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For Leila

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations of Japanese and English Works

The following magazines, encyclopedias, and complete works editions are cited in text in parentheses by the abbreviation, followed by volume where applicable and page number(s).

AJZ	Abe Jirō. *Abe Jirō zenshū*. Edited by Komiya Toyotaka et al. 17 vols. Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1960–1966.
BCAP	Heidegger, Martin. *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*. Translated by Robert Metcalf and Mark Tanzer. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009.
BH	Bi-Hihyōsha. *Bi-Hihyō*. Edited by Fujii Teiji et al. 32 vols. Kyoto: Bi-Hihyōsha, 1930–1933.
BNS	Shinkō kagakusha. *Shinkō kagaku no hata no moto ni—fukkokuban*. 2 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami Bukku Sentā Shinzansha, 1982.
BT	Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. New York: Harper Perennial, 2008.
BW	Heidegger, Martin. *Basic Writings*. Edited by D.F. Krell. New York: Harper & Row, 1993.
D	Doyōbisha. *Doyōbi—fukkokuban*. Tokyo: Sanichi shobō 1974.
IPR	Heidegger, Martin. *Introduction to Phenomenological Research*. Translated by Daniel Dahlstrom. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.
ISB	Iwanami Shigeo. *Iwanami Shigeo bunshū*. Edited by Ueda Yasuo et al. 3 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2017.
ISH	Iwanami shoten. *Iwanami shoten hachijūnen*. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1996.
KJZ	Karaki Junzō. *Karaki Junzō zenshū*. 12 vols. Tokyo : Chikuma shobō, 1967–1968.
KOS	Kuno Osamu. *Kuno Osamu shū*. Edited by Sataka Makoto. 5 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1998.
LCW	Lenin, Vladimir. *V.I. Lenin Collected Works*. 54 vols. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976–1977.
MECW	Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels. *Collected Works*. 50 vols. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 2010).

MKZ Miki Kiyoshi. *Miki Kiyoshi zenshū*. Edited by Ōuchi Hyōe et al. 20 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966–1986.

NKZ Nishida Kitarō. *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*. Edited by Takeda Atsushi et al. 24 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2002–2009.

NMZ Nakai Masakazu. *Nakai Masakazu zenshu*. Edited by Kuno Osamu. 4 vols. Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1981.

S Iwanami Shoten. *Shisō*. Edited by Watsuji Tetsurō et al. 1149 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1921–present.

STC Shinmura Takeshi. *Shinmura Takeshi chosakushū*. Edited by Imae Yoshitomo et al. 3 vols. Tokyo: Sanichi shobō 1993.

THZ Tanabe Hajime. *Tanabe Hajime zenshū*. Edited by Nishitani Keiji et al. 15 vols. Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1963–1964.

TJZ Tosaka Jun. *Tosaka Jun zenshū*. 6 vols. Tokyo: Keisō Shobō 1966–1979.

TSZ Takahashi Satomi. *Takahashi Satomi zenshū*. Edited by Miyake Gōichi et al. 7 vols. Tokyo: Fukumura shoten, 1973.

WC Sekai bunkasha. *Sekai bunka—Shōwa shi shiryō*. 3 vols. Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1975.

WTZ Watsuji Tetsurō. *Watsuji Tetsurō zenshū*. Edited by Abe Yoshishige et al. 27 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1961–63, 1976–78, 1989–92).

ZSB Shinmura Takeshi et al. "Zadankai 'Sekai bunka' no koro." In Vol. 3 of *Sekai bunka—Shōwa shi shiryō*. Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1975.

Abbreviations of English Translations

The following translation are cited in text in parentheses by the abbreviation, followed by the page number(s).

AIT Nishida Kitarō. *Inquiry into the Good*. Translated by Abe Masao and Christopher Ives. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990. All translations modified.

GT David Gordon. "Self-Overcoming as the Overcoming of Modernity: Watsuji Tetsuro's *A Study of Nietzsche* (1913) and its Place in the Development of his Thought." PhD diss. Translated by David Gordon. University of Hawai'i, 1997. Modified translations indicated by "mod" after page number.

HT Nishida Kitarō. *Ontology of Production: 3 Essays*. Translated by William Haver. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012. All translations modified.

KNT Nishida Kitarō. *Place and Dialectic: Two Essays by Nishida Kitarō*. Translated by John Krummel and Shigenori Nagatomo. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. All translations modified.

NT Watsuji Tetsurō. *Pilgrimages to the Ancient Temples in Nara*. Translated by Hiroshi Nara. Maine: MerwinAsia, 2012.

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Abstract

This dissertation aims to philosophically and historically reconsider Kyoto School philosophy through the framework of totality—proceeding from Nishida Kitarō's 1911 *Inquiry into the Good* to Nakai Masakazu's 1936 "Logic of the Committee." Separating from religious- and Buddhist-oriented narrations of nothingness, I instead foreground Kyoto School aesthetic, social, and historical production to recast these thinkers via their attempts to holistically conceptualize social development as a self-formative or auto-generating process. Unlike Aristotelian substance, which requires something stable and self-identical that persists beneath or behind transformation as its *agent* of change, totality is here articulated in terms of "independence and self-sufficiency"—as a "self-moving" whole that "develops and completes itself of itself" without recourse to some more fundamental agent or subject behind it. My philosophical thesis is that Kyoto School thinkers wielded this concept of holistic development to offer a highly novel account of the "self-formation" of society and social forms. The idea is that, rather than relying on the agency of a more basic or pre-formed human subject, or on formal organization by some external state institution, these thinkers conceptualized the autotelic organization of society in terms of intersecting social levels—individuals, groups, collectives, publics, the masses, and class—and in doing so, created a space for these intermediate forms to immanently revise and spur macro-scale processes of social development from within. And yet, pursuing these ideas in their historical register, I also make it clear that this account was by no means immune to reactionary trends in 1910s, '20s and '30s Japan. Tracking differences across schemas of totality, my research clarifies the structural variations by which the concept of self-formation was co-opted within reactionary conceptions of social holism by certain first generation Kyoto School philosophers, while also providing the resources for an emerging second generation of Kyoto

School thinkers to conceptualize social forms like collectives and the masses with the “critical” and “collaborative” functions to intervene in social development, and, for instance, produce counter “public spheres” of “common sense.”

Introduction

In an introduction to *The Standpoint of Totality* (*Zentai no tachiba* 全体の立場), a 1932 collection of essays by Nishida critic-turned-convert Takahashi Satomi, we find an illuminating characterization of the theory of nothingness that has organized discussions of Kyoto School philosophy:

> what I consider absolute nothingness is a totality qua singular totality that encompasses the entire system itself. Empty of itself, it is a pure nothingness that envelops all being and yet also extinguishes all being. It is a supra-self-aware absolute that envelops all conscious limitations. It is more than a synthetic unity (*synthetische Einheit*). It is absolute singularity (*absolute Einzigkeit*), an absolute oneness (*absolute Alleinigkeit*)…The totality of the system is understood to transcend dualism and self-awareness as a complete and pure absolute nothingness (*TSZ* 7:254–255).

While the language of nothingness and extinction is indeed striking—perhaps in part accounting for its dominance in narrations of Kyoto School thought—what I appreciate most about Takahashi's study is its bold attempt to theorize Nishida philosophy in terms of totality and its cognates: whole, unity, singularity, oneness.

Nevertheless the designation did not find much traction. In fact, Takahashi seems to have retreated from totality amidst stiff criticisms of ambiguity, stasis, and Bourgeois idealism by Tosaka Jun, a Marxist philosopher and graduate from the Department of Philosophy at Kyoto Imperial University.[1] In "The Magic of 'Totality'" (*'Zentai' no majutsu* 『全体』の魔術), Tosaka's April 1934 review of Takahashi's *The Standpoint of Totality*, he writes:

> According to the professor, this "dialectical system" is not a dialectical movement because if it were not to transcend the "processual perspective" indicated by movement, then it would not be a totality and it would not be a system. Here such movement is entirely sublated. But Takahashi has a unique way of understanding this sublation—which is normally just a process in the dialectic. That is, he understands true sublation to

[1] I hereafter refer to Kyoto Imperial University as Kyoto University.

> be a pandora's box. And so here, by Professor Takahashi's own hand, it is entirely undialectical. This dialectic of nothingness is in fact the absence or nothingness of any dialectic at all. Thinking myself that the dialectic of motion was necessary for the practical solution of practical problems, I asked Professor Takahashi about how to treat such a dialectic; he told me that it was a mistake to assume such practical problems were themselves problems (*TJZ* 2:356).

He continues with regards to the form of idealism that emerges from ignoring practical problems:

> we should be aware of the fact that being or existence, outside of its being the object of some certain thing, loses its most important application. The source of being or existence is not the operation of ideas with respect to the activity of abstraction or the whole of experience, as is thought in Takahashi's philosophy, but rather comes from the fact that the world that we live in exists according to the clarity our everyday experience. Being does not have its source in ideas; rather, its source lies in the so-called matter at its roots. Here we find a tragedy in which the relationship between ideas and matter, even in an idealist dialectic, is formulated in terms of matter transcending ideas in the external world and then concepts having no recourse but to grasp this transcendent matter. Using the abstract activity of ideas to straighten this out does not resolve anything; it simply smashes the issue out of sight (*TJZ* 2:356).

There are two points that I would like to draw attention to moving forward. First, that the charges of stasis and Bourgeois idealism share much with criticisms of Nishida philosophy at this time—by, for instance, Miki Kiyoshi in 1928, Tanabe Hajime in 1930, and Tosaka himself in articles from 1932 and '33. From this, I draw initial support for the idea that totality is seen by a range of contemporary thinkers as characteristic of Nishida and first-generation Kyoto School philosophy. And second that, while Tosaka clearly takes issue with Takahashi's understanding, he does not entirely rule out the concept of totality—provided it remains dynamic, material, and "applied to various practical problems, rather than losing itself in the abstract world of philosophy itself" (*TJZ* 2:356). From this, I draw initial support for the idea that totality was also central to the understanding of later-generation Kyoto School thinkers like Tosaka, Miki, and Nakai Masakazu. Leaving aside for the present the accuracy of Takahashi's characterization of totality

as well as Tosaka's critique of it, I read this debate as a passing insight into one of the most central yet understudied concepts in modern Japanese cultural production: totality.

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This dissertation aims to historically reconstruct this concept of totality as a major through line structuring discourses on social formation in interwar Japan. Focusing on the Kyoto School, and in particular on their aesthetic, social, and historical philosophy, I examine the ways in which Kyoto School thinkers holistically conceptualize social development as a self-creative or auto-generating process. Across this historical investigation, my general philosophical claim is that the keen attention to totality among these thinkers, and in particular to its temporal articulation in terms of "self-formative activity," can be used to provide a novel perspective on a host of topics central to social ontology—including issues related to collective identity, joint action, social institutions, cultural formation, and political intervention.

With these historical and philosophical motivations in mind, we can begin to focus the two major terms of our study: Kyoto School and totality.

Part 1: The Kyoto School

The above Tosaka–Takahsahi debate takes on radically different meaning depending on where one positions themselves within the growing body of Kyoto School scholarship. On one side, it can be read to confirm Takahashi alongside thinkers like Nishida Kitarō, Tanabe Hajime, Kuki Shūzō, and Watsuji Tetsurō as a first-generation member of a small coterie of highly intelligent philosophers who are credited with having "brought Japanese philosophy to the world."[2] On the

[2] Robert Carter and Erin McCarthy, "Watsuji Tetsurō," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2019), http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2019/entries/watsuji-tetsuro

other, it can be read as a damning indictment of Takahashi's membership alongside these same figures within a circle of hyper-aesthetic, reactionary modernists that "promoted not just exceptionalism but a notorious exclusivism with wide-ranging consequences."[3] Whether this is formulated in terms of a split between "side-steppers" and "side-swipers" (as does James Heisig),[4] or between the more recent designations of "pure philosophy" and "intellectual history" (as do Viren Murthy, Fabian Schäfer, and Max Ward),[5] reading Kyoto School philosophy within this polarizing debate, and thus reproducing this difference, has become *de rigueur* for English-language studies of the Kyoto School.

Rather than reproducing this conversation *ad nauseum*, however, I think it will be best if we rather proceed by focusing the wide-range of figures that have been associated with the designation, "Kyoto School." The term was first deployed in the September 1932 article, "The Philosophy of the Kyoto School," written by the above Tosaka. In it, only three names are mentioned: the Kyoto University philosophy professors Nishida and Tanabe, and their student Miki. In the intervening years, membership numbers have swelled dramatically to include not just Tosaka himself, but also figures that he explicitly excluded from the Kyoto School, including Watsuji Tetsurō and Kuki Shūzō. In fact, more recent attempts to narrate the *Tale of the "Kyoto School"* by scholar Takeda Atsushi has expanded the ranks to well over eighty members.[6]

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[3] Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2000), 251.

[4] James Heisig, "The Religious Philosophy of the Kyoto School," in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 17, no. 1 (1990): 53.

[5] Viren Murthy, Fabian Schäfer, and Max Ward, "Introduction," in *Confronting Capital and Empire: Rethinking Kyoto School Philosophy* (Boston: Brill, 2017), 2.

[6] Takeda Atsushi, *Monogatari "Kyōto gakuha"—Chishikijintachi no yūjō to kattō* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron shinsha, 2012), 17–18.

To accommodate these divergent readings we must recognize that the Kyoto School does not designate a unity—either *ideologically* or *institutionally*. Most English-language commentators have followed the lead of Gino K. Piovesana and, more recently, James Heisig in *ideologically* tracking Kyoto School thought in terms of the development of a "logic of nothingness"[7] or as "philosophers of nothingness."[8] This has historical precedence in the work of Tosaka, who, in the above article on the Kyoto School, offers a description of middle period Nishida philosophy in terms of "bottomless nothingness" (*sokonaki mu* 底なき無). This emphasis on nothingness has gained particular prominence in religious- and East Asian-centric readings of the Kyoto School. In terms of Japanese-language scholarship, this position finds recent representative in figures like Abe Masao, Ueda Shizuteru, and Ōhashi Ryōsuke, but traces back to the initial reception of Nishida's work by friends like D.T. Suzuki, students like Hisamatsu Shinichi and Nishitani Keiji, and even the earlier mentioned Takahashi—who writes in the above work on totality:

> Although I have yet to fully grasp the profound meaning of absolute nothingness as taught by Dr. Nishida, it has something oriental about it that appeals deeply to our heart. It is probably because it has deep inner connection with Zen thought that I resonate and draw strength from his thought—which is why I have decided to follow him in his philosophical quest for absolute nothingness (*TSZ* 7:254).

In addition, narrations of nothingness have gained prominence amongst interpretations that stress early and middle period Nishida's engagement with logic and radical criticism. As Itabashi Yūjin has it, nothingness is the result of Nishida's developing Kantian radical criticism, and in particular of his attempt to abandon "as many philosophical presuppositions as possible

[7] Gino Piovesana, *Recent Japanese Philosophical Thought 1862–1966* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 85.

[8] James Heisig, *Philosophers of Nothingness* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001).

from the analysis of experience" with regard to subjects, objects, and their division.[9] Essentially, Nishida claims that "Kant starts with thinking that knowing is an action [from the subject toward the object], based on the opposition between the subject and the object [as 'thing in itself']" (*NKZ* 3:502–503). The thrust of Nishida's claim, as I understand it, is that, in a move constitutive of the transcendental turn, Kant premises the objects of knowing upon a knowing of knowing, but in doing so he finds himself unable to adequately consider the type of knowing that is being used to know what knowing is. The key presupposition that Kant makes, (that movements in, say, phenomenology inherit,) and that Nishida tries to dismantle, is that this knowing of knowing takes the form of an action from the subject to the object. Essentially, Nishida's early and middle period work—from the field of experience, to his theories of self-awareness, *basho* (place 場所), and ultimately nothingness—is aimed at purging our assumptions regarding the type of knowing that is constitutive of this knowing of knowing, and at recognizing that "behind consciousness" there must be "absolute nothing" (*NKZ* 3:433).

While these two interpretations of nothingness have provided nuanced and stimulating lines of thinking, and indeed find support in agreement with how nothingness was understood by contemporaries in the interwar period, we should keep a few points in mind before rallying around nothingness as the ideological core of the Kyoto School. The first drawback is that this concept renders thinkers like Miki into relatively "marginal figures" (*eine Randfigur*) in Kyoto School thought.[10] This is problematic because, while Miki may not have taken nothingness as his

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[9] Itabashi Yūjin, "Grounded on Nothing: The Spirit of Radical Criticism in Nishida's Philosophy," *Philosophy East and West* 68, no. 1 (2018): 97.

[10] Ōhashi Ryōsuke, *Die Philosophie der Kyôto-Schule* (Freiburg/Munich: Karl Alber, 2011), 14. As cited in: Kenn Nakata Steffensen, "The Political Thought of the Kyoto School: Beyond 'Questionable Footnotes' and 'Japanese- Style Fascism,'" in *The Bloomsbury Research*

primary concept, he nevertheless directly studied under Nishida, was named as a member in Tosaka's article, and (as I show in chapters 3 and 4) directly engaged Nishida thought in developing his philosophical system. The second drawback to this emphasis on nothingness is that it has, to reference Kenn Nakata Steffensen, "resulted in a relative neglect of the turn to philosophy of history and political theory that is evident in the writings of both Nishida and Tanabe in the 1930s, not to mention in that of their students."[11] In a book foregrounding the Kyoto School as *Philosophers of Nothingness*, for instance, one scholar flippantly dismisses "the place Nishida gave to history [as] one of the weakest points of his thought."[12]

More recent attempts to *ideologically* narrate the Kyoto School have begun to address both of these concerns; in doing so, however, they have resorted to a hardened political divide within the school. This narration finds its representative figures in the right-wing versus "left-wing" narrative of Hattori Kenji's *Nishida Philosophy and his Leftist Followers* in Japanese-language scholarship, as well as in the above so-called "side-swipers" in the anglophone discourse.[13] Despite the resolute refusal to acknowledge the many positive contributions of this discourse by many of the above "side-steppers" interested in nothingness, such a reading has rendered an important service by incorporating major figures like Tosaka and Miki, as well as traditionally overlooked figures like Funayama Shinichi, Nakai Masakazu, Kakehashi Akihide, and more, within Kyoto School scholarship. This is to say nothing of the nuanced discussion of

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Handbook of Contemporary Japanese Philosophy, ed. Michiko Yusa (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017), 75.

[11] Steffensen, "The Political Thought of the Kyoto School," 73.

[12] Heisig, *Philosophers of Nothingness*, 68. To be clear, I shift away from these strands of interpretation not with the aim of criticizing their reading of nothingness, but in order to expand the discourse so as to better accommodate Kyoto School work on social and historical philosophy within the purview of Kyoto School thought.

[13] Hattori Kenji, *Nishida tetsugaku to saha no hitotachi* (Tokyo: Kobushi shobō, 2000).

Marxism, fascism, modernity, and the politics of everyday life that pervade these discussions. But this discourse too has its shortcomings. Its most glaring drawback, at least insofar as it relates to its Kyoto School contributions, lies in its conceding the ideological force of a *school* of thought in favor of camps—right and left—thereby privileging leftist student opposition as an explanatory principle. Here, for instance, the relationship between Nishida and Miki is entirely obscured, as are the subtle ways in which, say, Miki's dialectical materialism embraces Nishida philosophy as its interlocutor (see: chapter 3). Even Tosaka's penetrating critique of Nishida (see: chapter 3) has received little attention in the Anglophone variant of this narration. Thus in this reading it would seem that the Kyoto school was shuttered relatively quickly—supplanted by a form of Marxism that had little in common with Nishida thought.

The attempt to *institutionally* narrate the Kyoto School faces a different set of challenges. We find recent examples in the work of Fujita Masakatsu and Takeda. This interpretive strand can likewise be traced back to Tosaka—who in the above-mentioned article refers to the Kyoto School as a "social entity that has now come into full formation" (*TJZ* 3:175). In much the same manner that, say, the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory is institutionally anchored somewhere in the interstices of the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt am Main, then Columbia University, and then again in Frankfurt, the Kyoto School is institutionally anchored in the Department of Philosophy, the Faculty of Letters, as well as in adjacent departments within Kyoto University.

Foregrounding these institutional connections has largely served to elide the constraints of nothingness as an ideological determinant, offering an inflationary avenue for conceptualizing the Kyoto School. But if the ideological unity gained through nothingness sacrifices institutional breadth for theoretical depth, institutional attempts to narrate the Kyoto School suffer in

reverse—relinquishing ideological depth in service of institutional breadth. More generally, the downside of this approach is that it cuts the ideological force of conceptualizing these thinkers together as a school of thought. Thus Takeda's book, despite performing a great service by expanding the horizons of who we understand to be a member of the Kyoto School, forfeits any forceful ideological narrative connecting its thinkers together.

All of which is to say that this ideological–institutional distinction is always proportional, and when any one trajectory is pursued the other quickly rears its head as a check to its development. For Tosaka, for instance, the Kyoto School as a "social entity" quickly becomes transmogrified with the ideological content of nothingness, which he reads as an expression of the romanticism afflicting bourgeois philosophy in the age of modern capitalism (*TJZ* 2:348). To be sure, this ideological and institutional melding is not necessarily a bad thing. To return to the Frankfurt School comparison, it is by ideologically supplementing its institutional break that Critical Theory can accommodate figures like Jürgen Habermas or Walter Benjamin. Likewise in other contexts, it is by relying on loose institutional connections that we can, for example, productively read together the unabashed pessimism of Theodor Adorno's negative dialectics and the messianic optimism of Benjamin.

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Taking structural inspiration from scholarship on the Frankfurt School, and most directly from Martin Jay's *Marxism and Totality*, this dissertation aims to construct a narrative of the Kyoto School by priming institutional and ideological building materials beyond the concept of

nothingness and the institution of Kyoto University.[14] In particular, I take institutional inspiration in print materials and ideological inspiration in the concept of totality.

Just as the Frankfurt School designation includes theoreticians such as Benjamin, who were not formally affiliated with the institution but nevertheless published major works in its journal *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, my reading of the Kyoto School takes as its institutional through line Iwanami publishing and its magazines *Shichō* (Trends in Thought 思潮) and *Shisō* (Thought 思想), but also foregrounds print venues like the Kyoto University philosophy magazine *Tetsugaku kenkyū* (Philosophical Research 哲学研究), a host of Kyoto University adjacent coterie magazines like *Under the Banner of the Rising Sciences* (*Shinkō kagaku no hata no moto ni* 新興科学の旗のもとに)*, Bi-Hihyō* (Beauty-Criticism 美・批評), and *Sekai Bunka* (*World Culture* 世界文化), and also biweekly tabloids like *Kyoto Studio News* (*Kyōto sutadjio tsūshin* 京都スタヂオ通信) and *Doyōbi* (Saturday 土曜日).

Institutionally situating the Kyoto School in such magazines carries a twofold benefit. First, it avoids the geographical restrictions that accompany the designation "Kyoto School." These have, at times, been deployed to erase figures like Watsuji and Miki from the discourse, and to focus the term around (the more or less) lifelong Kyoto University affiliation of thinkers like Nishida, Tanabe, and Nishitani—the so-called philosophers of nothingness. By instead foregrounding Iwanami as one of the primary institutions of the Kyoto School, we can better understand Kyoto School ideas to have circulated across metropolises to Tokyo, where Miki and Watsuji would end up, as well as to more peripheral urban centers like Sendai, where the above

[14] Martin Jay, *Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept from Lukács to Habermas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

Takahashi was professor. At the same time, emphasizing print, and in particular attending to the above coterie magazines, de-homogenizes Kyoto itself—stressing different sites of intellectual production between, say, the temple districts on the East-side of the Kamo river, where the first-generation of Kyoto School professors lived, and the more popular residential districts located city center and northwest of the university, where students like Nakai lived and where his coterie magazines circulated.[15] What we have then is not a school of thinking somehow in touch with or emblematic of the ways of the ancient capital, but a discourse that unfolds between and across different areas and classes amidst the rapidly changing topography of modern Japan.

Institutionally focusing on magazines also expands the cultural terrain of the Kyoto School, allowing us to concretely understand the ways in which philosophy was, at this time, very much connected to other areas of cultural production. I briefly touch on this point in relation to literature and art history in chapter 2, where I present the Taishō (1912–1926) period work of Watsuji Tetsurō on totality in continuity with the literature of Abe Jirō and the art history of Okakura Kakuzō and Ernest Fenollosa. My goal here is to re-connect the Kyoto School with the broader historical moment, and to gesture towards the more prominent role that totality played across these different areas of aesthetics. In this way, my aim with regards to the expansion of the geographical and cultural terrain of the Kyoto School via print is to open myself to as many building materials as possible in the construction of this school.

Part 2: Schemas of Totality

[15] Michael Lucken, *Nakai Masakazu: naissance de la théorie critique au japon* (Dijon: Les Presses du réel, 2016), 104–106.

I hedge the earlier mentioned mire of too much breadth by casting totality as my ideological through line. In doing so, I again take structural inspiration from Frankfurt School scholarship, and from Jay's work in particular. Working across the above print materials, my goal is to reconstruct the concept of totality—rendered spatially in terms of a "constellation," "network," or "structure" and temporally in terms of "activity," "self-formation," and then later "social" and "historical formative activity"—as foundational to Kyoto School thought.

To be clear, it is not my claim that totalistic or holistic thinking is unique to the Kyoto School; it is not. There is, for instance, a rich lineage of this variety within traditional Japanese thought. The phrase "a flower's blooming is the world's coming into being" (*kekai sekai ki* 華開世界起), often repeated by Dōgen, might come to mind for scholars of traditional Japanese philosophy—especially those with an interest in Kyoto School texts like Watsuji's *Shamon Dōgen*. Likewise, as Jay writes of a different context, holistic perspectives were being "developed by a wide range of thinkers" within the century that the Kyoto School was forming itself into a social and ideological entity, "including Karl Mannheim, Othmar Spann, Talcott Parsons, and the adherents of such movements as structuralism, Gestalt psychology, and systems theory."[16] More than either Japanese tradition or contemporary movements in the humanities and social sciences, however, the most direct inspiration for the Kyoto School takeover of totality is the work of G.W.F. Hegel, Karl Marx, Henri Bergson, and Martin Heidegger. As we will discuss in more detail below, much of the discussion and debate regarding totality unfolds within the horizons of Hegelianism, Marxism, life philosophy, and hermeneutic phenomenology—with

[16] Jay, *Marxism and Totality*, 14.

modified strands of idealism (in what I chart out as its inflationary and two-world variants) and materialism emerging as major reference points in Kyoto School debates on totality.

This means that the Kyoto School is not singularly defined in its approach to totality—at least in the way that the above-mentioned East Asian- and religious-centric readings of nothingness have been formulated. This might provide misgivings among commentators committed to the "conceptual incommensurability" of nothingness and Kyoto School thought. Indeed, one of the reasons that the theory of nothingness has gained purchase, both then and now, is that it cordons off Kyoto School contributions in difference from accomplishments in Western philosophy. This was of great importance *then* as a strategy to level the intellectual field within the highly unequal international order of the early twentieth century, and it remains so *now* as an effective strategy to neutralize the Eurocentric politics governing scholarship on philosophy today. Nevertheless, it is my conviction that these Kyoto School ideas are striking enough on their own that there is no need to appeal to "conceptual incommensurability"—to say nothing of the murky culturalist issues that often mire such appeals.[17]

To be clear, however, it is not my intention to entirely disregard the schema of nothingness. In fact, my understanding of totality is crucially linked to a host of terms that are frequently deployed alongside nothingness, including activity, self-formation, self-formative activity, negativity, and more. Readers interested in nothingness will no doubt find a myriad of resonating points between nothingness and my narrative of totality. My goal in pursuing totality, then, is not to counteract or critique theories of nothingness, but to address the two earlier mentioned drawbacks of this interpretive strand. In other words, I employ totality to better

[17] For the language of "conceptual incommensurability," see: Robert Wilkinson, *Nishida and Western Philosophy* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), 160. Wilkinson's study is otherwise extremely illuminating and helpful.

capture the dialogue between first- and later-generation Kyoto School thinkers that unfolded in their discussions of the social and historical world.

Nor do I mean totality to be the singular framework by which we can understand the Kyoto School. While I argue that totality is of central importance to these thinkers and that foregrounding it will help us chart overlooked dimensions in and across the work of its members, there are indeed other concepts through which we can focus under-appreciated dimensions of Kyoto School thought. Itabashi's works on philosophical method provides one model.[18] Though shorter, Masato Ishida's work on the geography of perception offers another.[19] Nevertheless, I maintain that totality, because of its breadth, is uniquely capable of speaking to the different ideological presuppositions and starting point within the tradition, and thus remains unparalleled in its ability to accommodate figures valorized among so-called side-steppers and -swipers. For this reason, I contend that by tracing the concept of totality, we will be able to understand the Kyoto School tradition, and in particular what is that constitutes these thinkers as a school, in new and exciting ways.

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The concept of totality plays a prominent role in Kyoto School thought in its earliest moment: Nishida's seminal 1911 *Inquiry into the Good*. Nishida opens onto the idea of totality via a discussion of activity, writing: "We normally think that activity has an agent, and that it is from this agent that activity occurs. But from immediate experience, activity itself is reality. This agent-thing is an abstract concept that is born from the idea that unity and its content mutually

[18] Itabashi Yūjin, *Nishida tetsugaku no ronri to hōhō: tetteiteki hihyō shugi towa nanika* (Tokyo: Hōsei daigaku shuppankyoku, 2004).

[19] Masato Ishida, "The Geography of Perception: Japanese Philosophy in the External World," in *Comparative Philosophy without Borders*, eds. Arindam Chakrabarti and Ralph Weber (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016).

oppose each other as independent realities" (*NKZ* 1:59; *AIT* 58). The idea is that, unlike Aristotelian substance, which requires something self-identical that persists behind transformation as its agent of change, activity is here articulated in terms of "independence and self-sufficiency"— as a "self-moving" whole that "develops and completes itself of itself" without recourse to some more fundamental agent or subject behind it.

We will deal with this excerpt in further detail in chapter 1; for now, however, we can use it as a springboard to introduce some of the key analytic vocabulary through which we will navigate the terrain of totality. Fortunately, we inherit a rich lexicon from studies in Western and Structural Marxism in support of this task. More specifically, we will be working with a host of terms synthesized and organized by Jay, including: longitudinal, latitudinal, expressive, centered, decentered, closed, and open-ended totalities.[20] We can begin by noting the *longitudinal*—which we can provisionally render temporal—nature of this totality. One hallmark of Kyoto School thought is that it less concerned with *latitudinal*—tentatively spatial—holism, instead conceptualizing totality in terms of a longitudinal self-developing activity that unfolds and realizes itself through time. With regards to Nishida, for instance, we can trace a line through the self-activity of consciousness, to his middle period engagement with "expressive activity," and then to a later interest in "social" and "historical formative activity."

Nishida's terms here helpfully open onto *the* major distinction within longitudinal totality: between *expressive totalities* on the one side, and *centered* and *decentered* totalities on the other. Above I mentioned idealism and materialism as the two main sources of inspiration for Kyoto School theories of totality. We find a degree of compatibility between idealism and the

[20] For a systematic introduction of these terms, see: Martin Jay, "Totality in Lukács and Adorno," in *Varieties of Marxism*, ed. Shlomo Avineri (The Hague: Martinus Nijhojf, 1977), 147–174. I am italicizing key terms for the reader's convenience.

expressive theory of totality on the one hand, and between materialism and the decentered theory of totality the other. The centered account, as we will see, occupies terrain somewhere in the middle—seen as incomplete by expressive views and seen as latently expressive by decentered views. Let's deal with these terms in turn.

Expressive Totality: Variants on Idealism

The terminology of "expressive totality" is perhaps most explicitly drawn and popularized in the work of Louis Althusser:

> For Hegel, society, like history, is made up of circles within circles, of spheres within spheres. Dominating his whole conception is the idea of the expressive totality (*totalité expressive*), in which all the elements are total parts, each expressing the internal unity of the totality which is only ever, in all its complexity, the objectification-alienation of a simple principle... And when you read the Introduction to the *Philosophy of History*, you find the same process, one might even say the same procedure: each moment of the development of the Idea exists in its States, which realize a simple principle—the beauty of individuality for ancient Greece, the legal spirit for Rome, etc. And borrowing from Montesquieu the idea that in a historical totality all concrete determinations, whether economic, political, moral or even military, express one single principle, Hegel conceives history in terms of the category of the expressive totality.[21]

Before Althusser, Max Horkheimer articulates idealism in similar terms:

> In materialism, individuals and social groups, working and struggling, of course, with such capabilities as previous historical development affords them, have an effect, in turn, on current economic relationships. In idealism, on the contrary, an intellectual force whose essential traits are antecedently fixed is the originator of events; history, consequently, is not a process of interaction between nature and society, already existent and emerging cultures, freedom and necessity, but is the unfolding or manifestation of a unitary principle.[22]

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[21] Louis Althusser, "Is it Simple to be a Marxist in Philosophy?," in *Essays in Self-Criticism* (London: New Left Books, 1976), 182.

[22] Max Horkheimer, "Authority and the Family," in *Critical Theory: Selected Essays* (New York: Continuum Publishing, 2002), 51.

Working from within the Marxist tradition, both thinkers critically read expressivity as a defining feature of idealism, and in particular, an idealism rendered into a crude form of "two-world" Platonism. Here, the expressive totality qua unitary principle becomes synonymous with the abstract universalist reading of a Platonic realm of causally independent forms—sundering our concrete, lived world of *actuality* (*genjitsu* 現実) from a more expanded or complete world of *reality* (*jitsuzai* 実在).

Generally speaking, this longitudinal account of expressive totality takes the form of either a *genetic principle* of origin or an implicit *teleological* direction that guides activity out of the present and into the future. When two-world Platonism is combined with the former, idealism is condemned for its commitment to, as we see below, a theory of emanation that actualizes itself into existence from a more fundamental and originally unified state of reality. When combined with the latter, it is condemned for its commitment to an end or telos that actualizes history according to a pre-determined path. In both cases the issue is longitudinal *closure*, with its horizons for possibility being determined in advance either from a wellspring pushing it forth from a previous moment, or a guiding force by which history approaches some destined end. These two strands can, with important modifications, help us to make sense of certain dimensions of the Taishō period production of Watsuji, for example his discussion of will to power and the revival of idols, and of middle period Nishida's work on expressive activity. We will discuss this in further detail shortly.

But first, we must recognize that this is not the only variant of idealism at play here. On the whole, Kyoto School thinkers are more sympathetic to idealism than either Horkheimer or Althusser. To better do justice to the rich tapestry of Kyoto School thought, we will proceed with an expanded account of idealism and thus the expressive view of totality. If we read the content

constitutive of idealism not necessarily in support of a two-world thesis, but also more openly in terms of a methodological orientation towards totality, we will recognize the possibility that the idealist "is in fact additionally a realist concerning elements more usually dismissed from reality…including the existence of the Ideas and the becomings they cause."[23] In recent scholarship on Western philosophy, such a tradition has profitably been expanded to stretch from the ancient Greek and Hellenistic philosophy of Parmenides, Plato, and Plotinus, through modern rationalism, German Idealism, and British Idealism, and into the present via idealist (and indeed controversial) readings of Friedrich Nietzsche and life philosophers like Henri Bergson and Gilles Deleuze.[24] Such an expanded key allows for an alternate reading of expressive totalities that renders the above unitary principle not within a sundered realm of transcendent forms, but rather according to "a one-world inflationary idealism" that has "Ideas as features of its actual existence or nature."[25] It is through such an inclusive approach to reality that idealism incorporates, say, the virtual and the actual within a univocal understanding of being in the vein of Deleuze on Bergson, or the philosophy of dominated and dominating forces in the vein of Deleuze on Nietzsche.

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[23] Jeremy Dunham, Iain Hamilton Grant, and Sean Watson, *Idealism* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 4

[24] These thinkers would object to being classified as idealist—given the traditional rendering of idealism. For instance Bergson, reading idealism in terms of the two-world thesis, offers the following critique: "To say that an image of the surrounding world issues from this image of advance of atoms [of the brain], or that the image of the one expresses the image of the other…is self-contradictory since these two images—the external world and the intra-cerebral movement—have been assumed to be of like nature." But this latter position is remarkably close to the inflationary reading of idealism that I discuss below. See: Henri Bergson, *Mind-Energy: Lectures and Essays* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920), 238.

[25] Dunham, Grant, and Watson, *Idealism*, 6.

As we will see in chapters 1, 4, and 5 these forms of non-dualistic and anti-transcendent one-world idealisms have much in common with certain Kyoto School ideas—especially the early and then middle-late period work of Nishida and the early '30s work of Miki and Nakai. Nishida's *Inquiry* offers an early formulation of this more inclusive approach—articulating reality as an "originally unified activity" that is structured in terms of its ability to self-develop itself according to immanent "forces of potentiality" that carry lines of development and differentiation "implicitly" within them. As we move into the '30s, this inflationary account of development becomes closely linked to art and aesthetics—with, for instance, Miki reading the aesthetic in terms of affectively charged *répresentations* that allow us to draw out new social configurations beyond the naturalized world, and Nakai reading the aesthetic in terms of "an attempt at immersion amidst dynamic transcendence" by which we "leap over the limits of 'possibility' and 'actuality'" (*BH* 19/20:295). As such, we shall see that this account provides the grounds for a genetic principle of expressive totality that departs not from a causally independent realm outside of actuality, but from a realm of forces and potentials that is best captured via the inclusivity afforded within the one-world account of idealism.

The Centered Totality: Between the Material and the Ideal

And yet, we find the earliest attempt to articulate a non-expressive totality in the same place that we find the earliest articulation of an expressive totality: Nishida's *Inquiry.* This text, as we discuss in chapter 1, despite its general expressive thrust, is ambivalent on the distinction between expressive and non-expressive totalities. Though in certain places Nishida embraces the above expressive theory of "originally unified activity" (ultimately adapting this into his middle period work on expressive activity), in others he also employs what might be termed a non-

expressive, *centered* reading of "systematic activity" (ultimately combining this with his earlier expressive account and adapting it into his late-middle period work on historical formation and active intuition). Nishida looks to the organism to make this point:

> Although a tree exists as the unification of parts that form various functions—branches, leaves, and a trunk—it is not simply an aggregation of these parts. If there is no unifying force of the tree as a whole, then the branches, leaves, and trunk lack significance. A tree exists upon the opposition and the unity of these parts.

With this in mind, he claims:

> The fundamental mode of reality is both one and many, many and one; equality accompanies differentiation, and differentiation accompanies equality. Insofar as these two directions cannot be separated, this can be reformulated in terms of the self-development of a single entity" (*NKZ* 1:57; *AIT* 57).

Though an extension of the theory of organism that is central to Hegel and German Idealism more broadly, I nevertheless claim that this reading marks an important departure from expressive accounts grounded in either genetic origin or teleological goal. This is because, in Nishida's hands, rather than securing longitudinal development in some past principle or future purpose, the synchronous, latitudinal connections of the present are given priority. In this respect, I argue, Nishida's shift to the language of "one and many" breaks from the discussions of ontological priority or genetic origin that govern the theory of originally unified activity—instead stressing the reciprocal dependence, and even stronger the mutual determination, of the many and the one in the present. For this reason, I have pursued the co-presence of expressive and centered accounts of totality as a kind of peculiarity in the late Meiji period (1868–1912) thinking of early Nishida, and traced the way that—though not incompatible—their differing emphasis respectively prefigures broader movements in Taishō (1912–1926) and interwar Shōwa (1926–1937) thought.

The Decentered Totality: An Appeal to Materialism

Both the expressivist and the centered understanding of totality engendered a critical response amongst thinkers coming into prominence in the inter-war Shōwa period. As we will see in chapters 3 and 4, expressivity forms one of the central lines by which Miki and then later Tanabe challenge Nishida's account of totality. To be sure, this reading might not always be fair. For instance, both Miki and Tanabe appropriate Emil Lask's emanatist (*emanatistisch*) critique of Fichte, uncharitably reading Nishida's middle period theory of expressive totality in terms of a unitary principle sundered from actuality within a transcendental realm of forms. Here, Miki says, "[d]evelopment is a self-enclosed movement with an identical end and beginning. If we can risk using a metaphor, development in Hegel [and Nishida] is not like the flow of a river but like a fountain. The movement leaving the self is the movement returning to the self" (*MKZ* 3:316–317). Likewise in Tanabe's critique, Nishida's expressive totality "is formulated as something that determines [the things of this world], while itself preceding determination in independence" (*THZ* 4:308).

This is not to say that they make recourse to the centered account. Though the decentered approach resonates with its emphasis on synchronous, latitudinal connections in the present, nevertheless Miki, for instance, objects to any such distinction between the expressive and centered frameworks. The idea is that, while the latitudinally centered systematic account *seems to* break away from the genetic or teleological orientation of the expressive account, nevertheless since this organicist emphasis on reciprocity ultimately appeals to the tree as a "unifying force," it implicitly presupposes the unitary principle of expressive totality. Thus, he claims, "in organic development the driver of development is the unity that envelops its various parts" (*MKZ* 3:307). And so, while this departs from the expressive theory of, say, a genetic principle of origin, Miki

nevertheless argues that its commitment to unity and unifying force imposes a kind of "telos" on activity—"a concept of unity that is furnished with finality"—and therefore resolves itself into a teleological variant of expressive totality. Regardless of its accuracy, the critique is that both the expressive and the centered accounts reduce totality into a state of closure in which totality either precedes or succeeds the present.

In response, Miki and his Marxist colleagues develop a competing *decentered* view of open-ended development. There are two points of distinction by which this view critically defines itself against the expressive and centered frameworks. First, the decentered account repudiates any unified center of gravity—whether it be a singularly unified principle of emanation or a unifying force that regulates its many parts longitudinally. Jay, tracing this concept most directly to Adorno and Althusser, defines the decentered totality as "a force-field of relationships whose constituent elements cannot be understood without reference to the whole, but a whole which is irreducible to one expressive or genetic center. In other words, the totality is not seen as the objectification of a creator-subject, but rather as a constellation of interactions without a specific origin."[26] To be clear, this is not too eschew totality in favor of a more positivistic approach to the world—there is still an "ever pre-given complex whole" in Althusser, a "force-field of relationships" in Adorno, a "provisional unity" in Miki.[27]

Nevertheless—and this is the second point of distinction worth emphasizing—this unity avoids any sense of mutually reciprocal determination. Rather, these figures, to again reference Jay, "employ a concept of overdetermination that maintains the irreducibility of one causal chain

[26] Jay, "Totality in Lukács and Adorno," 160.

[27] Ibid, 165.

to another."[28] It is here that the Shōwa period decentered accounts most forcefully depart from Nishida's centered account of systematic activity. Miki writes: "where the system is realistically pursued, it is natural that emphasis is placed upon synthesis, and not on contradiction within the dialectic" (*MKZ* 3:140). Unlike the balanced, mutual cooperation that accounts for continuous development in Nishida's centered account—for instance the tree—Miki instead emphasizes contradiction amongst the parts, as well as the parts and the whole, as the driver of development. Here, activity (qua longitudinal totality) is not systematically driven forward in a flow of continuity by way of balanced reciprocity; rather, "it is contradiction that is the driving force of development" (*MKZ* 3:140). In other words, we find a self-moving activity that urges itself forward in discontinuous leaps through the contradictions that emerge amongst the many, as well as the many and the one.

The difference drawn between contradiction and overdetermination on the one hand, and mutually reciprocal determination on the other, is normatively grounded in the issue of closure. Essentially, contradiction and overdetermination is emphasized by decentered thinkers because it is said to make possible a truly *open-ended* account of longitudinal development. Unlike expressive and centered accounts of totality, where longitudinal development is overwhelmingly encumbered and determined by origins, goals, or unifying forces, contradiction purportedly liberates development within an open-ended schema of growth and change.

Totality and Social-Historical World

This issue of closure and openness emerged as a contentious point of difference as discussions of totality finished their transformation from the terrain of consciousness to "true reality," in the

[28] Ibid.

late Meiji and early Taishō periods, and then to the domain of social philosophy and history, which became increasingly central in discussions of totality in the interwar period.

By the late '20s and early '30s, discussions of totality were almost entirely undertaken in the domain of the socio-historical. Two competing understandings of society proliferated amongst Kyoto School thinkers amidst these discussions. For thinkers who had risen to prominence in the idealism of the Taishō period—for instance Watsuji with his increasing attraction to Platonic understanding of expression—the idea of a social totality was primary employed in relation to the pre-destined greatness of present and future Japan. And so when dealing with the cultural issues that increasingly occupied his attention, Watsuji's aim was to clarify and highlight "eternal problems for the average reader" (*S* 1:back page). Accordingly, Watsuji's work from the late Taishō and early Shōwa period pursues expressivist accounts grounded in genetic principles or teleological goals—such as in his discussion of will to power and the revival of idols. What is key with regards to this earlier work is not that it is static, nor that it precludes social change or development, nor that Watsuji simply considers Japan as superior to its neighbors; what matters is that Watsuji explains how the present coheres within a longitudinally closed schema of development that genetically departs from a historical past and moves into a destined historical future. Here, the resolution of new problems in the present is pre-ordained according to the genetic principles that precede them or the future end that is destined to succeed them.

In the late '20s, a competing social discourse on "crisis" emerged to challenge this view. This term "crisis" had two distinct referents. It first served as a criticism of Watsuji's variant of longitudinally closed totality and its inability to explain social change. More specifically, these critiques pointed to expressive and centered thinkers inability to reconcile the present historical

moment within their description of its origins or goal. For instance, Miki, making coded reference to Watsuji, claims that eternalizing gestures to origins or goals function to normalize a favorable ideological order. For Miki and many of his fellow decentered thinkers from this moment, the character of thought is "an expression of class," and, he continues, the "class structure of society is divided into a dominant class and a dominated class. And this dominant–dominated relation is naturally fixed as the good and bad character of thought" (*MKZ* 2:248–249). And so, "when a thought appears that contradicts and opposes their own thought, people like this forget that this is only a crisis for their thought and instead consider it to be a crisis for thought more generally, a crisis for truth" (*MKZ* 2:244–245). From this perspective, the expressive attribution of eternality made with reference to origins or goals is not simply grounded in abstraction from the present, but in the preservation of a social ordering from the near past—one grounded in a series of exclusions benefitting, say, intellectuals in the dominant class.

Second, the term crisis was also appropriated by decentered thinkers to explain the open-ended nature of social transformation. Miki writes: "the crisis of thought, if looked at purely theoretically, means that a given thought transforms into its opposite." Here crisis is sheerly descriptive—it points to the open-ended, self-developmental fact of longitudinal totality, the absence of which is "only coagulation and death" (*MKZ* 13:92–93). The idea is that historical crisis and moments of social change only appears as crises of truth for people who refuse to recognize the open-ended nature of longitudinal development—"for those who cannot grasp the developmental life of truth as it is mediated by contradiction" (*MKZ* 2:244–245). And so for the Marxist youth steeped in a decentered account of totality, "the crisis will no longer manifest

itself as a crisis or as a simple crisis"—as "so-called crisis." Crisis is instead felt as the natural course of development for a longitudinally open society that forms itself through contradiction.

On the Possibility of Intervention

But this leads to tricky questions about the subject of social revolution, about how to engender social change, and about the ways in which subjects within society can effect revolution. Essentially, there is a tension between, on the one hand, the open-ended nature of decentered accounts, and on the other, theories that make room for the emancipatory possibility of subjective and inter-subjective intervention.

For instance, Structural Marxists like Althusser emphasize the "mature" Marx's treatment of individuals "only in so far as they are the personifications of economic categories, the bearers (*Träger*) of particular class-relations and interests" (*MECW* 35:10, mod). From this, they claim that humans are determined by the relations of production, and so have no power to intervene in longitudinal development:

> the structure of the relations of production determines the places and functions occupied and adopted by the agents of production, who are never anything more than the occupants of these places, in so far as they are the "bearers" (*Träger*) of these functions. The true 'subjects' (in the sense of constitutive subjects of the process) are therefore not these occupants or functionaries, are not, despite all appearances, the "obviousnesses" of the "given" of naïve anthropology, "concrete individuals," "real men"—but *the definition and distribution of these places and functions. The true 'subjects' are these definers and distributors: the relations of production* (and political and ideological social relations)...if by chance anyone proposes to reduce these relations of production to relations between men, i.e., '*human relations*,' he is violating Marx's thought.[29]

[29] Louis Althusser and Étienne Balibar, *Reading Capital*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: Verso, 1970), 180. Author's italics.

This means that for thinkers like Althusser, as Jay notes, there can never be "any meaningful intersubjective determination of the whole…Even after the revolution, men would be mere supports of a structure whose origins they were not responsible for and whose goals they could not determine."[30]

Both the Marxist- and the less-Marxist-oriented thinkers of the Kyoto School would, by and large, be unsatisfied with such an account. Instead, they resembled Western and anti-Althusserian Marxists like Antonio Gramsci, E.B. Thompson, Theodor Adorno, Jürgen Habermas, and Jacques Rancière in attempting to theorize, describe, and realize the subjective and intersubjective cultural practices that can occasion concrete socio-historical change. In other words, to borrow language from Helmut Fleischer's work on Western Marxism, these Kyoto School thinkers likewise began searching for "a theory of inter-subjectivity;" a theory "of the social synthesis of objectives and the practice that brings [socio-historical change] about."[31]

Dealing with the work of Nishida, Miki and Nakai Masakazu across chapters 4, 5, and 6, we find a number of competing explanations about how this can happen—how the masses can form themselves into the kind of social and political entity that has the power to effect social critique and generate historical change. Certain dimensions of these accounts resonate with arguments provided by the above European figures. Much like Gramsci, for instance, we find an increasing concern over the role of the revolutionary intellectual in a schema that promotes the self-formation and -emancipation of the general masses. We also find resonances with these thinkers in Nishida, Miki, and Nakai's understanding of aesthetics, and in particular the idea that art bears the capacity to generate a kind of vanguard break in the normal process of social

[30] Jay, *Marxism and Totality*, 410–411.

[31] Helmut Fleischer, *Marxism and History* (London: Penguin Press, 1973), 101.

development—an idea that finds parallels with, for instance, the disruptive capacities of art found in Adorno's work on Arnold Schoenberg, the theory of the "dis-identification" of the working class with the dominant belief system in Rancière's work on the *Nights of Labor*, and the inter-subjective significance of public spheres in the work of Habermas. To be clear, I do not intend to trace out Kyoto School ideas as, say, proto or deficiently Habermasian; there is no shortage of differences between these accounts, and when I make reference to such theories, I only do so to explicate and orient the reader in relation to Kyoto School thinking. Moreover, there are also accounts that find no strong counterpart in Western Marxism. We might find limited parallels between, say, Nakai's "logic of the committee" (see: chapter 6) and the workers' councils that theorists like Anton Pannekoek, Gramsci, and Rosa Luxemburg at one time or another put their hopes in; nevertheless if we look closer we find in Nakai a theory that is wholly unique in its attempts to bring forth self-education and -emancipation through an infinitely recursive logic of mutual determination between the masses and the committee. Regardless of whether we stress similarity or difference, my claim is that these theories of inter-subjective intervention form an important strand of engagement within what we might now consider not-so-Western Marxism.

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Across these chapters I have strived to present a narrative that is accessible to specialists and non-specialists alike. My hope is that the theme of totality, with its many connections to life philosophy, hermeneutic phenomenology, Hegelian thought, and Western Marxist theory, will not only attract a range of readers beyond specialists of modern Japanese thought, but also call attention to the many Kyoto School contributions to these different areas of research. For readers new to the Kyoto School then, the text serves as an introduction, and includes representative

figures like Nishida Kitarō (chapters 1, 2, 4) and Watsuji Tetsurō (chapters 1, 2). For readers more versed in Kyoto School thought, I have attended to under-studied texts and manuscripts in my reading of these figures and have foregrounded the institutional site of the magazine to situate these figures within the broader cultural context of early twentieth century Japan. With both types of readers in mind, I have made considerable effort to incorporate lesser-studied figures in Anglophone scholarship, such as Miki Kiyoshi (chapters 3, 4) and Nakai Masakazu (chapters 5, 6). In doing so, I have treated these latter figures with as much rigor as the former in the hopes that they too will develop into major subjects of research in Kyoto School scholarship.

Chapter 1

The Foundations of Totality in Modern Japan: Early Nishida and Watsuji

This chapter introduces our topic of totality in relation to the early work of Nishida Kitarō and Watsuji Tetsurō. Parts 1 and 2 focus on Nishida's 1911 *Inquiry into the Good* (善の研究 *Zen no kenkyū*) to argue that his work was a trailblazer in the terrain of totality in Japan, forging the theoretical path upon which later Kyoto School thinkers would begin their journey; part 3 focuses on Watsuji's 1913 *A Study of Nietzsche* (ニイチェ研究 *Niiche kenkyū*), and shows how Watsuji developed this concept and ultimately shaped the terrain upon which thinkers would come to conceive totality across the Taishō period.

Part 1: From Pure Experience to Totality

The aim of this first part is twofold. First, to provide general prefatory remarks on Nishida's *Inquiry into the Good* and his concept of "pure experience" (*junsui keiken* 純粋経験), and second to show the way in which Nishida opens this concept of pure experience onto an ontology of totality.[1] With regards to the first aim, my orientation aligns with extant scholarship on pure experience in showing that Nishida: first, displaces the locus of consciousness from the self; second, extends consciousness out across a diversity of phenomena; and then finally, brings these diverse phenomena together as a single, holistic, auto-developing activity.

But standard readings of early Nishida trace the ontological implications of pure experience outwards from singular event to foreground the broader complex field of relationships that impinge upon and embrace each supposedly self-contained thing. While I do

[1] I hereafter refer to this text as *Inquiry*.

not dispute this reading, I focus an additional ontological move in the text—exploring the ways in which Nishida transforms his holistic reading of consciousness qua pure experience into an ontology of self-developing totality. In particular, I focus the way in which the activity of reality is formulated in terms of "independence and self-sufficiency"—as a "self-moving" whole that "develops and completes itself of itself."

The Unity of Immediate Experience

Inquiry was published in January 1911 by Kōdōkan Publishing, just one year after Nishida was appointed assistant professor of ethics in the Department of Philosophy at Kyoto University. Though largely ignored by "elder academics" within the field of philosophy, its return to "immediate experience" (*chokusetsu keiken* 直接経験) and its discussion of a more primordial "unity" found an eager readership in a younger generation of what Robert Adams calls "young would-be scholars of the Taishō era."[2] Indeed, even early critics like Takashi Satomi praised it as the "only philosophical book" produced by the "hands of a Japanese philosopher" "filled with thoroughly original ideas"—describing it with a "characteristically *Inquiry into the Good* tint and scent" (*TSZ* 4:153–154). In short, *Inquiry* and its shift towards pure experience were seen as an epoch-making event for Japanese philosophy by its readers—as Tosaka Jun later wrote, a "representative philosophy for Japan," that could "occupy a leading position even by global standards" (*TJZ* 3:171).

"To experience," Nishida begins the work, "is to know facts as they are; to know in accordance with facts without the operations of the self interfering" (*NKZ* 1:9; *AIT* 3).

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[2] Robert Adams, "The Feasibility of the Philosophical," PhD diss., (University of Chicago, 1991), 49.

Examining the depths of consciousness, Nishida's sought out a more fundamental plane of "pure experience" that precedes, envelops, and makes possible the epistemological constitution of subject qua object and object qua subject. Nishida appeals to aesthetic experience to articulate this more basic experiential unity, calling forth the primordial "moment of seeing a color or hearing a sound" as a trigger capable of awakening us to the depths of experience. We encounter this color or sound, Nishida writes, "before thinking that this is due to the activity of some external object or that *I* am sensing this," and even "before there is any judgment as to what kind of color or sound it is" (*NKZ* 1:9; *AIT* 3). Thus experience, for Nishida, is not something that is simply dependent upon me: "there is not experience because there is an individual; it is only when there is an experience that there is an individual" (*NKZ* 1:24; *AIT* 19). Thus on the most fundamental level, there is no "I" that "has" experience "of" an "object" in this interpretation. Prior to any explicit form of self-consciousness or object-oriented directionality, we are always already thrust in the world, inter-acting within a state of "subject–object non-differentiation" (*shukyaku mibun* 主客未分) or "subject–object unity" (*shukaku gōitsu* 主客合一). Here, seeing, the object of sensation or perception, and its awareness are always already merged together as a holistic event within which we move and act together with objects.

This entails a radical departure from how we normally understand the operations of consciousness. This is perhaps most evident with regards to judgment. Nishida writes: "The meaning of, and judgments regarding, experience only point to their relations to other [parts of experience], they do not enhance the content of experience itself" (*NKZ* 1:14; *AIT* 9). Referring to the subject–predicate, knower–known form in which judgments are made, Nishida's claim is that, while the same content is found in both immediate experience and acts of judgment, the latter is more refined and structured, and thus is "comparatively impoverished in terms of its

content" (*NKZ* 1:14; *AIT* 9). Imagine a person listening to music. When the fullness of pure experience is composed within a propositional structure, it takes the form 'the person listens.' In forming this proposition, we have abstracted 'person' and 'listening' from the undifferentiated fullness described above, and the richness of the song and the conditions of listening (are they at a concert hall or their house?; with others or alone?) drop from the picture.

Yet, the fact that these judicative acts are "abstractions" from pure experience does not render judgment an external process; rather, the claim is that the content of higher-order thinking is contained within immediate experience itself. And this is not just about content; for Nishida *all* of the elements of higher-order judgments are abstracted from the bounty of primordial experience. Even the overly rigid structure of judgment is born out of "the discriminative aspect carried by experience itself" (*NKZ* 1:13; *AIT* 8). Thus for Nishida, direct experience is considered both proto-judgmental and proto-propositional—the ground from which judgment and propositional forms develop. He thus concludes: "meaning and judgment do not add anything that was not there already" (*NKZ* 1:13; *AIT* 9).

But to be clear, this proto-judgmental and proto-propositional nature of direct experience neither entails monistic simplicity nor requires utterly indeterminate content. Instead, Nishida articulates pure experience as "a single, simple fact" (*tanjun naru ichi jijitsu* 単純なる一事実) that is nevertheless irreducibly "complex" (*fukuzatsu* 複雑). He writes: "Insofar as directly given pure experience is constituted from past experience and can be analyzed into single elements, it can be called complex. But no matter how complex pure experience is, it is always a single, simple fact of the moment" (*NKZ* 1:11; *AIT* 5). Here, Nishida is trying to navigate perceptual experience as both unmediated and direct, and yet also constituted within a larger whole or context that involves an implicit and immediate, if not wholly determinate, relationship with

other consciousness. We can find an illustrative case of this intersection in the above example of music. Though we can break down our apprehension of a song into a sequence of slice-like notes aligned horizontally on a temporal axis, such an isolated note is born from a state of reflection that is "divorced from the true reality of music" (*NKZ* 1:49; *AIT* 48). This is because, when we listen to music, we do not hear melody as an unconnected sequence of punctual notes but rather directly grasp each note in continuity with what came before and what we anticipate will come after. Here, "the scope of pure experience is one with the scope of attention," and perceptual attention is not rigidly divided as the "momentary perception" of isolated notes in the present, but in terms of "perceptual continuity" (*NKZ* 1:11; *AIT* 5–6).

Nishida offers a more concrete example to fill this out: "when we judge an auditory perception to be the sound of a bell, we simply determine its place within past experience" (*NKZ* 1:14; *AIT* 9). Though this example is articulated as an act of judication, there are two points that connect this to the discussion of perceptual continuity, and thus to the simple qua complex and complex qua simple nature of direct experience. First, remember that our immediate perception of the sound exists beneath the level of judgment in an undifferentiated state of direct immediacy. And second, recall that everything contained within judgment is already contained within this more fundamental experience. Put together, these two points amount to the idea that our judgment that "this *is* the sound of a bell" is the pursuit and subsequent reification of a relational connectivity that finds its source in the immediacy of direct experience itself. Here, the direct flow of perception constitutive of "consciousness is not stuck within the place in which it appears, but implicitly carries a relation to other consciousness" (*NKZ* 1:15; *AIT* 10). Thus immediately preceding his account of the bell, Nishida writes:

> Even that which yields meaning and judgment results from the union of present and past consciousness. In other words, these are based upon the unifying activity that unites the

> greater system of consciousness. What we understand as meaning and judgment indicates the relation of present consciousness to other consciousness, these simply make clear the position of present consciousness within the broader system of consciousness (*NKZ* 1:14; *AIT* 9).

The notion of "meaning" here is key to untangling the relational embeddedness of perceptual continuity, and thus Nishida's view of the intersection of simplicity and complexity in direct experience. Meaning, for Nishida, is always grounded in the establishment of a relationship between present consciousness and other consciousness. Nevertheless, as Kōsaka Masaaki notes, this relational understanding of meaning is developed in two directions in *Inquiry*.[3] The first is overtly propositional and largely synonymous with the abstract content formed in higher-order structures of judgment. As discussed above, meaning is here directly contrasted with the fluid structure of pure experience, and it is in this propositional sense that Nishida claims in "truly pure experience there is absolutely no meaning, there is only the present consciousness of facts as they are" (*NKZ* 1:9; *AIT* 4). But crucially, not all meaning is propositional for Nishida. While his second formulation of meaning is still defined in terms of the relationality of consciousness, this understanding is pre-propositional and carried within pure experience itself. Here, Nishida writes, true reality is "not merely existence but something that has meaning" (*NKZ* 1:50; *AIT* 49). It not only follows that immediate perception "implicitly carries a relation to other consciousness," but also that "the meaning carried by virtue of the relation between consciousness of fact and other consciousness is often unconscious" (*NKZ* 1:20; *AIT* 15).

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[3] Masaaki Kōsaka, *Nishida Kitarō sensei no shōgai to shisō* (Tokyo: Kokusai nihon kenkyūsho, 1971), 76–79.

This second meaning follows from subject–object unity. Decentering the object within a state of subject–object non-differentiation not only precludes it from assuming a privileged position and an articulate form, it also allows for the relations that obtain as the condition for the emergence of subject and object to come forth as the immediate content of direct experience. Here, the object is neither distinct nor determinate; rather, it is differentially articulated to include the horizon of relations that make it possible. In this case, both sides of the subject–object dyad are cracked open to extend outward such that the content of experience is relationally constituted. Following William James, Nishida argues that these relations "fringe" outward into an indefinite "field" of indeterminate content. For Nishida, this fringe is understood in terms of "the multitudinous relations of consciousness that are contained as an experiential fact of direct experience" (*NKZ* 1:10; *AIT* 4–5).

Though this concept of a fringe or field of relationships most clearly registers itself in spatial terms, this static formulation is no more than a cross section of a more dynamic process of temporal unfolding. Here there is no static present; "the present as a fact of consciousness is necessarily of some temporal duration" (*NKZ* 1:10–11; *AIT* 5). These temporal dimensions of relationality can be fleshed out if we return to the case of the song. As mentioned, in direct experience perception does not immediately grasp a sequence of isolated notes within a series of punctuated moments. Rather, perception is grounded in "temporal duration" and thus is structured in terms of a "perceptual continuity" that constitutes direct experience as both simple and complex. Edmund Husserl's work on time-consciousness offers an initial reference. Beyond the note that constitutes the center of perceptual attention in the present, perception retains at least certain aspects of the notes that immediately came before (retention) at the same time that it anticipates the notes that will follow (protention)—though it often does so in a vague or

indeterminate manner.[4] Here, pre-reflective recollection and anticipation directly impinge upon and enrich the content of immediate experience such that our focus of perception inter-bleeds and -penetrates within a surrounding temporal field.

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But to be clear, Nishida's account is not purely phenomenological. The above account of the relational field or fringe of experience and the implicit proto-subject that actively constitutes perceptual duration privileges proto-subjectivity as the site of relationality, and thus the locus of the present. Nevertheless, inasmuch as this account is grounded in the more fundamental subject-object unity that is constitutive of experience, the basic fact of experience can likewise be understood with proto-objectivity at its core. To this end, Shimizu Takashi notes, the object of perception operates in a "referent or medium-like role" in Nishida's account, and thus it is not just the active pre-subject but also the "continually existing 'object'" that connects attention across time and establishes perceptual continuity.[5] In support of this reading, Nishida writes: "perception preserves strict unity and connectivity; as consciousness transitions from one object to another, attention is constantly directed to its object so that the activities that come before gives rise to activities that follow without allowing the smallest fissure for thought between them" (*NKZ* 1:13; *AIT* 6). To return to the above case of music, experience takes the form of the continuity of the song, meaning that the "scope of attention" is formed in line with the temporally extended nature of its object. It is due to the continuity of the song itself that the present notes of a song are tinged within a broader field of experience, and thus they are

[4] I have here consulted: Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind: An Introduction to Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

[5] Shimizu Takashi, "Aim of the Idea of Pure Experience: William James, Nishida Kitarō, Inoue Enryō," *Annual Report of the Inoue Enryo Center* 24 (2016): 66.

immediately given in connection with the pre-discursive recall and anticipation of the notes that immediately came before and that are expected to follow. Here, Nishida emphasizes the active role of the pre-individuated object of attention in sustaining perception, and thus his work can be read as contributing to "object-oriented" accounts of experience found in writers like Graham Harman.

And yet, to further clarify, Nishida's account is neither simply object-oriented. For Nishida, both subject- and object-oriented perspectives are possible because they are aspects or manifestations of the more basic fact that experience is relationally simple yet complex, and so what is key is that the complex, temporally extended apprehension of the note is nevertheless given as a simple fact of perception. Nishida thus claims, "when our minds are caught by exquisite music" anticipations and recollections enfold upon the present note and we hear it as "one resounding sound" (*NKZ* 1:49; *AIT* 48).

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Nishida turns to more overtly engaged activities in to develop this dynamic field structure as it constitutes the intersection of relational singularity and complexity. He writes: "when a climber resolutely scales a steep cliff, when a professional musician plays a song they are skilled in, there is the presence of a continuous perceptual whole—what can be termed a perceptual train" (*NKZ* 1:11; *AIT* 6). Refusing to implace consciousness within the brain, Nishida reverses the standard view in claiming that "consciousness is not within the body, but rather the body is within consciousness" (*NKZ* 1:44; *AIT* 43). Moving closer to parity in lecture notes, he argues that in pure experience, mind and body are "two aspects of the same reality" (*NKZ* 15:217). While Nishida admits that, say, the strained, hyper-aware finger movement of the beginner pianist are a far cry from the fluidity of the skilled pianist, nevertheless the "art first comes alive"

when we surpass "consciousness of each individual movement, and reach a state of unconsciousness" (*NKZ* 1:67; *AIT* 66). In lecture notes from the period, he talks in terms of a musician being "engrossed" in their performance, claiming masters like Mozart "grasp in one moment what a normal person grasps successively" (*NKZ* 15:104–105). In the case of the master pianist, there is "not even a tiny gap between the demands of will and its actualization" and so the fingers glide across the keys "without the smallest fissure for thought." Such a development is not a matter of sheer *mental* learning, but is in great part constituted by learnt dispositions embodied through practice. Here, as Higaki Tatsuya writes, "the fluidly drawn object of perception and the movement of the body that corresponds to it are presented as a closely coordinated system within the 'present.'"[6]

And just as this closely coordinated system is not bound by the brain, it is neither bound by the skin—extending beyond the (embodied and pre-individual) subject and (non-differentiated) object. Nishida writes: "Originally phenomena are not divided as internal and external; both subjective consciousness and the objective world are the same phenomenon seen from different perspectives—there is concretely only one fact" (*NKZ* 1:13; *AIT* 7). He adds in lecture notes: "originally there is no self–other distinction, there is just one field of experience" (*NKZ* 15:111). Here, a system emerges in which the pre-differentiated subject is not merely dependent but constituted together with the network of pre-differentiated objects that compose the world. This relation is neither simply active nor simply passive; rather, the distinction between active and passive is "in the end a difference of degree," meaning that we pre-discursively act upon and manipulate the world as we are acted upon and manipulated by it (*NKZ* 1:54; *AIT* 48). Here, the exercise of the pianist's skills overcomes the internal–external division

[6] Higaki Tatsuya, *Nishida Kitarō no seimei tetsugaku* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2011), 71–72.

to involve, as a constitutive dimension of its actualization, the keys that the fingers glide across such that the unity of a pre-established, dynamic field subsumes consciousness, hand, and piano key as "the activity of a single reality."

Nishida extends the principle of this closely-coordinated system, or "singular activity" (*yuitsu no katsudō* 唯一の活動), to include the social and self–other non-differentiation. He asks: "Though the consciousness of yesterday and today are independent they nevertheless belong to the same system, and thus can be thought of as one consciousness; can we not likewise discover a relation of sameness between the consciousness of myself and the other?" (*NKZ* 1:46; *AIT* 44). Imagine the above musician performing a duet. Nishida's claim is that the horizon of fluid relationality does not merely extend across the object of perception and the performer's body, but rather extends to the embodied thoughts and actions of the other performer. To achieve a successful duet, the two performers not only coordinate but sync cadence, rhythm, tempo, beat and more; the immediate perceptual activities constitutive of their consciousness must pre-reflectively merge together in a state of non-differentiation that transcends the rigid demarcations of contact afforded by musical notation. Their relation forms a "coupled system" that is ontologically irreducible to what has sometimes been referred to as the respective "we-intentions" of the individual performers.[7] Here, the syncing and merging of the coupled system is not the coming together of two distinct individuals with separate experience, but a recovery of, or openness to, the always already established trans-personal field of relationships that constitutes self and other.

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[7] For more on "coupled systems," see: Andy Clark and David Chalmers, "The Extended Mind," *Analysis* 58, no. 1 (1998). For more on "we-intentions," see: Raimo Tuomela and Kaarlo Miller, "We-Intentions," *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition* 53, no. 3 (1998).

These extensions—from singularity, to complexity, and then from complexity back to singularity—are part of an attempt by Nishida to, first, displace the locus of consciousness from the self, second, extend it out across a diversity of phenomena, and finally, bring these diverse phenomena together as a single activity. Nishida's claim is irreducibly two-sided here, grounded in singularity qua complexity and complexity qua singularity. It is not merely that there is no discrete self, nor simply that the self is connected with its object, it is also that this singular unity qua totality—articulated latitudinally as a field or closely coordinated system and longitudinally as singular activity—is the most fundamental unit of experience.

Ontology of Self-Developing Activity

From this account of pure experience, Nishida develops what Andrew Feenberg and Yoko Arisaka call his "experiential ontology"—a term directing us to the fact that "Nishida was willing to accept even the most paradoxical consequences of his reversal of the traditional relationship of experience and individuality."[8] At the core of this "paradox" lies the fact that Nishida ontologizes his experiential claims without reservation; that his inquiry into experience is simultaneously an inquiry into being. As a result, his account of ontology is, like his account of experience, structured in terms of singularity qua complexity and complexity qua singularity.

Ontology of Self-Developing Activity (1): Singularity qua Complexity

We can begin our analysis from the perspective of singularity qua complexity. From this direction, Nishida's ontology proceeds in two steps. First, the phenomenological inconsistencies

[8] Andrew Feenberg and Yoko Arisaka, "Experiential Ontology: The Origins of the Nishida Philosophy in the Doctrine of Pure Experience," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (1990): 182.

of formulating experience as something "'I' 'have' 'of' an 'object'" dismantles the basis for the Cartesian understanding of being—both in terms of a self-contained subject and a "discrete, material object." And second, the concomitant presentation of relations within experience provides direct support for a holistic ontology of relations. In this perspective, Nishida urges us to think of ontology differentially, speaking not of beings but of "events" (*dekigoto* 出来事) that are constituted according to their positionality within a more holistically unified field of relations:

> We normally think that discrete, material objects exists as facts. But in actuality, a fact is always an event. As the Greek philosopher Heraclitus said, "the myriad of things flow without stopping;" reality is a continuity of events that flow without stopping (*NKZ* 1:55; *AIT* 54).

Nishida's claim is that we tend to mis-identify facts within the horizons of singularity, reifying independent objects from the fluidity of events. In doing so, we transform a latitudinally extended field of relations that is always changing into a discretely articulated substance that endures. His language of events is meant to move us beyond this substance ontology, as well as its presupposition of spatial isolation and temporal endurance. More specifically, the event—productively read as a fact (事) that comes (来) and goes (出)—is mobilized to invert the spatio-temporal coordinates of traditional substance ontology, instead foregrounding a singular (though not punctual) moment constituted differentially within an extended field of total connectivity.

This allows us to contextualize some of the more radical dimensions of Nishida's experiential account. While James, in Nishida's (inaccurate) reading, restricts his discussion of the field to psychological and empirical claims—speaking in terms of an "unconscious more" or a shadowy, indeterminate "penumbra" in the fringes of attention—Nishida's own transition to

ontology radicalizes its scope, bringing endless holistic plentitude to bear on events.[9] Here, the directness of experience does not simply entail the ontological collapsing of the subject–object dyad in the event, nor is it merely a mark of psychosomatic, ecological, or inter-subjective co-constitution. Rather, the connectedness of experience means all of this and more: the experiential present opens onto a fluid horizon of relationships, transmitting the entire network of parts and positions within which the present finds itself and then differentially locating the pre-individual as a coordinate within this broader constellation of totality. Nishida writes: "we always see the world of actuality encircled within a periphery. While James thought of this in terms of a fringe of consciousness, the world of actuality already carries an infinite fringe" (*NKZ* 6:258).

And yet, Nishida remains ambivalent as to the status of this infinite fringe of relationships vis-a-vis the individual event. At times Nishida speaks of this relation on the level of principle. Since each event is constituted relationally, it logically follows that the entire universe strings together in a wider web of inter-penetrating totality. That is, each subset of relations exist within a larger set of relations that itself is constituted relationally—with the universe itself formed as a latitudinally expansive tapestry of totality within which seemingly disparate threads are inter-weaved. In this formulation, being is hollowed out within a broader holistic network by which it is, in principle, related to even the most distant coordinates of the universe. Here, the universal connectivity of totality is not actualized, and background infinity exists as potentiality presented within the individual event.

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[9] Nishida's reading of James is incorrect in that the latter very much constructs an ontology and metaphysics from his doctrine of pure experience, albeit one that is very different from Nishida's. See: David Dilworth, "The Initial Formations of 'Pure Experience' in Nishida Kitarō and William James," *Monumenta Nipponica* 24, no. 1/2 (1969); Steve Odin, *The Social Self in Zen and American Pragmatism* (New York: SUNY Press, 1996).

And yet, Nishida offers a stronger reading in other parts of the *Inquiry*. At times, he writes as if the entirety of the universe can be directly felt within pure experience. In the above example of listening to a melody, the pre-reflective recollection and anticipation that organizes present perception opens onto something greater: "when our minds are caught by exquisite music, we forget our nature and physical things, and we experience the universe as one resounding sound" (*NKZ* 1:49; *AIT* 48). Here, being is expanded outwards within a broader holistic network of totality by which even the most distant coordinates of the universe are transmitted within concrete expression.

Regardless of whether this whole stretches to the edges of the universe in principle or in actuality, what is key, in this ontological framework of singularity qua complexity, is that each event is constituted according to its location within a broader complex field of totality.

Ontology of Self-Developing Activity (2): Complexity qua Singularity

Yet if we only move from singularity to complexity—from event to the total field—we miss some of the most interesting dimensions of Nishida's ontology. Nishida's ontological account is, like his experiential account, grounded in singularity qua complexity *and* complexity qua singularity. While the perspective of singularity qua complexity appeals to a broader relational whole in order to reconfigure the discrete object as a mutually constituted event, the perspective of complexity qua singularity already resolves itself in the singularity of totality, and so has no compunction to seek out some more fundamental experiential or ontological unit. This allows us to recontextualize Nishida's above assertions that: "subjective consciousness and the objective world are the same phenomenon seen from different perspectives—there is concretely only one fact;" and that: "originally there is no self–other distinction, there is just a single field of

experience" (*NKZ* 15:111). Seen from the perspective of complexity qua singularity, the fact that there is no self-other distinction amounts to the idea that the whole field itself is the most basic experiential, and thus ontological, fact. Itabashi Yūjin captures this point well: for Nishida, "the field in which both [subjects and objects] are different at the same time that they are mutually related is itself, as a totality, established from the beginning."[10]

This understanding of the holistic field as an irreducible unit of experience and ontology gains clarity in light of its longitudinal structure. As mentioned above, the static formulation of a relational field is no more than a cross section of a more fundamental temporal unfolding. To capture this dynamic structure of totality, and thus of complexity qua singularity, Nishida appeals to the language of activity (*katsudō* 活動; *sayō* 作用), and more precisely to the language of "systematic activity" (*taikeiteki sayō* 体系的作用) or "unified activity" (*tōitsu sayō* 統一作用). He writes: "We normally think that activity has an agent, and that it is from this agent that activity occurs. But from immediate experience, activity itself is reality. This agent-thing is an abstract concept that is born from the idea that unity and its content mutually oppose each other as independent realities" (*NKZ* 1:59; *AIT* 58). The idea is that, unlike Aristotelian substance, which requires something self-identical that persists behind transformation as its agent of change, activity is here articulated in terms of "independence and self-sufficiency" (*dokuritsu jizen* 独立自全)—as a "self-moving" (*mizukara ugoku* 自ら動く) activity that "develops and completes itself of itself" (*mizukara onore o hatten kansei suru* 自ら己を発展完成する) without recourse to some more fundamental agent or subject behind it.

[10] Itabashi Yūjin, *Soko naki ishi no keifu: Shōpenhauā to ishi no hitei no shisō* (Tokyo: Hōsei daigaku shuppan kyoku, 2016), 101.

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It will perhaps be beneficial to further consider the experiential basis for this holistic account of self-activity. As in the perspective of singularity qua complexity, this view invokes a descriptive account of pure experience. Though drawing upon the same above experiential description, it differs in its radical stress upon the self-activity of consciousness itself without resorting to a determining subject or agent. Nishida looks to perception and representational thinking in support of this view. First, he appeals to the active nature of perception to correct our assumptions vis-à-vis the passivity of perception; he then reverses his strategy with regard to representational thinking, demonstrating that the so-called subject has less control over conscious associations than is normally assumed. Across these two claims, Nishida's goal is to rearticulate consciousness as activity itself—where consciousness is understood to transcend the bifurcated standpoint of subject and object, active and passive, as a self-developing whole.

