

PLACE & DIALECTIC

Two Essays by Nishida Kitarō



Translated by JOHN W. M. KRUMMEL
and SHIGENORI NAGATOMO

Place and Dialectic



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Translated by John W.M. Krummel and Shigenori

Nagatomo

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REFERENCE LIST OF NISHIDA'S WORKS

The following is a chronological list of Nishida's major works discussed in the introduction with the year of first publication and the *Zenshū* (*Collected Works*) (2003 edition) volume in which each can be found.

- Zen no kenkyū* (*An Inquiry into the Good*), 1911: Z1
Jikaku ni okeru chokkan to hansei (*Intuition and Reflection in Self-Awareness*), 1917: Z2
Geijutsu to dōtoku (*Art and Morality*), 1923: Z3
Hatarakumono ("That which Acts"), 1925: Z3
Basho ("Basho"), 1926: Z3
Sōda hakushi ni kotaeru ("In Reply to Dr. Sōda"), 1927: Z3
Hatarakumono kara mirumono e (*From the Acting to the Seeing*), 1927: Z3
Torinokosaretaru ishiki no mondai ("The Unsolved Issue of Consciousness"), 1927: Z7
Ippansha no jikakuteki taikei (*The Self-Aware System of Universals*), 1930: Z4
Mu no jikakuteki gentei (*The Self-Aware Determination of Nothing*), 1932: Z5
Tetsugaku no kompon mondai (*Fundamental Problems of Philosophy*), 1933–34: Z6
Ronri to seimei ("Logic and Life"), 1936: Z8
Tetsugaku ronbunshū dai ni (*Philosophical Essays Vol. 2*), 1937: Z8
Bashoteki ronri to shūkyōteki sekaikan ("The Logic of Basho and the Religious Worldview"), 1945: Z10

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Basho, World, and Dialectics: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Nishida Kitarō

JOHN W. M. KRUMMEL

Recently it has come to the attention of some philosophers that highly systematic and developed modes of speculation and thought have evolved in different areas of the world. Many realize that what is called “philosophy” may perhaps not necessarily be the sole possession of the so-called West. Even if those who believe so are still in the minority, one could argue that the responsible thinker can no longer afford to confine or isolate him/herself within his/her own school of thought, associated with a certain cultural or geographical sphere, be it Anglo-American analytic philosophy or the various schools of Continental philosophy or American pragmatism. When the world is, and has been, rapidly changing shape due to globalization, bringing together previously separated cultural horizons, whether through peaceful integration or through violent conflict, the philosopher is now obliged to also look beyond the Greco-European tradition of thought. Today, when the collapsing of cultural worlds may lead to violent outbreak, it is necessary to seek dialogue and be willing to learn from one another’s insights. This is so, especially if one is not to fall into the trap of reducing one’s *other* through preconceptions and stereotypes. This also means that we need to be weary of hypostatizing “West” and “East” as monolithic entities closed off from each other. It is in this worldly context of today that I invite the reader to look at the philosophical work of Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945).¹

The thinking of Nishida, a philosopher of Japan during the first half of the twentieth century, escapes confinement or reduction to the dichotomizing schema of “West vs. East.” His thinking offers much to today’s global world, for the circumstances under which he wrote was, to an extent, not unlike ours.

Now at the beginning of the twenty-first century when we hear the ever-increasing multiplicity of disparate voices sounding in the global network of communication and information, with configurations of truth quickly displacing one another in a fierce competition for universal and eternal validity; when humanity is faced with a variety of global crises vis-à-vis nature as well as among fellow human beings, the questions looms large: What is one’s *place* in the midst of others, the *topos* or locale one occupies within the environment and how does one fit into the changing and ever-so-uncertain cosmos, whose confines keep receding into the abysmal dark? Since the nineteenth century, we have been finding ourselves amid the crumbling of age-old monolithic edifices of truth-claims. We have also found ourselves amid erections of new but transient amalgamations of truths in a postmodern hodgepodge. Today we are witnessing the confusing proliferation of conflicting disparates (worldviews, religions, philosophies, truth-claims, ways of life, etc.) on a global scale, calling for a philosophy that can make sense out of the situation, a philosophy of *place* in this ever-shifting globalized context. Again, Nishida’s situation was not unlike ours. He lived in a period when Japan was straining to synthesize East and West to position itself within the world heading toward globalization. He lived when Japan was undergoing radical changes in its appropriation of foreign influences and quickly emerging as a power in international politics. He lived from the period of the Meiji restoration through Japan’s rise as a colonial power in Asia and through the two world wars. His own thinking reflected his enviroing world as it underwent alterations. Nishida has been recognized in Japan traditionally as the first genuinely original thinker, among those trained in Western philosophy, to provide a uniquely Japanese philosophy, which is not a simple review or explication of what has been learned from the West. When one studies his *œuvre*, one recognizes the truly global character of his work that is more than simply Japanese or Western, more than just Buddhist or Kantian or Hegelian. His works are imbued with insights taken from the major thinkers of both Western and Eastern traditions but further developed in an original manner that spoke to his time and is recognizable as what has come to be called “Nishida philosophy” (*nishida tetsugaku*). These insights speak to our time as well.

In the midst of the turnovers and chaos of attempts at modernization, the two world wars, and the battle of ideologies, Nishida tackled the philosophically pertinent issues of truth and reality and the meaning of human

existence in the interrelationships between one's self *qua* knower and the object of knowledge, or between the self *qua* individual and the world that is both one and many. Especially the subject-object dualism assumed by traditional epistemology, with its concomitant objectification or substantialization of every theme it touches, is an issue that philosophers and philosophical schools ever since Kant and throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been struggling with. Nishida was influenced by many of those thinkers of the West as well as those from the East Asian and Buddhist traditions. But to that age-old issue of object-centered (or objectifying) thinking, Nishida proposes a series of unique solutions by way of turning *away* from the object of one's focus, as if to suggest a fresh philosophical alternative to some of the staleness of mere phenomenology or the dead ends of mere deconstruction of today. Nishida's thinking continued to develop throughout his career ever since his maiden work, *Zen no kenkyū* (*An Inquiry into the Good*) of 1911.² But the real breakthrough in his philosophizing came with the mid-1920s formulation of his theory of *basho* or "place" as represented by the first essay of this volume, "*Basho*." Nishida's very aim in formulating his theory of *basho* was to overcome that dichotomy implied in the various terminological pairings of subject and object, idealism and realism, experience and reality. He wanted to show that the dualism assumed by traditional Western epistemology and especially that of the neo-Kantian thinkers has no inherent necessity. Neither were the solutions offered by Henri Bergson's philosophy of pure duration with its focus upon temporal-linear development, Edmund Husserl's phenomenology that focuses upon the field of consciousness and its phenomena, G. W. F. Hegel's dialectic that Nishida saw as oriented purely upon the process of the universal's unfolding, or William James's emphasis upon subjective experience *per se*, adequately radical enough to provide any sufficient answer to the problem of epistemological dualism and ontological substantialism. Nishida's theory of *basho* as offered in his 1926 essay, "*Basho*," is one solution, which he then continued to improve upon throughout his career. Although his usage of the term *basho* dwindles somewhat in his later years, we never see him truly abandon the concept as noticeable in the title of his last completed essay of his life, *Bashoteki ronri to shūkyōteki sekaikan* ("The Logic of *Basho* and the Religious Worldview") of 1945. One may assert that *basho* is a truly significant concept for his philosophical system as a whole. In its initial formulation in the "*Basho*" essay of 1926, the theory is primarily epistemological in a response to subject-object dualism. *Basho* in its deepest sense is understood as the concrete situation, i.e., the "placedness" or "implication" of our lived experience vis-à-vis reality, in the whole of its dynamic structure, that grounds cognition and whence the bifurcation into subject-object

