audience, they also allow activists to meet other like-minded people and to develop a feeling of belonging to a community of activists whom they may later meet in real life. Despite the richness of the possibilities of SNS, I argue that convincing people to change their behaviours usually takes one-to-one conversations and exchanges on an emotional and very personal level.

Finally, I conclude by showing how our human and humane vulnerability to environmental changes can give us the common grounds for drafting a global normative motivational structure for environmental ethics.

1. Is activism a threat to harmony?

At first glance, a common aspect of East Asian ethical philosophical traditions such as Buddhism and Taoism is the importance given to self-cultivation. Priority seems to be given to changing the Self in order to adapt it to the world, *instead of changing the world itself.* East Asian ethical traditions seem to foster individuals to be "internally" active, and there seem to be an apparent tension with environmental ethics understood as a form of environmental activism. Indeed, environmental activism supposes "external" action to change not only behaviors, but also the society itself in order to "sustain" the environment.

For example, in ancient Chinese philosophy, Xunzi considered self-cultivation and the practice of rituals as the expression of ethics. In Japanese context, this can be seen in the importance given to the execution of *kata* in martial arts, or of specific rituals as in the tea ceremony or the flower arrangement. These practices are, of course, social, because their rules and procedures are defined by the community and the cultural imaginary. But their goal is the development and improvement of the self. This aspect might also be reflected in the importance given to the role in these societies strongly influenced by Confucianism (also see Feldman, 2000):

> Human activities must follow rigid forms as prescribed in the rituals (li, 禮) because these rituals are the manifestation in the individual of past cultural norms (represented by the formal aspect of the ritual) and of a new ideal expressed through the ritual acts (the feeling with which these acts are performed). (Mayeda, 2006, 118).

According to Confucian Ethics (and to a certain extent to Taoism), then, one should lead its life according to these ancient norms, intertwining the social (objective) and the individual (subjective) (Wee, 2011; Doh, 2012). For example, the individuality and the originality of the self of an artisan are expressed through the excellency of the interpretation of her[2] role in the society (Kondo, 1992, 41). In East Asian societies emphasizing harmony with others and family relationships, individual identities are constructed as interdependent and strongly connected with others, stressing the importance of external features such as statuses, roles, and relationships. To fit in a group and to fill a social role are considered as essential. Indirect communication is preferred (Singelis, 1994).

From this perspective, the self is not barely expressed through open rebellion towards social standards, but through the re-interpretation of these standards and norms while understanding the cruciality of the harmony of the interdependent community of individuals. Mentioned in my conversations with Japanese environmental activists, the popular Japanese proverb "the stake that sticks up gets hammered down" (出る杭は打たれる) **gives a vivid image of how speaking up and standing out is socially discouraged.**

On top of this socio-cultural background come personal doubts about the correctness of one's own opinion concerning environmental issues. Indeed, contemporary environmental issues such as climate change are characterized by an extreme complexity and a fundamental uncertainty. In a constantly changing and partially unknown system, not only cause-to-effect relationships cannot be fully determined, but also what tools and actions are the most appropriate to face and fix environmental problems is unclear.

More concretely, environmental activists in Japan and Taiwan are sometimes confronted with the threat of exclusion from their local community, social stigma and general cultural disapproval. In some cases, it leads to harassment, blackmailing attempts and death threats[3]. For example, when asked if he had ever been threatened as a member of an environmental group, a Taiwanese interviewee replied:

> "When the [political party] was formed [in…] to participate in the elections, it was threatened by local gangsters because it challenged the gang-backed candidates" (Online, 10th August 2017, Taiwan).

During informal exchanges, some Japanese anti-nuclear interviewees also reported being followed and one told me that such pressures drove one acquaintance to suicide, and some others to ostracism. Fortunately, most of the interviewed activists did not face such extreme threats. Nevertheless, at the very least, "coming out" as an environmental activist involves taking high social risks and may trigger identity costs. Whistleblowers are never welcome, because they shed a harsh light on problems and disturb the image of a harmonious society thriving gloriously to progress. Standing up for one's personal opinion and ideals, and doing so challenging the dominant state of affairs takes courage and determination. Thus, one can suspect that such a decision is not taken lightly, and that environmental activists would have carefully weighed up the pros and cons.