With regard to the self-active nature of perception, he writes:

> Even when we think we perceive the whole object within a single glance, if we study this more closely we will see that attention transitions itself together with the movements of the eye to acquaint us with the whole. The origins of such consciousness is systematic development; insofar as consciousness maintains strict unity and self-develops, we do not lose the standpoint of pure experience (*NKZ* 1:12; *AIT* 7).

Nishida refutes the idea that we compose perceptual experience out of basic sense impressions, as well as its correlative claim that we passively receive these impressions. Instead, he claims that "perception is not entirely passive but necessarily entails active, in other words constitutive, elements" (*NKZ* 1:48; *AIT* 48). Through subtle movements of the eye, consciousness is always already directly involved with the object of perception, extending itself beyond any given profile and arranging aspectual perspectives into a larger perceptual whole. To be clear, Nishida's goal in making this point is not to advocate for an active phenomenological subject; rather, it is to

shift our perspective away from unidirectional subjectivity—either active or passive—to view the intersection of activity and passivity as indicative of the holistic self-activity of experience.

Making his point from the standpoint of representational thinking, Nishida argues that it is a mistake to assume that "a representational experience, no matter how unified, belongs to subjective activity and so cannot be said to be a pure experience." To counter such a view, Nishida finds exemplary cases of the self-development of consciousness in dreaming and artistic creation, citing "Goethe's intuitive creation of a poem in the midst of dreaming" (*NKZ* 1:12; *AIT* 7). The implicit claim is that, when day-dreaming for instance, we often find ourselves shocked by the way in which consciousness develops associations freely, pursuing flights of fancy that are difficult to trace after the fact. Likewise, Goethe's Romantic conception of a genius is formulated in rupture from overtly labored and methodical thinking, stressing the spontaneous creation of an artist unaware of the process and meaning of their work. Beyond dreaming or artistic production, Nishida claims more generally that, "when a system of representations develops of itself, this totality is just pure experience" (*NKZ* 1:12; *AIT* 7).

Thus for Nishida perception differs from thinking only "in degree." Across perception and representational thinking, Nishida's point is that consciousness, rather than being the consequence of a subjective agent or a determinant sense impression, is better understood holistically as an intransitive, self-moving whole that transcends active–passive, subject–object, internal–external division in self- or auto-developing itself of itself.

Part 2: Two Frameworks of Totality in Early Nishida

But the path to an ontology of totality is by no means clear. My interpretation is that, in trying to figure out how this holistic account of self-developing experience translates into ontology,

Nishida arrives at two largely separate schemas of totality qua the self-development of reality: expressive and centered accounts. To be clear, my claim is not that these schemas are mutually exclusive—they are not. Nevertheless, the way in which these two schemas are brought together is by no means straightforward and of no small significance. As we will see across the subsequent chapters, differing combinations and emphases can bring thinkers to openness or closure. For middle period Watsuji and Nishida, stressing the expressive over the centered leads to closure (chapter 2); for Miki of the late '20s, the centered account in many ways presupposes the idealism of the expressive, and necessitates a new decentered framework for openness (chapter 3); and for Miki and Nishida's revised position of the '30s, the two can be brought together in a highly compelling, one-world idealist schema of self-development (chapter 4).[11] Nevertheless, Nishida's failure to treat these schemas together in *Inquiry*—either by refusal or inability—is of great historical significance. As I read it, this separation leaves their synthesis or resolution as a task for later thinkers, thus forming the motivating question or initial conundrum of modern Japanese speculation on totality.

Reality as Expressive Totality

Nishida overwhelmingly develops his expressive account of reality in chapter four of section two of *Inquiry*, "True Reality Already Carries the Same Form" (*shinjitsuzai wa tsuneni dōitsu no keishiki wo atteiru* 真実在は常に同一の形式を有っている):

> independent and self-sufficient true reality (*jitsuzai*) is established in the same form in all things. That is, it is established by means of the following form: first, the whole manifests itself *implicitly* (*ganchikuteki* 含蓄的), from that its content develops in differentiation, and then, when this differential development finishes, the whole of reality is actualized

[11] Likewise outside of Japan, G.W.F. Hegel famously brings together these two schemas as his absolute idealism.

> (*genjitsu serare*) and completed. In a word, a single entity self-develops and -completes itself of itself (*NKZ* 1:52; *AIT* 52).

And earlier in the text:

> We normally believe that we know the universal through thought and the individual through experience. But there is no universal separate from the individual—the true universal is a force of potentiality behind the actualization of the individual; it is the force within the individual that causes it to develop. It is like the seed of a plant (*NKZ* 1:23; *AIT* 17).

Though Nishida squeezes a lot into these short passages, we can begin our analysis by attending to a few key points. First, that this account of the totality of reality is unabashedly idealist. This is clear from the above distinction between reality (*jitsuzai*) and actuality (*genjitsu*), with Nishida articulating the former in a more complete sense to entail both what is actualized in the material sense and also the horizon of potentiality by which this is made possible. To be clear, this distinction is not of transcendence, and this idealism is not of the two-world Platonic variety. Instead, Nishida is an idealist in the inflationary sense outlined earlier: "a realist concerning elements more usually dismissed from reality…including the existence of the Ideas and the becomings they cause." In perhaps his clearest formulation, Nishida writes: "true reality is not something that can be termed a phenomenon of consciousness or a material phenomenon" (*NKZ* 1:45; *AIT* 44); the point is that, for Nishida, potentiality and actuality are brought together within the single process by which reality, as a whole, develops itself.

This is further explained with regards to the second key point: the immanent schema of self-development. For Nishida, reality, as totality, manifests itself "implicitly" according to "immanently unified" (*naimenteki tōitsu* 内面的統一) "forces of potentiality" (*senseiryoku* 潜勢力) before it is actualized within the material realm of actuality. Here, potentiality is carried immanently within the present moment as the transcendental condition for the formation of

actuality. This is to say that, despite overflowing the actual, these implicit forces of potentiality are nevertheless involved in and integral to the determination of actuality, and with it, the processual unfolding of reality. This notion of an unfolding of reality brings us to our third point: that the content of this whole of potentiality is developed (and thus actualized) through differentiation, and thus that it is through this process of limitation and determination that certain strands of this more full potential effects itself into the actual.

This is a difficult point, but Nishida has examples: "we obtain a judgment when such representations [of pure experience] that have been implicitly operating from the beginning become actual" (*NKZ* 1:16; *AIT* 12). Recall our above discussion of judgment. The idea is that the undifferentiated fullness of representation exists in pure experience as lines of potentiality, and that it is through the development and determination of certain strands of this more full picture that the judgment is actualized within the subject–predicate form. Remember, *all* of the elements of higher-order judgments are abstracted from the bounty of primordial experience—which is to say that the actual is only actualized as actual insofar as it first existed as a line of potentiality within this undifferentiated fullness. Thus in the transition to ontology, the above proto- judgmental and -propositional structure contained within the fullness of experience is rendered into lines of potential development.

Nishida further clarifies this process with reference to linguistic expression: "when the subject appears in consciousness, the whole sentence is already implicitly included (*an ni fukundeiru* 暗に含んでいる). But when the predicate appears, its content is developed and actualized" (*NKZ* 1:53; *AIT* 52). Here, the undifferentiated fullness of potentiality is rendered in terms of a background totality of fullness that shades any possible determination of the subject, and it is only when the predicate is fleshed out and differentiated, when lines of development qua

“immanent force of potentiality” (*naimenteki senseiryoku* 内面的潜勢力) are charted out and pursued, that this more full, holistic horizon of possible reference becomes actualized within the subject–predicate form of judgment or declaration.

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The question, then, is how does this process of actualization via differentiation take place? In other words, how does the whole develop itself in this schema? Nishida clarifies this via his above reference to the “seed of a plant”:

> no matter how the seed is cultivated from without, if there is no power of generation (*hassei no chikara* 発生の力) in the seed, the plant cannot grow. Of course on the other hand, the plant cannot grow if there is only a seed. Therefore both of these views look in one direction and forget the other. The activity of true reality is the self-development of a single entity (*yūitsu no mono* 唯一の者) (*NKZ* 1:54; *AIT* 53).

This example is useful in that it further clarifies potentiality, actuality, differentiation and their connectedness within the single activity of reality as totality. The power of generation corresponds to the above force of potentiality, and is thought to be something carried immanently within the seed itself—like a genetic code. To be clear, Nishida is not interested in this force of potentiality as a site of definition—through which the thing itself comes into its essential or ownmost being. Instead, this concept is better understood in terms of its inherent plurality, as a bundle of diverse forces or lines of development. It is a site of openness carried within reality, a set of alternative paths by which actuality can engender itself into the future.

Higaki makes a productive connection to the life philosophies of Henri Bergson and Gilles Deleuze in this regard, writing that Nishida, like Bergson, “demonstrates a strong tendency to grasp this force in terms of potential difference, in terms of indeterminacies that

bring about change."[12] If we briefly refer to the work of Deleuze, it may be useful to think of this force in terms of a "virtual plane" that carries "disjunctive" lines of possibility. Here, as Rediar Due renders Deleuze, "genetic determination," in other words, the potential force of determination carried within reality, "proceeds from a selection on a virtual plane among pairs of 'disjunctive' possibilities—or more properly, 'virtualities.'"[13]

For Nishida, a given line within the disjunctive plane of potentiality is actualized in the formation of a new present in intersection with the effected conditions of actuality—which, in the case of the seed, not only includes the embryonic plant and its coat, but also the soil, the temperature outside, precipitation levels, and a multitude of other external conditions.

As with Bergson and Deleuze, moreover, "for each actualized virtuality, another equally possible virtuality is not realized, and these unrealized virtualities are always given as disjunctive alternatives present within any moment. This means that the present is a site of bifurcation, a moment of choice where the world is moving in one direction rather than another, de-selecting another, equally possible, future world."[14] Nishida formulates this point in processual terms, arguing that the process of actualization is simultaneously accompanied by the formation of a new plane of possibility, which constitutes the horizons out of which reality will again newly actualize itself into existence. Here, the formation of actuality into the future proceeds via differentiation, and so is decisive in the sense that it is simultaneously both a foreswearing of possibilities as it is also the constitution of a new plane that carries potential lines of development. The idea is that potentiality and actuality are irreducibly tangled up with each other

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[12] Higaki, *Nishida no seimei tetsugaku*, 82–83.

[13] Reidar Due, *Deleuze* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 44.

[14] Ibid.

in a single processual development such that to speak of reality is necessarily to speak of a single holistic activity that develops itself in the back and forth determination between potentiality and actuality.

We can again look to verbal language to untangle this relationship. As we saw, Nishida claims that when the subject of the sentence appears, it is already implaced within a background horizon of meaning. This horizon of meaning, we will see in further detail in chapter 2, is articulated in terms of an objectively real yet not actual world of meaning that transcends our psychological activities. Such implacement within the realm of meaning is the reason why we are able to communicate with others, according to Nishida. And so in language, the individual escapes their own subjectivity to immerse themselves and partake in the objectively real world of meaning qua potentiality. But at the same time, it is through the subject partaking in this objective real world that language as a whole escapes abstract objectivity to become actualized. In short, it is through language use—through the actualization of meaning into concrete expression—that language as a whole changes its form and develops over time. With each use of language, the possibility of expression is recast in a new plane of potentiality, so that, over time, certain phrases and grammatical structure gradually fall out of fashion, as new ones emerge and come into prominence with novel strands of potential use readily available.

Reality as Centered Totality

Eschewing language of potentiality and immanence, Nishida's centered account of totality argues that totality qua self-formative activity develops through a less idealist, more material(ist), process of co-determination between one and many. Nishida presents this understanding in chapter five of section two of *Inquiry*, "The Fundamental Form of True Reality" (*shinjitsuzai no*

konponteki hōshiki 真実在の根本的方式). He begins with a critique of our intellectual bias towards reductionism, again referring to vegetation:

> Though a tree exists as the unification of parts that form various functions—branches, leaves, and a trunk—it is not simply an aggregation of these parts. If there is no unifying force of the tree as a whole, then the branches, leaves, and trunk lack significance. A tree exists upon the opposition and the unity of these parts (*NKZ* 1:57; *AIT* 57).

For Nishida, substantialist readings of the perspective of singularity qua complexity—that the whole is a mere secondary composite born of more basic parts—are reductive because they formulate the relation of each part to the other, as well as the relations constitutive of the whole aggregation, as inessential to the more fundamental subsistence of each on its own as a self-contained entity.

Hegel can help us here, but requires another addendum: Hegel is a grand thinker with many points of connection to Nishida thought. Fujita Masakatasu and Peter Suares offer adept readings of the relationship between Hegelian thought and *Inquiry* within the horizons of what I have outlined as expressive totality—mapping the move from *ansich* (in itself) to *fürsich* (for itself) and then to *an und fürsich* (in and for itself) onto Nishida's notion of an implicit whole that actualizes itself immanently through self-development.[15]

Nevertheless, as I read it, chapter five of Nishida appeals to a different aspect of Hegelian thought:

> Hegel claims anything that is rational is real, and that reality is necessarily something rational. Although these words have encountered opposition, based on the perspective of the viewer this is undeniably a real truth. The phenomena of the universe, including even the most trivial of entities, do not occur accidentally without any relation to what comes

[15] Fujita Masakatsu, "Nishida Kitarō 'Zen no kenkyū' to He-geru 'Seishin genshōgaku,'" in *Doitsu kannenron to nihon kindai*, ed. Yoshio Kayano (Tokyo: Mineruva shobō, 1994), 56; Peter Suares, *The Kyoto School Takeover of Hegel* (New York: Lexington Books, 2010), 9.

before or after. They necessarily accompany reason in their occurrence. Our seeing these as accidental simply follows from insufficient knowledge (*NKZ* 1:58; *AIT* 58).

It is immediately following this paragraph that Nishida introduces his claim that "activity itself is reality," and that this "agent-thing is an abstract concept that is born from the idea that unity and its content mutually oppose each other as independent realities." This placement shows that Nishida reads Hegel's often-maligned *Doppelsatz*—"What is rational is real; and what is real is rational"—in terms of relational constitution, tying this to the inseparability of unity and content, of part and whole, found in a centered account of totality that self-forms, or in Hegel's words, "self-reproduces" itself (*als dieses sich Reproduzierende*). Here, the sufficiency of knowledge tantamount to grasping rationality is understood in terms of viewing seemingly individual facts as constitutive moments of a self-producing whole.

Perhaps the best place to start our exploration of the connection between part–whole relationality and centered totality is Hegel's philosophy of nature and his concept of organic life. Klaus Brinkmann pulls these together well: "This organismic structure is characterized by a cyclical, self-referential, and self-sustaining process, in which the material elements, *i.e.* the organs, are not separate individuals but individuals subsumed under, and defined by their membership in, an overarching whole."[16] Stephen Houlgate fills this out: "A living organism continuously produces and renews both itself as a whole and its constituent parts. Indeed, the two processes are one and the same, the organisms renews and preserves its whole self precisely *through* renewing its parts."[17] Here, the centered account of self-development, as "a *self-*

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[16] Klaus Brinkmann, "Hegel on the Animal Organism," *Laval théologique et philosophique* 52, no. 1 (1996): 138.

[17] Stephen Houlgate, *An Introduction to Hegel: Freedom, Truth and History* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 161. Author's italics.

sustaining cyclical process that initiates and continuously renews itself,"[18] is the condition of part–whole relationality, in which "the parts of the organism not only sustain and renew the organism as a whole…they are in turn sustained by the whole, since they can only function properly within it."[19] And so activity has no agent; it is entirely constituted in the unity of its parts, whose existence is fundamentally organized by their role in sustaining and renewing the whole.

As such, the centered account of self-development grounds self-production in the interaction of parts and whole within the horizons of actuality. We can return to the tree and its parts. Here, force is not located in some power outside of or supervenient upon the right combination of the parts themselves; rather, activity is an always already constitutive force that embraces events within a field of mutual interaction. Here, each branch is internally related to the other branches as well as to leaves and the trunk within the tree as a totality. The existence of these parts is made possible insofar as they preserve, maintain, and regenerate the tree, which itself preserves and maintains the existence of, say, the trunk—which cannot continue life outside of its connection with the tree as a whole. And so, it is because it is grounded in mutually relational activity that the tree itself can be understood in terms of a larger holistic activity that develops itself of itself.

But much as the organism is just one stage in Hegel's philosophy of nature, Nishida too departs from the framework of the organism:

> The fundamental mode of reality is both one and many, many and one; equality accompanies differentiation, and differentiation accompanies equality. Insofar as these two directions cannot be separated, this can be reformulated in terms of the self-

[18] Brinkmann, "Hegel on the Animal Organism," 138. Author's italics.

[19] Houlgate, *An Introduction to Hegel*, 162.

> development of a single entity. Independent and self-sufficient true reality always takes this form (*NKZ* 1:57; *AIT* 57).

Nishida's goal here is not simply to reconsider mereology from a non-substantialist position. Because the language of parts and whole takes as its core the Aristotelian ontology of substance and accident, rendering one side of the dyad contingent and inessential, Nishida shifts to the language of "one and many" to distance himself from such discussions of ontological priority, and to foreground the reciprocal dependence and mutual determination of the many and the one.

Perhaps we can begin with how the many determine the one. Recall the above discussion of relations. There we noted that Nishida's event ontology proceeds differentially, meaning that each of the many is articulated according to its positionality within a larger holistic field of relations. Here, relata do not retain their core individuality over and above this relational positionality, but are fundamentally constituted in their relations. It can thus be said that the many mutually constitute each other insofar as each determines and is reciprocally determined by its relata. In mutually determining each other, moreover, the many bind together to constitute a unified field of totality that exceeds any one of these relations. What emerges as the result of co-determination among the many is a unity that is not simply reducible to its constituent parts. Next, we can look at how the one reciprocally determines the many. Insofar as the many are relationally constituted, it follows that entering into a relational unity re-constitutes each of the many on an ontological level. This can take different forms based on the type of unity, and in certain instances this unity functions to sustain the interactions between the many. Regardless, of its form, the unity that emerges as the result of co-determination among the many reciprocally informs the many.

We can clarify such mutual determination with reference to Hegelian scholarship. Avital Simhony's concept of the "relational organism" approaches Nishida's understanding of the

bidirectionality of the one and many. Here, the relational organism connotes "a whole of parts constituted by double (internal) relations; the parts are mutually interdependent and the parts and whole are mutually interdependent."[20] Philip Quadrio clarifies further: "The whole and the parts, and if understood properly the parts amongst themselves, are mutually sustaining without reference to anything external or above that relation."[21] In emphasizing the "dynamism of the relation," Quadrio comes even closer to Nishida's view, claiming that it is "the mutual penetration of the relata that brings about the reciprocity of this informing/transforming process."[22] To bring this back to Nishida, the claim is that it is the dynamic relational co-determination among the many, as well as among the one and the many, that constitutes the self-development of the unified activity of the whole.

And so it is precisely this bidirectional, co-determinative understanding of many and one that is the source of Nishida's commitment to a singular, unified activity of totality. That is, as in the expressive formulation of totality, in this centered account reality likewise resolves itself as a single activity, a "single entity" (*hitotsu no mono* 一つの者). Here too reality is a "self-moving" whole that determines itself without an agent; "an entity that forms a single system of itself" (*NKZ* 1:57; *AIT* 57).

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And so, Nishida's 1911 account of complexity qua singularity, of activity without an agent, is ontologized within two largely separate accounts of totality: expressive and centered. In

[20] Avital Simhony, "Idealist Organicism: Beyond Holism and Individualism," *History of Political Thought* 12, no. 3 (1991): 520.

[21] Philip Quadrio, "Hegel's Relational Organicism: The Mediation of Individualism and Holism," *Critical Horizons* 13, no. 3 (2012): 325.

[22] Quadrio, "Hegel's Relational Organicism," 332.

the former, the longitudinal development of the whole is achieved via immanent forces of potentiality that carry lines of development and differentiation implicitly within themselves to actualize the concrete world out of the broader horizons of reality; in the latter, totality self-reproduces itself by means of a dynamic, relational co-determination among the many, as well as the one and the many, within the concrete horizons of actuality itself. As I read it, this separation leaves their synthesis or resolution as a task for later thinkers, thus forming the motivating question or initial conundrum of modern Japanese speculation on totality. With these as our theoretical set pieces, we are now in a position to proceed with our study of totality in modern Japanese philosophy.

Part 3: Expressive Totality in Early Watsuji

This idea of self-developing totality did not pass unnoticed among "young would-be scholars of the Taishō era." But with reception comes transformation. This is perhaps nowhere more evident than Watsuji Tetsurō's 1913 *A Study of Nietzsche*, possibly the earliest in-depth study inspired by Nishida's treatment of totality.[23] Arguing for an interpretation of "will to power as totality," Watsuji put his own spin on the concept, transforming Nishida's interpretation in key ways that would ultimately shape how totality matured across the Taishō period. As I read it, Watsuji makes three significant transformations to the concept of totality. First, he reduces the centered account of totality to the expressive, making reciprocal development a mere moment through which expressive totality engenders itself; second, by doing so, he arrives at a longitudinally closed formulation of expressive totality that differs substantially from early Nishida's account; and third, he brings this longitudinally closed expressive account to bear on social and aesthetic

[23] I hereafter refer to this text as *Nietzsche*.

issues. In this latter move, Watsuji sowed the Japanese discourse on totality on fertile ground, bringing it closer to newly emerging trends in Western philosophy, and thereby guaranteeing its conceptual prominence into the future.

Will to Power as the Self-Activity of Consciousness

In December 1911 Watsuji, then a 22-year-old philosophy student at the University of Tokyo, proposed a dissertation on Nietzsche to Inoue Tetsujirō—head of the department and a major figure in Japanese philosophy. Inoue refused to approve the project, saying "Nietzsche is very wild and the project won't work," but offered an alternative: "to understand Nietzsche you have to understand [Arthur] Schopenhauer, so why don't you first write on him." Watsuji apparently did not take issue with the suggestion, hastily putting together and submitting a dissertation in July 1912 entitled "Schopenhauer's Pessimism and Theory of Salvation" (*WTZ* 24:274).

Shortly after submitting his dissertation, however, Watsuji would return to his proposal to begin what would become his massive *Nietzsche*. The project was organized around the concept of "will to power" (*kenryoku ishi* 権力意志), and took as its guide the eponymously labelled manuscripts that Nietzsche's sister, Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche, edited together with Peter Gast (Johann Heinrich Köselitz) after Nietzsche's death. As Ōishi Kiichirō notes, Watsuji's goal was to realize Nietzsche's unfinished project based on the table of contents of *Will to Power*, likewise dividing his own project into two parts—"Principle for the Establishment of New Values and "The Destruction and Construction of Values"—and organizing each part according to chapter topics derived from the table of contents in Nietzsche's manuscripts. In doing so, Ōishi

continues, Watsuji strove to "grasp the whole of Nietzsche's thought from a unified perspective," with "'will to power' placed center as the core principle of Nietzsche's thought."[24]

However, Watsuji used will to power not only to grasp the whole of Nietzsche's thought, but to link together "will to power as individual" and "will to power as totality;" to grasp "the life of the individual as cosmic life," and thus open onto our topic of totality. Through will to power, Watsuji argued,

> any given person becomes free to live for himself in unity with cosmic life, that person becomes a true individual. At that time, that individual is true life, the entirety of life, surpassing the subject–object division, and living eternally in the value of the sole reality (*yuitsu jitsuzai* 唯一実在)…one can say to every person that the life of the cosmos resides within you" (*WTZ* 1:175; *GT* 592, mod).

Noticing this shared language of sole reality, our starting question is: how does will to power link individual and totality, for Watsuji?

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As in *Inquiry*, Watsuji's explanation departs from the self-activity of consciousness. Here Watsuji takes inspiration from two of his contemporaries: Nishida, of course, but also Abe Jirō, six years Watsuji's senior at the University of Tokyo. Abe had emerged as a major intellectual force across the Tokyo Asahi and Yomiuri newspapers, as well as the avant-garde literary magazine *Subaru*, and the University of Tokyo's *Imperial Literature* journal. Abe's *Diary of Santarō*—first published in April 1914 but composed of "a dozen or so essays over a period of about six years, from 1908 to January 1914"—became a sensation in Japan, remaining a perennial bestseller into the postwar years (*AJZ* 1:13).

[24] Ōishi Kiichirō, "Watsuji Tetsurō to Ni-che: Nihon ni okeru Ni-che no juyōshi no tame ni," *Hikaku bungaku kenkyū* 46 (1964): 7–8.

Included in *Diary of Santarō* was his August 1911 "Literature as a Direct Copy of Inner Life," which, drawing on Nietzsche's 1872 *The Birth of Tragedy,* argued that a more fundamental and intuitive mode of consciousness is revealed in Dionysian expression:

> The world appears in relief for the Apollonian poet. Life appears as a phantoms inseparable from our own perspective and attitude. For the Dionysian poet, however, the world is a dance of inner life. Rhythm is everything in his world. Thus the topic of interest for him is only his dreamlike thoughts, feelings, and emotions. His art is intoxicated verse (*AJZ* 2:157–158).

Abe pursued this further in a January 1912 follow-up:

> the impulse for creation in the Apollonian is to express some *thing*, not some *fact*. His central concern is to observe some object before him, put order to the chaos of the thing, and bring forth some form. He feels devotion to the procedure of observation by which he clarifies the observer and the observed in distinction…[By contrast, for the Dionysian] his sole effort is to vividly and appropriately draw forth the scene of his inner life, using the power of observation and compositional abilities as a mere expedient…he therefore strives to make the inner life of their self dance through art (*AJZ* 2:162–163).

Abe's reading here "differs from the original sense" of *The Birth of Tragedy*, Suzuki Sadami notes, in transposing Nietzsche's Apollonian–Dionysian distinction onto two forms of literary production—those written for readers using communicable forms shared in clear relief, and those written to directly express the facts that flow as their inner train of thought.[25] Undergirding this division was a view of consciousness that privileged pre-discursive over higher-order operations of consciousness. Abe unpacked his understanding in literary criticism from this period, as

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[25] As Suzuki Sadami notes, Abe adds to Nietzsche's interpretation a distinction between "extroversion, in which the consciousness of the artist is directed toward the reader," and "introversion, in which the artist expresses himself from within." Suzuki Sadami, "Watsuji Tetsurō no tetsugakukan, seimei-kan, geijutsu-kan: 'Niiche kenkyū' o megutte," *Nihon Kenkyū* 38 (2008–2009): 333.

Kitazumi Toshio notes.[26] For instance, in his 1909 review of *And Then*, Abe praised his mentor Sōseki's depiction of "the human condition of present-day Japan," but noted that while its protagonist Daisuke's attitude towards reality was grounded in his "superior intellect and sharpened sensitivity," Sōseki "omitted the affective dimension" of lived experience (*AJZ* 2:39–44). He shows a similar penchant for the affective and pre-discursive in his polemical review of Japanese naturalism: "Those who do not understand that there is a realm beyond the literature of objective description and the art of relief are colorblind. Those who apply this aesthetics of relief to this other realm are cross-eyed. There are more than a few colorblind and cross-eyed among the ranks of the naturalists" (*AJZ* 2:157–158). Essentially, Abe's view was that naturalists mistakenly reify the abstract Apollonian dimensions of experience as primordial, and in doing so ignore the affectively charged level of Dionysian rhythmic fluidity that underly them.

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Like Abe, Watsuji similarly maps the Apollonian–Dionysian divide onto two forms of literary production, grounds this divide in the working of consciousness, and privileges the fluid unity of Dionysian life over Apollonian abstraction. Watsuji first develops this strand of interpretation in his 1910–11 work on symbolism—carried in *Subaru* and *Imperial Literature*, the same venues in which Abe had published his work on Nietzsche. Though these articles took as their focus the work of symbolists like George Bernard Shaw, Eleanora Duse, and William Blake, his interpretations were peppered with references to Nietzsche throughout. Drawing *heavily* from American critic James Huneker's 1909 *Egoists: A Book of Supermen*, Watsuji read

[26] Kitazumi Toshio, "Kaisetsu," in *Nihon kindai bungaku taikei*, ed. Itō Sei et al. (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1970), 13.

symbolist expression within the Dionysian parameters of fluid life.[27] In his work on Blake, for instance, Watsuji claims that "Symbolism expresses a fact that cannot be fully expressed in any other way. It requires a great deal of instinct to understand it" (*WTZ* 20:222). He explains the more full expression of symbolism in notes from 1913:

> It will not be enough, if we realistically try to represent the expression of life—regardless of how detailed our description is. Mechanical description cannot reach the organic, no matter how many descriptive layers we accumulate…But the symbol, though it is only simple and partial, is sufficient enough to reveal the organic whole (*yukitaiteki no zentai* 有機的の全体) (*WTZ* B1:12–13).

Here, as Karube Tadashi writes: "symbolic expression selects out a single object and implies the 'organic whole' of life through it."[28] And so, as with Abe's understanding of Dionysian art, Symbolism here transcends the Apollonian forms of Naturalism to express the fluid whole of inner life.

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Watsuji's 1913 *Nietzsche* takes significant steps towards unpacking this Dionysian understanding of inner life qua fluid, organic whole. Though Watsuji explicitly cites Henri Bergson and William James as inspirations for his more nuanced reading, he employs a good deal of uniquely Nishidian vocabulary in his interpretation, including "direct experience," "pure experience," "subject-object unity," and more. To be clear, this is not simply a matter of shared sources; Yuasa Yasuo has analyzed "posthumously discovered notes from Watsuji's school

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[27] As Nakajima Kunihiko has noted, Watsuji's article on Blake largely consists of a translation of "Mad Naked Blake"—a chapter from James Huneker's *Egoists*. See: Nakajima Kunihiko, "Jikkan, bikan, kankyo: kindai bungaku ni egakareta kanjusei 23: Blake inyu no imisuru mono: Yanagi Muneyoshi no kanjusei," *Waseda Bungaku* 176 (1991): 90–104.

[28] Karube Tadashi, *Hikari no ryōgoku* (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1995), 55–56.

days" to "uncover references to Nishida's *Inquiry into the Good* alongside Bergson."[29] Which is to say that Watsuji's view of experience and consciousness is close to that of early Nishida discussed in chapter 1.

Recall that Nishida formulates consciousness as self-developing activity, claiming that the postulation of an "agent-thing" is simply an "abstract" explanatory concept developed after the fact. Watsuji writes similarly:

> The view that holds that an actor accompanies all acts and that a thinker accompanies all thoughts is a postulate of logic…Both "I think" and "it thinks" are the result of human intellect distorting fact by interpreting activity in such a way as to trace it back to an agent. "Ego" is simply something that has been imagined as the nominative case of a feeling of power (*WTZ* 1:70; *GT* 427–428).

In developing this idea, moreover, we find striking resemblances between the terminology of Nishida philosophy and Watsuji's longitudinally holistic vocabulary of "self-activity" (*sore mizukara no katsudō* それ自らの活動), "self-moving force" (*mizukara doryoku* 自ら動力), "self-formation" (*jiko no keisei* 自己の形成), "self-purposiveness" (*jiko mokuteki* 自己目的), and more.

This understanding of consciousness qua holistic self-activity is directly related to Watsuji's key concept: will to power. For Watsuji, "will to power…is activity itself" (*WTZ* 1:48; *GT* 393). In other words, will to power is understood as the longitudinal self-formative and -moving activity that is constitutive of consciousness. Watsuji thus continues the above excerpt: "The feeling of power that Nietzsche spoke of is will to power seen in its affective aspect; it

[29] Yuasa Yasuo, *Watsuji Tetsurō: kindai nihon tetsugaku no unmei* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1982), p. 56.

denotes something that undertakes activity while flowing continually at the base of a consciousness that consists of a group of atomistic representations” (*WTZ* 1:70; *GT* 427–428).

Will to Power as the Self-Activity of Reality

As in Nishida, the self-activity of consciousness serves as a model for the workings of reality as a whole. And so, just as Nishida ontologizes his experiential claims without reservation, Watsuji too renders will to power into a description of the whole of reality—“the essence of the universe” or “cosmic life.” Watsuji explains:

> There is a deep reality at the bottom of the world that is interpreted by human beings. It is a sort of noumenal world. This is not something supra-empirical, but rather, something that ought to be lived directly. Inasmuch as it does not don a mythical, metaphysical garb, and likewise, is not something that ought to be attained by logical knowledge, it does not emerge into our clear consciousness; as a dark, amorphous instinct, however, it is most acutely active (*WTZ* 1:109; *GT* 488).

Here, the pre-discursive awareness that constitutes our direct inner life is understood as a kind of intuition of will to power as the more fundamental structure of reality.

With this as evidence, Watsuji claims that our analysis of consciousness likewise holds as a description of reality, and so just as consciousness is self-activity, “reality is only activity, only ‘action.’ What are thought of as causes—‘physical entities,’ ‘the subject,’ ‘the will,’ and so on—are the generalizations/abstractions of large numbers of actions by means of sensation and thought” (*WTZ* 1:81; *GT* 445). Here, will to power likewise takes the sense that, to quote Nishida, the “activity of true reality is the self-development of a single entity.”

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So, we know that for Watsuji, as for Nishida, reality develops itself in the same manner that consciousness develops itself. But to spell this out we need to track the means by which it

does so: force. In the same way that the activity of consciousness does not develop itself through the static, self-contained concepts of logic or atomistic representations, but through the more fundamental motive power of sensation, affect, intuition, and instinct, Watsuji claims that reality is not constituted of distinct objects but of forces—of will to power. Here, "congealed objects—'matter'—are created through sensory interpretation" (*WTZ* 1:77; *GT* 438). As in Hegel's phenomenology (though Watsuji does not cite this text), forces here transcend the idea of objects insofar as they contain within them an effective relation, making possible the interaction between so-called self-contained objects. The idea is that forces necessarily act on other forces that reciprocally act on them—and as a result, the claim is that we are immersed in a world of forces as opposed to a world of objects or things.

An explanation of Watsuji's understanding of reality is thus grounded in two connected questions: first, how do we characterize this effective relation between forces; and second, how does the idea of force connect with the holistic understanding of reality as self-activity? We can reveal the former through the latter—activity as the longitudinal self-development of totality. Remember, Nishida offers two paths for understanding the self-development of the whole: expressive and centered. In the former, activity develops itself according to "immanent" "forces of potentiality" that carry lines of development and differentiation "implicitly" within them; in the latter, activity produces itself in terms of a dynamic, relational co-determination among the many things, as well as among the one single activity and these many things within the horizons of actuality.

We find a similar tension between expressive and centered accounts in Watsuji. But these are not separated as two largely self-contained and self-completing schemas—as in early Nishida. Instead, Watsuji unites these schemas together: bringing flow and fluidity together with

one and many. Within the expressive horizons of the former, Watsuji claimed that the "state of flow that characterizes the essence of life…disallowed a spatial interpretation such as that of part and whole." Yet within the centered horizons of the latter, he commits himself to a language of one and many, singularity and complexity—claiming that, within will to power, "the one and the many is one at the same time that it is many and many at the same time that it is one." (*WTZ* 1:49; *GT* 394–395).

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To understand how these two positions—expressive and centered—come together, for Watsuji, we have to introduce the other key dimension of his theory: the Apollonian. Watsuji follows Abe in privileging the Dionysian fluidity of inner life. But "Abe does not negate [the value of] all Apollonian artists," as Sakagami Hiroichi notes.[30] What Abe most forcefully denounces is "those who are born of Dionysus, but led astray by the [Apollonian] aesthetics of relief to take up the chisel in their clumsy hands" (*AJZ* 2:162). In short, though Abe criticizes those who rule out or treat the Dionysian in terms of the Apollonian, he does not ignore the importance of Apollonian expression. Watsuji follows Abe in this orientation, but carves out an even greater space for the Apollonian in his reading of Nietzsche. In fact, Yorizumi Mitsuko argues, Watsuji was unique among his contemporaries—both East and West—in understanding the mutual "complementary relation between Apollonian 'form' and Dionysian 'flow.'"[31]

Watsuji describes the Apollonian in terms of "congelations" (*gyōko* 凝固) produced by the intellect, ascribing them to an essentially pragmatic motive. He looks to Bergson and James

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[30] Sakagami Hiroichi, "Abe Jirō no shoki bungei hyōron o megutte: 'jinsei to bungei' no sho-hen o chūshin ni," *Meijidaigaku kyōyō ronshū* 89 (1975): 52.

[31] Yorizumi Mitsuko, "Watsuji Tetsurō no shisō ni okeru 'katachi' no igi ni tsuite," in *Hikaku shisō o kangaeru*, ed. Nakamura Hajime (Tokyo: Hokuju shuppan, 1993), 2:213, 215.

to flesh this point out, claiming that, while the essence of consciousness is "flow and perpetual creation," there is a "practical spirit" at the root of concept formation—by which he meant that "concepts are in some measure beneficial to life, they are congelations for the purpose of assisting [the] flow" of will to power (*WTZ* 1:66; *GT* 421). He develops this idea with reference to the economizing function of identity:

> "Laws of thought are all developments of the law of identity. We have a tendency to view the similar as identical abstracts and to summarize the profusion of reality to the extent that it is possible. It is greatly effective for one's economy of force to be able to place a large number of phenomena into a single schema" (*WTZ* 1:67; *GT* 423, mod).

The idea is that, while our understanding of "static, unchanging, and eternally self-identical reality is a fabrication of logic," these fabrications are nevertheless "congealed for the sole purpose of benefiting life"—"economizing" the flow of force through pre-carved channels to aid the operation of conscious activity (*WTZ* 1:69; *GT* 426, mod). Thus Watsuji, even more than Abe, incorporates the Apollonian alongside the Dionysian—sorting out their relation in terms of a "conflict of two experiences, or at their base, two desires: the former seeks the permanence of phenomena and views human beings as something silent and clear, while the latter seeks creation and destruction and views the significance of human beings in terms of their becoming" (*WTZ* 1:23; *GT* 355–356).

But to be clear "incorporation alongside" and "mutual complementarity" does not signify equality. In fact, "flow was taken as primary" in *Nietzsche*, Yorizumi notes.[32] That is, despite preserving a more significant role for Apollonian form, Watsuji, like Abe, nevertheless privileges the Dionysian over the Apollonian:

> Seen from within, becoming is the unceasing creation of the unfull, the overfull, and that which lies within infinite tension and compression…Continuous destruction must pierce

[32] Yorizumi, "'Katachi' no igi," 226.

> through semblance—taken as a merely momentary deliverance—internally. In other words, Apollo acquires his correct significance solely through the spirit of Dionysus (*WTZ* 1:23; *GT* 356).

Here, the above-mentioned forms, concepts, laws, and so forth are only provisional fabrications—semblances—of a more basic and fundamental fact of Dionysian fluidity.

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To bring this back to the self-productive schema of reality, Watsuji's goal is to incorporate something like the centered account of the one and the many within a Dionysian account of fluid, expressive development. Our question, then, is how do these Apollonian congelations of form fit within the fluid Dionysian ontology of holistic self-development?

This can be clarified by unpacking Watsuji's understanding of the one and the many. David Gordon captures the various one–many commitments of will to power well: "it is simultaneously unitary and multiple, harmonious and conflictual, active and affective, particular and universal. It is also mysterious, immanent, self-moved, and absolute…It is the genuine essence of the world and of each individual human being."[33] And so for Watsuji, the one–many relation of will to power is neither an "aggregate of oneness, nor does it numerically appear as one and many" (*WTZ* 1:110; *GT* 490, mod). This one–many relation is vividly captured in Watsuji's use of the term self to refer to both the individual self and the true or cosmic self. Thus he claims that "when Nietzsche speaks of the self what is invariably signified is the flowing, seething life of the cosmos. This latter is indeed the individual, but it is at the same time the entirety of life" (*WTZ* 1:174; *GT* 590, mod).

[33] Gordon, *Self-Overcoming*, 191.

Still, the nature of this relationship between one and many, between individual and cosmic self, differs substantially from Nishida's 1911 centered account. This is clearly on display in further passages on the self:

> The "self" of which Nietzsche spoke is none other than this will to power. The zenith of the personality, which has transcended the form of cognition, can only be interpreted as "self." A relation of part to whole is not allowed here. The relation between the individual ego and the absolute is not that of part to whole. The "self" is directly the essence of the cosmos (*WTZ* 1:49; *GT* 395).

Likewise:

> "Self" is essentially will to power. It is the totality of will to power and at the same time a specialized force within it. Thus, all things are the activity of the self. And will to power as individual is the most intense activity of this [cosmic] self…Nietzsche takes the self to be the essence of the cosmos and then asserts that self. [In] his egoism…the self as the entirety of existence asserts itself…[this is] the self as progression of the world" (*WTZ* 1:173–174; *GT* 589–590, mod).

Here, the driver of development does not occur through the co-determination of many and one; there is, in fact, no mutual interaction. Instead, the totality of will to power develops longitudinally as a "vividly propellant, ceaseless activity" by virtue of its own "perpetual urge bent on expressing power" (*WTZ* 1:47; *GT* 392). "Will to power is, in respect of its individual entities, the totality. For the individual to grow is precisely for will to power to undertake activity" (*WTZ* 1:139–140; *GT* 537, mod). This means that, despite parallels with the centered account in his language of one and many, Watsuji ultimately situates this distinction within the more fundamental terrain of expressive development.

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But this does not mean that Watsuji shares in Nishida's expressive schema of development. While both accounts are indeed expressive, Watsuji's characterization of the longitudinal process of development differs from Nishida's in two key respects. First, in its

emphasis on fluidity in its narration of force: "deep, unmeasurable reality flows" (*WTZ* 1:58; *GT* 409, mod). Here, force is not something that engenders itself from a virtual plane of possibilities, but is a fluid outpouring of becoming: "For Nietzsche, actuality is only this instinct—eternal generation, unceasing progression—that flows onward by penetrating the essence of every individual entity. The absolute and the fixed do not exist in actuality. Everything is relative, a lively relation" (*WTZ* 1:109; *GT* 488, mod). This more fundamental fluidity is central to will to power. As Yorizumi puts it: "'will to power' can be rephrased in terms of the eternal generation of life (*werden*), the fluid force of life (*Leben*), a force immanent within the individual and transcendent of the individual, a fundamental motive force, the fundamental life of an undifferentiated universe, a ceaseless creative force, and more; the entirety of existence is the self-development of this force."[34]

Second, and as the preceding discussion of one–many makes clear, this becoming is unique in its unidirectional understanding of determination. This is what the "will" of "will to power" signifies, for Watsuji: "Nietzsche used the term 'will' to express a 'force that wells forth from within'" (*WTZ* 1:47; *GT* 392). While Nishida's expressive account does not embrace mutual determination to the same degree as his centered account, his expressive understanding of activity is still grounded in the right coordination of, say, environmental conditions. But for Watsuji, determination is entirely one-sided, with the whole actualizing itself through the individual, and the many thus determined as expressions of a single unified activity. Thus Watsuji configures will to power as "an active unifying force penetrating everything" (*WTZ* 1:49; *GT* 394); as "eternal generation, unceasing progression—that flows onward by penetrating the essence of every individual entity" (*WTZ* 1:109; *GT* 488, mod). To recall Horkheimer from

[34] Yorizumi, "'Katachi' no igi," 209.

our introduction, this is “not a process of interaction between nature and society… but is the unfolding or manifestation of a unitary principle”—will to power. Here, actuality is one-sidedly determined in the present moment by will to power as an expressive principle.

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Yet, we still have not explained how this fluid, unidirectionally determinative expressive account connects back to the one and the many—how expressivity subsumes centered relations; how the Dionysian incorporates the Apollonian? We know that there is no oppositionary many by which the one develops in mutual determination because the many is only an expression of this more fundamental unity. But, then why does Watsuji even include the language of one and many here?

The (unwritten) inspiration seems to be Hegel. Above we asked: how do we characterize this effective relation between forces? For Hegel, force is defined in opposition to another force. This opposition itself is an abstraction or extraction from the fullness of reality—which is precisely what his phenomenology is aiming to recover. Thus the goal in switching from a language of objects to one of force, in Watsuji by way of Hegel, is to effect a synthesis of opposition and thereby transition from the abstract to the concrete—a negation of negation that ultimately reveals the identity of opposites. This means that any “center of force,” for Watsuji, “is a profuse opposition when seen from one angle, even as it is a state of fusion as the essence of the cosmos when seen from another” (*WTZ* 1:70; *GT* 427). Now, in the same way that subject and object give way to oppositionary forces that achieve their resolution as a unified force, the one and many achieve their resolution in the unitary force of will to power. Gordon attends to this point as well, noting both that Watsuji’s concept of “force…requires that there be something

that resists it," and that "Watsuji places the bulk of his emphasis on unity" such that "will to power's dynamic oppositions, themselves, manifest the unitary substratum of reality."[35]

Watsuji charts out this longitudinal rendering of many and one, of opposition and then identity, in terms of a ceaseless cycle of creation that develops via destruction and conquest. Above we noted that the term "will" in "will to power" pointed to immanent development; here we see the way in which this is linked to power: "the term 'power' [in will to power] is used to express the essence of force in terms of battle and conquest." And so, "will to power is not only an active force, a force of life, and a self-active force, it is also a force of growth, conquest, and creation" (*WTZ* 1:47; *GT* 392, mod). And again: "Assimilation and fusion are first of all wills that aim to vanquish; growth and reproduction are wills that aim to create anew" (*WTZ* 1:116; *GT* 500).

It is with this in mind—a Hegelian commitment to an oppositionary understanding of force that brings about the identity of opposites amidst a whole that is unfolding through time—that Watsuji recontextualizes the language of one and many in terms of a process of "differentiation and unification" (*WTZ* 1:49; *GT* 394), of "breakup and fusion" (*WTZ* 1:59; *GT* 410). What is key is that this "breakup and fusion does not quantitatively signify many and one, but a more fundamental unity that it is one at the same time that it is many" (*WTZ* 1:59; *GT* 410, mod). Here, the one and the many are not wholly distinct, but rather oppositionary forces that reveal their more fundamental unity:

> Despite the fact that there are a number of centers of force and a relation of assimilation and fusion among them, the one (*ichi*) and the many (*ta*) is one at the same time that it is many and many at the same time that it is one; the relation is not one of part to whole but of confrontation within a fusion…There is no distinction between subjectivity and objectivity here. There is only a fluid force, a force that wells up from within and exerts

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[35] Gordon, *Self-Overcoming*, 192, 194.

> itself in creation. Moreover, that force is always fighting and conquering. This fluid force cannot be counted, but for purposes of battle it must comprise confrontation. It is confrontation that transcends the confrontation of subject and object, and profusion that is not a relationship of plurality (*WTZ* 1:49; *GT* 394, mod).

And so, Watsuji admits many and one but recasts them within a process of provisional differentiation and fusion through which a more fundamentally unified totality expresses itself longitudinally in an infinite process of development.

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This holds significance with respect to the issue of closure. Watsuji again and again claims that "the world has no finality" (*WTZ* 1:141; *GT* 539), and that his totality is open: "Although evolution is this will to power, and thus is moved by a purpose that penetrates it from beginning to end, it does not move forward by aiming for a final state" (*WTZ* 1:121; *GT* 508). While will to power does not seem to be aiming for a final purpose or destined end in this telling, nevertheless the process of conquest via destruction and creation is, as I read it, the expression of a more unified origin (or, to borrow Michel Foucault's language on Nietzsche, an *Ursprung*) guiding development, and so his theory amounts to a form of closure.[36]

This point can be developed in relation to Deleuze's "Anti-Hegelian" reading of Nietzsche, and in particular his claim that "there is no possible compromise between Hegel and Nietzsche." According to Deleuze, Nietzsche philosophy "forms an absolute anti-dialectics and sets out to expose all the mystifications that find a final refuge in the dialectic."[37] Nathan Widder's work on Deleuze brings his critique out well:

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[36] Foucault distinguishes between Nietzsche's use of the terms "*Ursprung*," "*Entsehung*," and "*Herkunft*"—each of which is commonly translated into English as "origin." See: Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Michel Foucault: Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, ed. James Faubion (New York: The New Press, 1998), 372–374.

[37] Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (New York: Continuum, 2002), 195.

> Deleuze maintains that it is Hegel's language of opposition, contradiction and negation that is inadequate to the task of grasping the nature of force relations. Hegel's account remains one-sided and incomplete because his stolid and seemingly more analytical and philosophical language removes the forcefulness that makes forces what they are.[38]

What matters here is not an opposition between forces that lead to their identity; it is difference qua difference that is key. To incorporate this difference, Deleuze's Nietzsche shifts from the terminology of negation to one of struggle and power, foregrounding the language of active and reactive, dominative and submissive, weak and strong in an effort to recapture a more fundamental difference that is not oppositional.[39] And so for Nietzsche, Deleuze claims, "the essential relation of one force to another is never conceived of as a negative element in the essence…For the speculative element of negation, opposition or contradiction Nietzsche substitutes the practical element of difference."[40]

We can relate this back to Watsuji and Nishida's theory of expression. Remember, we have found an emphasis on plurality and difference in reading Nishida by way of Bergson and Deleuze. For Nishida, the formation of actuality is decisive in the sense that it is simultaneously both a foreswearing of possibilities as it is also the constitution of a new plane that carries potential lines of development. This occurs in the present-moment as "a site of bifurcation, a moment of choice where the world is moving in one direction rather than another, de-selecting another, equally possible, future world."

Watsuji too focuses on the present as an important locus of development: "being flows and dissolves moment by moment without stopping for even an instant" (*WTZ* 1:41–42; *GT* 383).

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[38] Nathan Widder, *Political Theory After Deleuze* (New York: Continuum, 2012), 66.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 8–9.

And yet the becoming of actuality made possible in the fecundity of the present, in Watsuji, never opens onto a plane of disjunctive possibilities nor selects itself out of a plane of possible differences—as required in a truly open account of longitudinal development. Rather, actuality is formed as the expression of the more fundamental principle of will to power. Thus, the eternality of the present simply proceeds through the opposition of breakup and fusion—which is really just unity. While Watsuji's account is likewise involved in a hyper-dynamic momentary schema of self-production, will to power as a genetic origin sweeps away the present, and with it, the possibility of intervention.

And so, though Watsuji, taking inspiration from Nishida, reads Nietzsche's understanding of will to power in terms of the self-activity of the whole of consciousness and reality, he collapses the centered into the expressive, ultimately arriving at a longitudinally closed account of expressive totality.

Will to Power as the Self-Activity of Society and the Role of Art

Watsuji's *Nietzsche* also holds significance in that it brings the issue of self-active totality into the realm of the social and the aesthetic. We can begin with "will to power as society." What remains consistent across will to power as individual and as reality holds with regards to society—namely, the structure of self-active totality. Just as the self-activity of consciousness forms a kind of microcosmic reflection of the self-activity of reality, society is structured according to the same framework of self-formative development.

Our task with respect to society, then, is to unlock its terms within this more general structure of self-activity. First, society is totality: "society is not simply a collection of individuals, but something that exists of itself" (*WTZ* 1:166; *GT* 578)—"a single personality"

(*WTZ* 1:157; *GT* 563, mod). Second, as totality, "society possesses the instincts of struggle, conquest, creation, and so forth" (*WTZ* 1:157; *GT* 564). Remember, this language of conquest and creation is central to the centered account of one–many development. Here, the many, upon which will to power as society as one lays siege and through which it develops itself, are individuals. Watsuji thus attends to the entirety of activity as *one* unified totality, while nevertheless recognizing that this one totality is constituted by *many* forces. Rendered within the social, the idea is that "society is not simply a collection of individuals, but something that exists of itself" (*WTZ* 1:166; *GT* 578, mod). Here, "the individual becomes a part of the personality of society," such that "society is formed from a number of individual entities but is, as society, a single will to power" (*WTZ* 1:157; *GT* 563).

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But society is not simply one totality that operates in conquest through many individuals. In the same way that Watsuji attends to the congelations of identity produced by the intellect with respect to the self-activity of consciousness, he likewise foregrounds social institutions and "systems of marriage, property, language, custom, family, the populace, the state, and so on."

Recall that, for Watsuji by way of Bergson and James, the congelations produced by the intellect are indeed "a fabrication of logic," but these fabrications "benefit life." Yorizumi offers a helpful summary: "the provisional *Schein* [appearances; fabrications] are useful and necessary in the sense that they order and unify the diversity of flowing life (*Leben*), and thereby lead to the greater assimilation and formation of life."[41] Thus Watsuji talks about these fabrication of form as incorporating forces together to strengthen the flow of life: "Will to power appears as

[41] Yorizumi, "'Katachi' no igi," 210.

creative activity, and it carries out an 'incorporation of forces' in order to give itself form as something still stronger, still larger" (*WTZ* 1:62; *GT* 415).

Transposed to the realm of social activity, the idea is that, in the same way that the forms produced by consciousness aid and stimulate conscious activity by "economizing" the flow of force through pre-carved channels, social institutions and forms likewise aid will to power as social activity by economizing its flow. And so, these social institutions and "systems were in every case created not for the happiness of the herd but for the development of will to power itself. The formation of such congelations requires labor; when maintained continually, however, they become a large economy of force" (*WTZ* 1:158; *GT* 565, mod). The meaning of marriage, for instance, "lies in the fact that society allows two individuals to satisfy their sexual desires on the condition that they place the benefit of society foremost." Here, "marriage is merely a training of the species. It takes as its objective the preservation of the virile type of human being who rules" (*WTZ* 1:158; *GT* 565–566). Thus marriage is beneficial, for Watsuji, because it enhances will to power as society by promoting the virile type of human being who can channel its flow and effect its will.

There are also systems who economize the flow of society by removing the interference of weak individuals. Watsuji embraces the bio-power of the state here—endorsing eugenic practices like the "prohibition of most instances of reproduction," the "deprivation of freedom," and "on occasion even castration" to "destroy, without the slightest mercy, all inferior forms of life that sully the activity of life" (*WTZ* 1:159; *GT* 567, mod). Here, "imposition of every possible limitation and narrowness on the individual is for the purpose of great creation" (*WTZ* 1:157–158; *GT* 564, mod). So, regardless of whether these institutions promote virile individuals

that stimulate activity or remove weak individuals who interfere with it, their function is to economize the flow of will to power as society.

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Yet, we will recall, concepts can also obstruct the fluid development of inner life. With respect to cognition, the problem is when we mistake these concepts to point to something more fundamental—either regarding consciousness or reality. While the congelations of concepts, forms, laws, *etc.* economize the diversity of life into readily graspable and actionable patterns, we tend to become overly dependent upon these patterns, shutting ourselves off from the natural fluidity of inner life to embrace a "life bound to schemata." Watsuji writes:

> will to power continues its moment-by-moment creation as the life before our eyes. Human beings, however, attempt to go in the reverse direction by obstructing life's creative activity through their cognitions, which are constructed as instruments of that creation—or in other words, through an excess accumulation of schematizing, congelatory tendencies. While language, concepts, ideas, morals, and systems are necessary to life, they are continually injurious once they give rise to tendencies to try to determine life (*WTZ* 1:50; *GT* 396).

In other words, while concepts and forms can stimulate the flow of inner life, when we become overly attached to them, they obstruct and interfere with our instinctual attunement with cosmic life, and thus the operations by which will to power flows through the individual.

Working from parity, Watsuji sees a similar tendency towards degradation and obstruction in social institutions: "no matter how much these [social institutions and] systems facilitate society's conquest and creation, insofar as they are congelations, congealment itself finally comes to be regarded as having value, and the systems naturally reach the point of obstructing the activity of society" (*WTZ* 1:158; *GT* 565). Here will to power stops operating through these forms, and will to power as society becomes sluggish.

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When the flow of will to power as society hardens in stagnant social institutions, it seeks alternate paths of expression. Given the schema of one–many that we have seen at play in Watsuji's rendering of society qua totality, it is natural that he looks to will to power as individual. Though this individual comes in many guises, Watsuji foregrounds two as central: the despot and the artist.

We can begin with the despot. Here, the "great individual appears as the focal point of will to power as society" (*WTZ* 1:166; *GT* 578, mod). Because will to power expresses itself through the one–many relation of conquest and dominance, "the individual must be either the person who confronts society without being conquered by it or the master over society." Thus when society stagnates, the *Übermensch* steps up as the virile individual who becomes "the legislator/master of society" either by confronting society in opposition, or by tyrannically guiding society forward (*WTZ* 1:166; *GT* 578–579, mod).

But while the despot destroys those forms that hinder life, they are not adept at creating new forms that strengthen its flow. This is where the artist differs: "An artist is someone who possesses a vigorous life and an abundance of the force that dominates symbols, and thus performs self-expression in the most forceful fashion" (*WTZ* 1:204; *GT* 637). Though the true artist likewise "stimulates the fluidity of life," and so "does not take congealment as its characteristic feature," nevertheless they are unique in their ability to produce symbols that promote the flow of life without them hardening into "poisonous" and "life-negating" routine (*WTZ* 1:197–198; *GT* 627, mod).

This brings us back to the *symbol*. Recall that "symbolic expression selects out a single object and implies the 'organic whole' of life through it."[42] In a move beyond the *Übermensch*

[42] Karube, *Hikari no ryōgoku*, 55–56.

and the despot, the artist carries a unique relationship to symbols and forms, adeptly employing them so as to "'reveal' (*keiji* 啓示) the organic whole" of life that surrounds it. In *Nietzsche* this organic whole is articulated in terms of will to power as totality, and so is understood in terms of longitudinal activity. Here, symbols do not merely uncover, but participate in, the longitudinal unfolding of will to power as totality—channeling its energy to stimulate the development of the whole of society into the future.

He explains the role of the artist here within a two-fold process. First, they are able to recognize cosmic life qua totality behind forms—to "espy images that live in one's environment, [and] sense the deep life in those images." Here, the artist "grasps the true life of Dionysus within oneself while living in the world of Apollo." Second, they have a "drive to change the form of the self and to express the self through the flesh and soul of another." The self here, is the organic whole of the cosmic self, and the artist's aim is to "express that life through the symbols of Apollo" (*WTZ* 1:207; *GT* 642).

To understand how this stimulates the self-formation of will to power as totality we must introduce an additional element: artistic consumption. Recall that, in the normal course of events, forms, concepts, laws, *etc.* harden into husks that ultimately stultify the flow of will to power. But when some person "comes into contact with art that expresses intense life, his life receives the force of that expression, becomes excited, and sees the expression of its self in that art" (*WTZ* 1:214; *GT* 653). Here, "the diverse semblances of the objectified world are broken through" (*WTZ* 1:208; *GT* 643, mod). Through this process, we become able to perceive the provisional nature of social forms and institutions, and recognize their status as fabrications. By virtue of the work of art being a *symbol* of will to power, then, so-called "objective things are made to suggest something fundamentally different from any of the interpretations supplied by cognition" or by

social norms, thus allowing the audience to disengage from extant interpretive paths and open themselves up to the flow of will to power (*WTZ* 1:208; *GT* 643, mod). In doing so, they "obtain force through this suggestion," with the work of art functioning as a "great stimulus to life and a guide toward the climaxing of life" (*WTZ* 1:219; *GT* 660). Through symbols then, the flow of will to power is spread outwards among members of a society, so that they can overcome the stultifying tendencies of social norms to likewise participate in its unfolding.

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But again, Watsuji does not simply embrace the one–many centered account of totality; he incorporates the centered account within a framework of expressive self-development. So though despot and artist negate the extant formation of society, they do so as expressions of the more fundamental will to power—of which society is likewise an expression. Thus for Watsuji, the despot and the artist function as social variations of the expressive structure of the true individual or *Übermensch*:

> The *Übermensch* is a directional value that appertains to the advancement and creation of the self (or cosmic life). The essential identity of the self and the cosmos; the self as unifying force that is identical with the entirety of existence…the self that takes its yet higher assertion of itself as its true character: the *Übermensch* is the symbol of this self (*WTZ* 1:32; *GT* 370).

In this expressive schema, the artist qua *Übermensch* is *über*- because they are attuned with and channel the essence of life—not because they, as individuals, are able to reciprocally effect a change in the longitudinal development of the whole. As with consciousness and reality then, we again find pseudo-reciprocity here—a one–many structure that subsumes the supposed mutual confrontation between individuals (many) and society (one) within the expressive unfolding of will to power as totality.

Thus with regard to the artist, Watsuji writes: “Nietzsche took the aesthetic attitude as the essential activity of life and viewed art as its necessary expression…Life is fundamentally creation; it is effort that ceaselessly strives to express the self” (*WTZ* 1:204; *GT* 637). This means that the “expression of will to power/expression of self is precisely genuine art” (*WTZ* 1:202; *GT* 634). So, “rather than seeing the artist as making an effort to express a certain something…[a] certain something itself inevitably presses for its expression. This certain something is the essence of life and is also the self of the artist” (*WTZ* 1:211–212; *GT* 651). As with the *Übermensch* and the true individual, the artist and their symbols are mere expressions by which the will to power as totality develops itself beyond the stultifying constraints of cognition and social norms.

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This means that, like actuality, society is formed as the expression of the more fundamental principle of will to power. While despot and artist are indeed involved in opposition, they do so as expressions of will to power. Here, will to power as genetic origin operates and actualizes itself through them, and as such, removes from the individual any real possibility for social intervention. Both one and many, society and individual, are simply expressions of this fundamentally closed principle of will to power.

Chapter 2

Expressive Totality in Taishō: Middle Period Nishida and Watsuji

This chapter tracks our topic of totality in relation to Taishō period cultural production. Institutionally, we focus on the printing practices of Iwanami, and especially its magazines *Shichō* and *Shisō*, its *Philosophy Series* (*Tetsugaku sōsho* 哲学叢書), and its increasing connection with Kyoto University thinkers. The three figures that we dealt with in chapter one—Nishida Kitarō, Watsuji Tetsurō, and, to a lesser extent, Abe Jirō—again emerge salient. Ideologically, we track these venues and thinkers in relation to the expressive theory of totality that grips Taishō period discourses in life philosophy, cultivationism, cultural history, and Nishida philosophy. Our goal is to pursue and unpack this expressive theory of totality, while also tracing out the unique form that it took on across the Taishō period. We will do so across three parts: first, treating the institutionalization of Iwanami through its connection with Abe, second, investigating changes in Watsuji's theory of expression that accompany his transition to cultural history in his late 1910s *Revival of the Idols* (*Gūzō saikō* 偶像再興) and *Pilgrimages to Ancient Temples of Nara* (*Koji junrei* 古寺巡礼), and third, looking in detail at Nishida's technical treatment of expression in his 1925 essay, "Expressive Activity" (*Hyōgen sayō* 表現作用).

Part 1: Iwanami and Taishō Period Changes in Expressive Totality

It would be difficult to overestimate the impact that Iwanami publishing had on urban elites in interwar Japan. Iwanami publishing began with the used bookstore Iwanami shoten in the bookseller district of Jinbochō, Tokyo on August 8, 1913. Started by Iwanami Shigeo, the

venture was almost entirely supported by capital from his inheritance and book donations from friends.[1] Just over a year later Iwanami entered the publishing world, and by the mid-1910s—just a few years after its establishment—had carved out a unique place within Japan's print industry as a high-quality publisher of literary and intellectual works.

Key to his early success was a publication deal with renowned Meiji period writer Natsume Sōseki. Iwanami, a newcomer with just two titles printed, petitioned Sōseki in mid-1914 to publish the highly anticipated book edition of *Kokoro*, which had recently finished serialization in the *Asahi Newspaper* on August 11. Sōseki agreed with a "Well, I can do that for you," and Iwanami released *Kokoro* just over a month later.[2] Sōseki was heavily involved in the publication process, supplying the initial capital and famously involving himself in its design. The cover that emerged—tan characters on a light red background based on rubbings from a monument inscribed with the significance of *kokoro* by Confucian scholar Xunzi—became an iconic look for Sōseki publications into the future.[3] By the time Sōseki died two years later, Iwanami had become the sole publisher for his new works, including *Inside My Glass Doors*, *Michikusa*, and his unfinished *Light and Dark*. Iwanami commemorated Sōseki's death with the announcement of *The Complete Works of Natsume Sōseki*. As demonstrated by the slogans with which Iwanami advertised the complete works—initially, "literature lasts, but life is short" and later, "a golden monument to eternally commemorate Japan's contribution to the masters of

[1] Andrew Kamei-Dyche, "Crafting Legacies in Print: Natsume Sōseki, Intellectual Networking and the Founding of the Publisher Iwanami Shoten in Prewar Japan," PhD diss., (University of Southern California, 2020), 197–198.

[2] Nakajima Takeshi, *Iwanami Shigeo: Riberaru nashonarisuto no shōzō* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2013), 65-66. As cited in: Kamei-Dyche, "Crafting Legacies," 261–262.

[3] The characters were sent by his student Hashiguchi Mitsugu. See: Tochio Takeshi, "Sōseki to 'Sekkobun' no sōtei," *Seijō Bungei* 167 (1999): 17–58.

world literature"—these deals were meant to cement Iwanami in the public imagination as a high-quality press that would preserve the height of Japan's Meiji period intellectual and literary heritage (*ISH* 9).

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But canonization was not enough to ensure Iwanami's position into the future. Much as "Sensei" in *Kokoro*, the fixation of the unnamed protagonist, "feels the age he belongs to is passing," thus linking—Michael Bourdaghs notes—"his own decision to commit suicide with the emperor's death, as well as the ritual suicide shortly thereafter of General Nogi [Maretsuke] and his wife;"[4] Iwanami too attached what Harry Harootunian calls a "sense of an ending" to these deaths—Sōseki's among them, though slightly belated.[5] Taishō intellectuals experienced the passing of Meiji in terms of "a genuine crisis of culture," but nevertheless discovered in its passing the possibility of newness—a feeling that the era that they were living was profoundly different than what had come before. It was with an eye towards the future, and in particular towards the sense of newness that was being demanded across wide swaths of the press and popular literature, that Iwanami began seeking out new venues through which it could wed itself to the many calls for new, uniquely Taishō forms of *expression*.

We find an early account of this perceived newness in the work of Miki Kiyoshi, a second-generation Kyoto School thinker and the subject of the following chapter. In an

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[4] Michael Bourdaghs, "Natsume Sōseki and the Theory and Practice of Literature" in *The Cambridge History of Japanese Literature*, ed. Haruo Shirane et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 639.

[5] Harry Harootunian, "Introduction: A Sense of an Ending and the Problem of Taishō" in *Japan in Crisis: Essays on Taishō Democracy*, ed. Bernard Silberman and Harry Harootunian (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 3–28.

autobiography of his school days, Miki claimed that in "the intellectual world of Japan at that time"

> there was initially a period of adventurousness and activism, and at that time the political interest of students was generally strong and the skill of oration was in vogue—I experienced this [Meiji] period to a certain extent in my middle school years—but then in reaction, a period of introspection and skepticism appeared [in the Taishō period], and from this atmosphere an idea of "cultivation" appeared amongst intellectuals in our country. The idea of "cultivation" was either literary or philosophical in origin, and did not include political cultivation, but rather consciously excluded and rejected the political as external…In this way, humanism in Japan, or rather a Japanese humanism, gradually formed (*MKZ* 1:387).

Thus Taishō intellectuals, revealing what Harootunian terms a "chronic hostility toward, and indeed a rejection of, [the] politics" that had governed intellectual and public discourse in the Meiji period,[6] defined themselves in their pursuit of a more "cosmopolitan opening up to the wider world."[7]

As we see in the above excerpt, cultivation was the key concept here. Writing in 1949, Karaki Junzō, an even younger-generation Kyoto School member, maps out the intellectual shift from Meiji to Taishō in terms of a self-conscious transition away from a purportedly Meiji stress on the self-discipline and training of *shūyō* (修養) to a newfound Taishō emphasis on cultivation or *kyōyō* (教養) (*KJZ* 3:88). Rejecting the political, thinkers pushing for cultivation instead immersed themselves in introspection on the premise of a more fundamental humanism connecting different cultures.

To be clear, this was not simply about the human. In Miki's reflection, he not only identifies introspective confessional and humanist works like Leo Tolstoy's "My Confession"

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[6] Ibid, 22.

[7] Ibid, 15–16.

and “On Life,” as well as proto-humanist tracts like Jean-Jacques “Rousseau’s *Confessions*, St. Augustine’s *Confessions*, and Marcus Aurelius’s *Meditations*,” he also singles out the cosmic “life philosophy of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche” and of Rudolf Christoph “Eucken and Bergson” as significant in this period (*MKZ* 1:387, 403). For Karaki, the dual-focus here was not simply “humanity and individuality,” but also “universal and the individual”—a simultaneous movement inwards and outwards that ultimately revealed the way in which “inner life” opened onto will to power as totality or cosmic life.

This entailed, as Karaki notes, being pulled in two directions at once: “on the one hand, Taishō youth exposed themselves to a wide range of books on life, and on the other they tried to penetrate inwards to the depths of narrow individuality” (*KJZ* 3: 93). What this means, Karaki continues, is that

> the species as intermediate between genus and individual, and the particular (*tokushu* 特殊) as intermediate between universal (*huhen* 普遍) and individual (*kobetsu* 個別) were not taken up as problems here. Neither the state, society, politics, nor economics as species, nor the folk or the tribe as particular became an issue. They treated this with contempt, instead trying to establish a direct connection between totality and individual, between god and individuality. As species, then, the intermediate term was not a medium (*baikaibutsu* 媒介物) but a hindrance between these two (*KJZ* 3:93–94).

The significance of this individual–totality, totality–individual focus gained force, somewhat peculiarly, through Japanese participation. Miki singles out the three late-Meiji, early Taishō Japanese texts as pioneering this trend in cosmopolitan universalism. With regards to the inward confessional strand of humanism, Miki argues that “cultivation was mainly comprised of Sōseki’s disciples (*monka* 門下) and students influenced by Professor [Raphael Von] Koeber,” and adds that “Abe Jirō’s *Diary of Santarō* is a representative pioneer of this, and I remember reading it by candlelight after the lights went out in my dormitory.” With regards to the outward

holistic life philosophy strand, he claims that "Watsuji Tetsurō's *A Study on Nietzsche*" and "Nishida Sensei's philosophy" "expressed the atmosphere of that time" and "belong to" the trend of life philosophy in Japan (*KJZ* 3:93–94).

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Iwanami's acquisition of the cultural capital of Taishō newness involved yoking his company to Abe, Watsuji and Nishida, and thus to Japanese contributions to these emerging trends in cultivation, life philosophy, and Kyoto School thought. Abe was the first to get involved with Iwanami publishing. Above, Miki mentioned Abe by way of Sōseki's disciples in the Thursday Society. By some tellings, Abe is said to have introduced Iwanami to Sōseki, who afterward began attending these meetings as well. Before this, Abe and Iwanami, together with Abe Yoshihige, had been close friends at the First Higher School, and studied together in the Philosophy Department at Tokyo Imperial University. Abe (Jirō) began working as an advisor for Iwanami in 1914, shortly after publishing the above-mentioned *Diary of Santarō* with Shinonomedō. In the wake of its success, Abe wrote a series of essays as a follow-up, publishing the second volume of *Diary of Santarō* in February 1915 through Iwanami "as a tribute for his close friend's founding of the publishing company."[8] This edition also sold well, rapidly running through the first print run of 1,000 units, about double the general print numbers at this time, and then requiring a second print of 1,500 units and a third print of 2,000 units by August of that same year (*ISH* 5). By 1918, Iwanami had come to an agreement with Abe on the first edition as well, releasing the *Collected Edition of the Diary of Santarō* in June. This edition was wildly successful for Iwanami, running through 19 different printings by 1944.[9]

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[8] Kono Kensuke, *Monogatari Iwanami shoten hyakunen shi: Kyōyō no tanjō*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2013), 85.

[9] Kono, *Monogatari Iwanami*, 1:85.

Beyond *Diary of Santarō*, Abe was tightly folded into the Iwanami family. He was first installed as co-editor of their *Philosophy Series* in October 1915, alongside Abe Yoshihige and other fellow university classmate Ueno Naoteru. They also brought on an advisory board including Kyoto University faculty like Nishida, Hatano Seiichi, and Tomonaga Sanjurō, and included a volume by future faculty member Tanabe Hajime. The series was aimed at addressing the "poverty of philosophy in Japan" and took as its purpose the "establishment of philosophical thought among the Japanese people" (*ISH 5*). Iwanami began his October 1916 announcement: "Bergson, Eucken, [Rabindranath] Tagore. Their being transported to our world of thought is of great importance. But while we are pleased to see trends like this, in order for them to have true significance in our world, we must cultivate (*yashinau* 養う) the ground for us to receive it" (*IBS* 1:32). The Iwanami *Philosophy Series*, he continued,

> is the most fundamental, concise, and straightforward exposition of the most up to date knowledge in various branches of philosophy…my hope is that it will offer an accurate and precise foundation for knowledge. The authors are all up and coming scholars with a passion and sensitive scholarly conscience; though their names are not yet widely known, their abilities are not inferior to those of the so-called great scholars (*IBS* 1:32–33).

Miki remembers the series serving such a foundational role during his (Taishō) period of youth:

> Iwanami's *Philosophy Series* marked a new era in the publication of philosophy books in Japan. I read through *Epistemology* by Kihira Tadayoshi and *Introduction to Philosophy* by Miyamoto Wakichi many times without understanding them. *Logic* by Hayami [Hiroshi] was the textbook for my teacher's lectures at school. In short, my study of philosophy began together with Iwanami's *Philosophy Series* (*MKZ* 1:393).

Iwanami was aggressive with its printing runs, releasing each volume in runs of 700 to 1000 units. But the popularity outstripped even this larger scale, and by the end of the Taishō period Hayami's *Logic* has sold around 75,000 copies and Takahashi Yutaka's *Psychology* around 43,000 (*ISH 5*).

This was the first step in cultivating a generation of Taishō intellectuals to associate Iwanami publishing with philosophical thought; the next step was to establish a print venue that would be unique to the voice of this newer generation. In January 1914, the year after the Iwanami bookshop had opened, it began selling *Tetsugaku zasshi* (Philosophical Magazine 哲学雑誌)—the primary organ for the Philosophy Association and the Department of Philosophy at the University of Tokyo.[10] The magazine was published by Kōdōkan publishing, established ten years prior by Uzo Tsujimoto in the nearby Nishikicho district. Kōdōkan had made a name for itself in the academic world publishing textbooks and journals, as well as popular academic books like Nishida's *Inquiry*. Adding to the cultural clout accrued through their *Philosophy Series*, Iwanami's aim was to compete with Kōdōkan by producing an academic magazine that would rival *Tetsugaku zasshi* in readership. Iwanami again connected with Abe, and in Autumn 1916 they began developing *Shichō*, a new intellectual journal to be released in May 1917.[11]

Abe was the journal's driving force, but he enlisted editorial help and manuscript submissions from many of the up-and-coming Taishō thinkers—such as Watsuji Tetsurō, Abe Yoshishige, Ishihara Ken, and Komiya Toyotaka. In drawing on this younger generation, Iwanami and Abe were self-consciously crafting a space for Taishō intellectuals in difference from standard Meiji-era venues like *Tetsugaku zasshi*—most directly associated with "the prototypical Meiji intellectual, Inoue Tetsujirō."[12] Instead, as Miki alludes above, a different

[10] Iwanami would takeover publication duties of *Tetsugaku zasshi* from Kōdōkan in October 1928.

[11] The first issue sold for 30 sen, and later for 25 sen (*ISH* 9).

[12] William Lafleur, "A Turning in Taishō: Asia and Europe in the Early Writings of Watsuji Tetsurō," in *Culture and Identity*, ed. J. Thomas Rimer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 241.

professor emerged central here: Raphael Von Koeber. A number of the University of Tokyo figures affiliating with Iwanami publishing, including the Abes, Watsuji, and Iwanami himself, studied under the tutelage of Koeber—himself a student of the above life philosopher Eucken in Germany. In reflections, Koeber was remembered as a refined "man of culture," a "worldly intellectual who transcended national boundaries," and thus as a stark cosmopolitan alternative to the Meiji ideologue Inoue.[13] Koeber contributed to two-thirds of the issues in the magazine's run, and Watsuji even claimed that perhaps one of the goals of the magazine was to "provide the elder professor with a venue to freely publish his writings" (*WTZ* 24:92).

Abe Jirō made this Taishō appeal to cultivation and cosmopolitan universality explicitly in difference from the political orientation of Meiji nationalism, writing in the foreword:

> In order to build a splendid civilization (*bunmei* 文明) and develop a prosperous life, we must lay our foundation broad and wide. In order to do so, we must possess a deep and vast interest towards and understanding of our own country as well as the world, of ourselves as well as others. Narrow nationalism together with a foreign imitation that lacks penetrating insight or criticism, impoverishes both our civilization and our life. Against these two pitfalls, our primary mission is to mediate a rich sympathy with and a thorough understanding of all things…[To this end,] we will draw the ancient and contemporary trends in thought towards our country today, and from there will draw forth new trends in thought (*AJZ* 7:108–109).

Moreover, this cosmopolitan or universalist impulse was, Kono Kensuke notes, again structured by a kind of subjectivist or individual turn inward.[14] In "Small Matters of the Everyday," carried in the inaugural issue containing the above foreword, Abe notes:

> Bothered by the clamorous voices around me, I sometimes think in a rage—do those who advocate social attitudes or ethnic spirit really live in social attitudes or ethnic spirit in the

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[13] Abe Yoshihige, "'*Ke-beru sensei totomo ni*' ni josu," in *Ke-beru sensei totomo ni*, ed. Kubo Masaru (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1951), 18.

[14] Kono, *Monogatari Iwanami*, 1:151–152.

> same way that I live in my own thoughts? If they do not live in what they preach, then all of the many words they spout are entirely empty (*AJZ* 7:151).