derives. The attraction of Nishida's *basho*-theory is in providing a philosophical glimpse into that concrete situatedness that we all live and experience "always already" (*immer schon*), and from which we thus find ourselves having "fallen from grace" in thinking about it. In his later works, as in the second essay of this volume, "Logic and Life" (*Ronri to seimei*), Nishida's theory is developed further in terms of the historical world wherein we interact and work upon one another as well as upon things. In the first essay Nishida attempts to present his theory as a "logic," inheriting the broadened sense of the term from German philosophy (traceable to Kant, Hegel, and Lotze). And in the second essay Nishida makes a connection between what we ordinarily call "logic" in its restricted formal sense and the dynamic structure of the world. What we find as common to both essays, and throughout his thinking after the formulation of his *basho*-theory, is what Nishida calls the "*peri*-logical" (*hōronriteki*) (Z3 418) structuring of implacement that envelops and grounds the more restricted structure of dichotomies. *Hōronri* connotes here the structuring involving "envelopment" (*hō, tsutsumu*) by environing circumstances. We translate this as *peri*-logical because the Greek prefix *peri* has the similar connotations of "surrounding" and "enclosing." In both essays, then, it is the dynamism of a *peri*-logic that Nishida offers to object-centered thinking. I suggest that such a *peri*-logical thinking of *place* that we may derive from Nishida's *basho*-theory may shed some light for us in the current issue we face of globalizing uprootedness.

I begin by first discussing the context that surrounds these two essays, "*Basho*" and "Logic and Life." I will then explicate some of the important themes that appear in each of them and conclude with a discussion of the relevance of Nishida's thinking for us today.

STAGES IN NISHIDA'S LIFEWORK

In introducing Nishida Kitarō's writings, it is useful to note where they fall in his *œuvre*. Nishida's commentators have divided his lifework in different ways, the division falling into two, three, four, five, and even six stages.³ Many commentators writing in English seem to have for the most part followed Sueki Takehiro in dividing Nishida's lifework into three periods but with differences as to where some of the periods begin or end.⁴ We must keep in mind, however, that the division of his *œuvre* into distinct stages or periods is, to an extent, an interpretive imposition that Nishida himself never made. And yet for the sake of comprehending Nishida's work as a whole, it may be helpful to make use of such a division as a heuristic device. In order to account for significant developments in his thinking, it might be

appropriate to divide his lifework into four periods, instead of three, the last two periods comprising his “Nishida philosophy.” This is not to deny, though, that there is also a coherent thematic focus that continues through the different periods of his thinking.

The four stages of Nishida’s lifework may be set forth as follows: (1) 1911–15, the psychologistic period; (2) 1917–23, the voluntaristic period; (3) 1924–32, the epistemological period; and (4) 1934–45, the dialectical (or historical-cultural) period. The first period is represented by the work *Zen no kenkyū* (*An Inquiry into the Good* 1911). The major theme here is his concept of “pure experience” (*junsui keiken*). The second period is exemplified by two works, *Jikaku ni okeru chokkan to hansei* (*Intuition and Reflection in Self-Awareness*, 1917), which takes “self-awareness” (*jikaku*) and “absolute will” (*zettai ishi*) as its themes;⁵ and *Geijutsu to dōtoku* (*Art and Morality*, 1923), which develops the idea of “absolute will.”⁶ Three major works comprise the third period, inaugurating what came to be called “Nishida philosophy”: *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*, 1927), *Ippansha no jikakuteki taikei* (*The Self-Aware System of Universals*, 1930), and *Mu no jikakuteki gentei* (*The Self-Aware Determination of Nothing*, 1932). In these works, Nishida develops his theory of *basho* primarily in response to the epistemological dualism of the neo-Kantians. During the fourth and final period, turning his attention to society and history, Nishida develops the dialectical implications of *basho*, specifically the aspect of its “contradictory unity” (*mujunteki tōitsu*) or “contradictory self-identity” (*mujunteki jikodōitsu*), in the various concepts of the “dialectical universal” (*benshōhōteki ippansha*), the “historical world” (*rekishiteki sekai*), and “acting-intuition” (*kōiteki chokkan*). This period is represented by the two-volume *Tetsugaku no kompon mondai* (*Fundamental Problems of Philosophy*) (1933–34)⁷ and the series of essays leading up to his death in 1945, including his final essay, *Bashoteki ronri to shūkyōteki sekaikan* (“The Logic of *Basho* and the Religious Worldview”).⁸ The first essay included in our present volume, “*Basho*,” belongs to the third period, representing the initial formulation of the notion of *basho*. And the second work, “Logic and Life” (*Ronri to seimei*) belongs to the fourth period, representing subsequent developments.

All of these themes of the four periods are in fact linked as unfoldings of what Nishida was concerned with, and convinced of, throughout his philosophical life: the concrete nondifferentiated but dynamic foundation of everything. Nevertheless we also need to recognize that there is a significant break between the pre-“Nishida philosophy” works and those that came to comprise “Nishida philosophy,” in other words, between the second and the third periods. From the *basho*-standpoint of his later thinking, his earlier ideas may be construed as too psychological in orientation. In the perspectival shift his thinking makes from the second to the third

periods, the previous reliance upon the terminology of “experience” and of “will” or “self-awareness” becomes grounded on the concept of “*basho*,” with which Nishida hopes to escape the charge of “psychologism.” In his preface to *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*), Nishida explains this shift as a “turn” (*tenjiru*) from a Fichtean voluntarism to an intuitionism (*chokkanshugi*) of sorts that sees all acts of consciousness and all workings of things as mirror images occurring within what he calls *basho* or “place” (Z3 255).⁹ Certainly the concept of intuition (*chokkan*) was already significant in his earlier works, but now, upon its grounding in *basho*, its relationship with volition is reversed. This “turn” is thus reflected in the title of this work, *From the Acting to the Seeing* (*Hatarakumono kara mirumono e*) and in its division into two parts.¹⁰ In the following section we briefly trace the development of Nishida’s thought up to that “turn.”