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[2] I use the feminine as gender neutral.

[3] 作為組織/團體的一員，您受到過威脅嗎？如果有，為什麼？請具體描述。X 年成立 X 黨參與選舉時，曾經遭到當地的黑幫威脅，因為我們的參選威脅到黑幫支持的候選人。

When speaking up, East Asian environmental activists are often confronted to expressions of their non-confrontational "harmonious" socio-cultural backgrounds such as threats, ignorance and disapproval. However, the activists I've spoken to do not seem to feel a tension between the values driving their environmental activism and the values of harmony and compliance inherited from the cultural ethical traditions. Some notice a tension between the role that they were expected to fit in (e.g. quiet housewife and mother) and their activity (e.g. spokesperson for a climate change advocacy NPO), but such tension does not translate into an internal struggle for coherence between personal values.

On the contrary, the narratives and life-stories of most activists describe an improvement in their quality of life linked to a better "sense of purpose" and harmony within oneself. There are two main elements that pushed the interviewees to become environmental activists. The first one is a personal life story about how some environmental issues grew up to become so important in one's worldview. Some activists can put the finger on one specific life-changing event that made them decide that *they had to do it* (e.g. the change of the legal age for election to 18 years old in Taiwan). The other recurring element in the interviews is the feeling of urgency. Some action needed to be taken imperatively, and it needed to be done *right now*. Many interviewees came up by themselves in the conversation with the idea that environmental activism is one of the things that is giving meaning to their life, not only to their everyday life, but also to their life as a whole.

The life story of Lin (not her real name) illustrates how the sense of duty and the sense of purpose intertwine in her practice of environmental activism. I met Lin by chance when she was campaigning as a Greenpeace activist in the streets of Taipei. During her childhood, her father brought her mountain climbing and bird seeing and shared with her his love for nature: "he showed me how beautiful Taiwan (and the nature) is. Taiwanese people don't know how beautiful it is. That makes me sad"[4]. Lin experienced loneliness until she started following the teachings of a Confucian mentor who taught her "how to communicate and connect with people". Lin does not practice meditation, but reflects on herself and seeks to "teach others by example".

She did not recognize herself as an "environmental activist" (translations carry different connotations). She insisted that she is not an expert about environmental issues, as she studied interior design. But working in this field was too busy, too "dark", and overworking is not her dream. She pointed out shyly:

> "I don't want to earn money to go to hospital. [...] I hope I can help the world. [...] When I'm old, I don't want my grandchildren to look bad at me (like I've done nothing). [...] I want my life brilliant – wonderful" (Taipei, 26th July 2017).

For her as well as for most of the interviewees, the social threat of exclusion or stigma is outweighed by the prospect of what would happen if nobody does anything. In Lin's case, the fear of losing Taiwan's beautiful natural environment got her interested in environmental issues. Then, she realized different issues such as pollution in Taiwan and ice-melting in the Arctic were all related. Finally, she notes that before meeting her

[4] Interview in a café in Taipei, 26th July 2017 – translated together during the interview with one of her friend.

Confucian teacher, "the world was Taiwan", but after, she *feels* connected to the whole world.

The reasons for becoming committed to an environmentally-friendly behavior and to start activism are often very emotional. Environmental activism involves turning the fear of losing into the will to protect. Environmental destruction and disasters are *painful* ("It hurts!") and fill up activists with sadness and sometimes despair ("I sometimes want to give up"). Yet, these strong and dark emotions transform into anger and pro-active indignation. Finally, these mixtures of emotions are sublimated into an empowered enthusiasm and positivity about the real possibility for change.