The material and legal conditions of *Shichō* ensured that the journal kept its focus oriented towards the individual and the universal, and thus away from political matters. Important here was the Newspaper Act of May 1909, which stipulated that all serialized print materials regularly published under the same title must be classified as "newspapers," and imposed additional measures for newspapers "dealing with current affairs." Before printing, this meant requiring publishers of topical issues to register with the local governmental office and pay a security deposit of up to 2000 yen; after print, it meant that their materials were subject to close scrutiny and censorship by the Police Department and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This held for so-called general affairs magazines like *Taiyō* (Sun 太陽) and *Chuō kōron* (Central Review 中央公論), but literary and academic magazines like *Tetsugaku zasshi* were exempt from these measures. To avoid these restrictions, Kono notes, *Shichō* was "processed and classified as an academic journal, and was premised on the condition that 'current affairs' would not be discussed."[15]

But despite its attempt to skirt these additional costs associated with the Newspaper Act, *Shichō* never made much of a profit. More generally, Abe and his co-editors exercised final control over the editing process—almost completely to the exclusion of input by Iwanami publishing—and the magazine proved more work than expected (*WTZ* 24:92). This resulted in its often being poorly edited, late, and riddled with typographical errors. For instance, its publication of "On Japan" confused the middle characters of Nishida Kitarō's name—by then *the*

[15] Ibid, 146–147.

major figure in Japanese thought—reading 西田幾太郎 as opposed to 西田幾多郎. In the end, Iwanami together with Abe and his fellow editors decided to halt the magazine at an editorial board meeting in Fall of 1918, stopping serialization in January 1919 after 21 issues (*WTZ* 24:92).

Part 2: Idols as the New Expression of Self-Activity

About two-and-a-half years after ending *Shichō*, Iwanami began acting on plans for a follow-up intellectual journal, *Shisō*. It seems that, due to Abe's tight control over the magazine, "Iwanami did not feel that *Shichō* was an Iwanami magazine," but more of a "coterie magazine" (*WTZ* 24:92). To ensure editorial control and more closely tie the magazine to his own brand—and perhaps also to try again to capitalize on the cultural cache of Iwanami's still wildly successful *Philosophy Series*—Iwanami wrote the younger Watsuji about creating "neither a coterie magazine nor a revolutionary magazine for political advocacy, but a 'magazine of Iwanami shoten," as the latter recalls it (*WTZ* 24:92). With Watsuji as editor, Iwanami released the first issue in October 1921.

Shisō followed *Shichō* in its official status as academic journal, and Watsuji followed Abe in editorial spirit—avoiding current affairs and sticking to cultivation and personality as the magazine's defining concept. This shines through in the editorial note appended at the end of the first issue, which claimed: there are "many magazines that devote themselves to fads and garner the interest of readers by taking up fashionable problems," *Shisō* instead "brings eternal problems to the average reader, without currying favor by appealing to the fashion of the times" (*S* 1:back page).

Yet, despite sharing an orientation towards "eternal problems," Watsuji's rendering of cultivation differed from Abe's in its relentless fixation upon culture. Recall from Karaki that, for thinkers like Abe, "neither the state, society, politics, nor economics as species, nor the folk or the tribe as particular became an issue." By contrast for Watsuji, the "chronic hostility toward, and indeed rejection of, politics" constitutive of cultivation was inextricable from the transition to Taishō "culture"—with this latter term defined in an outwardly (if not authentically) de-politicized cultural discourse of "spirit" or *Geist* (*seishin* 精神).

In the years preceding the establishment of *Shisō*, Watsuji would begin his self-proclaimed "conversion" (*tenkō* 転向) to Japanese and East Asian cultural history, beginning in December 1918 with *Revival of the Idols*, gaining steam with his May 1919 *Pilgrimages to Ancient Temples of Nara*, and then continuing across the '20s and '30s with a series of books on traditional Japanese and East Asian Culture.[16] This "conversion" to cultural history has often been interpreted as a major change in Watsuji's thinking—away from an earlier interest in Western philosophers like Nietzsche, and towards traditional Japanese and East Asian culture. For instance Umehara Takeshi, known for institutionalizing Watsuji's cultural studies at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken), reads *Revival* as the "tale of a hedonist who awakened to spiritual purpose and drew back from debauchery."[17] Robert Bellah, the celebrated sociologist of religion, likewise claims that, with *Revival*, Watsuji turned "his back on individualism and return[ed] in his own way to the warm *gemeinschaft* community of

[16] The first two works, which we will focus on here, are composed of essays written from 1916 to 1918 and almost exclusively carried in *Shichō*. I hereafter refer to the first text as *Revival* and the second text as *Pilgrimages*.

[17] Umehara Takeshi, "Kaisetsu," in *Kindai Nihon shisō taikei*, ed. Umehara Takeshi (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō 1974–1990), 25:424.

Japanese life…that harmonious life in which the individual is perfectly blended in the group."[18] More recently, the famous post-structural cultural critic Karatani Kōjin has read the purpose of this work to be "the revival of the 'idols' destroyed by Nietzsche and the revival of Buddhist 'idols' in Japan."[19]

But we have to be careful here. While there is support for this narrative of conversion—as Watsuji does indeed focus much of his energies on cultural history moving forward—it is not clear that this is truly in repudiation of his earlier understanding of culture and society. In fact, we will see, structurally, this late '10s account of cultural forms relies on the same expressive theory of totality as his 1913 *Nietzsche*. And so, to bring this back to the language of Karaki, while Watsuji in no way treats cultural matters of species with "contempt," his cultural conversion is not undertaken in rupture from his previous work. Rather, in Watsuji's post-conversion cultural studies of Japan, as in his work on Nietzsche, "the intermediate term" of Japanese *Geist* is "not a medium" between individual and totality in any real sense of the word, but is again formulated as an *expression* of the more fundamental principle of totality.

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Much like *Nietzsche, Revival* takes as its subject the self-development of social forms as a totality. Working across various cultural regions and historical moments, Watsuji develops a cyclical tripartite stage theory in an attempt to understand the general process of cultural change and historical development. In doing so, he proceeds with a theory of historical formation qua longitudinal development that closely resembles his earlier expressive theory of totality. Recall

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[18] Robert Bellah, "Japan's Cultural Identity: Some Reflections on the Work of Watsuji Tetsuro," in *The Journal of Asian Studies* 24, no. 4 (1965): 587.

[19] Karatani Kōjin, *History and Repetition*, ed. Seiji Lippit (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 66.

that, in *Nietzsche*, society is totality, longitudinally formulated as social activity, and that the congelations of social forms function to economize the flow of social activity. In *Revival* too, the idol functions as an almost *ur*-social institution, playing "a necessary role in life, providing unity and strength to the flow of life, and guiding healthy, fertile, and beautiful development." Moreover, just as in 1913, idols run the risk of stagnating in hardened social institutions void of their earlier utility: "idols must be destroyed because they harden and lose their symbolic value," becoming "lifeless stones, simply a fixed ideal" (*WTZ* 17:9). Thus this account of social activity qua longitudinal totality is likewise imbricated within a schema of conquest and creation: "The destruction of idols is necessary for the progression of life…This is the only path through which the flow of life can be maintained. The idols that we unconsciously internalize and ceaselessly construct must also be ceaselessly destroyed through careful and deliberate effort" (*WTZ* 17:9).

There are, however, points of difference in these later works as well. First and foremost is that, while *Nietzsche* largely proceeded in generalities about social institutions such as marriage, property, customs, *etc.,* Watsuji's so-called conversion required him to think this structure within a historically particular geo-cultural domain.

Watsuji starts *Revival* with a narrative of Western Europe, beginning with Paul the Apostle, and his role in destroying the Greek idols that remained in the Hellenistic era: "Paul the Apostle had a fiery passion for eliminating idols. The idols he saw were simply objects of superstition that impeded true life. Walking the streets of Athens as a nameless wanderer, he witnessed a foolish people drunk on the superstition that they had been honored by and were filled with the power of their idols" (*WTZ* 17:10). In this telling, Paul's Areopagus sermon, especially his supposedly deft handling of the Epicurean philosophers who claim the "world is simply a union of atoms," opened a new epoch in history, swapping the Greek pantheon for a

new Christian idol—the monotheistic conception of God. In his wake, the "passion of Paul continued to hold authority for more than a thousand years," and the many "beautiful images of the Greek gods were, in the end, hidden in the darkness of the Middle Ages" (*WTZ* 17:11). Here we have a movement of creation through conquest and destruction.

But as this movement continued forward, these Christian idols inevitably hardened into strict dogma void of symbolic value: "By the eighth century, the movement for the destruction of the idols would not even tolerate images of the Christian saints." Then, from the darkness of the Middle Ages, "a new era dawned:"

> From the depths of a pit, the Anti-Christ was excavated from the earth and called out in joyful tones "idol, idol." The white naked body of the goddess lie like a corpse between ancient red stone walls. For the first time in a thousand years of darkness, the entirety of her body was covered in the bright light of the torch. "It's the Venus, the Venus of Praxiteles," people began shouting in ecstasy (*WTZ* 17:12).

These iconoclast movements were initially met with an "impulse to flee in fear," but this was checked by a "strange joy" that "seized their whole body" so they "could not move." Watsuji surmises: "Even if it was a sin for which they would eternally burn in hell, they could not resist the charm of her beautiful skin. A new and deep world was unfolding" (*WTZ* 17:12).

This excavation marked an important transformation in the structure of the idol. With the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, the "idols were no longer gods to be venerated;" "people trembled not because this was a heretical god, but because this was beautiful"—a work of art. It follows that

> the revival of the idols meant a rebellion against the oppression of ecclesiastical authority that had spanned over a thousand years. In the eyes of those reviving the idols, ecclesiastical authority itself was the idol to be destroyed. In the end, the rebirth of the old idols was concealed in the destruction of new idols. Materialism was also revived with great power along with these older idols, and this became the motivation for the movement of natural science in the new age—and with it lie concealed the expansion of a fresh and novel look on the world (*WTZ* 17:12–13).

Layered within this description is a second point of departure from *Nietzsche*. While Watsuji's narrative here still resonates with his 1913 theory of destruction and creation, it departs from the one–many horizons of fluidity and form by structuring self-formative development within a three-stage historical structure of: icon creation (Greek antiquity), (Christian) iconoclastic reaction (up and through the Middle Ages), and then an iconic revival (in the Renaissance that accompanies the birth of the modern scientific outlook).[20]

To be clear, this three-stage structure is explicitly evaluative. With an eye towards the psychology of idol veneration, Watsuji charts out these three-stages within a process of tension, degeneration into relaxation and a life of powerlessness, and then the recovery of tension. He links Christianity with this middle structure in Western Europe, and marks out the late Middle Ages as the moment in which "'degeneration' comes to its nadir." More specifically, Christianity marks the moment in which the "deep fevered" "tension" of the Greek antiquity "relaxes"—"crumbling from the inside" until it reaches a stage of "degeneration" in which "all of the freshness and strength for generative growth is gone" (*WTZ* 21:173). This is a little bit difficult to parse out, but essentially Watsuji maps out a three-stage structure within each stage of the above three-stage structure such that "within the totality of this larger flow [from Greek antiquity, through Christianity, to the Renaissance], this same transition was repeated several times in smaller cycles, but these cycles took place at lower levels" (*WTZ* 21:174).

And so, while imbricated within a geo-culturally specific tripartite structure, and thus differing from his earlier general emphasis on fluidity and form, this is nevertheless an iteration

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[20] This is connected to the fact that "the theory of 'forms' becomes actualized as the main subject of Watsuji's thought." Yorizumi, "'Katachi' no igi," 215.

of the same process of creation, hardening, destruction, conquest, and creation anew that we found in *Nietzsche*.

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More than philosophy, Watsuji here seems to have been influenced by work in cultural history, and especially by the Meiji-period art historians Ernest Fenollosa and Okakura Kakuzō. Fenollosa and Okakura understood art in terms of a tripartite Spencerian evolutionary schema, situating contemporary civilization in a state of decay and arguing for the need to recover past content and forms. Turning to the past, Fenollosa found the cultural apotheosis of Eastern art in Nara and early Heian-era Japan, and the high-point of Western art in classical Greek painting and sculpture. His commitment to both is perhaps most evident in *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, where he argues for a historical connection between Greek and Japanese style, claiming that Greco-Buddhist art formed "a wave that was long in gathering in Western Asia, swift and brief in its passage across China, and somewhat more deliberate in its breaking and dissipating upon the shores of Japan."[21]

Though "not agreeing with all the things that [Fenollosa] said," Watsuji broadly follows Fenollosa and Okakura in applying this three-stage form to the cultural history of Japan, and in likewise situating Greek antiquity as the genetic principle of Japanese art (*WTZ* 2:183–186; *NT* 178–181). In fact, Satō Yasukuni notes, the thesis of *Pilgrimages* "is that the Buddhist art of Asuka [CE 538–710] and Nara [710–794] is at the height of all of the Buddhist art left behind in Yamato because it best transmits the spirit of ancient Greek art, which itself is the distant source

[21] Ernest Fenollosa, *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art: An Outline History of East Asiatic Design (Volumes 1 and 2)* (Berkeley: Stone Bridge Press, 2007), 97.

of Buddhist art."[22] Watsuji initially talks about the Greco-Japanese connection in terms of character and spirit, arguing that although "the ancient Japanese did not have the culture of the Hebrews or the Greeks, they were very much alike in their characteristics. Ancestral veneration, the emphasis on lineage, reverence for fertility, joy of life in this world, emphasis on natural human features—in short, daily life as a child of nature—which appears in Genesis and Homer, is also evident in the ancient Japanese" (*WTZ* 21:171).

His trip to Nara—itself inspired by Fenollosa and Okakura's own trip to explore antiquities in the Kansai region—heightened his perception of this connection.[23] By *Pilgrimages*, Watsuji made this connection historical. Watsuji begins the text reflecting on the Ajanta mural paintings that art historian Arai Kenpō had showed him the evening before, starting his pilgrimage with the "vague speculation" of a "connection to Greece," of "an *Indianized* Greek influence in the Ajanta paintings" (*WTZ* 2:11–13; *NT* 3–5). This speculation is borne out as he moves forward; for instance, he describes the Shō Kannon in the Tōindo Hall of Yakushiji in relation to Greek sculpture, claiming that the sculpture "demands straight away that we give it deeply meaningful and significant status in an international context:"

> if we look at Greek sculptures of deities in somewhat similar cultural context [as Shō Kannon], we are surprised by the idea that there seems to be two distinct types of art, rather than the idea of their respective artistic values. That is, one is art in which a god was created from the human form and the other is art that expressed a god in the shape of the human body…The first begins from realism to reach the ideal the other begins with the ideal and uses realism…I think the inclination to render a divinity in human form, culturally speaking, is analogous to rendering "India" in "Greek" form. And I believe that the Shō Kannon represents nearly the pinnacle of this tendency—perhaps its highest point. If we look at it that way, the Shō Kannon does not stand as the opposite of Greece, rather it is a new child born with India as the father and Greece as the mother. Christian

[22] Satō Yasukuni, "Seiyō no jubaku kara no kaihō," in *Yomigaeru Watsuji Tetsurō: Jinbun kagaku no seisei ni mukete*, ed. Satō Yasukuni et al. (Kyoto: Nakanishiya shuppan, 1999), 90.

[23] Sakabe Megumi, *Watsuji Tetsurō* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1986), 154.

> art is simply Shō Kannon's stepbrother born of the same mother but with a different father (*WTZ* 2:133–135; *NT* 130–131).

Thus for Watsuji, Asuka and Nara period Buddhist sculpture plays a parallel role to the Greek pantheon in the above account.

But then, what is the parallel iconoclastic response and later revival? In "On Japanese Culture: An Introduction to 'Idol Veneration,'" carried in the April 1917 issue of *Shichō*, Watsuji traces these stages with a dual aim in mind—both historical and contemporary. Historically, Watsuji observes "three stages of transition in Japanese culture from the Suiko period [604–628] to the Heian period [794–1185]." In the "totality of this larger flow," he writes, the "peak is from the Suiko to the Hakuhō [673–686], followed by the period of the rise of Esoteric Buddhism" in the early Heian (*WTZ* 21:174). He seems to have in mind here Kukai and the establishment and spread of Shingon Buddhism across the 9th century. But as Shingon was imbricated in aristocratic culture, the argument goes, it became decadent and corrupted, starting its decline into the "degeneration the Heian period" and triggering a "social breakdown that drove people into a state of anxiety about life." This is crystallized in mid-Heian with works like *Tale of Genji*—of which Watsuji had a famously low opinion (*WTZ* 4:139–140).

As he moves forward in history, moreover, Watsuji repeated deploys this tripartite structure in rank of a given historical moment. The Kamakura period (1185–1333) revives the spirit of Nara Buddhism, but with time, the great

> spirit of the Kamakura period was gradually lost, until it finally sunk into the degeneration of the latter half of the Tokugawa period [1603–1867]. By this time, religion had entirely lost its life…Compare the Ukiyo-e prints [of the late Tokugawa] with the *emaki* (picture scrolls 絵巻) of the Kamakura period; while the latter bites into the depths of what it is to be human, the former is a play-thing with only faint life. Compare the *ninjōbon* (sentimental fiction 人情本) with *The Tale of Heike* and other *monogatari*. The latter penetrates the depths of human emotion to reveal the spirit of the

> age, while the former frivolously tries to divert the narrow interests of the people (*WTZ* 21:175).

Underlying this is a reference to the above tripartite structure that he likewise found in Europe. Thus Watsuji endorses a comparison of "the period before the Tenpyō period [729–749] to the flourishing of Greece and the Kamakura period [1185–1333] to the Renaissance." He continues: "I interpret the remarkable religious movement from the end of the Heian to the Kamakura period as a practical revival of the spirit of the Suiko and Hakuhō periods" (*WTZ* 21:173–174).

Watsuji also renders this schema into the contemporary moment. In his above "Preface to Idol Veneration," Watsuji goes to great lengths to establish an "ideological upheaval" in contemporary Japan. Speaking from 1917, Watsuji argues that there is a "boundary between people at around the age of forty-four or -five" that separates "those who were educated in Western thought from early on" and "those who were educated in Confucianism until late in life." He continues: "we [Taishō youth] may not realize it, but we have been nurtured by Greek and Christian culture in our sense of beauty, our search for truth, and our moral sense of self. It is for this reason that we find ourselves markedly different from the Japanese of previous eras" (*WTZ* 21: 167–168).

In terms of the tripartite structure of icon creation, iconoclasm, and icon revival, then, we are offered an alternate perspective on historical formation. By virtue of its historical connection, the Nara period maintains its equivalence to Greek antiquity. But in this iteration, William LaFleur argues, the "Meiji period was…the equivalent of Europe's Dark Ages."[24] Key iconoclastic events include the reappearance of Meiji Christian missionaries who understood Buddhist religious sculpture as idolatrous, as well as the quasi-governmentally sanctioned

[24] LaFleur, "Turning in Taishō," 245.

haibutsu kishaku (discard the Buddha, destroy Shākyamuni 廃仏毀釈) movement to eradicate Buddhism from Japanese culture—an event that, when recounted to Watsuji by Okakura, made his "young blood boil with indescribable indignation" (*WTZ* 17:354). It follows then that, in this contemporary rendering, one could draw an "equivalence between the Renaissance and the spirit of Taishō" (*WTZ* 17:246). Here, Watsuji's *Pilgrimage* was, like Fenollosa and Okakura's before him, meant to revive the icons of the Nara period, and thus lead contemporary Japan out of the iconoclasm of Meiji culture.

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As in 1913, it once more *seems as if* Watsuji has presented a self-formative schema of social and historical development through mutual confrontation—albeit modified in relation to his emerging interest in cultural history and his commitment to a three-stage structure of development. And yet again, this is just surface-level; dictating this entire structure is an expressive theory totality.

This expressive structure first shines through in Watsuji's understanding of idols themselves. Recall Watsuji's above description of the Shō Kannon: "a new child born with India as the father and Greece as the mother." This metaphor of parent and child points to a broader expressive theorization of idol creation. Throughout many of the essays that comprise *Revival*, Miyagawa Keishi notes, expression "is talked about through the metaphor of pregnancy and birth."[25] In "On the Psychology of Creation," for instance, Watsuji claims that:

> The inner life that impels expression carries a means for expression that fits it perfectly. To best explain this relationship, I once compared the psychology of creation to that of pregnancy and birth. In fact, it is only those things that are pregnant with life that can be born alive. When we give birth, we do not have the same freedom as when we make a clay figurine by hand. We have no choice but to make full use of what we are

[25] Miyagawa Keishi, *Watsuji Tetsurō—Jinkaku kara aidagara e* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2015), 26.

> impregnated with and to unconditionally submit to its demands…To avoid any falsehood in expression, there must be extreme sincerity, love, and care for that which we are impregnated with…It will not do for those pregnant [with inner life] to only be concerned with the process and repercussions of its birth, and to neglect their honesty and love for that which they are impregnated with. It is only by giving birth honestly, and so necessarily with the force of love, that there is true creation (*WTZ* 17: 214–215).

Watsuji continues, "with regard to the creation of art, it is essential that we are impregnated with something greater" (*ooi naru mono* 大いなる者)— namely, the totality of life.

Artistic creation is thus, by way of the metaphor of birth, expressive. As in *Nietzsche*, a "certain something [greater] itself inevitably presses for its expression" (*WTZ* 1:211–212; *GT* 651). But the language is even stronger here; the artist does not merely attune and channel the essence of life, they are filled with it—they give birth to a work by means of their being impregnated by a more full and holistic life. And, as with mothers and birth, artists do not control their powers of expression: "As the activity of the whole of life becomes vigorous and the value of the personality increases remarkably, it is attended by the urge towards the expression of this boiling life in eternal form" (*WTZ* 17: 213).

In "The Psychology of Idol Veneration," the final essay in *Revival*, Watsuji directly connects this framework of expression to his theory of idol creation and veneration. He writes of the Nara period: "artistic appreciation and religious devotion were one. Similarly, artistic creation and religious salvation had to be one" (*WTZ* 17: 283). And so, icons such as the above Shō Kannon are similarly expressions of totality. Thus, he says in our above excerpt, they "begin with the ideal and use realism;" they are representative of an "art that expressed a god in the shape of the human body," and that "concretizes the mysteries of cosmic life" (*WTZ* 22: 32).[26]

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[26] This latter quote makes reference to a letter to Kinoshita Mokutarō, published in *Shichō* in February 1918, from which the above *Pilgrimages* excerpt is based.

The use of terms like “ideal,” “god,” and “cosmic life” are key here. They point to the fact that Shō Kannon is not merely an iconic expression of the *particular* historical moment of Nara and Greece—no matter how international this may have been—but further, that these icons exist as expressions of “something greater,” something, to return to Karaki’s language, *universal*.

This expressive structure also governs artistic appreciation and idol veneration. Watsuji claims that “artistic creation is closely related to idol veneration. Just as artistic appreciation has its roots in the inner life of the [artist qua] creator, idol veneration too has its roots in the inner life of the idol creator” (*WTZ* 17:283). The idea is that, as soon as the expression of this greater totality emerges, impregnating the artist or apostle and then birthing itself into the icon, it “casts a spell” over a people—presenting itself with “an infinite power and the highest of authority,” as a “mystical power that transcended the human” and in which they “cannot help but believe” (*WTZ* 17:279). This mystical, transcendental force of totality thus expresses itself through the artist, crystallizes itself in the icon, and then casts a spell over the people of a given era, becoming the “current of the age” (*WTZ* 17:281).

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This expressive rendering of icon creation has significance for the entirety of Watsuji’s self-formative process of historical development discussed above. Put plainly, if icons are expressions of a more fundamental totality, and if the people constitutive of a given period “cannot help but believe” and follow the expression of these icons such that they become the “current of the age,” then, to again quote Horkheimer, we find history to be the “unfolding or manifestation of a unitary principle.”

This expressive structure allows us to make sense of Watsuji’s three-stage structure, and his evaluation of historical periods and their cultural products. As I read it, the key criteria for

Watsuji's cultural evaluation is a given moment's contact with the universal—the totality of life. Nara and Greek antiquity are here considered the zenith of cultural formation because of their contact with the universal, and because their icons best express this totality. In contrast, those icons that encapsulate cultural difference are taken as signs of cultural degeneration. Thus it is that middle Heian period works like *Tale of Genji* and late Tokugawa art forms like Ukiyo-e, traditionally seen as stand-ins for the particularity of Japanese cultural production, are esteemed lowly by Watsuji.[27] In these moments of cultural particularism, Watsuji claims, "'degeneration' comes to its nadir. There is no trace of the great life left. Everything is diluted and faint" (*WTZ* 21: 173).

This expressive structure also allows us to better make sense of Watsuji's theory of revival. Moments of renaissance and revival do not simply bring past cultural forms into the present—otherwise Watsuji would admit the revival of degenerate forms, which he nowhere does. Rather, revival is premised upon our connection with the universality of life. Thus "the Renaissance (*bungei fukkō* 文芸復興)," for Watsuji, was indeed "a revival (*fukkō*) of antiquity in the literal sense of the word," but "this new movement gained strength and force by reviving what could not be destroyed in antiquity"—namely, the universal (*WTZ* 17: 13). Watsuji thus clarifies: "my goal is not simply to 'revive antiquity.' In restoring antiquity, the past sheds its husk to shine with new life. Here there is no longer any constraint on time. This is eternally young and eternally new. In this way, my goal is to reveal the eternality of life in the present" (*WTZ* 17: 17).

[27] Satō offers a similar reading: "the most excellent work of Japanese art did not have Japanese characteristics as a regional feature, but was open to the world and, in that sense, realized universal character." See: Satō, "Seiyō no jubaku," 98.

And finally, this expressive structure allows us to make sense of Watsuji's pilgrimage. It is no coincidence that, in order "to reveal eternality of life in the present," Watsuji sets out in pilgrimage. The custom of pilgrimage in Japan, Sakabe Megumi writes, connotes "a sense in which people and objects (such as dolls), objects and minds, the visible and the invisible, actuality and that which has a stronger existence than actuality, freely interpenetrate in a relation of symbolic exchange." For Watsuji, pilgrimage was the opportunity to escape what he deemed the iconoclastic space-time of the Meiji period, and not just expose himself to the past, but to a different form of time: "time as a form that mediates the visible and the invisible, actuality and that which has a stronger existence than actuality;" "time as a form that mediates this world and the other world in a relation of interpenetration."[28] Whether formulated in terms of an "ideal," "god," or "cosmic life," or of the "invisible" or "other world," the purpose of the pilgrimage is to recover past icons, and again impregnate us with "that which has a stronger existence than actuality"—the whole of reality qua expressive totality.

And what these all amount to within an expressivist schema of historical formation—that is, the three-stage structure and its criteria, the theory of revival, and the significance of pilgrimage—is a longitudinally closed understanding of development. Here, historical development is only possible through the revival of icons that express this unitary principle. As a result, we not only find the expressivity of icon creation rendered into a *genetic principle* in the style of will to power, we also find an additional element of *final purpose*. Watsuji thus ends his introduction to *Revival*: "There is one great path that passes through the bosom of every idol. All of the efforts of mankind, across both past and future, ultimately gather along this path. The life of the eternal present is on this path, proceeding forward with great vitality" (*WTZ* 17: 17).

[28] Sakabe, *Watsuji Tetsurō*, 143–144.

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Despite Watsuji's impulses towards culture and cultural history after his so-called conversion, this understanding of cultural formation is fundamentally expressive. Here, each cultural period is an expression of a greater totality, and the three-stage structure of development is nothing more than exfoliation upon a longitudinally closed, pre-determined path. And so, to return to Karaki's characterization, although culture and society do emerge as topics of discussion, these are in no way treated as a "medium" between individual and totality. Rather, as with society in *Nietzsche*, culture is here an expression of totality.

Part 3: Nishida's Theory of Expressive Activity

But Watsuji's interest in the cultural history of Japan was an outlier in Kyoto School philosophy in this period. Though these works are from the period before he joined the faculty at Kyoto University, even after he accepted their invitation in 1925 he received pushback on his proposal for a course in "History of Japanese Culture."[29] In fact, later students of Watsuji recall that senior students and faculty alike warned them to "not become like Watsuji," and that "if you get involved in Japan things you will end up like Watsuji."[30] And so, our question is, to what extent was this expressive totality merely a reflection of popular philosophical intellectual movements in this period—such as life philosophy, cultivationism, and cultural history—but not Kyoto School philosophy proper?

Institutionally, such a clean division is not possible. Much as Iwanami pursued a relationship with Abe and Watsuji, he also actively sought out a connection with Nishida and

[29] The agreement reached was that Watsuji would integrate the study of Japanese culture into his course on ethics. See: Yuasa, *Watsuji Tetsurō*, 114.

[30] Ibid, 115.

other Kyoto University faculty—inviting them to serve on the advisory board for Abe's *Philosophy Series* and encouraging their contributions to Abe's *Shichō* and then Watsuji's *Shisō*. Iwanami also actively sought out book deals with Kyoto University faculty. With regards to the by-then-highly-famous Nishida, for instance, Iwanami was "eager to publish every book" and to "become the sole publisher of his works," to quote Michiko Yusa.[31] In October 1917, just over a year before Watsuji's *Revival*, Iwanami came to an agreement with Nishida to publish *Intuition and Reflection in Self-Consciousness*. In marketing the book, Iwanami showed the ways in which he felt Nishida's philosophical project, despite its technicality, fed into the broader ethos of cultivation that governed Iwanami in this period:

> The important philosophical problems of contemporary philosophies may be reduced to the relationship between (a) value and existence, and (b) meaning and reality. The present book is a crystallization of the philosophical effort of the author, who is probably the foremost original system-builder that Japan has seen…I am convinced that this book amply testifies to the fact that the essence of philosophical reflection does not consist in a simple logical organization of concepts. Rather, it shows that philosophical reflections are an intrinsic part of the profound process of attaining human authenticity.[32]

Iwanami actively sought out Nishida's back catalog as well. In May 1919, just five days before Watsuji's *Pilgrimages*, he republished *Thought and Experience*, originally carried by Senshōkan Publishing in March 1915. Moving forward, Iwanami would further wed its identity with that of Nishida, releasing his next major work, *Problems of Consciousness*, in January 1920, and then re-releasing *Inquiry* with a new preface in March 1921—which by then had gone through three printings at Kōdōkan and was out of print (*ISH* 19). Beyond Nishida, Iwanami also began printing books by fellow Kyoto University philosophy professors like Hatano, Tanabe, and

[31] Yusa, *Zen and Philosophy*, 138.

[32] Iwanami Shoten, "Ad," *Tetsugaku kenkyū* 21 (1917), back matter. Translation in: Ibid, 149.

Tomonaga—including the former's work in religious philosophy and Western religion, the middle's work on the philosophy of science and Kant's teleology, and the latter's work on Descartes. Furthermore, as we discuss in the following chapter, the company began employing and sponsoring a number of Kyoto University philosophy graduates—including Miki Kiyoshi, Tanikawa Tetsuzō, and Hayashi Tatsuo. Institutionally, then, there was no clean break between Kyoto School thought and these movements.

Nor was there an ideological or philosophical break. As we will see in this part, the middle period philosophy of Nishida was, despite its technicality, not divorced from trends of the time. Like Watsuji and Abe, Nishida became increasingly interested in aesthetics and social ontology across the 1910s and '20s, and his interests here were united within an increasingly expressive understanding of totality.

This expressive understanding finds a mature formulation in "Expressive Activity," carried in the January 1925 issue of *Shisō*, and then later collected in the 1927 volume, *From the Acting to the Seeing* (*Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* 働くものから見るものへ). Operating within the horizons of expressive totality, Nishida here connects his theory of self-developing "expressive activity" together with aesthetics and social ontology—grounding mutual knowledge, recognition, and communication in the expressive process by which a more complete and holistic reality self-develops and actualizes itself into existence from planes of potentiality immanent within reality itself. Here, the argument goes, we are not pre-formed subjects who come into contact with each other by entering social relations or drawing upon our capacities of, say, linguistic or artistic expression; rather, we are engendered as subjects on the condition that we are already connected as expressions of this more holistic reality.

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Before we discuss this concept of expressive activity, however, it will be useful to say a few more words about the connection between activity and sociality outlined in *Inquiry*. As with the transition to ontology from experience more broadly, Nishida's 1911 account of social ontology is born out of the social dimensions of experience. Recall Nishida's claim to the "relation of sameness between the consciousness of myself and the other." Though we clarified this relation with reference to a duet, Nishida's understanding of the social dimensions of experience in this text is neither limited to direct collaboration nor intimate face-to-face communication; it is far more "general" (*ippanteki* 一般的). He writes:

> The entirety of the content of our thought and feeling is general. Even when separated by thousands of years or miles, thoughts and feelings are mutually understandable. For example, things like mathematical principles are the same regardless of time or place. And so the greats are capable of inspiring people together to form a group, and of directing them according to their same *Geist*. In times like these, the *Geist* of the people can be seen as one (*NKZ* 1:46; *AIT* 44).

This account of sociality has often been understood by Nishida scholars with respect to the perspective of singularity qua complexity. For instance, Steve Odin makes important connections to classical American pragmatism in this regard, writing that, for Nishida, "the focal self is at each moment surrounded by a fringe of social relationships in the felt background of experiential immediacy which constitutes each moment as a felt whole and confers upon it boundless depths."[33] While such an analysis offers important insights into social thought by moving from event to field, I believe that we can arrive at additional insights if we consider Nishida's thought holistically from the perspective of complexity qua singularity—and thus if we consider his social ontology in terms of self-active totality.

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[33] Steve Odin, *The Social Self in Zen and American Pragmatism*, 85.

Key to this reconsideration is the concept of expressive activity. Nishida inherits this term from Conrad Fiedler's claim that an "expressive movement" (*Ausdrucksbewegung*) forms the origin of artistic creative activity. As Michael Marra points out, however, Nishida uses "the notion of 'expressive act' in a much broader sense than Fiedler, who had reserved it for the arts."[34] This broader interpretation is supported by the research of Fujita Masakatsu, who, citing Nishida's diary entries, claims that he had probably been working on Fiedler's concept of aesthetic expression as early as June 1912—about a year and a half after *Inquiry* was first published.[35] This timeline ties the concept of expression to Nishida's broader engagement with the concept of self-formative activity, grouping art and expression together as part of a broader arsenal that Nishida deploys to clarify his arguments for self-completing and -developing totality within, as the term "expressive activity" suggests, the framework of expressive totality. In other words, Nishida's theory of "Expressive Activity" in 1925 stands as the development of the expressive theory of totality in *Inquiry*.

This essay approaches the issue of totality through the interpersonal grounds of expression, and in particular by way of asking: how our expressions—linguistic and artistic—bear objective content and thus are generalizable to the extent that, at least provisionally, they "should be understood as something that can be understood by anyone" (*NKZ* 3:357; *HT* 35). To put this in the language of contemporary communication theory, Nishida's investigation is into the "content of expression," which is reserved for a sign-content or a message that is generalizable such that, in its most favorable conditions, it could allow for *universal* address among humans. Nishida begins his 1925 essay:

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[34] Michael Marra, "Conrad Fiedler and the Aesthetics of the Kyoto School," in *Essays on Japan* (Boston: Brill, 2010), 141.

[35] Fujita Masakatsu, *Gendai Shisō toshite no Nishida Kitarō* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1998), 164.

> When we speak of expressive activity, it might first be thought that we are speaking of something like a movement of outward manifestation of some kind of emotion. But to speak of expression is to speak of the expression of some content. In movements like the above, what is expressed is the content of subjective emotion of a certain individual; but in something like expressive activity, what is expressed is the content of an objective idea that can be understood by anyone. Even in something like artistic expression, what is expressed is not simply the content of a subjective emotion, but rather must carry objective meaning. All expressive activity can be thought of as emerging from three things; that is, emerging from the content expressed, the expressive activity, and the expression itself. In something like the movement of outward manifestation it can be said that these three things are one; but in something like language each of these is different (*NKZ* 3:357; *HT* 35).

Setting aside the outward manifestation of emotions as relatively straightforward, Nishida focuses on expressive activity, and especially how it is possible that the individual "partakes" in objective, external content. To this end, he outlines "three things" constitutive of expressive activity: the content expressed, the expressive activity, and the expression itself.

As we will see, Nishida's explanation of each of these falls within the horizons of expressive totality, forming a tripartite structure of reality qua expressive totality. Here, the content expressed corresponds to the lines of potentiality carried within broader totality, expression itself to actuality, and expressive activity to the activity by which totality engenders and actualizes itself. Following the economy of relations laid out in the expressive theory of totality found in *Inquiry*, expressive activity is here formulated as the self-unfolding of a totality that engenders and actualizes the expression itself from the broader totality of content expressed. And so, the most central question for Nishida's investigation is: how does the totality of content expressed qua objective reality connect to expression itself qua the actualized material object? Rephrased: how does totality actualize itself into existence?

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The answer lies in expressive activity. Nishida begins by thinking through the similarities that run across the content expressed and the expression itself, between the totality of content expressed qua objective reality and actuality. He writes:

> Along with it being thought that that the expressed content is objective, even that which bears such expression must be thought to carry objective reality, or at least belong to objective fact. The objective reality of language and the work of art carry a sense of existence; despite their consisting in something like an external manifestation, it is the movement of the physical figure that appears in their outward appearance. In the sense that both the expressed content and the expression itself transcend our psychological activities, they can be called objective. The former belongs to the world of meaning and the latter belongs to the world of existence (*NKZ* 3:357–358; *HT* 35–36).

Expression, for Nishida, is the coming together of two forms of objectivity: the world of meaning, which corresponds to the expressed content, and the world of existence, which corresponds to expression itself. Both worlds are objective in the sense that they transcend our psychological activity, and so can be thought to be real. But from our discussion of *Inquiry*, we will recall that Nishida draws a distinction between reality and actuality—both of which transcend our psychological activities. The objectivity ascribed to the expression itself falls within actuality, and thus the world of existence more or less aligns with what is actualized in the physical sense. The objectivity ascribed to the expressed content, however, falls outside of actuality—within a broader and more *holistic* world of meaning that transcends the physical realm. And so while we have a relatively common-sense grasp of the form of objectivity carried within the linguistic utterance or the work of art—say, the physical sounds or pigments—the more holistic objective reality of the world of meaning—a form of reality that is in not physical—is more difficult to pin down.

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Nishida aims to further clarify the totality of objective reality by thinking through the temporal modes unique to the worlds of meaning and existence. He asks:

> By what form of unity can yesterday's consciousness and today's consciousness, interrupted as they are by sleep, directly join together? It cannot be thought that there is continuity between [yesterday's consciousness and today's consciousness]; it cannot be thought that what comes next appears before what comes before has ended. Speaking from today's consciousness, yesterday's consciousness has obviously disappeared (*kiesatta* 消え去った). Where does the disappeared consciousness exist such that it acts upon the consciousness of the present? If it is said that it remains as traces in the cortex of the brain, this merely begs the question. To speak of yesterday's consciousness and today's consciousness directly joining together in a single consciousness, that which has already become nothing must be thought to act. Not only is it not possible to think that yesterday's consciousness exists within matter, we must recognize that the non-conscious self-contradictorily becomes conscious. The unity of consciousness must be thought of as the unity of that which is completely separate from time; here, meaning acts within consciousness (*NKZ* 3:370; *HT* 48).

In a twist on an idea from *Inquiry*, Nishida preserves two ideas that seem at variance: that yesterday's consciousness has disappeared, and that yesterday's consciousness acts upon the present. Though this claim *prima facie* reads as untenable, we can make sense of it if we map yesterday and today onto the world of meaning and existence, respectively. The world of present existence is overwhelmingly spoken of in material terms, such that, like the linguistic utterance or the work of art (the expression itself), it is the material presence of yesterday's consciousness that stands as the transcendental condition for its placement within the world of existence. Conversely, yesterday's consciousness is linked to the content expressed insofar as both fall within the realm of meaning. The idea is that yesterday's consciousness only "disappears" in the physical sense entailed within the world of existence, and it is in this sense that "it cannot be said to carry the same character of reality." Still, what is important is that while it no longer *exists* in the same "dimension" (*jii* 次位) of reality as the expression itself, yesterday's consciousness is

still objectively real insofar as it submerges alongside the content that is constitutive of the totality that entails the world of meaning (*NKZ* 3:370–371; *HT* 48–49).

This leads to an important corollary from the perspective of temporality: concomitant to submerging the content of yesterday within the world of meaning, the content of meaning is submerged within the world of the past. This is significant because middle period Nishida thought is typically characterized as lacking historical sense. Indeed, as John Maraldo notes, "up to 1930 Nishida developed a philosophy of consciousness that had little to do with the social and historical world,"[36] and, as John Krummel notes, it is really from around 1932 that "Nishida extends and applies his theory of place [*basho* 場所] to the dynamic features of that sociohistorical world so that the logical structure of the system of place now becomes explicitly identified with that of historical world constitution."[37] Nevertheless in this 1925 essay—which deals with the theory of place in its final pages—the totality that constitutes the world of meaning is irreducibly historical such that both the world of meaning and the historical world are objectively real without being actual.

More, there are two important consequences of Nishida's making the past objectively real. First, it demonstrates that Nishida's claim is not restricted to individual psychology; my past is a perspective on a more fundamental past that, as Nishida put it earlier, "transcends our psychological activities." And second, that the past does not exist within the present, but rather stands as an independent and more holistic realm of objective reality outside of what is actualized within the present.

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[36] John Maraldo, "The Problem of World Culture: Towards an Appropriation of Nishida's Philosophy of Nation and Culture," in *The Eastern Buddhist* 28, no. 2 (1995): 185.

[37] John Krummel, *Nishida's Chiasmatic Chorology: Place of Dialectic, Dialectic of Place* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 79.

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And yet, tying together dimensions of objective reality and modalities of time further complicates the relationship between the expressed content and the expression itself. Remember, both Nishida and our common sense are committed to some form of connection between these two realms—that, despite carrying a different and more full sense of objective reality, the world of meaning and history continue to exert influence on the present world of actuality. But now, objective reality is not merely separated into a world of meaning and of existence; rather, the worlds of meaning and existence map onto different forms of time. And so this issue has become inextricably linked with Nishida's philosophy of time, and his understanding of the connection between past and present.

It is with the aim of understanding this relation—of today's consciousness with yesterday's, of present with past, of the world of actuality with the more holistic world of history and meaning—that Nishida turns to the notion of expressive activity.

In resonance with his 1910's position, Nishida's middle-period work first approaches this question from an experiential standpoint. Key here is the idea of "self-awareness" (*jikaku* 自覚). While Nishida had dealt with this concept in his mid- and late-1910s work, his pursuit is more rigorous in the '20s, arriving at the claim that for us to have knowledge of some object, there must be a more fundamental "knowing of knowing" (*shiru koto o shiru* 知ることを知る) at its base (*NKZ* 3:360; *HT* 37). This concept of self-awareness is formed as part of Nishida's radical criticism in response to Kantian critique, and in particular to the earlier mentioned idea that "knowing is an action [from the subject toward the object], based on the opposition between the subject and the object [as 'thing in itself']." Kant premises the objects of knowing upon a knowing of knowing, but in doing so he finds himself unable to adequately consider the type of

knowing that is being used to know what knowing is. The central presupposition that Kant makes, and that Nishida tries to dismantle, is that this knowing of knowing takes the form of an action from the subject to the object. There are, as Ueda Shizuteru points out, two senses of self-awareness at play in Nishida's radical criticism. In addition to the more static "sense of 'reflection of reflection'" that Nishida inherits from European transcendental philosophy, there is a more fundamental "sense of the self-awakening of pure experience"—by which Nishida refers to direct experience awaking to itself in all of its primordial fullness.[38] The idea is that, in being tacitly aware of its first-order directedness, the content of this self-aware knowing of knowing noetically transcends the object of knowing, moving toward a more primordial dimension of experience that lies beneath judgmental knowledge. This knowing of knowing is a second-order reflexive activity accompanying a first-order intentional act, thus containing additional content excluded in the first-order directedness of the conscious self. In this more fundamental order of experience the self has both proto-judgmental knowledge of objects and intuitive knowledge of itself as intentional, as directed toward objects. Bringing the co-constitution of self and object to the fore, Nishida claims that there is no distinction between subjective and objective in self-awareness, and there is thus a "supraconscious unified" (*chōishikiteki tōitsu* 超意識的統一) act at the base of our self-awareness upon which the conscious self is established. Here, expressive activity is not an activity of the subject, but is instead a subject-producing activity. As a consequence, that which unites expressed content and the expression itself, as well as yesterday and today's consciousness, must necessarily transcend the self to be rooted within the supraconscious realm of unified activity.

[38] Ueda Shizuteru, "Pure Experience, Self-Awareness, Basho," *Études phénoménologiques* 18 (1993): 77. This is a translation of chapter four of part three of: Ueda Shizuteru, *Nishida Kitaro o yomu* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1991).

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This experiential account therefore brings us back to the issue of activity without an agent, and thus to the holistic perspective of complexity qua singularity discussed in chapter one. As Nishida formulates this idea in his 1925 work: "to say that a thing acts is necessarily to say that this thing transforms its qualities of itself" (*NKZ* 3:358; *HT* 36).

Just as Nishida's discussion of the expressed content and the expression itself falls within the horizons of the expressive framework of totality, so too does this account of expressive activity. Towards this end, Nishida once more employs the language of force:

> the acted upon must itself act. Insofar as these two things mutually inter*act*, both lose their quality of independence, and are unified according to a single force. The concept of a thing dissolves within the concept of force. Rather than thinking that a thing acts, it can be thought that a thing is caused to move by a force. When we say that some phenomena are succeeded by other what we mean is that a force transforms from one state to another. Force is that which transforms itself of itself. Or we can say that without one force being moved by another, there can be no change. But there must be an unchanging force that acts. And so, it is insofar as forces mutually inter*act*, that they are necessarily unified as one force (*NKZ* 3:358–359; *HT* 36).

Here again Nishida echoes his 1911 argument, dissolving independent objects within an interpenetrating field of totality that urges itself forward as activity or force. But this dynamically unified account is brought in tension with Nishida's commitment first, to a plurality of forces and second, an unchanging force that acts. Recall our discussion of the first problem in *Inquiry*; noting resonances with the work of Bergson and Deleuze, we formulated this unified force in terms of a virtual plane that carries disjunctive lines of possibility among which only certain lines are actualized. The distinction between force and forces more or less aligns with the distinction between a virtual plane and lines of possibility, though here Nishida is also using forces in its plural to refer to the actualization of these lines. These lines, insofar as they are grounded in interaction, simultaneously constitute a newly unified force out of which reality self-

develops itself by differentiating and actualizing a plurality of forces into existence. Here we have Nishida's tentative opening onto the centered by the expressive. Thus, following the above excerpt, he writes: "We must permit a logical contradiction at the grounds of activity—that the one gives birth to the many, and that the many is constitutive of the one" (*NKZ* 3:359; *HT* 37).

But this first instance of the expressive opening onto the centered is only properly understood with further reference to the second idea, that there is an unchanging force of totality that acts. Here, as in Watsuji, we find the expressive ultimately dominant. Thus it is that Nishida ends the above passage with reference to one unchanging force that acts.

This point can be clarified with reference to the above discussion of time—the relation of today's consciousness with yesterday's, of present with past. The idea is that, as a condition of the emergence of diachronic identity, or even anything like a temporal axis, there must be some more fundamentally unified activity that joins together the diverse contents of each moment. Otherwise, we are left with synchronic slices that bear no relation to each other. Nishida maintains that, "even in the transitioning from the moment that has passed before to the next moment that occurs in rectilinear time, there must be something that entails and suspends both the before and after" (*NKZ* 3:379; *HT* 57). To be clear, Nishida is not advocating for rectilinear time, nor for any particular temporal construction in which we organize these contents along a linear, one-dimensional temporal axis—for instance, mechanistic or teleological accounts.

In fact, Nishida not only argues against linear time, but also against the idea that there can even be an *a priori* temporal axis. Instead, he claims that the "active present" (*hataraki iku genzai* 働き行く現在) (the world of actuality where consciousness, thinking, and perception unfold) joins together with the content of the past (the worlds of meaning and history through the

"suspended present" (*tomareru genzai* 止まれる現在) or the "eternal present" (*eien no genzai* 永遠現在). Nishida thus follows his above critique of rectilinear time:

> Behind the active present, there must be a suspended present despite it all. If time transition moment by moment, then there must be something that maintains its results. These results are unified by means of [the suspended present], and they are objectivized as one-dimensional time. A productive activity that simply moves from one moment to the next alone cannot unify this result; in order for activity to see activity, there must be a standpoint separate from activity (*NKZ* 3:379; *HT* 57).

Here, it is through the active present's connection with the suspended present that the content of the past is actualized in the formation of the present.

Perhaps it will be useful to diagrammatically render this idea. If we think of the active present moment as unfolding horizontally, forming new moments in its lateral movement, then the suspended present marks a vertical eruption upward that enfolds this horizontal unfolding within a three-dimensional structure. A comparison to Bergson's inverted cone is perhaps useful.[39] Just as Bergson's cone opens onto the entirety of the past in its greatest level of expansion, Nishida's structure opens onto the supraconscious field, or as he later has it place (*basho*), of totality where the contents of yesterday join together with the content of propositions in an objectively real though non-actualized holistic world of history and meaning.

Nishida overwhelmingly speaks of this field or place of totality in terms of either the body or eternity—two terms that, *prima facie*, seem at odds. Nevertheless, each of these terms is telling. Although we will see the body perform several functions in Nishida's thought, here it adds a certain robustness to this field of totality, and emphasizes its independent status beyond the psychological activity of the mind—which is the locus normally ascribed to expressive acts

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[39] Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory* (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 152, 162.

like thinking and artistic creation. The notion of eternity, on the other hand, situates this totality of history and meaning outside of any particular temporal framework. Here, "time loses the shape of time itself, and merges as an image of the eternal" (*NKZ* 3:374; *HT* 52). Nishida's clam is that time is only formed as time through the determinative acts of expressive activity; that time is an expression of totality. Or, in a bit more detail, *the present along with the temporal axis itself* is formed as a determination of the plane of eternity through the process of expressive activity. Here, Nishida brazenly puts it, "'time' can be thought of as something that is created" (*NKZ* 3:374; *HT* 52). So, in this middle period expressive account, totality self-develops itself as *expressive activity*, forming the present as an expression of the past, the world of existence as an expression of the world of meaning and history.

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This expressivist reading finds support in Nishida's discussion of the social dimensions of expression. Recall from Nishida's opening paragraph that he sets aside the outward manifestation of emotions and focuses on how it is possible that the individual "partakes" in objective, external content. Nishida first takes up the issue of the shared social basis of expression through inter-personal communication:

> When I speak with someone, my thoughts are directly transmitted to the other, and their thoughts are directly transmitted to me in the same way. How is such an exchange of thought possible?…It must be that there is something essentially communal within our minds, and that mutual recognition is achieved through the signs of language. It is because expression is impersonal that two persons are connected, and consequently it is with this as its medium that two minds achieve mutual knowledge (*NKZ* 3:374–375; *HT* 52–53).

Mutual recognition is predicated not on our use of signs to express individual thought, but the fact that expression is the transcendental condition for thought itself. In short, expressive activity is the grounds by which our thoughts themselves are irreducibly communal.

This point will perhaps emerge salient in relation to contemporary communication studies. For example, Nishida is not interested in what Robert Craig has termed "transmission models" of communication, in which "communication is conceptualized as a process in which meanings, packaged in symbolic messages like bananas in crates, are transported from sender to receiver."[40] Instead of conceptualizing sender and receiver as pre-established structures and formulating communication as a tertiary connective line transmitting information across them, Nishida instead foregrounds the unified activity of expression, first, as the transcendental condition for inter-personal communication, and second, as the process that makes possible the emergence of something like a sender and receiver, and thus of something like subjects.

We can further flesh out Nishida's social ontology here in relation to artistic expression. As in *Inquiry*, Nishida connects aesthetics to the primordial grounds of experience, claiming that activity is the substrate out of which creative expression emerges. He writes:

> In expressive activity, the center of consciousness transitions from the conscious self to the supraconscious self, and so-called conscious activity, on the other hand, becomes a shadowy image reflected onto the body. If we are able to think of language in the manner above, then we should probably say that art is an expression in its most complete sense…As I've referenced in Plotinus, the artist does not create because he possesses eyes and hands, but rather they create because they take part in an idea. It is inasmuch as the artist submerges the subjectivity of the self within objectivity, that they intentionally act (*NKZ* 3:377; *HT* 54–55).

Nishida moves quickly, but we can use our above comments regarding reality, actuality, supraconscious unified activity, force, and time to clarify four key moments constitutive of expressive activity, and thus of our sociality. First: in expression our consciousness transcends the standpoint of subjectivity to merge alongside the objectively real world of meaning (this is

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[40] Robert Craig, "Communication," in *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*, ed. Thomas O. Sloane (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 125.

what will become the content expressed) in a holistic state of supraconscious unified activity qua totality. Here, expression, artistic or linguistic, is not the effect of subjective thought, but rather the transcendental condition for the actualization of thoughts and ideas. Nishida writes: "Language is not the result of thought but can instead be said to be the condition of its establishment. Our thought is made possible through language; it is through language that thought escapes subjectivity and becomes objective. At the root of thinking is the world of verbal expression." Also: "the activity of thinking is nothing more than the development of the content [of propositions]." What this amounts to, for Nishida, is that "for thought to be thought it must be brought out in a public place (*ōyake no basho* 公の場所) at least once; even if this is not necessarily a communal place with another (*tanin to no kyōdō no basho* 他人との共同の場所), this is nevertheless a public place within the mind of the self-itself" (Nishida, *NKZ* 3:375; *HT* 53).[41] The claim is that the subject does not express its preformed thoughts and ideas using some form of artistic expression as its medium, but rather that in expression the ego-subject is dissolved within the objective reality of meaning through supraconscious unified activity.

Nishida relates this to the above notion of a body in his discussion of linguistic expression: "Pure thought is not contained within the activity of our thinking, but rather resides within the world of language—language is like the body of thought" (Nishida, *NKZ* 3:375; *HT* 53). The shift to the lexicon of the body here locates the propositional content of thought and ideas outside of the mind of the subject, and requires that the subject transcend its limited standpoint to engage in thinking. Feeling creative, Nishida claims that it is through expressive

[41] Nishida here uses the term self-itself as broadly synonymous with supraconscious unified activity.

activity the conscious self becomes a “shadowy image cast upon the body” of the objective content of expression.

This transcendental submersion within this more holistic world of objectivity is, for Nishida, the condition of the possibility of inter-personal communication:

> The fact that at any time our minds can mutually understand each other is made possible from within the standpoint of the objective mind. It is thorough language that we live within the objective mind, and it is by means of this that we mutually understand each other. To submerge the subjective self within objectivity necessarily requires objective expression; in other words, it is by means of linguistic expression that we take the standpoint of objective thought (Nishida, *NKZ* 3:376; *HT* 53).

Nishida unpacks this idea that we take the standpoint of or live within the “objective mind” with one more key sentence: “In expressive activity, what can be thought of as the so-called real is enveloped within [what is thought to be] the non-real, in something like meaning. The real is the raw material for the manifestation of meaning” (Nishida, *NKZ* 3:378; *HT* 56).

This can be unpacked with regards to the second moment: in merging with the world of history and meaning, the locus of activity transitions from the actualized present to the unified force or plane of potentiality within the suspended present. Key to the above quote is the intransitive sense of manifestation. It is not the subject that actively negotiates the world of meaning to pull out ideas through language so as to convey their internal thoughts. Neither internal thoughts nor subjectivity has yet been formed! Instead, meaning manifests or presences itself by actualizing itself into existence in the formation of the present. Nishida here reverses the terms such that that “meaning acts within consciousness” and not the other way around. In short, in expression it is not the subject that acts but totality.

Perhaps we can better approach Nishida’s claim if we remember our three-dimensional diagram. Within this deep structure are various horizontal planes, the surface of which are

constituted by propositions, history, ideas, and so forth. The claim is that as the actualized subjectivity dissolves within the suspended present, it animates some plane within this vertical structure. In being awakened, the surface of this plane transforms from something like smooth horizontality, and a multitude of forces erupt vertically downward. This is connected to the third point: expressive activity forms the present moment into existence by actualizing forces immanent to this unified plane. This is how we should read the "logical contradiction at the grounds of activity—that the one gives birth to the many, and that the many is constitutive of the one." The claim is that some, though not all, of the forces that well downwards towards the surface break through, actualizing the many into existence, and thus forming a new present moment.

Here again it may be useful to link Nishida's argument to communication studies. Put broadly, Nishida's account resonates with what Craig calls the "constitutive model" of communication, where "elements of communication rather than being fixed in advance, are reflexively constituted within the act of communication itself."[42] But Nishida's claim is more radical. It is not simply that expression itself (a work of art or a linguistic utterance) is constituted in expression, but that both sender and receiver are elements constituted as expressions of the activity of supraconscious unified totality. Thus the issue is not about how they transmit their thoughts because, as subjects, inter-personal communicability is the condition of their emergence.

We therefore arrive at our fourth and final point: expression produces objects (the expression itself) that are capable of bearing objective content such that they are, in principle, capable of being understood by anyone. This is possible precisely because the subjective is

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[42] Craig, "Communication," 125.

submerged within the objectively real world of meaning and history in expressive activity. We can tease this out if we return to the opening passage, in which Nishida distinguishes expressive activity from the outward manifestation of emotions. While emotions are irreducibly embodied for Nishida, and thus capable of being understood by others, they are not, he claims, submerged within the objectively real world of meaning and history, and so are not capable of being understood by anyone. It is because expressions themselves are formed in the above process of expressive activity that the content they bear are, in principle, universally communicable.

And so, the social ontological implications of self-active totality are laid bare in Nishida's middle period work on expressive activity. In the most straight forward of terms, the idea is that inter-personal recognition, knowledge, and communication are made possible because we, as subjects, are already linked within a more complete and holistic reality that carries within it a tendency or force of expression through which it self-develops and -completes itself of itself. We are not pre-formed subjects who come into contact with others by entering social relations or drawing upon language; rather, we are engendered as subjects on the condition that we are already connected by expression—linguistic, artistic and more.

Tanabe's Critique of Nishida's Expressivity

Thus, as I read it, this schema, like other Taishō schemas of totality, is fundamentally expressive. The characterization of this expressive framework within the lexicon we laid out in the introduction—transcendent or immanent, closed or open-ended, guided by genetic principle or final purpose—became the subject of much debate in Japanese philosophy.

The first *explicit* critique of Nishida's expressivism by a Kyoto University peer was Tanabe Hajime's May 1930 essay, "Looking up to Professor Nishida's Teachings," published in-

house at the Kyoto University philosophy journal, *Tetsugaku kenkyū*.[43] Though the essay is primarily aimed at Nishida's January 1930 collection of essays, *The Self-Aware System of Generals*, Tanabe connects his critique to Nishida's 1927 collection, and especially the concept of expression (*THZ* 4:306).

Tanabe levels charges of transcendence and closure as the two broad tendencies that undercut the philosophical integrity of Nishida's system. First, Tanabe argues, expression amounts to transcendence in Nishida such that, in his work, we find a marked propensity to reduce our confrontation with things—material objects and people in the world that confront us as a noematic determination of experience—in pursuit of a more direct and immediate activity that precedes the subject–object bifurcation. Remember, for Nishida, the goal is to overcome the "so-called self" that emerges in higher-order thinking, and to return to the more fundamental self-producing activity of the "self-itself" found in supraconscious unified activity. The issue, for Tanabe, is that this framework presupposes that activity expresses or "manifests itself spontaneously and voluntarily" (*jihatsuteki* 自発的) of its own accord (*THZ* 4:308). Couching his critique in the language of Martin Heidegger, with whom Tanabe had worked in the early '20s, Tanabe argues that Nishida grounds this spontaneous, voluntary, self-producing activity of expression—which we will remember stands as the constitutive ground for the emergence of subjectivity and objectivity—in an undetermined formulation of *Sosein* (being such-and-so) that echoes the scholastic understanding of *essentia* (*THZ* 4:308). The claim is that Nishida's understanding "seeks *Sosein* outside of *Dasein*" in a more primordial and transcendent locus of experience—something like the plane of potentiality carried immanently within the suspended

[43] For more on their debate, see: Mine Hideki, *Nishida tetsugaku to Tanabe tetsugaku no taiketsu: basho no ronri to benshōhō* (Tokyo: Mineruva shobō, 2012).

present. The issue with Nishida's explanation, for Tanabe, is that such a plane precedes the *Daß-sein* (thatness) of our always already having been structured within a horizon of concernfulness and intelligibility. Here, expressive activity is transcendent: "formulated as something that determines [the things of this world], while itself preceding determination in independence" (*THZ* 4:308). In Tanabe's reading, then, this transcendent theory of expressive activity amounts to no more than an aesthetico-religious "theory of emanation" in the vein of Plotinus, one that proceeds amidst unmediated, "unremitting creation" (*THZ* 4:309). Contra Nishida, Tanabe's point is that self-developing totality itself—as well associated concepts such as expressive activity, self-awareness, *basho*, and more—must always already be realized in determination (*THZ* 4:308).

Second, Tanabe argues, expression amounts to closure in Nishida. The above lack of any concrete noematic determination gives Nishida philosophy a particularly "static" or "still" quality. For Tanabe, the undetermined nature of Nishida's philosophy, his rendering of *Sosein* as *essentia*, leads to a quietism that firmly places his thought on the side of religion, not philosophy. Key here is the charge of "irrationality." While Tanabe credits Nishida for countering rational idealism and taking seriously the irrationality at the base of reality, nevertheless when this is transformed into an unmediated noetic activity—one that subverts the traditional oppositions that philosophical discrimination relies on, including subject and object, particular and universal, noema and noesis—it turns self-development into an "unobtainable final" principle that resides in stillness (*THZ* 4:309). The idea is that, since self-producing activity is spontaneous and voluntary, free from noematic determination, and overflows philosophical discrimination, it exists beyond the world of reality or rationality, in the static realm of a transcendental, supra-historical religion. In a formulation meant to partially evoke Nishida's notion of self-awareness,

Tanabe claims that religion “aims to envelop all dynamism into absolute stillness,” thereby transforming movement into stasis (*THZ* 4:311). What is lost in Nishida’s “static resignation,” in his shunning of philosophy for religion and his locating the grounds of totality and its activity in the stillness of the suspended present, is the “actuality and activity of life as it is” (*THZ* 4:312).

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And so, despite, its technicality, Nishida philosophy was not divorced from Taishō trends of the time. Connecting his theory of self-developing, “expressive activity” together with aesthetics and social ontology, Nishida here grounds mutual knowledge, recognition, and communication in the expressive process by which a more complete and holistic reality self-develops and actualizes itself into existence from planes of potentiality immanent within reality itself. Here, the argument goes, we are not pre-formed subjects who come into contact with each other by entering social relations or drawing upon our capacities of, say, linguistic or artistic expression; rather, we are engendered as subjects on the condition that we are already connected as expressions of this more holistic reality.

The concerns voiced by Tanabe here point to the increasing skepticism about such an expressive rendering of totality—especially with regard to what is seen as its inevitable descent into transcendence and closure. Moving from the Taishō period, we begin to find Kyoto School thinkers seeking a new basis for totality outside of expression.

Chapter 3

Phenomenology, Marxism, and Decentered Totality: Miki in the Late 1920s

This chapter track transformations in our topic of totality in relation to changes that gripped Shōwa period cultural production. Just as ideas regarding expressive totality took on a social hue in line with cultural impulses structuring late 1910s and early '20s cultural production, in the cultural climate of the late '20s and early '30s, we find thinkers like Miki Kiyoshi, Nishida, and Nakai Masakazu turning to new trends in phenomenology and then Marxism to re-work and -fashion the social articulation of totality in support of social change and revolution.

We will again take Iwanami as our institutional lens; but here we focus on its attempts to refashion itself to meet the concrete social demands of the Shōwa youth in venues like Iwanami Bunko, the newly revamped *Shisō*, and Iwanami Kōza. Ideologically, we will track our topic of self-formation in relation to Miki's late '20s philosophical production. My claim is that Miki's work was instrumental in shifting the discourse of self-formation onto the terrain of hermeneutic phenomenology and then Marxism, spurring re-consideration and -evaluation of the social articulation of totality qua self-formative activity in new and exciting ways.

Part 1: Iwanami and Early Shōwa Period Changes in Totality

By the late 1920s the print industry had changed. As technologies developed, production costs dropped, and intense competition pushed sales prices lower, less-educated and -wealthy sectors of the population began to more actively engage in mass print culture. For instance, in January 1927 Shūeisha's immensely popular *King* became the first magazine to reach circulation

numbers of one million.[1] The year prior, Kaizōsha began its *Complete Works of Contemporary Japanese Literature*, drawing upon many of the same print technologies and circulation networks to release each volume as an *enpon* (one-yen book 円本). At its peak, circulation numbers reached approximately 340,000—significantly higher than the tens of thousands that had previously been the threshold for a bestseller. Increasingly, Ted Mack observes, "people desired the entity modern Japanese literature more than they wanted specific works of modern Japanese literature."[2]

The same was true of philosophy and thought. Initially, Iwanami began self-fashioning itself into just this kind of entity through its appeal to cultivation. While print runs of *Shisō* remained comparatively insignificant, its contributors provided Iwanami with a great deal of cultural capital. In an editorial from May 1926, Iwanami and the *Shisō* editors matter-of-factly stated the aim of *Shisō* is to become "the highest-quality magazine of cultivation" (*S* 55, 59:back matter)—which scholars like Karube Tadashi and Satō Takumi have interpreted as a device to distinguish *Shisō* from rival publisher Kōdansha's calls for "self-discipline and -training" (*shūyō*) and to protect itself from its 12-volume entry into the *enpon* market, *Complete Works for Self-Discipline*.[3] There was even talk of starting a *Cultivation Series* in the mode of Iwanami's earlier *Philosophy Series*.

In the end, the *Cultivation Series* never came to fruition. Tastes were changing, and, as senior Iwanami editor Kobayashi Isamu warned Iwanami at the time, "the word 'cultivation' smells musty and no longer holds the power to tug on the hearts of people today" (*S* 500:61; *AJZ*

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[1] Ted Mack, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature: Publishing, Prizes, and the Ascription of Literary Value* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 19.

[2] Ibid, 120.

[3] Iwanami shoten, *"Shisō" no kiseki: 1921–2011* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2012), 56–58.

10:334). The fact was, amidst the increasingly competitive *enpon* print industry of the early Showa period, the exclusivity of cultivation now served not as a boon but a break against readership. *Shisō*, for instance, which had so closely wed itself to cultivation, was now struggling. As cultivation had fallen from favor, so too had its young Shōwa readership. Despite stop gap measures, sales figures slumped to around 3,000 units and the magazine became unviable. In September 1928, after 82 issues, the journal was placed on hiatus.

In place of early *Shisō* and its broader ethos of cultivation, Iwanami began courting the Shōwa youth demographic across three venues: Iwanami Bunko, a series of portable classics inspired by the Universal-Bibliothek run of German publisher Reclam Verlag; a revamped *Shisō*, returning under new editorial direction after its hiatus of several months; and Iwanami Kōza, a book series that would systematically deal with a single topic across several volumes via contributions from specialists on a specific sub-topic for each volume (*ISH* 43).

Much as Iwanami employed the cultural capital of Abe, Watsuji, and Nishida, to engage Taishō youth, two thinkers emerged salient here—Miki Kiyoshi and Hayashi Tatsuo. Miki had been peripherally involved in Iwanami since the early 1920s, editing his teacher Hatano Seiichi's lecture notes for publication. He became more closely involved in mid-1922 when, upon the recommendation of his teachers, Iwanami agreed to sponsor a two-year study tour of Germany. He initially went to Heidelberg but then later moved to Marburg to study phenomenology with Martin Heidegger (*MKZ* 1:415). At the urging of Fukada Yasukazu, another of his professors from Kyoto University, Miki extended his tour of Europe, proceeding to Paris by way of Vienna, where he immersed himself in the writings of Blaise Pascal (*MKZ* 1:401). Throughout this time, Miki actively contributed to Iwanami publishing, sending back translations of German thinkers and actively producing articles on Pascal for *Shisō* in 1923. After his return from Germany Miki

began working at Iwanami, helping Takahashi Yutaka with general editing duties after Watsuji had left for Kyoto in 1925.

Hayashi joined Miki in assisting Takahashi in his capacity as editor. Hayashi entered the Kyoto University philosophy department two years Miki's junior, graduating in 1922 and publishing his graduation thesis, "The Origins of Greek Tragedy" in *Shisō* that same year. In 1924, he took up several teaching positions in Tokyo, the most permanent as Professor of Cultural Sciences at Tōyō University. He also published two translations with Iwanami during this period, Wilhelm Bousset's *Kyrios Christos* in 1923 and August Strindberg's *The Defence of a Fool* with Watsuji in 1924. Hayashi began contributing more of his own work to *Shisō* in 1927 and began officially working as editor that summer.

Together, Miki and Hayashi spearheaded important changes in Iwanami publishing. Miki became actively involved in Iwanami's book series— instrumental in the establishment of Iwanami Bunko and, together with Hayashi and the Marxist historian Hani Gorō, Iwanami Kōza. Around this time, Hayashi joined Watsuji and Tanikawa Tetsuzō, a fellow recent philosophy graduate of Kyoto, as co-editor for the revamped *Shisō*. By then, Watsuji had already left for Kyoto, and would soon depart for a state-sponsored research trip to Germany in early 1927. Watsuji would be only peripherally involved with *Shisō* until his return to Tokyo University in 1934. Together, the three would co-edit the journal until 1946.

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Working across Iwanami Bunko, *Shisō*, and Iwanami Kōza, Miki and Hayashi repositioned Iwanami from the lofty and eternal to the concrete and social—pushing the company to fold affordability and inclusivity into its publishing identity. As a consequence, we find a near complete inversion of its stance on mass culture. While Iwanami's early- and mid-20s

appeals to cultivation pitted, as Harootunian notes, "culture and refinement against the threatening claims of mass culture," by the late '20s Iwanami had dropped cultivation as a site of elite difference, now stressing the capacities of print to address differential access to knowledge and culture.[4] The burden was no longer for educated and economically stable readers to discipline themselves through cultivation, but for publishers to make knowledge and culture available to a general public beyond the leisure class.

This first shines through in "On the Occasion of the Publication of Iwanami Bunko," a short notice carried in the *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper* under Iwanami Shigeo but drafted by Miki (*ISH* 43). It begins:

> At one time, education and the arts were narrowly enshrined and closed off to make the people stupid. Reclaiming knowledge and beauty from the monopoly of the privileged class remains an urgent task for progressive people in the present. Iwanami Bunko was born for this task. It will liberate undying works from the libraries and offices of the few and will stand rank and file in the streets with the people (*ISB* 1:65).

Yet, despite the pledge to join the people in the streets, the content of Iwanami Bunko closely resembled Iwanami's earlier catalog. Iwanami Bunko launched with 23 titles and included a number of works by Meiji and Taishō touchstones like Sōseki and Abe Jirō. There were material reasons at play. Bunko books had a set price of 20-sen per roughly 100-pages—indicated by the number of stars on its cover. Iwanami made this financially feasible by cutting production costs—utilizing the latest developments in print technology and paper manufacturing, exploiting the surplus labor in post-Great Kanto earthquake Tokyo, and focusing almost exclusively on works that either Iwanami had already published, or were easily accessible classical or foreign works.

[4] Harootunian, "Sense of Ending," 16–17.

After making affordability and expanded circulation a touchstone of its identity, Iwanami began refashioning the ideas with which it was associated. This is perhaps clearest in a postscript to the newly revamped *Shisō*—signed "H" presumably for Hayashi. Lamenting that the magazine had "fallen out of balance"—hardening into an "extremely high-grade, specialized academic magazine," or worse "a leisure magazine composed of idle words and fruitless investigations"—Hayashi announced the editorial intention to "depart from the old spirit of the magazine." They would make the new *Shisō* into a magazine of the times:

> the significance of a monthly magazine lies in its timeliness and contemporaneity. Both our society and our daily life progress forward endlessly, changing appearance in each moment. We face new phenomena and encounter new problems daily. Especially today, in the fast-moving tempo of the present age, we are faced, day and night, with important phenomena and with pressing problems that we cannot look away from. It is the duty of every enterprising social person to grasp and understand such phenomena and look directly and critically at these problems. To close your eyes and cover your ears in the face of emerging novelty is itself to make a "reactionary" mark (*S* 83:152).

Coded in this postscript were the two primary venues by which Iwanami would refashion itself: phenomenology and Marxism. Pre-hiatus *Shisō* had proved itself a phenomenological pioneer, and the magazine benefitted from the auratic association its figures held with Germany and Heidegger. Tanabe's October 1924 "New Trends in Phenomenology" was a key moment in the introduction of the Heideggerian strain of hermeneutic phenomenology to Japan. Moving forward into its post-hiatus period, this strain proved more inter-disciplinary than the Husserlean variety and was quickly linked with works in the human and social sciences. For instance, Watsuji's April 1929 "Climate," connected Heidegger's hermeneutic approach to cultural studies to arrive at a new science of human geography, and, as we will see below, Miki's January 1927 "The Basic Concepts of Hermeneutic Phenomenology" served as a kind of precursor to his work on Marxist anthropology.

It should be no surprise that *Shisō's* approach to Marxism was similarly syncretic. Though at this time the Japanese Communist Party supported theoretical intervention—broadly under the direction of Fukumoto Kazuo's reading of György Lukács—they did so largely independently from other academic currents, isolating Marxism and exclusively investing its theoretical energy in "raising proletarian consciousness." In contrast, the space for Marxism in *Shisō* was more philosophical, inter-disciplinary, and synthetic. In this respect Miki's June 1927 "The Marxist Form of Anthropology" was a pioneer. Kuno Osamu, several years Miki's junior in the philosophy department at Kyoto University, notes the gap that *Shisō* filled in the Marxist discourse of the time, writing: "For us younger students who were seriously concerned with how to join philosophy and socialism, [Miki's] work shook us to an extent perhaps unimaginable to other generations."[5]

In addition to a quick succession of articles on Marxist anthropology by Miki, Takahashi—under the influence of Hayashi and Miki—printed several articles on Marxism at the end of its pre-hiatus run. After its return, Hayashi actively sought out Marxist contributions—pushing for a special issue devoted to Marxism and historical materialism in the early 1930s. Under Hayashi's influence, articles on Marxism were so prevalent that it sparked reader "inquiries as to whether *Shisō* is a Marxist magazine." Though Tanikawa replied in the negative, Miki and Hayashi's synthetic approach to Marxism became integral to the magazine's late '20s and early '30s identity.[6]

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[5] Kuno Osamu, "Kaisetsu," in *Gendai Nihon shisō taikei*, ed. Kuno Osamu (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1966), 33:39.

[6] See: Iwanami shoten, *Shisō no kiseki,* 63–64.

But this newfound identity did not sit well with Watsuji. Watsuji put a stop to the above plans for a special issue on Marxism, writing heated letters of dissent addressed to Tanikawa and Iwanami Shigeo from Kyoto. More broadly, Watsuji dismissed "Marxist youth as merely quarrelsome and empty of content" and prevented the publication of overtly Marxist works of criticism (*WTZ* 25:535–536, 545–546, 564–566).

The issue of Marxism in *Shisō* came to a head with Tosaka Jun's "Is the 'Logic of Nothingness' a Logic?—Regarding Professor Nishida Kitarō's *The Self-Aware Determination of Nothingness*" ('*Mu no ronri' ha ronri de aru ka?—Nishida Kitarō hakushicho 'Mu no jikakuteki gentei' ni tsuite*『無の論理』は論理であるか？ ―西田幾多郎博士著『無の自覚的限定』について). For Tosaka, Nishida's account of expressive activity amounts to a mere toothless idealism—a philosophical "hermeneutic" that delights in romanticism, substituting symbols for material things, and thus "treating the meaning of things (*jibutsu no imi* 事物の意味) instead of things themselves" (*TJZ* 2:347). In Tosaka's reading, the most basic and fundamental concern of Nishida philosophy is not what exists, but rather the "category of existence;" the question of "*how we can think about* what exists" (*TJZ* 2: 344). Rejecting claims that Nishida's philosophy is essentially feudal, gothic, or fascist, Tosaka instead argues that Nishida's philosophy is the purest expression of the romanticism and aestheticism that grips bourgeois philosophy in the age of modern capitalism (*TJZ* 2: 348). Presupposed in this bourgeois understanding is the abstract notion of free will found in cultural or literary liberalism, an ideology that "thinks things with the individual at its core" (*TJZ* 2:367). Here, the character of bourgeois philosophy lies in its unmediated impulse towards noetic comprehension—in expanding conscious activity into a "logic of self-awareness," the argument goes, Nishida substitutes the real thing for its interpretation within the broader field of consciousness, constructing a meta-narrative in which

"all categories of existence are organized and systematized in the 'self-aware determination of nothingness'" (*TJZ* 2: 345).

Hayashi found the article "superb," and pushed for its inclusion in the magazine; Watsuji was incensed. He wrote Tanikawa: "It is not only useless for Professor Nishida, it is useless for understanding Nishida philosophy. Or rather, it is only useful for the left-wing camp and their class struggle; this suits a current affairs magazine...but it does not suit *Shisō* at all." Marxist critique had no place in Watsuji's *Shisō*, and if Hayashi could not understand that, neither did he: "the most serious issue is that Hayashi again fails to obey the editorial policies of *Shisō*...I have no choice but to request that Hayashi stops editing *Shisō*" (*WTZ* 25:564–566). Either Watsuji never brought the matter up, or Iwanami refused him; either way Hayashi stayed on as editor.

The difference in editorial direction came down to the issues of timeliness and contemporaneity that, we have seen, confronted its precursor, *Shichō*. As Abe Jirō envisioned his magazine to exist in difference from other magazines "dealing with current affairs," Watsuji's "*Shisō* transcends the confrontational standpoint [of Tosaka and other Marxist youth], and departs from a foundational standpoint that, in the first place, can make further criticisms of such a standpoint" (*WTZ* 25:566). As we have seen, Hayashi believed the opposite—situating the magazine on the side of "novelty and change," and arguing that, "in transitionary periods like today, it is the 'youth generation' who are most receptive to unrest and change, and who move with and carry these problems" (*S* 83:152).

Postwar commentaries have reframed this conflict into the magazine's strength. According to contributor Shimizu Ikutarō, "taking up non-specialized problems gave rise to an expanded readership, and taking up fresh problems set the stage for the appearance of new persons" (*S* 500:67–69). Co-editor Tanikawa similarly frames *Shisō* at the intersection of a

“demand for a universal perspective and general outlook, and [a demand] to re-think and -criticize these in line with the concrete and practical concerns of the contemporary moment” (*S* 400:2). With the concept of totality in mind, I read the tension between Hayashi’s call for social change and Watsuji’s attempts to transcend such calls as indicative of the more fundamental conflict of the moment—opening us onto changes that would grip discussions of totality in this period.