LEADING UP TO THE “TURN” TO BASHO

At the start of his career, Nishida in *Zen no kenkyū* (*An Inquiry into the Good*, 1911) conceived of the concrete ground of reality in terms of “pure experience” (*junsui keiken*), an immediate state prior to the differentiation between the experiencing subject and the experienced object. But the need to explain how the dynamic of fission unfolds from this fundamental nondistinction, led Nishida in *Jikaku ni okeru chokkan to hansei* (*Intuition and Reflection in Self-Awareness*, 1917) to his concept of “self-awareness” (*jikaku*). “Self-awareness” here involves a concrete dynamic that comprises an ongoing interaction between two moments: an initial “intuition” (*chokkan*) in immediate (“pure”) experience and its subsequent “reflection” (*hansei*) in thought that analyzes that experience, reconstructing it into the dichotomized terms of subject and object.¹¹ The process of this dynamism is ongoing, with each reflection leading to another intuition inviting further reflection, and so on. Nishida conceives of this endless dynamism as an internal mirroring of its own process *within* itself, in the sense that the resulting content appears *within* the very dynamism of the process of determination. The determining then is an *internal self-determining*, a mirroring of its own ongoing process, while the very system of mirroring itself, the whole of the process, escapes determination, i.e., objectification or reduction to a mirror image, since every objectification falls *within* it.¹² This formulation of a dynamic of self-awareness is the beginning of Nishida’s attempt to seriously grapple with the issue of epistemological dualism and is what eventually leads to the formulation of his *basho*-theory. In *Geijutsu to dōtoku* (*Art and Morality*, 1923), Nishida looks to the will (*ishi*) as the source of that self-mirroring dynamism that unfolds

into various dichotomies (knower-known, subject-object, self-world, etc.). Under the inspiration of Fichte, Nishida focuses upon the volitional act as what lies behind any thinking or knowing act, “the transcendent and absolute will” (*chōetsuteki ishi, zettai ishi*) as the act underlying all acts, the a priori of all a prioris (Z3 188/AM 158, Z3 235/AM 197).¹³ In other words, the will acts to unfold differentiations (and dichotomies) mirroring itself. For example, in art the will creates beautiful objects, mirroring itself so that it can intuit itself as “beauty” (See Z3 189/AM 159, Z3 184–85/AM 155).

In both works of the period, Nishida articulates the movement of self-awareness—whether in terms of an ongoing unfolding from intuition to reflection or in terms of the will’s creative acts—as an interior self-mirroring. Emphasizing its concrete immediacy, he viewed it as enabling an epistemological standpoint that could avoid the pitfalls accompanying modern epistemology with its dualistic assumptions, especially that of the neo-Kantians. And yet the concept of self-awareness, along with will and intuition and his earlier notion of pure experience, all invite the charge of “psychologism.” The neo-Kantians themselves had formulated their epistemology in terms of a “logic” in order to overcome the shortcomings of the then-prevalent reduction of cognition to psycho-physiological processes. Nishida himself was being charged of psychologism by the critics of his earlier writings. He thus felt the need to reformulate his own ideas by providing some sort of a “logical” grounding that would not call to mind the contingencies of the psyche. His conception of *basho*, literally meaning “place,” was the result.

So what then is *basho*? It may be too simplistic to put it as the standpoint (*tachiba*) vis-à-vis reality. For it points to a dynamism that precedes any intellectual dichotomization between experience and reality. It refers to the most concrete situatedness at the base of our being, entailing a nondistinction between experience and reality, hence a priority to the subject-object dichotomy or the distinction between ideal and real. It would be the “place” enveloping and encompassing all mental acts and their objects, all perspectival horizons of intentionality that constitute the world of objects. Nishida’s “logical” grounding for a new epistemology that is to avoid the pitfalls of both dualism and psychologism is centered around this notion of *basho*. The concept first makes its appearance in the “*Basho*” essay, inserted in the collection of essays *Hatarakumono kara miru mono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*).

THE “TURN” TO BASHO: LOGIC AND INTUITION

Nishida’s idea of *basho* makes its initial appearance in his essay *Hatarakumono* (“That which Acts”), first published in 1925.¹⁴ But Nishida first systematically develops that articulation of the concept of *basho* in his essay

“Basho,” first published as a journal article in 1926 and then included along with *Hatarakumono* in the two-volume *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*) in 1927.¹⁵ The significance of this essay is evident in a letter Nishida wrote after its initial publication to his student Mutai Risaku, who was studying at Heidelberg, Germany, at the time. Nishida states that he feels that with this essay he has reached his ultimate standpoint and that he can now reconstruct his previous ideas on the basis of this view (Z18 303).¹⁶ Coming right at the midpoint of his philosophical career, it served to provide a conversion locus—or what Nishida himself refers to in the preface to *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*) as a “turn” (*itten*)—from his older formulations to a newer one that gives birth to the “Nishida philosophy.”¹⁷ For this “turn,” the concept of *basho* proves to be pivotal. After *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*), his theory becomes further elaborated upon and developed in *Ippansha no jikakuteki taikai* (*The Self-Aware System of Universals*) of 1930 and *Mu no jikakuteki gentei* (*The Self-Aware Determination of Nothing*) of 1932.¹⁸

As alluded to earlier, Nishida was taking off from the neo-Kantians’ attempt to logically found the dynamic of cognition without reference to psychological contingencies. The need to answer the charge of psychologism led him to seek a “logical foundation” (*ronriteki kiso*) for his ideas, which in turn led to his formulation of the concept of *basho*. This is evident in his preface to *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*) as well as in his preface to the 1936 edition of *Zen no kenkyū*. In the latter Nishida states that in formulating his idea of *basho*, he had attained a clue to “logicizing” (*ronrika*) his philosophical understanding (Z1 3). Around the same time that Nishida was formulating his idea of “*basho*,” he wrote another short essay, *Torinokosaretaru ishiki no mondai* (“The Unsolved Issue of Consciousness”), wherein he expresses his desire to look into the relationship between the logical and consciousness, and to conceive of *basho* and implacement in terms of such a logic (Z7 220).¹⁹ He expresses dissatisfaction with the failure of Greek philosophy to attribute any “logical independence” to its notion of “place” (*chōra* in Plato, and its interpretation as *hyle* in Aristotle), (Z7 223). So Nishida turns his attention to the neo-Kantians, who inherited Kant’s notion of a “transcendental logic” in order to claim for their epistemology a “logic” that transcends the psychological.²⁰ Nishida takes over this meaning of “the logical” as referring to the noncontingent, nonarbitrary, hence nonpsychologistic. But the epistemological dualism assumed by the neo-Kantians, e.g., Hermann Cohen or Heinrich Rickert, proved unsatisfying. So were Edmund Husserl’s phenomenological attempts to overcome the same issues. As an alternative to that dualism, Nishida had already formulated his notion of a self-mirroring self-awareness—that