Another example is Chang's (not her real name) commitment to veganism. She can clearly describe the turning point that drew her to take animal rights issues personally. She was deeply moved by a documentary about the industry of animal-based products (meat, eggs, diary, etc.) that she watched at her Buddhist high school (where she practiced regularly meditation). She explains that in Taiwan, "many people don't want to eat meat because it means killing the animals (and the suffering of sentient beings), but they are unaware of what's happening behind eggs and milk production"[5]. After watching the documentary, she decided to study chemistry to be able to make a change. However, very soon she realized that changing the world is not only about knowledge and invention, but more about money and the diffusion of the invention. She is now active online in different social media groups about veganism (exchanging various information such as recipes, restaurants, shops, and documentaries), and she plans to open a vegan restaurant in the future. The main reason is that she noticed that it was easy to convince people with food as "it's a nice opportunity to exchange". She does not feel threatened at all. On the contrary, she thinks that the population might quite support her, if she can explain what is really going on in the animal industry. Neither does she see any tension between her activism and her cultural or religious practices. She points out that Buddhist teachings (to be always taken with critical mind – she adds) foster compassion for all sentient beings, and so are the arguments against the industry of animal products. Yet her activism is not political nor religious and she does not challenge dominating powers in the public sphere. Her activity is very personal, centered on her lifestyle, the people around her, and social media.

References to the Taiwanese peculiar geopolitical situation appeared in most of the interviews in Taiwan. Lin also raised: "Our history taught us how to fight. We know we have to fight". Besides, many of the environmental activists I met were part of the students occupying the streets with tents during the Sunflower student movement between March 18th and 10th April 2014 in the Legislative Yuan and Executive Yuan. A leader of a young Green political movement explained that she feels that in Taiwan "there is no choice". The "constant threat of mainland China" is pushing them to speak up[6]. Some weeks before our meeting, until being forced to leave by the government, her group occupied the ruins of an arena that "was supposed to be a park, but now they [government and companies] want to destroy it to build a huge shopping mall". Politically active, her group also provides legal supports in environmental lawsuits. In short, for most Taiwanese environmental activists, the geopolitical situation of Taiwan reinforces the feeling of emergency and urges them to take action.

[5] Interview at her apartment in Taipei, 30th July 2017, in English.
[6] Interview in a café in Taipei, 27th July 2017.

Activism can seem to be a threat to the "harmony" of the local traditional community as it challenges the status quo and seeks to bring a change. Activists are creating a tension with the dominant positions of the elites in power, and sometimes with the so-called traditional values. In spite of that, activists often describe being in harmony with "something higher", which may be nature, the Earth, or their (re-) interpretation of cultural values such as the transmission of the heritage received from their ancestors as beautiful as it was to their grandchildren. For example, when asked why and what he wanted the most to leave for the future, a Taiwanese interviewee replied:

> "A beautiful earth, because every life deserves the opportunity to share it"[7].

Concern for posterity also appeared in Lin's quote above. It is recurring in the narratives of environmental activists in East Asia, and also in the discourses to the public. In Japan, in demonstrations such as the Earth Parade or marches against the restart of nuclear power plants, a very commonly chanted slogan is "for the future of our children"[8]. This remarkable concern for future generations may take its roots in Confucian ethical traditions. It may have been reinforced by the fact that historically, housewives and mothers have been leading the Japanese environmental grassroots movements (such as the famous example of Minamata disease in 1968). In contrast, I did not observe such an emphasis in European environmental demonstrations' culture.

Another common discourse pattern appearing in environmental activists' interviews and speeches is the identification to and fighting for a *higher good* such as the beautiful prospect of living in harmony with nature. A narrative about the former golden age when human beings were living in harmony with nature is often found in East Asia, as shown by the success of the "revival" of the concept of Satoyama in Japan (Kagawa-Fox, 2012, pp. 34-35; Saito and Shibata, 2012; Takeuchi, 2010). It is difficult to express "wilderness" in Japanese, because there is "no such thing as nature without humans". The idea of pristine nature as distinct from and uncontrollable by human beings is not a commonplace in Japanese culture. Hayashi writes that in traditional Shinto beliefs, "nature was a mysterious and powerful place, and people developed effective methods for living in harmony with it" (2002, p. 35). Such storytelling is very popular among Japanese environmental activists.

2. "Community of activism" and social media

In addition to the sense of purpose gained by committing to an environmental cause that matters to them personally, environmental activists also tend to develop a feeling of belonging to a "community of activism". The development and the ubiquity of social networking sites (SNS) such as Line, Facebook, and Twitter has expanded the possibilities to connect with other like-minded people all over the world. Social media are light-touch tools characterized by an end-user structure, or the capacity to involve

[7]您最想留給未來（如：後代子孫）什麼呢? 為什麼？ 一顆美麗的地球，因為每一個生命都有分享它的機會。(Online, 10th August 2017, Taiwan).