Part 2: From a Hermeneutic of the Individual to the Public Sphere

This section focuses on Miki’s January 1927 “The Basic Concepts of Hermeneutic Phenomenology.” Its general claim is twofold: first, that Miki’s research into hermeneutic phenomenology laid the groundwork for his departure away from Taishō expressive theories of totality; and second, that this research was foundational for his *critical* development of the centered account that we find in his Shōwa period writings. To be more precise, hermeneutic phenomenology offered an account of the “publicity” (*Öffentlichkeit*) of human beings that derived not from genetic or teleological principles of history, as in Taishō expressive totality, but instead from our embeddedness within a holistic world of meaning that is anchored within this concrete world of actuality.

From Negotiation to Social Beings

At the core of Miki’s hermeneutic phenomenology, and thus his theory of totality, is the idea of negotiation (*kōshō* 交涉)—Miki’s translation of Heidegger’s “*sich verhalten.*” This term and its cognates are variously translated as “behave,” “relate,” or “negotiate” in English renderings of Heidegger’s ‘23–’24 winter and summer semester lectures that Miki attended at the University of

Marburg,[7] and as “coping,” “comportment,” or “dealing with” in discussions of his ’27 *Being and Time*. The term *Sich Verhalten*, for Miki by way of Heidegger, points to the fact that there is “no self-complete existence wholly independent of our negotiations, but rather that existence is made manifest for the first time in our negotiations” (*MKZ* 3:7). Much as Nishida and Watsuji’s holistic rendering of consciousness from subject–object unity is the first step in their transition to the totality of society and all of reality, Miki’s understanding of totality departs from the more primordial unity of negotiation. Accordingly, we will see, the uniquely concrete, social, and historical dimensions that he adopts from his studies with Heidegger impact his rendering of totality moving forward.

Miki, like Nishida and Watsuji before him, develops his concept of negotiation against naive realism and the understanding of phenomena as structured within the subject–object framework of modern epistemology. For Miki, we can neither say that there is an object of perception that presents itself in separation from the subject, nor that we have mediated access to some “thing in itself” that serves to anchor, found, or stabilize these objects. Instead, Miki situates perception as the “simplest form within which humans negotiate the world.” Though “thing-in-itself” conjures Kant, Miki focuses his critiques against empiricism, and especially its presumption of a disinterested subject who passively receives raw sense impressions and then recomposes a more holistic perceptual experience from them. “We do not,” Miki argues, “discover objects as pure, so-called theoretical facts, but within their own circumstances” (*MKZ* 3:203). Here, the so-called object of perception is never isolated and independent, but is always contextualized according to the background details of its circumstance (*Umständlichkeit*). This

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[7] For Heidegger’s Winter Semester 1923/1924 lectures see: *Introduction to Phenomenological Research* (*IPR*); for his Summer Semester 1924 lectures see: *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian* (*BCAP*).

opens onto the "prepredicative" structure of perception discussed in *Inquiry*; Miki writes: I do not see "a wall (subject) that is white (predicate)" but rather "I see a wall without seeing whiteness, I see the evening sky without seeing red." Here, the redness of the evening sky is not given devoid of significance—but wrapped up in, say, foreboding or appreciation. Miki continues: "I see not an undetermined white, but white as white paper, not an undetermined red but red as a red flag" (*MKZ* 3:204). This flag, moreover, is given directly in relation to its country of affiliation—the Empire of Japan, for instance. The same holds for other sensory domains; in hearing, for instance, sound comes "always" and "already" meaningfully stitched together as, say, the ticking of a clock or the backfiring of a car. So, Miki argues, while we can indeed parse out individuated visual tones or auditory notes from perception via reflection, such elements are patent abstractions which do not express the immediacy of lived perception as it is enveloped in the fullness of meaning.

And further, for Miki by way of Heidegger, these circumstances are fundamentally related to the perceptual subject as they concretely negotiate the world. Miki claims that, in perception, we are called to attend to certain dimensions in our perceptual field not via a cognitive or theoretical attitude on the world, as certain strains of rationalism have it, but within a horizon of practical familiarity—"already encountering beings 'as' something" (*als etwas*) (*MKZ* 3:204). This as-structure differs from the above idea of contextual circumstance in stressing the role that preconceptual interests play in constituting the appearance of the perceptual object. In our everyday negotiations, the perceptual subject is always already involved in a value-laden perceptual context or circumstance, what Heidegger refers to as a "world," and thus are "being-in-the-world." And this immersion in the world is crucially related to the way that entities present themselves. Here, Miki writes, "the beings that are primordially given to us

are not so to speak neutral or independent of our interests or concerns, but in some sense already entail our presuppositions and prejudices within them" (*MKZ* 3:217). Negotiation entails that we are absorbed within a world of meaning, and that it is through such absorption that we concretely and skillfully negotiate entities within it.

As in Nishida and Watsuji, moreover, this concrete, skillful negotiation opens onto the embodied structure of the perceptual subject. For Miki, the body is neither a corporeal tool connected with the self (as in empiricism), nor determined by conscious, discursive activity (as in rationalism). Humans, Miki writes, "are not simply psychological but a psycho-physical unity; they are not simply thinking subjects, but unified, embodied subjects that express themselves through vectors such as willing, feeling, and representation" (*MKZ* 3:14). Miki's view of the negotiating body resonates with Heidegger scholar Hubert Dreyfus's notion of "the absorbed coper," who is "directly drawn by each solicitation in an appropriate way: the chairs draw him to sit on them, the floorboards to walk on them…the windows to open them, and the door may draw him to go out."[8] In its most schematic form, the negotiative acts constitutive of our being-in-the-world means that entities are always already situated within a meaningful contextual circumstance that is crucially related to the concrete, practical interests of the embodied subject.

Miki fills out his understanding of negotiation with reference to our concern (*besorgen*). Miki here focuses on our *a priori* interpretive (*Ausgelegtheit*) involvement within a "fore-structure" that, together with the "as-structure," is constitutive of our "being-in-the-world." Here, Miki closely follows Heidegger's winter lectures, in which the latter foregrounds three modes of negotiation as central to the fore-structure:

[8] Hubert Dreyfus, "The Myth of the Pervasiveness of the Mental," in *Mind, Reason, and Being-in-the-World: The McDowell–Dreyfus Debate* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 18.

> it is necessary to come to some understanding of 1. the fore-having [what one has before one: *Vorhabe*], what is had from the outset for the investigation, upon which the look constantly rests; 2. the fore-sight [what one foresees: *Vorsicht*], the sort and manner of seeing what is held onto in the fore-having; 3. the fore-grasp [anticipation: *Vorgriff*]: how what is seen in a specific way is conceptually explicated on the basis of specific motivation. These are the factors of the hermeneutical situation on the basis of which something is interpreted (*IPR* 79–80, mod).

Miki, following Heidegger, refers to the desk and its givenness vis-à-vis the scholar to adumbrate this tripartite structure. In fore-having, the scholar has a general understanding of the desk that he or she shares with other members of their broader social milieu—regardless of their individualized interests. For instance, this understanding is shared by scholars in the humanities and sciences, as well as people in, say, the technology industry or finance.[9] This is a less direct, more background form of summoning, and includes a broad totality of different as-structures, and thus possible practices, vis-à-vis the desk.[10]

But the concrete content of this object is structured by what Heidegger, in his summer 1924 lecture on Aristotle, refers to as an "in terms of which" that "guides every natural interpretation of beings" (*BCAP* 184–185). This brings us to fore-sight. While beings, Miki writes, "carry within themselves the ability to appear in many different as-structures [in their fore-having], in reality they necessarily present themselves according to their determination within a single as-structure" in their fore-sight (*MKZ* 3:214). The desk, in Miki's example, is determined by a fore-sight that is structured by one's occupation. In fore-sight, then, the desk is determined in a more restricted register than the above more general understanding. Here, the desk solicits certain actions that are appropriate from the point of view of the scholar. Thus the

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[9] See: Michael Inwood, *A Heidegger Dictionary* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2010), 107.

[10] David Couzens Hoy, "Heidegger and the Hermeneutic Turn," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger* (Oxford: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 183.

desk appears “not simply as a desk but a podium,” the room presents itself “not simply as a room but as a lecture hall” (*MKZ* 3:214). And so, fore-sight demonstrates that the meaning of entities in the world are fundamentally related with our own needs as we dynamically negotiate the world, and therefore that we already structure entities into meaningful objects based on our roles and practices.

And yet, fore-structure is not just about the subject actively interpreting entities of experience; it is also about objects of experience as they are imbued within contextual significance, determining the perceptual, conceptual, and practical activities of the subject. Structured neither in subject–object nor object–subject directionality, the fore-structure makes clear both that human beings are always embedded within a world of meaning, and that, in our activity, we are solicited by and called to respond to meaningful objects within the world. Thomas Sheehan’s language of implicit or proto-“phenomenological correlation” captures this well:

> Heidegger always preserves the phenomenological correlation between whatever is open/intelligible and the apprehending of what is open/intelligible…[the] disclosedness of things is their meaningful (not just their sensible) disclosedness, and this occurs not off by itself in some pre- or extra-human scenario but only in and with the human apprehension of those things.[11]

This bidirectional interpretation of Heidegger likewise shines through in Miki: “negotiation is a dynamic, reciprocal relation between human beings and beings in the world” (*MKZ* 3:80). And so, although the content is filled out with reference to Heidegger, Miki paves the way for his theory of totality via an analysis of the co-genesis of being—subjects and objects in the world

[11] Thomas Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 73.

co-constituting each other in the inherent unity of lived experience—in much the same manner as Nishida and Watsuji.

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But more than early Nishida, Miki's concept of negotiation theorizes this primordial subject–object unity socially: "beings are made real in *our* negotiations" (*MKZ* 3:7). This means, as Tobita Maiko notes, that "humans are always in a negotiating relationship with other beings, and it is only in this relationship that other beings as well as my own being is realized."[12] Here, we have to differentiate the sense of being-with-one-another (*Das Miteinandersein*) in Heidegger's '23 and '24 work from the idea of *mitsein* in *Being and Time* (*BCAP* 185). As Theodore Kisiel notes, "many themes that were given short shrift in [*Being and Time*]…are dealt with in great detail in [Summer Session] 1924."[13] For '24 Heidegger as for '27 Miki, the publicity of human beings is not primarily the sign of our inauthentic conformity with the one (*Das Man*)—as interpreters have perhaps over-stressed in readings of *Being and Time*.[14] Instead, publicity here follows from the shared nature of our concern and thus our embeddedness within a meaningful world—which is why the above modes of the fore-structure appeal to different social registers.

To be clear, sociality does not simply follow from our being-in-the-world. The sociality of the human being follows from the fact that we are already familiar within a meaningful world

[12] Tobita Maiko, "Miki Kiyoshi 'yuibutsu shikan to gendai no ishiki' ni okeru kōshō gainen no kentō," *Waseda seiji kōhō kenkyū* 95 (2010): 55. I've found Tobita's work particularly helpful for my work on Miki.

[13] Theodore Kisiel, *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 293.

[14] This interpretation has roots as early as Karl Löwith, Heidegger's first doctoral student: Karl Löwith, *Das Individuum in der Rolle des Mitmenschen* (Freiburg: Karl Alber, 2016).

and our embeddedness within meaning follows from the fact that we are already social. As Theodore Schatzki explains, "[i]t is not that Dasein [the human being] is in the world and also coexists. Rather, in being in the world Dasein coexists, and in coexisting Dasein is in the world."[15] Here, publicity stands as a transcendental condition for our negotiations in and with beings in the world.

This social character is expressed or explicated (*explikation*) in relation to the final of the fore-structures, fore-grasp. In fore-grasp our fore-having and -sight are articulated—in Heidegger's summer 1924 vocabulary—within the "definite familiarity" (*bestimmte Bekanntheit*) of the "prevailing intelligibility" (*Die herrschende Verständlichkeit*) that structures our "being-with-one-another" (*BCAP* 185). Rephrased colloquially, we not only use concepts from language to render our experience within intelligible forms available to others, these intelligible forms also actively structure the content of our experience. Key here is the idea of *logos*. As Andrew Feenberg notes, "'*Logos*' is the gathering together of the relationships that make things intelligible and the making manifest of the results of this gathering…*logos* is related to the essence of things and to the articulation of that essence in speech." Importantly, Feenberg continues, *logos* operates "not only in theoretical knowledge, but also in circumspection, the basic familiarity with things that accompanies action. At every level of cognition, *logos* signifies the functions of unifying and making explicit involved in the intelligent encounter with the world."[16] Similarly for Miki: "fore-grasp means that when care makes beings present themselves through *logos*, this expression occurs already with a fixed orientation, and therefore from within a fixed public sphere" (*MKZ* 3:216). In other words, language is here intimately related to our

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[15] Theodore Schatzki, "Early Heidegger on Sociality," in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Hubert Dreyfus and Mark Wrathall (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 234. Brackets my own.

[16] Andrew Feenberg, *Heidegger and Marcuse* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 31.

immersion in the world, and structurally determines the way in which humans are embedded in meaning, and thus negotiate entities in the world. As Heidegger has it in his winter lectures: "speaking is being with the world, it is something primordial, and is in place prior to judgments" (*IPR* 15).

Given our being-in-the-world and our co-existence, it follows that language conditions the ways that we relate to other people. Stuart Elden comments of Heidegger's lectures: "all speaking is a speaking about something, and a speaking to someone. Language is something concrete: humans do not solely exist, but constitute themselves through their speaking with others."[17] Miki offers a similar interpretation: "To speak is always to a listener, and therefore means that we speak towards what is called a world; it follows that *logos* is, in its concreteness, always transmissive. Insofar as to speak is for beings to appear and to communicate with other people, being is something that is spoken about and so becomes shared by both the speaker and the listener" (*MKZ* 3:196). Miki, following Heidegger, appeals to light: "language saves experience by casting light on it and making it public" (*MKZ* 3:5–6); in Heidegger's own language: "the genuine function of *logos* (λόγος) is apophantic revealing (ἀποφαίνεσθαι), the 'bringing of a matter to sight.' Every speaking is, above all for the Greeks, a speaking to someone or with others" (*BCAP* 14, mod).

The fore-structure of existence thus converges as proof of the irreducibly social nature of human beings. Sociality, in this reading, is foregrounded as the central determinant of our concernful dealings in the world, and thus our negotiations. Thus Miki writes: "care cannot preserve its own being of itself, but must submerge within the public sphere." Also: "care does

[17] Stuart Elden, "Reading Logos as Speech: Heidegger, Aristotle and Rhetorical Politics," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 38.4 (2005), 290.

not appear as care for me alone; we are only able to access beings through *logos* and its public sphere." And so, "the 'there' character of being can be completely preserved by becoming public"—which is to say that human beings, as being-there (*da-sein*) or Dasein, are fundamentally social beings (*MKZ* 3:196–197).

The Shift to the Public Sphere

To be clear, Miki's goal is not simply to derive the social nature of human beings as a condition of hermeneutic phenomenology. Much as Nishida and Watsuji's phenomenological analysis served a larger inquiry into the totality of society and reality, Miki, in an abrupt but important move near his conclusion, pivots away from a hermeneutic of human beings, to take the *whole* of *logos* and the public sphere (*kōkyōken* 公共圏) as his direct objects of analysis:

> The expression of being via *logos* is, by necessity, already determined in some direction. This is because care necessarily seeks out publicity in order to achieve self-certainty, and so the expression of *logos* is necessarily structured within the public sphere that belongs to different periods of life. Here, what is called the public sphere is shared among people living in the same period and constitutes what is called an objective world of mutual understanding therein. Indeed, as I stated at the beginning, this world is first born through *logos*. Here, different public spheres [of forms of life] exist not only as common sense, but also as academic consciousness and most fundamentally as philosophical consciousness (*MKZ* 3:215–216).

Miki is imprecise here. On one level, the public sphere indicates an "objective world of mutual understanding"—an "academic" and "philosophical consciousness." Here, the "public sphere is established in *logos*" in its conventional understanding as reason or discourse (*MKZ* 3:216). Miki productively opens onto Habermas's work on the public sphere in this regard, likewise thinking the production of shared forms of *logos* as a site for the emergence of "rational-critical

discourse." This broadly lines up with the interpretation of Miki's public sphere by Uchida Hiroshi as a "place=relation in which the knowledge of the people is concentrated."[18]

Yet on another level, Miki's language of mutual intelligibility combines with the explicative mode of fore-grasping to open onto a deeper structure of sociability. The fact that the public sphere is established in *logos* opens it as a horizon of intelligibility by which beings make themselves manifest. This is to say that higher-order intelligibility engages alongside the pre-reflective and pre-linguistic in determinations of experience. "Heidegger warns us," David Couzens Hoy notes, "not to break interpretation up 'into pieces,'… not [to] infer that the implicit levels of the fore-structure of the understanding would function independently of explicit interpretations."[19] Because the public sphere is born from *logos*, its intelligibility and explication open onto the more basic common sense of a shared perceptual, discursive, and practical activity that is constitutive of our being in the world. Thus, Miki writes, "from the outset, care does not appear as care for me alone; we are only able to access beings through *logos* and its public sphere" (*MKZ* 3:219).

And yet, despite this more fundamental sociability, Miki nevertheless resembles Habermas in historicizing the public sphere as a "a category that is typical of an epoch." Much as Habermas' bourgeois public sphere "cannot be abstracted from the unique developmental history of that 'civil society' originating in the European High Middle Ages,"[20] for Miki, the public sphere, like the fore-structure that it conditions, is "an expression of fundamental historicity"

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[18] Uchida Hiroshi, *Miki Kiyoshi: Koseisha no kōsōryoku* (Tokyo: Ochanomizu shobō, 2004), 196.

[19] Hoy, "Heidegger and the Hermeneutic Turn," 184

[20] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), xvii.

(*MKZ* 3:217). He writes: "the public sphere established in *logos* must be historical from the beginning. All of what we normally refer to as tradition or history lives here. But life itself is not only historical, all facts and reality are historical. History is a structural category for all real beings" (*MKZ* 3:219). In other words, the public sphere, for Miki, is a historically constituted shared world of meaning that forms and articulates the horizons of seeing, thinking, and doing for a given social milieu, and therefore determines the horizons for rational-critical communication and debate amongst its members.

To be clear, this historically constituted public sphere is not simply an offshoot of Miki's more fundamental interest in hermeneutic phenomenology. In fact, the priorities are reversed: the purpose of Miki's excursion into hermeneutic phenomenology was to clarify the historical and social foundations of experience, and to direct our attention to the whole of the public sphere as an object of study. Thus he ends his article:

> The public sphere that provides us with access to beings always necessarily determines itself in reality. The public sphere we live in is, if termed simply, contemporary consciousness (*gendai no ishiki* 現代の意識). We can only access the past itself and our distance from it through contemporary consciousness. Contemporary consciousness is the only possible point of departure for hermeneutic phenomenology. That is the "real point of departure" (*der wirkliche Ausgangspunkt*) in this study. And so, the departure point of our study has become clear. In actuality, hermeneutic phenomenology begins from here. What kind of methodology is able to acquire beings with modern consciousness as its departure point? (*MKZ* 3:219-220).

This passage casts everything that precedes it in a new light. In short, it contextualizes Miki's excursions into phenomenology as a hermeneutic justification for what he is really interested in: the self-formative process of the socialized, meaningful world of totality—"the public sphere" of "contemporary consciousness" "within which we live." But because, according to Miki, Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology only concerns itself with the social by way of an ontological analysis of the individual—thus making this social totality a secondary effect rather

than its primary object—its usefulness has here run its course. Thus Miki ends with the call for a "real point of departure"—one that can grasp the totality of the public sphere as its primary ontological unit.

Part 3: Historical Materialism and the Self-Formation of *Logos* as Totality

To be clear, this was not an open call—the language of a "real point of departure" was coded reference to an often-repeated phrase in the writings of Karl Marx. Miki soon decoded this for the public, publishing "The Marxist Form of Anthropology" in *Shisō* in June 1927, and following with two more articles in *Shisō* in August and December of that same year, and a fourth for his May 1928 standalone collection, *Historical Materialism and Contemporary Consciousness (Yuibutsushikan to gendai ishiki* 唯物史観と現代の意識). In this section and the next we will connect Miki's Marxist historical materialism to the theory of self-formative totality that concerns this study. My claim here is twofold: first, that Miki's Marxism was foremost concerned with the self-formation of social systems as a totality; and second, that it was through his engagement with Marxism that Miki made substantial critiques of the centered and expressive articulations of social totality qua self-formative activity that had preceded him.

Miki and Marxism

Though almost entirely unrecognized in Western scholarship on Marxism, Miki's work stands as an early, highly original innovation into the field of Marxism. In much the same manner that Antonio Gramsci's "Revolution Against Capital" resurrected, in Martin Jay's words, a "political will against the economic determinism of those who reduced Marxism to the historical laws of

Marx's best-known work," Miki too reoriented Marxism away from near-uniform emphasis on economics in Japan. [21]

Instead, Miki immersed Japanese Marxism in historical materialism, taking the public sphere of contemporary consciousness and its process of self-formation as his object of study. According to Miki, "historical materialism is a holistic worldview that concerns itself with the processual movement of the whole world" (*MKZ* 3:34). In particular, its aim is to understand "the system by which certain ideologies are born, develop, collapse, and then are replaced by new ones" (*MKZ* 3:3). In further parallel with Gramsci, the term ideology here gestures "not to Friedrich Engels's idea of a false consciousness" but to the public sphere as a "*locus communis*" of contemporary consciousness, as Uchida notes.[22] Put together, the idea is that historical materialism is concerned with the historical process through which holistically constituted public spheres of shared sensibility, discourse, and action form, take hold, and then break apart and dissipate.

We can begin by *provisionally* situating Miki's historical materialism within the centered account of totality. Remember, the distinction between expressive and centered totalities resides in the locus of self-development—whether self-formation relies on a broader reality that includes within it a sphere of potentiality that engenders itself into the concrete world of actuality through expression, or constitutes itself in a process by which, say, the individual and the socio-historical environment mutually determine and form each other within the horizons of this world of actuality. Miki pursues the latter track, quoting a Vladimir Lenin piece translated by his teacher Kawakami Hajime—a Marxist economist at Kyoto University, critic of Watsuji, and major

[21] Jay, *Marxism and Totality*, 156.

[22] Uchida, *Miki Kiyoshi*, 196.

figure in the Japanese communist movement—to argue that historical materialism "grasps the progress of the entire world in terms of self-movement (*jiko undō* 自己運動), self-generative development (*jiko hatten* 自發的発展), and living reality (*MKZ* 3:34).

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Miki charts out this holistic account of the self-generation and -dissipation of social forms within what Arakawa Kazuo terms a "stratified order" of basic experience–anthropology–ideology.[23] While Miki situates basic experience at the base of this order, basic experience itself is, as Tobita notes, nevertheless grounded in negotiation—our more fundamental mode of being-in-the-world.[24] But, deviating from his earlier hermeneutic phenomenology, Miki now articulates two modes of concrete negotiation: "basic experience" (*kiso keiken* 基礎経験) and "everyday experience" (*nichijō no keiken* 日常の経験) (*MKZ* 3:218).

"Everyday experience is governed by *logos*." It is formed when socially configured orders of *logos*, like the ideology of the public sphere, filter downwards to penetrate more fundamental modes of experience. Miki's account of *logos* here broadly retains its structure from hermeneutic phenomenology—as a holistic background force of meaning that operates in both theoretical knowledge and in our more fundamental familiarity and negotiation with things. As in his work on phenomenology, moreover, Miki here stresses the intelligibility, publicity, and communicability of everyday experience: "our experience is preserved, made public, and stabilized by being expressed in *logos*." In fact, Miki aligns *logos* even more closely with

[23] Arakawa Kazuo, *Miki Kiyoshi* (Tokyo: Kinokuniya shoten, 1968), 141.

[24] Tobita, "Miki Kiyoshi 'yuibutsu shikan," 49.

language than he had previously, stressing the shared "language of common-sense," and its role in "sav[ing] experience by casting light on it and making it public" (*MKZ* 3:5–6).

Still, Miki's aim in this piece have shifted from the descriptive to the explanatory; rather than describing the structural features of everyday experience as articulated by *logos*, Miki takes it as his task to explain how we arrive at everyday experience itself. To do so, Miki re-immerses himself within the un-processed "darkness" of basic experience. Unlike everyday experience, which is processed and developed in the light of publicity, basic experience is explained as "a completely free and primordial experience;" as a "singular, completely simple and primitive fact" (*MKZ* 3:6). Though he couches his understanding in Bergsonian citations, his vocabulary makes obvious reference to Nishida's *Inquiry*—even appealing to the "fluid continuity" of "pure experience." The idea is that, just as judicative acts are abstraction from pure experience, everyday experience lacks the bounty of basic experience insofar as the light of *logos* only reveals certain aspects of some perceptual object or experience.

This opens onto the auto-development of experience. As in Nishida's work on pure experience, Miki here stresses the unity of negotiation in basic experience—especially its "*holistic* structure of dynamic mutual connectivity" (*MKZ* 3:8). This holistic structure of existence, as we saw above, is articulated longitudinally in terms of "self-movement" and "self-generative development." This has profound implications for the relationship between darkness and light. While the illuminated articulations of everyday experience remain largely stationary, finding comfort in the stasis of *logos*, the penumbra surrounding light is always teeming inward, reordering the content articulated in illumination. Miki explains this darkness in terms of an "anxious dynamism" that is in constant pursuit of the static articulation afforded by the light of *logos*. It is this process that is key to the self-formation of experience as a totality. The idea is

that basic experience presents novel facts and associations that generate a new set of articulations which demand a meaningful ground that transcends the association governing the dominant *logos*. Here, "basic experience is not led by *logos* but instead guides, calls on, and produces *logos*" (*MKZ* 3:5). This is to say that the illuminative process of articulation is itself guided by a more fundamental urge from the darkness. And so, as in Nishida, we find in Miki an account of the auto-development of experience—by which primordial experience, as a whole, self-develops itself into higher-order levels of experience.

Yet there are important differences between Miki and Nishida here. First, unlike Nishida, Miki claims that "basic experience is historically and socially determined from the beginning," and so all of the elements of experience are constituted socio-historically (*MKZ* 3:9). Put plainly, there is no originary basic experience here because the most basic elements of experience are—as in his above work with concern/care—always irreducibly structured socially and historically. Miki references Marx's 1859 preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* to this end, citing its claim that it "is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness" (*MECW* 29:263).[25] And second, for Miki, historical materialism socio-historically determines not only the elements taken up in self-formation, but more fundamentally the self-formative process as a whole. Here, the process of self-production by which basic experience guides the self-development of *logos* into the

[25] This makes the difference between basic experience and everyday experience less clear cut than initially charted—the two are different not in terms of historicity or sociality, but in the degree to which they are determined by the reified structures of *logos*. While everyday experience is historically constituted through anthropology and ideology, and so has the security of articulated *logos*, basic experience is constituted by a comparatively less processed, more raw social and historical matter.

anthropology and ideology of the public sphere is structured in terms of historicity and sociality. We can clarify this latter point by turning to Miki's anthropology.

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Anthropology is formulated as "self-interpretation" (*Selbstauslegung*)—the "first order" of *logos* that expresses basic experience. Put generally, Miki's claim is that humans have no choice but to interpret their existence, and that anthropology is the first step in this process.

Prima facie, this language of anthropological self-interpretation might be accused of abstraction—of reifying the individual subject based on higher-order, *post-hoc* reflections about experience. Such an understanding rings particularly questionable in the wake of structuralism and post-structuralism—in which the goal of the human sciences, to quote Claude Lévi-Strauss, is "not to constitute, but to dissolve man,"[26] and in which ideology, to quote Louis Althusser, "interpellates individuals as subjects."[27] But in committing himself to the primacy of anthropology, Miki is not presupposing the primacy of the subject—to do so would undercut everything we have said about totality and self-formation thus far. Rather, for Miki, subjectivity is formed together with *logos* in a more fundamental, structural process of codification: "Anthropology is a *logos* that is directly produced amidst the fundamental, concrete negotiations of life." (*MKZ* 3:9–10). In short, anthropology points to the fact that *logos* emerges out of the concrete negotiations between humans and their socio-historical world; that humans are already involved within the world as a background totality, and so imbricated in the process by which basic experience articulates itself into the well-defined forms constitutive of *logos*.

Language is key to this process:

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[26] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), 247.

[27] Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (London: New Left Books, 1971), 175.

> Humans directly grasp their existence according to the way in which they negotiate being. It is by talking about their existence that they talk about themselves. (It is through the process of human negotiation that all objects become visible for humans, that they become objects for the first time, and it is here that they receive their designation or name; and this means, according to Ludwig Noirë, "the oldest root-words, as far back as they can be traced, express a human act.") It is in this process that language in the sense of man talking to himself—that is, in the sense of anthropology—is born (*MKZ* 3:15).

The claim here is that the negotiative acts constitutive of basic experience are first articulated into *logos* in the process by which we put our own existence into words. As Miki's parenthetical demonstrates, it is through the negotiation by which the proto-subject engages with proto-objects that these proto-objects become articulated as objects *for subjects*. This is why the oldest function of language is to "express a human act," and why language takes on the "sense of man talking to himself." Anthropology thus commits itself to the co-determination of subjects and objects, and to the fact that the articulation of objects through language always has a reflexive function back to the proto-subject—which itself is constituted into a subject through this process. In this way, Miki's anthropology is fundamentally different than the "anthropological structure" of humanism from which, Foucault laments, "we have not yet escaped."[28] Miki's anthropology marks *not* the primacy of the subject, but that subjectivity is constituted in and with the codification of *logos*, just as this *logos* is constituted in and with the formation of the subject.

We can focus Miki's unique stance on language in comparison with Nishida's view in "Expressive Activity;" for Miki, the use of language is not the engendering of unactualized potentiality that is found within the broader horizons of reality. In fact, Miki's position on language situates him directly against the expressive account of totality, and in particular Nishida's claim that "the phenomena of consciousness are the one true reality." Drawing on

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[28] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2003), 198.

Marx's claim that "language is as old as consciousness" itself and that language is irreducibly "practical" (*MECW* 5:44), Miki reworks Nishida's formulations to stress sociality: "words themselves are the one true actuality of a consciousness within society." For Miki, there are no objective dimensions of meaning and history that exist outside this concrete world of actuality. Instead, direct communication is possible because consciousness itself is constituted in and alongside the codification of *logos* as a totality: "It is because the individual expresses their own consciousness in language that their subjectivity is immersed within language, and they become public." Here, the brute social fact of existence is explained insofar as "the consciousness of the individual is submerged within the public existence of language" (*MKZ* 3:56).

Miki develops his position by highlighting the practical dimensions of language—the fact that when "I say to the furniture store employee, 'bring me a desk,' he directly understands me in this moment, and takes out a few desks to show to me" (*MKZ* 3:58). For Miki, language is fundamentally rooted in the here and now of this world of actuality. Miki develops this point via what he calls "the common" (*bonyōsei* 凡庸性) and the "neutral" (*chūwasei* 中和性). Miki's claim is that, because the subject is co-constituted with *logos*, they "live socially" within the realm of "the common" carried in language. To be clear, the common shared in the co-emergence of subject and *logos* never takes an "abstract or general form;" this would get too close to an idealist and "theoretical" view of the "universal concepts" of expression. Instead, this process is always "concrete" and "historical," and therefore always "belongs to a particular age:" "Because humans and their basic experience are established upon more fundamental historical and social determinations, their self-interpretation is also established upon historical and social determinations" (*MKZ* 3:9–10).

Perhaps this will gain clarity as a counter-position to Heidegger. Through his research on Marx, Miki became attentive to what commentators like Charles Guignon have generously described as the "tension" in early Heideggerian thought: "if the goal of *Being and Time* is limited to unfolding the meaning of Being 'insofar as being enters into the understandability of Dasein,' then it seems that the account should be subject to the same cultural and historical limitations that are found to shape Dasein's understanding in general."[29] In foregrounding the historicity and sociality of anthropology, Miki discovered what Heidegger would arrive at only after his "turn" (*kehre*) from phenomenology—that Dasein is not ahistorical, but irreducibly constituted within a particular socio-historical context. In essence, Miki's Marxist immersion amidst historical and social determination made him attentive to what Lee Braver calls "the vestiges of realism" regarding a universal subject in Heidegger.[30] While Miki follows the hermeneutic thrust of Dasein's taking a stand on its own being, his immersion in Marxist theory allowed him to historicize Dasein among a multitude of (what he would later term) "human types" that vary according to socio-historical circumstances (*MKZ* 8:258–510). Uchida makes this point well with regard to Miki's own trajectory, noting that we find a commitment to historical anthropology in his movement between "the *homo abyssus* of St. Augustine, the *homo sapiens* of Descartes, and the *homo faber* of Marx."[31]

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[29] Charles Guignon, *Heidegger and the Problem of Knowledge* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1983), 67.

[30] Lee Braver, *A Thing of This World: A History of Continental Anti-Realism* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 163–341.

[31] Uchida, *Miki Kiyoshi*, 195.

Miki next explains ideology as a "second-" or "higher-order *logos*" that develops out of the first-order anthropological formation of *logos*. Remember that, for Miki, the second-order *logos* of ideology points to the public sphere as a "*locus communis*" that is "shared among people living in the same period and constitutes what is called an objective world of mutual understanding therein." This objective world, as totality, is articulated in terms of a shared "philosophical consciousness" and "academic consciousness" that is taken up in the so-called *Geisteswissenschaften* of the historical, social, and human sciences.

Miki positions these higher-order, ideological discursive activities as an inevitable result of first-order anthropology and the "common" or "public" grounding of language that it establishes. Miki formulates this in terms of the "urge" or "impulse of *logos* vis-à-vis publicity:" *logos* "strives to be 'founded' and 'objectivized' in the academic or philosophical consciousness of that time" (*MKZ* 3:11). Essentially, since consciousness is established upon the articulation of language, which is grounded in publicity, *logos* has an inherent propensity towards an objective world of mutual understanding—the ideology of the public sphere.

Ideology is thus located at a comparative distance from basic experience in Miki's stratified order. While the first-order *logos* constitutive of anthropology is determined in and alongside the concrete negotiations of basic experience, the second-order *logos* of ideology only has direct access to the *logos* of anthropology. This means that "philosophical ideology" has its "underlying foundation in anthropology" (*MKZ* 3:24–25). While the *logos* formed in anthropology makes reference to experience itself, the *logos* of ideology refers back to the perceptual, conceptual, and practical faculties of the subject *only insofar* as they have already been structurally determined by language. To this end, ideology is understood in terms of a higher-order "self-understanding" (*Selbstverständigung*) that develops from *logos* as it has

already been articulated in self-interpretation: “as higher-order *logos*, the reality encountered as the starting point for research in the historical and social sciences is nothing but existence as it is always and already determined anthropologically” (*MKZ* 3:15).

Perhaps this point will emerge salient with further reference to post-structuralism. Miki’s work on ideology resonates with Foucault’s *The Order of Things*, especially his discussion of the “historical *a prioris*” or “*epistemes*” that “order” philosophy and the human sciences. Foucault resembles Miki in that he too situates philosophy and other higher-order modes of academic consciousness (ideology) as ultimately dependent upon “living beings, economic facts, and the laws of language.”[32] Philosophy thus has “more in common with the empirical domains of life, labor, and language than is commonly supposed,” as Joseph Tanke observes of Foucault.[33] For Miki too, neither academic nor philosophical consciousness exists in independence from, nor is privileged with neutral access to, the laws of language or the experience that it codes. What is key for both figures is that these historical orderings inform the higher-order intellectual operations of the human sciences, and that they are fundamentally related to language. James Bernauer captures this point for Foucault: “any attempt to fathom the nature of the ‘I think’ is a pursuit of the ‘I speak’;”[34] in Foucault’s own language: “we are already, before the very least of our words, governed and paralyzed by language.”[35] Similarly for Miki, “everyday experience in the daily life of humans is already guided by language,” and so ideology only “grasps [experience] through the mediation” of first-order *logos*, or anthropological coding (*MKZ* 3:5).

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[32] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York: Routledge, 2002), ix

[33] Joseph Tanke, *Foucault’s Philosophy of Art* (New York: Continuum, 2009), 23.

[34] Thomas Bernauer, *Michel Foucault’s Force of Flight* (New York: Humanity Books, 1990), 63.

[35] Foucault, *Order of Things*, 325.

But ideology does not merely reflect this anthropological coding; rather, ideology marks a "second-order transformation" of *logos* in two senses. On one level, ideological transformation points to the divisions of *logos* being taken up in "rational-critical" debate in the public sphere via academic or philosophical consciousness. This transformation is grounded in "organizing, blending, revising, and supplementing pre-established concepts" (*MKZ* 3:18). In other words, the public sphere is the site for the discussion, elaboration, and development of the conceptual divisions initially coded in anthropology, and the aim of philosophical thinking is to elaborate their general principles—to furnish a more fully fleshed-out and articulated "conceptual system."

But neither does ideology simply reduplicate and order *logos*. Miki also talks of ideological transformation in terms of an intensification of the divisions first articulated in *logos*. With its separation from concrete lived reality, the structures of *logos* are reproduced and intensified such that they become unidirectionally "interwoven within our lived reality" (*MKZ* 3:10). In other words, ideology marks the shift away from and ultimately an unmooring of *logos* from its co-determinative relationship with concrete experience. Instead of receiving feedback from the concrete foundations of basic experience, ideology marks a determinative *logos* that unequally orders the perceptual, conceptual, and practical horizons of a given population. Extending his earlier account of fore-grasping, especially the idea that "care makes beings present themselves…already from within a fixed public sphere, and therefore with a fixed orientation," Miki argues:

> Once an ideology has been established, it fundamentally intervenes in our daily lives. It is from this standpoint *alone* that we are compelled to interact with existence, and that we see problems as resolvable. It is because this is first and foremost an objective expression or grasping of experience—which is, as it were, an intervention within experience—that it guides and teaches experience, and that it can function to invigorate and develop experience (*MKZ* 3:18).

Here, the structures of *logos* are embedded in our everyday experience, unidirectionally structuring the ways in which we perceive, conceive, and act in the world. Thus "our action and work are granted significance and realized from the perspective of *logos*," and so "it is from this perspective alone that the expressions and products of our life are understood and evaluated" (*MKZ* 3:10).[36]

The other key dimension of this second-order ideological transformation is that it further naturalizes the divisions of *logos*. Here "anthropology acts as a determinative force in the formation of ideology, but as soon as the latter is established, the former immerses and buries itself within the latter" (*MKZ* 3:13). Ideology thus obscures its anthropological origins, subsuming anthropology within itself, and in doing so, naturalizing its ideological configuration such that it is taken as self-evident.

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The above reference to a determinative force marks a good place to link back to our topic of totality and its self-formation. It is important that these transformations are not ascribed to the subject of experience, but are descriptions of the ternary structure itself. Remember, Miki's goal is to describe social forms as a "living reality" that proceeds forward within the holistic terms of "self-movement" and "self-generative development." To this end, Miki directly engages Nishida's 1911 language of activity without an agent: "as soon as this *logos* is produced, it becomes an agent of itself, controlling and guiding the entirety of experience of the life of the human" (*MKZ* 3:10). Here *logos* itself, as totality, is the ontological unit; *logos* itself takes a life of its own: "*logos* becomes an independent force, guiding the experience of man and becoming

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[36] This second-order penetration of *logos* explains why Miki identifies the ideological public sphere with both pre-conceptual cognition like "common sense" and also with "academic" and "philosophical consciousness."

its ruler" (*MKZ* 3:15). The process goes like this: *logos* self-develops itself by extending first-order divisions and ideologically reifying them into seemingly invariant structural categories of experience; it follows that, insofar as subjects are determined as subjects through *logos*, they are "interpellated" within a historically constituted nexus of perception, action, and intelligibility—an anthropological and ideological configuration of *logos*. This is the holistic background realm of everyday experience within which we move, think, and act.

But Miki is not simply interested in the self-*development* of *logos* as a totality; he is also interested in the process by which these holistic systems "collapse, and then are replaced by new ones." The shift from development to collapse is crucial. Miki argues that "when experience develops to a certain stage, this intervention will become a restraint and obstruction to this more primordial development" (*MKZ* 3:16). Ideology, then, must be understood in terms of both inclusivity and exclusivity. Regarding inclusivity, ideology reduplicates, orders, and further incorporates *logos* into a holistic network of perceptual, conceptual, and practical associations—a homogenous field of experience shared among a historically and culturally located population. But it is precisely in constructing this field of identity that ideology functions in terms of exclusion. It is by including and excluding certain dimensions of the larger continuum of experiential possibility that *logos* constructs the ways in which we can and cannot sense, make intelligent, and act in experience. This is the significance of anthropology "burying itself" in ideology. Ideology enforces exclusion by maintaining the appearance of sameness and homogeneity, masking its logic of segmentation, and operating as if no one and no thing of import has been excluded from its logic.

As such, it is through ideology that *logos* "occupies an absolutely despotic position," reifying its subset of experiential affordances out of a fecund horizon of possibilities. As a result,

logos shifts from guide to tyrant, operating as "an oppression and constraint on life itself" (*MKZ* 3:16). Miki explicates this point with further reference to Marx's 1859 preface, and its idea that "at a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production…[and] these relations turn into their fetters" (*MECW* 29:263). For Miki, "the *logos* that develops and urges forth basic experience as a form of development turns into a fetter against the development of basic experience when it reaches a certain stage" (*MKZ* 3:10–11). And so here we see the mutual, reduplicative interaction of this ternary structure, and thus we find basic and everyday experience re-entering the picture. Remember, Miki differentiates basic and everyday experience in terms the degree to which they are determined by the reified structures of *logos*. *Logos'* coding of everyday experience is the fetters inasmuch as it determines the perceptual, affective, ideational, and motor affordances of a given population.

Anthropology, Ideology, and Fetters; Basic Experience and Excess

Miki next explores the fetters of the contemporary moment with reference to the commodity. Re-deploying his earlier notion of the common, Miki claims that everyday experience is structured in terms of the common of the commodity: "We can probably say that the principle of the common of modern existence is the commodity. The commodity has gradually become a dominant category, and even amounts to a universal category such that the common of existence obstructs and restrains the development of human sociality" (*MKZ* 3:60). He continues:

> The structure of the commodity is the formal prototype of objectivity for all of existence in our society…Here, consciousness departs from the actuality of our everyday and is submerged in profit such that the materiality of existence is controlled all the more. Therein human labor, and even that which is most interior, is nothing more than a commodity…In the capitalist society in which commodities rule as a universal category of the entirety of social existence, it is not simply the conscious relations amongst

> humans but all of social relations themselves that are buried and immersed. It is the essence of the commodity structure that all traces of the relationship between humans obtain the character of materiality and are implaced within its strict laws such that they are suppressed and endowed with the specter of objectivity (*MKZ* 3:61–62).

The commodity form acts as a kind of holistic, background horizon constraining the forms of perception, action, and intelligibility that govern modern society. It not only determines the horizons for discourse in the public sphere according to, for instance, propertied males, but actively structures *all of existence in our society* in line with the demands of objectivity. The commodity form functions as a fetter to enforce exclusion by defining what is visible and invisible for a given population. Consequently, we over*look* the humanity of, say, proletarian day-laborers to literally *see* them as cheap labor. There is no place for them as human with rights whose safety should be considered here. The idea is that the commodity form has become so intimately intertwined with everyday experience in modern Japanese capitalism that its objectification of persons is naturalized as self-evident.

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While the common of everyday experience finds comfort in the ordering of the commodity form, basic experience is always teeming with difference. Recall the coordinates of light and dark; Miki explains the darkness of basic experience in terms of an "anxious dynamism" that constantly pursues and reorders the stasis of articulation afforded by light: "basic experience is not led by *logos* but instead guides, calls on, and produces *logos*" (*MKZ* 3:5). Basic experience is thus understood in terms of an excess that overflows the principle of sameness structuring the common. It is through this excess that basic experience plays a dissonant role, highlighting the inadequacies of the anthropological and ideological orderings of *logos*. As Harootunian has it, basic experience remains "as surplus, outside of representation, capable of generating changes in a present fraught with danger and in need of fundamental

changes."[37] Accordingly, it is the viscerally felt excess of basic experience that challenges the stability of *logos*, contesting its partitioning of the world on the grounds of exclusivity. This amounts to a disjunct between, on the one hand, the entire anthropological and ideological system by which we normally make sense of experience, and, on the other, the concrete content of what is perceptually and concretely given.

Miki next integrates the surplus of basic experience within the self-generative account of social formation as a totality by directly linking this excess to the schema of "social revolution" found in Marx's preface (*MECW* 29:263):

> This dominating force that *logos* carries vis-à-vis humans must of course have its limits. *Logos* is born from the basic experience of life, and it is by grasping and expressing this that it activates basic experience, and functions to develop it. And because *logos* occupies an absolutely despotic position, it contrarily amounts to an oppression and constraint on life itself. When the basic experience of a life that changes and moves reaches a certain intensity and extensity, it is no longer able to withstand the oppression of *logos,* and it opposes and rebels against established *logos*, seeking out a new logos of itself. We can discover a dialectical relationship here (*MKZ* 3:10–11).

It is the viscerally felt excess of basic experience that challenges the stability of *logos* as a totality, contesting its partitioning of the world on the grounds of its exclusivity. This amounts to a disjunct between the anthropological and ideological system by which we normally make sense of experience, and the concrete content of what is perceptually and conceptually given. The concrete feeling of difference found in basic experience marks a site of discontinuity through which the wider social system (re)organizes and (re)produces itself of itself, thereby (re)forming itself into the future.

[37] Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*, 365

To tie this to the logic of the commodity discussed above, Miki claims that "proletarian basic experience" (*musanshateki kiso keiken* 無産者的基礎経験) exudes a "sensuous" and "practical" difference that transcends the cultural coordinates of bourgeois ideology and the abstract anthropology that conditions it: "because proletarians always practically act on the world, they grasp their own essence as practice within their negotiations. But since all practice must entail sensuality, they arrive at an interpretation of the essence of human sensuousness that is already implaced within practical negotiation" (*MKZ* 3:29–30). Miki references the fifth and eighth of Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach* here—situating Marx's "practical, human sensuous activity" against Ludwig Feuerbach's "sensuous, in other words passive and receptive" understanding of intuition (*MECW* 5:7, mod). For Miki, the difference between Feuerbach and Marx is that the former derived his understanding of sensuous experience from the abstract ideology of religion, while the latter developed his ideology of historical materialism from the excess of proletarian basic experience. Because of this, Feuerbach assumes that "the sensuous world has been directly given in its perfection as the same thing for all of eternity," as in Taishō theorists of expressive totality; in contrast, since the Marxist ideology of historical materialism is developed from the excess of proletarian basic experience, it forms out of a "Marxist anthropology" that is irreducibly practical, sensuous, social, and historical (*MKZ* 3:33).

And so, Marxist historical materialism allowed Miki to theorize practical, sensuous, and historical interventions into popular theories of the self-formation of totality—opening onto a different schema for understanding the self-development of totality through his theory of an excess or surplus immanent to basic experience.

Part 4: From Centered Totality to the Decentered Totality of Dialectical Materialism

In his December 1928 "Organicism and Dialectics" (*Yūkitaisetsu to benshōhō* 有機体説と弁証法), Miki turns to dialectical materialism to develop a decentered account of holistic development from the idea that the self-generation of social forms proceed via excess—formulating contradiction, negation, and, discontinuity as the driver of (self-) development. In doing so, Miki pays special attention to the work of Nishida, challenging his centered account of totality on the grounds of organicism, and his expressive account of totality on the grounds of (two-world) idealism.

Against Nishida and the Centered Account of Totality

But we must start with an addendum: Nishida philosophy is nowhere mentioned by name here; Miki's direct object of critique is organic theory and Hegelian idealist dialectics. Nevertheless, it is my contention that Nishida's understanding of totality and self-formation forms the hidden object of Miki's critique. I've found methodological inspiration for this reading in the work of Michael Lucken, and in particular his use of Homi Bhabha's theory of "mimicry" to explain the power dynamics of citation in modern Japanese scholarship. With only a few exceptions, Miki's theoretical targets are Western philosophy—Bergson, Heidegger, Hegel, and Marx. And yet, we should not conclude that Miki is uninterested in, or that his work is separate from, the work of his peers; rather, methodologically following Lucken, we can say that Miki's writing "conforms to the current practice among his circle which excludes Japanese and all Asians from the discourse." The point is that, in modern Japan, "local knowledge always needs to go through external mediation."[38] Key here is the idea of colonial mimicry. Though unpalatable to position

[38] Lucken, *Nakai Masakazu: naissance*, 37–38.

1920s and ‘30s Japan in the position of the “colonized” persons that Bhabha works on—especially true of someone who would become closely involved with the ideology of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere—nevertheless Miki’s work can be understood as a form of colonial mimicry insofar as his reference to Western sources often function to secure symbolic recognition and cultural capital. We can add to this the widespread practice of not criticizing your mentors—the breaking of which forms a taboo that still codes our understanding of Tanabe’s work today. With these power dynamics in mind, Miki codes Nishida-inspired ideas like basic experience as engagements with Blaise Pascal, Bergson, and later Marx. To bring this point back to the issue of self-formative totality, my claim is that, despite there being no mention of Nishida, “Organicism and Dialectics” nevertheless engages the accounts of self-formation presented in *Inquiry* and “Expressive Activity.”

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Let’s begin with Miki’s criticisms of the centered account, and in particular the organic and one–many accounts of self-formative totality found in *Inquiry*. In terms of the organic account, recall that Nishida introduces the idea of activity without an agent directly following his discussion of Hegel’s *Doppelsatz*, connecting his tree example to Hegel’s organic thinking. It is because the tree is grounded in this mutually relational activity amongst its parts (branches, leaves, and a trunk), and amongst the parts and the whole (the entire tree), that the tree itself can be understood as a centered totality that self-reproduces itself of itself. In terms of the one–many account, recall that Nishida shifts to the language of “one and many” to stress the reciprocal dependence and mutual determination of the many and the one.

Miki outlines five points (indirectly) criticizing Nishida’s purported organicism and the self-sustaining process of reciprocal determination that underlies these accounts of totality:

TOPIC	NISHIDA (Organicism; Centered Account)
1: Trajectory of Development	Continuity
2: Driver of Development	Unity that Envelops its Parts; Balanced Reciprocal Activity
3: Relation to Antecedent Formation	Preservation
4: Concept of the Unity of the Whole	Givenness as Self-Contained Whole; Teleological; Complete Whole; Finality
5: Spatial Relations	Structure; Closed

Diagram 1: Miki's critique of Nishida's centered account of totality.

Miki begins with the trajectory of development of this totality, arguing that, for Nishida, "organic development is grounded in endless continuity" (1o/ca) (*MKZ* 3: 307).[39] Citing Houlgate, we noted that Nishida's tree as a "living organism continuously produces and renews both itself as a whole and its constituent parts," and that "the two processes are one and the same, the organisms renews and preserves its whole self precisely through renewing its parts."[40] Here, continuity takes the form of mutual dependence between part and whole—the tree and its branches, leaves and trunk—which forms the basis for the tree as a self-sustaining, continuous whole.

This opens onto the "driver" of development in Nishida: "in organic development the driver of development is the unity that envelops its various parts, obtaining a balance in the reciprocal activity between the individual parts and the unified whole" (2o/ca) (*MKZ* 3:307). Here we can extend Miki's critique to Nishida's account of the reciprocal determination between the many and the one as constitutive of the self-development of holistic activity. Because the "fundamental mode of reality is both one and many, many and one," and thus because "these two

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[39] The "o/ca" refers to "Organicism; Centered Account" in the diagram.

[40] Houlgate, *An Introduction to Hegel*, 161. Author's italics.

directions cannot be separated," reality is reformulated as the "self-development of a single entity" in Nishida (*NKZ* 1:57). In the language of Miki's critique, this means that it is the balance among the many, as well as the one and the many, that drives development of the singular, unified activity of totality forward. And because this balance ultimately resolves into the unity of totality, it follows that "preservation is emphasized in organic development" (3o/ca) (*MKZ* 3:308). This holds both for Nishida's organic and one–many accounts. Here, preservation unfolds on the level of the organism/whole, of its parts/the many, as well as on the mutual relationship between them. Recall that, with the tree, its parts exist only insofar as they preserve, maintain, and regenerate the tree, which itself preserves and maintains the existence of, say, the trunk—which cannot continue life outside of its connection with the tree as a whole. Here, reciprocal, balanced dependence is the grounds for the mutual preservation of part and whole.

Consequently, "the totality is endowed with givenness" (4o/ca). In organic development, the driver "is totality, and it is only insofar as the parts are determined by the whole that there is reciprocal dependence between them. As such, this development cannot be understood in actuality unless the totality is understood in terms of a self-contained unity and is 'given' as such. In this case, totality must be teleological in essence;" an "organic whole is already a complete totality" (*MKZ* 3:308). This brings us to closure; remember, longitudinally closed accounts of totality presuppose either a simple genetic principle of origin, or an implicit *teleological* direction guiding the activity of totality. While Miki is not against the latter as a provisional state, he criticizes Nishida for overemphasizing unity and thus imposing a "telos" on the activity of totality—"a concept of unity that is furnished with finality." Here, the unity of totality takes on normative implications, and the idea of telos and finality preempts Tanabe's critique of Nishida's "unobtainable final" principle that resides in stillness. A key difference

between Miki's '28 and Tanabe's '30 critique, however, is that the former criticizes Nishida's centered account, while the latter, because he focuses on Nishida's late '20s and early '30s philosophical production, criticizes his expressive framework; while Tanabe will argue that Nishida's framework of expressive activity is inadequate, Miki makes it clear that Nishida cannot simply return to the 1911 account of a closed yet dynamic account of centered totality.

While Miki's first four critiques overwhelmingly emphasize Nishida's longitudinal lack, his fifth incorporates the latitudinal dimensions of Nishida's formulation. Remember, latitudinal self-formation points to the spatial aspects of self-forming system—the entire network formed amidst part and whole, one and many, complexity and unity (5). Miki employs the concept of "structure" to claim that, in organicism, "totality is already given" and so is "primordially" organized in terms of "completion" and "closure" (5o/ca).

Miki makes this claim with reference to Dilthey. In the year prior to "Organicism and Dialectics," Dilthey's work appears in three of Miki's articles, with his idea of structure emerging as a recurring point of engagement. Miki takes particular issue with Dilthey's contention that the historical world is "a productive nexus centered in itself, at the same time containing other productive systems within it, which by positing values and realizing purposes, also have their center within themselves. All are to be understood as structurally linked into a totality in which the sense of the nexus of the socio-historical world arises from the significance of the individual parts."[41] The goal of Dilthey's late-period writing like this was, Ilse Bulhof notes, "to find historical coherence in empirical study of the structures that kept the fabric of the historical and social world together."[42]

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[41] Wilhelm Dilthey, *Selected Works*, vol. 3 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 160.

[42] Ilse Bulhof, "Structure and Change in Wilhelm Dilthey's Philosophy of History," *History and Theory* 15, no. 1 (1976): 22.

Miki takes up the insufficiently longitudinal nature of this concept in an installment of "Contemporary Trends in Thought" (*Gendai shichō* 現代思潮). He writes:

> While Dilthey clearly understood the historicity of life (*Geschichtlichkeit des Lebens*) better than anyone else, he was unable to grasp the particular significance of the living nature of history (*Lebendigkeit der Geschichte*)…What we mean by the living nature of history here is not simply [that history is an expression of life] but rather that the historicity of history is processual, and in particular to grasp that the contemporary period is the result of the process of the past at the same time that it is a process into the future. In a word, history does not only mean the history of the past, as is normally understood, but also means the history of the contemporary period. The historicity of history appears as the history of the contemporary period. It is in this particular sense that Dilthey was unable to grasp the living nature of history (*MKZ* 4:258).

In admitting Dilthey's awareness of the historicity of life but criticizing his inattention to the living nature of history, Miki formulates the latitudinal emphasis on structure as the culmination of an insufficiently open or dynamic account of longitudinal development—represented by points 1–4. Miki's argument is that the longitudinal dimensions of Dilthey and Nishida's account of totality are wrapped up in continuity, preservation, and, finality, thus leading to the view of the social world as a culmination of past moments (the historicity of life). What this effectively means is that, in organicism, the longitudinal understanding of dynamic development is flattened out so that it culminates in a synchronic, latitudinal web of interconnected totality. Dilthey's emphasis on structure is simply the spatial expression of the closure that marks the teleological view of time and totality that governs the organicism of thinkers like Nishida.

Against Nishida and the Expressive Account of Totality

Miki next expands this into an (indirect) argument against Nishida's early and middle period theory of expressive activity. Remember, in expressive activity the self-development of totality is formulated in terms of the actualization of forces of potentiality that emerge from planes

immanent to the whole of reality itself. Here reality carries within itself a tendency or force of expression to self-develop, -complete, and actualize itself of itself.

Though his criticisms of expressive activity are less systematic than the above, Miki again outlines five points of critique against this understanding of totality:

TOPIC	NISHIDA (Organicism; Centered Account)	NISHIDA (Idealism; Expressive Account)
1: Trajectory of Development	Continuity	Continuity through Return
2: Driver of Development	Unity that envelops its parts; Balanced reciprocal activity	Emanation; Abstraction; Separation; Independence
3: Relation to Antecedent Formation	Preservation	Preservation of Content; Ideal
4: Concept of the Unity of the Whole	Givenness as Self-Contained Whole; Teleological; Complete Whole; Finality	Givenness of Self-Contained Whole; Teleological; Self-Completed Whole; Finality; *a priori*
5: Spatial Relations	Structure; Closed	Closed

Diagram 2: Miki's critique of Nishida's centered and expressive accounts of totality.

There are two important things to note here. First, there is significant overlap between Miki's articulation of the organicism/centered and idealism/expressive accounts. We find a similarly critical stance on continuity (1i/ea), preservation (3i/ea), and the commitment to a self-contained whole (4i/ea)—though these are now imbricated as structures within the more complete reality of expressive totality.[43] This is because, for Miki, Nishida's centered account naturally ends in an expressive schema totality. In short, the claim is that Nishida's middle period shift from the centered account follows from his presupposition of an "*a priori*," "self-completed whole" (4o/ca), and thus from his inability to adequately pursue an "empirical approach" to the self-development of totality as it unfolds in this world of actuality (*MKZ* 3 330–

[43] The "i/ea" refers to "Idealism; Expressive Account" in the diagram.

331). And so, just as “Hegel’s [idealist] dialectic is furnished with a tendency to organicism,” Nishida’s centered rendering of totality tends towards expressive activity—thus in part accounting for his middle period shift in this direction (*MKZ* 3:327).

The second point to note is its resemblance to Tanabe’s 1931 critique of Nishida. Above we noted similarities between Miki and Tanabe’s appraisal, but highlighted differences in their object of criticism—centered and expressive totalities, respectively. In the second and third sections of “Organicism and Dialectics” however, Miki links his critical assessment of Hegel’s idealism to Nishida’s late ’20s work, widening his critique to occupy the same terrain as Tanabe. Though directed at Hegel, and thus avoiding Tanabe’s combative tenor, his repeated return to the language of the “eternal present” connects his critique to Nishida philosophy. In doing so, Miki launches several critiques of Nishida philosophy that Tanabe would only come to advance three years later—including charges of religiosity and emanatism, as well as of the “*a priori*” presupposition of unity as “something that is given” free of determination.

Miki opens his expressive critique with this latter point—that totality is *a priori* given as self-contained and self-complete (4i/ea):

> The givenness of totality is one of the most important constitutive elements of organicism. But this is closely connected with the idea that totality has a self-complete nature (*jiko kanryōteki seishitsu* 自己完了的性質). There were numerous reasons why Hegel took the whole as given. This belongs to the holistic genus granted by religious experience. He begins the introduction to his philosophical system: “Philosophy does, initially, share its object in common with religion. Both have *truth* in the highest sense of the word as their object—for both hold that *God* and God *alone* is the truth.” Of course, God is here the God of pantheism. God does not remain in self-identity but develops through the process of the world; nevertheless, in doing so this development returns again to itself. The process of the whole is self-completing in that it is the self-development or self-unfolding of God (*MKZ* 3:314).

We can begin by noting overlap with Tanabe's critique that Nishida philosophy turns the self-development of totality into an "unobtainable final" principle that escapes noematic determination, residing in the static realm of transcendental, supra-historical religion. For Miki too, Nishida privileges an *a priori* understanding of totality, and in doing so endorses activity as it precedes determination.

From this, both Miki and Tanabe conclude, emanation is the driver of development (2i/ea) in Nishida—phrased a logic of emanation (*ryūshutsuteki ronri* 流出的論理; *die emanatische Logik*) for Miki, and a "theory of emanation" (*hasshutsuron* 発出論) for Tanabe. Both words contain 出, the character for "out," mapping onto the "e-" prefix of emanation—the assimilated form of "ex-." Here, emphasis is placed on the flow (流) or departure (発) of activity outwards, and so on activity as uniformly determinative. Activity thus "determines [the things of this world], while itself preceding determination in independence" (*THZ* 4: 308). This is captured in Tanabe's language of static and stillness, and in Miki's treatment of "abstraction," "separation," and "independence" as the driver of development in expressive totality.

Miki's language of pantheism places an additional inflection on this charge of emanation. Citing Emil Lask's criticisms of Fichte, he writes: "In order for the Copernican Revolution to be burdened with a pantheistic sense, the system of the universe necessarily become an *emanatistisch* system of spirit. Herein logic becomes a logic of emanation" (*MKZ* 3:138). Emanation here entails not simply a burst outward, but also a reintegration inward. The claim is that, in stripping the power of determination from actuality, the process of differentiation that early Nishida lauds is, in fact, just an expression of God. As such, Nishida's emanation not only determines this world of actuality, it incorporates actuality back into itself as a closed system. Miki writes: "God, of course, alienates and reduplicates itself; but it is precisely 'because one is

capable of finding themselves that they return to themselves.'" He continues: "Development is a self-enclosed movement with an identical end and beginning. If we can risk using a metaphor, development in Hegel [and Nishida] is not like the flow of a river but like a fountain. The movement leaving the self is the movement returning to the self" (*MKZ* 3:314–315). As a result, actuality does not develop reality forward, it is no more than a momentary eruption that trickles back downward to where it started—an endless process of reintegration. As such, the totality of reality is radically *unproductive* in this account. It does not develop itself forward through preservation qua affirmation; rather, preservation reigns paramount, with the productive forces pacified and consumed in an infinite cycle of reduplication. Just as the fountain recirculates its own water into its base at a rate comparable to the velocity with which it burst forth, actuality falls back into the totality of reality without developing it forward.

This means, Miki (indirectly) argues, that Nishida's theory of expressive totality is a longitudinally closed, structurally complete system (5i/ea). "Because in Hegel" and Nishida, Miki writes, "pantheism is historically developmental, and because it is not intuitive, totality can only be the 'essence completing itself through its own development'" (*MKZ* 3:139).[44] Here truly open longitudinal development is substituted for the continuity (1i/ea) of preservation (3i/ea) and complete unity (4i/ea).

Central to this process of reintegration is the above-mentioned "eternal present." Miki continues his above discussion of the fountain: "The movement leaving the self is the movement returning to the self; from the standpoint of totality, all is the eternal present" (*MKZ* 3:315). In Miki's reading of Nishida, the present plays a key role in bringing preservation, independence,

[44] See: G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 13.

and self-contained unity together to form a structurally complete totality. Recall that in "Expressive Activity" the "active present" (the world of actuality where consciousness, thinking, and perception unfold) joins together with the content of the past (the worlds of meaning and history) through the "suspended present." Mapping this out, we formulated the active present as a horizontal unfolding that forms new moments in its lateral movement, and the suspended present as a vertical eruption that enfolds this horizontal unfolding within a three-dimensional structure. More, we noted that, at its base, the suspended present opens onto the supraconscious field of eternity—where the contents of yesterday join with the content of propositions in an objectively real though non-actualized world of history and meaning. Miki offers an example to help us bring this into focus. He says that the active present, "the external phenomena that appear in history—Athens, Carthage, and the eternal city of Rome—will all fall into ruin" with the lateral movement of time; nevertheless its content—which for Hegel and Nishida is "the conceptual content" (*rinenteki naiyō* 理念的内容) of these places—"will be saved from ruin altogether, preserved in the eternal present of the absolute" (*MKZ* 3:316).

What this means, according to Miki, is that "the entirety of the past is preserved idealistically, that the place of this preservation is the absolute idea, and that for the absolute idea, the entirety of the past already exists in the present" (*MKZ* 3:316–317). The claim is that although we lose Athens, Carthage, and Rome as they were lived in the actuality of the ancient world, nevertheless their ideal, conceptual content—their "'philosophy' as it were (the reason for this is that each philosophy, according to Hegel, is the substance of its own time comprehended in thought)"—is preserved through its negation and transubstantiation as ideal content within the

independent world of history and meaning (*MKZ* 3:316–317).[45] Here we have continuity (1i/ea) through the preservative act of return—the endless process of integration by which actuality is pacified, made ideal, and submerged within the ether of eternality.

But preservation comes at a cost. Since Nishida only "recognizes development in the past, he does not understand the present itself in the process of development, despite the fact that it is the present especially that should be grasped in development" (*MKZ* 3:324). In abandoning any robust sense of an active present, of the horizontal unfolding that forms new moments, Nishida rids himself of his earlier Heraclitan conviction that "'the myriad of things flow without stopping;' reality is a continuity of events that flow without stopping." In emphasizing the eternalizing activity of the suspended present, Nishida has "transformed his Heraclitanism into an Aristotelianism." Such that reality is not a processual flow of events; "development is nothing but an expression of this present, of Aristotelian 'presence' (παρουσία)" (*MKZ* 3:315). Through its suspension, the present loses its active sense of development; it is always preservative—stripping actuality of its capacity for difference as it enfolds its content within the eternal present (3i/ea). The idea is that, without any real sense of an active present, the processual, fluid nature of time collapses in on itself, and the self-development of totality loses its longitudinal sense of openness.

This impoverished sense of openness, and thus of the possibility for development over time, is the consequence of Nishida's taking reality to be already given *a priori*—as self-complete totality (4i/ea):

> When the meaning of development is presence in this way, the center of development falls into continuity (συνεχής), and it is self-completion—that is, telos (τέλος)—that is sought. In fact, a degree of continuous unity is being sought amidst contradiction and

[45]See: G.W.F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 21.

> change in Hegel [and Nishida], but development and externalization are bent back and return to themselves. In this way, the primordial force that brings about development and the primitive energy that endlessly consumes and breaks apart the self are, herein, domesticated and appeased so to speak (*MKZ* 3:315).

In the activity of expressive totality, reality does not develop itself forward but loops back to return on itself. Here the productive capacities of development are stripped of their power as consumption reigns supreme—forming materiality into ideal content as it endlessly bends actuality back into itself to form a self-completing whole. Thus it is that "we have an eternal, complete system that encompasses the entirety of past, present, and future" (*MKZ* 3:331).

Miki and the Decentered Account of Dialectical Materialism

And so, Miki's most salient concern across both frameworks—organicism and idealism, centered and expressive—is their stunted capacity for diachronic development and change, and thus their inability to account for the longitudinally open self-development of totality. Neither Nishida's early centered account of the present as a culmination of past moments, nor his later expressive account of the present as a repository of ideal content transcends closure.

Against the "closed" dialectic indirectly charged of Nishida, which claims that "development is an expression of eternal presence," Miki aligns himself with the decentered, longitudinally "'open' system of the Marxist dialectic." This involves a new attitude that situates the present "retrospectively" in the horizons of the past, and also "prospectively" as a "tendency towards the future, as procedural, namely as a general process that moves into the future" (*MKZ* 3:144). Here "the contemporary period is the result of the process of the past at the same time that it is a process into the future" (*MKZ* 3:148).

This is related to the issue of practice. Against the contemplative grounding of the present in the past, for Miki "the practical (*praktisch*) mainly involves an orientation toward the future"

(*MKZ* 3:144). This is related to Miki's above critique of practical time in Nishida; because Nishida's practice is grounded in the eternal present, and thus immersed in the past and not the future, it is "weakened" in the sense of being overwhelmingly contemplative and retrospective. Nishida "only understands the 'contemporary period' as a consequence of the past, and does not, at the same time, grasp it as a process for the future" (*MKZ* 3:148). Contrarily, for dialectical or "practical materialism, the reality of the contemporary period is a problem of the utmost importance. History here is the *contemporary period*. And so dialectically grasping the contemporary period is the greatest task; there is no need for an eternal, complete system that encompasses the entirety of past, present, and future" (*MKZ* 3:331).

With this longitudinally open and decentered developmental account of the present in mind, Miki outlines his own theory of self-formative totality:

TOPIC	MIKI (Dialectical Materialism, Decentered Account)
1: Trajectory of Development	Discontinuity; Contradiction; Transition; Leaping
2: Driver of Development	Contradiction Immanent within the Whole
3: Relation to Antecedent Formation	Preservation and Destruction; Affirmation and Negation
4: Concept of the Unity of the Whole	Task; Provisional Unity; Transitionality
5: Spatial Relations	Strata; Open

Diagram 3: Miki's dialectical materialist account of totality.

Insofar as the contemporary period is not merely the culmination of the past but urges itself forward as a process into the future, continuity is replaced with a more "positive sense of 'transition' in dialectics" (*MKZ* 3:307). He writes: "dialectical development entails as its moment 'transformation' and 'leaping'—for instance, the leap from quantitative to qualitative transformation; while it is indeed a development of continuity, it embraces discontinuity"

(1dm/d) (*MKZ* 3:307).[46] Key here are the concepts of transition, leaping, and discontinuity—which offer a decentered framework for the longitudinal self-development of totality that stands in direct contrast to the continuity of organicism (1o/ca) and idealism (1i/ea). Although these terms are found in the work of, for instance, the early Russian Marxist Georgi Plekhanov, as well as in the work of Hegel, Marx, and Engels, Miki nevertheless uses this language to form an explicit connection with the work of Vladimir Lenin. In particular, Miki makes reference to "On the Question of Dialectics"—a fragment from Lenin's 1915 Notebooks that was translated into the Japanese in March 1926 by the above Kawakami. In much the same terms that Kuno captured the charm of Miki for his generation, Raya Dunayevskaya captures the charm that Lenin might have held for Miki—while "scores of 'popularizations of Marxian economics had been written," Lenin's work was "the first, since the death of Marx and Engels, to show the primacy of a philosophical approach."[47] In essence, Miki found in Lenin support for his original application of Marxism to a diversity of topics that extended beyond economics—ranging from his interest in basic experience, to language and social ontology, to the self-formative development of totality.

To understand this trajectory of holistic development as it is decentered and grounded in discontinuity (1dm/d), we must look at the driver of development in dialectics: a "contradiction immanent within the whole" (2dm/d). Miki writes: "The structure of dialectics emphasizes contradiction over unity; it is contradiction that is the driving force of development" (*MKZ* 3:328). Here, Miki cites "The Doctrine of Essence" from Hegel's *Science of Logic*, and in particular the idea that: "identity is only the determination of simple immediacy, of dead being,

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[46] The "dm" refers to "Dialectical Materialism" in the diagram.

[47] Raya Dunayevskaya, *Marxism and Freedom* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1958), 168.

whereas contradiction is the root of all movement and life; it is only insofar as something has a contradiction within it that it moves, is possessed of instinct and activity."[48] Working on this same chapter, Lenin notes the following:

> Movement and "*self-movement*" (this NB! arbitrary (independent), spontaneous, **internally-necessary** movement), "change," "movement and vitality," "the principle of all self-movement," "impulse" (Trieb) to "movement" and to "activity"—the opposite to "*dead Being*"—who would believe that this is the core of "Hegelianism," of abstract and abstrusen (ponderous, absurd?) Hegelianism?? This core had to be discovered, understood, *hinüberretten* [rescued], laid bare, refined, which is precisely what Marx and Engels did (*LCW* 38:141).

Lenin continues: "The manifold entities acquire activity and vitality in relation to one another only when driven on to the sharp point of Contradiction; thence they draw negativity, which is the inherent pulsation of self-movement and vitality" (*LCW* 38:142). Miki's claim is similar: "what is particularly dialectical about the law of dialectics is the negative, the contradictory, its progress and transformation, an impulse towards the sublation of itself through the medium of negation and contradiction" (*MKZ* 3:306).

It is on this point that Miki's dialectical materialist account of the self-production of social forms departs from Nishida's centered account of totality: "where the system is realistically pursued, it is natural that emphasis is placed upon synthesis, and not on contradiction within the dialectic" (*MKZ* 3:140). Instead of a synthesis that presupposes unity and preservation, Miki argues for a radically decentered view in which there is no unified center of gravity. Miki agrees that the self-formation of totality proceeds through the mutual determination of individual and environment within this world of actuality, but he offers a methodological intervention into how we conceive of this mutual determination (2dm/d). While balanced, mutual

[48] G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, trans. George Di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 381–382. Translation modified.

cooperation sneaks in a pre-given and ultimately dominant whole to account for continuous development, for Miki, contradiction amongst the parts, as well as the parts and the whole, is the driver of development. Here, the self-activity of totality is not systematically driven forward in a flow of continuity by way of balanced reciprocity; instead, a decentered whole urges itself forward in discontinuous leaps through the contradictions that emerge amongst the many, as well as the many and the one. Thus we have the decentered, dialectical materialist account of the self-development of totality.

Perhaps we can clarify Miki's view by circling back to "The Marxist Form of Anthropology." For Miki, it is the contradiction between the excess of basic experience and *logos* (both in its anthropological and ideological orderings) that drives the development of society as a whole forward. Recall that when basic experience can no longer withstand the "oppression of *logos*," it "rebels against established *logos*, seeking out a new *logos* of itself." Thus Miki employs the language of contradiction to discuss the driver of social change, locating "transformations in anthropology" in "the contradiction between *logos* and basic experience" (*MKZ* 3:10–11). Miki's point, to link to Kevin Anderson's commentary on Lenin, is that "the internal contradictions of a given society are the key to grasping changes within that society, changes that develop as a process of self-development and self-movement" of totality.[49]

We can more sharply focus this idea by relating it to negation. Hegel writes that the "negative, is inherently contradiction, self-dissolving, self-repelling, and self-determining,"[50] and so "negation is equally positive."[51] Lenin finds this latter point inspiring in his 1914–1915 Hegel

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[49] Kevin Anderson, *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 45.

[50] Hegel, *Science of Logic*, 393.

[51] Ibid, 33.

Notebooks: “negation is something definite, has a definite content, the inner contradictions lead to the replacement of the old content by a new, higher one” (*LCW* 38:97). Miki cites a similar passage from Kawakami’s translation of Lenin: dialectics “alone furnishes the key to the ‘self-movement’ of all actuality; it alone furnishes the key to ‘leaps,’ to the ‘break in continuity,’ to the ‘transformation into the opposite,’ to the destruction of the old and the emergence of the new” (*LCW* 38: 358, mod). In short, contradictions bring forth a qualitative transition or leaping that not only transcends the limits of the present ordering of totality, but that is also—and this is Miki’s third point—marked by “simultaneous preservation and destruction, an affirmation that accompanies negation” (3dm/d) (*MKZ* 3:308). Remember, Miki is invested in “understanding the system by which certain ideologies are born, develop, collapse, and then are replaced by new ones” (*MKZ* 3:16). The shift from development to collapse marks the destructive capacities of negation, and the shift to replacement marks the affirmation that accompanies negation, the preservation that accompanies destruction. Miki’s point is that the new ideology will bring with it the advances of the previous ideological ordering, but that this inclusion will fundamentally alter the form of this previous ordering. Here, Peter Fryer writes: “Every new stage becomes in time an old stage; every negation is itself the arena of new contradictions, the soil of a new negation that leads inexorably forward to a new qualitative leap, to a still higher stage of development, carrying forward the advances made in the previous stages, often seeming to repeat—on a higher level, enriched by the intervening development—a stage already passed.”[52]

Miki himself clarifies this point with reference to Hegel’s *Doppelsatz*. Recall that Nishida read Hegel’s *Doppelsatz* in terms of the reciprocal determination between part and whole, and

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[52] Peter Fryer, “Lenin as Philosopher,” *Labour Review* 2:5 (1957): 136–147, https://www.marxists.org/archive/fryer/1957/09/lenin-phil.html.

that Miki charges that such a reading sneaks in a self-contained, "complete totality" that is furnished with closure. Contra Nishida, Miki reads Hegel's statement in terms of "transitionality" (*katosei* 過渡性) and "provisional unity" (*sanjitekinaru tōitsu* 暫時的なる統一), imbricating the movement of negativity in the never-ending production of new, higher forms of unity (4dm/d):

> In dialectics, thesis establishes antithesis, and the contradiction between them is unified together in union; but as soon as the synthesis is formed, this itself appears as a (higher-level) thesis, and it confronts its opposite of itself; this contradiction is again synthesized together in a higher union, but before long this synthesis will lapse into contradiction of itself. In this way, dialectics, as a method, is formally nothing more than a process of infinite development and includes neither conclusion nor completion within itself as a necessity. In its realization, each form of history concurrently carries its own resolution, and so, as a result, it carries its own negation; it is in this way that it transforms into a higher layer. The revolutionary significance of dialectics lies in the necessity of such transformation that knows nothing of conclusion or completion (*MKZ* 3:128).

Here, Miki offers a longitudinal account of holistic development that is neither normative nor closed, instead ascribing an interim status to unity and integrating it as a stage in a never-ending process of the self-movement of totality. "What is needed is simply a whole that is capable of synthesizing the present contradictions within the succeeding stage—a provisional unity, so to speak" (*MKZ* 3:308).

To be clear, the "higher-level" discussed here is radically different from the teleological urge that marks centered and expressive accounts of totality. As provisional unity, each higher-state is stripped of its sense of telos and resolves itself in decentered purpose-less movement, and thus radically open development. This dynamic, longitudinally open account of the self-movement of totality is expressed latitudinally in the shift from structure to strata (5dm/d). Stratified development, Miki writes, "proceeds in terms of the accumulation of folded layers of strata upon strata, and so there is no need for the whole to be given in terms of completion or closure." Instead, each synthesis is transformed into a "(higher-level) thesis," forming a new

stratum in an infinite upward expansion of self-movement. Miki refers to Lenin to make this point: "the unification of opposites (union, identity, action balance) is conditional, temporary, transient, and relative. The struggle of opposites is development, movement—this is absolute. It is absolute, as it is" (*LCW* 38: 358). Here, the latitudinal dimensions are not absolutized within a closed totality but mark a temporary and transient stage of unity that is soon confronted with its antithesis, thus being integrated within a dynamic and open account of longitudinal totality.