knowing means to mirror the self within one's self. In the essay *Sōda hakushi ni kotaeru* ("In Reply to Dr. Sōda") that follows the "Basho" essay in *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*), Nishida warns that such self-awareness is not to be conceived psychologically for it itself is the standpoint that establishes psychological awareness (Z3 486).²¹ Nevertheless the term "self-awareness" along with "will," just like his earlier concept of "pure experience," still invites the charge of psychologism. The very necessity to answer that charge with a "logical founding" for these ideas served as a catalyst for Nishida to develop his *basho*-theory. So self-awareness *qua* self-mirroring remains a startingpoint to his epistemology but now explicitly formulated in terms of *basho* (Z3 420). This founding is pursued by way of an inquiry into the logical structure of judgment, an issue of central epistemological significance for the neo-Kantians. Taking judgment in its paradigmatic form to be the subsumptive relationship between the grammatical subject and its predicate, Nishida moves *away* from a thing-centered view of reality by focusing on the predicate *qua* universal as the envining or enveloping determinant *wherein* the grammatical subject *qua* individual is implaced and determined (see Z3 422, Z4 83–83). Hence the "logical grounding" for his theory of knowledge, in connection with this enveloping structure, thus proves to be "peri-logical" (*hōronriteki*), (Z3 418). This predicate-centered logic is what thus comes to be called his "logic of *basho*" (*basho no ronri*).

And yet his "logic" here is paradoxically also an "intuitionism." As indicated in his preface to *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*), Nishida believes that he is making a "turn" from a "voluntarism" to a kind of "intuitionism" (*chokkanshugi*). But this "turn" is made by way of a logical analysis of the structure of judgment that responds to its previous formulations as set out within dualistic and thing-centered (i.e., substantialistic) perimeters.²² "Intuition" (*chokkan*) here is broadened from its earlier meaning as but one moment in the dynamic of the absolute will's self-mirroring self-awareness. Now it is ascribed a deeper significance: a "seeing everything that is and everything that is at work as reflections of what mirrors itself within itself by itself becoming nothing" (Z3 255). Nishida adds immediately, "I want to conceive, at the root of all things, a seeing without a seer" (Z3 255). At the end of *Chokkan to ishi* ("Intuition and Will"), one of the earlier essays of the first half of *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*), Nishida writes that when the act underlying all acts becomes aware of itself as creative, the will operating behind all activities loses its own reality to instead realize itself in, or *as, one intuition* (Z3 288). This very reversal and conversion, *from* a voluntarism that relies on the postulation of an absolute will *to* an intuitionism belonging to the self-mirroring of that which recedes into nothing, is expressed

in the title of this collection of essays as well as in its division into two parts.²³ For Nishida, this very intuition that is a “seeing without there being a seer,” as lying behind all objectifying or determining acts, implies the unobjectifiable, the indeterminate, the nondifferentiated, i.e., “nothing” (*mu*). And it is that “nothing” in its enveloping capacity that becomes explicated in terms of *basho*.²⁴ With this concept of *basho*, Nishida felt that he could explicate and clarify what sees without being seen even as a seer, that unsayable abyssal ground of *seen*, *seer*, and *seeing*. In any case, Nishida’s break with his earlier voluntarism in favor of a deeper understanding of intuition becomes even more pronounced in the second half of this collection of essays, wherein we find the “*Basho*” essay.

One might also point out that despite Nishida’s primary concern here being to logically found knowledge, “intuition” within this epistemology represents a concern with what lies at the very depths of human existence, a concern that Nishida elsewhere often speaks of as “the religious” (*shūkyōteki*). That is, the deepest self-awareness lies at the point where the self-contradiction of existence is made explicit, at the very place (*basho*) where life meets death.

THE ISSUE OF DUALISM

One of the major catalysts that drove Nishida to his *basho*-philosophy was his encounter with neo-Kantianism. In *Torinokosaretaru ishiki no mondai* Nishida raises the point that modern epistemology begins with the assumption of the opposition between knower and known (Z7 216–17). Such dualism reached its apex in Kantian epistemology. Even though they certainly were not the sole catalysts, the neo-Kantians hold a significant place in Nishida’s formulation of his *basho*-theory. Kant and the neo-Kantians understood the subject-object relation in Greek hylomorphic terms—going back to Plato—of form and matter, determining and determined. They viewed cognition to be the (re-)constitution of the object by means of a priori conditions.²⁵ In hylomorphic terms it is a formative activity vis-à-vis sensible material.²⁶ The neo-Kantians also developed this hylomorphic dualism in terms of the distinction between ideal and real, validity and existence, *ought* and *is*. Validity (*Geltung*) is ascribed to values like “truth” that serve as norms or standards for judgment-making. On the other hand, being or existence belongs to the reality of the sensible matter of judgment. This is what becomes the grammatical subject of the judgment. The two, validity and being, are distinct: while a being “is” (*Seiendes ist*), values “are valid” (*Werte gelten*).²⁷ In contrast to beings, values as ideal are thus “non-being.” Nishida inherits this dichotomy and focuses upon its

characteristic distinction between non-being (or: nothing; *Nichtsein*; *mu*) and being (*Sein*; *u* or *yū*).²⁸ On this he superimposes other dualities, such as the Husserlian *noesis-noema*, and the judicative (grammatical) predicate-subject distinction, understanding all of them as indicating the duality of determining act and determined content while viewing this in terms of non-being and being. Nishida's aim, however, was to show an underlying dynamism that sustains as well as erases such dichotomization through a development of his earlier notion of self-awareness in terms of his new concept of *basho*.