[8] "子供の未来のため", appearing on banderoles, flyers, and chanted during demonstrations such as Earth Parade in Kyoto on November 29th 2015, and the People's Climate March Kyoto, on April 30th 2017. Other common chant: "気候を守ろう 環境を守ろう 京都で一緒に歩こう。"

people with one another, socially, politically and intellectually (Bimber et al., 2012, 42). "Peer-to-peer" contemporary technologies are increasing the importance of personal motivations and goals, because "the aggregate technological environment facilitates individuation" (Bimber et al., 2012, 184).

Environmental activists use media in three main ways: to exchange information, to get to know other like-minded people, and as channels to spread the message they are fighting for. These echo the distinction of the three main contributors to involvement in organizations by Bimber, Flanagin and Stohl (2012, 29). And these can as well apply to membership in SNS groups such as Chang's activities on Facebook groups on veganism. The first reason to get involved is instrumental as members receive a direct return through information such as vegan restaurants and recipes. The second is social and refers to the interaction with other people sharing similar concerns and values. Third is the wish to be represented by the group about crucial issues, like Chang's will to make her voice and indignation about the conditions of production of animal products heard.

Online activism, the third dimension, is usually wide and shallow because of the structure of social media. Activists use it to raise awareness and share information to a wider public about environmental issues. SNS are also used to put pressure on governments and companies through shaming strategies and online petitions (such as Greenpeace and change.org online campaigns). NGOs often provide "activist toolkits" to be easily used in various personalized ways online, from sharing a post to adding a "pin" showing affiliation and support to a movement on one's profile picture.

Through the (changing) algorithms, the biggest global social media network, Facebook, encourages users to exchange about "small things":

> "Facebook is more concerned with discussing the subjective, personal "small" elements of everyday life rather than the objective, impersonal "big" of public life that takes more time to digest and articulate, requires deliberation and is more difficult to commodify. (…) [On Facebook,] Even when we engage in "big" issues, we do so through the lens of subjective personal experience." (Marichal, 2012, 63-64).

The Facebook architecture of disclosure pushes users to express their own passionate personal and situated opinions. Rational "common good" debate as acclaimed in the public sphere literature is not encouraged by the very structure of nonymous social networks. This has two paradoxical consequences. The first one is the creation of a high diversity of cacophonous voices. Among them are the one of environmental activists. Second, little by little, users tend to become isolated in groups of like-minded people and lose access to this messy diversity, as they "block" access to people with strongly conflicting opinions.

For environmental activists, NGOs, the UN bodies and any organizations wanting to be heard, this means that messages on SNS should be targeted to typical personas and drive on their emotional attitudes to foster their engagement ("click", "like", "share", commenting and signing the online petition, etc.). Posts with strong engagement from a high variety of users will then be prioritized by the algorithm to appear to more users. All the environmental activists I interviewed use social media to some degree, with more or less professionalism. Nevertheless, social media are nowadays an unavoidable tool for reaching the goals of activism (civil society building, raising awareness, pressure companies, etc.).

For environmental activists who may suffer from isolation and lack of understanding in their local communities, social interaction with like-minded supportive other people is also essential. In many cases, the "lonely" activist will join social media groups about the specific (or general) issue that matters to her. Over a second phase, she may take part in events organized through social media pages, meet other members and build real-life long-term relationships. These one-to-one relationships are keys to long-term activism.

Social media encourage the creation and flourishment of global networks of people sharing interest about some general issues. They make possible the creation of a "community of activism" spanning across large geographical distances, and sometimes also across time (as posts and groups do not get erased even after a long time span without any activity). These networks are developed around multiple emergent and transient hubs often without any apparent hierarchy nor leader. Fluidity and personal linkages characterize these networks spanning across the Internet (Ganesh and Stohl, 2010).