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And so, Miki's dialectical materialism aims to rethink the centered account of self-active totality while keeping its engine within this world of actuality—and in particular, within the practical, sensuous, and historical realm constitutive of historical materialism. Here, the self-development of society as a whole is grounded not in Nishida's "cyclical, self-referential, and self-sustaining" process of balanced reciprocal determination, but in a decentered and endlessly longitudinal process of negation, contradiction, and discontinuity. At stake here, as Anderson has it, is an account of the self-formation of totality that resides within this world of actuality, yet nevertheless is "more nuanced, more open to spontaneity, self-movement, and creativity from below."[53]

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[53] Anderson, *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism*, 47.

Chapter 4

Subjective Intervention: Nishida and Miki in the 1930s

This chapter tracks totality forward from the late ‘20s to early ‘30s Shōwa period Japan. We again take as our institutional lens the print industry, but here focus on *Under the Banner of the Rising Sciences*—a coterie magazine by former Iwanami affiliates Miki Kiyoshi, Kobayashi Isamu, and Hani Gorō. Ideologically, our focus is on Miki and Nishida, and in particular their attempt to rethink a role for the subject in generating social change, while nevertheless remaining committed to a schema of holistic self-development via contradiction and negation. We will do so across five parts. The first three parts will focus on Miki: first and second, treating Miki’s turn to the social sciences and his discussion of crisis via *doxa*, dogma, and *mythos*, and then connecting this to his work in the philosophy of history from this same period. In the fourth part, we will look at Nishida’s middle-late period work on active-intuition, absolutely contradictory self-identity, and the historical world from this same period. We will end with a fifth part tying their work together, and showing the way in which both schemas demonstrate a departure from decentered totality in their concern over how to engender social change, the subject of social revolution, and the ways in which subjects within society can generate the self-development of society.

Part 1: On *Under the Banner of the Rising Sciences*

If, as the decentered account says, society qua totality develops itself in discontinuity—from the excess of basic experience for example—in what way can humans intervene in development to refashion society? More, what is the path forward when the dominant ordering of *logos*—the ideological fetters governing society—seem to reign in perpetuity? These questions pressed

urgently in the late ‘20s, as Japanese society entered a state of what Miki and other intellectuals termed “crisis” (*kiki* 危機). Crisis initially offered a path forward for Miki: the contradiction of society was understood to be natural to social development, and social transformation was inevitable in Miki’s dialectical materialism. But as the capital and imperial technologies of the state grew in power, and as his fellow intellectuals on the left sunk further in “anxiety” (*fuan* 不安), Miki began thinking more rigorously about how it was possible to engender social change within this more holistic schema. His answer involved thinking further about the *subject* of social revolution, and about how *subjects* within society could serve as catalysts to generate and spur self-development of society as a whole.

Miki and The New Social Sciences

Miki turned first turned to “the social sciences” to focus this question. “The term ‘social science,’” as Andrew Barshay observes, “came to be synonymous with Marxian class analysis” in interwar Japan, and Miki’s case is no different.[1] In October 1928, Miki, joined forces with the Marxist historian Hani Gorō and the former Iwanami editor Kobayashi Isamu to release *Under the Banner of the New Sciences*—a “theoretically synthetic magazine” that took “Marxism as its backdrop” (*BNS* 1:back page; 2:back page).[2]

Miki had known Hani from Germany; four years his junior, Hani was studying historical philosophy under Heinrich Rickert in the philosophy department at Heidelberg University. Upon his return to Japan in 1924, Hani continued his studies in history at Tokyo Imperial University,

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[1] Andrew Barshay, “Imagining Democracy in Postwar Japan: Reflections on Maruyama Masao and Modernism,” *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 18, no. 2 (1992): 370.

[2] I hereafter refer to this text as *Banner*.

graduating in 1927 and taking a job at the university's historiographical institute. We have seen Kobayashi already—from his work as the general editor at Iwanami. Kobayashi entered Iwanami Publishing at the age of 17 under the *shōnen shoin* apprentice system, which provided food and lodging for young members of Iwanami and prepared them for careers in the company. Kobayashi befriended Miki shortly after he arrived to Tokyo, seeing "a different type of person than the scholars he had met up to that point."[3] Like Miki, Kobayashi recognized that Japan was entering a new cultural moment of Marxism, and he did his best to distance Iwanami from the "musty" waft of cultivation and maintain its relevance for a new generation of readers (*S* 500:61; *AJZ* 10:334).

The months leading up to *Banner* proved difficult—not just for Hani and Kobayashi, but the entire left-wing contingent of Japanese intellectual society. It is no coincidence that Miki's first article on crisis, "Theoretical Consciousness in Crisis" (*Kiki ni okeru rironteki ishiki* 危機における理論的意識) was written in 1928—a year punctuated by worker strikes and state suppression. Perhaps the most prominent example was the March 15 Incident, a crackdown on socialists and communists under the conservative leadership of the Rikken Seiyukai Party and Prime Minister Giichi Tanaka. Marginal gains in the lower house by socialist- and labor-party candidates in the February general elections—the first following the adoption of universal male suffrage—resulted in a hung parliament, meaning that while the Tanaka government would continue, its ability to extend its reach into China, for instance, were curtailed. In response, the Tanaka cabinet invoked the powers vested in the Public Security Preservation Law of 1925—which many of its members had a hand in drafting under the previous Katō Takaaki

[3] Kobayashi Isamu, "Watashi no rirekisho," in *Watashi no rirekisho: Bunkajin* (Tokyo: Nihon keizai shinbunsha, 1983), 4:364.

administration. The law was harsh, mandating that "[a]nyone who has formed an association with the aim of altering the *kokutai* (national body 国体) or the system of private property…shall be liable to imprisonment with or without hard labor, for a term not exceeding ten years."[4] The Tanaka administration then doubled down in the face of the threat of restraint, issuing an "emergency edict" in the wake of the hung parliament and pushing through an amendment that strengthened the penalty to include "the death sentence or punishment and imprisonment indefinitely or for a period exceeding five years." More than 1600 socialists and communists were suspected to fit the bill, and of those detained about one-third of them were arrested for, as the warrants read, plotting "to overthrow the present organization of our country, and by a proletarian dictatorship to realize a communist society."[5]

Unlike similar measures in the past, this had direct ramifications for members of the intellectual community—like Hani. While there had been assaults on academic freedom, in the wake of the March 15 Incident the Tanaka cabinet directly consulted with the Ministry of Education in what Byron Marshall calls "the first truly concerted effort to purge the imperial universities of radical faculty."[6] On April 13th, the Education Minister Mizuno Rentarō summoned the presidents of the Tokyo, Kyoto, and Kyushu imperial universities to Tokyo and instructed them to remove the radical left-wing presence from their student and faculty population. Perhaps the most high-profile target was Kawakami Hajime—the above-mentioned translator of Lenin and economics professor with whom Miki worked closely. On April 16th

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[4] Richard Mitchell, "Japan's Peace Preservation Law of 1925: Its Origins and Significance," *Monumenta Nipponica* 28, no. 3 (1973): 339.

[5] Richard Mitchell, *Thought Control in Prewar Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), 84.

[6] Byron Marshall, *Academic Freedom and the Japanese Imperial University, 1868–1939* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1992), 133.

Kyoto Imperial University president Araki Torasaburō, in consort with Professors Takarabe Sakuji and Kambe Masao from the economics department, demanded Kawakami's resignation from the teaching post he had held for twenty years. While the interim president at Tokyo Imperial University, Onozuka Kiheiji, was less yielding to government demands, refusing to fire the professors that the ministry wanted removed, he nevertheless instituted severe measures to curb university radicalism.[7] Hani, under pressure by his employers in the historiographical institute for a speech he gave on behalf of the Social Democratic Candidate Abe Isō, was soon out of work.[8]

Kobayashi would soon be out of work as well, though for different reasons. Despite his sympathies toward the new cultural force of Marxism, Kobayashi found himself opposite protests by Iwanami workers led by Sakaguchi Sakae. On March 12th a coalition of more than 60 workers submitted a petition for improved labor conditions, and on the 13th they stopped working (*ISH* 49). One of the chief sources of dispute was opportunities for career advancement, and in particular the apprentice system through which Kobayashi had joined. Strikers argued that the system hampered opportunities for advancement by employees who had entered Iwanami later in life, and they lobbied for the dismissal of two senior-level Iwanami employees who had emerged through the apprentice system—Kobayashi and Nagata Mikio. Kobayashi was shocked to find himself on the other line of the picket; Miki approached Sakaguchi and the other strikers on behalf of Kobayashi, but according to Kobayashi's telling, they insisted that it wasn't personal, and that they were protesting an unfair system.[9]

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[7] Marshall, *Academic Freedom*, 134–136. Also see: Gail Lee Bernstein, *Japanese Marxist: A Portrait of Kawakami Hajime*, 1879–1946 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 145.

[8] Hani Gorō, *Watakushi no Daigaku* (Tokyo: Nihon tosho sentā, 2001), 161.

[9] Kobayashi, "Watashi no rirekisho," 365.

The strike would end in ten days, with Iwanami meeting certain demands but also firing Sakaguchi and other strike organizers (*S* 465:404). Kobayashi offered his resignation soon after the strike ended, but it was rejected by Iwanami. Nevertheless Kobayashi felt differently about working with the company, and he decided to leave Iwanami that August.[10] It was Miki who had convinced him. In an effort to lift his spirits after the strike, Miki took Kobayashi out for a consolatory night on the town. By the end of the evening Kobayashi had decided to start his own publishing company. And, in a strange twist, he would take as his partner Sakaguchi, who had led the strike and demanded his dismissal at Iwanami (*S* 465:404).

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The first issue of *Banner* would be their first act as a solo-publisher, and it formed the inspiration to start their own company, Tettō shoin (Steel Pagoda Publishing 鉄塔書院). The writer Kōda Rohan came up with the name for Kobayashi—an allusion to the Nantian Steel Pagoda from which Nagarjuna was said to have received the esoteric teachings of Buddhism.[11] Though the journal would, in name, be printed under the Association for the New Sciences—a makeshift publishing company that took as its head office Hani's residence—Tettō shoin handled the actual publishing. While Kobayashi and Sakaguchi handled print duties, start-up capital for the magazine was provided by Hani and Miki, with the latter using funds from his summer lecture series tour of Manchuria and north China with Iwanami Shigeo for the South Manchurian Railway Company.

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[10] Kobayashi, "Watashi no rirekisho," 366.

[11] Iwakura Hiroshi, *Aru senjika no teikō: Tetsugakusha Tosaka Jun to "yuiken" no nakama-tachi* (Tokyo: Kadensha, 2015), 33.

The first print of *Banner* ran approximately 3000 units, and each issue ran about 150 pages long.[12] Both the title and the look of the journal (down to its binding and color) referred to two of its forebearers. First *Unter dem Banner der Marxismus*, a German language publication focusing on Soviet Marxism that was associated with key Marxist theorists like Abram Deborin; and second, *Under the Banner of Marxism*, a Japanese language magazine published from June to December 1926 by Fukumoto Kazuo that centered on translations from the German-language journal.

Miki's *Banner* differed theoretically in important ways from Fukumoto's magazine. As previously mentioned, Fukumoto supported theoretical intervention, but did so by isolating Marxism from other academic currents. While Miki's magazine indeed took Marxism as its backdrop, "the change from 'Marxism' to 'New Science' was a significant one," as scholars like Kevin Doak have noted. Instead of isolating Marxism to effect class consciousness, it "emphasized the need to build bridges across disciples, institutions, and ideologies in charting the course for political change in Japan."[13]

Perhaps this gesture to build bridges and forge an inter-disciplinary basis for a new science is most evident in the editorial postscripts to *Banner*. The first issue reads:

> Most contemporary academic journals are reports from a variety of independent research laboratories from a variety of separate universities. The content of philosophy, economics, law, political science, the arts, and so forth are restricted in accordance with their specialization. But the necessity of synthetic research is now felt acutely. More than anything else, the development of Marxist philosophy has brought about this situation (*BNS* 1:back page).

[12] The print run is debated. Iwakura puts the figure at 3000, while Hani says it may have been as many as 8000, though he admits that he is not sure the exact number.

[13] Kevin Doak, "Under the Banner of the New Science: History, Science, and the Problem of Particularity in Early Twentieth-Century Japan," *Philosophy East and West* 48, no. 2 (1998), 235.

Against academic specialization, Miki believed that "The Issue of Scientific Criticism"— the title for the first article of the magazine—was to synthetically study the linkages between traditional academic disciplines, and tease out the ways in which they form a broader latitudinal web of ideology. To be clear, this connection does "not simply stand in a planar relation of mutual interactivity, but form overlapping strata and so shapes mutual activity in a three-dimensional relation" (*MKZ* 3:222). For instance, he claimed "philosophy is now required to stand in a particularly close relation to the social sciences more generally, which take as their core economics" (*MKZ* 3:225). Though Miki emphasizes economics here within something like a very minimal base–superstructure relation—claiming that "the study of economics forms the base layer in the structure of ideology"— he is more generally interested in the holistic investigative capacities of the social sciences, and especially in their capacities to uncover the "connection between a certain ideology and the foundation that constrains it," and thus the deep structures by which Japanese social existence connects together as a totality (*MKZ* 3:335).

Part 2: Crisis and Self-Development

But social *science* was not only Marxist and syncretic; it was also unapologetically *new* and critical. Miki makes this clear in two announcements for the journal: first in the October 8th edition of *Imperial University Newspaper* and the second serialized from October 10th to the 14th in *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*.

> Miki first framed the magazine as call to youth:
>
> It is only natural for the old to be overtaken by the young. Without this, we could not expect general historical development. Though the old should indeed recognize the course of their collapse, they often behave as if they themselves are eternal. One must be brave to recognize the inevitability of your own collapse…And so the old obstruct the progress of the new by condemning new things as a fad of the times, or as a superstition,

> or as a fantasy of youth…What I call old here is not being advanced in the years, but rather points to the fact that all things stop developing of themselves (*MKZ* 19:457–458).

Again positing a connection between one's temporal framework and its connection to reality, Miki here maps young and old onto two forms of historical awareness, approaching the "problems of actuality" differently based on their temporal schema.

The old, established sciences are grounded in a static and eternalizing gesture. They "behave as if they themselves are eternal," repressing development and absolutizing their interpretive schema as the ultimate culmination of the past (*MKZ* 19:457). They can "be called reactionary scholars in the sense that they negate historical movement," single-mindedly "indulg[ing] in the retrospective observation" of an "endless accumulation of historical materials." Accordingly, "their reactionary 'respect for history' sees the present as a result of the past and so immediately understands it as conclusive and complete"—dismissing new interpretive schemas as "fad" and "fantasy" in their detachment from concerns of the present or future (*MKZ* 13:95).

This language of fads and eternality refers to Watsuji and the Taishō logic of cultivation. Recall Watsuji's dismissive attitude towards magazines that "devote themselves to fads…by taking up fashionable problems," and his attempt to portray "eternal problems to the average reader" in the inaugural issue of *Shisō*. For Miki, there is a contradiction in terms here: "eternal problems are problems that no longer possess the nature of a problematic;" it is only "by separating from their formative base [in actuality] they obtain so-called eternality" (*MKZ* 13:96). The idea is that, in immersing themselves in eternality, Watsuji and the cultivationists lose their ability to deal with the problems of actuality that were originally the wheelhouse of scholarship and cultural production.

The young, on the other hand, embrace "critical consciousness" (*hihantekinaru ninshiki* 批判的なる認識) in an "effort to explicate the processual nature of existence and its transitional character." That is, they use critical consciousness to clarify the longitudinal self-development of society as a whole. Here, they recognize that the "present, as present, is pregnant with both past and future," and so their understanding of "process is the result of a process from the past at the same time that it is the starting point for a process into the future" (*MKZ* 13:94–95).

Remaining "suspicious of both everlasting truth and of everlasting problems," they ground their concerns in the present and the problems of actuality in its historical moment. "All problems of scholarship have a necessary connection to a certain historical period, and so are established as possessing the problematic nature of actuality" (*MKZ* 13:96). As such,

> scholarship is a child of the times. In these contemporary times, and in particular in this age of transition, it is only natural that a new science is born against the established sciences. The fact that the contemporary age is particularly transitional means that the contradictions and transition are revealed even more acutely. Rather than trying to eternalize the contemporary period as some people are doing, those who can positively capture this as a process must grasp the new sciences and develop them (*MKZ* 19:458).

And so while old ideologies function to stabilize and codify a given ordering in their push for eternity, the new (social and historical) sciences are positively grounded in: their *comprehensive* urge to chart the latitudinal web of relations constitutive of the totality of actual society; and their *critical awareness* of the longitudinal process by which these social forms, as totality, develop themselves forward into the future, out of the past, in this world of actuality.

Crisis, Dogma, and *Doxa*

With this differentiation of the new sciences from the old, Miki begins articulating for the social sciences a more positive role in bringing forth social transformation. This begins, as I read it,

Miki's departure away from the anti-subjectivism of the decentered account found in "Organicism and Dialectics." Recall Althusser's words on decentered totality: "The true 'subjects'…are not, despite all appearances, the 'obviousnesses' of the 'given' of naïve anthropology, 'concrete individuals,' 'real men—but the definition and distribution of these places and functions…the relations of production." Though still committed to development through contradiction and negation, Miki begins looking to the social sciences as a site of social intervention, and thus begins to carve out a more positive role for individual subjects in generating the crisis of contradiction and bringing about social change.

This new understanding of social change begins to takes a more discernible form in the discourse on crisis and anxiety that became prominent in the social sciences from the late '20s. The critical awareness of the new social sciences, Miki writes in the second announcement,

> only find their beginnings in a period of social collapse. At this time, society begins to expose the contradictions and oppositions immanent within itself. Society is confronted by crisis. It is corresponding to this period of crisis or *kritisch* (*kiki*), that a critical or *kritisch* (*hihantekinaru*) awareness is born. Marx attached the name critical to the awareness of the process of the collapse of capitalist society. And the period of opposition and contradiction manifests its transitional and processual character, as Hegel made clear in his logic (*MKZ* 13:93–94).

Key here is Miki's "Theoretical Consciousness in Crisis"—published three months after these announcements and one month after "Organicism and Dialectics." Miki uses crisis here to further explicate his distinction between young and old, and to elucidate this distinction in terms of their respective approach to the dialectical self-transformation of society as totality: "the crisis of thought, if looked at purely theoretically, means that a given thought transforms into its opposite." Here crisis is sheerly descriptive; it points to the negative process through which society as a whole develops itself of itself, the absence of which is its "congelation and death"—perhaps a terminological reference to Watsuji's *Nietzsche* and *Revival*.

He continues his reference to Watsuji and Taishō cultivationism:

> For those who advocate the universal validity of truth, its abstract eternality, for those who assert the self-identity of truth, its formal invariance, and for those who cannot grasp the developmental life of truth as it is mediated by contradiction—when a thought appears that contradicts and opposes their own thought, people like this forget that this is only a crisis for their thought and instead consider it to be a crisis for thought more generally, a crisis for truth, and so they loudly scream about a crisis of thought (*MKZ* 2:244–245).

This is crucially related to the idea of dogmatism (*dokudanron*, *doguma* 独断論、ドグマ) that Miki begins working with in this period. For Miki, the scream of the old is that of the dogmatic—those that cling obstinately to their thought in the face of change. “Their argument turns to righteous indignation. And the scholar now appears as a patriotic loyalist,” characterizing anyone with opposing beliefs as “dangerous, vulgar, and immoral” (*MKZ* 2:248).

The dogma of Watsuji and the Taishō cultivationists is wrapped up in what Miki calls the *doxa* (*dokusa* ドクサ) of society—an idea that he develops in *An Introduction to the Social Sciences (Shakai kagaku gairon* 社会科学概論), published across two volumes as part of the Iwanami Kōza *Philosophy Series* in April and August 1932.[14] *Doxa* brings together a number of points Miki had developed previously. Structurally, it resembles the fore-structure of experience as well as its attendant conceptions of *logos* and ideology. As we are thrown in the world, “we are born amidst *doxa*; we are born amidst society” (*MKZ* 6:297). And, as with fore-grasping, *doxa* forms the background whole of intelligibility and *logos* that structures the shared perceptual, discursive, and practical activities constitutive of our being in the world.

For this reason, Miki broadly associates *doxa* with “common sense.” Common sense carries dual significance here: “common” insofar as “there is inherently something social in its

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[14] I hereafter refer to this text as *Social Sciences*

way of existence;" "sense" inasmuch as it is taken as a kind of "pre-given assertion" that is "simply received and accepted as is" (*MKZ* 6:298). On the level of the individual, there are two stages. First, there is this pre-discursive, sensual level of naturalization effected through custom and habit: "the manner of human social behavior is continually repeated to the extent that it takes form, and this, in its customary repetition, executes its social function" of codifying *doxa*; "a common sense regarding society is naturally born for humans via such habitual repetition" (*MKZ* 6:300). Second, this common sense informs the way in which we operate on higher, discursive levels of *logos*. In this vein, Miki appeals to what the Romans called *opinio juris*—a shared opinion that bears "no sense of individual opinion" but is instead "attached to a certain social or collective within a certain historical period" (*MKZ* 6:299). Echoing Heidegger's conception of *Das Man*, Miki clarifies: "we do not make our own positive declarations, rather we speak together within what has already been spoken;" we act together in forms that have already been set (*MKZ* 6:297).

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As in his work on fore-structure and ideology, Miki's analysis of *doxa* pivots from a hermeneutic of human beings to again take the totality of society directly as his object of analysis. Here, Miki's understanding of *doxa*—as well as the two ways of relating to it, eternality and critical awareness, old and young—is ultimately grounded in the dialectical schema of the development of society that he laid out in "Organicism and Dialectics." Here society, as totality, retains its structure of self-development "from one to the other" via a "contradictory relation of otherness."

But remember, Miki is here further preoccupied with the possibility of subjective intervention in his theory of social development. In an attempt to further understand the role of

the subject in generating or stymieing social transformation, Miki now parses out two general tendencies for the self-development of the social whole: *doxa* and *mythos* (*miyutosu* ミユトス). While *doxa* is chiefly associated with the social totality in equilibrium, *mythos* is associated with the transformation and development of the social whole. Rather than foregrounding the forces of production alone, as in the decentered account, both tendencies integrate the individual subject to either explain periods of intransient stasis or to carve out a more positive role for subjective intervention in generating the crisis of contradiction and thus social change.

We can begin with *doxa*; Miki writes:

> What are the conditions for social knowledge to exist as *doxa*? It is like this: For a given society in a given historical period to persist in its social form in any sense, it must include a tendency to equilibrium within itself…for a given society to persist in its social form it must preserve equilibrium as a whole in the face of disturbances in its social parts. Incidentally, a society that has balanced relations is a society that is in a normal state (*MKZ* 6:300).

Specifically, Miki is interested in the power relations by which *doxa*, despite being enmeshed within a social theory of development via contradiction and negation, extends "provisional unity" into a "normal state" for the social whole. He writes:

> Those who have secured the supremacy of their own existence in this form of society will particularly feel the urge to maintain this equilibrium of this society in perpetuity; it is in this way that naturally emerging *doxa* comes to carry a socially restrictive sense in its natural course. We can perhaps most clearly recognize this kind of situation with regards to the law of customs. Naturally emerging [*doxa*] will in this way gradually be taken up in explicit conscious form to preserve a state of equilibrium within a given social form (*MKZ* 6:300).

Taken up in this way *doxa* becomes dogma—a discursive justification for the perpetuation of a given ordering of intelligibility or *logos*. We can tie this back to Miki's critique of Watsuji and the old guard of cultivationists; their dogmatic, eternalizing gesture penetrated everyday *doxa*

because it was “compatible or suitable with the equilibrium of extant society,” and since then its function has been to preserve, maintain, and extend this ordering of the social whole forward.

The attribution of eternality, then, is not simply grounded in abstraction from the present, but in the preservation of a given ordering of a social totality—one that is predicated upon a series of exclusions that have benefitted a dominant class of, say, intellectuals. As such, Miki argues first, that social structure is reflected in “the character of thought;” and second, that this character of thought is “an expression of class.” He continues: “The class structure of society is divided into a dominant class and a dominated class. And this dominant–dominated relation is naturally fixed as the good and bad character of thought.” And so, “it is not ideology or truth itself that is preserved in the rejection of bad thought but is in fact the ruling class” (*MKZ* 2:248–250). Miki concludes, dogmatic thought essentially manifests itself as “prejudice towards the self”—a stubborn striving to preserve the dominant *doxastic* ordering of the whole of society in the face of its natural development (*MKZ* 2:242).

Crisis, Development, and *Mythos*

But the *doxa* of society does not tend exclusively towards equilibrium—inasmuch as society, as totality, is structured within a schema of dialectical development through contradiction and negation (*MKZ* 6:298–299). Rather, *doxastic* common sense is open either to equilibrium or to change. The dogmatists invest energies in its capacities of equilibrium by immersing themselves in *logos* to maintain a given order to the social whole. To bring about social change—that is, to activate a trend away from equilibrium in the social whole—we must immerse ourselves not in the language and reason of *logos* but in affect and emotion, what Miki calls *pathos (patosu* パトス).

This opens onto the second general direction for the self-formation of the social whole: *mythos*. Miki's theory of *mythos* relies on the work of Georges Sorel, and especially his claim that social myths underlie revolutionary periods of transformation in society—primitive Christianity, the Reformation, the French Revolution, and the general strike.[15] Here *mythos* is grounded in an inverse relation to social stability: "While the *doxastic* form is compatible with the tendency toward equilibrium in society, the *mythos* form is compatible with contradictory or antagonistic social relations." Consequently, they emerge from and effect different social functions: *doxa* achieves security in the repetition of the customary, thereby maintaining stability; *mythos* is "directly born from the contradictions of reality" and so can direct the whole of society towards transformation.

We can link this to our discussion of crisis. Because the old guard is dominant within its social ordering, it experiences crisis as a visceral threat to its way of life; in contrast, Miki links *mythos* to the form of critical awareness that marks youth, claiming that *mythos* is the "characteristic form of knowledge that corresponds to critical periods of crisis" (*MKZ* 6:307). Consequently for the youth steeped in the inevitability of social change, "the crisis will no longer manifest itself as a crisis or as a simple crisis"—as a "so-called crisis"—but will instead be felt as the natural course of development for a society that, as a whole, self-forms itself through contradiction and leaping.

As in his schema of the dialectical self-development of totality, moreover, contradiction is linked to the longitudinal self-formation of society into the future. *Mythos* injects a new sense of temporality into the totality of social relations. While "*doxastic* relations can be latitudinally characterized" as static and structural social whole, *mythos* "express a certain temporal 'aspect'

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[15] Georges Sorel, *Reflections on Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 20.

under which the entire world is pulled" (*MKZ* 6:308). Here, *mythos* opens onto the longitudinally open schema for the self-development of totality that we detailed in the previous chapter.

His schema remains heavily indebted to Sorel here, especially in its emphasis on a future-oriented present. For Sorel, future-directedness is ultimately grounded in the present, and more specifically, a present defined by action. Myths, Sorel writes, "must be judged as a means of acting on the present;"[16] but as J.R. Jennings points out, for human beings to act on the present in Sorel's framework, they "needed in some way to 'frame' the future, to possess a 'picture' of the coming battle and their victory."[17] And so, future and present are brought together in *mythos* such that, in the words of Miki, "the future does not mean some far away thing, it is a future consumed by the present, or rather, that has been particularly accented by the future" (*MKZ* 6:311).

The proverbial closeness of *mythos*, as it were, is related to its third point of differentiation from *doxa*: that "*mythos* is not born from representations as one form of *logos* consciousness possessed by higher-order thinking" (*MKZ* 6:310–311). While *doxa*, as common sense, informs the way in which we operate on higher-order discursive levels, thus facilitating its dogmatic appropriation in support of the present ordering of *logos*, *mythos* instead takes "intuition and *répresentations* as its characteristic distinctiveness" (*MKZ* 6:309). Following Sorel, Miki traces *mythos* to the work of Giambatista Vico, and his anti-Cartesian "new science" of "poetic wisdom." Here, Miki distinguishes *mythos* from the rational ordering of *logos*, claiming that "the origin of *mythos* is *pathos*" (*MKZ* 6:310). Though Miki is surprisingly unforthcoming about this concept of *pathos*, the references to Sorel and Vico identify it as a

[16] Sorel, *Reflections on Violence*, 116.

[17] J.R. Jennings, *Georges Sorel: The Character and Development of his Thought* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1985), 134.

broadly emotive, affective, and sensual mode of experience that escapes the dominant ordering of rational *logos*.

Miki clarifies this point in contradistinction from *mythos* as it is adulterated by *logos*: "when *logos* is connected to *mythos* to become utopia," he argues, "*mythos* becomes *mythology*." In this sense "utopia is nothing but *mytho-logie*;" a *mythos* "connected with a certain *logos* and theory"—a mere "product of intellectual labor" (*MKZ* 6:310).[18] Utopia and mythology play a role equivalent to dogma in the *doxastic* form, but whereas dogma eternalizes the past irrespective of the present, utopia and mythology eternalize the future irrespective of the present. This was Marx and Engels's diagnosis of the "*moderne Mythologie*" of utopian socialism—with "the goddesses of 'justice, liberty, equality,' *etc.*" guiding absolute "independent of space, time and the historical development of humans" (*MKZ* 6:306). The issue is that, when *mythos* is connected with *logos* in the form of mythology, it drains the efficacy out of its *pathos* elements such that these *répresentations* lose their affective inspiration to convey the need for social change, and thus their ability to engender action (*MKZ* 6:311).

To inspire change in the *doxastic* configuration of common sense we cannot reside in the domain of *logos* knowledge. *Logos* qua intelligibility is charted territory—mapped out within the needs of the dominant class. Instead, we must immerse ourselves in *répresentations* that are, in the words of Melissa Anne-Marie Curley, "'saturated' with emotional and kinetic elements."[19] Bringing in the ternary structure from Miki's Marxist anthropology, perhaps we can say *mythos* escapes the dominant ordering of *logos* because it refuses to take its anthropological and

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[18] See: Sorel, *Reflections on Violence*, 28.

[19] Melissa Anne-Marie Curley, "Miki Kiyoshi: Marxism, Humanism, and the Power of Imagination," in *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 452. Curley is working on Miki's later work on *mythos*, but her analysis holds for Miki's early work as well.

ideological presuppositions as its starting point; instead, submerging beneath the discursive orderings of *logos* within a pre-discursive logic of affect and feeling. This allows it to short-circuit the normal connections of common sense and enhance the intensive affect into a directly *felt* call to *action*. While in *doxa*, we normally "speak together within what has already been spoken," *mythos* is "an expression of the will to act," "an expression of the conviction of a social collective through the language of movement" (*MKZ* 6:311). As Uchida has it, "*mythos* is above all a timely and revolutionary consciousness that inquires as to what to do in the here and now, and that inspires action."[20] This inspiration functions as a kind of shock to common sense, pushing society as a whole to self-fashion itself in the direction of change and transformation.

Part 3: From *Logos* and *Pathos* to the Philosophy of History

And so equilibrium and change broadly chart two tendencies within the self-development of society as a whole—the stasis of *doxa* via *logos* versus the novelty of *mythos* via *pathos*. In the second essay of *Social Sciences*, "Social Science and the Theory of Ideology" (*Shakai kagaku to ideorogi-ron* 社会科学とイデオロギー論), Miki maps these onto the mother of all divisions, charting *logos* onto objectivity and *pathos* onto subjectivity as the two general tendencies structuring the self-formation of the whole of society.[21] He adds to this the language of "existence" (*sonzai* 存在) and "fact" (*jijitsu* 事実), which he imports from his *Philosophy of History* (*Rekishi tetsugaku* 歴史哲学)—released the same day as volume one of *Social Sciences*.

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[20] Uchida Hiroshi, "Miki Kiyoshi 'kōsō-ryoku no ronri' no mondaizō keisei katei ronri kōzō," *Senshū keizaigaku ronshū* 43, no. 3 (2009), 10.

[21] Though Miki had originally written the article around May 1931, he added a sixth section on *pathos* and *logos* for its April 1932 publication.

"Any subject that does not belong to the order of the object…we will call a 'fact' in distinction from the objectivity that we call 'existence.'" (*MKZ* 6:354–355). And so we are presented with two opposing tendencies for self-development—objectivity, *logos*, and existence; subjectivity, *pathos*, and fact.

To be clear, these tendencies are not binaries; Miki remains committed to totality: "as Marx thought, this opposition is a dialectical opposition, and therefore a dialectical unity, such that the process of (inter)*act*ion between man and nature [or society] can, as totality, be grasped as a 'self-transformation' *Selbstveränderung*" (*MKZ* 6:83). In other words, while fact and existence, *pathos* and *logos* can be abstracted out according to the antipodes of subject and object in theory, in actuality they are very much connected as developmental trajectories of society as one whole or totality.

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Miki presents this account of the "self-transformation" of history and society as "one totality" via a further critique of Nishida's theory of holistic development. Nishida had modified his position in the intervening year-plus between Tanabe's critique in May 1930 and Miki's social scientific and historical critiques here (first published in July and December of 1931). He had done so, moreover, in line with many of Miki's critiques in "Organicism and Dialectics"—demonstrating a new found emphasis on the "dynamism" of a "dialectical movement" instituted via the "fundamental contradiction" of reality. But Miki either did not read or was not interested in these works and their overwhelming concern with consciousness. He instead couches his critique again in the language of the "acting" (*hataraku mono*)—a reference to Nishida's 1927 collection containing "Expressive Activity."

Recall that, for Nishida, the "acted upon must itself act. Insofar as these two things mutually inter*act*, both lose their quality of independence, and are unified according to a single force." Miki broadly agrees with these sentiments—writing that that "humans act upon nature at the same time that they are acted upon by nature," and adds that the same holds for society, the historical world, and any "environment" within which we are enmeshed (*MKZ* 6:80). But unity alone is not enough. The concept of environment not only opens onto the co-determinative unity between subject and their environment; "the concept of the environment is born from the difference in order of subjective fact and objective existence" (*MKZ* 6:84). Here, co-determinative unity entails an irreducible difference in order between subject and object, fact and existence. Miki writes: "in even talking of unity as subject=object, to understand this kind of unity as subject=object, the subject and object must already be distinguished in some way. Accordingly, the subject must be thought of as in some way not belonging to the order of the object" (*MKZ* 6:354).

This allows Miki to offer to a new understanding of totality in line with these two tendencies of self-development. Subject and object, fact and existence are both different at the same time that they are connected. Perhaps this is clearest regarding fact, which Miki, following the work of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, links to the German term "*tatsache*." *Tatsache* is here analyzed as a thing (*mono* もの; *sache*) that acts (*kōi suru* 行為する; *tat*) on other things (*mono*; *sache*). Here, act and thing are meant to be crystallizations of subjectivity and objectivity; in linking fact to *tatsache*, Miki is both committing himself to mutual determination and to an irreducible difference between subject and object: fact "inevitably already binds itself to history as existence…When we act, we are always binding ourselves to an existence that is already discovered there" (*MKZ* 6:140).

But this does not mean that the two are co-primordial. Subject and object do “not confront each other with equal force; in this contradiction one side is ultimately fundamental” (*MKZ* 6:96). Here we find a further engagement with Nishida’s theory of acting and being acted upon. Extending his earlier critiques of organicism and idealism, Miki claims that Nishida privileges the reproductive stasis found in expressive activity, and thus the preservation of objective elements (remember: Athens, Carthage, and Rome). He writes: “The fact that the object acts as an object cannot be understood as practice, and this means just saying an ‘acting thing’ does not sufficiently stipulate the concept of subjectivity” (*MKZ* 6:354).

Against the objective bias governing Nishida’s theory of totality, Miki argues that objective presupposes subjective, existence presupposes fact: “The opposition between history as existence and history as fact is the confrontation between existence and the basis for existence.” Here, “history as fact can be thought of as the act of making history itself, and against this history as existence is the history that has been made.” For Miki, fact is originary as an act (*sache*) that produces or *makes* this existence: “Making is originary for the made; if there is no making then there is no made. In this sense, history as fact precedes history as existence” (*MKZ* 6:26–27). And so fact is the primordial fact—the subjective is foundational for the entire “made” realm of objective existence.

This language of made and making, acted and acting helps us to situate these two tendencies—subjectivity and objectivity, fact and existence—within the framework of holistic development. As in his work on Marxism, the self-development of totality is here dialectical: “the making and the made confront each other; since the made takes a fixed and limited form, it opposes the making as its other as soon as it is made;” “history as existence is, on one side, the realization of history as fact, and on the other, its negation” (*MKZ* 6:26–27). But the difference in

his work here is that the subjective is more openly privileged, and thus the dialectical self-formative development of totality is articulated with subject, making, and fact as its basis. Miki writes:

> Such unity in confrontation and confrontation in unity is determined dialectically, and so all actual things are dialectical. History as fact realizes itself in history as existence, as something that confronts it. In this case, it is through its connection to the past of history as existence that it determines itself. Without all of this, it would be unable to determine itself of itself (*MKZ* 6:94).

And so, fact here is the fact of the self-development of totality. The privileging of fact as both *united with* yet *different from* existence means that while fact holistically self-determines itself, it always does so out of a fixed world of meaning, and so its capacity for self-development is always structured within the horizons of objective existence.

The Social Subject

But this begs the question: how are these two tendencies of holistic development, fact and existence, subject and object, related? Miki answers this with reference to the body—another point indicating Miki's integration of the individual subject into his analysis of the development of society qua totality, and thus his departure away from a strictly decentered account.

Miki articulates the body as the locus of an interior and exterior horizon, a site of commonality by which subject and object, self and environment, relate and determine each other. He again has the work of Marx in mind here: "it is because we are bodily and sensual that human activity is necessarily connected to the existence of nature, or nature as existence" (*MKZ* 6:34). Here, sensuality not only makes us receptive to objects in the world, it also makes it possible for us to be active and practical—to actively manipulate things in the world.

While Miki explicitly cites Marx's work to get at the bidirectional nature of holistic activity, his understanding is also linked to an increasing interest in the work of Maine de Biran by Japanese scholars in the 1930s, as Fujita Masakatsu notes.[22] A key moment in this de Biran boom is Nishida's April 1931 "Anthropology" (*Ningengaku* 人間学), written just prior to Miki's work here:

> Although it is true that human being is human being only due to its interiority, and in this sense we have many things to learn from Maine de Biran who takes as his point of departure *homo interior*, on the other hand, human being exists not only in himself, but also in the flesh. Moreover, human being exists not only in the flesh, but also in society, and not only in society, but also in history. We human beings cannot be understood merely from the interior. Anthropology must, therefore, be approached from both directions (*NKZ* 12:25).[23]

For Miki too, "the flesh" of the body is both interior and exterior—the body functions as the medium by which the subject works on things, and the environment works on the self; it is through the body that humans both act upon and are acted upon by nature. As such, "the body is not simply natural existence…it is at the same time nature as fact" (*MKZ* 6:34).

But, Miki clarifies, "the body, is not simply the individual body (*kojinteki shintai* 個人的身体); from another direction, we should also call it a social body" (*shakaiteki shintai* 社会的身体) (*MKZ* 6:35). He uses the term social body in two senses—each of which amounts to the movement from singularity qua complexity and complexity qua singularity discussed in chapter 1. First, he uses it to argue that "society can be understood as the environment of individuals"

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[22] Fujita Masakatsu, "Logos and Pathos: Miki Kiyoshi's Logic of the Imagination," in *Japanese and Continental Philosophy: Conversations with the Kyoto School*, ed. Bret Davis, Brian Schroeder, and Jason Wirth (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 310. Miki will cite Biran in later works on anthropology, *pathos,* and *mythos*.

[23] Translation by: Bret Davis, with Moritsu Ryū and Takehana Yōsuke. See: Ibid, 310.

(*MKZ* 6:80). In other words, society is of a different order than the individual—a kind of meaningful, holistic background environment of *existence* that the individual finds pre-*made* in, for instance, the social customs and norms of *doxa*. And so "it is because humans possess a social body that social existence is made, and that the entirety of their activity is necessarily connected to history as existence" (*MKZ* 6:36). In this understanding, the social body is the medium by which individual, as "subjective fact" (*shutaiteki jijitsu* 主体的事実), is connected to social existence, and thus is able to form and reform, make and remake, this existence.

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But Miki also uses the term social body to rearticulate society itself as a "social fact" (*shakaiteki jijitsu* 社会的事実). This use is crucial to our understanding of society as self-developing totality. Here, society is not simply the latitudinal surrounding environment that determines fact; rather society itself is subjective fact: "culture is not frozen and fixed, but rather it achieves movement in its pursuit of the development of life" (*MKZ* 6:100). Miki's second claim is that society, as totality, is a subject in the same sense that the individual is a subject.

To be clear, Miki's understanding of subjectivity here is divorced from conception of the ego and the self, and his articulation of the social body as subjective fact is meant in distinction from those forms of "nationalism, ethno-culturalism, cosmopolitanism, and so forth" that aim to reformulate the nation as a being (*MKZ* 6:36–37).[24]

To understand the way in which society, as totality, is a subjective fact, and more broadly to understand this language of social fact, we have to further focus Miki's conception of subjectivity. He writes:

[24] To this end, Miki offers a critique of Watsuji's later theory of climate on the grounds of totality. Unfortunately, we do not have space to develop his argument here.

> We ourselves have used the language of "subjective fact" and "objective existence." But we must be aware that the language of subjective and objective carry historical baggage. For example, even if it is said that fact is subjective (*shukanteki* 主観的), this is certainly not the epistemic subject (*shukanteki*) in the sense of being individualistic and unreal; in this sense it is rather objective. Alternately, facts are not considered to be an epistemic subject (*shukanteki*) because they do not carry the sense of "thing" (*mono*). In this sense, they are rather objective. What is called fact is an action that directly carries a sense of thing. Accordingly, we have intentionally avoided the term epistemic subject and intentionally used the term practical subject (*shutaiteki* 主体的) (*MKZ* 6:88–89).

He also notes:

> The old metaphysics understood existence as the basis of variable phenomena, and so considered that which transcended it to be constant and unchanging; against this, fact itself is true movement, and existence can be said to be fixed on one side as the negation of fact. The movement and development of existence should primordially be seen as based on the movement and development of fact (*MKZ* 6:25).

It is natural, Miki says, that "if history as fact is understood to be a mere act, the question of what is the subject of this action will arise" (*MKZ* 6:33–34). But while it is the mistake of the old metaphysics of substance to conflate the subject with the transcendental ego or permanent self, there is no error in its quest to find a subject underlying existence. Following Hegel, Miki claims that "the fundamental proposition that the basis of existence cannot also belong to the order of existence means that it is necessary to grasp the basis of existence as 'subject'" (*MKZ* 6:69). And so, the challenge here is to articulate a conception of subjectivity that can form the basis of existence in an ontology of dialectical self-development. Liberated from the eternal dictates of substance and self, Miki formulates the subject in the sense of *shutai*, the practical subject, simply as an action that is bound to existence. Subjectivity, within an ontology of self-active totality, is "not the object presupposing action, nor the action presupposing the object, but the fact that action and object are one" totality in the sense of *tatsache* or fact (*MKZ* 6:34). Tobita renders this point well: "Whereas traditional ontology understands the basis of existence as a

different existence that is already there and does not move—as, say, essence or idea, or as some objective substance—the subject is here neither an existence nor an object, it is an act that is forever moving in development, and that is determined as that which creates and recreates history."[25] Subjectivity defined in this manner opens itself beyond the ego-subject of the individual to totality. Any fact of self-development here is subjective; "subjective fact itself is objective, existential, and supra-individual" (*MKZ* 6:69). And so, when Miki refers to society as a subjective fact, he means that society, as totality, self-develops itself of itself, and, in this process, makes history. Here, the development of society, as a whole, is subjective fact, and its past forms constitute the horizon of objective existence from which holistic development takes place.

Weaving the Strands

We can return to *doxa* and *mythos* with this subjective understanding of social fact in mind. First, let's recall their alignment—objectivity, *logos*, and existence versus subjectivity, *pathos*, and fact. Second, remember that these two tendencies interact within a processual ontology of holistic development. And third, that it is the subjective side that is primordial in development. As a subjective fact, society as a whole is always transforming itself of itself. But just as history as fact always develops itself out of history as existence, social fact self-develops out of social existence, in the phenomenological sense of an always, already familiar background world of things with objective meaning. Miki writes: "History begins with the birth of the we itself, of consciousness itself. Because even what is called we, or consciousness, is born or made, it can be

[25] Tobita Maiko, "Miki Kiyoshi ni okeru shakai henkaku no tame no shutai keisei no kadai: 'rekishi tetsugaku' (1932) no jiki o chūshin ni," *Waseda seiji kōhō kenkyū* 100 (2012): 69.

understood as existence. In this way we make ourselves and give birth to consciousness, and so we can certainly be called fact. We are forever in the process of being made anew" (*MKZ* 6:71). Our social body is not only made but constantly negates the made world of social existence as it makes itself into the future. Accordingly, the self-development of social world is always at least minimally transformative, involved in the production of new social forms according to its dialectical, self-movement.

But again, this negative process of social development is a matter of degree. Here, *doxa* and *mythos* mark two broad directions by which society self-develops itself in *fact*, out of *existence*: objective and subjective, *logos* and *pathos*. The significance of these two concepts, *doxa* and *mythos*, lie in their ability to focus social equilibrium and transformation within this self-formative social whole. In *doxa*, society develops itself in the direction of *logos*, proceeding objectively within an already "fixed orientation, and therefore from within a fixed public sphere" (*MKZ* 3:216). Self-formation in this objective direction is comparatively static, unfolding according to the dictates of its objective and *logos* elements and emphasizing reproduction and equilibrium. Here, *doxa* marks an exceedingly restricted conception of development and making, one that privileges the recapitulation and rearticulation of the social body of existence: "history as existence is ultimately confrontational with history as fact, and so the former transforms into a fetter on the latter" (*MKZ* 6:94–95). And since this making is constrained within the horizons of objectivity, it largely functions in terms of reproduction. The customary, repetitive function of *doxa* functions disciplinarily to reproduce and maintain common sense, constraining the social development of fact within the horizons of objective existence, and longitudinally preserving the extant social configuration into the future. Consequently, in *doxa*, "the culture of the past is resurrected" (*MKZ* 6:100–101). In other words, *doxastic* making broadly guides holistic

development in line with existence, largely reproducing past *logos* orderings with a minimally creative interpretation.

Contrarily in *mythos*, society, as totality, develops itself in the direction of *pathos*, proceeding subjectively through the novelty of affect. While the social formulation of *pathos* is perhaps less intuitively grasped than the shared meaning of *logos*, Miki is clear that *pathos* can be shared socially: "*Leidenschaft* joins with the individual body, *pathos* joins with the social body" (*MKZ* 6:41). When *pathos* governs the whole of the social body, self-development is comparatively novel, refusing *logos* as its source of generation and emphasizing social revolution and change. Here, "history as fact destroys the past form of existence and develops a new form of existence" (*MKZ* 6:94). This is not to say that *mythos* is completely novel. Miki is careful to distinguish development from progress (*shinpo* 進歩): "progress means the endless purge of the old and creation of the new; in this way, it does not consider the internal relation that the history of the present has with the history of the past" (*MKZ* 6:132). In short, such self-development is always revolutionary vis-à-vis social existence, and thus the extant social order. Nevertheless, the difference from *doxa* lies in the fact that *mythos*, Uchida notes, "aims to give birth and cultivate new forms of social intelligence."[26] That is, *mythos* itself is the making and production of new social configurations of totality—not merely the reproduction of social order. And so, Fujita remarks, *mythos* is the "activity of portraying, or quite literally 'drawing out' (*egakidasu* 描き出す), a new world (reality) on top of the natural world," and, we can add, the natural*ized* world.[27]

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[26] Uchida, "Miki kiyoshi 'kōsō-ryoku no ronri,'" 10.

[27] Fujita, "Logos and Pathos," 316.

Thus, Miki began thinking more rigorously about the subject of social revolution, about how to engender social change, and about the ways in which subjects within society can generate the self-development of society and effect transformation. The trick of the old science was to convince people that a given *doxastic* order was eternal, marking the development of society in terms of reproduction. The new sciences, on the other hand, recognize that the contradictions of society are a necessary moment of social development, and so social transformation is inevitable. While the old sciences immerse themselves in *logos* to justify *doxa*, the new sciences attend to *pathos* as it is involved in bringing forth a *mythos* consciousness of change. The goal is to mobilize new relations of affect and action, and bring about a novel social ordering that upsets the dominant–dominated relation. In doing so, the aim is to unite people into a revolutionary subject capable of engendering transformation in the social totality, of bringing forth the development of society of itself.

Part 4: Nishida and Totality as Absolutely Contradictory Self-Identity

Regardless of the soundness or precision of Miki, Tanabe, and Tosaka's charges against Nishida philosophy—a matter still debated today—their critiques and original developments in philosophy exerted great force on Nishida's thinking. The bulk of Nishida's major philosophical production across the 1930s and '40s can be productively read as engagements with the writings of these figures over the issue of totality, and especially the historically formative process by which society as totality develops itself forward. Internalizing the concepts of contradiction and discontinuity from Miki's decentered criticisms in the late '20s, as well as his objectivist criticisms in the *Philosophy of History*, Nishida, like Miki from this period, began to refashion

his concept of totality with the individual subject as an important locus of discontinuity and development.

Active-Intuition and the Embodied Self as the Site of Subject–Object Holistic Unity

The body is a useful starting point first, because Miki's work engages Nishida in this regard; and second, because, as we have seen for Miki, the body binds together fact and existence, subject and object, thus opening onto his critique of the objective bias that purportedly structures Nishida philosophy. As with Miki, we can discern two levels of analysis in Nishida's discussion of the body: "our embodied self" and "the historical body."

From the standpoint of our embodied self, the perspectival equivalent of the individual body in Miki, Nishida's develops a series of concepts to expand on his middle period analysis of the supraconscious self as the locus of self–world, subject–object relationality. Key here are terms like the "active-self" (*kōiteki jiko* 行為的自己), "active-expression" (*kōiteki hyōgen* 行為的表現), and, most frequent and lasting, "active-intuition" (*kōiteki chokkan* 行為的直観). Active-intuition functions, to borrow James Heisig's expressions, as a fundamental inter-active, inter-intuitive relational activity at the base of experience.[28] As *relational* activity this is not simply unity—as Miki charges of Nishida's 1927 account of activity. But neither is it the traditional dichotomous rendering of subject and object. As a more fundamental site of co-determinative relational activity, active-intuition makes possible both an *active* subject grasping and molding more passive objects in the world and an *intuiting* subject that becomes passive in the face of more active objects in the world. In active-intuition, my activity necessarily entails

[28] Heisig, *Philosophers of* Nothingness, 55.

the activity of the thing, and the activity of the thing necessarily entails my activity such that, for instance, "even passivity is a form of activity" (*NKZ* 5:276). Here, the world flows against the subject and the subject flows against the world to the extent that action is always being acted upon—a bidirectional activity in which we form and determine objects as we are formed and determined by objects. And so, without ignoring or erasing subject and object, Nishida emphasizes mutual mediation and co-determination—the claim being that it is only in and through its connection with the other that each expresses itself as itself.

Mine Hideki offers a helpful explanation of our embodied self as engaged in active-intuition with reference to a sculptor carving a stone statue:

> once work begins and they engrave their chisel into the rock, there is no gap between the concept that they have drawn out in their head beforehand and the movement of their hand. Form gradually appears in the carving of the marble, with each form evoking what follows, and each movement of the hand guiding what follows. The force of the chisel regulates itself in accordance with each feeling of texture and touch…Though new challenges arise one after the other, the hand never stops and the work progresses. Work is suspended only when something obstructs this operation, or when it is felt necessary to review the work as a whole.[29]

The back and forth between the sculptor's chisel and the stone is meant to exemplify the bidirectional back and forth constitutive of active-intuition. The sculptor and stone are not simply collapsed together in active-intuition; rather, the chisel moves with and against the stubborn resistance of the rock in a never-ending back and forth between activity and passivity.

Perhaps this can be further clarified with reference to another art form, pottery. Imagine a scene in which a potter is throwing a lump of clay. The movement of the potter's hands do not simply act upon and mold the clay, but develop in relation with the clay's spinning on the

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[29] Mine, *Nishida tetsugaku to Tanabe tetsugaku no taiketsu*, 69. The sculptor–stone example was initially provided by Nishida.

potter's wheel. Here, the activity and form of the clay likewise adapt and develop in relation to the movement of the potter's hand. And so neither the potter's hands nor the clay spinning on the potter's wheel can be referred to sheerly in terms of activity or passivity, and thus there is no clean division between subject and object. As Itabashi puts it more generally, "my activity enters into what can be termed the activity of the object, and the activity of the object becomes my activity such that the activity of the object and my activity are directly one activity."[30] The takeaway is that, for Nishida, our primordial mode of being in the world lies in mutual mediation and determination, in the locus of acting–acted. And so, both the movements of the potter's hand and the spinning of the clay on the potter's wheel join together as active qua passive and passive qua active—mediating and determining the movement of each other and thereby directly joining together as a holistically unified activity prior to any division.

The Historical Body as Latitudinal Totality

Beyond the register of subject and object, active-intuition gestures to the co-determinative intersection of subject and environment, of subject and social-historical world. This brings us to the second level of the body—the historical body, the equivalent of the social body in Miki. We will recall that the term social body was used in a twofold sense in Miki's work: with regard to society as the environment of individuals as latitudinal totality, and to society itself as longitudinal totality or social fact. Both levels are likewise present in Nishida's analysis.

We can begin with the first—the historical body as the environment of individuals. In "I and Thou" (*Watashi to nanji* 私と汝), written in July 1932 shortly after Tanabe and Miki's

[30] Itabashi Yūjin, *Rekishiteki genjitsu to Nishida Kitarō tetsugaku* (Tōkyō: Hōsei daigaku shuppan kyoku, 2008), 21.

criticisms, Nishida goes to great lengths to refashion his theory of expression as an environmental determinant within this world of actuality. He again takes up the problem of mutual knowledge, recognition, and communication, but grounds it differently:

> That which determines my consciousness must be that which determines your consciousness. And that which determines your consciousness must be that which determines my consciousness. You and I are determined by the same principle. As stated, it is by possessing a body that you and I both belong to the world of matter, and it can be said that my voice reaches your ear as waves of air and thereby transmits the content of my consciousness to you. But what transmits the content of my consciousness to you is not only waves of air, the waves of air must be an expression of the content of my consciousness, they must be language. Insofar as you and I determine the present from the future and thus act, the environment that encircles us must be thought of as not simply as the world of matter, but as an expressive world. What is thought of as matter is not only matter but must carry a sense of social-historical reality…You and I do not know each other materially, through waves of air, we know each other through language (*NKZ* 5:290).

Though Nishida remains eager to dispel the materialist account of communication, this differs from his 1925 work insofar as the "expressive world" is not sequestered within some objectively-real-yet-not-actual world of history and meaning, but formulated directly as the socio-historical environment within this world of actuality. Nishida likens this to Marxist historical materialism: "Marx's commodity is not simply a material substance, but must rather be a historical fact that expressively determines itself of itself" (*NKZ* 5:110; *HT* 90, mod). Here, expression is still an objective determination of the subject, but determinative from within the socio-historical world.

But this is not to say that he is again guilty of the objective bias that Miki charges above. This is because Nishida views the relationship between subject and socio-historical environment or world, individual and totality, in the same terms as subject and object—co-determination and co-constitution. Thus Nishida writes: "the world of activity can be thought of as the world of dialectical movement in which the environment determines the individual and the individual

determines the environment" (*NKZ* 5:301). Here, "the individual is enveloped and determined by the environment at the same time that it is not determined by the environment, and, on the contrary, determines the environment" (*NKZ* 5:270). Put plainly, Nishida's claim is that while we, as historical beings, are conditioned by the social, historical, and natural environment that we grew up in, we also retain the ability to influence and change the environment through our actions. Thus we are not just acted and acting, we are formed and forming, made and making in a co-determinatively unified process together with the social and historical world as one totality. Nishida writes: "When things are mutually independent yet bond with each other, then each can be thought to contain the sense of totality" (*NKZ* 7:104; *HT* 84).

And so, it is through active-intuition that we participate in the self-formation of the world, as it is through active-intuition that the world participates in our own formation. The idea is that, because the primordial connectedness of active-intuition functions as the transcendental condition for any possible subject–object or self–world relation, and thus because the self-expression of both the subject and the environment is always active qua passive and passive qua active, subject and historical world are always already latitudinally joined together as a singularly unified whole.

Historical Body as Longitudinal Totality

This brings us to our second sense—the historical body as wrapped up in the historically formative process by which the social-historical world longitudinally develops itself as one totality. Using terminology that will be unpacked below, Nishida articulates the "holistic, unified self-determination of the world in the contradictory self-identity of the holistic one and the individual many" (*NKZ* 9:263). In brief, the idea is that, just as in *Inquiry*, where activity was

introduced to capture the dynamic structure of the entirety of the field itself as totality, Nishida's theory of active-intuition imbues the totality of the social and historical body with a robustly longitudinal sense to denote the "holistic, unified self-determination of the world."

To begin in broad strokes, Nishida distinguishes his work from rectilinear theories of time, which conceive of the historical past as a stream that determines the present into the future. Instead, he emphasizes the dynamic "self-determination" (*jiko gentei* 自己限定) of the present of the social-historical world according to a logic of "historical production" (*rekishiteki seisan* 歴史的生産) or "*poiesis*" (*poie-shisu* ポイエーシス). Here, the historical world operates not merely as a latitudinal horizon surrounding the self, nor simply as the storehouse of past experience; rather, it is integrated into the activity of the present in its movement of self-formation. This temporal dynamic self-determinative movement, moreover, is understood as an irreversible, sequential transition of moments moving "from the made to the making" (*tsukuraretamono kara tsukurumono e* 作られたものから作るものへ) in which the present self-determines itself, affirming itself into the future through its negation of the historical past.

This structure can be brought into relief by focusing it in "temporal-spatial and spatial-temporal" terms (*NKZ* 8:13, 129). Let's begin on the spatial-temporal level. Spatially, as we saw above, active-intuition unifies subjects and objects, self and world together within a latitudinally unified whole. From the spatial-temporal perspective, this unified whole is what determines itself in the present, in the movement from the "made to the making." The idea is that, at the same time that subject and object, self and environment are spatially situated as fundamentally both distinct and unified within one dialectically self-identical realm of active-intuition, they are also temporally singular yet connected within the dynamic unfolding of totality. As the many different subjects and objects of the world instantly determine themselves in the move to the

making, this whole simultaneously determines itself, uniting them together into a new totality. To be clear, "this is neither simply a movement from the individualistic many (*kobutsuteki ta* 個物的多)," and thus not a reduction of the whole into the many, "nor from the holistic one (*zentaiteki ichi* 全体的一)" and thus not a reduction of many into the one of latitudinal totality (*NKZ* 9:248). Instead, this is the simultaneous recognition of individuality and totality, of self and world, of many and one as together comprising the holistic development of the social historical world. Thus Nishida continues: "The world of actuality determines itself as the contradictory self-identity of the holistic one and the individualistic many; in short, the subject forms the environment as the environment forms the subject and, at bottom, the world forms itself in the contradictory identity of subject and environment" (*NKZ* 9:261).

But we have to be careful here. Despite this language of contradiction and dialectics, the mutually determinative process of active-intuition has sometimes been mistaken as a kind of romantic, harmonious give and take that does not fundamentally differ from Nishida's earlier analysis in *Inquiry*. If interpreted in this way, the spatial-temporal framework of totality could plausibly be read as an extension of the earlier centered account—as Abe Masao and Christopher Ives almost suggest in their claim that "the idea of pure experience…leads eventually to [Nishida's] notion of contradictory self-identity" (*AIT* 56). But mutual determination is not simply harmony; in the above subject–object discussion of active-intuition as acted–acting, as well as its accompanying self–world intersection of formed–forming and made–making, *negativity* (*hiteisei* 否定性) is the medium by which the mutually *contradictory* (*mujunteki* 矛盾的) are unified together within the single activity of totality.

This has important ramifications for Nishida's schema of longitudinal development. As opposed to his earlier centered account, in which the language of many and one gesture towards

a reciprocal movement together, Nishida here stresses the mutually negative relation between the many and the one as the process by which holistic activity unfolds—a conceptual development very much in line with the Miki's decentered criticisms. And so, on the spatial-temporal level, we have what Nishida now terms the "contradictory identification of the many and the one" (*ta to ichi to ga mujunteki jikodōitsu* 多と一とが矛盾的自己同一). as the grounds for the longitudinal development of totality. We find a nice presentation in one of Nishida's more pithy statements: "The subject forms the environment just as the environment forms the subject, and the world of historical causality that moves from the made to the making must necessarily be the world of the contradictory self-identity of the many and the one" (*NKZ* 9:246).

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This emphasis on negation will further shine through if we pursue the longitudinal self-development of totality from the temporal-spatial standpoint. As discussed above, Nishida articulates the historical process as a sequential transition of successive moments in the movement from the made to the making. Despite history *explicitly* operating as the hallmark of his work from the '30s, the radicality of this view somewhat paradoxically comes to the fore through its emphasis on the present and the notion of negation therein. Privileging the present, and later the "absolute present" (*zettai no genzai* 絶対の現在), Nishida claims that the activity of the present moment "creatively" unfolds as self-determination—a "diffusion" of novelty in the present moment. This is possible inasmuch as, in this temporal schema, active-intuition is conceptualized in terms of the "affirmation of absolute negation" (*zettai hitei no kōtei* 絶対否定の肯定); that is, insofar as the activity of the absolute present unfolds and determines itself by negating and transcending the past, affirming itself into the present moment. This self-determinative movement of totality is termed "absolute" since this creative diffusion is

conditioned by the negation of the past, and thus the rectilinear conception of time. This movement is termed "diffusion" because it is an unfolding of the one into the many within the framework of the contradictory identity of opposites. Here, the disconnected, singular moment arranges the scattered many within a unified activity of self-determination in the transition from the made to the making, while simultaneously negating this unity, dispersing this unity into the many, and thereby crystallizing the contradictory identity of the many and the one as the "perishing and becoming of each moment" (*NKZ* 6:250). Finally, this is termed "creative" as it is the negation of the present moment into the future that allows for the novel self-developing activity of the present moment.

So, we are presented with a holistic schema of development in which space is the medium by which disconnected many are unified into one moment (the spatial-temporal), and in which time is the medium by which this one whole self-determines itself in a process of diffusion into the many in the formation of the new moment (the temporal-spatial).

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Yet, despite this whole perishing and becoming in each moment, activity in the present moment is not completely isolated from past and future. In fact, it is quite the opposite, as Nishida interprets historical formation as a "continuity of discontinuity" (*hirenzoku no renzoku* 非連続の連続), stressing the "simultaneous existence" (*dōji sonzai* 同時存在) of past and future in the present moment. The idea is that, as the activity of the present moment articulates itself into existence, it simultaneously negates itself out of existence, perishing into the past; as it sinks into the past through the movement of negation, the modified historical body upon which the past is inscribed conditions the simultaneous self-determinative activity of the present, structuring the new formation of the present.

But to be clear, this does not collapse past and future into the present. Responding to charges of stillness, emanation, and expressivism by Tanabe and Miki, Nishida goes to great lengths to preserve the distinct temporal modalities of past, present, and future without giving up his present-focus. To this end, he refashions his 1925 concept of the "eternal present" into what he now terms the "eternal now" (*eien no ima* 永遠の今). Much like the eternal present, the eternal now envelops the absolute present. If we again formulate the determination of the present according to a two-dimensional coordinate system, and conceive of it as a horizontal movement from the made to the making, then the eternal now stands vertical, making robust what would otherwise be a flat, linear unfolding (*NKZ* 9:483). This vertical expansion allows for two movements. First, in this upward expansion of the horizontal present moment, the eternal now undercuts any universal standpoint for temporality, dispersing the present moment into the many, and therefore into a multitude of present moments, of temporal movements. This entails that, as Masato Ishida notes, "no perspective fathoms the 'absolute depth' of the past—there is no universal method to determine whether a past occasion belongs to a relatively 'immediate' past or a 'remote' past."[31] Second, past and future are integrated into the determinative-forming of the many present moments through this vertical axis. This means that the historical body, as mentioned above, operates both as the storehouse of the past and is integrated into the present through the eternal now. In being integrated into the present, the historical body functions alongside future possibilities to constrain the horizons structuring the self-determinative activity of the instant. As Jacynthe Tremblay remarks, "the present thus appears as the center in which the past has already passed and simultaneously has not yet passed, and in which the future has

[31] Masato Ishida, "The Sense of Symmetry: Comparative Reflections on Whitehead, Nishida, and Dōgen," *Process Studies* 43, no. 1 (2014): 11.

not yet arrived, although it appears there already."[32] In Nishida's own words: "The relation between past, present, and future is established with the present at its center, directly joining together with the past via memory as it anticipates what is yet to come" (*NKZ* 5:144).

To be clear, this constellation of temporal concepts—the self determination of the present, the eternal now, and the continuity of discontinuity—differs qualitatively, and therefore diagrammatically, from his idea of the suspended or eternal present found in the '20s (and thus from the account of expressivity found therein). The eternal now is not situated topologically in an objectively-real-yet-not-actual conic structure that extends downwards; rather its upwards and downwards expansion is centered on its horizontal axis. This matters, as Higaki notes, because this vertical expansion of the eternal now is "not established in the 'yonder' vertical base, but is redrawn within the 'scene' of activity" in the "here and now."[33] Nishida himself draws this in the starkest of contrasts from his '20s work, and thus his earlier expressive account: "There must be a historical ground at the base of our historical operations...The historical subject does not simply proceed from the potential (*senzai* 潜在) to the manifest (*genzai* 顕在)," (*NKZ* 9:293).

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Perhaps we can clarify this "temporal-spatial and spatial-temporal" schema of holistic development by charting examples in line with "our embodied self" and "the historical body." For the former, let's quickly return to the pottery example. The potter and the clay on the wheel, subject and object—two distinct individuals that comprise the many—are grounded in a holistically unified activity such that, together, the two are active and passive with respect to

[32] Jacynthe Tremblay, "Hidden Aspects of Temporality from Nishida to Watsuji," *Frontiers of Japanese Philosophy* 2 (2008): 168.

[33] Higaki, *Nishida no seimei tetsugaku*, 185.

each other. In the back and forth determinative negotiation between the hands and the clay on the wheel, form emerges. There is no singularly active agent here but a holistically unified activity of co-determination between potter and clay in the present. We can connect this to the historical significance carried in the eternal now. As with the fluid finger movements of the skilled pianist, the fluid movement of the potter's hand is only possible because it is shrouded in both learned traditions and methods of production as well as in future anticipations. Likewise the potter's wheel bears a tradition in its historical body that provides it with its unique form and mode of operations into the immediate future. Without these historical traditions and futural anticipations, the mutual adjustment of forces that unfolds between potter and wheel in the present may be so overwhelmingly one-sided that, for instance, the potter's wheel takes on the role of sheer activity, and the potter could only strive to respond intuitively—without any hint of the active-. Here, the traditions, anticipations, know-how, and projections carried within the eternal now are not locked some place outside of or at the bottom of the present, but emerge within and make possible the practical activity by which the present, as a whole, self-determines itself.

Expressive Activity and the Self-Development of the Historical Body as Totality

Illustration of the latter historical body requires more space—as Nishida seems significantly more interested in fleshing out his theory of active-intuition on this holistic level, rather than simply making an experiential claim. We can begin by again returning to the issue of expression. We will recall from his '25 work that expression is holistic expression, and that expressive activity is not an activity of the subject, but a subject-producing activity. Nishida maintains this framework here, writing: "expressivity must be thought of in terms of an environmental determination against the self-determinations of the acting self" (*NKZ* 5:287). The difference is

that expressive activity is always of the social-historical world here. Thus, "environmental determination carries a sense of social determination" such that "what is thought of as the simple world of matter is a historical world, it is a plane of the expressive world" (*NKZ* 5:290). Or as he phrases this in his late '30s work, "the historical world is expressive formativity…expressive formativity is the activity of being born, giving birth, and creating...the reason that historically productive activity is historically productive activity resides in its expressive formativity" (*NKZ* 8:273; *HT* 156).

As in his '10s and '20s writing, Nishida continues to see artistic production and consumption as a privileged site for understanding expression.[34] In line with the historical focus of his later work, he does so with the self-development of the historical world in mind, claiming "artistic production must be clarified from the standpoint of the self-formation of the historical world as a historically formative activity" (*NKZ* 9:237). And so, Nishida here understands artistic expression as a form of expressive activity, and understands expressive activity from the standpoint of historical formation. He makes this point explicit:

> Perhaps the aesthetician Conrad Fiedler has thought most deeply about artistic production as an expressive forming activity… Long ago Fiedler articulated the relationship between subject and object, self and world, through the process of "expressive movement"…yet, Fiedler is too subjective, only thinking about expressive formation from the side of the conscious self…Against such a subjective position, I believe that we must understand expressive formation from the standpoint of the self-formation of the historical world (*NKZ* 9:235).

To this end, Nishida begins taking seriously the "style" theories found in late 19th and early 20th century art history, especially the work of Alois Riegl and Wilhelm Worringer. He references Riegl's "*Stillfragen* [*Problems of Style*], a teleological approach which recognizes the

[34] For more on Nishida and art, see: Kyle Peters, "Artistic Production and the Making of the Artist: Applying Nishida Kitarō to Discussions of Authorship," *Philosophy East and West* 68, no. 2 (2018): 477–496.

art work as the result of a definite and purposive, self-aware artistic will (*Kunstwollen*) which makes its way forward in the struggle with function, raw material, and technique."[35] Likely encountering these ideas in the work of his colleague Watsuji Tetsurō—and in particular Watsuji's late-'20s claim that Egyptian, Greek, and Japanese people form an artistic style within their own distinct climate—Nishida commits himself to a tight connection between artistic style and historical moment, even declaring that "what Worringer calls the 'fundamental transformations' grasped by art history can be directly swapped for the progress of historical reality" (*NKZ* 9:294). And this is because "styles in art are constituted as a reflection of the paradigms of historical and cultural life in the historical plane. What is normally thought to be beautiful is nothing more than a mold or model of a cultural species" (*NKZ* 9:272). And so here, artistic style is formulated as part of the historical body, articulating the horizon of affordances open to expression and thereby acting as a paradigm for artistic expression in the present.

But to be clear, this is not simply about the horizons of expression, which, if we took this in its everyday sense, might be confused with, say, higher-order thinking. More fundamentally, expression determines the horizons by which we perceive, conceive, and act in the world, and even more fundamentally, the formation of subjectivity itself. As we saw earlier in the above excerpt from the "I and Thou," "you and I are determined by the same principle." He continues in this same piece:

> That which determines I as I is that which determines you as you; you and I can be said to be born from the same environment and to exist within it as extensions of the same general. Even if we think in terms of generation, our self does not begin as an individual. Rather it begins from communal consciousness (*kyōydō ishiki* 共同意識), as can be seen in primitive peoples. So it can be said that the individual is born form society (*NKZ* 5:272).

[35] *NKZ* 9:235–236. This is a Riegl quote: Alois Riegl, *Die spätrömische Kunstindustrie* (Vienna: Druck und Verlag der kaiserlich-königlichen Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1901), 5.

The claim here is that the emergence of embodied subjects follows the path impressed by the historical body—owing to the integration of the past via the eternal now in the self-determinative movement of the present. Thus Nishida writes: "our bodies, as expressive and historical, are born from the self-determination of the expressive world. Our perceptual body sees things in an expressive way" (*NKZ* 7:152; *HT* 129). Here, Nishida's understanding shares certain similarities with post-structuralist thinking, especially with Michel Foucault's archaeological and genealogical account of the constitution of subjects vis-a-vis historical discourse and institutions. The historical body, as the paradigmatic horizon of expressive activity, operates much like a discursive constraint—forming a network of pre-discursive, conceptual and practical associations that determine the formation of subjectivity. Nishida clarifies: "It is not that we are each implaced within our own internal world and we work and act together through the so-called external world; rather, we are mutually related insofar as we are determined and implaced within the same general" (*NKZ* 5:288). William Haver articulates this point well, noting that, "for Nishida the possibility of sense is radically *para*subjective."[36] To move forward a bit loosely with post-structuralist thinking and its vocabulary, the claim is that, in the self-determinative activity of historical life, we are "interpellated" within a historically constituted nexus of perception, action and intelligibility—which Nishida refers to as "communal consciousness" in the above.[37] This communal, *para*subjective network of associations forms a homogenous field of experience shared among a historically and culturally located population, determining not only the expressive horizons open to a given population, but the formation of subjectivity itself.

[36] Haver, "Introduction," 18.

[37] Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," 175.

Further, it is through this process that the historical body is reproduced into the future. Expression, this longitudinally robust movement that proceeds via diffusion in the present, does not merely constitute the horizons of subjectivity, it constitutes subjectivity as a suggestion for interpreting the historical world into the future. This is why the two senses of the body are so crucial. Because our embodied self is determined by the social historical world, Nishida writes, "our body is not simply matter, but must be thought of as a social-historical fact" (*NKZ* 5:291). Nishida clarifies:

> The world inevitably presses on us as the absolute past. But as the contradictory self-identical world of the past, this does not simply press on us causally…this must be a historical past that presses into the very foundation of the life of our individual selves, and that moves us from the depths of our souls. Within the standpoint of active-intuition, what intuitively confronts us as the historical past must be something that negates our individual selves from the very foundation of our life. It is this that is truly given to us [in experience] (*NKZ* 8:412).

The idea here, to return to our post-structural terminology, is that subjectivity is subjected, produced and located in its integration of the material historical body. The flip-side of this, Nishida writes, is that "the very activity of our selves can be understood as the self-formativity of the world. Thus our selves are synthesized as one aspect of the historical world" (*NKZ* 9:248). In short, it is through its crystallization into many distinct subjectivities that the historical world, as totality, presses itself into the future; the constitution of embodied subjectivity, via its integration of the historical body, functions to reproduce and extend the historical world as a whole forwards into the future. And so, keeping in mind the co-determinative process through which totality self-produces itself, it should be further recognized that the composition of subjectivity itself operates as the transcendental condition for the propagation and future articulation of the historical world.

This suggestion for interpretation is the most basic level at which expressive activity unfolds. In its minimal form, expressive activity functions as a prompting to repeat what has

been given in antecedent experience, recapitulating the totality of the historical world forward through the constitution of subjectivity. Nishida thus remarks: "we act according to expressive activity… the self [of the individual] necessarily becomes a point of the self-projection of the absolute," of the social historical world as a whole (*NKZ* 9:246).

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But, Nishida does not believe that the formation of the many subjectivities is simply the recapitulation of totality into the future. This follows temporally inasmuch as history cannot move from the made to the made, or the making to the made. Rather, the movement of self-determination of the present, as made, is conditioned by the past and also, as making, stands in direct relation to the future. Thus Nishida writes: "Our lives are determined as the continuity of discontinuity. The sociality of our life must lie therein; there must be some sense in which a child is not born from its parent just as there must be some sense in which they are of the same lineage" (*NKZ* 5:280–281). The idea is that, while "expressivity must be thought of in terms of an environmental determination against the self-determinations of the acting self," and thus as an interpretation of the historical world into the future, this interpretive proposal cannot entirely stand as recapitulation. Rather, on the most primitive level, expressive activity is a first-order minimal expression and minimal interpretation through which the made is transformed into the making, and thus through which the whole transforms itself in its development forward.

This ontological schema shines forth in Nishida's discussion of habit. Recall that, for Miki, habit was tied to *doxa*, and thus the naturalization of a social order: a *doxastic* "common sense regarding society is naturally born for humans via such habitual repetition" (*NKZ* 5:300). Nishida likewise cites habit formation as the most basic level through which the historical body influences, conditions, and thereby suggests a form for the present into the future. He writes: "to

put this in terms of the subject, the world of the present is habitually determined. Habit is the self-determination of the medium [of the historical world] itself. Our body is determined as an actionable habit by the historical world" (*NKZ* 7:160; *HT* 136). The claim is that our habits develop in the progression of history, usually in relation to changes in one's surrounding environment. As the environment changes, our habits adjust, remaining similar to what they once were but also regulating themselves in accordance with such fluctuations. So, Nishida writes:

> What composes our habit is not simply consciousness. Something like biological instinct is established as the self-determination of the dialectical world. And something like second nature [which Nishida defines as "the world of habit"] is established within our biological bodies, and moreover, it is established as expressive activity (*NKZ* 7:155; *HT* 132).

Given what we have said about the minimally interpretive nature of expressive activity, this means that the passive habit is always minimally creative. It follows from his discussion of habits then, that Nishida provides an ontology of reproduction and, since this reproduction is minimally influenced by expressive activity and not a mere recapitulation of the past, production—or *poiesis*.

And so, while it is indeed true that subjectivity is subjected or interpellated in and as the process by which the social-historical world as a whole reproduces itself forward, nevertheless the production of subjectivity is always minimally creative. And so the embodied self, despite being subjected to the historical body, is structured by expressive activity, and is therefore always simultaneously forming-formed *and* formed-forming. This means that in its expressive, intuitive self-determination, the formation of subjectivity itself entails the injection of novelty into the social historical world.