The core issue of epistemological dualism is the reference of the matter of cognition to something transcendent to its determination. In *Sōda hakushi ni kotaeru* ("In Reply to Dr. Sōda") Nishida faults Rickert's epistemology for failing to clarify the ground of the given content that would establish objective knowledge (Z3 489). If the objective source of the material of cognition transcends the very determining process to begin with, the *thing-in-itself* remains unknown. Nishida thus wanted to find how this apparent gap between transcendental consciousness *qua* knower and transcendent object as the unknown source of the known is overcome (Z7 223). How does the structure of judgment that relates the known object *qua* grammatical subject to its determining predicates accurately correspond to the world of objects? Nishida thus searches for some primitive unity that holds the dichotomy in place, to guarantee the very possibility of cognition. Rather than viewing form and matter in cognition as two separate entities, he sought on the basis of his notion of a self-mirroring self-awareness (Z3 420, 481, 494, 496) to regard the formation of unformed matter, the objectification process, from the *broader* perspective of a *self-forming* formlessness to thus encompass the dichotomized terms of subject-object or form-matter.²⁹ This is the sense behind "self-mirroring," i.e., the immanent self-determination or self-differentiation of an undetermined, nondifferentiated, transcendent unity as a holistic situation or context that encompasses the allegedly transcendental (epistemological) subject and transcendent object. Furthermore, in the attempt to overcome any implicit or misunderstood reference to the psyche, Nishida was led to conceive of that dynamic in the "spatial" terms of a field or place. Nishida thus came to formulate his concept of *basho* to designate that concrete situatedness of "reality-cum-experience," wherein ideal and real are not yet distinct, a unity enveloping but lived prior to its bifurcation. We see this development in the second half of *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*), starting with his "Basho" essay.

In search of that unity, Nishida chooses, in his analysis of judgment, to focus upon the predicate rather than the subject. Among the neo-Kantians, we may look here to Emil Lask as an important figure. Lask, who was

Rickert's student, appropriated the neo-Kantian theory of the two realms of the valid (*Geltendes*) and of beings (*Seiendes*) in a direction that may have suggested to Nishida a possible overcoming of that dualism.³⁰ Lask understood the predicate in terms of a domain or "place."³¹ By developing this further in terms of his own concept of *basho*, Nishida believed himself to have found a logical grounding for his ideas whereby he might avoid the charge of psychologism.

THE ISSUE OF OBJECT-CENTERED THINKING:

Another issue closely related to that of dualism, which Nishida felt the need to surmount, was object-centered thinking. The very formulation of the question of dualism already assumes that there are two "objects," determined things, in relation. In this mode of thinking, what can be made into a subject of judgment (i.e., the object) is the center of focus. Nishida traces this to Aristotle's substantialism whereby the subject specified by predicating properties designates an underlying substance. Aristotle takes this "substance" (*ousia*) to be that which serves as the grammatical subject or substratum (*hypokeimenon*) but is *never* itself predicated of something else. It cannot be a predicate (Z3 325, Z7 221).³² That primary substance in its own individuality independent of its predicates, underlying but transcending them, is hence unknowable, irreducible.³³ (See Z3 294, 328, 390.) Aristotelian substantialism thus leads us to what was found questionable in neo-Kantian dualism: If the substance is transcendent to our knowing and judging acts, how does it come to be the object of our knowledge and the subject of our judgment?

This same problem of object-centered thinking arises also in connection with the *other* pole of the epistemological duality. In thinking of the cognitive process as involving two determinate terms, we have already in fact objectified not only its content but consciousness itself as some *thing* standing in opposition to its object. In other words, consciousness itself *qua* object is now being spoken of in terms of a grammatical subject of judgment. Nishida takes this to be the hidden premise behind modern epistemology: it conceives of cognition as a relationship involving *objectified* beings (see Z7 218). Even Husserl, who had taken up consciousness as an issue more directly than did the neo-Kantians, is accused of doing the same. In *Torinoko-saretaru ishiki no mondai* Nishida makes the point that the consciousness Husserl looks at is a consciousness that one is conscious *of* (i.e., as an object thematized) rather than the consciousness that *is conscious* (i.e., as *act*). While objectifying consciousness, phenomenology had failed to pay attention to the very consciousness that is *conscious* of that consciousness (see Z7 219, 223).³⁴ Both objectifications, of knower and known, attempt to

reduce the irreducible, objectify the unobjectifiable. What then is the pre-objective source of this objectification and dichotomy? Nishida believes that the key to unlock the mysteries of cognition lies in the direction of the unobjectifiable pole of consciousness, necessarily assumed *behind* every objectifying act. He believes that we do possess some sort of immediate knowledge of it prior to any thematization (Z7 219–20). In search of that root of cognition, Nishida looks away from the grammatical subject, the determined product of objectification, to turn in the opposite direction to the determining “predicate.”

PREDICATE AS BASHO

As just stated Nishida attempts a de-focusing away *from* constituted, objectified, beings. Although this means turning in the direction of the determining (objectifying) act, he attempts to do so *thoroughly*, i.e., without objectifying that act, and toward its assumed unobjectifiable dimension that he calls “the predicate-plane” (*jutsugomen*). The shift allows for acts constitutive of objects to be seen in light of reflective acts, which in turn presuppose that predicate-plane. This predicate-plane ultimately designates a holistic situation preceding bifurcation, encompassing and mirroring itself in those bifurcated terms. But what does this have to do with the “predicate” (*jutsugo*)? Nishida takes the subsumptive form of judgment, wherein the predicate *qua* universal (*ippansha*) is said to subsume the grammatical subject *qua* particular (*tokushu*), to be the paradigmatic form of judgments, foundational for knowledge claims (Z3 390). Aristotle’s substance, the Kantian thing-in-itself, escapes such subsumption. Nishida reasons that in order to understand how such transrationality becomes understood or transformed in terms of our rational capacities in the cognitive or judicative act, we need to make a perspectival shift away from the objectified object and toward its determining predicate. That “predicate” ultimately in its most concrete significance is the unobjectifiable and unsayable field wherein all possible determining predicates are implaced.

By the term “predicate-plane” Nishida means *basho*. In his *Torinokosare-taru ishiki no mondai*, Nishida cites Bosanquet’s claim that when we say that “this desk is made of oak,” the true grammatical subject is not “this desk” but rather “reality.”³⁵ Nishida understands this to mean the entire underlying situation as “whole,” expressing itself in that desk that is in turn situated within it (see Z7 221). In other words, the predicate *qua basho* at its most concrete level signifies the “universal” understood as the pre-thematically lived “whole” of experience-*cum*-reality, that becomes subsequently expressed in objectified and dichotomized terms. Overcoming the

shortcomings of Bergson's purely linear-temporal analysis, it is the environing and backgrounding context in our immediate experience, wherein things become determined with significance in our cognitive or judicative acts. The predicate taken in this sense is thus transcendent to the judgment itself. While Aristotle looked to the grammatical subject, pointing to an underlying transcendent substance as the foundation of judgments, Nishida thus turns away to look for the foundation in the reverse direction, looking beyond its determining predicates, through the various determining, objectifying acts, and toward their transcendent predicate-plane "that becomes the predicate but never the grammatical subject."