In comparison with Europe, there are only a few "formal" transnational environmental activists' networks in East Asia. One of them is the Asia Pacific Greens Federation (APGF), founded in 2005 in Kyoto (Japan). It works as an umbrella organization and its members include the Japanese and the Taiwanese Green Parties. The activists I met tend not to be aware of the existence of such networks, or even not to have much information about the activities of other activists in neighbouring countries. The activists and organizations in Japan and Taiwan actively seeking support from outside their own nation tend to look more at the Western countries. However, some interviewees who had the chance to meet neighbouring nations' activists had built long-term strong friendly ties.

Social media are used to reaching out to wide audiences and bring together people with similar sensitivities. Yet, they seem to be largely inefficient at changing one's personal opinions or at engaging key players in a discussion towards concrete changes. Indeed, social media tend to crystallize a social identity and comfort individuals in their choices instead of stimulating them to self-examination and rational debates from a – artificial – objective position. As always, changing people's opinions can be done, but it needs more than sharing some moving picture of polar bears and information on social media.

Convincing other people about the importance of some change of behaviors or policies usually takes one-to-one conversation. As we previously saw, the deeper reasons pushing activists to act are not rationally balanced principles. On the contrary, they are heavily emotionally charged ideals. And often, activists themselves are perfectly conscious of some apparent contradictions in their worldviews. A long-term figure of anti-nuclear activism in Japan, Green Action Japan leader Aileen Miyoko Smith, told me about her two "internalized contradictory mottos". On the one hand, she recognizes that (the restarting of) nuclear power plants "can only be stopped together with everybody". But on the other hand, she is determined that "Even alone, I will do it!"[9]. Through her career in the anti-nuclear advocacy movement in Japan, she is often confronted to the strict hierarchy of the administration that functions as "doors to prevent us to go higher in the hierarchy". Facing unshakable deterrent obstacles to change things, she is constantly questioning her methods to figure out "how to stop this thing from happening"

[9] "みんなと一緒でしか止めることができない"and "あたしだけでやっちゃう！" Interview in Kyoto on November 29th 2017. Green Action Japan website: greenaction-japan.org/en

(referring to the restart of nuclear power plants and the prospect of another nuclear disaster such as the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Disaster in 2011 and still ongoing).

She came to the conclusion that the best way of changing things was to change people themselves, one person at a time. Instead of confronting people with scary global long-term prospects and pointing out their dark role and their duties to act, it is more fruitful to "find in each person what makes them happier and find a match" with one own values and reasons for activism. Aileen describes the long, smooth process of bringing one to choosing the principle that "empowers you, nourishes you" and then becomes a core value.

Environmental decision-making comes down to a very personal and profound level and goes to the core of the individual identity and guiding values. Thus, to influence one's decision-making in a long-lasting way, environmental activists need to find a common ground with the person they are speaking with and touch her emotionally with their own life stories. These one-to-one exchanges can shatter not only the person who might be having a life-changing conversation, but also the activists themselves. As the issues they are fighting for are lying at the core of their identities, it can be threatening to discuss them with an unknown other.

3. Common vulnerability

All this brings us far away from rational philosophical or political debate about sets of abstract moral principles discussed in a logical way. Some scholars worry that this move away from the neutral, objective debate threatens the very basic democratic ideals and may sign the end of the public sphere. But maybe, moving the debate to a more personal level might bring it to a more accessible level:

> "Abstract political debate is a (language) game, like aesthetic criticism, and like the competence entailed in aesthetic criticism, its requisite competence must be acquired. It presupposes immersion, experience and perhaps some formal instruction. But as with aesthetic competence, these formative experiences manifest a structured and unequal social distribution". (Crossley, 2004, 104)

Crossley notes that such competencies to abstract political debates are usually present mainly in the "educated middle-class". In the end, bringing the environmental debate on a personal level through the personalizing lenses of SNS and one-to-one conversations may be a more democratic move than elevating it to abstract philosophical realms. It might also bring to light what is common to all of us and support the ongoing building of a transnational public sphere based on personal interactions and relationships. From this more optimistic perspective, the Internet and social media might preserve and extend "the dialogical character of the public sphere in a potentially cosmopolitan form" and improve deliberative democracy (Bohman, 2004, 152).

More than political ideals, what binds us together globally are the intimate desires and everyday life concerns that make us human. These do not only present us with our sameness, but it also makes us intelligible to each other. Besides, the global environmental crisis highlights the vulnerability and fragility to changes in our environment of each of us, and of all of us as specie. Like any specie, if we, human beings, are to survive in the long term, we inevitably need to adapt ourselves to unescapable changes in our environment.