Active-Intuition and the Self-Development of the Historical Body as Totality

But the novelty entailed in habits, particularly those linked to second nature, is extremely constrained. If Nishida stopped here he would still have an exceedingly restricted conception that overwhelmingly privileged rearticulation of the objective social-historical body—as Miki had charged. But Nishida proceeds forward, drawing upon his above work on de Biran to distinguish "active" and "passive" habits. Expressive activity broadly functions as a passive habit, formulated as the inheritance of past "impulses" with a minimally creative interpretation. Against expressive activity as a passive habit, Nishida formulates active-intuition as an active habit. He writes: "If we speak from the standpoint of the self-determination of the historical world, what is called an active habit should be thought of as active-intuition" (*NKZ* 7:155; *HT* 132). The active habit of active-intuition, Nishida writes, "is not a matter of accepting things as they are," as in intuition or the passive habit, "but of (pro)actively (*nōdōteki* 能働的) grasping things" (*NKZ* 8:411). Here, as Haver puts it, human "perception, apperception, and cognition are not for Nishida merely inscriptions on an essentially passive epistemological or phenomenological subject but modes of an active, aggressive, appropriation, driven by a daemonic *potential*, the power to be."[38]

This discussion of active habits via active-intuition opens onto the more fundamentally creative role that our individual (embodied) selves play in generating the holistic development of the social-historical world in novel directions—and thus onto the important ways in which Nishida develops his theory of holistic activity with the objectivist critiques of Miki in mind. In his 1932 unofficial response to criticisms, Nishida writes:

> Our individual selves exist at the limits of social and historical determination, and are thus understood to carry a creative sense by which they determine history and restructure (*kaizō* 改造) society. The self-determination of the individual self is at the forefront of

[38] Haver, "Introduction," 18.

> the determination of society itself, and it is through the self-determination of the individual that society proceeds forward (*NKZ* 5:280–281).

This theme carries through in his later work; in 1939 he similarly writes:

> Against the absolute past that presses into the foundations of our individual selves in the above manner, we are forever active-intuitively formative inasmuch as we stand in the standpoint of the absolute present; we are forever creative inasmuch as we are the creative elements of the creative world (*NKZ* 8:412).

The present is crucial here. In our above discussion of expressive activity, we stressed the absolute present in its continuity with past and future—as a linkage point or connective node that finds its point of connection in the "'scene' of activity." But this holds as a description of the largely uncreative expressive mode of development, where we overwhelmingly respond instinctually or intuitively in passive habit to carry the impulses of the historical world forward. Since the present is also a site of discontinuity, it is able to break the more strict historical continuity of expressive activity (in which the historical body wrests away our selves), and since the present is a productive movement of making enveloped within a more robust vertical horizon of the eternal now, it also produces alternate paths of development forward. Nishida writes:

> The fact that the world moves from the world of actuality in an absolutely contradictory self-identical manner and transcends the world of actuality in this direction means that the present negates both past and future from the bottom the present, and is situated in the standpoint which envelops time. Therein the world of artistic intuition appears as the self-determination of the absolute present. And this is the passive world that negates both past and future. The fact that this directionality transcends the dynamic world and progresses in this direction is the fact that it separates from the world of actuality, making abstract the world of actuality (*NKZ* 9:262).

The creative reconfiguration of active-intuition appears as the self-determination of the present when the present is not determined forward by interpellating subjects, but rather when some of these individual subjects submerge or elevate in the vertical eruption of the eternal now to "abstract," "separate away from," and "negate" the social-historical impulses that form in their integration of the past into the present. While, as mentioned earlier, "the historical subject does

not simply move from the potential to the manifest," nevertheless the immersion of these subjects in the eternal now provides them with the opportunity to actualize themselves in the determination of the present moment in a comparatively less historically constrained manner, and thereby bring forth new possibilities rendered unactualizable in the more routine production of instinct, intuition, and passive habits.

As the above excerpt indicates, moreover, this involves an additional dimension of artistic production as a historically formative activity. As John Maraldo notes: "the artist takes in or intuits the world and transforms or enacts it, both of which are but two moments in a single unfolding."[39] The idea is that, for Nishida, artistic production is not simply the injection of the stylistic paradigms of the historical world in the expressive process of subjective formation; artistic production is also a key site by which subjectivity active-intuitively reforms the horizons of the socio-historical world. To this end, Nishida claims that "artistic intuition is established as a certain case of active-intuition" (*NKZ* 8:411). Thus he writes:

> The artistic standpoint is, at bottom, the standpoint of the absolutely contradictory self-identical historical creation of subject and environment. And yet, it is, at bottom, a fundamentally abstractive movement in the direction of the subjective. The world of animalistic instinct is constituted by the environmental subject, and this means that there is nothing that we could truly call subjectivity here (*NKZ* 9:261).

He continues:

> Artistic production is not instinctual; rather it reaches the limits of subjective formation. As a contradictorily self-identically historically formative activity, our *poiesis* [production] is artistic production; but this holds only insofar as it can be thought that [the] *poiesis* [of the subject], at its bottom, transcends [the] *poiesis* [of the social-historical world]; that is, only insofar as it is the *poiesis* of the self-determination of the absolute present (*NKZ* 9:264).

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[39] John Maraldo, "Nishida Kitarō," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2019), http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2019/entries/nishida-kitaro

The idea is that, while instinctual subjectivity is production, it is minimally novel and so is chiefly dominated by the passive inheritance of past impulses—as we saw with passive habit and intuition. On the other hand, while the artistic intuition responsible for artistic production integrates the historical past, it is differentiated in its active reconfiguration of past impulses. In other words, in artistic intuition, we do not passively accept the historical world that births us; rather, we subjectively abstract away from its material and historical impulses, and reconfigure ourselves into the future in novel ways.

And we do so, moreover, in a way that differs from active-intuition. Artistic production is not only more novel in its reordering than instinct, it also seems to be comparatively more novel than active-intuition. Remember, artistic intuition is an "abstractive movement in the direction of the subjective" on the part of the individual subject. For Nishida, such subjective determinations of the present are situated on a continuum between "immanent" (*naizai* 内在) and "transcendental" (*chōetsu* 超越) poles. Keeping in mind these antipodes, Nishida articulates two active movements of determination on the part of the individual self, distinguishing artistic intuition from intellectual "speculation" (*shii* 思惟). While both stand as forms of agency, constituted as the production of subjectivity qua objectivity in the self-determination of the present, intellectual speculation functions in the transcendental direction, as an active movement on the side of objectivity, and artistic intuition functions in the immanent direction, as an active movement on the side of subjectivity. This means that the agency constituted in the latter artistic direction emphasizes the direction of the self in its formation. And so, because the present is

constituted in the direction of the individual subject in artistic production, it functions to make the historical "world reflect the image of the self-itself" (*NKZ* 9:283).[40]

Part 5: The Role of the Aesthetic in Guiding Social-Historical Development

Across both Nishida and Miki, then, we find the self-generation of totality unfolding in the negation, contradiction, and discontinuity between subject and social-historical world, in which the world determines the subject and the subject determines the world. Unlike Nishida's expressive theory from 1925, totality is here articulated within this world of actuality—and in particular in terms of the self-movement of the social-historical world as a whole. Unlike his earlier centered account, the self-generation of the social historical world proceeds not in a harmony of reciprocal dependence but rather in the mutually negative movement of affirmation qua negation that unfolds between individual subject and world that constitutes totality as an absolutely contradictory self-identity. Moreover, across both thinkers we are presented with two modes by which the social-historical world, as totality, self-forms itself—both of which rely on the individual (embodied) subject for development, with the historical world either negating or being negated by this subject. Nishida lines up instinct, expressive activity, and passive habits on the side of minimal reconfiguration, through which the world, as a whole, reproduces itself through us with minimal novelty. This broadly lines up with what Miki refers to as *doxa*—the "common sense" that we are "born amidst," and that we reproduce in our everyday affairs. Nishida then lines up active-intuition, active habits, and artistic intuition on the side of more novel reconfiguration, through which subjects intervene to more creatively reconfigure this

[40] Though, to be sure, the abstractive movement of artistic creation is not an entirely subjective or immanent movement; Nishida notes that "the actual social world exists in neither of these foci, but rather lives in the contradictory self-identity of these two poles." (*NKZ* 9:261).

world into the future (*NKZ* 8:410–411). This broadly aligns with what Miki terms *mythos*—the irrational, affectively charged feeling that opens us onto "contradictory or opposing social relations." Both are adamant, moreover, that these two processes cannot be separated out from each other such that the self-creation of the subject is the self-creation of the world, and the self-creation of the world is the self-creation of the subject.

As the presence of the aesthetic in both thinkers demonstrates, moreover, this theory of totality is significantly different from the decentered dialectical materialism of Miki's late '20s work. Recall again that, in Althusser's decentered totality, the "true 'subjects' [are]…*the definition and distribution of these places and functions…the relations of production.*" As I read it, Nishida's work on artistic intuition and Miki's work on *mythos* are sites by which these thinkers express a twofold discomfort not only with the decentered account's abandonment of "concrete individuals" and their ability to effect revolution, but also with what they identify as the objectivism of Marxism more broadly: first, with regard to its material basis, and thus their privileging the objective over the subjective conditions of social-historical development; and second, with regard to its concomitant refusal of any subject or group of subjects as able to bring forth social change and transformation. Thus Nishida writes: "Even Marx's philosophy, which claims itself centered on practice, only thinks of the acting world from the perspective of the objective, and so does not truly stand in the position of the acting self" (*NKZ* 6:135). Miki too: "general Marxist theory has treated the individual lightly and with disdain. While the individual is forever determined by society, the individual also reciprocally determines society back. The industrialist, the leader, the genius, and so forth are not simply determined by society. The

pioneer of an era is not always its representative" (*MKZ* 19:560).[41] Miki will double down on this idea by the mid-'30s: "The human being is a free subject who is able to exit the group, determine his own associations and relations of him or herself, and form the group. Society is not simply a given for humans, but rather something that humans create. It is only when we transcend society that we can form society. This is the freedom to stand outside of relations and to negate relations" (*MKZ* 5:179).

The aesthetic takes its significance here. For Nishida and Miki, the aesthetic opens onto the creative role of the individual subject in the determination of the present moment, and thus re-invests their theory of totality with an outlet for schemas of social change and revolution by which they can re-shape the social-historical world into the future. Thus it is that, moving forward in the late '30s and early '40s—as Nishida begins thinking through artistic production as a historically formative activity—Miki embarks on his *Logic of Imagination* in an attempt to find in "the dialectical unity of logos and pathos," Dennis Stromback writes, "the relations of production so important to Marxist literature without abandoning the role of the agent in directing the course of social history," and in fact situating "the creation of historical forms squarely within the subjective imagination."[42]

But how is it that this acting self, this free and pioneering subjective imagination, reforms the social-historical world in novel ways into the future without abandoning our holistic unity in and with the social-historical world? For both Nishida and Miki, the emphasis on the subject is not in exclusion of the objective world, but instead involves a reconsideration of the subject–

[41] This is from an article written in July 1932, about one month before the publication of the second volume of *Social Science.*

[42] Dennis Stromback, "Miki Kiyoshi and the Overcoming of German and Japanese Philosophy," *European Journal of Japanese Philosophy* 5 (2020): 116. Stromback uses the term idealism differently than I use it here.

object, self–world relation of totality in terms of idealism and expression—albeit in a different form than the transcendental accounts of expressive totality dominant in the Taishō period. In the introduction we noted the tendency among Marxists like Althusser and Horkheimer to associate expression with idealism, and to collapse all forms of idealism within a transcendental, two-world structure of closure that grounds self-development in either a *genetic principle* of origin or an implicit *teleological* direction. The idealism here, however, bears more in common with the idealist strand in *Inquiry*, and thus is instead rendered in the "one-world" inflationary sense outlined in the introduction—"a realist concerning elements more usually dismissed from reality…including the existence of the Ideas and the becomings they cause."[43]

Perhaps we can best unpack this idea by sticking with Nishida. Though, as just mentioned, his account resonates with the immanent schema of self-development found in *Inquiry*—where reality, as totality, manifests itself "implicitly" according to "immanently unified" "forces of potentiality" before it is actualized within the material realm of actuality—Nishida's later account is distinguished on several points. First, its historical basis; as we saw earlier, the "historical subject does not simply proceed from the potential to the manifest" such that, for Nishida, lines of potentiality are formed immanent within the historical world. Thus he writes: "potentiality is not exterior to manifestation, but contained in the actuality of self-contradiction. Thus it is that *energeia* is said to precede *dynamis*" (*NKZ* 8:81; *KNT* 160). Key to this process is the eternal now, the second significant point of difference. Nishida explains this by noting that, while the present does not simply move from potentiality to actuality, but "always proceed from actuality to actuality," nevertheless the "present entails infinite suggestibility insofar as it is determined in active-intuition." Thus "there are innumerable paths proceeding

[43] Dunham, Grant, and Watson, *Idealism*, 4.

forth from the present" (*NKZ* 8:83; *KNT* 161). Here, the intersection of the self and the social-historical world in the present erupts vertically with endless paths sprawled and jutting forwards horizontally through which the present moment determines itself into the future. Higaki puts this masterfully: "The 'actual' exists when an individual carrying infinite forces of potentiality ceaselessly confronts an infinite world in their infinite 'transition' from 'form' to 'form.' As such, the world of the absolute contradictory self-identity is itself the scene in which the individual is given a rupture by infinity from within, and 'transitions' from 'present' to 'present.'"[44] The idea is that while the subject and world exist together in a mutually opposing relation of absolutely contradictory self-identity, the formation of the subject from out of the social-historical body in the present moment, by virtue of its immersion in the vertical eruption constitutive of the eternal now, negates the world in a movement of discontinuity that does not simply resolve itself into a mere oppositional relation of contradiction but rather opens onto the difference of potential plentitude.

Nishida makes this point almost explicit in his 1939 "Absolutely Contradictory Self-Identity" (*Zettai mujunteki jiko dōitsu* 絶対矛盾的自己同一):

> In the absolutely contradictory self-identical world, that which is given to us must be given as a task. We are tasked with forming something in this world. Therein lies our life. We are born with tasks in this world. What is given to us is not simply negated, nor is it something that mediates or is mediated by what is given. Rather, it is given to us to be carried out; in other words, it is given to us bodily. We are not born into this world without hands; we are born with a body. The fact that we are born with a body can be understood as a task that has already been solved by historical nature (as with, for example, the eyes of insects), but it also, as absolutely contradictory self-identity, entails an infinite task. The fact that we are born with a body means that we are born with and carry an infinite task (*NKZ* 8:392–393).

[44] Higaki, *Nishida no seimei tetsugaku*, 224.

The claim to difference and plentitude amounts to being confronted by an infinite task that exceeds the oppositional horizons of negativity. By means of the discontinuity of the eternal now, Nishida's goal is to re-invest the moment of subjective formation, constitutive of the production of totality, within an open schema constituted of an infinity of tasks, suggestibility, or lines of development through which the subject, in the process of their being constituted by the historical world as a solution to its own task, can rework and make innovations upon the social-historical world into the future in a way that outstrips contradiction or opposition. In this vertical eruption, the formation of subjectivity is able to break away from the expressive channels that determine intuitive activity, so as to actively re-make and -actualize the historical world so it "reflects the image of the self-itself." And so, Nishida and Miki rework the Hegelian and Marxist schema of totality and its dialectical formation so that there is room for the subject qua pioneer, the artistic genius, who is not a representative of the age but rather refashions their age into the future. In emphasizing the subject, their aim is to exert control over historical development, and thus find a site of difference that allows for social-historical developments that exceed the negative relations of contradiction and negation, allowing for the open-ended development of the social-historical world qua totality into the future.

Chapter 5

Collective Intervention: Nakai and *Bi-Hihyō* in the Early 1930s

This chapter and the next focus on Nakai Masakazu and a younger-generation of Kyoto School thinkers working in a set of Kyoto and Dōshisha University adjacent print materials: *Bi-Hihyō*, *World Culture*, and *Doyōbi*. Unlike contemporary interpretations that distance Nakai as a "heretic theorist" of the Kyoto School,[1] my claim is that Nakai and his fellow contributors are very much responding to contemporary movements in Kyoto School thought, and especially to centered, decentered, and one-world inflationary expressive accounts of totality. Using totality as my ideological through line, my goal in this chapter is to show the way in which Nakai picks up and develops Miki and Nishida's work on subjective intervention from the standpoint of collectivity, carving out a priviliged role for inter-subjective collectives and groups to re-fashion the horizons by which the social-historical world develops itself forwards. We will proceed across five parts: treating Nakai's work on collectivity and machine technology in the first two parts, then moving to his work in hermeneutic phenomenology, Neue Sachlichkeit, and team sports in parts three, four, and five.

Part 1: *Bi-Hihyō*, Collectivity, Machine Technology, and Material Collective Character

The lineup for the magazine *Bi-Hihyō* initially consisted of seven members working in the fields of aesthetics and art history, philosophy, and archaeology: Nakai, Fujita Teiji, Tokunaga Ikusuke, Tomioka Masugorō, Nagahiro Toshio, Mizusawa Sumio, and Fujii Genichi. Each had worked with Kyoto University Professor of Aesthetics Fukada Yasukazu in some capacity, and

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[1] Kitada Akihiro, "An Assault on 'Meaning:' On Nakai Masakazu's Concept of 'Mediation,'" trans. Alexander Zahlten, *Review of Japanese Culture and Society* 22 (2010): 88.

the magazine got much of its impetus in the wake of Fukada's sudden death in 1928. Though the latter five members assumed collective editorial responsibilities, the chief editor for the first 11 issues was Tokunaga, after which Fujii took over for the next 16, and Tomioka for the final four.

The magazine was primarily funded by a contribution from *Osaka Asahi Newspaper* editor Ueno Seiichi, where Fujita worked reporting in the arts and science column, and by an endowment from Fukada's family on the third anniversary of his death (*KOS* 5:44). With funding sources in order, formal planning for the magazine began in May 1930, and the coterie released the first issue just four months later, on September 1, 1930. Each issue was printed on A5 paper and, apart from a few double issues, ran just over 30 pages. The cover sported a bold art deco typeface bearing the magazine's title in black at the top of the magazine, and the issue number was indicated by a bright orange number placed center right, drawing the reader's eyes to the table of contents running left from the center. In total, they would publish 32 issues of the magazine, and finish its run in October 1934.

The magazine was priced at 20-sen, except for the above-mentioned double issues. It was first sold out of Sorobanya shoten, a small downtown bookseller on the north side of Sanjō street near its major intersection with Kawaramachi street, but switched to the closeby Guroria-Sosaete located on the south side of Sanjō from the fourth issue. This Kawaramachi–Sanjō district had boomed in recent years as part of a post-Great Kanto Earthquake exodus of intellectuals and artists moving from Tokyo, and both bookstores appealed to an educated urban clientele.[2] *Bi-Hihyō* was sold in other major urban areas as well, with issues 6 through 27 sold by Tokyo-dō in Jinbōchō, and issues 6 through 11 sold by the Sogensha bookstore in Osaka. Back in Kyoto, they

[2] Lucken, *Nakai Masakazu: naissance*, 98–99.

would sell issues 15 through the 17/18 double issue at Sogensha's sister store Dōhōsha, before switching to Nakanishiya shoten, located in front of the main gates of Kyoto University.

Though the editors made a point to "not publish any general plan or declaration" in the editorial afterword to the first issue, they nevertheless believed that "a given era necessarily carries with it new problems," and that "everyone should concern themselves with what that problem is and its solution" (*BH* 1:32). In the scant secondary literature on the journal, the guiding concern of their contemporary moment has primarily been understood in terms of mass culture and modernism, with Bamba Toshiaki briefly characterizing the early run of the magazine as shaded in "thick hues of modernism,"[3] and Aaron Moore summarizing it in terms of its engagement "with contemporary European modernist trends such as Surrealism, Bauhaus, Neue Sachlichkeit, montage film theory, reportage literature, and Russian avant-garde film."[4]

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For many members, this engagement with modernism and mass culture was seen as a development upon Nakai's work on collectivity and machine technology. In the year leading up to the first issue, Nakai published works on "The Structure of Machine Beauty" (*Kikai bi no kōzō* 機械美の構造) in the February edition of *Shisō*, and wrote a draft on "Collective Beauty" (*Shūdan bi* 集団美) in May that would be heavily edited and printed as "The Significance of Collective Beauty" (*Shūdan bi no igi* 集団美の意義) for the *Osaka Asahi Newspaper* in July. Inspired by his writings, and at times referencing them directly, the first issue carried essays on

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[3] Bamba Toshiaki, *Nakai Masakazu densetsu: nijūichi no shōzō ni yoru yūwaku* (Tokyo: Potto shuppan 2009), 123.

[4] Aaron Moore, "Para-existential Forces of Intervention: Nakai Masakazu's Theory of Technology and Critique of Capitalism" *Positions* 17:1 (2009): 130.

machine technology by Tokunaga, Fujita, and Hermann Matzke (translated by Nagahiro), and, were it not for an editing error, would have carried Tomioka's work on collective laughter.

Nakai's understanding of collectivity and machine technology was structurally guided by Ernst Cassirer's *Substance and Function*, and in particular by Cassirer's attempt to "transition from the substance concept to the function concept" such that subject and object are reorganized as a "complex" (*fukugō* 複合) of "elements within a "function;" as "places" within a broader "systematic relation" of "totality" (*NMZ* 3:255, 1:167).[5]

Though Nakai quotes Cassirer both directly and extensively, I believe his co-referent here is Nishida philosophy, and especially Nishida's early period theories of totality. Using language from *Inquiry*, Nakai claims that functional logic furnishes us with the concepts to "reflect on what should be called the subject–object non-differentiation of our embodied direct experience" (*NMZ* 1:169). In particular, Nakai follows the opening lines of *Inquiry* to consider the primordial "moment of seeing a color or hearing a sound." Much as our direct experience of the bell in Nishida is simultaneously simple and complex, and so is directly given as it carries a pre-propositional relationship to other consciousness, Nakai argues for "hints of a deep connective system carried by simple sensation itself." Focusing first on the domain of music, Nakai claims that, "for those with a deep sense of hearing, one sound of ober C signifies along with it a continuous series of an infinity of major and minor scales." Here, "one simple sound itself exists as a force of tension within the structure of sound as an infinite objective relation" (*NMZ* 1:178). The same holds for color. In a rare transcendence of norms of Japanese citation, Nakai directly references Nishida's *Problems of Consciousness* to discuss our perception of the color red:

[5] Ernst Cassirer, *Substance and Function and Einstein's Theory of Relativity* (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1923).

> when sensations of red colors are arranged in accordance with their degree of saturation on a continuum, these degrees constitute the form of order of the set. When this series is considered infinite, the type of order has 'reality.' The possibility of infinite transition signifies that the type (*Typus*) possesses power. It signifies that the elements are the representations of a reality in their background, and that the elements are nothing more than its determinations. Here the type of red becomes a force and act. This power cannot properly be called material or spiritual; but at any rate it signifies that the representation red can be expressed infinitely (*NKZ* 2:356–357).[6]

What is key, for Nakai by way of Nishida and Cassirer, is that any concrete perception of red always refers to a broader background series or set as a systematic totality. The movement between the musical, color, and mathematic illustrations all speak to, Gregory Moynahan notes, the "tacit dependence of the determination of any phenomenon on a next order 'form' that exists under a different, and usually unstated category."[7] In the case of red, it is color; for ober c, it is scale, and for the differential, it is the integral. In each case, Cassirer writes, "the advance from the individual to the whole, involved here, is possible because the reference to the whole is from the first not excluded but retained and only needs to be brought separately into conceptual prominence."[8] And so, Nakai writes, "within a particular instance of red our vision is suffused by its type (*typus*) within an endless system" of totality (*NMZ* 1:178).

Function, Machines, and Collectives

Much as Cassirer would expand his work to account for cultural forms in *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Nakai too would position his above analysis within a broader cultural hermeneutic. Nakai

[6] The translation is by David Dilworth and Valdo Viglielmo. See: Nishida Kitarō, "Affective Feeling," in *Analecta Husserliana*, ed. Nittai Tatematsu (New York: Springer, 1979), 8:237–238. Nishida's passage here resonates closely with: Cassirer, *Substance and Function*, 22.

[7] Gregory Moynahan, *Ernst Cassirer and the Critical Science of Germany, 1899–1919* (New York: Anthem Press, 2013), 127.

[8] Cassirer, *Substance and Function*, 248–249.

follows his above functional analysis of our vision of red: “we see the sweetness, warmth, and freshness of vermilion within horizons permeated by human passion” (*NMZ* 1:178–179). Similar to the way that, in Miki, we see “not an undetermined red” but the “evening sky” wrapped in foreboding or appreciation or “as a red flag” of, say, the Empire of Japan, in Nakai simple visual and auditory perceptions are situated within a broader complex whole of cultural meaning. Nakai writes: “as a music can be heard in society, could it not possibly be the case that we discover society in music? A color, a sound, a vowel or consonant—these already carry deep solidarity and unity in their expansive background, and to encounter them is [to feel] the vibration of the entirety of relations structuring all life” (*NMZ* 1:179–180).

And so, as Nishida later connects the simple qua complex nature of perception with “a relation of sameness between the consciousness of myself and the other” in expressive activity, and as Miki connects the fore-structure of experience to the public sphere, Nakai too connects the affective significance attached to perception with our “*sensus communis*” or “*Gemeinsinn*” (*kyōtsū kankaku* 共通感覚). In our perception of a passion-suffused vermilion, he elaborates,

> the ego has already proceeded from within and out of its social relation, and positioned the self according to a pattern within it; or else, it can be thought that there is mutual penetration of our sensation, all the way down to the structure of our sense of taste and feeling of warmth, and that *sensus communis* is configured under a mutually equivalent relationship with red as a pattern of force; accordingly, a complex of endlessly complex sensation is discovered within the domain of simple sensation itself. Therefore, the seeing ego is already an element of the social structure, and in the form of this connection, when it faces the structure of color, the body dissolves amidst the color, and the body achieves equivalence by immersing itself amidst the red (*NMZ* 1:178–179).

Here, our simple perception of red is complex not only in terms of its position within a broader color scale, but within the horizon of social meaning. This means that the whole of the relational field that impinges on concrete perception, for Nakai, is social. We see vermilion within the

horizons of passion, sweetness, and warmth because experience is suffused by a holistic background of social meaning.

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But Nakai makes a stronger claim about society; it is not simply that the subject exists within and is shaded by a broader social system, but that the social system itself has its own form of intentionality or intentionalities. Social forms are here considered in their totality as "the systematic body of an even greater human" (*yori ooinaru ningen* より大いなる人間) (*NMZ* 3:248).

Nakai develops this point in his May draft on collective beauty, distinguishing the concepts of the public (*kōshū* 公衆) and the collective (*shūdan*) as distinct social forms associated with different historical moments—mid-19th and early 20th century. In doing so, Nakai looks to Samuel Butcher's work on the "revolution in intelligible form demonstrated by the Greeks in the transition from the written word to the spoken word," developing and charting this revolution forward to the "printed word" with reference to Victor Hugo and Gabriel Tarde, and then to the "electronically transmitted word" of radio and telegraph that marked the contemporary age (*NMZ* 3:243).[9] Following Butcher, and in dialogue with contemporary theorists Bela Balasz and Friedrich Dessauer, Nakai's claim was that social and technological transformations emerged in mutual determination with "revolutions in the intelligible and sensible faculties of humans" such that new modes of communication were made possible amongst addressees within a mass delivery system.

[9] Watsuji and Tanaka Hideo translated Butcher's "The Written and the Spoken Word" in 1920.

For Nakai, the term public "is first born with the appearance of the printed word." While prior to this "[t]here were, of course, people (*minshū* 民衆), assemblies and delegations of both armed warriors and unarmed citizens, and in addition groups of people (*gunshū* 群衆) in various other meanings," nevertheless "there is no corresponding term in the Greek and the Latin" as "the feeling that we generally associate with the term public had not yet been born in the domain of 'the spoken word' and 'the written word.'" Instead, there were simply "attendees of displays held in the assembly square or hall" (*NMZ* 2:183). This distinction is drawn with respect to the directionality of participation. While the address itself may have, at times, tailored to the audience in classical middle ages, there was never a shared sense of mutual participation among addressees. Instead, most spent their time listening to a performance within the Greek oral tradition or hearing an announcement decreed by a small privy council with access to a select "few volumes or manuscripts."

The distinguishing feature separating members of a public from attendees in previous moments is the shared sense of belonging that formed in the advent of mass media, in particular, the printing press. Much as Habermas links the formation of the bourgeoisie public sphere to the onset of print media, Nakai states that the "public was born for the first time in breakthroughs in the invention of print technologies in the 18th century." Though Nakai marks out both identical content and expanded range of delivery as unique to the printed word, noting its capacity to distinguish "a social public of contemporaneous readers of the same newspaper and of admirers of certain fashionable novels," his emphasis is overwhelmingly upon the way in which this transformed sign-content and mode of delivery leads to new forms of connection among addressees. While in the spoken and written traditions knowledge was accumulated by a select few poets or readers and then disseminated to a relatively small audience of eager listeners,

“public consciousness was felt mutually in the reader, who was conscious of hundreds of print materials being read in the same present” (*NMZ* 2:183).

And yet, while a feeling of simultaneous, expanded, and reciprocal connection indeed marks the sociality of the reading public, Nakai nevertheless argues that with the advent of electronic transmission the feeling of social connectedness achieves new levels of *collective* organization. Here he maps electronic delivery onto sensible and intelligible transformations in two respects. First, in terms of speed and a heightened sense of simultaneity among addressees: ours “is an age in which everything on this round earth is felt simultaneously. The speed of electromagnetic waves is at the same time the speed of the transmission of thought.” Nakai has in mind not the world of vision but the “world of sound”—the gramophone, the talkie, and especially audible broadcast media like radio. With the mass audience of radio, John Durham Peters notes, you find “a collective united in time but dispersed in space,” all of which “attend to the same thing at the same time.”[10] Similarly linking simultaneity and attention in the collective, Nakai writes: “Through the power of radio all the people on earth can at the same time listen to and sing the same song with their arms folded and their eyes closed” (*NMZ* 2:185).

Second, Nakai claims that electronic transmission allows for an even greater form of reciprocity to emerge in the sensible and intelligible capacities of its audience. Still working within the world of sound, he writes: “through the athletic radio broadcast or the talkie, for the first time we feel in our hearts the shocking pain of the collective ‘incomprehensible cry’ of the crowd, and it is understood that this means something profound” (*NMZ* 2:181). Moving beyond broadcast, Nakai shifts to two-way radio transceivers, pointing to the “the interchange of radio

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[10] John Durham Peters, “Mass Media,” in *Critical Terms for Media Studies*, ed. W.J.T. Mitchell and Mark Hansen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 273.

waves" that facilitate "the mobilization of a squad of airplanes, a fleet of battleships, and even the formation of a large battalion crossing land and sea" (*NMZ* 2:185). Here simultaneity and reciprocity coincide in a new level of coordination and cooperation unrealizable in previous technological orders, opening onto novel forms of connectedness that outstrips the feeling of holistic unity found in a public of readers.

This heightened sense of reciprocity and simultaneity leads to a felt qualitative difference in the connectedness of the collective. In contrast to the collective, "the feeling of the term public accompanies a sense of 'plurality as a chaos (disorder)' that is related to one center." He has in mind the literary relation of an author and his or her audience, dispersed in space but ultimately directed by the words of the author. But in the collective "[t]here is nowhere a central body;" "the feeling of the term collective is that of a function and its complex, where everyone is an element; it accompanies a sense of 'plurality as a cosmos (order)' due to the reciprocal regulation amongst its elements" (*NMZ* 2:184). The idea is that innovations in mass media technologies have organized participants within a broader collective as elements within one functional system or totality —not simply as attendees or joint readers. The language of cosmos and eschewing a center references the way that each element in the collective always already reflects the whole of the complex system in their mutual, co-determinative operations with other elements as a "unity of plurality" (*tasū no tōitsu* 多様の統一), a "system possessing a plurality" (*tasū no motsu soshiki* 多数の持つ組織) (*NMZ* 2:185).

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And so, in early Nakai we arrive at an account of the collective that is strikingly similar to early Nishida's centered account of totality. This is evident not only in their shared holistic understanding of a dynamic, relational co-determination among the many things (parts,

elements) as well as the one single holistic activity (totality, complex function) and these many things; but also in their shared gesture to organicism in accounting for social relations. Drawing from Cassirer much the same vocabulary as Nishida employs, Nakai writes:

> In contrast to the concept of whole and part in [traditional] formal logic, which lacks the pre-established concept of the complex as a positive functional activity, in this new logical function all elements take system itself as their background and based upon this complex relation establish totality. [In fact,] rather than calling such a concept totality, this [should be called] one *organism*. This is because the element itself carries the functional system of itself. This is not an expansion of "parts within the whole," but a functional form that fuses in a connective system of mutual determination (*NMZ* 1:167).

Across Nishida's social ontology and Nakai's collective, "the individual is always inexhaustibly saturated by totality as a single relational form" (*NMZ* 2:184). Like the reciprocal determination of the many and the one in Nishida, Nakai's claim that there is no central body in the collective and his aligning it with a "a sense of 'plurality as a cosmos (order)' due to the reciprocal regulation amongst its elements" aligns closely with Nishida's centered account of totality.

But though Nakai's collective logic is broadly in step with early Nishida's centered account, the key difference is that, for Nakai, the cohesion constitutive of the co-determinative self-formation of totality is not a transhistorical fact, but a new form of collective organization made possible among an increasing number of people in mutual determination with innovations in machine technology—injecting a robust sense of historical and technological awareness and thereby linking the holistic sense of collective unity to developments in media technology.

Part 2: *Bi-Hihyō* and the Material Collective Character

Members would tighten the direction of the magazine in line with the themes of collectivity and machine technology as the magazine continued. In the afterword to issue six, editors cited "two essays"—Nakai's "Continuity of Spring" (*Haru no kontinuitei*– 春のコンティニュイティー)

and new member Tsujibe Masatarō's "Fragments of the Collective Character" (*Shūdanteki seikaku no danpen* 集団的性格の断片) —as "offering broad perspectives for how to present and grasp problems into the future" (*BH* 6:192). While the precise perspective cited is ambiguous, moving forward the magazine tightened its theoretical development in line with two themes: "medium and small units" of collectivity, and the material character of new technology in support of collectivity.

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With regards to the first point, Tsujibe's article clarified the scope of the collective to not only include broader-scale systems like class or nation, but also medium and small-scale systems, such as "a city, military unit, company, bank, school, newspaper company, and so forth." Offering a succinct definition of the collective, Tsujibe argues that these medium and smaller-scale units are united as elements in "something like a systematic body (*soshikitai* 組織体) that carries intention, control, and action" (*BH* 6:169). In other words, the systems themselves are the intentional unit, and carry the necessary structures to produce themselves as an integrated whole into the future.

Tsujibe develops this by focusing on the artistic and print industries. He notes a "tendency towards collective production" that restructures the traditional domains of artistic production in line with this collective character: "the wave of this movement has been strongly received even in the world of painting, sculpture, and the so-called crafts—which are thought of as conservative and as part of traditional handicrafts" (*BH* 6:170). In the realm of painting, he references the "Imperial Fine Arts Academy, Japan Visual Arts Academy, Second Society," and more, claiming that "each of these exhibition societies advocate for a single character." The same is true of literary production: the "magazine *Battle Flag* is understood in terms of a single great

literary character. Here, the particularity of any given author is not pronounced," and "character" means "collaborative production in the sense of systematic production is realized" (*BH* 6:171).

There is a sense of self-referentiality at play here. The call in the afterword is not simply for everyone to write on the same topic, but for the magazine as a whole to develop a more cohesive sense of small- or intermediate-level collective identity; for *Bi-Hihyō* members to not only write on collectives, but to form into a collective body of "collaborative production" such that contributions are self-organized via the themes of machine, function, and collectivity.

Working on even broader-scales in the print industry, Tsujibe shifted from the art magazine to the collective identity of the publisher and even the newspaper. Be it major publishers like "Kaizōsha, Chuō kōronsha, Bungei shunjūsha, Shinchōsha, Iwanami shoten," or more specialized publishers focusing on leftist topics like "Battle Flag Publishing" or "the Proletarian Research Association"—"magazines and publishers must be understood as a procedurally small or intermediate stage of the collective character" (*BH* 6:172–173). Here, the "concrete magazine and publishing companies carry definite intention, control, and action;" they are the bearer of collective intentionality (*BH* 6:176). The same holds with newspapers, which Tsujibe understood to be "the largest" forms of collective organization in the print industry.

As Tsujibe moved from small to intermediate forms, he felt the need to justify his claim of collective identity. To this end, he took a more empirical and experimental approach to measure collective character. Working on the publishing industry, Tsujibe performed statistical analysis of shared key words from the February editions of Chuō Kōron and Kaizōsha, finding a kind of collective homogeneity of cultural, economic, and political buzzwords across individual contributions by the "intellectual class." While this analysis could perhaps be criticized as

limited in scope, Tsujibe's aim was to demonstrate, with statistical evidence, that a collective character structured and determined the content of individual contributions to the magazine.

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Following Tsujibe, Nakai began thinking through smaller and more intermediate units of collectivity. While Nakai, in his 1930 work on machines, included the domain of "everyday life, the newspaper, the laboratory, the detective room, the observatory, and more," he tightened the scale in work from this period, referring to "associations, companies, factories, schools, military troops, newspapers, journals, *etc.*" as collective "units of negotiation."

Nakai's contribution also resembled Tsujibe's in its experimental approach to collectivity and new machine technology. In preparation for "Continuity of Spring," Nakai attended a screening of Mikhail Kaufmann's *In Spring* (*Vesnoy*) at the Kyoto Shochiku theater—located in the Shinkyōgoku dōri arcade about one kilometer south of the above Sorobanya and Guroria-Sosaete bookstores. Aided by Tsujibe on the stopwatch, Nakai measured "the temporal pace of the continuity" of its editing and diagrammed out the six set pieces of the film using the following standards:

> 60/100 second standard ∴ 1 = 0.6 seconds
> marking inter titles with Japanese numerals;
> marking flashbacks with f,
> marking rhythm with ~ ~

Looking at the first mountain pass scene Nakai found an "extremely daring destruction of the format" of traditional narrative cinema. He charted this out as follows:

> 三 f f f f 5 2 2 2 2 3 f f f f f f 4 3 4 4 4 f f f f f 6 5 7 10 10 15 4 3
> 2 4 4 3 2 2 4 6 f f 2 4 4 10 7 7 5 4 4 4 4 6 3 f f 5 6 3 4 13 10 5 5 5 5 5
> 10 5 7 4 3 2 4 4 7 7 6 6 11 7 10 3 2 7 7 2 2 10 13 7 7 4 4 4 9 6 3 7 2
> 11 9 10 7 10 7 2 3 6 4 5 2 2 5 七 5 5 20 2 4 6 3 8 3 2 10 2 六 2 13 4
> 2 五 5 5

This experimental analysis was meant to demonstrate that the decisive cinematic revolution of *In Spring* was grounded in the material structure of film itself—in, say, the quick pace of its cut. As Philip Kaffen observes, Nakai felt that "even films like [Abel Gance's] *La roue*, in spite of its famous rapid editing, remained incapable of achieving the full possibilities of cinema's dynamic 'contrasts of association' and the kinds of radical tempos created through quick shifts between images and scenes."[11] In contrast, *In Spring* engendered a "rhythmical effect" by breaking from narrative continuity and employing cinematic cuts in "quick tempo," immersing its images in "contrasts" and "chains of association" in an entirely new "visual language." With *In Spring*, Nakai claimed, film "left behind its painterly elements, and [was] transforming into its musical and linguistic elements. In short, there is no need to *see* clearly, and there are many instances in which, much like language, its use is as a mere moment of associations" (*NMZ* 3:149).

The Material Collective Character

Following *In Spring*, Nakai began a more concerted effort to consider the relationship between the material and collective character of new media. This is nowhere more apparent than "Material Collective Character" (*Butsuriteki shūdanteki seikaku* 物理的集団的性格), released two months later in issue 8. In this article, Nakai argues for a mutually determinative relationship between the material and collective character of new media technology like film and radio: "The material collective character that is constituted by the social collective character is mutually projective and equivalent (*sōgo tōchiteki ni shaeiteki* 相互等値的に射影的). Therefore this material collective also carries a reverse invocation for the social collective character" (*NMZ*

[11] Philip Kaffen, "Nakai Masakazu and the Cinematic Imperative," *Positions* 26:3 (2018): 495.

3:157). His claim is that the social collective character and the material collective character of film are wrapped up in a mutual, co-determinative relation such that collective organization "projects" (*shaei* 射影), "translates" (*kansan* 換算), and produces "equivalent" (*tōchi* 等値) collective forms in new media technologies at the same time that new media technologies project and institute new and equivalent forms of collective organization in the social sphere.

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This language is inherited from his work on functionalism. As we saw above, the charm of the concept of function is that it immerses the subject or object within a broader relational series or set as systematic totality. But this is only half of Cassirer's argument, and Nakai knows it. Much of the second half of Cassirer's *Substance and Function* is devoted to dismantling the "copy theory" of experience—in which there first exists something like a world or thing-in-itself (*Ding an sich*) that is then copied or reflected in consciousness or the mind.[12] Cassirer writes: "From a copy we demand some sort of similarity with the object copied, but we can never be sure of this in the case of our presentations. The sign, on the contrary does not require any actual similarity in the elements, but only a functional correspondence of the two structures."[13] And:

> The particular element, which serves as a sign, is indeed not materially similar to the totality that is signified,—for the relations constituting the totality cannot be fully expressed and "copied" by any particular formation,—but a thoroughgoing logical community subsists between them, in so far as both belong in principle to the same system of explanation. The actual similarity is changed into a conceptual correlation; the two levels of being become different but necessarily complementary points of view for considering the system of experience.[14]

[12] Moynahan, *Ernst Cassirer and the Critical Science of Germany*, 138-139.

[13] Cassirer, *Substance and Function*, 304.

[14] Ibid, 285.

Here, truth is not structured veridically via the "accuracy" of consciousness' correspondence with reality, but in terms of the internal coherence of the sign system as a whole. Thus Cassirer notes, the "system and convergence of the series takes place of an external standard of reality."[15]

Nakai adopts this sign theory of reality and its concomitant emphasis on internal coherence. Underlying the above analysis of "Continuity of Spring," is the assumption that it is possible to *project* or *translate* film into the number system and find its *equivalent* numerical elements. Functionalism, Nakai writes,

> translates all quantitative thinking into positions, which in turn signifies a great transformation in the problem of equivalence. In such a concept of the function, being equal signifies being equivalent (*äquivalent*). It means that the elements of different set can be arranged in the elements of a another set with the same meaning (*NMZ* 1:167).

He offers a lucid example of these terms at work in a later piece:

> the word form [or sign, in functionalism] indicates not the thing in its being, but its exterior as it is equivalently abstracted, or the projection that this exterior appearance equivalently traces in something else, or else a different being that can be substituted for it via equivalence (*NMZ* 3:301).

Taken together, the idea is that with the concept of function and its concomitant view of signs, we project or translate the so-called thing into a domain, region, or series of signs, for instance the number system, and then find its equivalent elements within that sign system. Expanding on his work in functionalism, Nakai here marks out the domain or region in terms of materiality and collectivity, and adds to it an argument to reciprocation not found in his earlier work.

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Though the argument to reciprocal determination precludes ontological or temporal priority, we can perhaps best present Nakai's thesis by first focusing the way collective

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[15] Ibid, 321.

organization projects the material character of film. Nakai makes this point with regards to the "process of producing a film," arguing that "[t]his process signifies a social collective character." The idea is that film is a "collaborative production" among actors and directors, camera operator and crew, and the film studio and its executives. But "the process of making a film is not only collective, the format itself is already collective;" the materials of film—the lens, camera, vacuum tube, *etc*.—are the result of collective collaboration (*NMZ* 3:153). For this reason, he talks of the film and lens' of cinema in terms of the companies that produce and manufacture them—referencing "Eastman, Agfa, Pathé, Bolex, Dupont" for the former and "Carl Zeiss, Cooke, Plasmat" for the latter (*NMZ* 3:161). His point is that the material conditions of film are themselves the product of collective collaboration, and so film should be understood as a "recorder" of the social conditions of its production.

And film is also a "reproducer" of its social conditions (*NMZ* 3:160). This opens onto Nakai's latter claim regarding the physical collective character of film projecting a social collective character into existence. The idea is that the above-mentioned materials of film, which are themselves the result of collective production, in turn engender the social collective character of film production. Though we sometimes imagine the director to be the sole locus of creative control, in fact directors work closely with editors, whose intuitive sense of placing cuts fundamentally shape the sentiment of a scene. More, the post-production editing process already relies on the collaborative production amongst the technical crew—the camera operator syncing with the light department to provide a particular scene with a certain feel. In brief, film, due to its complex material character, requires a collective endeavor in which tasks are distributed among the technical crew and the studio in pre- and post-production.

Further, this distribution requires a phenomenological transformation in how each member approaches their task. Nakai has in mind his earlier work on function: "Whereas the self (*jiga* 自我) as a simple whole worked on the thing (*mono*), the self now works on the thing as one element of a complex compositional structure" (*NMZ* 3:161). Here members approach their task with a sense of the totality of the collective in mind—as a team working together. To this end, Nakai talks about a holistic "sentiment" at the base of collaborative production—a feeling of "solidarity" and "unity," or else an "organizational" or "associational" (*zusammenhang*) sentiment of totality. The idea is that the complex material structure of film requires the crew to coordinate their tasks, and thus to perform their role as elements within a greater whole or totality. Nakai writes: "Being freed (*yūri* 遊離) from your post (*busho* 部署)—even provisionally—allows you to grasp the mathematical and mechanical sentiment of the thing based on a perspective that takes in the full picture of the system" (*NMZ* 3:161). Nakai remains within the centered account of totality here, citing Feuerbach to talk of this sentiment in terms of organicism: "For us, there is only organic life, only organic action, only organic thought. Or rather, it is more accurate to say there is only organicism" (*NMZ* 3:159). Essentially film, due to its complex material structure, engenders a collective sentiment of "unity" that distributes, coordinates, and integrates individual tasks as function within a greater organic whole or totality.

But we should not overlook the radical material dimensions of this argument. Recall Nakai's earlier claims that social and technological transformations are brought about in mutual determination with "revolutions in the intelligible and sensible faculties of humans." Here his argument is put more forcefully: "lens, vacuum tube, film—in their very character—conform themselves as if they belong within physiological activity" (*NMZ* 3:160). The claim is that technological media are incorporated into the human sensory domain and literally transform the

way that we perceive the world—engendering the above sentiment of collective solidarity directly onto our sensory faculties.

Nakai makes this argument by appealing to technology as a kind of medium not simply between self and object—but, insofar as the self is immersed within a collective and the object is immersed within a system—between the physical collective character and the social collective character. He writes: "the problem of technology is born as the medium of negotiation. It is the question of how a physical collective character and a social collective character can be fully connected." It is through our use of the same media technology that "the physical and collective character interacts with the social and collective character, and thereby carries equivalence at the same time" (*NMZ* 3:161). His claim is that our sensory expansion onto such technologies, which engenders an overall holistic collective sentiment, paired with that of our fellow crew members doing the same, constitutes our shared participation within a unified whole that bears a greater collective character. In the language of equivalence and projection: "in the domain of sentiment, the social collective character is equivalent with the material collective character that it produces. They reciprocally project each other" (*NMZ* 3:158). Nakai brings this together in a striking quote: "The lens as well as the film and vacuum tube that accompany it have a particular collective character. This is not simply a feeling of association in the object of contemplation. This [collective character] penetrates the senses themselves. [These technologies] are, so to speak, the nerve tissue itself (*shinkei soshiki jitai* 神経組織自体) of the social collective character" (*NMZ* 3:159–160).

Part 3: Year 2 of *Bi-Hihyō* and the Beginning of Capitalist Critique

In Iino Masahito's comprehensive introductory article "On the Journal *Bi-Hihyō*," he discusses the next year of the journal in terms of a "dramatic transformation" in its understanding of modernism. There was, he writes, a kind of "introspection shared among the coterie as to whether they had simply confirmed the phenomena of modernism" in the first year of the journal.[16] We can add to this a political reevaluation of a number of themes championed in the first year—including machines, collectives, and functional logic—as well as the structure of capitalist modernity that made these possible. This part and the next will focus on this capitalist critique, examining the ways in which Nakai re-examines his previous work on functionalism and the collective to confront the "spiritual mechanization" and the concomitant "averaging" or "leveling" of thought that he claimed were structural within capitalist modernity.

The Crisis of Capitalism

This critical reevaluation first and foremost involved confronting the so-called "crisis" of capitalism. We find the clearest articulation of this phenomena in his November 1932 "Art and its Tendencies in Intellectual Crisis" (*Shisōteki kiki ni okeru geijutsu narabini sono dōkō* 思想的危機における芸術ならびにその動向). Recall the dominant understanding of crisis held by Watsuji and the "old guard" of intellectuals: "when a thought appears that contradicts and opposes their own thought, people like this forget that this is only a crisis for their thought and instead consider it to be a crisis for thought more generally, a crisis for truth" (*MKZ* 2:244–245). Like Miki, Nakai emphasized the misguided nature of this view of crisis and he broadly accepted the schema of development outlined in Miki's work on crisis. Nakai paraphrases Miki to this

[16] Iino Masahito, "Zasshi 'Bi hihyō' ni tsuite; tsuke 'Bi hihyō' sōmokuji oyobi sakuin," *Yamanashi kenritsu bijutsukan kenkyū kiyō* 13/14 (1998), 9.

end: "The reason why our present age is called crisis by people is that one culture has passed through its prosperous period and has reached its maturity in all its departments, and is now required to be decomposed and reconstructed in some way" (*NMZ* 2:71).

Nevertheless Nakai made this schema his own. Linking this theory of crisis to his work on the machine and the collective, Nakai argued that this discourse often misdirected its general anxiety towards change, first, into a kind of abstract fear of the machine as a "brutal figure that squeezes the spilt blood of humans through its cold steel gears;" and second, into a hatred for the masses as a "coarsely dressed and unsightly crowd" that had encroached upon the refined elegance of the upper classes (*NMZ* 2:44–45). In fact, Nakai argued, the crisis of capitalism has less to do with the material machine or the purportedly coarse customs of the masses, and more with what he termed the large-scale "mental" or "spiritual mechanization" (*seishinteki kikaika* 精神的機械化) of culture.

This spiritual mechanization manifested itself in mutually correlated forms in modern Japanese society— "specialization" (*senmonka* 専門家) and "massification" (*taishūka* 大衆化). Nakai found the paradigm of the specialist in his colleagues in philosophy. Whereas philosophers were once systematic—working to cogently integrate the great problems of beauty, knowledge, truth, etc. within a greater systematic framework—they were now specialists, restricting themselves to isolated subtopics within, say, aesthetics, epistemology, or metaphysics. This was because "speculative thinking has become a kind of profession" in modern capitalism. Nakai laments: "in our time there are no philosophers that are also shoemakers like [Jakob] Böhme, or that polish glasses like [Baruch] Spinoza. Everyone the same is a lecturer." Professionalization and specialization mutually reinforce each other within the modern university system such that there is an "intense division of labor, where the university is divided by subject, and the students

of each divided subject are compelled to refrain from attending other department research societies." Even within their own field, young researchers are compelled to localize and isolate a subject of research; to "establish a kind of patent" or "monopoly over [a set of] research materials"—as "an Aristotle specialist, a Leibniz specialist, or a Dilthey specialist." And the goal is no longer knowledge, but merely "finding employment." Here the "speculative function is commodified" as thought is "restricted by market demand," and thus increasingly "typified and standardized" according to the needs of the university qua market (*NMZ* 2:47–48).

To be clear, capitalist professionalization does not merely alienate the philosopher from other areas of philosophy or research; by intensely focusing on a narrow set of topics, the specialist no longer thinks in terms of the whole discipline, let alone the totality of their cultural moment. This means specialization via professionalization brings about its corollary massification in that same specialist; specialization and massification are mutually correlated such that "a specialist in their own domain will find themselves outside their area of their expertise in other domains, as part of the general public" (*NMZ* 2:45).

Moreover, just as philosophy—supposedly the most "self-critical" of disciplines—had lost any critical sense of reflection on itself or its era via its specialization, professionalization, and standardization within the modern university system, authors and artists too lost their critical function by virtue of their imbrication within the profit structure of modern capitalism:

> To the extent that literature is presented through corporations of profit such as publishing houses, bookstores, magazines and newspapers, it is a commodity. To the extent that it is a commodity, it is ordered according to the projects of the newspaper or magazine. Something that is regulated by demand is a product. There are cases too where literature is sold by means of the ghost-writer, or by using some famous person's name—i.e. by the advertised name (label) (*NMZ* 2:49).[17]

[17] Translation in: Moore, "Para-existential Forces," 133; modified.

The same is true of the visual arts. Like the philosopher, "the artistic specialist has become so differentiated that they no longer are able to peer to the inner depths of human existence." Instead, their work simply "corresponds to the demands of the patron or their market broker, or else to the structure of the newspaper or magazine editor" (*NMZ* 2:53). Here we are left not with so-called "pure" -philosophy, -science, -literature, or -painting, but a hyper-commodified and standardized abstraction governed by the logic of the commodity. As proof, Nakai points to "the paths of Futurism, Expressionism, New Sensationalism, and Surrealism shifting form purity to abstractionism," and thus the alienation of the artist from their cultural moment (*NMZ* 2:52–53).

Alongside Nakai, other members of *Bi-Hihyō* discussed this capitalist abstraction in terms of the "leveling" (*suiheika* 水平化) or "averaging" (*heikinka* 平均化) of the content of art. Tomioka was among the first to point this out in his May 1932 "Problem of the Audio Recording Arts" (*Rokuon geijutsu no mondai* 録音芸術の問題):

> The condition of modern reality is that of cultural struggle, and of the multi-dimensional and -lateral movements of various strands of thought. What is generally called modernism represents a projective leveling of this multi-lateral nature. This averaging as irrespective of the many different struggles and fashionable movements in thought. Therein is mixed an unoriginal modernity that omits historicity and worldliness (*BH* 17/18:235–236).

And so, we find capitalist critique emerging as a more central concern for Nakai and his fellow coterie members in the second year of *Bi-Hihyō*. The question was from what theoretical vantage point should they respond?

Part 4: Neue Sachlichkeit and The Hermeneutic Critique of Capitalism

As I read it, Nakai's critical stance vis-à-vis capitalism forced a more critical eye towards Cassirer's functionalism, and especially towards what he felt was its susceptibility to the

homogenizing processes of capitalist modernity. In its place, Nakai began searching out possibilities for capitalist critique in his emerging interests in hermeneutic phenomenology.

A Critique of Functionalism

Nakai's newfound concerns regarding functionalism are perhaps best represented in his work on rhythm. Recall that we encountered rhythm in part 2, with Nakai and Tsujibe gauging the "rhythmical effect" of the "quick tempo" of *In Spring.* With stopwatch in hand, the two "measured with precision" the duration of each frame to chart the "temporal tone of the film's continuity" (*NMZ* 3:146). Almost a quarter of the article was comprised of these numbers, providing a more objective, numerical mood to matched Nakai's interest in functional logic. A different view is presented in "The Structure of Rhythm" (*Rizumu no kōzō* リズムの構造), carried just two issues after Tomioka's above work. With concerns over standardization and leveling forefront, Nakai expresses reservations over both the functionalism and the Neo-Kantian figures he had earlier praised.

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Nakai re-evaluates functional logic within a broader mathematico-reductive discourse that purportedly stretches back to Renaissance thinkers, and whose continued prevalence in the field of aesthetics and philosophy is exemplified in the then prominence of Neo-Kantian philosopher Rudolf Hermann Lotze. In particular, Nakai focuses on the numeric account of rhythm presented in Lotze's 1868 *The History of Aesthetics in Germany*. Developing upon early work in laboratory psychology, Lotze's views in aesthetics are established at the intersection of physiology and psychology, articulating rhythm in the interconnection of temporal apprehension and affective states. In terms of its temporal character, rhythm is here reduced to strings of

atomic unit groups, with differences in rhythmic series articulated according to numerical variations in the organization of individual unit groups. Lotze then works to link this temporal perception with emotional states, claiming that certain rhythmic intervals elicit certain affective states in the perceiver. Put together: he tries to chart the relationship between feelings of tension, expectation, and satisfaction to the repetitive variations of these more individualized unit groups, establishing a one-to-one cause and effect relationship between percept and affect.

For Nakai, a capitalist techno-rational logic of leveling underlies both premises of Lotze's study. It is first seen in the reductive materialist logic that structures his attempts to breakdown a given rhythmic sequence into a more basic constituent unit group, and is further apparent as these basic constituent unit groups are stripped of value to function as bare data that give themselves to quantification and measurement. For Nakai, this is a structural feature that compromises all functional thinking:

> in a projection of functional equivalence, this interpretation thinks of the numerical structure that connects [these] various domains in terms of the immanent structure of existence, and it proceeds forwards by making them homogeneous. The long [tradition] of Renaissance intellectualism exerts its influence here. We can count…the systematic thinking of Kant, as well as the Neo-Kantians within this line of thinking" (*NMZ* 2:30).

This reductive materialism extends to Lotze's listener as well, and his attempts to mechanistically correlate these isolable atomic unit groups with affective states. For the Nakai of "Continuity of Spring" there was a relatively straightforward relationship between emotion and mathematical structure: "the rapid tempo of an average of 1.79 seconds per scene seen in the sixth part furnishes us with a rhythmical, extreme effect." But in the Spring of 1932, with the destructive leveling effects of capitalism at the forefront of his mind, such an approach is emblematic of a broader approach to reposition human emotions as nodes in a stimulus-response circuit. Such a view Nakai writes, "situates human perception within the objective laws of time;

in other words, it makes the quantification of the qualitative its most fundamental standpoint" (*NMZ* 2:30). Here, input leads to output, and emotion is re-articulated as autonomic response.

At issue in both of Lotze's premises is an underlying logic that presupposes an "objective" relationship structuring temporality, humanity, and their intersection. In first standardizing rhythm into fixed intervals, next emphasizing the reducibility of these fixed intervals into atomic unit groups, and then quantifying emotions according to the standardized repetition of fixed atomic units, Lotze presupposes a fixed time that stands *a priori* to the interaction of humans and objects. This is indicative of a broader issue structuring the mechanistic account of time. For Nakai, the mechanistic account uncritically assumes that the spatio-temporal is a pre-established field, with people and things acting *within* it, not upon it. Actions and movements cannot disrupt this homogenous spatio-temporal zone, and this means that one is powerless in the face of time, measuring it (*Zeitmessung*) in a futile attempt to grasp systematic regularity and reclaim some degree of control.

Nakai reads such a scientific approach as the natural extension of the adoption of "Greenwich time," and the onsets of the "hegemony of the public time of the clock" (*tokeiteki zokushū jikan* 時計的俗衆時間). He writes:

> When it is recognized that time itself is already born in the activity of things, and that Greenwich time is nothing more than a convenient explanation for this time, we cannot help but inquire into the meaning of the musical metronome that forms the base of rhythm. And further, into why it is that music must be grasped according to the hegemony of the public time of the clock (*NMZ* 2:31)?

Nakai situates this new, homogenous conception of time within a broader historical and technological trajectory. Picking up on the Renaissance foundations discussed above, Nakai genealogically articulates the co-constitution of emerging forms of time-marking technologies in and alongside new forms of temporal apprehension. The technological expansion of the duties of

the clock, with the clock now capturing the passage of seconds and chiming on each of the twenty-four hours, was concomitantly linked to an emerging Renaissance intellectualist logic, which sought to articulate mathematics as a universal standard, capable of penetrating and revealing human affect. With the co-proliferation of this intellectualist logic and the role of standardized clocks in the Renaissance, a new temporal sensibility based on public clock time spread. In its expansion, a new temporal regime took form, imposing objective synchronicity onto the structure of humanity, thereby coordinating affairs between and across humans, and imbricating temporality into the universalist logic demanded by capitalist modernity.

In response to this transcendental account of rhythm, Nakai writes:

> we must turn our investigation towards the anthropological structure of *distance* [*Entfernung*] that composes the interior plane of time. According to a mathematical interpretation of rhythm, even one who fatalistically retreats into solitude is determined by the internal structure of rhythm, and this mathematical interpretation of rhythm functions as a restraint on the structural outlook of rhythmic plurality. Here, rhythm merely signifies the repetition of a so-called simple past, achieving no more than mechanism and probabilism (*NMZ* 2:31).

He is working with two closely related points. The first is that this numerical account situates the temporal unfolding of the present moment within the horizons of the past in a retroactive attempt to recover some semblance of a relationship between humanity and time. Put otherwise, it is that this analysis retrieves the connection between humanity and time by functionally reducing the temporal movement of the present to a set of objective laws derived from the past. But in doing so, recurrence is articulated within the confines of a mechanistic repetition of past structure, and thus temporality is understood to be imposed from the outside. This is related to his second claim: that the numerical account institutes an artificial *gap* (*hedeateru* 隔る) between humanity and temporality, proliferating a discourse that sunders the production of subjectivity from its

temporal base. Against this, he calls for an anthropological account that attends to a sense of distance, or *Entfernung* (*kyori* 距離).

The Hermeneutic Critique of Functionalism

Distance is here a reference to Heidegger's theory of *Entfernung*. While Nakai initially showed great interest in Cassirer, and in intervening years even tried to link Cassirer's work together with Heidegger, in the second year of the magazine he largely privileges the work of Heidegger, granting hermeneutic phenomenology an increasingly central role in his engagement with capitalism. His interest in hermeneutic phenomenology took new levels in 1931, after he began attending a special lecture course on "The Phenomenological Ontology of Heidegger" by his advisor, Kuki Shūzō.[18] In response, Nakai produced a series of manuscripts and publications with Heidegger as his chief referent, including November 1931's "An Anthropological Consideration of Art" (*Geijutsu no ningengakuteki kōsatsu* 芸術の人間学的考察), April 1932's "The Aesthetics of *Neue Sachlichkeit"* (*Noie zahharihhikaito no bigaku* ノイエ・ザッハリッヒカイトの美学), and "Aesthetics of the Turning Point" (*Tenkanki no bigaku* 転換期の美学), composed of notes from his lectures at Sōai Women's Technical College during this same period.

In these works, hermeneutic phenomenology is framed as the inversion of functionalism, or at least as a bulwark against the homogenized iteration of it found within capitalist modernity:

[18] Along with Tanabe, Watsuji, and Miki, Kuki was part of the early wave of thinkers that went to Germany, studying with Husserl in Freiburg and Heidegger in Marburg, before proceeding to France to meet Henri Bergson and a young Jean-Paul Sartre. See: Stephen Light, *Shūzō Kuki and Jean-Paul Sartre: Influence and Counter-Influence in the Early History of Existential Phenomenology* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987).

> [Cassirer] departs from a mathematical hypothesis in an attempt to obtain a projective and equivalent clarity regarding the phenomena of concrete life. The fundamental systematic structure that indicates this is termed symbolic form. Departing from the precision of mathematics, he descends to concrete life.
>
> Heidegger, on the contrary, departs from the self-disclosure of life itself and ascends to the essential structure. And our understanding [*Verstehen*] of what is called fore-structure (*Vor-Struktur*) can be termed transcendent; but this is not transcendence in the sense opposing immanence, but transcendence as a constitutive element of an internally unified system. This is transcendence in the sense of *überstieg* (surmounting); a leap in the sense of the transcendence of the distance of the reference (*Verweisung*) [to being as a whole or World]. As this transcendence is connected to worldly existence as a totality of involvement (*Bewandtnissnisganzheit*), then when it is articulated (*artikulieren*) in interpretation, as Heidegger notes, its sense (*Sinn*) or function (*Funktion*) is formed in relation to its structural framework (*NMZ* 2:20–21).

Though Nakai has not abandoned functional theory, he is now concerned that, in starting from the mathematical as opposed to concrete life, and in making the *modus operandi* of projective equivalence the quantification of the inherently qualitative, functionalism risks reduction—never adequately integrating the qualitative dimensions of life and thus remaining without articulation.

The charm of the hermeneutic account, for Nakai, is that it secures the organic holism of functional thinking, while simultaneously avoiding the evacuation of meaning found in the numerical account. Yoshida Masazumi captures this well, writing that, for Nakai, "Heidegger is different from the [account of] relation and function as a 'simple diagram' [found in Cassirer, instead] marking a foothold in 'a concrete world that announces itself.'"[19] That is, instead of a futile attempt to recompose a broader network of meaning from numerical units, it starts from being as an "involvement whole" or "totality of involvement"—a pre-established structural web of referential meaning that determines the way that we see, act, and think in the world. Here,

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[19] Yoshida Masazumi, "Seishin no meiseki: 'Sekai bunka' shūdan no teikō to gakushū: Nakai Masakzutachi to 'teikō no gakushū' o meguru shomondai (2)," *Kyōto daigaku shōgai kyōikugaku, toshokan jōhō-gaku kenkyū* 3 (2004): 46.

each so-called unit always already transcends (*überstieg*) its supposed self-containment to refer to the broader involvement whole structuring lived experience. Nakai writes: "In life, the function is soaked in actual existence…Once the function is equivalently projected in life and transforms into the existential, the levee has already broken. Here, the torrent of life violently swells to capacity, overflows, and bursts out of the dry orderly canal" (*NMZ* 2:22).

The fact that Nakai transitions to hermeneutic phenomenology via the concept of distance, or *Entfernung* is of further importance. In contrast to Watsuji, who was famously troubled by the fact that Heidegger "ignored spatiality as a primordial existential condition," Nakai's relation to hermeneutic phenomenology is overwhelmingly spatial (*WTZ* 8:2). He writes:

> If we say the above [numerical account] transforms the qualitative into the quantitative, this can perhaps be said to transform the quantitative into the qualitative. In other words, this is not numerical in the sense of natural numbers but suggests irrational numbers as a cut of infinity. Put again: this can be interpreted not in terms of Lotze's experiments measuring time (*Zeitmessung*) but in terms of temporal cuts (*Zeitschnitt*)…in aiming for something within the internal infinity of time, there can be no moment before nor any moment after, and so we reach the limits of mechanical law. It is therein that we know for the first time true "interiority." The meaning of the "interiority" of existence is understood for the first time in such a "comprehension of time." In Japanese, the [spatial] sense of in-between, or "*ma*" (間) carries such a structure. And so we say *ma ga au* (間が合う to be in sync), *ma ga hazureru* (間がはずれる to miss an opportunity), *ma ga nukeru* (間が抜ける to miss an opportunity) *ma ga nobiru* (間がのびる to procrastinate). This term is likewise accommodated in both spatial and social domains, for instance it underlies the terms *nakama* (仲間 friend) and *ma ni au* (間に合う to be in time for)
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> In the moment that this structure of *ma* is understood in terms of existential ontology, the self turns over on itself and transfers inwards such that we drop body and mind and get in touch with a deep, comfortable tension; in a word, we get taste a sense of "interiority" (*NMZ* 2:32–33).

While, *prima facie*, Nakai's analytic shift towards temporally discontinuous cuts seems to reinforce Lotze's quantitative individualized unit groups, Nakai elides these numeric connotations by relocating discontinuity within the horizons of the subjective—thus emphasizing

that discontinuity is not merely the suspension of objective time. Here, the spatial structure of time in the hermeneutic account of temporal discontinuity—the sense of distance (*Entfernung*)—does not homogenize time into space but imbues it with existential significance.

Nakai casts the difference between functionalism and hermeneutic phenomenology in terms of two different approaches to space—interval (*kankaku* 間隔; *Abstand*) and distance (*kyori*; *Entfernung*). This is a difficult point, and Heidegger's language is tricky and does not map onto Japanese as easily as Nakai feigns. We can get a first approximation with the aid of Heidegger scholar Michael Inwood:

> *Ferne* means 'distance,' and *Entfernung* is 'distance, removal.' *Ent-* here intensifies the sense of distance. But *ent-* is, in other cases, privative: *decken*, 'to cover,' becomes *entdecken*, 'to uncover.' Thus *Entfernung* could mean: 'removing distance.' Heidegger introduces the word in this sense by writing it as *Ent-fernung*… If something is too close, then we cannot deal with it; it is in a way too far. So removing something to an appropriate distance, *Entfernung*, is also bringing it close enough to handle, *Ent-fernung*.[20]

Hubert Dreyfus helps explicate this further: Heidegger "uses [*Ent-fernung*] this way to mean *the establishing and overcoming of distance*, that is, the opening up of a space in which things can be near and far." And things can be near or far according to our involvement with the world. "Dasein brings things close in the sense of bringing them within the range of its concern, so that they can be experienced as near to or remote from a particular Dasein."[21] In Heidegger's own language: "circumspective concern decides as to the closeness and farness of what is proximally ready-to-hand environmentally. Whatever this concern dwells with beforehand is what is closest and this is what regulates our" ontological sense of distance, or *Ent-fernung* (*BT* 142). And so

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[20] Inwood, *A Heidegger Dictionary*, 4–5.

[21] Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), 130–131.

when Nakai writes "the origin of this interval (*kankaku*) must lie in a feeling of distance (*kyori*)," and that there first "must be a pathos of distance, a consciousness of distance," he is talking about our primordial and pragmatic sense of involvement or concern with the world (*NMZ* 2:290).

But this ontological sense of *Ent-fernung* is the condition of the possibility of not just concern, but of physical space itself—of the interval. This argument follows Heidegger's "derivation" of the "present-at-hand" from the "ready-to-hand"—from everyday coping, to practical deliberation, to theoretical reflection.[22] Here, the physical, quantifiable units of the numerical account are of a second-order, and only emerge *post-facto* in theoretical reflection. Nakai follows this logic, arguing that "when the phenomenon of distance [*Entfernung*] is seen from the perspective of the uninvolved, it simply becomes a kind of interval." And this means that "[s]o-called physical space is just a shadow of this space of the mind. And so when time and also space immerse within life itself this is ontologically termed a living space" (*NMZ* 2:290).

Nakai's sense of distance is here grounded in our "living space" in the same way that Heidegger's account of spatiality is ontologically grounded in involvement or being-in-the-world. Nakai finds support for this position in the Japanese language—integrating this account of the spatial in-betweenness of living space onto the sociality of existence. As we have seen, Nakai's key example is the term *nakama* (friend).[23] *Ma* is here an integral concept undergirding life, "traversing life itself, and crossing over and through the true nature of existence" (*NMZ* 1:34). And so here, Nakai makes sociality fundamental to intelligibility—to the opening up of a

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[22] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, 137.

[23] Watsuji mines a similar social sense of spatiality from hermeneutic phenomenology, with his account of "betweenness" (*aidagara* 間柄, *ma* 間) receiving its earliest formulation in his 1931 *Ethics*.

space in which things can be made near or far. Through this concept of *ma*, Nakai demonstrates the existential and ontological nature of these social dimensions, formulating *ma* as a fecund social space integral to rhythm and the production of subjectivity.

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In the same way that Heidegger's derivation of physical space from existential spatiality closely follows his derivation of the present-at-hand from the ready-to-hand, Nakai derives two main forms of subjectivity from the hermeneutic account of space—theoretical and pragmatic. These correspond to the capitalist iteration of the numerical account and the social-historical iteration of hermeneutic phenomenology. He initially follows Heidegger in terming these the thinking subject and *Sache* (*kōi* 行為, activity) respectively, but will later code them in the local script of Japanese philosophy as *shukan* and *shutai* respectively. With regards to the thinking subject (*shukan*), Nakai writes: "Heidegger urges attention with regards to our deriving a thinking substance, *res cogitans* from the proposition *cogito ergo sum*…It is from this thinking subject that the concept of the self was determined, and from that point on that the substantial objects that oppose it are considered." Against this thinking subject is an account of the subject as holistic activity, or *Sache* (*shutai*): "when subject and object, *Ding* and *Tat*, are disassembled internally, they dissolve within the *Sache* (activity) as one development" (*NMZ* 2:16). Tsujibe too puts forward this idea of *Sache* in Heidegger: "The sublimation of *Ding* and *Tat*, *Sache*, is not the so-called thing in itself (*Ding an sich)* nor the so-called *Tatsache* [of Johann Gottlieb Fichte], but the surfacing of a new *Sache*" (*BH* 17/18:218).

Hermeneutics, *Sache*, and Neue Sachlichkeit

But while Nakai and Tsujibe connect this pragmatic language of *Sache* as holistic activity directly to Heidegger, they also make implicit local reference to Miki's work on the philosophy of history. By this time, articles later included in Miki's *Philosophy of History* had already been circulating, and Nakai writes a review of the book in *Tetsugaku kenkyū* in May of this same year. Remember, Miki embraces this idea of the fact (*Tatsache*) in an attempt not only to overcome subject-object bifurcation, but to re-define subjectivity as an instance of self-formative totality.[24] As we noted, subjectivity defined in this manner opens itself beyond the ego-subject of the individual such that any fact of self-development is deemed subjective. Here, "subjective fact itself is objective, existential, and supra-individual" (*MKZ* 6:69). And so, when Miki refers to society as a subjective fact, he means that society, as totality, self-develops itself of itself, and that in this process it makes history. The members of *Bi-Hihyō* take a similar approach to the self-development of social forms as a whole, formulating Heidegger's involvement totality as the locus of self-formation. For instance Tsujibe, in his work on the emerging German art movement Neue Sachlichkeit, talks of "*Sache* determining and developing *Sache* of itself" and, while admitting the movement is young, sees prospects for it to perhaps realize a "new dynamic world" (*BH* 17/18:218–219). Nakai makes a similar point working on Neue Sachlichkeit:

> [*Sache*] should be understood in terms of the sublimation of "object" and "activity," the acting object, the activity of the object. Heidegger's understanding of the tool (*zeug*) amidst the concept of referential whole (*Verweisungsganzheit*) opens onto this sense of *Sache*…
>
> To the extent that subject and object—the concepts of *Tat* and the *Ding*—are disassembled in the concept of *Sache*, it necessarily leads of itself to an attendant dissolution of the division between form and content…
>
> The concept of form already rids itself of its sense as the exterior of the object, the external form. We must discard the view that it is a container filled up by content.

[24] Nakai uses the term *Sache* as opposed to *Tatsache* perhaps because this latter term, in Heidegger, is connected with the factuality of entities but not the facticity (*Faktizität*) of Dasein.

> Instead, it must be based upon the concept of *morphe* as in the sense of botany. The relational form of a developing organism is constituted in the mutual relation between its necessary function and other functions, and it is through this form that a projection of the whole is made clear; in other words, an equivalence is uncovered in the activity of development itself; the significance of the fore-structure (*Vor-Struktur)* is contained in the fact that Being itself has access to (*Zugang*) and encounters being itself [their preontological understanding of being, organized as nexus of intelligibility]. New *a prioris* or new forms exist as vanguard- or fore-structures (*zenei kōsei* 前衛構成) of this *Vor-Struktur*. It is only in this sense of this fore- or vanguard structure that transcendence (*transzendenz)* to a new sense [*Sinn*] is justifiable. This can only be understood by returning to the diagram of time.
>
> In this case, the word Form (*katachi* 形) can be easily understood in terms of form (*fo-mu* フォーム) in sports. This is *morphe* deepened through *praxis*. Form (*katachi*) is thus a functional record of activity as a form (*keitai* 形態) of development (*NMZ* 2:24–25).

While Nakai's point regarding the self-development of social forms is obscured by his over-reliance on Heideggerian language and our need for translation (equivalent projection?) into English, we can holistically locate these passages in both latitudinal and longitudinal terms.

We have touched upon the latitudinal structure of the totality of involvement above. Again, Nakai is talking about the holistic structure of social meaning—the referential whole (*Verweisungsganzheit*) of their interrelations, the involvement whole (*Bewandtnissnisganzheit*) that includes human concerns and involvement, and the entire world as a preontological understanding of being (*vorontologisches Seinsverständnis*) that forms a network of intelligibility.[25] The language of form and content is important in terms of distinguishing this hermeneutic sense of the whole or totality: while functionalism transforms content into numerical form, the hermeneutic emphasis on *Sache* is grounded in the unity of the two, thus forming a preventative measure against the reductive vulnerabilities of functionalist thinking.

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[25] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, 97.

Essentially, Nakai has retained a sense of the *a priori* latitudinal holism of the functionalist account but ensured its immersion in the felt, qualitative significance of lived experience.

His latitudinal model for this hermeneutic sense of totality is again the organism of the centered totality. He is here inspired by botany. In the same way that each organ interacts with other organs to preserve the organism as a whole, each node in the network references other nodes, forming a broader form/figure (that is, projecting a whole) via their reciprocal inter-relation. But this is not to grant priority to the parts; rather, as in the case of botany, the whole form/figure (of the plant) is *a priori* such that it always already structures the functioning of its parts. In a rapid move, Nakai links this to the involvement whole and the fore-structure, claiming that the involvement whole structures our access to being. He has in mind Heidegger's work on our "preontological understanding of being"—the holistic nexus of intelligibility that structures our everyday interaction with entities. Here, each part is transcendent in the sense of *überstieg*, of its supposed self-containment to refer to a broader involvement whole. Heidegger writes: "An involvement is itself discovered only on the basis of the prior discovery of a totality of involvement" (*BT* 118).

Members of *Bi-Hihyō* developed a longitudinal theory of self-formation out of this theory of a meaningful whole or totality (*Ganzheit*). Here we find an account of temporality that is in direct opposition to the Greenwich time of the numeric account. Nakai makes this clear with reference to sports in the above excerpt. Here the latitudinal configuration of form (*katachi*, *keitai*), is formed (*fo-mu*) over time through practice. The kind of intuitive team awareness and collective intentionality that we appreciate in watching, say, a first-ranked soccer team—where a member is already aware of where his teammates are going to be and so already has an intuitive sense of where to place a pass—is only formed (*fo-mu*) through practice. This is sometimes

talked about in terms of the thrill of watching club teams over international teams; the latter do not have the same degree of group cohesion or form (*keitai*) because they don't have the chance to play with each other to the same extent. And so, for Nakai, form (*katachi*, *keitai*, *morphe*) is developmentally formed (*hatten, fo-mu*) over time through practice. We will tease out both this understanding of sports and the self-forming system below; what is important as a starting point is that *Sache* is always self-formative, immersed longitudinally within the diagram of time. Here the entire holistic nexus of intelligibility—the latitudinal connection of meaning that make up one's living space—is a self-forming totality that develops itself forward longitudinally.