One must bear in mind here that Nishida is overlapping the various dichotomies of the grammatical subject-predicate, the epistemological object-subject, the conceptual particular-universal, the metaphysical matter-form, the phenomenological *noema-noesis*, content-act, and so forth, and understands all of these in terms of implacement between "the implaced" (*oitearu mono*) and its "place of implacement" (*oitearu basho*). The grammatical subject subsumed in its predicate is the object determined by the epistemological subject, the particular sharing in the universal, the matter being formed by form, etc. And that subsumption of the grammatical subject *qua* particular in the predicate *qua* universal means that the grammatical subject is implaced within, enveloped by, its predicate (Z3 390, 464–65, 498; also Z4 81). So in "red is a color," "red" is implaced within the broader universal "color"; and in "the rose is red," it is the particular redness of the rose that is implaced within the universal of redness (see Z4 82). The copulative *is* thus signifies implacement: everything that *is* (*arumono*), whether physical or mental, is implaced (*oitearu*) in some place (*basho*). (See Z3 416–17, 428–29.) The "predicate" for Nishida then, more than its grammatical significance, is *basho* as this pre-objective environing background for determining acts and determined content, the plane of potentials (predicates) allowing for the foreground emergence of beings *qua* objects or *qua* grammatical subjects.

At the same time that Nishida focuses upon the predicate *qua* universal as "the place of implacement," he looks at the same relationship in the reverse direction in terms of the universal's own individuation through self-differentiation or self-determination (see Z3 347–48, 391, 400, 402, 428–29, 431, 465, 517). Nishida understands the particular's implacement in the universal, the universal's envelopment of the particular, as *also* a self-determining act, its self-individualization into that particular. The grammatical subject is then what is cutout through differentiation from the vast matrix that is the predicate, the universal. Borrowing Hegel's term, Nishida thus characterizes *basho* as a "concrete universal" (*gutaiteki ippansha*).³⁶ (See Z3 409) As concrete, the universal thus proves to be the true substratum

(the *subjectum*) or “substance” (*hontai*) underlying subsumptive judgments, in the double sense of being *both* the agent-subject of the formative act *and* the matter of its determination (see Z3 330, 340, 443). Because the determining act here is a *self-determining*, Nishida calls it a “pure act,” i.e., a self-forming pure form taking itself as matter. Nishida understands this *also* in light of his earlier formulation of self-mirroring self-awareness. For example, Nishida takes the recognition of the color red expressed in the proposition, “red is a color,” metaphorically as the universal “color” mirroring itself to see itself as “red.” This self-mirroring is the universal’s self-particularization into the grammatical subject “red” (see Z3 332–33). The judicative act thus involves implacement, self-determination, *and* self-seeing or mirroring, all being different ways of speaking of the same dynamic of *basho*.

Each universal predicate determining its subject can itself be made into a subject of further judgment determined by a broader universal. For example, “red” is a universal that is also a particular of the broader universal “color.” This entails for Nishida a serial layering of universals implaced within universals and, in the reverse direction, a series of self-determining, self-mirroring universals (see Z3 466). Proceeding in the direction away from the objectified object that becomes the grammatical subject, Nishida reasons that there must be presupposed a transcendent predicate-plane as the *final* and unobjectifiable “predicate that cannot become a grammatical subject,” an ultimate context necessary for all determination or differentiation, itself escaping any reduction or determination. In contrast to determined “beings,” this undetermined source of determination is hence “nothing” (*mu*). On the way toward that “nothing” is consciousness (*ishiki*) itself *qua* “universal” as the field where possible predicates, determining universals, are lodged. It is not quite “nothing” itself but relatively “nothing” in relation to its objects. Judgments themselves are moments within that field of consciousness (*ishiki no ba*). Consciousness *qua basho* is thus a “predicate” as expressed in the predication, “X is what I am conscious of” (i.e., “X is discerned by me”). In Kantian terms this would be the realm of the a priori. But when we focus upon consciousness as the epistemological subject, we have objectified it, made it into a grammatical subject of “I think . . . X.” Nishida thus emphasizes the need to regard consciousness as a predicate rather than a grammatical subject, as a circle instead of a point, as not a thing but a *basho* embracing its terms and wherein judicative or cognitive acts take place (Z3 469, 504). While the “I” might thus be objectified *qua* grammatical subject vis-à-vis its opposite, the not-I, its ground sustaining this very opposition cannot be objectified. Consciousness as field of determining predicates is “nothing” relative to their objects of predication, the determined “beings” implaced within it (see Z7 222). But in its relatedness to its objects, consciousness in turn is guided by *further* determining

acts, a further context, belonging to what in objective terms is *truly* “nothing.” Consciousness thus provides the entryway leading from “oppositional nothing” (*tairitsuteki mu*) to “absolute nothing” (*zettai mu*), (Z3 432). Consciousness itself as the field of potential predicates then dissolves into a further environing and self-determining transcendent field, which in its nondifferentiation is truly nothing, serving as an *an-ontological* (under-) ground of beings.³⁷ This is what Nishida calls in the “Basho” essay, the *basho* of true nothing (*shin no mu no basho*), (Z3 482).

Within the series of implacements, leading up to that transcendent “nothing,” each asymmetrical pair of particular-universal constitutes the relationship of foreground-background, which Nishida characterizes in terms of being-nothing (*u-mu*). We just saw above how consciousness is “nothing” in relation to its objects. In another example, the general system of “color,” in remaining undetermined as to its specificity, is “nothing” in comparison to specific colors. Furthermore, each universal in its capacity as the background “nothing” makes room in order to include opposites belonging to the same species. And this means affirmation and negation. For example, “color” must include *both* “red” and “not-red,” meaning all other colors that are *not* red. At the final end on the predicate pole of the series of implacements, “the universal of universals” would have to be an utter non-differentiated “nothing” that includes *all* types of beings and their negations, hence being-*in-general* and its very negation.³⁸ But in addition to such horizontal contradiction, this also entails, in the vertical direction, a relationship between that which becomes “the grammatical subject but not a predicate” (the individual *qua* being) and the “predicate that cannot become a grammatical subject” (the universal *qua* nothing). At the extremities of both ends of the judicative structure lie indeterminable transcendent—the transcendent object and the transcendent predicate—united in nondifferentiation.³⁹ Nishida views all judgments thus to be explications or amplifications in terms of the bifurcating formal structure of subject-predicate, of a fundamental (self-)intuition involving, or nondistinct with, that primal unity: the *basho* of nothing as a self-differentiating undifferentiatedness, a unity of transcendent contradictories. It is in this concept that the Buddhistic aspect is most conspicuous in his thinking.

At this point one might wonder why Nishida felt the need to formulate an epistemology on the basis of a view to the predicate when the Japanese language itself does not have the same grammatical constraints of the Indo-European languages. That is to ask in what sense would Nishida’s analytic of the grammatical subject-predicate structure of judgment even apply to the Japanese language where a single word may express the meaning of a sentence.⁴⁰ The fact is, Nishida is responding to Western philosophy, which from his view has placed too much emphasis upon the object, i.e., that

which becomes the grammatical subject in a judgment. This can be traced to Aristotelian substantialism, wherein the correlation between the metaphysics of substance-accident and the linguistic structure of subject-predicate is explicit. One might say that Nishida is reacting to the Indo-European linguistic proclivity toward focusing upon the grammatical subject—objectification—which has made its way into philosophy in general.