Based on the commonness of our human vulnerability, I propose the following reasoning as a draft of common global normative motivational structure about environmental ethics. As humans living, we value our existence. Environmental sustainability is a necessary condition for our existence. Furthermore, adaptability is a necessary condition for our survival and environmental sustainability. On the conscious deliberate level, creativity and better stimulation of ideas increase the chances of finding the appropriate solution to a problem. On the more biological level, higher diversity leads to better adaptability. Then, on the individual level, I suppose that maximizing one's diversity of experiences (physical, intellectual, emotional...) is stimulating ideas and creativity. It follows that in order to reach a better adaptability, we need to foster the diversification of experiences.

Given the value that we, human being, give to our existence, two normative conclusions can follow. I call the first one "principle of curiosity", as it normatively encourages individuals to seek encounter and exchanges with diverse unknown others. Indeed, as we saw before, it is encounters that build individual values in a long-lasting and pervasive way. The second one, the "principle of freedom of thought", refers to the avoidance of dogmatic walls that exclude some experiences (including conceptual and thought-experiences). Indeed, dogmatic walls would restrict experiences and be contradictory with the principle of curiosity.

Yet comes the delicate problem of intervention. Indeed, what gives environmental activists the "right to criticize" other people's ideas and behaviors? To some extent, for many environmental issues, we could consider that the rights that activists have to live in a clean and healthy environment, and to offer such a livable environment to their children gives them legitimacy to criticize and oppose action from others that may thwart these. As the political philosopher Matthias Risse writes: "reflection on ownership of the earth leads to membership rights in the global order, and to human rights" (2012, 34). He continues arguing for the responsibility of powerful entities such as states, NGOs and universities to enforce these rights and build a common motivational structure. But these entities are composed of individuals, and in the case of NGOs, many of them are activists.

Environmental activists criticizing some practices in their own culture are sometimes accused by the dominant voices in that very "culture" to have been "brainwashed" by external discourses (sometimes called "Western propaganda"). But the very fact that they are disharmonious voices inside a "culture" shows its heterogeneity and the difficulty to choose whose voice is most legitimate to represent the "authority" about one's cultural norms. Meanwhile, the environmental crisis and the subsequent humanitarian crisis are pressing us to take concrete action. In the end, "we are stuck with the necessity of passing moral judgement at the global level, and must create the motivational structure needed to sustain such judgements" (Risse, 2012, 48-49).

Nowadays, due to globalization, we are all connected to other human beings. We are connected through our shared environment, as air and water pollution do not recognize national borders, nor does climate change. We are connected through the economic ties of trade, which bring food to our tables and manufactured objects to our offices. And finally, we are connected through the traditional media (newspapers, radio, TV), and the

Internet and social media. We thus *need* shared moral standards applying to all human beings.

And yes, like any of us, environmental activists are not fully coherent nor perfect in their reasoning nor in their actions. Nevertheless, in Martha Nussbaum's words, we must not "indulge in moral narcissism when we flagellate ourselves for our own errors" while others are and will suffer from the consequences of our non-action (1996, 1). By voicing out their concerns about environmental issues in a variety of personal ways, environmental activists are contributing to the building of a sustainable multicultural community. They might also remind intellectuals and politicians that while they are debating about the incoherence of some principles or facing conflict of interest to pass some laws, environmental problems continue to unfold in many unexpected manners and threaten our very existence.

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Session VIII Memory and Dialogues for Multicultural Democracy

Comparative War Memory of the Japanese Occupation of Southeast Asia

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The remarks of Southeast Asia's leaders on their countries' memories of the Japanese Occupation regularly seem to bear out the often made observation that Southeast Asia is different from Northeast Asia when it comes to remembering the Japanese Occupation. Lee Hsien Loong, the Prime Minister of Singapore, when asked by Singaporean and Japanese reporters about the ongoing 'history wars' of Northeast Asia while in Japan during May 2013 commented: 'We should move forward and not keep reopening old issues. Because if we keep re-opening old issues it becomes more difficult to develop the relationships and the co-operation which you need in order to thrive in the twenty-first century.'[13] When visiting Tokyo in May 2014, the Prime Minister of Singapore told Japanese reporters that there is a contrast between the behaviour of nation-states 'in Southeast Asia where Japan has made accommodation and settled their war history with the countries' and the actions of 'China and Korea where this history has not really been put behind you'.[14]