Becker, Leaping, and Negativity

As we have seen across Nakai's Kyoto University forerunners, Nishida, Watsuji, and Miki, this development can be oriented towards reproduction and recapitulation or towards novel production and reordering. Nakai is interested in the latter—the novel reconfiguration of the present ordering of our involvements. Breaking with the concerns of 1927 Heidegger, Nakai foregrounds "vanguard" or "avant-garde" (*zenei*) configurations of the totality of involvement. His language here is intentionally strange and, as I read it, meant to serve a dual purpose. First, to evoke an aesthetic sense; like the term avant-garde, *zenei* was associated with new and disruptive trends in the art world. He phrases it this way, we will see, because for Nakai and other members aesthetics is a key site by which we reorder the associational linkages structuring the totality of intelligibility, thus opening new possibilities for seeing, thinking, and acting in the world. Second, the term *zenei* evoked a political sense; like the term vanguard, *zenei* was associated with the revolutionary vanguard party endorsed by the Bolshevik revolution—a kind of catalyst that accelerates the revolution in the absence of a sufficiently developed revolutionary class.

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We will deal with these two senses in turn. To understand the first aesthetic sense, we need to introduce another key figure from hermeneutic phenomenology: Oskar Becker. Though there is not much written on Becker in English, Husserl entrusted him and Heidegger together to complete his phenomenological project. As Hans Sluga observes, Husserl paired Becker's *Mathematical Existence* with Heidegger's *Being and Time* in the 1927 edition of the *Yearbook for Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* in an attempt to represent and further "the two sides of the phenomenological movement in philosophy—the scientific and the humanistic one."[26] Becker's intervention largely consisted in his approaching the field of mathematics from an existential standpoint, or as he has it "to put 'mathematical existence' in the context of human existence" with particular reference to "Heidegger's research method of hermeneutic phenomenology."[27] But more than his mathematical research, it was his work on space and art that was welcomed by the Japanese philosophical community. For instance, in 1931, Shimomura Toratarō, fellow graduate from the Kyoto University philosophy department, published "The Transcendental Structure of Intuitive Space (Becker)," an introduction and scattered translation of Becker's 1930 work by the same name; and in 1932 Yuase Seinosuke published a translation of Becker's 1929 "The Depreciation of Beauty and the Adventurousness of the Artist." Nakai was aware of both—selecting the former to be published in issue 16 as editor of *Tetsugaku kenkyū* and writing a positive introduction to the latter that was printed in the 19/20 double issue of *Bi-Hihyō* (*BH* 19/20:293–296.)

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[26] Hans Sluga, "Oskar Becker or the Reconciliation of Mathematics and Existential Philosophy," *META: Research in Hermeneutics, Phenomenology & Practical Philosophy* 11.2 (2019): 571.

[27] Oskar Becker, "Mathematische Existenz: Untersuchungen zur Logik und Ontologie mathematische Phänomene," in *Jahrbuch für Phänomenologie und phänomenologische Forschung* 8 (1927): 442.

It was his theory of art that had the largest impact on Nakai and other members. In particular, the above vanguard sense of artistic production was, at least partially, indebted to Becker and his idea that art forms beyond the "limit of the power of 'understanding'" (*Verstehens*). Essentially, for Becker, aesthetics outstrips our preontological understanding of being, and thus the holistic nexus of intelligibility and totality of involvements that structures our everyday interaction with entities. Art, Becker writes, appears when the 'thrownness' that characterizes facticity, and thus necessarily the factual and real possibilities of purely historical existence, are considered to reach the limit of their valid possibilities." He continues:

> Thrownness, expressed in the temporal analysis in terms of an 'always already having been' (*Gewesenheit*), has its limits (*Grenze*); it does not totally control the genius of Dasein. The 'burden-character' of Dasein, which it assumes in its 'existential' of 'always already having been'—in contrast to which all 'free' moods appear as sheerly 'liberated,' or else sheerly 'elevated'—finds its end where the 'free-favor of nature,' the in-principle ahistorical, wondrous, and adventurous destiny of the artist begins.[28]

In the schema of self-formative totality, artistic production is "ahistorical" in that it overflows the horizon of affordances instituted in any given understanding of being to outstrip our structural thrownness in the world, opening new perceptual, conceptual, and practical possibilities that went un-noticed within the previous understanding of being. It is "wondrous" in that, in breaking from the horizons of our thrownness, it opens unfamiliar and unexplored forms of intelligibility. Negotiating these new forms, it is "adventurous" in that this topos of understanding remains uncharted and unnavigated.

But remember, the unit of analysis here is not the individual artist-genius but *Sache* itself. Nakai admits that Becker's work is "scarred" by the romantic sense of genius, creativity, and aestheticist autonomy, but nevertheless works to nullify these dimensions by re-working his

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[28] Oskar Becker, "Von der Hinfälligkeit des Schönen und der Abenteuerlichkeit des Künstlers," in *Dasein und Dawesen: Gesammelte philosophische Aufsätze* (Neske: Pfullingen, 1963): 33.

analysis on the level of historical self-formative activity of *Sache* as totality (*BH* 19/20:296).[29] For instance, Becker talks about the novel dimensions of artistic creation in terms of an "incomprehensible creative leap"—distinguishing this process from the kind of gradual or steady progress that marks discursive thinking, as well as from our everyday modes of being in the world.[30] In Nakai, this is translated as leap (*hiyaku* 飛躍), and then associated with negativity (*hiteisei* 否定性). In other words, Nakai translates this idea into the Hegelian–Marxist–Leninist–Kyoto School holistic framework of discontinuous self-development, thus departing from his earlier centered account of totality. Emphasizing Becker's references to György Lukács, and especially the sense of totality that structures his diverse output, Nakai writes: "the sense of severance carried within this leap, and its sense of transcendence, is dynamic. It is what Lukács calls *dynamische Forma Formans*."[31] Linking this to dialectics, he continues: "'negativity' can be said to be the greatest form of historical self-development" (*BH* 19/20:294). The significance of the leap, then, is not for the artist, but for the entire nexus of intelligibility. Insofar as this nexus, formulated as *Sache*, is the locus of self-development, art is seen to have radical potential vis-à-vis the self-formation of our extant understanding of being.

So, we know that aesthetics is seen in terms of its break in the historical process of formation, which, by virtue of its severing, allows for the reconfiguration of any given network of intelligibility. The members of *Bi-Hihyō* tried to work out the details of this process in relation

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[29] This is a reference to Nakai's work on "Machine Beauty" from 1930.

[30] Becker, "Von der Hinfälligkeit," 13.

[31] This is a reference to Lukács's 1918 "Die Subjekt-Objekt-Beziehung in der Ästhetik," which is cited by Becker.

to Neue Sachlichkeit, devoting the 17/18 double issue to this diverse German art movement. In his contribution, Nakai conceptualizes this process like this:

> the particular form of the phenomenon of beauty and art lies in uncovering a who (*Wer*), a character of existence, within a what (*Was*), the categorical domain of presence-at-hand (*Vorhandenheit*). [In art, w]ithin the presence-at-hand mode of being, we hear the call (*ruf*) that draws us towards our own existential possibilities. The call solicits [possibilities of] being from the clouded mountains and flowing rivers.
>
> This also means that we uncover a presence-at-hand (*Vorhandenheit*) in the character of existence. This is to see hills and valleys in one's chest. The same holds of the four flowers—plum, orchid, bamboo, and chrysanthemum. The words spoken by [Kuwayama] Gyokushū, that "it should be said that the true nature of Edo's topos—its famous mountains and great rivers—were created by [Ike no] Taiga;" and by [Oscar] Wilde, that "life imitates art far more than art imitates life," holds great interest from this perspective. The mutual projection of category [the What- or *Was*-being of entities] and *Existenzialien* [existentials; the Who- or *Wer*-being of Dasein] carries a unique structure of being. I believe that Besseler's *In-Stimmung-Sein* (Being-in-the-mood), which is restricted to the domain of music, should be expanded out to the region of art as a whole [to account for] this unique structure.
>
> The heat and sheer purity of the heart that is for the first time discovered in the blast furnace, the shock to the soul experienced for the first time in the scream of the generator—each marks an encounter of humanity with being and is not without point. People draw unquantifiable depth from the lens, film, radio, and electricity; each of these, as they are always preceded by [*Sache* as] an acting object or object of action, must carry the depth of a call that solicits us from the possibility of being.
>
> The fact that one's own vanguard, as already-ahead-of-itself (*Sich-vorweg-sein*), is brought forth in oneself—we refer to this as the call (*ruf*) (*NMZ* 2:27–28).

While art is still grounded in a mutual projective and equivalent relation, in this understanding projection and equivalence mediate between two ontological ways of being: the who (existentials; the Who- or *Wer*-being of Dasein) and the what (category; the What- or *Was*-being of entities that are not Dasein). In one direction—moving from the what to the who—we pull from entities a significance that is not normally contained in the dominant intelligibility of being (the *Wer*). In his lecture notes Nakai associates this with natural beauty, and understands it in terms of external nature being projected inwards towards oneself (*NMZ* 2:292). Nakai introduces

the presence-at-hand here as a kind of analogy; in the same way that the presence-at-hand emerges as a break in the referential totality or equipment totality of readiness-to-hand, natural beauty likewise breaks the "coherent" [*Zuassamenhang*] intelligibility of some population's cultural practices and horizons. But while presence-at-hand can fall into what Heidegger later calls "standard reserve" (*Bestand*)—the kind of numerical leveling that leaves it ripe for capitalist exploitation—natural beauty solicits unrealized possibilities of being within any given cultural nexus. Art here has the capacity to bring forth new ways of seeing, thinking, and doing; to reorient the perceptual, discursive, and practical horizons of a population. Nakai writes: "nature itself is inserted into the canvas, and it is through the canvas that we are separated from nature itself, that we begin to understand [*Beurteilung*] and achieve a new clarity of perspicuity [*Durchsichtigkeit*] regarding nature" (*NMZ* 2:291). This allows us to see quotidian objects anew, enmeshed with fresh significance: "It was when [William] Turner first drew the beauty of fog that fog was extolled as beautiful by people. Perhaps it is better said that it is through art that natural beauty develops" (*NMZ* 2:302). This holds for man-made objects too. For instance, through photographs of the blast furnace and operatic performances of the generator—references to Neue Sachlichkeit artists Albert Renger-Patzsch's photography of blast furnace plants and Max Brand's opera, *Machinist Hopkins*—the artist decodes the objects from their everyday sense (*Sinn*) and invests it with a new sense that speaks to our existential character. Here the heat of the blast furnace is the purity of the heart; the scream of the generator is the shout of our soul.

In the other direction—the projective equivalence of the who (*Wer*) onto the what (*Was*)—art structures neutral entities with layers of meaning and restructures or adds additional layers to entities that have already been determined within an involvement or referential whole. In his lecture notes Nakai links this with artistic beauty, and understands it in terms of the artist

projecting or throwing themselves outwards (*NMZ* 2:292). This is the point of the Wilde and Gyokushū references above; both quotes point to the way that art maps the natural world with cultural significance. Here aesthetics is a key site by which the totality of involvements, and even more strongly the world, is created and made concrete. For instance, the significance and cultural weight of the three sacred peaks—Hakusan, Tateyama, and Fujisan—were coded and instituted through aesthetico-religious practices like Taiga's *Journey to the Three Peaks*. The same can be said of Matsuo Bashō and Amanohashidate, or Paul Cézanne and Mont Saint-Victoire. And so: "the phenomena that are given, are not simply given, but are thrown outward through our blood, through our flesh—or else they are [structured by virtue of a] projected design" (*NMZ* 2:293).

And, as the above makes clear, these two directions are always already inter-mingled in the "mutual projection of category and existentialia." To this end, Nakai introduces a third and more fundamental understanding of aesthetics: technical or technological beauty. Nakai writes: "In artistic expression generally, whether drawing a picture or playing music, there is something different sunken in the pleasure of drawing and playing that separates it from the simple pleasure of seeing or listening. The pleasure sunken in this drawing that projects the interior exterior is first established by letting something interior flow outward and letting something exterior flow inwards without interruption" (*NMZ* 2:293). Unpacked in this way, it should be clear how much this hermeneutic structure aligns with his earlier functionalist theory of projection, translation and equivalence. The difference is that here its domain is entire the horizon of intelligibility. That is, the unit of analysis is the whole nexus of cultural associations as totality.

This is (deeply) coded in in the next sentence via Nakai's reference to Heinrich Besseler and his *In-Stimmung-Sein* (Being-in-the-mood, or Being-in-attunement). Besseler was a student of Heidegger, and introduced the Heideggerian notion of mood or attunement (*Stimmung*) to

musicology. Heidegger writes that “ontologically, mood is a primordial kind of being for Dasein, in which Dasein is disclosed to itself *prior* to all cognition and volition, and beyond their range of disclosure” (*BT* 175). Connecting his research in music to this theory of mood, Besseler argues that music is not first given as an object, but “originally becomes accessible to us as a manner/melody (*Weise*) of human existence (*des mensch lichen Daseins*).”[32] Here, music is not given in terms of any simple mode of being—neither as a neutral object nor as an equipment with a purpose—but rather discloses our way of being in the world.

Nakai offers a vivid example with reference to the origin of string instruments. These, he argues were “developed from the bowstring. Surely the high pitch of the string poured out while bustling amidst the mountains and hills, and when this happened humans suddenly heard the sound of the bow. We can imagine a human who has forgotten his prey, as well as himself, to simply sink within the sound. And who then begins examining and inspecting this sound.” The claim here is that music literally breaks our immersion within the entire involvement totality of hunting. He continues with reference to “the origins of the Japanese flute; hearing the sound of wind blowing the bamboo, a monk came to a spiritual realization that the path itself was hidden in the bamboo, immediately cut it, and blew through his own mouth. In other words, he examined and found the soul of the wind striking the bamboo.” Here, the aesthetic not only breaks our immersion within any given intelligibility of being, it opens a path by which we come to new terms with our intelligible environment.

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[32] Heinrich Besseler, *Aufsätze zur Musikästhetik und Musikgeshcichte* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1978), 45. Translation by: Andrew Bowie, *Music, Philosophy, and Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 294.

This is importantly related to the self-formative process of history, and Besseler himself applies this idea of *In-Stimmung-Sein* historically.[33] As Andrew Bowie observes, Besseler construes any given historical practice of listening "as one aspect of a history which is neither subjective nor objective, because it involves a dialectic between objective practices and subjective responses." Here, there is a "persistent tension in…music between new possibilities of subjective expression, and the ways in which the forms of that expression can rigidify into objectified convention."[34] For Besseler and Nakai, the movement from interior to exterior and from exterior to interior, or from category to existential and from existential to category, are dialectically linked as one flow constitutive of historical development. In Nakai by way of Besseler then, the *Neue* of Neue Sachlichkeit is about new formations of *Sache*, about art producing new formations that transcend the dominant totality of intelligibility.

Perhaps we can clarify this point with reference to Heidegger's later work. While Nakai's view here very much outstrips the accounts given of both art and history in *Being and Time*, the work nevertheless resonate with later accounts given by Heidegger after his self-described "*kehre*" (turn)—from seeking a universal ontology, a science of being, to an "ontic" account of world that is both culturally and historically located.[35] Key here is "Origin of the Work of Art."[36]

[33] Before Nakai, Nagahiro used Beseller's work in his analysis of "Radio (The Sociality of the Concert)" to first, historically situate the opera as having emerged in the late 18th century, and having really "only won its position in the so-called era of the genius in the latter half of the 19th century," and second, situate the radio as a kind of chance for music to return to a kind of pre-performance "purity" and "righteousness"—a curious inversion of the standard reading of radio and popular music found in thinkers like Adorno. See: *BH* 9:280–282.

[34] Bowie, *Music, Philosophy, and Modernity*, 307.

[35] Hubert Dreyfus, "Heidegger's Ontology of Art," in *A Companion to Heidegger*, eds. H. Dreyfus and M. Wrathall (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 407.

[36] Nakai's account of art as an opening onto human existence and our understanding of being also resonates with notes from Heidegger's 1935 lecture course: "We must provide a new content for the word 'art' and for what it intends to name, on the basis of a fundamental

Though this article received its earliest formulation in 1935, two or so years after Nakai's article, the link between the two lies in the work of Becker. As Sluga argues, "Heidegger's essay 'On the Origin of the Work of Art' can be read as a response to Becker's critical challenge of 1929" and its idea that art exists outside the scope of the historical-hermeneutic account of *Being and Time*. For the Heidegger of this period, as for Nakai, art "breaks open a new open place, in whose openness everything is different than usual" thereby making it such that "everything ordinary and hitherto existing becomes an unbeing" (*BW* 197, mod). More, after deconstructing the current understanding of being as it exists in a given culture and its practices, the work of art enacts a new understanding of being. Heidegger cites several examples:

> art attains to its historical essence as foundation. It happened in the West for the first time in Greece. What was to be called Being in the future was set into work, [thereby] setting the standard. The realm of beings that had been opened was then transformed into a being in the sense of God's creation. This happened in the Middle Ages. This kind of being was again transformed with the onset and progression of the modern age. Beings became objects that could be managed and penetrated through calculation. At each time a new and essential world irrupted (*BW* 201, mod).

Here a new understanding of being was born out of the open space afforded by the work of art's deconstruction of the Greek understanding of being. This allowed for an ontology that sets up our relation to beings as God's creation. When a work of art later comes to deconstruct this understanding of being thereby opening another space, art fixes into place our relation to beings as controllable and penetrable.[37]

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orientation to Being that has been recovered in an originary way." See: Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 140.

[37] Kyle Peters, "Goddesses and Gods in Rancière and Heidegger," *Journal of Aesthetics and Phenomenology* 1, no. 2 (2014): 161–162.

This modern horizon of intelligibility opens onto another site of resonance between Nakai and later Heidegger: capitalist critique. This is perhaps clearest in relation to another of Heidegger's famous post-*kehre* essays: "Question Concerning Technology." The target of critique in this work, what Heidegger refers to as "standing reserve," is strikingly similar to Nakai's critique of the reductive tendencies of the numerical account. Here "[e]verywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately on hand." Devoid of meaning, an entity "no longer stands over against us as objects" with meaning, but as resources geared toward efficient extraction (*BW* 322). Like Nakai, moreover, Heidegger argues that in order for us to reflect upon and confront the contemporary technological understanding of being, we must operate from the standpoint of art. That is, for Nakai and later Heidegger, art bears the capacity of transcendence (*transzendenz*)—the possibility to open new horizons of intelligibility, new relations between category and existential, through which we relate to entities in a different manner.

But again, Heidegger's later view approximates Nakai's, not the other way around. Drawing on Becker, Lukács, and Besseler in different ways, members of *Bi-Hihyō* move beyond the Heidegger of *Being and Time* and approach a position on art that Heidegger himself would later occupy both by thinking through the development of historical forms as such, and, by securing a key place for aesthetics in the creation of new historical possibilities.

And so Nakai and fellow members of *Bi-Hihyō* contributed a novel understanding of self-formation—not only to the discourse on self-development in Japan, but to the international discussion of hermeneutics. In the framework of self-formation, the idea is that through aesthetics we defamiliarize our dominant cultural nexus of intelligibility, and then reconfigure it with new associations. And so it is through the "vanguard configuration" of aesthetics that we find a new form of transcendence—not in the sense of *überstieg* to the broader referential nexus,

but of "*transzendenz* to a new sense [*Sinn*]," or horizon of intelligibility. It was in this new sense that Nakai's hermeneutic hope for capitalist critique and transformation resided.

<u>Part 5: Sports Feeling and the Collectivist Rearticulation of the Hermeneutic Account</u>

But the hermeneutic account is not the full picture either. In the period after his work on Neue Sachlichkeit, Nakai began criticizing this account of *Sache* as self-formative totality, writing:

> Because collective phenomena of ontology possess the structure of man, the problem already carries an individualistic form. And so even though this outlook has been developed in this direction to a certain extent in the work of [Karl] Löwith and, in a different sense, Lukács, fundamentally this interpretive perspective cannot escape its individualism. And for this reason, we are concerned that the problem of historical collectives has been cut off in this trend (*NMZ* 2:37).

As I read it, the shortcoming of the hermeneutic account—its individualism—is not latitudinal; remember, for Nakai, the charm of hermeneutics is the latitudinal immersion of the individual within a broader, holistic network of intelligibility. Rather, the individualism here is linked to its longitudinal schema of historical development. While still invested in *Sache* as a self-formative account imbricated in longitudinal development, and art as a kind of vanguard break in the normal process of development, Nakai nevertheless criticizes the hermeneutic account for its reliance on the perspicuity (*Durchsichtigkeit*) of the artist-individual to institute social change. Essentially, by focusing social transformation in the singular artist and their unique ability to reconcile the world, this framework wrests the capacity for self-formative development from the social system itself. To connect this to chapter 4, Nakai might say that Nishida and Miki have presented us not with a theory of the self-formation of totality, but with an "individualism" that bestows developmental powers to the pioneer or genius alone.

Nakai's goal is to rethink social change and historical development so as to situate the collective, not the individual, as the catalyst for social change. Here we find the second political sense of *zenei* qua the revolutionary vanguard party discussed above. Nakai finds a model for such collective revolution in the dynamic team activities of sports like rowing and rugby. Key here is "The Structure of Sports Feeling" (*Supo-tsu kibun no kōzō* スポーツ気分の構造)—printed in *Shisō* in May 1933, but probably written in mid-1932.

Nakai and Nishida: Building on the Hermeneutic Account of Self-World Connectivity

For Nakai, the revolutionary significance of team sports starts with the dynamic structure by which we actively immerse ourselves in and with others and objects in the world. This point is reflective of, on the one hand, a *dynamic* development of his previous theory of machine technology and the material collective character, and on the other, his proximity to middle-late Nishida philosophy.

Let's start with the latter point. Though Nakai primarily studied under Kuki and Tanabe after Fukada's passing, his editorial work at *Tetsugaku kenkyū* brought him in contact with Nishida. More, Nishida, along with fellow professors Tanabe, Hatano, Kuki, and Watsuji, are known to have attended Nakai's November 1932 presentation to the Kyoto Philosophical Association, "The Problem of Beauty and its Conversion" (*Bi no tenkō to sono kadai* 美の転向とその課題). According to Kuno Osamu, the invitation meant that Nakai would "without exception be promised a post at the university"—which he would assume in 1934 (*NMZ* 4:374; 2:380). During this same period, Nakai became closer with Nishida, and began frequent visits to

his residence in the northern Kyoto district of Tanaka Asukaichō.[38] Around this time, we increasingly see the presence of ideas adjacent to late-period Nishida philosophy like "active-intuition," the "co-determination of one and many," "self-determination of the present," "eternal now," and the "continuity of discontinuity."

Let's start in the experiential register. Recall that, for Nishida, the body operates as a medium that articulates itself across and beyond the active–passive, subject–world division. In active-intuition, my activity and the thing or world's activity necessarily flow with and against each other as one unified whole. Nakai too, treating the body as the most fundamental instance of technology, argues that the body rises towards the world from the world; that the body simultaneously functions as the locus of an interior and exterior horizon. The idea is that, on one side, the world articulates itself through us such that "our body is already a natural phenomenon; that our life is soaked in nature" (*NMZ* 2:293–294). Here we are more passive, with Nakai appropriating the Heideggerian conception of thrownness (*Geworfenheit*) on this point. He also uses Heideggerian language to discuss our projecting (*Entwurf*) ourselves onto the world, and thus to discuss the active perspective by which subjectivity invests the body and flows out into the world (*NMZ* 2:300). What is key is that these two directionalities are inter-connected and combined in the body such that it is impossible to determine which is active and which is passive: "the world of technology is born in the place where these two directions [subject and object, self and world] are indistinguishable and united in total harmony—where the outer flows inward and the inner flows outward (*NMZ* 2:293)." As with active-intuition, we here find the co-

[38] We find brief references to Nakai's visits in Nishida's journal from this period. Upon his first visit in February 1924, Nishida writes: "In the evening the student Nakai Masakazu visited; I was tired and it was inconvenient." *NKZ* 18:112.

genesis and co-constitution of self and world, with each functioning as differential expressions of this more fundamental unified whole.

In a further resonance with active-intuition, Nakai charts this unified whole within a schema of self-formative development. Here, subjectivity is imbricated and develops in our dynamic activities running out through our body, across our use of technology, and into the surrounding world—both natural and social. We have previously dealt with mediation and the connection between self and world with respect to the material collective character—where the collective character "penetrates the senses themselves," and technology is "the nerve tissue itself of the social collective." Re-deploying this general idea of technological mediation within the dynamic framework of sports, Nakai claims that the "rower directly feels through the face of the paddle" (*NMZ* 1:399). Here, as Kitada Akihiro explains, "the tool/technology of the oar and the human body that employs it are involved with each other."[39] The idea is that, since there is no strict disengagement between self and world, our body extends onto the technology that we employ. Overflowing instrumentality, these objects mediate us with the world, meaning that subjectivity is neither strictly demarcated from the paddle, nor the water in which the paddle is submerged. Here, subjectivity is imbricated in our concrete activities running across our use of technology and into the surrounding world.

And in the same way that the body opens onto objects in the world, it opens onto other persons as well. Kitada likewise makes this point, talking of a "communication space made possible *amidst*/in technology."[40] For Nakai, we do not merely feel the water through the paddle; we rather feel and are felt by "the other seven members directly on the face of the paddle" (*NMZ*

[39] Kitada Akihiro, "An Assualt on 'Meaning,'" 91.

[40] Ibid.

1:399). In essence, our engagement in rowing demonstrates our fundamental engagement with the natural and social world, and thus the primordial indeterminacy at the base of any distinction between self, object, others, and world—all points resonating with Nishida's middle-late philosophy.

Para-Existence, Aesthetics, and Sports

Nakai tries to overcome the individualism at the base of the hermeneutic account of self-formation by thinking through this experiential account of self–other, self–world unity in relation to the aesthetic structure of sports feeling.

Though retaining his reference to Becker's reading of artistic creation as an "incomprehensible creative leap" that transcends "the factual and real possibilities of purely historical existence," he crystallizes this idea in a new concept: Becker's theory of quasi- or para-existence. For Nakai by way of Becker, para-existence is situated outside of the historical being of Dasein—as a "middle form between the characters of the category and existentialia," and thus the ways of being revealed in pragmatic and theoretical modes. In quasi- or para-existence, we "provisionally separate from the dis-tance [*Entfernung*] inherent in what is called the 'towards the end of' or the 'for-the-sake-of-which' that structures equipmental significance; here we penetrate and breakthrough the very dis-tance such that significance itself is disclosed and rises to the surface" (*NMZ* 1:396). This is to say that we overflow readiness-to-hand, temporarily separating from the realm of equipmental totality and its fore-structure, as we separate from the cool, reflective character of presence-at-hand such that "there is nothing that can be described in language here; in this sense, it does not have a structure of 'as' (*Als-Struktur*)" (*NMZ* 1:401).

Para-existence is “the middle structure between these two” as- and fore-structures, and takes “as its defining feature the ever-deepening character of existential feeling” (*NMZ* 1:401). In his introduction to Yuase’s translation of Becker, Nakai talks of this in terms of a “third dimension,” claiming “the world of the standpoint of thrown projection, or *Geworfener Entwurf*, as an axis for the configuration of the aesthetic category, is an attempt at immersion amidst dynamic transcendence.” This dynamic transcendence is talked about in terms of “a particular existential category in which, in one bound, we leap over the limits of ‘possibility’ and ‘actuality’” (*BH* 19/20:295). In short, the idea is that the para-existential mode of aesthetics overcomes the limits (*Grenze*) of historical possibility, opening up new experiential avenues for seeing, thinking, and acting in the world.

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Nakai links sports to aesthetics, and thus para-existence, through the idea of play—a common theme in the aesthetics of philosophers like Friedrich Schiller. For Nakai, “play is almost entirely unconcerned with the kind of understanding found in the ‘towards the end of’ or the ‘for-the-sake-of-which,’” and “belongs to a dimension different than mere existence” (*NMZ* 1:393). In play, objects are separated from their fore-structures and thus from the dominant horizons of intelligibility. In tabletop games like *go*, the affordances of the desk drop away and the player immerses themselves in the points on the *go* board; in a pick-up game of soccer, trashcans are separated from their standard use-purposes and seen as the goal line; street gutters become boundary lines. With objects denude of their standard significance, subjects open themselves up to new ways of seeing and doing. Here, Nakai writes, play “provides access to an interpretation [*Auslegung*] and understanding [*Verhaltens*] of being,” and thus “brings forth and discloses the character of meaning itself” (*NMZ* 1:393–394, 396).

The significance of this type of experience gains clarity through its description. Nakai points to skilled rowing, rugby, and tennis athletes, and to those moments in which they unlock or figure out the right form to effortlessly negotiate the situation:

> The form is gradually felt in a way that overcomes peaks and valleys. This is a feeling in which the growth into maturity itself is tasted in the muscles, and reveals itself in the triumphant smile of the sportsman. The feeling that follows a day of strong and fierce training when one was being chided and scolded forward and then they suddenly, in some way, grasp what was being said; when this is understood [*Verstehen*]; when this sinks within your organs; that is, when you feel that you've done it—this feeling is pure joy…The *This* [feeling] itself of the Ha ha! *This* is it! is brought about by our muscularly grasping and disclosing a thrown projection (*Geworfener Entwurf*) within an existential formation of 'actuality' (*NMZ* 1:401–402).

First, it removes this experience from the horizons of the epistemological—traditionally the domain where subject and object are sundered. In para-existence, we reach the limits of historical existence, and thus of our ability to rely on conventional ways of seeing, thinking, or doing. Thus he writes, "if one is still conscious of their own form, then that form is not authentic" (*NMZ* 1:403). Second, this corporeal language binds the human body with his existential claim regarding the perspicuous capacities brought about in aesthetics: "Sports belongs to [the aesthetics of] play, but is a unique form of existence insofar as it is primarily based in bodily technology" (*NMZ* 1:393). In sports our "muscular activity becomes a 'towards the end of' of itself, and so brings our existential structure into the light" such that our "physical, bodily structure can tentatively be said to carry a direction towards an interpretation of being" (*NMZ* 1:396–397, 401–402).

Para-Existence: New Modes of Connectivity and Collectivity

In providing access to understanding and our interpretation of being, and thus in disclosing the coordinates of meaning within the dominant horizon of intelligibility, para-existence opens new modes of immersion "amidst/in" objects, others, and the world.

We can begin in terms of connectivity—our relationship with objects and the world. The sense of connectivity in his work on sports and para-existence transcends our immersion in a world or involvement totality to reveal a tighter degree of holistic connectivity among self, object, and world. Here, "each stroke marks an encounter with the deep structure of rhythm. One swing in tennis, one stroke in rowing. Each moment suggests the entirety of life" (*NMZ* 2:34). It is not just that the rower "directly feels through the face of the paddle;" there is a higher degree of unified connectivity, with "the body adapting and melting in the water to become one" (*NMZ* 1:399, 419). Here, self, object, and world participate within each other as a single holistic relation—as one form: "When the structural function of the water and the structural function of the body become continuous and unobstructed in a deep relationship, there is therein a developing form (*fo-mu*), a Form (*kata*) with living flesh" (*NMZ* 1:403). The idea is that, through para-existence, we achieve a more intimate and higher-degree of latitudinal holistic connectivity or Form (*kata*) with objects and the world, and that this holistic Form develops itself longitudinally as one form (*fo-mu*).

Para-existence also differs from our everyday technological and worldly immersion in terms of the novelty of this Form. Remember, our everyday experience is structurally determined within referential and involvement totalities, and the entire world as network of intelligibility.[41] In an attempt to expand on Heidegger, Nakai situates tool usage as unique to humanity—as "an animal that makes tools, and therefore labors with a plan." He then makes a stronger claim about

[41] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, 97.

the development of humanity: "by freeing ourselves from the productivity of some productive technology, a new world is carried in the technology itself."[42] It is for this reason, he continues, that in Schiller "humans are only fully human being when they play" (*NMZ* 1:394). Here, the nature of humanity is productive, and our interactions with the world are structured through the involvements that accompany technology. To be "freed" from this productive structure, as in the para-existence of sports play, is to open that technology onto a new world—a new totality of involvements. In the above language of Form/form, the idea is that in para-existence, we not only establish new Forms through form; we break free from Form via form to immerse ourselves in a new Form—in this case, a new totality of involvement and intelligibility of being.

Finally, this new form differs in its contextual appropriateness. Para-existence is important to the development of new Form/forms—new holistic modes of relation in and with the world. Nakai talks about this in terms of "liberation from our own warped way of being" and a new form of "contextual awareness." In para-existence, we unlock a new form or "disposition in which we entrust our bodies to the oar and the water," and thereby unlock new Forms of self–world relationality, new modes of acting in and with the world as one totality. In the moment of para-existential eruption, Nakai writes:

> the mannerism of the extant form crumbles and drops away, and we dispense with the force by which we organized a form that amounted to a kind of half-hearted meeting [with the world]. Separating from these with doubt and anxiety we face a new form (*atarashii fo-mu* 新しいフォーム) moment by moment, but this anxiety leads to pleasure, and we face whatever it may be—if in water, water; if in land, land; if in the mountains, the mountain—and, so to speak, carve ourselves into the natural function.(*NMZ* 1:401–402).

[42] Nakai's terms are a bit different here, but this idea of a form of "productivity" or "world" associated with productive technology is similar to what we have seen before—namely that any given tool is given with a structure of equipmental referentiality and its encompassing totality of involvement (*Bewandtnissnisganzheit*).

So, para-existence marks the spontaneous eruption of a new form (*fo-mu*) that bring us into a closer relationship of Form (*kata*) with our local context or environment.

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The same holds with regards to collectivity—our social existence. Nakai writes:

> in our co-existence (*kyōdō sonzai* 共同存在) with others, we discover here a special world of collaboration (*kyōdō sekai* 共同世界) carried in this [sports] feeling that is made possible when we are freed from (*yūri*) and reveal this shared (*kyōdōteki* 共同的) world [of equipmental significance]…What rises to the surface in sports is the nature of mutual collaboration itself (*sōgo no kyōdōsei* 相互の共同性), rather than the shared concern (*kyōdō ni koryo* 顧慮) of equipmental referentiality (*NMZ* 1:398–399).

He continues:

> At the same time that the disclosure of this feeling of co-existence is a unique existential character possessed in sports, it gradually becomes evident that Dasein has a co-dependent existential character (*kyōdō sōgo sonzai* 共同相互存在) corresponding to its gradual penetration within the instrumental structure of equipmental referentiality. Facing these new projections, the structure of this co-existential feeling is revealed and brought forth in its being freed from (*yūri*) the Dasein character of humans (*NMZ* 1:399–400).

These are tricky passages because Nakai (ab)uses the word "*kyōdō*" (共同) to mean "shared," "cooperation," "collaboration," *etc.* But despite his using the same term to describe our shared world of equipmental significance and the feeling of mutual collaboration and co-existence in sports feeling, these forms of sociality are distinct in important ways.

Nakai's point, regarding equipmental significance, as we have already seen, is that we are irreducibly social beings because we are already immersed together within a totality of involvement. But what is key about the para-existential feeling of co-existence in sports, is that we are "freed" (*yūri*) from the dominant horizon of intelligibility structuring this totality of involvement. As with his use of "freed" in part 2—our being freed from our post (*busho*) allows

us to take in a full picture of the system, and thus immerse ourselves within a holistic sentiment of unity. Here too, the new form of holistic unity is talked about in terms that resemble his earlier work on the function and collectives. "this thing called a self conforms to its own particular function and post (*busho*) in relation to other positions, and so only carries ontological sense in its co-dependent being" (*NMZ* 1:399). To return again to the language of form/Form, the idea is that, in para-existence, we not only establish new Forms through form; we break free from Form via form to immerse ourselves in a new Form—in this case, newly unified social collectives.

He concludes, then, that the feeling of co-existence revealed in sports feeling, and thus the collective, is qualitatively different from the co-existential character of Dasein in terms of its connectivity and collaboration. Here, we are not merely involved with each other through our immersion within a referential structure; rather, to borrow a phrase from Kitada and Alex Zahlten, we unite in a kind of "dynamic common labor" (*dōteki na kyōdōsei* 動的な協働性).[43] Nakai again gestures to rowing to talk of a state in which "any psychological or muscular disturbance in one person can be felt by the other seven members directly on the face of the paddle." He continues, "when the grasp between them is perfect, it is almost as if an electric current is transmitted on the face of their paddles, and the one time that flows across the eight positions is known through the organs. The language of our spirits meeting, *kiai* (気合), is used to explain this feeling" (*NMZ* 1:399). What is key is that the rowing team is not merely a synthesis of individual rowers or players. Rather, "if there are eight people, those eight people form one boat" in which each of its members are so intimately intertwined with each other that

[43] Kitada, "An Assault on 'Meaning,'" 101.

they “form one character (*hitotsu no seikaku* 一つの性格) over and above this synthesis” (*NMZ* 2:39–40).

Nakai also cites rugby as a paradigmatic case of this collective, dynamic labor. In an earlier work on the “Aesthetic Elements in Sports” (*Supo-tsu no biteki yōso* スポーツの美的要素) from mid-1930, Nakai uses the functional language of mathematics to make this point with reference to rugby:

> if we watch closely, the moment that the ball falls into one of their arms, and each of the fourteen teammates and fifteen opponents move silently to the requisite position for the play as if in a deep mathematical [function]…the halfback passing the ball to the tailback calls forth an invisible relational structure with the other fourteen players…each player themselves, as an element of a deep mathematical function, submerges themselves onto the interior of this structure through their body. This pleasure is generally called uniformity in sports (*NMZ* 1:410–411).

Nakai’s language of uni*form*ity here maps his connective statements regarding the totality of self–technology–world with his collective statement regarding self and others. The idea is that in rugby the ball, the field of play, ourselves, and our teammates and opponents all “become continuous and unobstructed” within one holistic self-developing form/Form.

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But there is another sense of form that is crucial here—historical form (*rekishiteki keitai* 歴史的形態). Recall from the previous section that, for Nakai, “the word Form (*katachi* 形) is easy to understand when we think of form (*fo-mu* フォーム) in sports. This is a *morphe* deepened through *praxis*. Form (*katachi*) is therefore a functional record of activity as a [historical] formation (*keitai* 形態) of development” (*NMZ* 2:24–25). Our question, then, is how do the Forms (*kata, katachi*) produced via our development of form (*fo-mu*) in and with the social and natural world intervene in the developmental process of historical formation (*keitai*)?

Or more straightforwardly: how do the forms (*kata*, *katachi*, *fo-mu*) that we create through our interactions in and with objects and others in our environment connect to the self-formative process of historical formation (*keitai*)? The answer, we will see, is linked to *zenei* qua the vanguard revolutionary party.

Para-Existence and the Moment

This revolutionary reading is connected to the temporality of para-existence—another feature in resonance with Nishida and Miki's philosophy. Much as in Nishida's continuity of discontinuity, Nakai talks of "a never-ending continuity of moments in which we fall from [form] and then must dash head long" to capture a new form (*NMZ* 1:404). Moreover, as in Nishida's theory of the eternal now, Nakai claims that the uniqueness of this type of experience lies precisely in its immersion in the present, as a "particular existential deepening of time itself." Here, the "*This*" of the "*This* is it!" is firmly situated within the horizons of the now, and in particular, Nakai writes quoting Becker, "'the identical now of a different form of temporality;' in other words, a time that does not flow and that simply expands outwards right there" (*NMZ* 1:403).[44]

As with Nishida, this momentary understanding of the present within the space of the [eternal] now is not simply sundered from past or future. In terms of the past, Nakai is interested in the passive-qua-active sense of fatigue and training: it is through training that, amidst the height of fatigue, we can "go the extra mile" and break through our fatigue to, say, score in a decisive moment (*NMZ* 1:419). Here, "the developing *morphe* is grasped instantaneously" (*NMZ* 1:403) in a decisive breaking through of the past in the present moment. Through our experience of training we transcend our training in a decisive momentary break; through our intense fatigue

[44] Also see: Becker, "Von der Hinfälligkeit," 29.

we break through fatigue and unlock the right body-mind–world configuration to smoothly navigate the situation.

With regards to the future, Nakai emphasizes projections and goals. This future-directedness is also grounded in the present, and, as in Miki's work on Sorel, in a present defined by action. In rowing, the finish line is not given as 200 kilometers away nor even "just these last 50 kilometers;" it is divorced from such considerations as a strained space for "striving" and "panting." Here, we immerse ourselves in what Moore evocatively describes as "a shifting, 'sweating,' uncontainable structure that moves quickly and unexpectedly from plan to plan, not a simplistic structure of implementing the proper means or techniques to reach a definite goal."[45] And so, bringing past and future together in the present, this momentary, intuitive unlocking of form is explained in terms of a "sudden grasp within a process involving trial, projection, and practice" (*NMZ* 1:400).

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And remember, para-existence is introduced within a broader discussion of aesthetics to explain the limits (*Grenze*) of historical existence. To this end, Nakai maps this temporal configuration onto Heidegger's language of thrown projection, *Geworfener Entwurf*. For Heidegger, Dreyfus notes, a horizon of possibilities is opened in line with "what it is already, its facticity," and because "Dasein is what it does, it is always projecting on, i.e., acting on, some such possibility. Dasein's capacity for taking a stand on its current facticity by pressing into the future, Heidegger calls transcendence." Here we find "the existential pairs, thrown/projecting, facticity/transcendence—that which sets boundaries to possibilities and the possibilities

[45] Moore, "Para-existential Forces," 128.

themselves."[46] Insofar as para-existence is a "third dimension" in which "we leap over the limits of 'possibility' and 'actuality'" in "dynamic transcendence," the rupture of trial and projection translates into the momentary transcendence of our fore- and as-structures. Here, the intense exertion in the present ruptures the dominant horizon of intelligibility to open onto novel lines of potentiality carried in the present that exist outside of these standard modes of being. The idea is that, while drawing on both past experience and a future concrete goal, the local circumstances of the present reign paramount, and, by immersing ourselves in this present in para-existence, we trace new lines of potentiality and thus unlock new opportunities for action—Nakai's twist on the one-world inflationary idealism endorsed by Nishida and Miki.

The Now, Form, *form*, and Historical Formation

Sticking with sports, we can now return to our above question: how do the new Forms/forms (*kata*, *katachi*, *fo-mu*) that we create through our para-existential interactions in and with objects and others in our environment connect to the self-formative process of historical formation as a whole (*keitai*)? As we saw above, capitalist modernity is the contemporary historical Form, and it is in desperate need of re*form*ation. Within the realm of sports, capitalist structure manifests itself in the star system, and the treatment of the athlete within the logic of the commodity: "Sports have begun to take on the form of a business advertisement within the cultural form of contemporary industrial capitalism, and only develop in their function to free (*yūri*) the human spirit from their productive structure; this character of sports feeling is nothing more than a deformed growth of one corner of the temporal feeling of the fan" (*NMZ* 1:405). Freeing here takes the sense of separation or release. The idea is that, in *only* releasing humanity from its

[46] Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, 300.

productive structure, the deformed feeling of the fan separates themselves from the ability to create new worlds/Forms/totalities of involvement. In this situation, what once carried the capacities for reformation has been "averaged" or "leveled" in a way that "omits historicity and worldliness." Nakai talks about this in terms of a "presence that has an anticipatory structure of forgetting itself" (*NMZ* 1:405). We can read this "function" towards separation in terms of Adorno's account of the "functional" world of commodity production. As David Held notes, Adorno talks of a new structure of cultural production in which, in ours case sports, "has become 'functional' for a world of commodity production. It is manufactured for its 'selling chances' and offers little more than entertainment and distraction." In this respect, Held continues, "it is tailor-made for the functions of this 'industry.' It 'fits' well into the *status quo's* ideological tendencies."[47] Here, sports are not something you do, but something you consume, and as such, fit well within the cultural form of capitalist modernity.

It is of further importance that, in the above quote, Nakai stresses the "temporal feeling of the fan." In separating from their productive structure, the fan loses their connection to the present, and thus removes the possibility of novelty, change, and reformation. Instead, they immerse themselves in sheer temporal continuity—both experientially and historically. Experientially, the fan relates to sports in terms of times, record, and scores, immersing themselves in probability and the question of who will win. Thus fans often gamble on the spectacle, focusing their concentration on the final score or finish line. Here, the transformative potential within the present are squashed, and the fan subsumes themselves in an overwhelming past or future-orientation. Nakai traces this feeling back to "feudal religious cultural forms" like

[47] David Held, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1980), 89, 102. Author's italics.

"the Greek Olympian athlete and the slave of the Roman coliseum," claiming that the "excessive emphasis on clock time and records is, in fact, nothing but a manifestation of the capitalist cultural form's enslavement of humanity" (*NMZ* 1:405). And so, "as the victim of capitalist journalism, sportsmen are just an intensification of the Roman Slave form (*keitai*)"—a distraction to appease the masses from violent uprising.

In order to intervene into the cultural formation of modern capitalism that structures the athlete within logic of the profit mechanism, then, Nakai encourages fans to not only separate the human spirit from its productive structure, but also to free themselves from their post in order to open onto new modes of collectivity and connectivity. The charge is for us to break free from the continuity of historical formation and take up play—some form of aesthetic activity—and realize new modes of immersion in and with objects and others that exist outside the profit-driven system of the athlete as star. In doing so, Nakai writes, the "temporal character of sports feeling will transcend this temporal time, record, and score, and will take notice of a deeper existential basis and their grounding therein" (*NMZ* 1:405).

And so, as in his work on Neue Sachlichkeit, sports qua art bears the capacity of transcendence—the possibility to open up a new horizon of intelligibility through which we relate to entities in a different manner. And given the dynamic nature of sports as a bodily technology, and the role that the body plays in mediating self with world and others, transcendence in the domain of sports allows us to break historical continuity to act in a way that not only separates us from the dominant intelligibility, but also allows us to engage in new form/Forms of connectivity and collectivity—in collective revolutionary vanguard activities.

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Thus we find Nakai's inter-subjective variation of Nishida and Miki's theory of subjective intervention in historical formation, and especially their understanding of one-world inflationary idealism and of the lines of potentiality actualized by the pioneer or genius. The now of para-existence plays a structurally similar role to the eternal now in Nishida, likewise investing the formation of the subject from out of the social-historical body to negate the world in a movement of discontinuity in the difference of potential plentitude. But here, unlike Nishida or Miki, the individual subject is not the locus of transformation; rather, the inter-subjective collective or team, by virtue of their own unique form of holistic integrity, forms the revolutionary vanguard by which we are able to re-fashion the self-formation of the social-historical world, as totality, into the future.

The idea is that these new forms of experience engender collectives with the capacity to intervene in the self-formation of capitalist modernity as a site of difference. By participating in/with a collective one can open themselves up to vanguard forms of experience that exist outside the normal parts and places in capitalist modernity, and thus immerse themselves in vanguard lines of potentiality that outstrip the more routine channels of historical formation. And so, Nakai's challenge is for fans to take up sports together, to find places where persons can form (*fo-mu*) together in connective and collective ruptures of self–world, self–other Form (*katachi*) that challenge the dominant horizon of intelligibility, and thus intervene in the process of historical formation (*keitai*) to negate the historical world, and to open up new horizons by which the historical world, as totality, self-forms itself forward.

Chapter 6

Committee Intervention: Nakai, *World Culture*, *Doyōbi,* and "Logic of the Committee"

This chapter continues to focus on Nakai via the Kyoto School lens of totality. In particular, we look at the way in which Nakai dissociates his theory of collectivity from the revolutionary vanguard role that it had assumed, and likewise from the subjective emphasis of Nishida and Miki, to arrive at a new understanding of the collective qua committee as a moment through which the masses, as a whole, engender critical self-reflection and cooperation amongst themselves, and thereby develop the conditions by which they self-form and develop themselves into the future together. We will make this argument across four parts: first, discussing Nakai's shift to Marxist historical materialism, next, looking at his work with *World Culture* and *Doyōbi*, and finally treating his 1936 "Logic of the Committee" in parts 3 and 4.

Part 1: Late Period *Bi-Hihyō* and the Turn to Historical Materialism

The revolutionary promise of collective para-existence was soon put to the test. In May 1933, the same month "The Structure of Sports Feeling" was printed, the ministries of education and justice began what Byron Marshall terms its "purge of the Imperial Universities."[1] The process began with the Takigawa or Kyodai Incident at Kyoto University, in which the ministry of education intervened in its most repressive attack on academic freedom yet—expanding government censorship to include liberalism in addition to Marxist and socialist elements in the university to suspend Professor of Law Takigawa Yukitoki. This was momentous for the entire

[1] Marshall, *Academic Freedom*, 145–150.

Kyoto University community, sparking a campaign of resistance among university members that would radically alter how Nakai theorized collective intervention and social change.

The Takigawa Incident

The Takigawa incident dragged on for over a year, and, though its origin is debated, its most direct cause seems to be an October 1932 lecture in which Takigawa called for the judiciary to incorporate the social roots of deviance in their deliberations. Takigawa was soon villainized as a radical by members of the right-wing press like Minoda Munegi, and by conservative representatives in the National Diet like Miyazawa Yutaka. In response, the education ministry, under the directives of the justice minister, pressed the university to suspend Takigawa. Though Kyoto University president Konishi Shigenao and the faculty of law supported Takigawa, the government reacted with direct measures in a "frontal assault on Kyoto University," applying the first personnel regulations review board against a professor and recommending Takigawa's suspension on May 26th.[2]

Soon after, "the entire teaching staff of the [law] department, from the chairman down to the most junior graduate assistant" issued a formal declaration threatening to resign in protest.[3] Shortly before then, on May 7th, around 1500 students and faculty crammed into a lecture hall in the faculty of law to make plans for collective response. Moving forward, a bi-weekly meeting of representatives from each department in the faculties of law, literature, economics, and agriculture was established. Kuno Osamu, the philosophy department representative, recalls furtive midnight bike rides to the houses of philosophy professors like Tanabe and Ojima

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[2] Ibid, 150–151, 157.

[3] Ibid, 151.

Sukema, who came out in support for the movement (*KOS* 5:22). In the end, despite resignations from President Konishi and a number of law professors, lecturers, and graduate students, the timing was not right for sustained momentum, and the protest movement dissolved with summer break.

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Despite being short-lived, however, the movement led to major shakeups in *Bi-Hihyō*. In postwar retrospectives members discuss the journal in two distinct phases—before and after the Takigawa Incident. Jarred by events, the magazine went on a year-long hiatus from May '33, and when it resumed, the playful art deco title and the splashes of orange were gone. The magazine now sported a more straight forward cover page of black text on white paper—stylistically similar to *Banner*. The changing cover reflected a transformation in its coterie. In the interim hiatus, *Bi-Hihyō* added a host of new members from the philosophy and literature tracks at Kyoto and the nearby Dōshisha University, including Mashita Shinichi, Shinmura Takeshi, Wada Yōichi, Kuno, Kurimoto Tsutomo, Morimoto Fumio, and Kumazawa Mataroku. These additions were connected to the above opposition movement, and this "new faction" characterized themselves as more radically leftist. Political matters often came to a head at the newly instituted coterie workshops, held bimonthly on the second floor of the Spanish-missionary-styled Kyoto University Rakuyukai building (*BH* 28:38). In retrospectives, Nakai recounted being "indignant" when newer members characterized the *Bi-Hihyō* coterie's political stance as "lukewarm and complacent,"[4] and newer members recalled contributor Taketani Mitsuo criticizing Nakai's "bourgeoise idealism" and challenging him on his supposed penchant towards abstraction from

[4] Sasaki Kiichi, *Shōwa bungaku kōyūki* (Tokyo: Shinchō sensho, 1983), 39.

lived reality (*ZSB* 30).[5] The rift was apparently substantial enough that several of the more artistic, less politically inclined members left the coterie.

Nakai and Historical Materialism

There is debate as to how much Nakai absorbed these critiques. Mashita, in agreement with Shinmura and Tsujibe, argues that Nakai may have adopted dialectics but remained in "firm opposition to materialism," "situated half way between positivism and pragmatism" (*ZSB* 28, 30). Harootunian offers a similar assessment in brief reference to Nakai's "insistent Neo-Kantianism" and "non-Marxian socialism."[6] Against this, Tsurumi Shunsuke—of the highly influential postwar journal *Science of Thought*—has speculated that Nakai was influenced by Lenin's *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*,[7] and research by Fujii Yūsuke and Lucken have found concrete evidence for the influence of Marx and Lenin in the form of uncited quotations in Nakai's mid-'30s work.[8] As I read him, Nakai was swayed by the historical materialist critiques of his peers, spurring him to reconsider his account of the self-formation of totality, and with it, his earlier ideas regarding collectivity and the possibility for intervention.

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The impact of Marxism and Marxism-Leninism, as well as their conceptions of totality, on Nakai's thinking was first made strikingly explicit in "The Many Characters of Beauty in the

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[5] See also: Yoshida, "Seishin no meiseki," 40.

[6] Harry Harootunian, "Time, Everydayness, and the Specter of Fascism: Tosaka Jun and the Philosophy's New Vocation," in *Re- politicising the Kyoto School as Philosophy*, ed. Christopher Goto-Jones (London: Routledge, 2008), 99.

[7] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Shisō no hakkō botai," *Shisō no kagaku, dai 4 ji* 7 (1959): 33.

[8] Fujii Yūsuke, *Nakai Masakazu ron—kurubeki 'shūdan' no tame ni* (Kyoto: Fujii Yūsuke-sha, 2002), 107. Michael Lucken, "On the Origins of New Left and Counterculture Movements in Japan: Nakai Masakazu and Contemporary Thought," *Positions* 26, no. 4 (2018): 601–603.

Modern Period" (*Gendai ni okeru bi no sho seikaku* 現代における美の諸性格) —first presented at the May 1934 *Bi-Hihyō* meeting, and revised for publication in *Risō* (Ideals 理想) two months later.[9] In this article, Nakai takes an explicitly critical approach against "Heidegger's ontology, along with phenomenology and Bergson's theory of time;" an implicitly critical approach to the work of Nishida and Miki from the '30s; and a self-referentially critical approach to his own previous work on Neue Sachlichkeit and sports. In particular, Nakai criticizes a shared emphasis on the "temporal and momentary singularity" of the present. By emphasizing the singularity of the moment, Nakai argues, "fluid exchange, dynamic movement, and developmental continuity become problems" in their account of the self-development of totality. The hallmark of these different theories, as Nakai reads them, is that they "deconstruct existence into time, dissolve the ego within fluid development, and finally grasp it as a resolute anxiety within the endless leap forward in the continuity of the moment." Explicitly referencing Bergson and, I believe, implicitly referencing Nishida, Nakai claims that this anxiety derives from "an eternal time; in which future and past are regarded as a singular void, and every single moment, as if in astonishment, is accompanied by a cold shudder as if crossing the empty cosmic vacuum of space." The resultant anxiety of this momentary structure is that "the entirety of phenomena in existence are fundamentally contingent, and all actions are aimless" (*NMZ* 2:67).

Taking up Heidegger specifically, Nakai was concerned that anxiety regarding our supposedly fundamental contingency and momentary singularity would open onto reactionary nostalgia and nationalism. No doubt shocked by news of the reactionary sentiments found in Heidegger's Rector Address from May '33—which he probably learned of via Miki's November

[9] Bamba, *Nakai Masakazu densetsu*, 125. Bamba notes that criticisms of his presentation may have been the catalyst for Nakai to revise and include materialist philosophy in the print version.

article, “Heidegger and the Fate of Philosophy”—Nakai warned of a tendency to channel this individual sense of anxiety and helplessness into a logic of ethno-cultural unity. In this existentialist framework, he writes:

> Humans are furthest alienated from themselves despite being-there [Dasein]. Their so-called anxiety or abyss lies therein. They lack the active force to remove this obstacle. What is brought about from this is a sense of fate…Here we already see the prototypical style in which individual citizens lose their existence in front of a collective citizenship that is formed of their own development (*NMZ* 2:72).

Nakai further pursues this in “Two or Three Fundamental Problems of Realism” (*Riarizumuron no kiso mondai ni, san* リアリズム論の基礎問題二、三), carried a month later in *Bi-Hihyō*. Likely inspired by Tosaka’s criticisms of Nishida, Yoshida Masazumi writes, “Nakai identifies the limits of the liberalism that is being touted as antagonistic to fascism in this period, emphasizing that [liberalism] is not ultimately antagonistic to ‘romanticism’ (the Japanese Romantic School) but rather these together support nationalism.”[10]

Alongside the fascism of Heidegger and the Japanese Romantic School, Nakai comes out against another form of collectivizing anxiety regarding contingency and singularity: the work of André Gide. He talks of Gide’s “obsession with an indefatigable existence that infinitely expands in each moment, as if it were lying asleep at the bottom of memory,” and of how Gide’s “religious conviction led him to turn from individual existence to collective practice, and to abandon it again” (*NMZ* 2:72). As I read it, Gide is a stand-in for Nakai’s previous hermeneutic-inspired view on the transformative capacities of aesthetics (even describing Gide’s collective religiosity by way of a language of Brownian molecules that he had used in his own work on machine aesthetics). Much as his para-existence “is an attempt at a [new collective/connective]

[10] Yoshida, “Seishin no meiseki,” 48.

immersion amidst dynamic transcendence," and is formulated in terms of "a leap over the limits of 'possibility' and 'actuality'" by way of a now that "expands outwards;" in Gide, Nakai notes, the "infinity of the past and the future melts into an emptiness, and the past of the present and the future of the present descend via the light, sound, and fragrance as a sudden source of chance. In this terrifying surprise at the present reality, the ego is broken into pieces like the quartering procedure in the Holy Roman Empire" (*NMZ* 2:73). Perhaps we can say that, while Nakai had recognized that Becker's work is "scarred" by romanticism in his earlier-mentioned book review of Yuase's translation, what he is now realizing is the extent to which his own account of the development of *Sache* via para-existence is likewise compromised.

And so, whether Heidegger and Becker's hermeneutic ontology, Miki and Nishida's emphasis on the present, or Gide and Nakai's collective theory, there are two primary feelings for "an intellectual class that has no active force:" "a deep fear is felt due to the great historical fact of change" or an attempt to "evade our being sunk down into the chasm of the moment" (*NMZ* 2:73).

To be clear, Nakai is not wholly dismissive of these enterprises. In a penetrating bit of self-critique, he recognizes them as "the efforts of an intellectual class that is already surrounded by post-war heavy industrialism, but that still tries to discover, through its bondage and the circumspection of its power, a style of beauty that is in the realm of ontological possibility." And yet, he adds, while it is "natural" to desire "an abstract release from real existence," Nakai tries to imagine a way forward amidst crisis that does not retreat into the aesthetic, the ahistorical, the isolated moment, or the privileged vanguard collective (*NMZ* 2:74–75).

System, Production, History, and Self-Formation

But Nakai has not abandoned collectives, the self-development of totality, nor the present. His aim is rather to link these concepts together to confront the dominant ideology of capitalist modernity. Three points are central to this linkage: a sense of “system” (*soshikikan* 組織感) “production” (*seisankan* 生産感) and “historical development” (*rekishiteki hatten* 歴史的発展). While not entirely novel in Nakai’s work, these concepts are, as I read it, brought together in a schema of holistic self-formation that differs from his previous account in key ways.

Nakai broadly retains the idea of system from his earlier work: “the fact that we occupy a post within that systematic order means that we carry a perspective on that totality of systematic order” (*soshikiteki chitsujo zentai* 組織的秩序全体). But he alters the structure of this systemic feeling first, by grounding it in concrete everyday interactions, and second, by immersing it within a framework of production and history. Here, “a sense of generation is born from the consciousness that we ourselves belong as one link in a productive force” of the “positive,” “self-developing” and “-generating” “holistic” activity of “history.” (*NMZ* 1:79–80).

Nakai began charting the productive implications of this holistic sense of systematic unity in “The Aesthetic Relation of Copy Theory: A Draft” (*Mosharon no bigakuteki kanren—hitotsu no sōkō* 模写論の美学的関連—一つの草稿), carried in the first post-hiatus edition of *Bi-Hihyō*. His inspiration seems to have been Miki’s work in Marxist anthropology. In much the same manner that Miki rethinks his work with Heidegger via the tripartite structure developed in his Marxist anthropology, Nakai reworks the hermeneutic schema of consciousness into a tripartite projective schema of:

1 direct projection (reflex); (*Chokusetsu shaei* (*hansha*) 直接射影(反射))
2 surface projection (reflection); (*jōbu shaei* (*hanei*)上部射影(反映))
3 basic projection (copy, *Abbild*) ; (*kiso shaei* (*mosha*) 基礎射影(模写))

Direct projection maps onto Miki's everyday experience. It points to the pre-discursive reflexes "accumulated over many years of experience of the human species." These are direct, autonomic responses to stimuli, and are discussed in terms of a "projective action" or a "reflex movement." Neither decided nor undecided, and capable of being correct or incorrect, these do not rise to the level of a memory image or consciousness of one's context (*NMZ* 1:14).

Nakai critically uses the term ideology to describe surface projection (reflection). Nakai matches Miki's description of ideological "oppression and constraint" with talk of the "storage of oppressed and constrained energy." Though he similarly gestures to historically constituted public spheres of intelligibility, his view is more critical, hewing closer to Engels' idea of a false consciousness. In surface projection, we unconsciously project and "bind a rough image of the world via the arbitrary distortion of tradition, personal feeling, the subconscious suggestions of the crowd, the projected suggestions of religious design, *etc*." This is pervasive regardless of intelligence and class, making it "extremely difficult for consciousness to obtain a correct and holistic projection" (*NMZ* 1:14).

In the same way that basic experience breaks free of *logos*, basic projection, or representation, is almost the inverse of the first and second. Like basic experience, basic projection is decidedly positive, with the aim of copy theory being a consciousness "that can escape from the constraints of 2 and approach 3" (*NMZ* 1:15). And just as everyday experience and ideology are born of *logos* and thus history in Miki, "reflex and reflection are broadly ideological," meaning they are received either through deep or relatively recent history, and that we overwhelmingly receive them in a passive register.

As a whole, Nakai's tripartite structure resembles the dynamic schema of social change found in Miki. As basic experience generates changes in the dominant ordering of *logos* for a

given society, Nakai frames basic projection as an antidote to the acontextual and abstract nature of ideology—as a site of excess in which the concrete and perceptually given overflow ideological ordering. The idea is that basic projection is structured by "a projective mechanism that possesses the ability to copy or re-present the entire world as a series;" and that through basic projection, "ideology is transcended, and the accurate projection (copy, *Abbild*) of actual world conditions is established as a task" (*NMZ* 1:12, 15). Going against passive reflex, in basic experience and projection we respond to concrete actuality to chart a solution according to a systematic and holistic sense of the concrete context. Here, Aaron Moore observes, "consciousness is not a contemplative substance but rather a practical, transformative mediation of the world with two moments of projection, based on two inherent meanings of the word *projection*—pro-jection (*shaei*) and re-presentation (*mosha, Ab-bild*)."[11] In essence, consciousness is productive, and projection points to the mediative process by which we are not only immersed in and reflect this world, as in direct projection (reflex) and surface projection (reflection), but also the way that we actively reconfigure, reorient, and re-present, or present anew, this world, as in basic projection (copy, *Abbild*).

In basic projection, then, our sense of system and productivity come together in holistic self-development: "Within the practice of productive technologies, and within the systematic order that exists in a given stage that is sought after via a positive subject that is the cause of themself [*natura naturans*], the fact that we occupy a post (*busho*) within that systematic order means that we carry a perspective on that totality of systematic order" (*NMZ* 2: 79–80).

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[11] Moore, "Para-existential Forces," 140. Author's italics, hyphens.

Nakai finds support for such a view in a new theoretical apparatus: “Marx’s material dialectic.” Implicitly referencing chapter seven of Marx’s *Capital*, Nakai points to the three components of the labor process to explain the mediation of human and nature within one self-forming system of holistic development (*MECW* 35:187–209):

> From a materialistic standpoint that collectively and productively takes up this concept of experience or experiment, the concept of subjectivity already frees itself from feudal religiosity, and grasps mother nature as an object of productive technology. Here, humans take up their existence as one natural force, and through the natural forces connected to their own body, they transform the material series of nature into human order. At the same time that it changes nature, it assimilates its own self within it. Such purposive activity is called labor. And with regards to the force of labor, the object of labor that is acted upon, and the means that are used to act upon it—the structure of human productive force is seen atop these three elements. Among these three elements, the force of labor and the means of labor, which are related to the positive activity of nature, are connected within a special structure to form the structure of technology. In this way, indices of technological progress become indices of its stage of development, and so the entirety of the future is seen clearly along this line of progress (*NMZ* 2:68).

In Marx’s material dialectic, he continues,

> self-causation (*natura naturans*) takes on a new sense of subjectivity with a different meaning. This is not the simple totality of scientific analogical uniformity; rather, the fluid and dynamic nature of development is concretely taken up under an existential feeling that has the sense of historical practice. In this way, the subjectivity of the collective, of the system, of production, of technology is connected in a new fashion...Here, the stages, direction, and perspectives must always live and exist within practice. The unceasing moment of ripening through repetition and then dropping out of this in a leap forward can be understood in terms of a crossing of a technological time that stands against this natural object (*NMZ* 2:68–69).

There is a longitudinal and latitudinal point about totality being made here—a claim about production and history, and also about systems. We can begin longitudinally by noting that, due to the emphasis on experiment, the present is still the axis of development—as in hermeneutic ontology and Nakai’s earlier work. But rather than expanding outwards in anxiety, the present is already enmeshed in a longitudinally holistic process of historical development—ripening,

repetition, leap forward. Because it is "placed within a position" in this longitudinal process, the phenomenological sense of "time that separates from existence and becomes directionless is internally dismantled" (*NMZ* 2:67). The moment here does not make a problem of developmental continuity but instead serves as its condition.

Nakai fleshes this out in his work on copy theory, expanding upon "technological time" to better link the moment within a longitudinal framework of productive development:

> Even if we say that time is sequential, necessity and contingency are not simply connected together horizontally in this experimental structure; when we are ensnared in human positive and purposive activity, whether necessary or contingent, everything is twisted and bent in the wellspring (*Urquelle)* of human directionality and primordial production (*Urschöpfung*) (*NMZ* 1:16–17).

And also:

> In contrast to the natural time that flows in a line, technological time carries a primordially productive present in which any moment is a point of departure. With the experimental mechanism as our medium, we acquire the new dynamic, human dimensions of the actual and non-actual, of the positive and the negative (*NMZ* 1:16–17).

Though above Nakai seems to lump Nishida in with Bergson and the phenomenological orientation towards the present, his remarks here on the experiential present resonate with key aspects of Nishida's theory of time—that active-intuition unifies objects according to a joint movement of "self-determination of the present" in a transition of moments moving "from the made to the making." Here, Nakai, like Nishida, proceeds in the tense intersection of a sequential understanding of time and an active present with the capacities of reformation—even adopting the same coordinate system as Nishida: "In the plane of the present that vertically severs time, the axis of productive technologies reflects the human primordial direction" (*NMZ* 1:19–20). While Nakai avoids the eternal now, clarifying that his theory posits "not the suspension of time," the present nevertheless marks a site of experimentation and intervention in the unfolding

of natural time—as in Nishida and Miki. Nakai even approaches their one-world inflationary idealist language, claiming that "humans positively act along the line of purposive activity to transform actuality into the non-actual, and the non-actual into actuality."

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Nakai maps his schema of production and technological time onto our historical sense. Nakai is here trying to balance the above "stages, direction, and perspectives" of history with the primordially productive present as a site of development; in short, the objective and subjective dimensions of self-formative totality. There is, Nakai writes, "a sense of singularity and unrepeatability in the way in which contingent events within necessary and historical development act decisively on this line of necessity." This singularity differs from the above phenomenological time in that it "does not free us from history; rather we surrender ourselves to the decisive directionality carried by the positive subject of productive force while at the same time seeing the entirety of contingency as a dynamic lever within history" (*NMZ* 2:81). So while Nakai is committed to our being connected through the past into the future in a kind of stage theory, he inscribes in the present moment the possibility of intervention, like Miki and Nishida in chapter 4.

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Now we can re-integrate his latitudinal claim. In his work on copy theory, Nakai initially connects history with longitudinal production and latitudinal immersion through the projective activities of the individual. Here, he offers a schema of revolution that is meant to engage Miki's late '20s historical materialism. Recall Miki's use of Marx's 1859 preface to argue that "the *logos* that develops and urges forth basic experience…turns into a fetter against the development of basic experience when it reaches a certain stage." Nakai uses this same language of fetters to

situate a technologically eruptive present as the mediating plane between, on the one hand, the extant forces that carve reality into the surface projection of ideology, and on the other, the horizons of alternate possibilities that mark basic projection. To this end, he writes of a "struggle of technology against nature," "against the fetters that gave birth to it." He continues:

> The true desires of human beings have been stained and warped, and even the basic projection of human action regarding what we ourselves want has been lost. Despite the fact that the tension of our always recovering this distorted, surface-level upper projection into true basic projection always silently squeezes, crashes against, and sets fire to concrete, historical objectivity, fetters always invite further fetters. While knowing the fact that this should not be, people have lost sight of what else could be (*NMZ* 1:17).

As basic experience brings forth social revolution in Miki via a negative process of development, Nakai claims that "[w]ith basic projection as a standard, we confront the entire region of possible and impossible moments; here, humans positively converting the non-actual into actuality, and actuality into the non-actual takes the image of the natural world and replaces it with an equivalent conversion of a human and technological image." Like basic experience, basic projection marks a feeling of concrete difference through which the wider social system, as one whole, is negated, then (re)organized, (re)produced, and (re)formed into the future.

But there is an important difference in emphasis here. While Miki stresses the excess and surplus of basic experience, Nakai stresses its immersion within a new form or order. He continues the above quote: "This is the synthesis of one sequential element with another sequential order; it is the emergence of a new order of necessity between natural progress and technological objects" (*NMZ* 1:17). The idea is that the negative movement constitutive of this revolutionary struggle is not of an individual against system, but rather integrates the struggle of each individual as an element within a system that is itself, as a whole, the subject of production:

> it is because the system forges ahead into a new stage through practice in this order that there is the emergence of new moral categories that are able to carry a positive sense of

> negation. This is not a confrontation between two self-complete characters as if "man is wolf to man," these are two different elements within one practically developing system. The conflict discovered therein is a new feeling of trying to become something better, of an attempt to catch up with pioneers, and of assisting the next generation. New sensibilities are derived from a worldview in which we ourselves belong together within this developing systematic subjectivity (*NMZ* 2:79).

Here, it is neither human against human, nor human against system; rather, dissensus is key to systematic production. As Mombe Masashi observes, we find a precursor to this view in Nakai's work on rugby, where he talks of "the fourteen teammates and fifteen opponents mov[ing] silently to the requisite position for the play as if in a deep mathematical" function. Highlighting Nakai's sense of "inverse relational negativity" (*gyakukankeiteki hiteisei* 逆関係的否定性), Mombe argues that Nakai's mid-'30s work relates such conflicts to the "division and self-relational negativity that is the concept of subjectivity in Hegel," and, I will add, Marx and Lenin.[12] But the negativity endorsed here, to be clear, is different in kind from his earlier work on Becker insofar as the conflict belongs to the system itself such that each side of the conflict forms an element. Here, negativity and leaping is ascribed not to the vanguard collective or artist, but to a conflict that is internal to the total system itself. And so, departing from organicism and from the vanguard view of negation, Nakai now claims that the systematic sense of production is not sheerly cooperative or organic, but rather occurs through negativity within the system as a whole itself.

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And yet, he almost seems to undercut this point by endorsing language of "pioneers" and of our having to "catch up" with them in the above. As I read it, Nakai of '34 is still sorting out

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[12] Mombe Masashi, "Nakai Masakazu ni okeru shūdan-teki komyunike-shon no kannen," *Kenritsu Nagasaki shi-boruto daigaku kokusai jōhōgakubu kiyō* 5 (2004): 109.

the relationship between the individual, the collective, and broader socio-historical development qua totality. The central questions for Nakai moving forward are: what is the relationship between negativity and socio-historical formation? And how does the collective figure in—is it possible to find a role for collectives not by virtue of their station outside the system as a vanguard or pioneer, but by virtue of the fact that they were produced within the system itself, and yet nevertheless bear the capacities to change this system as a whole? It is with these questions mind that he begins working on the tabloid magazine *Doyōbi* and drafts the "Logic of the Committee."

Part 2: *World Culture* and *Doyōbi*

These ideological developments accompanied institutional changes. As the disjunct between pre- and post-hiatus *Bi-Hihyō* widened, newer members pressed for the magazine to be re-titled and -organized in line with the coterie's political convictions. Mashita, Kuno, Shinmura, and Kumazawa had together been working on a review of the French Communist Henri Barbusse's work on Émile Zola, and they wanted a sufficiently political magazine to publish their work. Nakai and several of the earlier members initially resisted the change out of financial, intellectual, and safety considerations—about having to relinquish earlier sources of funding, and having to pay the now 500-yen deposit required to treat "current affairs;" about excluding original members who worked in the aesthetics and art history tracks; and about censorship and arrest under increasing state surveillance. Nakai pressed Shinmura on this latter point, urging him to consider his career as a lecturer in the preparatory course at Dōshisha University and the impact that his arrest might have on his father Shinmura Izuru, a renowned scholar of linguistics at Kyoto University (*NMZ* 1 pamphlet:3–5).

Despite these concerns, the group decided to move forward with the change, ending *Bi-Hihyō* with issue 32 in October 1934. Members came prepared with potential names for the new magazine at that month's research meeting. Mashita proposed *logos* to stake a position against the "growing irrationalism" of modern Japan, but this was rejected as too narrowly philosophical (*ZSB* 29). Another proposed name stressed the term "international," but was rejected on the grounds that it would invite police suspicion.[13] They settled on *World Culture*—with the name "world" as a response to the narrow nationalism of groups like the Japanese Romantics, and "culture" as a counterpoint to the rising tide of militarism and fascism.

World Culture

The inaugural issue of the *World Culture* was released in February 1935. The publishing office was set up in the Three One Bookstore across the street from Kyoto University and not far from Nakanishiya-shoten. The magazine had about 1000 units of each issue in circulation, priced at 20-sen each, and roughly 200 annual subscriptions. These numbers seem to have been inadequate to reach production costs, and by the second issue members used the postscript to talk about their hopes for increased circulation numbers. While readership largely hovered at this same level, the magazine stayed afloat with the support of donations from figures like Tosaka, Tanikawa, and Hayashi, among others.

Each issue ran between 50 and 80 pages. The cover and table of contents were standard-fare for intellectual journals at the time. In total, the magazine would run 34 issues, ending in October 1937. In terms of content, *World Culture* was very much the successor magazine to post-hiatus *Bi-Hihyō*—though the magazine never states this outright. In addition to continuity in

[13] Iwakura, *Aru senjika no teikō*, 120.

membership, Tomioka remained on as editor, and many of the structural adjustments of later *Bi-Hihyō* were continued or expanded. For instance, the "Overseas Reports" section was expanded into the "World Culture Information" section. Theoretical essays continued to play a central role in the magazine. Despite a few holdovers more in line with the spirit of *Bi-Hihyō*, most contributions tended towards the leftist politics of the popular front. This theoretical section, moreover, was now supplemented with translations of European writers—which had increased in late *Bi-Hihyō* but took a central role in *World Culture*—including works by Karl Löwith and Max Horkheimer.

The goal in thus restructuring the magazine was to construct a venue for the Japanese left to connect with, Wada recalls, the "anti-fascist movement of French and European intellectuals."[14] Indeed Kuno remembers the change to *World Culture* being inspired by the French Popular Front, and in particular the unity coalitions formed in the Paris demonstrations of 1934 (*KOS* 5:45). As Wada and Kuno make clear that the goal was not simply to follow the Communist International (Comintern) or to unite, say, under the banner of Marxism; rather, it was to spark a domestic popular front movement that was inspired by global movements, but nevertheless recognized the unique threats against freedom in Japan.

To realize this project, the magazine included contributions from specialist working on different areas of the globe: Shinmura of French cultural production; Wada of German; Kumazawa of Russian. They also included contributions from outside the humanities: the physicist Taketani, the historian Nezu Masashi, former Dōshisha scholar of law and co-op leader Nose Katsuo, and the historian of science Hara Mitsuo (*ZSB* 22). The range of specialists allowed for scholars to deal with diverse topics including Contemporary French Literature, the

[14] Wada Yōichi, *Haiiro no yūmoa: Watashi no shōwashi no-to* (Tokyo: Rironsha, 1958), 179.

Ku Klux Klan, contemporary Chinese music and more. Nevertheless, the heightened atmosphere of state surveillance in mid-1930s Japan required contributors to take precautionary steps to protect their identity, often publishing and translating articles under aliases, and removing references to “revolution” or “class struggle” in their submissions.”[15]

Members used a number of means to gain access to international news and information. Wada recalls taking out a number of subscriptions to French, English, and German language magazines (*ZSB* 27), and Kuno recalls buying foreign-language materials “from smaller distributors like Nakanishiya and Mitsukoshi” because when you “acquired them through [larger booksellers like] Maruzen, you would be monitored by the Foreign Affairs Section of the Special Higher Police” (*KOS* 5:46). In special circumstances members got in contact with the authors themselves. In the case of the above Horkheimer translation, Nezu contacted Horkheimer at the International Institute for Social Research at Columbia University regarding Kuno’s wish to translate the above work in Japanese. Horkheimer then discussed the matter with Karl August Wittfogel, a specialist on China and member of the original Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt am Main. Wittfogel was then living in Beijing, but had made a trip to Japan and while there spent a considerable amount of time with Nezu.[16] Horkheimer agreed after corresponding with Wittfogel in July 1936—though *World Culture* had finished serializing Kuno’s translation by this time.[17]

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[15] Lucken, *Nakai Masakazu: naissance*, 155.

[16] Nezu Masashi, “Wittofgeru hakase no Nihon hōmon” *Shinagaku* 8 (1935): 133–141.

[17] See: Rudolf Siebert, “Introduction: The Development of the Critical Theory of Religion in Dubrovnik from 1975 to 2007,” in *The Future of Religion: Toward a Reconciled Society*, ed. Michael Ott (New York: Brill, 2007), 40. Also: Lucken, “Origins of the New Left,” 605.

The “World Culture Information” section carried news about major figures ranging from existentialist philosophers like Lev Shestov (*WC* 1), to modernist writers like James Joyce (*WC* 2), but paid special attention to leftist writers and intellectuals like Gide (*WC* 1,2,27,29), Mikhail Lifshitz (*WC* 1,2,3,5), Romain Rolland (*WC* 9/10,16,20,22,32), Franz Carl Weiskopf (*WC* 20), and Antonio Gramsci (*WC* 34). Aside from cultural production, members also invested considerable energy in providing up to date news and analyses regarding Fascist developments in Germany, Italy, France, and Spain, as well as about the anti-fascist and popular front movements that confronted these developments in these same countries (as well as among European exiles and members of the Comintern) (*S* 470:101–114).