From the opposite end, however, one might also question whether an emphasis upon the predicate leads to a prioritization of the universal at the expense of the individual. In this respect we need to remember that by “predicate” Nishida ultimately means something more than the grammatical predicate or a conceptual universal, and he reminds us on occasion that *both* universals and particulars, both the grammatical predicate and subject, are implaced in that final transcendent predicate-plane he equates with the *basho* of true nothing. This reciprocity of opposing terms within an unsayable place is emphasized and made more explicit in his later writings of the 1930s and 1940s, in terms of a world of interacting individuals, the universal’s inverse determination (*gyaku gentei*) by individuals, and the inverse correspondence (*gyakutaiō*) between absolute and relative, place and implaced.

THE OPPOSITIONLESS OBJECT

On his way toward that nondualistic predicate-centered thought, Nishida obtains a clue to overcoming dualism in the formulations of a certain neo-Kantian, Emil Lask, who in deconstructing neo-Kantian dualism may be said to have brought the movement to its end. Lask’s understanding of the prejudicative experience serves as a kind of bridge from neo-Kantian dualism to Nishida’s nondualism. Lask found that the dichotomized terms of neo-Kantianism—fact and value, being and validity, sensible matter and logical form—are *already* interfused in their givenness to experience, in a unity constituting meaning (*Sinn*) prior to judgment. Prior to thematization, we encounter things in an “immediate intuitable lived-experience” (*unmittelbare anschauliche Erleben*) (as matter, being) but always *together with* meaning (as form, value, validity).⁴¹ Only subsequently does this holistic experience become bifurcated and artificially pieced together in the terms of subject and predicate, matter and form, or particular and universal. Lask called this primitive unity, “the oppositionless object” (*gegensatzloser Gegenstand*),⁴² “oppositionless,” in that it is prior to any judicative distinction. We can make neither affirmative nor negative judgments concerning it; its experience is beyond the oppositions of being and nonbeing, yes and no, true and false, right and wrong.⁴³ Nishida refers to Lask’s “oppositionless object” on numerous occasions throughout the “*Basho*”

essay.⁴⁴ We can see how in the evolution of Nishida's ideas toward a non-dual nothing that would overcome dualism, this Laskian notion was very significant. And yet the differences between the two thinkers need to be drawn out in order to show Nishida's advancement beyond the residue of hylomorphic dualism within Lask's thinking.

A borrowing related to the oppositionless object from Lask is the notion of validity as a "trans-subjectively" lived meaningfulness, a pre-given domain of values.⁴⁵ In this world of values, we live through the categories as in contexts; we know the matter only because we live through its form. Thus for Lask, we "live in truth."⁴⁶ Nishida also refers to an intelligible (*eichiteki*) world of values or validities, as providing horizontal guidance for the acts of consciousness (see Z3 432).⁴⁷ In distinction from the natural realm of objects, this would be the realm making possible "the emotive interpenetration between mutually intuiting persons" (Z3 485–86).⁴⁸ Validity for Nishida as well is found in the concrete situatedness of lived experience (Z3 481), but he understands this in terms of *basho*. We find Nishida accordingly referring to Lask's "alogical lived experience" as a kind of *basho* that is really *peri*-logical (*hōronriteki*), enveloping within itself the very opposition between form and matter (Z3 418). This takes off from Lask's description of the embracing (*umgreiffen*), surrounding (*umgeben*), enveloping (*umhüllen*), or enclosing (*umschliessen*) of matter by form; or the "standing-in" (*in-stehen*) of matter in form.⁴⁹ But Nishida collapses this hylomorphism. He finds the root of this form-matter unity in the will's living experience understood in terms of *basho* (see Z3 492–94). Lask provided a summary reading of neo-Kantian epistemology as a dualism of two *realms*, that of being and of validity. In his attempt to overcome that duality, he reformulates it in terms of the *two elements* of matter and form as always intertwined in experience. What Nishida does then is to take Lask's analysis further by collapsing that hylomorphism into the self-forming formlessness of *basho*—what in other works he describes as the "seeing without a seer" of true nothing. On this basis Nishida finds Lask's oppositionless object as *further* founded upon, enveloped by, a *basho* that is absolutely undeterminable, unobjectifiable. For Nishida the object is oppositionless in being opposed by nothing, it sinks into the *basho* of nothing. For further discussions of Lask's ideas, please refer to the notes of the translated text of "*Basho*."

TRUE NOTHING

Turning away from the object, from the grammatical subject, moving in the direction of the predicate and through the successive implacements of universals within universals, acts objectified by further acts, penetrating

beyond the limits of the field of consciousness as well as of the opposition-less object, we are led to acknowledge the transcendent predicate “that cannot be made into a subject of judgment.” Serving as an ever-implicit horizontal “beyond” or *other* that delimits experience, it permits no further objectification as *this* or *that*.⁵⁰ This is what Nishida calls the *basho* of true nothing (*shin no mu no basho*) (Z3 467).⁵¹ When nothing is *opposed* to beings as in consciousness vis-à-vis its objects, which Nishida calls the *basho* of oppositional nothing (*tairitsuteki mu*), that “nothing” is still determinate, a “being.” True nothing on the other hand encompasses that opposition of being and nothing, or object and consciousness, as abstract moments arising within its *basho* (Z3 424). At this most universal but concrete level of reality-cum-experience, there is only the flow of activity in its ongoing self-mirroring self-determinations.⁵² As prior to all dichotomization, this transcendent predicate *qua* true nothing envelops in its very nondistinction the transcendent object.