Historian Wang Gungwu has argued that different histories have been at the heart of explanations of the differences in the memories of the Japanese Occupation in Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia.[15] The main argument is that the decades of Japan assisting Southeast Asian countries in their nation-building activities had greater impact on state sanctioned collective memory of the war than the brief three and a half year period of Japanese Occupation, although it was as brutal as the Japanese Occupation of Northeast Asia with its own massacres, comfort women, and cruelties.[16]

Implicit in the view that Southeast Asia is different from Northeast Asia in its memory of the Japanese Occupation is the assumption that there is some degree of uniformity on how the wartime past is remembered in the Southeast Asian region. Does comparative study bear out the notion of a uniformly subdued memory of the Japanese Occupation in Southeast Asia? What are possible points of comparison? Perhaps a major point of comparison could be: how have the Southeast Asian nation-states reconciled the conflicting and diverse memories of the Japanese Occupation as direct memories of individuals have been transformed into collective memories?

The State as an Agent of Reconciliation of Conflicting Ethnic War Memories in Multicultural Democracies: Malaysia and Singapore

T.G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson, and Michael Roper in their study of war memory across several continents describe the pervasiveness of how memories of direct experience transition into cultural memories, or collective memories.[17] In the countries of Southeast Asia, the main facilitator of this transition has been the state, which has sought to fashion its own narratives of the wartime past as tools for nation-building. In the democracies of Malaysia and Singapore, the actions of the two states reveal how they have dealt with their shared multicultural and multiracial pasts. Among the Southeast Asian countries, these two nation-states offer excellent case studies for contrast of this process as they

Keynote Speech

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Multiculturalism in Local Settings

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The process and outcomes of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development mark a significant departure from previously internationally agreed development goals such as the Millennium Development Goals. This long process involved more diverse groups of people in the consultation process; placed a greater emphasis on the reduction of inequality; highlighted more transformative aspirations; and paid more attention to the architecture of development governance such as the supra-national and sub-national levels.

Another distinctive feature is the Agenda's emphasis on respect for and the promotion of cultural diversity and a culture of peace as not only a norm, but also as a distinct goal, means of implementation and enabler of the SDGs, as set out in SDG Goal 4.7 and paragraph 36. The Agenda reaffirms the importance of the right of everyone to participate in cultural life, as previously enumerated in Article 15, paragraph 1(a), of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and reinforces its ambition to leave no one behind in all aspects of human development, including the cultural dimension.

Guaranteeing the right of everyone to participate in cultural life and promoting cultural diversity as an enabler for sustainable development for all may sound like two different things. They are, however, closely interconnected. Without fully realizing the right to participate in cultural life, it is impossible for people to lead a life people have a reason to value, which is the core of development as freedom. The promotion of culture as an enabler of sustainable development requires establishing and strengthening institutions and mechanisms that guarantee the right to participate in cultural life as a prerequisite for development.

The interdependence and connections between the right to participation in cultural life and the promotion of cultural diversity as an enabler of sustainable development are, however, often ignored or narrowly interpreted in the process of policy-making and implementation. For instance, education policies are often insensitive to the problems faced by linguistic and ethnic minorities, even where they are based on a policy approach of universal free education. Misguided policies inspired by wrongly interpreted secularism and gender equality can sometimes impede the realization of the right to participate in cultural life and express religious beliefs, as we can see in the case of the French ban on the wearing of headscarves at schools.

Second, a prerequisite for creating synergistic relations in multicultural contexts is the rebalancing of power asymmetries in order to guarantee equal participation in economic, social and political processes. Current debates on multiculturalism in many European countries are often framed around questions on the impacts of multiculturalism and its supposed role in creating fragmentation in society. Populist politics and policies increasingly target migrants and multiculturalism as a source of political, economic and social ills. Historical and empirical studies, however, demonstrate that the real driving force behind the formation of separate communities has not been the presence of

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