Doyōbi

Aside from his work on the committee and a few small review pieces on film, Nakai’s engagement with *World Culture* was limited. This was owing to the fact that he began spending more of his energy on a quasi-companion print material—the bimonthly tabloid, *Doyōbi*. *Doyōbi* was, like *World Culture*, inspired by the French popular front movement, in particular the French weekly tabloid *Vendredi* (Friday), first published in November 1935 by André Chamson, Jean Guéhenno, and Andrée Viollis. The *Vendredi* tabloid ran twelve pages long, and its contributions were divided into sections on politics, society, foreign information, literature, art, entertainment, sections for women, and more. It was highly satirical, easy to read, and included a number of cartoons. It was also politically inclusive for members on the left, uniting a diverse coalition against “capitalism and fascism” ranging “from pacifists to planists, from Trotskyites to labor

unionists, from Christian leftists to militants from the League for the Rights of Man."[18] At its peak, circulation numbers reached around 100,000.

Vendredi was first introduced to *World Culture* readers in its 17th issue in May 1936 by Ichimura Keigo, a specialist of French Literature at Kyoto University.[19] It was around this same time that Nose Katsuo, who would serve as co-editor of *Doyōbi* alongside Hayashi Kaname, began attending monthly meetings after losing his position at the preparatory course of Dōshisha due to his arrest for Communist sympathies. (Shinmura would take over his position.) Two other figures were important to the founding of *Doyōbi*: Saitō Raitarō and Nakai. Saitō was a performer in the Shochiku Shimokamo Studios—not far from Kyoto University, the publishing offices of *World Culture,* and from branches of the Kyoto Consumer Cooperative, the newly formed and dominant Kyoto cooperative that a number of Kyoto and Dōshisha University students belonged to.[20] In June 1935, Saitō began publishing *Kyoto Studio News*, a monthly magazine aimed at low-ranking film employees. It ran four pages long, cost 5-sen, and its print run was 1,000 units. The magazine was born out of the difficulties that he encountered at the studio—low pay, long working hours, dismissal from work because of poor health conditions, and a salary that did not rise to meet inflation. But more than convey hardship, the newspaper was enjoyable, providing information about movie stars and related cultural activities. This fed into the aim of the magazine—the promotion of a sense of camaraderie among low-level film

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[18] Dudley Andrew and Steven Ungar, *Popular Front Paris and the Poetics of Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 79.

[19] See: Hirabayashi Ichi, "'Sekai Bunka' to 'Doyōbi:' Sekai Bunka kenkyū ni," *Kirisutokyō shakai mondai kenkyū* 10 (1966): 29–30.

[20] The Kyoto Consumer Cooperative was formed by merging several Kyoto area cooperatives, including the Kyoto Livelihood Consumer Cooperative with which Nakai had been deeply involved. The cooperative was established in April 1932 with Nose at its head.

employees. Saitō reflects: "I had in mind a newspaper written by readers, where people like us who live hand to mouth talk to each other together about our feelings and thought without adornment."[21] Paying the 500-yen deposit for the Newspaper Act, Saitō visited and requested manuscripts from several authors that he read in *Bungei Shunjū*, including the economist Sumiya Etsuji, the political scientist Ōiwa Makoto, and the above Hayashi Kaname. By way of Sumiya, Saitō was introduced to Nose (they had worked together at Dōshisha); and then by way of Nose, Saitō was introduced to Nakai (with whom Nose knew through the above consumer cooperative). He secured promises of contributions from each of them (*D* 8).

After issue 12, they renamed the magazine, releasing *Doyōbi* on July 4th, 1936. While the spirit and title of the newspaper were inspired by *Vendredi*, the cover "took hints from the French newspaper *Monde*," a popular front tabloid edited by Barbusse.[22] The slogans for *Doyōbi*—"Courage for Life," "Clarity of the Spirit," and "Fraternity without Separation"—formed a pyramid of small characters at the top of the magazine, underscored by the title *Doyōbi* in bold black letters, accented with the subtitle, "A Relaxing Afternoon" below it. The lower half of the first page carried an editorial introduction written by either Nakai or Nose, and above it was written an optimistic "prose-poem" that conveyed a sense of community and camaraderie: "A faith in the final victory of humanity is necessary," "Politics stands on the rational power of the people," "Don't cast off socialism," and "Utopia is grounded in actuality and effort." In the center between was a large woodblock print that changed periodically. Much of the cover art was created by Kenzo Itani and Mikumo Shonosuke, but other famous artists like Mukai Junkichi and Oguri Yoshiji would later contribute free prints. For the first issue, we find two stylishly dressed

[21] See: Itō Shunya, *Maboroshino 'sutadjio tsūshin' e* (Tokyo: Renga shobō shinsha, 1978), 28.
[22] Ibid, 9.

modern girls (*mogas*) and a child at what is presumably one of the many cafes that were popping up around the city at this time.

The cafe-setting opened onto the magazine's circulation. As Kuno recalls, the 1930s was a "period in which 'new cafes'…were popping up one after another in big cities." A cup of coffee ran about ten-sen, and the cafes served as a place where you could relax and, say, read a newspaper. Saitō, in charge of financial matters, initially asked various coffee shops to put the newspaper by the entrance, or to sprinkle them around the tables free of charge. Later, they would either sell issues in bulk to the coffee shop for cost,[23] or else the cafes would sell each issue for their list price of 3-sen, and for each issue sold they would give a cut of about 1-sen to the coffeeshop (*KOS* 5:85–86). The arrangement seemed to work well for cafes; of the 486 ads Gotō Yoshihiro counted in the magazine, 224 were for cafes.[24] Most were cafes in Kyoto and Osaka, and many in particular for the Kawaramachi-district of Kyoto. As we will recall, this area had boomed in the post-Great Kanto Earthquake period, and cafes emerged alongside the many bookstores that appeared in the district. For instance, the cafe Lunch Era was owned by the sister of a friend of Nakai, and it would sell about fifty units per week (*KOS* 5:85). *Doyōbi* was also sold in Salon de thé François, another popular cafe in the area opened in 1934 by painter and labor activist Tateno Shōichi. Tateno was close with above-mentioned Marxist economist and labor activist Kawakami Hajime. Through such connections, Tateno's shop emerged as a central hub of the popular front movement in Kyoto, and was frequented by students and scholars in

[23] Ibid, 8–9.

[24] Gotō Yoshihiro, "Nakai Masakazu to 'Bi hihyō' 'Sekai bunka' 'Doyōbi:' Teiryō-teki, teiseiteki shuhō ni yoru kenkyū," *Kiso kenkyū (C)* (2012–2014): https://kaken.nii.ac.jp/ja/file/KAKENHI-PROJECT-24500306/24500306seika.pdf

Kyoto. It was also one of the sites in which Nakai, Saitō, Nose, and Hayashi originally conceived the transition from *Kyoto Studio News* to *Doyōbi*.[25]

In addition to selling out of coffee shops, the magazine was mailed to different areas of the country, both urban and rural. Print runs started out at about 3,000 copies, but at its height expanded to around 8,000 units (*KOS* 5:85). Its popularity owed, at least in part, to its following *Kyoto Studio News* in embracing popular culture and entertainment. The tabloid ran six pages, and pages two through six offered enjoyable readings pertaining to sections on "Culture," "Film," "Women," "Society," and "Entertainment/Club." But *Doyōbi's* success cannot simply be attributed to entertainment value. In fact, the readership pushed back when things moved too far in this direction. For instance, an editorial afterword by Nakai notes reader "criticisms that there are too many articles on film," and tries to push back: "if you think about the great role that film plays in the contemporary period, we really cannot help one or two pages coming out" (*D* 40). Just as important as the entertainment section were the women and society sections. In fact, Moore notes that "[d]omestic issues took up much of the Society section's space and received the most reader contributions"—with topics ranging from national politics to the politics of the everyday.[26]

This is important because these reader contributions were perhaps the defining feature of *Doyōbi*. While the tabloid indeed solicited submissions by members of the *World Culture* coterie—including by Kuno, Shinmura, Nezu, Tsujibe, Ichimura, and Nagahiro—Saitō wanted the publication to be enjoyed by people from diverse strata of society, and so stipulated that

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[25] Satō Yuichi, *Furansoa kissashitsu—Kyōto ni nokoru gōka kyakusen kōshitsu no omokage* (Kyoto: Hokuto shobō, 2010), 1.

[26] Aaron Moore, "The Logic of the Committee and the Newspaper Doyōbi," in *Confronting Capital and Empire: Rethinking Kyoto School Philosophy*, eds. Viren Murthy, Fabian Schäfer, and Max Ward (Leiden: Brill Publishing, 2010), 315–316.

submissions must be accessible to readers with elementary-level education (*D* 9). Their intellectual contributions, moreover, primarily served as a minor and provisional measure amidst the larger goal of soliciting reader contributions. As Kuno tells it, "Nakai and Nose had the aim of stuffing the whole thing with letters from readers to create a cultural newspaper in which the editorial department's only function is compilation." By the end of its run, Kuno surmises, "*Doyōbi* was compiled of eighty to ninety-percent letters from readers" (*KOS* 5:89).

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This opens onto the relationship between collectives and masses as a social subject, and the connection that this relationship has with socio-historical formation qua totality.

We can begin by asking: how does this emphasis on reader contributions relate to Nakai's earlier writing on collectivity and the masses? And more generally, what is the relationship between the collectives and the masses here? We find hints of an answer in Nakai's editorial work, and perhaps most explicitly in an editorial postscript responding to readers in issue 16 from September 5th, 1936:

> I am extremely pleased that the letters from our unknown readers have increased remarkably…We will be very happy for you to provide any criticisms regarding our editorial aims. Even if you scold us as lazy and say that we are not advancing at all, we will still be very grateful…
>
> This newspaper belongs to all of the people who read it. We hope that criticism will move into direct action that benefits the people. Is it possible for all readers to become reporters just as they are? This is what we have been trying with our efforts. I want to try, even if it's just in feeling, to separate from the structure of selling and buying (*D* 40).

We also find important suggestions in Nakai's editorial introduction to issue 19, "The Collective is Seeking a new Form of Language:"

> With the discovery of the "printed word"…millions of people could speak and sing with other millions of people.
>
> But people didn't speak with each other. Today, newspapers only give one-sided sermons in a scream of advertisement. It seems that the "word of the vacuum tube" are

> similarly not the ears and mouth of the people…People remain deaf and mute in the collective.
>
> Our *Doyōbi* is new in that the readers become the writers. In now creating a space in which the ears of the thousands of people become the mouths of thousands of people, a new language is sought.
>
> Cannot we say that the voices of the thousands of people of this *Doyōbi* will eventually become the reciprocating voices of the tens of thousands, of millions, of billions of people talking to each other? We the deaf are acquiring collective language (*D* 47).

Here the editorial committee qua collective does not lead the masses. As the first excerpt makes clear, the aim of the *Doyōbi* collective of editors is not to edify its readers on some particular topic, as for instance with *Bi-Hihyō* or *World Culture*, but rather to function as an organ of communication and transmission amongst readers. This is what it means for readers to become reporters; for the ears to become the mouth. The function of the editor is not to guide its readers through a particular theme, but to create a venue by which people can develop a new language grounded in mutual criticism and collaboration.

More, these editorials make clear that, for Nakai, historical development is invested in the everyday process of mutual criticism amongst the masses. The foreword to issue 22 reads:

> The idea that you know that the world is becoming worse is the same as assuming that you have knowledge of the entirety of history, of the entirety of the force of dialectics. Is this really the case? Does history traverse a path schematically from one point to another like a line drawn on a map? Is it a trajectory that we should be able to view horizontally?
>
> No, it is not.
>
> What is the basis for those small movements that shift development from one direction to another?…
>
> Is not the reality of resistance the basis for all the activities of history?
>
> If the world is becoming worse, our natural power to further resists senseless violence will move history itself. Whether right or wrong, support for this claim depends on the little corrections of everyday people.
>
> It is through our becoming aware of the small things that we are lacking and forming claims in service of their correction that history and everyday life changes in a corrective direction…No matter how loud the speech, no matter how many years the flag has been raised and the procession has been repeated, there is nothing here that could reduce the

> price of the simplest of meat by even 1-sen. No—the numbers silently tell us the opposite.
>
> Truth and victory are always supported by daily life.
>
> Any small, correcting criticism or any little action amidst our minute lives can become the basis for enormous actions that can shift history from one pole to another.
>
> Rather than being seen horizontally, history should be entered into: it is seeking support. Today truth is sincerely asking for each of your little hands, both men and women, to not let go of your criticisms and actions toward your lives at hand (*D* 65).

But while striking, these editorials only provide hints. To flesh out these ideas—the relation between collectives and the masses, mutual criticism, the printed word, and the connection between mutual criticism and historical development—we have to turn to what is widely regarded as Nakai's interwar masterpiece: "The Logic of the Committee" (*Iinkai no ronri* 委員会の論理).

Part 3: The Historicity of the Logic of the Logic of the Committee

Nakai's "Logic of the Committee" was serialized across issues 13, 14, and 15 of *World Culture* from January to March 1936—just a few months before the first issue of *Doyōbi*.[27] As I read it, this text forms the theoretical and historical basis for the tabloid's practice, and thus holds the key to unlocking Nakai's triangulation of collectives, masses, and socio-historical self-formative development. Broadly speaking, the essay's aim is threefold: first, to chart the history of the concept of totality qua self-formation and to bring an adequate concept of totality qua self-formation to the analysis of history; second, to bring this history into the present to explain how the masses have been alienated from the processes of historical formation, falling into a state of

[27] I have read through and consulted Lucken's French translation, "La logique des comités." See: Nakai Masakazu, "La logique des comités," trans. Michael Lucken, *European Journal of Japanese Philosophy* 1 (2016): 289–357.

non-cooperation and -criticism; and third, to offer a path forward by which the masses can regain their cooperative and critical function to participate in the unfolding of history as a whole. We will deal with the first two points in part 3 and the third point in part 4.

Historical Logic as Totality

We can begin with the *logic* of the "Logic of the Committee." Nakai claims that it is a mistake to assume that logic "transcends the entirety of phenomena" to point to some "transcendental and eternal world." Rather, he deploys logic in a twofold sense. First, as latitudinal totality; Nakai here traces logic back to the Greek *logos*, and holistically conceptualizes *logos* through Miki's work on Heidegger and Marx—framing logic in terms of the concrete anthropological and ideological structures that govern everyday experience. The difference for Nakai is that, we will recall from the previous chapter, "revolutions in the intelligible and sensible faculties of humans" are produced in mutual determination with social and technological transformations, and so here logic points to a social ordering of totality that is not only governed anthropologically and ideologically, but also by social, economic, and technological structures.

Second, Nakai conceives logic as a longitudinal totality, writing that logic has "taken on different roles amidst cultural transition" (*NMZ* 1:46), and, in fact, "always performs some particular role in [bringing forth moments of] crisis in which one system is destroyed and reorganized according to something else. In other words, logic itself becomes a living ratio in the cleavage [of crisis]; that is, it becomes a medium" for self-development (*NMZ* 1:68). Put together, logic is, for Nakai, the latitudinal whole of anthropological, ideological, social, economic, and technological structures, as well as the longitudinal "medium" by which these

structures, unified together as one totality, self-produces itself forward to constitute historical development.

With this in mind, Nakai, drawing again on Samuel Butcher, distinguishes three latitudinal organizations of logic—the logic of the spoken, written, and printed word—and longitudinally organizes these in the transition from classical to medieval and then modern culture. We can provide a quick overview with reference to Nakai's own diagram, which I have rendered into English in diagram 4. In brief, the logic of the spoken produces and is produced by a "logic of discussion," and these are born in mutual determination with an ancient Greek culture grounded materially and economically in the transition from the clan system to slavery. The same holds regarding the written logic, a "logic of contemplation," and the transition from slavery and the feudal system in the medieval period. Things get a bit more complicated with the logic of print, owing to the intense material and economic transformations in the modern period. The logic of print initially produces and is produced by a "logic of experience" and observation that is connected to the transition to the commercial system. But Nakai details a series of transitions in the onset of capitalist modernity—mapping the transition to industrial capitalism onto a "logic of action" and the transition to finance capitalism onto a "logic of function." Now, out of this social and economic transition, there emerges two new logics—the logics of action and function yield a "logic of technology" and the industrial system and the financial system yield a "logic of production."

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In the absence of space to exhaustively detail the ins and outs of Nakai's historical map, perhaps we can best begin by observing that Nakai's deployment of Butcher's work here is structurally altered in line with his mid-'30s commitment to Marxist historical and dialectical

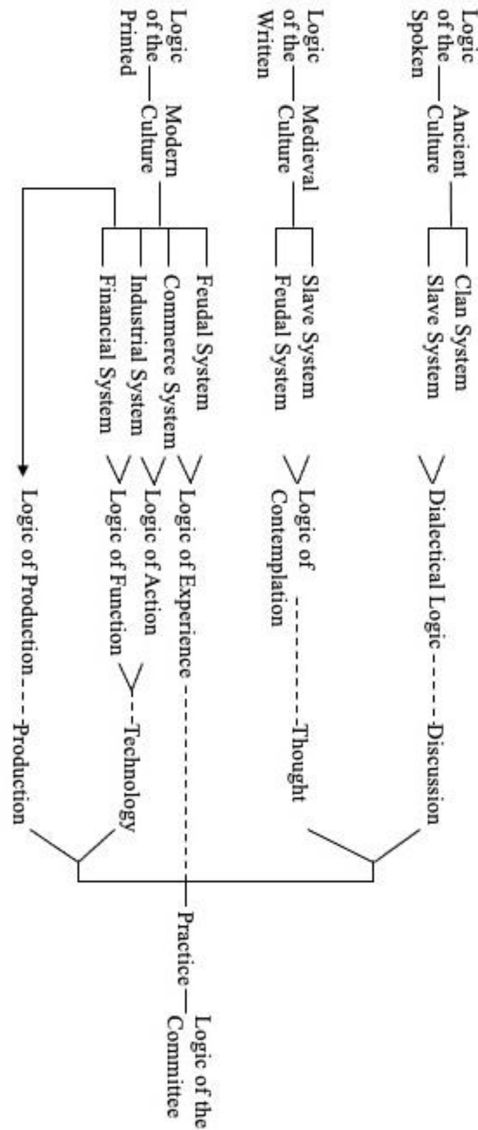

Diagram 4: Nakai's theory of historical logics (NMZ 1:91).

materialism. In his work on the committee, each culture and its verbal logic—ancient, medieval, and modern; spoken, written, and printed (the electronically transmitted word is, tellingly, dropped entirely)—is formulated in terms of the sense of system, production, and history that we earlier saw, for Nakai, was constitutive of "Marx's [historical] material dialectic." In other words, Nakai's verbal logics and cultural forms now bear the mark of, as Leslie Pincus observes, a "temporality [that] is both linear and structural"—not only "pressing forward through specific

stages, each of which is characterized, in a Marxian mode, by the means and social relations of production" but also "powerfully present in how it structures contemporary practices and modes of consciousness."[28] What Nakai has done here, as I read it, is used his earlier copy theory model of self-formation to chart history up to the present system of finance capitalism.

This means that, say, the logic of the spoken found in antiquity is not simply formed when the social rhetoric of the slavery system replaces the persuasion of the clan system according to changes in the material and economic relations; rather, these two systems conflict in "inverse relational negativity," to merge together in a new holistic system grounded in a logic of discussion. Further, this also means that the material dialectical synthesis not only holds within each stage of culture, but also in the transition across stages that is constitutive of the longitudinal sense of historical development. And so, while Nakai sets up, for instance, the spoken and written as opposites—the former allowing for words to be "interpreted in various ways by many different people" and the latter producing "a linguistic, semantic, and conceptual structure in which one word points to one meaning" (*NMZ* 1:47, 51–52)—he nevertheless recognizes both logics operating in the medieval period in a kind of "gap between the logic of biblical interpretation and the logic of common-sense knowledge (*NMZ* 1:52)." In short, the logic of contemplation does not simply replace the logic of discussion that preceded it; rather, the two are "estranged" from one another yet joined together in an unresolved but co-present thesis–antithesis structure. Nakai, citing the Neo-Kantian Rudolph Wagner, terms this the "double truth" (*nijū shinri* 二重真理) inherent in a given logic or ordering.[29]

[28] Leslie Pincus, "A Salon for the Soul: Nakai Masakazu and the Hiroshima Culture Movement," *Positions* 10, no. 1 (2002): 177.

[29] I would not have realized the centrality of this concept of "double truth" were it not for the work of: Fujii, *Nakai Masakazu ron*, 106–107.

This double-truth structure likewise orders logic moving forward. So, while the whole of the modern historical form and its logic of print is once more formulated in opposition to the written logic in the medieval form—with the public "granted the freedom of interpretation according to their own daily experiences and circumstances" in print (*NMZ* 1:53)—there is again a residual undercurrent of medieval contemplation. Nakai takes Martin Luther as emblematic of the double truth of the modern period, where we find interpretive diffusion in the Protestant Reformation soon followed by an attempt to restore interpretive uniformity in *Against the Murderous, Thieving Hordes of Peasants*. This likewise holds in the transition from the feudal system to commerce, and the new observational subject that emerges with Francis Bacon. The idea is that, even Bacon, having "fundamentally overturned the logic of Aristotle with a *Novum Organum* based on experience and observation" (*NMZ* 1:54–55), resolves himself in double truth in his pairing this new method with a commitment to revelation and faith in *The Advancement of Learning*.

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Rather than chart out the entire sinuous path by which Nakai charts this historical schema forward, I think it will be best to proceed by focusing Nakai's argument around the points that speak to these logics of totality as they relate to the crisis of 1930s Japan—which, we will recall from our discussion in parts 1 and 2, he understands in threefold terms: first, a lack of criticism and collaboration among the general public leading to a feeling of hopelessness and isolation; second, a feeling of helplessness among intellectuals that translates into a tendency to lose themselves within an abyss that transforms into reactionary nationalism; and third, an increasingly harsh and repressive state apparatus.

Industrial Capitalism: Modern Japan by way of Germany

The historical form that emerges in industrial capitalism is latitudinally structured according to a logic of action that adheres to the double truth of experience and contemplation, as Nakai shows in the above diagram 4. Nakai longitudinally roots this logic of action in the social and economic transformations that mark industrial capitalism, and, because of the prominence of modern German philosophy in this period, he takes particular interest in the case of German industrialization. Attentive to both international and domestic unevenness, Nakai notes that the transition to industrial capitalism "was not made at the same pace in England, France, and Germany," and also that the "conflicting economic systems in northern and southern Germany" eventually led to its being "left behind from the economic leap of Europe around 1500" (*NMZ* 1:57). But more than belatedness, Nakai is interested in its rapid rise in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War, its subsequent achievement of industrial and economical equal footing with England and France, its descent into the First World War, and, most importantly, the way in which this legacy created the grounds for the capitalist crisis and ferment of fascist thought that pervades its contemporary form in the 1930s.

Because of this rapid modernization and domestic unevenness, the modern German logic of action vividly displays the double truth of: one, a logic of experience imported from England and France via Bacon and then later Hume and Voltaire; and two, a holdover from the logic of contemplation. Relying on the scholarship of Oskar Walzel to explain the sustained presence of the logic of contemplation in Germany, Nakai argues that "German classicism is established upon the worldview of Plotinus" insofar as "Plotinus was always an expression of attunement with primitive Christianity." He references Walzel here:

> The Germanic peoples, who lived in a harsher, more oppressive natural environment than the south Europeans, found Neoplatonism quite in accord with their own feeling toward

> life. Christianity with an admixture of Neoplatonism seemed to them like the continuity of the conceptions of their ancient faith. This affinity was most evident in German mysticism during the Middle Ages.[30]

Nakai adds: “The foundation for a new logic that discovers the subjectum stretched out in the depths of contemplation amidst the creativity of emanation…is an amalgamation of peasant elements determined upon the German land, and Junkertum elements” (*NMZ* 1:58). Nakai’s claim is that German industrialization imported a logic of experience into a land still dominated by a logic of contemplation, such that a new version of double truth takes hold—the double truth operative in the logic of action.

Though Kant strives to bring the double truth of these two frameworks—experience and contemplation—into balance (*NMZ* 1:59), moving forward figures like Fichte and other German Romantics give into the worst impulses of the latter: “Fichte inherited one dimension of the subject of action and will, tracing the rise of the reactionary nationalism of the German Junkertum against Napoleon, resurrecting the logic of the past blood of Germania.” Referencing Walzel, Nakai’s claim is that a “pulse can be drawn from Plotinus, to Jakob Böhme, [Johann Georg] Hamann, [Johann Gottfried von] Herder and, further, to German Romanticism. The mystery of the sudden shift of Fichte’s logic from Kant’s logic must be read in terms of something lurking within their blood. Therein is what Wilhelm Windelband calls ‘the pantheistic method’ (*Ein Pantheismus der Methode*)” (*NMZ* 1:58).

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These references to Plotinus, emanation, and pantheism make an indirect but evident claim: that the irrationalism of modern German logic of action was inherited in modern Japanese

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[30] Oskar Walzel, *German Romanticism* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1932), 5.

thought—not just in middle-period Nishida philosophy but the entire logic of expressive totality that pervaded Taisho period cultural production. More broadly, Nakai's narration of the onset of modern German industrial capitalism finds corollaries in the rapid industrialization of Japan, its descent into the First-Sino Japanese and the Russo-Japanese War, and the contemporary condition of capitalist crisis and fascist thought. Though government surveillance prevented Nakai from writing this comparison outright, in "The Thought of Contemporary Youth" (*Gendai seinen no shisō ni tsuite* 現代青年の思想について), a lecture delivered to Kyoto university students the year prior, he charts a similar framework of belated but rapid modernization for Japan and of a resultant logic of action for its intellectuals. Nakai notes in this lecture that, in order to resolve this structure of double-truth, "Germany has followed an idealist tendency, rather than taking the common-sense, positivist, or naturalist path of thinking found in Britain and France," and adds: "This happened in Germany, and it seems that it happened in Japan as well." (*NMZ* 4:10–11).[31] This demonstrates that, in situating German fascism and "reactionary nationalism" as the result of the Plotinian and Romanticist proclivities of contemplation, Nakai is making coded reference to his mentors—with the subtext being that their theory of totality is historically conditioned in the double-truth of a moment that, when resolved via the "idealist tendency" of contemplation, carries very real risks.

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[31] In addition, Nakai's use of Walzel to talk of a German "logic of blood" that is unique to the German *climate* references the anthropology that Watsuji developed out of his engagement with Heidegger. But even with statements like these left out of his work on logic, the view of economic, material, and intellectual similarities between Germany and Japan was a relatively common position, and his readers would likely have made a local connection to the sense of irrationality coding the present in contemporary Japan.

So, what is the alternative that would allow us to adequately grasp the historical moment as it is structured in a totality of double truth? Hegel, for Nakai, marks an important path forward here. While the Fichte path proceeds from double truth by immersing itself in contemplation, Hegel is unique in having "escaped, through phenomenology, from the substantialism of this emanation…of Plotinus." To be clear, however, it is not merely that Hegel endorsed the observational over the contemplative; rather, Hegel found a way to integrate the contradiction of industrial capitalism's double truth itself as the condition for development—arriving at "a dialectic of subjectivity in which the processual medium of development through self-division always forms the moment of its own negation" (*NMZ* 1:62–63). Nakai makes this clear in *The Problem of the Subjekt* (*Subjekt no mondai* Subjekt の問題), carried in *Shisō* just a couple of months prior:

> The most important thing that we should note about Hegel's so-called subjectivity is that division itself is the fate of consciousness. Therefore the self-conscious subject, that is, the independence and autonomy that can make an object of oneself for oneself, becomes the fundamental moment of this division. Subjectivity expresses its clear form in opposition to substance. This is not a substance, which is like the bullet of a pistol that will continue to fly forever the moment it is shot; rather, the dialectical subject, by negatively mediating itself, is a process that develops through the constant determination of itself in a moment of opposition. It is an infinite moment of crisis that is always facing its own collapse and reconstruction. Here, the one substrate is already divided in two and these reside in a *topos* of uncompromising, discontinuous, and unstable development and tension which determines itself in the medium of this opposition (*NMZ* 1:44).

We should should note the themes of crisis, division, destruction, and reorganization that structure Nakai's reading of the Hegelian account of self-formation here. This language is important for two reasons. First, because these terms show up in Miki's dialectical materialist decentered account—where dialectics "alone furnishes the key to the 'self-movement' of all actuality…to 'leaps,' to the 'break in continuity,' to the 'transformation into the opposite,' to the

destruction of the old and the emergence of the new." This indicates that Nakai reads Hegel, Marx, and Lenin together to be offering an ontology of the self-formative production of totality—what, in diagram 4, he calls a "logic of production"—which is the synthesized logic of the double truth of observation and contemplation (unlike action, which subsumes observation into contemplation). This reading finds support in that his other references to Hegel are interlaced with uncited quotations of Marx and Lenin's mid-1910s work on Hegel, as Lucken and Fujii have noted (*NMZ* 1:76, 94).[32]

The second reason that this shared language of crisis, cleavage, destruction, and reorganization is important is because it appears in Nakai's own understanding of the historical progression of logic. Recall the quote by which we established the longitudinal nature of logic: that logic brings forth moments of "crisis in which one system is destroyed and reorganized according to something else," and thus is formulated as a "medium" for development out of the "cleavage" of crisis (*NMZ* 1:68). Nakai is here not only providing a history of the Hegelian–Marxist–Leninst concept of holistic self-production, he is providing a justification for its usage insofar as it alone adequately grasps, and is capable of resolving, the double-truth that leads into post-industrial finance capitalism. In short, by terminologically matching Hegel, Marx, Lenin, and his own thinking on logic, Nakai is providing historical justification for his adoption of the Marxist dialectical materialist standpoint of holistic production via negativity. It makes sense then, as we will see in the next section, that Nakai uses this Hegelian–Marxist–Leninist logic of production to diagnose the crisis of post-industrial capitalism in modern Japan.

Finance Capitalism and the Birth of the "Non-critical" and "Un-Cooperative" Masses

[32] Lucken, "Origins of New Left," 602–603. Fujii, *Nakai Masakazu ron*, 109.

Nakai uses a constellation of terms across various works to describe the social, material, and economic conditions of post-industrial Japan and Europe. Most frequent is the above "finance system" and "finance capitalism," but he also references "monopoly capitalism" and the "capitalism of cartels and trusts" as a "contradiction of the *laissez-faire* system." As we have discussed, Nakai has both Marx and Lenin in mind here.

Perhaps we can focus this period in relation to another of Nakai's references to Marx. In his above work on realism, Nakai quotes (but does not cite) Marx's *German Ideology* in the context of finance capitalism: "big industry created everywhere the same relation between the classes of society and thus destroyed the particularity of each nationality… while the bourgeois of each nation still retained separate national interests, big industry created a class having the same interests in all nations and for which nationality is already destroyed." (*NMZ* 2:95–96, *MECW* 5:73, mod).[33] In addition, his mid-'30s references to cartels and trusts in monopoly capitalism show that he has come to interpret the internationality of finance capitalism according to Lenin's *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. For Lenin, "Monopolist capitalist associations, cartels, syndicates and trusts first divided the home market among themselves and obtained more or less complete possession of the industry of their own country. But under capitalism the home market is inevitably bound up with the foreign market. Capitalism long ago created a world market" (*LCW* 22:245). Accordingly Nakai notes that, in this post-industrialist stage of monopoly capitalism, "the economic system is ever more deeply rooted in the finance system, and everything is moving towards a stage of imperialism and the European War" (*NMZ* 1:65). To put this briefly in the framework of modern Japan, you have a stage in which transnational corporations (*zaibatsu* 財閥) further instigate the imperial project (deeper into

[33] See: Fujii, *Nakai Masakazu ron*, 107.

Manchuria) as it edges closer to war (the full-scale invasion of China would begin in less than a year from publication) which is, in part, undertaken to secure the rights of these transnational corporations over the resources in that region.

Looking to Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Nakai understands this shift to post-industrial capitalism according to a new stage of bifurcated social logic—a new double truth of "self-alienation" (*MECW* 3:272). Here there is a split between the specialization of producers through "heavy industrialization" and the masses of consumers that are alienated from this process.[34] Mediating these is the commodity—which is given within two different logics according to one's position as a producer or consumer. In other words, the post-industrial, finance capital iteration of double truth is structured by the commodity such that producer and consumer are separated from each other and relate to commodities in fundamentally different ways. For the producer, there is "a 'logic of function,' a 'logic of the number'" underlying commodities; for the consumer there is only "sensible memorial representations."

Nakai's example is the 1936 model Ford. With the shift to heavy industrial technology, the "committee of specialized engineers" arrives at a "concept of things as they are produced through high-level technical science." That is, they are aware of the specific ways in which the 1936 model Ford is a complex, mathematical function comprised of a particular ordering of elements of, say, transportation, safety, comfort, and style. Nakai is here taking a different tack against functionalism. Recall his earlier Heideggerian criticism that functionalism, in beginning from the mathematical, was susceptible to being co-opted within the homogenizing processes of capitalist modernity. Appealing to his work on crisis, his claim is now that functionalism is

[34] This is not unlike the earlier-mentioned "gap between the logic of biblical interpretation and the logic of common-sense knowledge" constitutive of the double truth of medieval culture.

inequitably involved in the process of specialization. He links this claim to his work on the "Material Collective Character," and in particular the idea that the complex material structure organizing the products of modern capitalism require a collective sentiment of "unity" that functions to distribute, coordinate, and integrate individual tasks as functions within a greater organic system. Essentially, Nakai's claim is that the precondition for the functionalist understanding of products is "unity within the same system of cooperation," where this system of cooperation is structured by enterprises within the post-industrial, finance capitalist system (*NMZ* 1:99).

Nakai claims that two groups emerge paramount in this system: "the technical committee connected with the company" and the "academic research" committees found in the university. Through their participation within the finance system's schema of cooperation, "high-level mathematics" and "high-level technical science" rule the day, and the "productive mechanism of heavy industry leads the products, as well as the men themselves, to become extremely different from their starting point" (*NMZ* 1:65).

An opposite but corollary condition is brought about in consumers in finance capitalism. Unlike producers, who have complex mathematical and scientific understandings of products, "the general masses only possess a composite of perceptually felt memorial representations." Due to the increasingly complex structure of production and the isolation of research, the mass of consumers do not approach the Ford as a complex function. Rather, the 1936 model Ford is given as, say, a marker of success, or as a symbol of technological progress such that "the rationality itself of the many people is drawn away from technological generality" of the car and how it functions as a complex structure: "our understanding has descended and distorted to no more than an image of an automobile." And so in finance capitalism, Nakai concludes, "the

masses have been transformed and abandoned amidst a contradiction in which they are alienated from the general concept and only have these simple representations of the product" (*NMZ* 1:65).

To be clear, the producers are not some cabal lording their special access to the world over consumers. Remember, the flip side of specialization is massification, meaning that some members of the masses are even producers within a company and specialists in an academic field. Nakai here connects his earlier criticisms regarding the leveling tendencies of Cassirer's functionalism with his work, first, on the material collective character and, second, on the specialization and professionalization of crisis. Nakai's claim is that, within the cooperative unity of finance capitalism, even specialized producers are organized according to a "division of intellectual labor" such that: "When technology, through the established division of labor, becomes compartmentalized, mutually independent, and the exclusive function of a particular individual, and when you have the concentration of attention and the constant repetition of one specific action, then it becomes possible to get the desired degree of efficiency with minimal effort" (*NMZ* 1:99). This is important because it means that even collectivity within the finance system is grounded upon alienation and individualization. And so, "[a]lthough the mutual cooperative research of all human beings [involved in some project] is required for the research of the generality of concepts, here it has rather sunken within the secret research of individual competition. The feudal heritage of the [medieval cultural] form of secret transmission reappears here in a pronounced manner" (*NMZ* 1:101). In short, producers, precisely because of their specialization, are converted into the masses and alienated from the products of their labor.

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This is the result of broader transformations in the commodity structure that occurred in the transition to finance capitalism. Nakai takes "the sale of cement as an example." Initially producers and consumers were connected within a relatively direct process of buying and selling:

> If we observe in detail what we are selling, we will understand that this is in response to the human demand regarding the question, "is this cement?" Within the bounds of the system of profit economics, if there is something that does not conform, even a little, to the function within which cement is referred then, by not buying it, it will be excluded from the domain of existence (*existenz*) qua practice. In the present stage, what cannot be sold does not exist; it takes on the meaning of non-existence. Here, possible existence is connected, as it is, to actual existence, and we find a logic of *praxis*. In this way price, for some certain thing, signifies the line of limitation that the praxis of human activity allows for it to acquire real existence (*NMZ* 1:96).

While in the early stages of capitalism there is still a distinction between producer and consumer, and while producers still take privileged access to the commodity as a function, nevertheless cement itself, along with its marketability, depends on the practice and purposes of the consumer.[35] It is the "criticism" (*hihan* 批判) and "cooperation" (*kyōdō* 協同) of the masses that is important here. Cement is taken up critically by the consumers, and so its value, and thus being, is determined via human purpose and the concrete activities of people. The mass of consumers, then, can be said to cooperate with the producers jointly, though in differing degrees, in the construction of the concept of cement. Nakai writes: "At the moment that [the technical concept of cement] comes into existence, it exists within a conceptual structure in a logic of technology; here, there is already a projective criticism and negation of its efficiency, a negation

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[35] To be clear, this is not some kind of utopian rendering of the early stages of capitalism. Nakai claims that as this general structure develops to control the social logic of, say, modern Japan, a new ordering emerges in which everything is commodified, even "natural existence—whether mountains, rivers, plants, animals, or even human beings, everything is for sale. When something loses its value to be bought and sold, it is powerfully distorted and will fall into the domain of non-existence" (*NMZ* 1:96–97).

of itself with the more general concept of cement as its mediating moment, and the self-deconstruction of an actual existence that negates itself before possible existence" (*NMZ* 1:97).

Even within industrial capitalism, this general schema of development via criticism and cooperation holds: "Any phenomena that determines the price of cement and that drives the stock prices of the companies that produce it to go up and down in the stock market becomes a central condition determining the concept of cement as a concrete product. It is the percentage of cement A and cement B that stretches over human social activity that constitutes the phenomenal form of cement as a product, and it is the analysis of this that is the condition for the definition of cement in the present stage" (*NMZ* 1:96–97).

Nevertheless, with the transition to finance and monopoly capitalism, this critical and cooperative consumer is lost, and with them, the practical check on products. In other words, "in the present stage of monopoly capitalism existence in the system of selling and buying has been separated (*yūri*) from the criticism of the masses" (*NMZ* 1:97). As capitalism enters a new phase grounded in the finance and monopoly system, the products created by enterprises separate from the demands forged in the criticism of the masses, and a new relationship forms between state and corporate powers. The idea is that, with the bulk investment of capital required for heavy industrialization—both in terms of mining and processing resources—producers transform into large financial conglomerates (*zaibatsu*). The state, aware of the immense power that these financial institutions hold, represent and protect the needs of these institutions over those of its citizens. The state and corporations collude together in, for instance, the imperial project mentioned above. Here we find that, to use Robert Gilpin's summary of the Lenin text Nakai draws from, "as capitalist economies mature, as capital accumulates, and as profit rates fall, the capitalist economies are compelled to seize colonies and create dependencies to serve as markets,

investment outlets, and sources of food and raw materials. In competition with one another, they divide up the colonial world in accordance with their relative strengths."[36] As they do so, Lenin concludes in his own words, "surplus capital will be utilized not for the purpose of raising the standard of living of the masses in a given country"—that is, not to meet the needs of consumers—but to protect and ensure the interests of large corporate conglomerations (*LCW* 22:241).

Presumably owing to Japanese state surveillance, Nakai only briefly touches on the issue of imperialism and its inevitable progress into war; nevertheless the financial separation of producer and consumer holds with regards to the domestic structure of finance capital as well. David Harvey offers a connected *concrete* example with respect to China in the early 2010s, noting that "in three years China consumed 50 percent more cement than the United States had in the entire twentieth century."[37] This increase is not in line with consumer demand; there are, for instance, entire cities going un- or under-occupied in China.[38] The same holds in the United States—with over half of luxury skyscrapers built in Manhattan from 2015–2020 remaining unsold, despite the fact that there is a huge demand in the New York housing market.[39] The key point, for Nakai, is that capitalism has entered a new stage of accumulation in which products are being made without any consideration of the practical demands of the masses: "In the ever deepening significance of the structure of selling and buying that occurs in this stage, human

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[36] Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 39.

[37] David Harvey, *Abstract from the Concrete* (Cambridge: Sternberg Press/The Incidents, 2016).

[38] See: Wade Shepard, *Ghost Cities of China: The Story of Cities without People in the World's Most Populated Country* (London: Zed Books, 2015).

[39] Derek Thompson, "Why Manhattan's Skyscrapers Are Empty," *The Atlantic*, January 16, 2020: http://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/01/american-housing-has-gone-insane/605005/

demand itself becomes separated (*yūri*) from human purpose and ends up becoming something different" (*NMZ* 1:97–98). Here, financial corporations, supported by the state, have found a method of financial accumulation that does not depend on consumer needs. In other words, with the transition to finance and monopoly capitalism, the ability of the masses to critically and cooperatively engage with the products that they consume diminishes, and their practice is further separated from production so as not even to be enfolded back into the product itself. Returning to our example of concrete and the housing market, production here depends little on whether people want to move to these cities, or whether there is an active demand for affordable housing by the inhabitants within them.

As the ability of the masses to critically and cooperatively engage with the products that they consume diminishes, and as their practice is further sundered from production so as to not even be enfolded into the product itself, the aforementioned gap of double truth between the logic of function amongst producers and the memorial representations given to consumers emerges more starkly:

> when demand has no currency, it degenerates into a mere representation and transforms itself into something unreal and ineffective. Demand, which is the deepest foundation of technology, comes to be divided into demand that has currency and demand that does not have currency. In the case that demand has it—that is, it is based in money—it becomes a real object; but in the case that demand does not have it—that is, it is ineffective and based on one's own desires, emotions, and wishes—it is merely a relation between thought and existence, simply a provisional representation within me (*NMZ* 1:97–98).

Here, the mass of consumers do not approach the Ford as a complex function, nor primarily think of it in terms of their practice. Rather, "the masses have been alienated from cooperation in the concept of the tool, or to phrase it another way, removed from concrete collaboration in the understanding of the generality of the concept, such that they only acquire representations of products that are already given to them" (*NMZ* 1:97–98). "The cars that we ride or the clothes

that we wear—all of this is received without the least consideration of the generality possessed by the secret committees of the factory." And so in the current logic governing finance and monopoly capitalism, the masses—both producers and consumers—separate from the means of production and are thereby rendered fundamentally "non-critical" and "un-cooperative" (*NMZ* 1:101).

Part 4: The Logic of the Committee

Nakai develops a new "logic of practice"—that of the committee—to resolve the double truth of "self-alienation" in finance capitalism, fighting commodification and specialization to thereby reinvest the masses with "systematic deliberation against the non-critical" and "systematic representation against the un-cooperative" (*NMZ* 1:102). This emerges as a dialectical development in the larger historical progression of logic qua totality; the idea is that, through systematic deliberation and representation, preceding historical logics are brought together in a new logic of practice that can re-invest the masses, as a whole, with criticism and cooperation.

It might be useful to begin with Nakai's diagram of the logic of the committee, which I have rendered in English in diagram 5. We can begin by noting its "recursive and infinite" structure: that the proposal itself, which is the start of deliberation, is informed via reflection upon a report of results from a previous implementation of a plan based on an earlier proposal. This is significant because it means there is no first step; the proposal is always informed via reflection on practices that themselves are informed by an earlier process of deliberation and representation. Keeping this in mind, we can follow Nakai in beginning with deliberation.

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Deliberation is grounded primarily in two moments: proposal and decision. Proposals are

Diagram 5: Nakai's logic of the committee (NMZ 1:106).

a "reflection" of the social, material, and economic conditions of reality. Nakai is re-deploying much from his work on copy theory here—not just this language of reflection, but also basic projection, accurate projection, and copy (*Abbild*). The proposal is structurally similar to basic projection, which is similar to Miki's basic experience in its transformative structure. In the same way that in Nakai's '34 work basic projection aims for an "accurate projection (copy, *Abbild*) of

actual world conditions," in his '36 work "the proposal must take as its premise the precise and accurate projection of phenomena, that is a copy" (*NMZ* 1:104). But while his earlier account of basic projection, like basic experience, tended towards pre-discursive and concrete sites of felt excess, the proposal aims for an explicit rendering of concrete conditions—the "first-order objectification of subjective conditions."

But proposals exist within a highly precarious position. Recall that experience is normally grounded in direct projection or surface projection, which broadly aligns with ideology—the "storage of oppressed and constrained energy" that serves as the everyday function by which we "bind a rough image of the world via the arbitrary distortion" of tradition, personal feeling, *das man* (the they), religion, and so forth (*NMZ* 1:14). Nakai likewise claims in his '36 work that "direct lack and mediated alienation express themselves as a force," and thus that ideology has a tendency towards reproducing itself into the future. Because of this tendency, proposals have the "potential to *reflect* the distortions" of ideology.[40] This means that proposals require caution. If the force of the masses is "expressed in a careless form [in a proposal], then this force will most certainly be distorted in another direction, and be diffused as [a new] force [of the distortion of ideology] in the present" (*NMZ* 1:103–104). And there is no easy fix to capture real world conditions; the only solution to ensure an accurate projection is in endlessly recursive re-evaluation. In this way, the proposal is fundamentally a provisional step—and so while even the best departure point is susceptible to distortion, it is always correctable in this process.

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[40] Nakai here moves away from the strict use of reflection (*hanei*) as synonymous with the reproduction of the ideological order in surface projection.

We can focus this with reference to one of Nakai's own examples—housing construction. We can (all too easily) conceive a situation in which profit motives incentivize the construction of high-return luxury housing in the face of stagnant wages and a need for affordable housing among the lower and middle classes. For instance, "now that New York," Michael Greenberg notes,

> has become desirable to live in again, families that in the twentieth century had been kept poor in places like Brooklyn and Harlem are being pushed out of their homes. We speak nowadays with contrition of redlining, the mid-twentieth-century practice by banks of starving black neighborhoods of mortgages, home improvement loans, and investment of almost any sort. We may soon look with equal shame on what might come to be known as bluelining: the transfiguration of those same neighborhoods with a deluge of investment aimed at a wealthier class.[41]

The question, then, is what kinds of proposals could ameliorate this situation for the residents? While the initial government proposal was legal representation for low-income tenants facing eviction, the informal reflection by residents indicated the need for a more robust plan of protection for renters. In response, proposals flooded in from community organizations, including ending tenant blacklisting, drafting a tenant Bill of Rights, a cap on raising rent post-renovation, and more.

But any given proposal is not only subject to the distortions of surface projection, meaning that they may overlook the needs of a given group, it is also subject to changing housing and working conditions. For instance, legal scholar Paula Franzene notes the necessity of mitigating tenant blacklisting, but adds that such an "effort becomes painstakingly inadequate

[41] Michael Greenberg, "Tenants Under Siege: Inside New York City's Housing Crisis," *The New York Review*, August 17, 2017: http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/08/17/tenants-under-siege-inside-new-york-city-housing-crisis/

without a national resolve to stem the high incidence of evictions in the first place."[42] Sociologist of housing insecurity and public policy Matthew Desmond calls for the need of immediate "stopgap measures" including "the expansion of aid to families experiencing a drastic but temporary loss of income" and "free legal counsel."[43]

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But stopgap measures such as these are provisional, and so our next question is: how is a proposal amended? The proposal is always, in the schema of deliberation, questioned in the process of making a decision. "The proposal passes through multiple questions, explanations and debates, to arrive at a decision. In this process, the many distorted understandings of the real situation are amended, and lies and falsehoods are filtered out. Here an effort must be made to create an accurate projection of the image (*Abbild*)" (*NMZ* 1:104).

Though Nakai leaves out crucial details in this step, the idea is that, by bringing out the proposal into a public space of questions, explanations and debates, and then adjusting one's proposal to elicit agreement and understanding, the proposal is amended and corrected to arrive at a more accurate projection that begins (its infinite process of) approaching and doing justice to the diversity of experience towards some issue.[44] And so, through this process of questioning, the distortions of ideology and partisan world views begin to be filtered as actual world conditions and issues are further focused.

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[42] Paula Franzene, "A Place to Call Home: Tenant Blacklisting and the Denial of Opportunity," *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 45, no. 3 (2018): 693.

[43] Matthew Desmond, "Eviction and the Reproduction of Urban Poverty," *American Journal of Sociology* 118, no. 1 (2012): 123.

[44] Nakai is here referencing his work on Adolf Reinach and conviction, which he discusses in "Logic of the Committee" but traces back to two of his earlier essays: "Language" and "The Extension of Meaning and its Tragedy." See: *NMZ* 1:77, 257–258.

Recognizing the above measures as temporary and thus transcending, say, bootstrap ideology to see housing shortage as systemic to the private housing market, and to the capitalist system, we might arrive at a more radical decision: the construction of more widely available affordable and public housing. Desmond continues:

> The most powerful and effective eviction-prevention policies, however, are among the most powerful and effective antipoverty policies: tried-and-true affordable housing initiatives. The fundamental issue is this: the high cost of housing is consigning the urban poor to financial ruin. We have ushered in a sad and unreasonable moment in the history of the United States if thousands of poor families are dedicating upward of 80% and 90% of their income to rent.[45]

With something like this in mind, our imagined residents of a city call for the construction of more affordable and public housing programs as a supplement to the private real estate market.

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The decision reached here then becomes materialized in the form of a plan. The plan forms the moment that brings us to the process of representation. Representation also consists of two moments: delegation and implementation. Tasks are here delegated out, and the plan—informed through the questioning constitutive of the decision regarding a proposal—are implemented accordingly. While Nakai Hiroshi, eldest son and scholar of Nakai, notes the lack of "any explicit statement about the moment of representation," perhaps we can read his clipped comments as owing to the required specificity for this step.[46] Whether in terms of scale, structure, or subject—delegation and implementation vary based on the concrete plan. The delegation and implementation of a public housing project is going to be different from, say, food distribution in the consumer co-op—not just in terms of scale, but the actual structure of

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[45] Desmond, "Eviction," 123.

[46] Nakai Hiroshi, *Nakai Masakazu: ronri to sono jissen* (Tokyo: Tenbinsha, 1972), 299.

delegation.[47] In a large-scale housing project, you will have different levels of managers coordinating tasks on different dimensions of the housing project—blueprints, foundation work, plumbing, electrical, *etc.*

Nevertheless, Nakai still understands this representational process as an extension of the deliberation process, and thus as a continuation of planning. He thus refers to the delegation stage of the plan as a "schematic design" (*Entwurf*) or a "model" and of implementation in terms of "schematic projection" (*Geworfenes*). This further schematic rendering of the plan is discussed in terms of the "second-order objective conditioning of subjectivity" (*NMZ* 1:104).

Nevertheless, delegation and implementation also overflow this schematic character as a moment of mediation through which the plan becomes actualized. Through delegation, Nakai Hiroshi notes, "the organization from the moment before negates itself of itself."[48] With the delegation of tasks, the committee expands its operations, and in doing so, negates the central role that it had in deliberation. Thus far we have discussed the committee in line with Nakai's previous work on collectivity; but here, as our housing example shows, the committee qua collective is expanded, and these new members dismantle the central function of the deliberation committee.

The same is true of implementation. Nakai (Masakazu) makes this point clear with his own housing example:

> In the passage from the plan to the report, or, to put it another way, from the design schema to the projection schema, there is a process in which the project changes while remaining itself.
>
> More precisely, in the construction of a building, the *schematic design* [*Entwurf*] and the *schematic projection* [*Geworfenes*] are the same thing.

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[47] The example of food distribution in the co-op is used by Moore.

[48] Nakai Hiroshi, *Komyunike-shon no kōzō* (Tokyo: Daiyamondosha, 1974).

> The *plan* and the *report* are identical. *Implementation* severs this one thing and distinguishes it into two things, transforming it into a process (*NMZ* 1:104).

So while implementation does not differ from the plan in theory, in practice all sorts of gaps emerge. Here, implementation functions in terms of severance—a disjunct between plan and reality, between what we proposed and decided were the actual concrete conditions and what we found to be the actual concrete conditions during construction.

This is related to his earlier discussion of sports mastery. Recall the *form*/Form that emerges in the "Ha ha! *This* is it!" In the early stages of learning a sport, our actions follow a design or model—something like a set of rules that we "first learn from our coach." But as we develop these skills, we immerse ourselves in experimental action, moving from experiment to experiment. And remember, these experiments do not appear in the register of the future, but in our "muscularly grasping and disclosing a thrown projection (*Geworfener Entwurf*) within an existential formation of 'actuality'" (*NMZ* 1:401). As Gotō notes, Nakai's translations of the terms *Geworfen* and *Entwurf* are quite malleable, and while they strictly aligned with thrownness and projection in his work on Heidegger, he uses these terms to more flexibly reference design/plan and project in other articles.[49] Nevertheless, what remains consistent across these translations is a basic sense of their coming together in a present moment of transcendence. Nakai thus continues in his work on the committee:

> the implementation of the building construction that the plan aims for—because it is implemented in the building or rather, because it becomes the object of a report—becomes a medium that further produces concrete subjective conditions, and that is further directed to higher order plans. It becomes a moment of mediation which negates its own reality of itself" (*NMZ* 1:105).

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[49] Gotō Yoshihiro, "Nakai Masakazu 'iinkai no ronri' no 'insatsu sareru ronri' no nikateki sokumen ni tsuite," *Shuppan kenkyū* 47 (2016): 14–15.

And so, just as lived experience in the present of rowing overflows designs, models, and goals, the concrete challenges and obstacles faced in implementation likewise transcends the plans and deliberations that precede it to "adapt" and "melt" with the concrete condition that it faces.

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This concludes the initial deliberation/representation phase of the logic. Before we move onto the report, we are confronted with an important question: what is the committee? Is it the collective or the masses? Honma Shinichirō presents this question in the form of a critique, claiming that "in the first place, the scale of the 'committee' is unclear, and it is unknown to what kind of organization it actually applies."[50] As with the relationship between editors and readers in *Doyōbi*, this opens onto an issue that has haunted our discussion of Nakai—that of collectives and of masses as one social subject.

Though Nakai does not state this explicitly, he has been dealing with the committee qua collective in the stages of deliberation and representation that we have seen thus far. As we have seen above, the term "committee" is employed in reference to a small- or intermediate-level "committee of specialized engineers," and its scale does not seem to change here. The type of organization required to write a proposal and come to a decision, to delegate tasks, and to implement them all resemble the small- and intermediate-levels of collectivity seen in his earlier work—though of course the size and composition varies based on the project and on the step of the deliberation–representation process in which they are involved.

But if the small-scale collective is involved in decision-making and implementation, our question is then: how does this differ from his earlier understanding of the role of collectivity in bringing forth change in society as a whole? Nakai's work on sports presupposes a small-

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[50] Honma Shinichirō, "'Iinkai no ronri' bōdoku," *Katsuji izen* 44 (2010): 37.

collective *form*ing into new social Forms, which then have the capacity to radiate outward to effect changes in the self-development of society. As I have argued, within twentieth century Marxism, this can be interpreted as a kind of tacit endorsement of something akin to Lenin's "revolutionary vanguardism" (*LCW* 5:347–530)[51] or of certain (and not uncontroversial) interpretations of Gramsci's '20s theory of the intelligentsia as vanguard "educators" of the masses.[52]

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In my reading, the report is the catalyst that brings the masses into the process, and imbues them with the powers of auto-development. It is not entirely clear who the report is written by; nonetheless it is meant to not only reflect the results of the plan, but also the changes made to the plan in its concrete implementation. Nakai envisions the report to be something easily digestible—a kind of update or informational account that details the outlines of the plan and its implementation. This is in direct response to the double truth of post-industrial capitalism, and the rupture that emerges between the technical committee of producers and the mass of consumers. The report, then, is neither structured in the complex language of technical science nor obscured in the simple symbols given to consumers in post-industrial capitalism. Gotō makes a comparison to Nakai's later work on documentary film—a kind of widely available and readily consumable documentation of the plan, its implementation, and its practical use.[53]

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[51] See: *What is to be done? Burning Questions of our Movement*, *LCW* 5:347–530.

[52] For more on this reading of Gramsci and its shortcomings, see: Jerome Karabel, "Revolutionary Contradictions: Antonio Gramsci and the Problem of Intellectuals," *Politics and Society* 6, no. 2 (1976), 123–172. Also: Jay, *Marxism and Totality*, 166.

[53] Gotō, "Nakai Masakazu 'iinkai no ronri,'" 13.

In the same way that documentary is not sheerly an objective description of facts, Nakai talks about this report in terms of a "third order" process of "subjectification of objective conditions." To be most effective, the report should be drafted (subjectified) by someone with a critical distance to the committee, and in tandem with people whose practice involves the institutions or programs at play. To link the documentary and housing examples, Frederick Wiseman's "Public Housing" offered a kind of report on both the aims and goals of Chicago public housing and the concrete lives of inhabitants of the Ida B. Wells Homes.[54] The institutions and programs must be portrayed together with the concrete practices of the people that use them. The goal is to see how these institutions meet and fail to meet the needs of its inhabitants: for instance, does public housing still form a path for upward mobility among low-income and working-class members of the community? Why or why not? And how can they better serve this purpose?

The production and dissemination of the report generates a moment of criticism among the masses that use that specific institution or program—a "fourth order" process of "subjective conditioning of the objective." Essentially, the masses are given the opportunity to reflect on, say, the housing initiative, and make clear the ways in which this plan plays out in lived experience. This might involve, say, complaints about the location of the housing, or about the family size that the housing privileges. There is no reason to think that criticism must restrict itself to the particular program or institution; rather, criticisms might proceed structurally. For instance, the issue with the housing project might not be the housing, but access to a quality labor market, issues of racial or gender discrimination, or educational opportunities.[55]

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[54] Frederick Wiseman, *Public Housing* (Cambridge: Zipporah Films, 1997).

[55] See: J. S. Fuerst. *When Public Housing Was Paradise: Building Community in Chicago* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005). As well as its review by: Sheila Radford-Hill,

Criticism is, for Nakai, a crucial moment for the masses for two reasons. First, because it engenders *critical* consumption, thus transcending the double truth that separates the "high-level technical science" of the specialized committee of producers and the symbolic representation of the consumers in post-industrial capitalism. At the "root of the committee," Fujii notes, "is a structure that guides the condition of 'double truth' to an agreed upon single truth."[56] Here, the masses are liberated from the intoxication of symbolic representation such that, to use his earlier example, the 1936 model Ford is evaluated critically in terms of everyday practice. Now the consumer has the freedom to ask: will my needs be satisfied with a bicycle or by public transit? And if I do need a car, is there any reason to spend extra for the V8 Deluxe Model 68, or will the Model 48 or even the 1935 model suit my needs?

Criticism also forms a crucial moment of *cooperation.* Nakai understands cooperation in two senses here. First in the vector of totality. In much the same way that the literary magazine or the rowing team are brought together as systematically unified whole, Nakai finds in criticism the capacity for the masses to integrate themselves together with a higher degree of cooperation and unity as one totality. This is why diagram 5 renders subjectivity as emerging through criticism, with this sense of emergence represented through the dotted line. This might involve community screenings of the documentary or community meetings regarding the report—both of which would, ideally, foster a new sense of association and belonging and unite community members together as a whole.

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review of *When Public Housing Was Paradise: Building Community in Chicago*, by J.S. Fuerst, *H-Urban, H-Net Reviews*. November, 2005: http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=10939

[56] Fujii, *Nakai Masakazu ron*, 110.

This new sense of unity among the masses, moreover, would be informed in a critical space, and thus would differ from the sense of unity brought about in the shared consumption of symbolic representations—as we saw with the star system and sports in section 5.5. This opens onto the second sense of cooperation. Unlike post-industrial and finance capitalism, where the needs of consumers are simply provided by corporate conglomerations, cooperation in the process of production is ensured here insofar as the formation of the subjectivity of the masses involves a stage by which the masses "reflect" their criticism back to the committee—perhaps via the community meetings mentioned above. In this sense, Nakai also understands criticism to re-engender the cooperation of the masses in the construction of products.

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Reflection is, in many ways, the inverse of the report. The report goes from committee to the masses and functions as the catalyst that brings the masses into the process of self-development; reflection flows from the masses to the committee and forms the structure by which the masses, as a whole, integrate the committee into their process of self-development. With lived experience conveyed back to the committee, a new proposal is drafted based on these criticisms.

This is a good point to return to the relationship between the collective and the masses, as well as the collective and large-scale social transformation. The role of the collective in the logic of the committee, as I see it, is radically different than the above-mentioned revolutionary vanguardism found in Nakai's earlier work on sports, as well as in Nishida and Miki's concern with the pioneer or genius. In bringing the activities of the committee out in the open for the masses in the report, and in structuring the proposal of the committee according to the reflection

of the masses, Nakai subverts such revolutionary vanguardism in favor of an infinitely recursive logic of mutual determination between the masses and the committee.

As I mentioned above, Nakai's starting the analysis with the proposal is arbitrary. In actuality, any proposal will already have been formed in relation to, say, the housing practices that exist in the community and the criticisms that its inhabitants already hold towards these practices. It is the practices of the masses that exist first, and the committee is formed in order to meet their needs (—perhaps a commonsensical point, but nevertheless one that, Nakai argues and the above New York example demonstrates, has been lost in the transition to monopoly capitalism). To this end, he writes, "it is through this criticism that the subject [of the masses] truly dives into the depths of itself—sub-ject—and moves towards a fifth-order proposal." The masses here structure the committee via their reflection, determining the needs to be met and the type of collective that would be formed in response to these needs.

The committee, however, plays a crucial role in generating the perdurance of a critical and cooperative mass subjectivity. Nakai continues the above quote: "in other words, [the subjectivity of the masses] sinks further within its own self by moving again towards the objectification of subjective conditions;" that is, by moving again towards the proposal. In implementing a plan based on the reflection of the masses, the committee provides a new opportunity for cooperative criticism among the masses, and thus for the self-development of mass subjectivity as a whole. Here, the committee does not lead the masses, but rather institutes the conditions by which the masses, as a whole, self-develop themselves via their own criticism into the future. Thus the theory of collectivity and the self-formation of society as totality are at last brought together within one cyclical and infinitely recursive process. Nakai writes: "In the deepening of this recursive movement which leads from one subjective condition to another

subjective condition, there is the very definition of true subjectivity—a dialectic of self-mediating transformation" (*NMZ* 1:107).

To be sure, here we still have the severance constitutive of the open-ended logic of the Marxist–Leninist holistic framework of decentered discontinuous self-development, and of Nishida, Miki, and Nakai's writing on art. That is, we still have leaps and ruptures in continuity, and a dialectical framework in which, as we will recall, "'negativity,' can be said to be the greatest form of historical self-development." But here, the openness of negativity and discontinuous development is not engendered by the pioneering individual or the vanguard activities of the committee qua collective. Unlike Nakai's previous work with Becker, or Miki and Nakai's previous work on aesthetics—where the perspicuous capacities of the artist-individual or the small collective forms a revolutionary vanguard for social change—Nakai is here trying to inscribe this sense of severance, and thus this catalyst for development, as endemic to the masses as a whole and their longitudinal formation. Severance is here built into different stages of this logic: between the proposal of the deliberative committee and the report of the representative committee, as well as between the reflection of the masses and what becomes a "fifth-order" proposal of a new deliberative committee. These gaps "transforms [the logic of the committee] into a process." Nakai continues: "When the first-order plan transforms into a report, a measurement error appears there. It is these errors that propel historical progress! This measurement error is revised by re-examining it in line with its grounding in reality and thereby transformed into a higher-order plan. This recursivity is, by definition, the meaning of criticism." The errors are therefore the "propellers of history" insofar as they bring about the kind of open-ended negative discontinuity that leads to the further development of the masses as social subject into a higher-degree of cooperation and criticism.

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Thus we arrive at a new role for collectivity in the schema of socio-historical self-development. Here, collectives do not form vanguard configurations, and Nakai has excluded the need for any kind of vanguard pioneer to refashion our age into the future. Instead, the collective is integrated as a committee, serving as the moment through which the masses, as a whole, engender critical self-reflection amongst themselves, and thus develop the conditions by which they can self-develop themselves into the future as one whole or totality within an infinitely recursive, and thus longitudinally open, structure of self-formation. And he arrives at this longitudinally open structure of self-formative totality not as a "heretic theorist" of the Kyoto School, but by doggedly pursuing the Kyoto School logic of self-formative totality—participating with his fellow thinkers together in a holistic collective of mutual collaboration and criticism to develop the concept forward.

Epilogue

Just before dawn on November 8, 1937, Nakai's house was raided by the Kyoto division of the Special Higher Police, the policing unit tasked with investigating thought crimes. Searching Nakai's house top to bottom, the police seized issues of *World Culture* and *Doyōbi* and hauled Nakai, still in his eveningwear, south to the Gojō Police Station—passed Kyoto university where he would no longer work, passed the bookstores where his magazines would no longer sell, and passed the cafes where his ideas would no longer be discussed. He was not alone. That same day Shinmura and Mashita were later arrested, and within the month so too were Kuno, Taketani, and Nezu, followed by Wada and Nōse six months later.

Things could have been worse. The month prior a man dressed like a fashionable student had visited Saitō to request a lecture for him and his associates about the connection between *Doyōbi* and the labor movement. *Doyōbi* had just resumed its reporting on labor issues a month earlier, after about a year-and-a-half in abstention. The men were spies of the higher police unit. Saitō, keen on the situation, informed Nakai and other members, and Nakai began diligently "burning page after page of his personal library in a small fire on the lid of his bathtub."[1]

The *World Culture–Doyōbi* coterie was not alone. Miki was twice arrested—first in May 1930 for suspected financial contributions to the Japanese Communist party, and then again in March 1945 for harboring fugitive critic Takakura Teru in violation of the Public Security Preservation Law. Tosaka too, as with the *World Culture–Doyōbi* coterie before him, was arrested under the authority of the Peace and Preservation Law in February 1938, only to be released in May 1940 and then re-imprisoned in September 1944.

[1] Satō, *Furansoa*, 64.

Their detentions were cruel. Kuno recalled him and Nakai being "repeatedly stomped from the crotch down so that they could neither stand-up nor walk" (*KOS* 5:65); Nakai recalled the punches as well (*NMZ* 4:57). Shinmura recalled long periods of solitary confinement. Prisoners were dehydrated and malnourished, especially in the later stages of the war. On top of this, sanitary conditions were poor; prisoners were not allowed exercise, and, apart from the hottest days of summer, only allowed to bathe weekly. Many caught diseases. Nakai contracted diptheria in January 1939, and was taken to the Kyoto Prefectural Hospital with breathing difficulties.[2] He would recover and be released on house arrest eight months later. Miki and Tosaka would not be so fortunate. Tosaka died of kidney failure (nephritis) in August 1945, just before the end of the war. His death was announced in one-sentence in the *Asahi Newspaper*.[3] Miki died of kidney failure just a little more than a month later, in the early days of the occupation. Hayashi Tatsuo seethed in the *Nippon Times*: "He was not allowed visits by any members of his family or friends even once during his imprisonment, and he was transferred to the sick room only two days before his death."[4]

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Their arrest owed in part to their attempts to actualize their theory of totality and self-determination in the realm of the social. Refusing to distinguish between Communism, Marxism, and historical materialism, or between communist, labor, and popular front movements, their work became ineluctably tied to communism and the Comintern in the eyes of the police—no matter how hard they "tried to explain to [the] lieutenant…that Marxism is a theory and a

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[2] Bamba, *Nakai Masakazu densetsu*, 192.

[3] "Tosaka Junshi ga shikyo," *Asashi Shinbun* (Tokyo, JP), Aug. 23, 1945.

[4] "Kiyoshi Miki Passes at Toyotama Prison," *Nippon Times* (Tokyo, JP), Oct. 3, 1945.

research method," and that "a materialist is not necessarily a Marxist, and a Marxist is not necessarily a communist." (*STC* 2:70–71). In Kyoto, police went to great lengths to tie members like Shinmura with Kobayashi Yasunosuke, who attended the 7th World Congress of the Comintern and returned to Japan under the directive of promoting a popular front against fascism (*STC* 2:56). The "Kyoto District Court Public Prosecutor Office's Report" in the *Shisō geppō* monthly bulletin of the Special Higher Police charged that Nakai "conspired with Mashita Shinichi, Kuno Osamu, Shinmura Takeshi, and several others of the left-wing in Kyoto city" in order to develop a "collectivist form of thought that can correct and eliminate self-alienation," where the "pursuit of profit in the capitalist system is [what is] self-alienating in this conceptual structure."[5] This was realized, the announcement continued, through *Doyōbi*, which took as its "main purpose to spread and permeate anti-fascist consciousness among the general people as part of the Popular Front cultural movement in Kyoto City" with its goal being "to negate capitalism and promote communist ideology."[6]

The condition for their release was *tenkō*, or conversion—confess to their crimes and those of their colleagues, undergo a program of national re-education, promise to follow the law moving forward in support of the nation, and then be released on house-arrest.[7] But things were not so straightforward; from within, the possibility and timeline of *tenkō* was unclear and undetermined. Shinmura recalls the excruciating pain of withheld information and indeterminate solitude, and of unverified *tenkō* documents purportedly penned by colleagues (*STC* 2:79, 83).

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[5] Shihōshō Keijikyoku, "Nakai Masakazu ni taisuru chian ijihō ihan," in *Shōwa zenki shisō shiryō* (Tokyo: Bunsei shoin, 1972–74), 1:41–42.

[6] Ibid, 42–43.

[7] Lucken, *Nakai Masakazu: naissance*, 165–166.

To be clear, many of these *tenkō* documents and supporting articles were coerced under the threat of prolonged (re-)imprisonment—which is to say, for instance, that Nakai's "Our Conviction" (*Warera ga shinnen* われらが信念), carried in the 1942 edition of the Ministry of the Justice's journal *Shōtoku*, is perhaps less indicative of deeply held convictions than it is of a conviction to avoid re-arrest. Nevertheless, one of the striking features of many of these thinkers post-*tenkō* production is just how seamlessly they were able to marshal their conception of totality towards precisely the opposite social-political and philosophical positions they had earlier advocated. Thus Nakai's earlier "systematic body of an even greater human," marshalled in his visions of collective difference, becomes transmogrified into the conviction that:

> A greater existence, seen in Eastern nations and their awareness of a strict discipline intimately tied with death, is the correct path for grasping a greater reality. This is a reality that should be distinguished from the reality of everyday life. In order to face such [greater] existence, one's own mode of being must immerse within this existence with a heart of clarity and reverence. Such a heart of reverence, if we reflect deeply upon it, has prepared itself to die amidst such [greater existence]. In short, it is an existence in which one's own survival seems to only have meaning when mediated by the boundless nirvana of death (*NMZ* 4:64).

Nakai continues with a call for the "Greater East-Asian region of people" to "unite as one and realize that it is one great people and mobilize its own force of itself…to repel the power of the United States and Great Britain and, of ourselves, open up our own new heavenly domain in Greater East Asia" (*NMZ* 4:73). Here we find precisely the same flexibility that allowed totality to accommodate a diversity of domains—consciousness, experience, duets, groups, collectives, masses, society, and the entire universe—and thus that gave totality its rationale and enchantment for these thinkers, also allowing for its almost seamless co-option within the aims of the state and its war effort.

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To be clear, there are also cases where, in the absence of threat, the re-evaluation of totality was eagerly pursued in the context of the Second World War. In 1943, Watsuji, pressed to re-publish *Nietzsche*, twists his earlier universalist impulses to re-read his work on Nietzsche in the context of its being "published one year prior to the Great European War." With implicit comparison to the Japanese youth in the present conflict, he notes that "German youths at the front lines in northern France, with death before them, devotedly read Nietzsche's works for their spiritual nourishment." And he ties this in a string of continuity to Japan's wartime ally in the 1940s:

> The thorough rejection of Jewish culture and Jewish people, the exaltation of the significance of a [German] ethnic people, the attack on the decadence of European culture, the demand for the revival of strong-hearted life, the inspiration of a tragic courage to endure pain and fight to the finish, the advocacy of a love of fate: as well as being Nietzsche's major concerns they are also the very ideas that built up present-day Germany.

The universalist impulses of will to power qua totality are re-cast onto ethnic Germans as a whole here, and, in a cultural turn utterly devoid of his earlier rhetoric of universal cosmopolitanism, he writes: "Nietzsche's cultural evaluations are strictly evaluations of European culture, and the decadence he attacks is strictly European decadence. Consequently, this book can also be seen as an analysis of the crimes of Jewish culture and the decadence of European, particularly Anglo-American, culture" (*WTZ* 1:3–4, *GT* 344–345, mod).[8]

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And finally, there are a good deal of murky cases in the middle. By the mid-1930s, as intellectual censorship and ideological repression escalated domestically, a significant contingent

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[8] For more on Watsuji in the interwar and wartime period, see: Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity: On Japan and Cultural Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

of center-left and left-wing thinkers were enticed, not coerced, to project utopian visions of holistic unity onto East Asia by way of Manchuria. This includes Nishida and Miki.

While Nishida's diary entries reveal a fairly sustained and resolute hostility to ultra-nationalist attempts to co-opt or enlist his work within the framework of a narrow Japanese nationalism, his willingness to deliver lectures to Army and Navy ministers, Prime Minister Tōjō Hideki, and even Emperor Hirohito speak to a more fraught politic. Even as such lectures were, Christopher Goto-Jones observes, undoubtedly laced with barbs criticizing "narrow-minded Japanists" and promoting a Japanese *Geist* suffused with "global dimensions" in its insistence upon "all such [genuine] cultures on the international stage," nevertheless these lectures practically amounted to yet another use of totality to back calls for:

> the various peoples of East Asia [to] awaken to their own world-historical mission as East Asian peoples; they must each transcend themselves and create a single particular world and thus achieve their own world historical missions as East Asian peoples This is the principle of the construction an East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (*NKZ* 11:446).[9]

Perhaps the most infamous and vexing re-deployment of totality in the service of the state is found in Miki's participation in the Shōwa Research Association (*Shōwa kenkyūkai* 昭和研究会) in the late '30s—by then a formal research group sponsored by Prime Minister (and former Nishida student) Konoe Fumimaro. Miki first attended a meeting in February 1938 and then gave a talk on "The World Historical Significance of the China Incident" (*Shina jihen no sekaishiteki igi* 支那事変の世界史的意義), where he surmised dual significance in Japan's escalation to total war in China: "the unification of the Orient" and "the resolution of capitalism."[10] Miki was

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[9] Christopher Goto-Jones, *Political Philosophy in Japan: Nishida, the Kyoto School, and Co-Prosperity* (Routledge: New York, 2005), 80, 98. Translation by: Goto-Jones, ibid.

[10] Sakai Saburo, *Shōwa kenkyūkai: aru chishikijin shūdan no kiseki* (Tokyo: Teibi-esu buritanika, 1979), 151.

subsequently asked to chair a cultural study group within the Showa Research Association, synthesizing and publishing its research reports as *New Principles for Japanese Thought* (*Shin nihon no shisō genri* 新日本の思想原理) and *Philosophical Basis of Cooperativism* (*Kyōdōshugi no tetsugaku teki kiso* 協同主義の哲学的基礎) in January and September 1939.[11]

Miki writes in the first:

> The primary and most significant characteristic of Japanese culture is that is rooted in a principle of cooperativism that is founded upon a national body [based in] one ruler with many subjects that is unrivaled in the world. This principle of cooperation should, in its universal significance, be promoted and spread in East Asia so that it can shine upon the world (*MKZ* 17:530).

In this supposedly Japanese-style of cooperativism, we find a re-deployment of totality in support of what Miki from the early '30s might describe as a naïvely *utopian* attempt to redirect the energies of the war effort through *mythology*—mere "intellectual labor" guided by an eternalized theory of a future grounded in a unified East Asia that is absolutely detached from the colonial circumstances of the present (*MKZ* 6:306).

And we do not just encounter totality here; we find the distinctly revolutionary aspects that Miki gave to totality—its emphasis on action, dynamism, the present, and the historicity of life—re-deployed in service of the state and its colonial project:

> What Japan now needs is not a hermeneutic philosophy but a philosophy of action. Traditionally, discourse on the Japanese spirit has almost entirely consisted of hermeneutic philosophy. This discovers the particularity of Japan by investigating Japan's past. A philosophy of action, contrarily, departs from the present, not the past. Because hermeneutics is itself general, it is fixated on particularity. On the other hand, because action is itself particular, it demands universality. It is incumbent upon Japan, in its action, to discover its "world historical significance" and positively act to attain this meaning. The philosophical study of action must be the philosophical study of historical reason. Historical reason is not abstract, it is manifested through and embodied in a certain people in a certain time. A people are not great because they are a people, but because of their world historical mission (*MKZ* 15:243).

[11] Ibid, 154.

Thus we find the same concepts that provided Miki's totality with its revolutionary openness effortlessly re-deployed in support of a teleologically closed view of the state that overlooked, in Louise Young's words, "the institutional violence and political autocracy of the colonial state" to *rational*ize the war effort.[12]

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Owing to the horror of the Second World War, the reactionary valences of these terms have saturated public consciousness—almost to the exclusion of the philosophical and social possibilities that many Kyoto School and twentieth-century thinkers originally found in such ideas. And so, while the concept of totality has become nearly inseparable from totalitarianism in public consciousness, the idea of self-determination is now almost exclusively associated with settler colonial calls for the "right to self-determination" and the "right to exist."

In response, contemporary scholarship—both philosophical and social—has too often resolved itself into exactly the same kind of recalcitrant individualistic and atomistic thinking that the turn to holism was meant to contest. My hope is that, moving forward, this study will not only animate the sense of holism motivating philosophical and social considerations in modern Japan, but also cue us to the revolutionary possibilities of re-integrating these terms within our conceptual arsenal—all while being acutely aware of the need to maintain such an arsenal from exploding before us in a blast of reactionary thinking.

[12] Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 303.

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