Like Nishida (Z3 415), the ancient Greeks also stated that to be is to be in a place. Although in some English editions, Nishida’s term *basho* has been translated as *topos*, Plato’s concept of *chōra* is certainly more significant than Aristotle’s *topos* in regard to the “nothingness” of *basho*. In the beginning of “*Basho*,” Nishida tells us that he drew inspiration for his idea from Plato’s concept of *chōra* in the *Timaeus* (e.g., 52b). In the *Timaeus*, *chōra* appears as the “receptacle” (*hupodochē*) onto which the *ideas* are informed or inscribed to make their particular copies.⁵³ But the character Timaeus explains that while it always receives things, “it has never in any way . . . taken on any form like any of those things that enter it . . . for its nature is to be a matrix for all things” (50b-c). As a third “something” (*triton genos*) (52a) between the individual copy (the formed) and the universal paradigm or *idea* (the forming), serving as their place of *formation*, *chōra* must remain indefinite, formless, neither subjective nor objective, neither *idea* nor thing (50e). Nishida develops this characterlessness of *chōra* in terms of the nothingness of the final *basho*. Jacques Derrida, who most certainly was unaware of Nishida’s appropriation, comes close to Nishida’s conception when he remarks that Plato’s *chōra* as a *triton genos* that is *neither* of the immutable intelligibles (*ideas*) *nor* of the becoming and corruptible sensibles (*images*), is a dark “beyond” (in *excess* of sense and meaning), defying the either-or “logic of non-contradiction,” “the logic of binarity.”⁵⁴

Like Plato’s *chōra* that remains undetermined while serving as the “receptacle space” for the *ideas*’ own particularizations, Nishida’s *basho* at its most concrete level eludes positive description. It cannot be made into a subject of judgment to state that it *is* or *is not*; it cannot be predicated as *being* or *not being* (Z3 424, 503). This is necessary, however, for it must be presupposed by every such utterance concerning a subject. It thus slips away from any attempt

to make it into a subject of judgment; it recedes to make room for things determined, enveloping them as their “place” (see Z3 415, 421). And yet this negativity is simultaneously the positivity of its self-determination that inverts nothing into beings.⁵⁵ Because it *forms* itself, in spite of its formlessness, *basho* still proves to be a *positive* source of the real. This distinguishes Nishida’s *basho* as dynamic (self-forming) from Plato’s *chōra* that is also a nothing but in its pure receptivity. Nishida’s final *basho* thus collapses the Greek dichotomy between form (*idea*) and matter (*chōra*). Nishida’s criticism of Plato is that he failed to attribute any such ontological independence to placiality.

By “true nothing” or “absolute nothing,” Nishida then does not mean that there is ultimately literally nothing existing. Like the Mahāyāna Buddhists before him, as exemplified by Nāgārjuna, Nishida is careful to avoid any nihilistic tendency toward reifying negation. Nishida has in mind instead the formlessness that forms itself into formed beings. Nāgārjuna’s notion of the emptiness of emptiness constitutes one source to which Nishida’s idea here may be traced. Another strand of influence comes from the Daoist notion of nothing or void (*wu*) as that which cannot be determined in reference to any form or name. As the final and most concrete context presupposed in all determining acts, it cannot be objectified and treated as a grammatical subject. Rather it must be treated as a transcendent “predicate” (see Z7 223–24). We see Nishida’s ingenuity here in conceiving of the most concrete in terms of a final and undelimitable “predicate,” since this avoids the infinite regress that the objectification of an absolute leads to. It is in this way that Nishida states in *Torinokosaretaru ishiki no mondai* that he wants to open a new beginning for a different sort of metaphysics, one that can ground epistemology in the direction of the predicate rather than seeking for the ground of being in the direction of the grammatical subject (Z7 223–24). Such a metaphysics or epistemology founded upon concrete nondistinct immediacy, the *basho* of true nothing, would be reducible to neither realism nor idealism, nor any sort of dualism.⁵⁶ Nishida has constructed a “complete” system that includes the very impossibility of its completion, by virtue of its unreifiable, unobjectifiable concrete source.⁵⁷ For the most encompassing principle in Nishida’s system is this self-founding principle of no-principle, the indeterminate indifferent nothing that “horizons” as an opening, “a circle without periphery” wherein such distinctions are collapsed.⁵⁸

LEVELS OF BASHO

From that un-delimited predicate-plane of nothing unfold a series of determinations. Between the individual determined as object, defined as grammatical subject, on the one hand, and the most comprehensive situation

horizoning that objectification, on the other hand, itself indefinite, indeterminate as universal, there is the chain of successive determinations, analyzed by Nishida in terms of implacements within implacements, *bashos* within *bashos*. With each successive placement, the universal is finitized as the self-determination of a broader universal. Consciousness can also likewise endlessly reflect upon itself, taking itself as object implaced within a further consciousness, as it deepens and broadens its reflection. Behind each concrete universal constituting its object, there is then a mirroring universal reflecting itself in it (Z3 503). In this way, each self-determining universal, or each self-reflecting level of consciousness, is enveloped within a broader one, and all are enveloped by “the universal of all universals” determining and mirroring them in its self-determination or self-mirroring. Each *basho* is an image mirroring a broader self-mirroring *basho*, which in turn mirrors a further one, and so on, until the most concrete situatedness of an imageless *basho qua* transcendent predicate. In this movement from individual being to enveloping nothing, the system of *basho* thus comprises a whole succession of meontological-ontological levels of determining act and determined content, form and matter, *noesis* and *noema*, predicate and subject, place and implaced.⁵⁹

The successive progression of implacements in general move from the realm of objects to the realm of consciousness, wherein objects appear as phenomena, to the realm of value or validity wherein acts of consciousness are determined and reflected, and to the enveloping circumferenceless nothing. In the “*Basho*” essay itself Nishida provides a rough threefold schema in explicating this system in a variety of ways, especially in section three, in terms of existence, fields of placement, worlds, modes of seeing, and determining acts. (For a detailed discussion of this, please refer to the text and accompanying notes.) But we may summarize the system here as follows: (1) What appear as substances are constituted by acts of force within the *basho* of beings; (2) But seen from a more concrete standpoint, they are constituted as oppositional objects by acts of consciousness upon the field of consciousness; (3) That field of consciousness however is a relative nothing, and hence still a being, whose acts are in turn determined by the will in relation to intelligibles (i.e., values) upon the *basho* of true nothing. Those intelligibles themselves are shadow-images of that enveloping nothing. Moving from being to nothing then, what are (a) seen as *substantial things* possessing qualities become (b) seen as *substanceless acts* of consciousness, which upon true nothing become (c) seen as *images* or shadows of the self-mirroring, self-nullifying *basho* of true nothing (Z3 445).⁶⁰ At the deepest level of the nothing that envelops all in an infinite “circle without periphery”—perpetually *other* than what we can think or say and yet concretely lived in our immediate experience—duality is

overcome, as knower and known *qua* mirroring and mirrored are seen as different aspects of the same self-mirroring nothing.

Each level of *basho* involves a distinct perspective to, and from, the non-dualistic basis of reality-*cum*-experience. With that in mind, *basho* takes on the significance of “standpoint” (*tachiba*), with the most foundational or concrete standpoint being the *basho* of true nothing (*shin no mu no basho*)—although his usage of the term “standpoint” can be misleading. And yet one may also make the point that the distinction between the “ontological” and the “epistemological” is collapsed. For it is through the determining acts taking place via each standpoint that specific sorts of determined beings and their realms or worlds emerge.

Imagine, if you will, knowing an object, for example, a table. You see a table in front of you, you thematize it in your thinking, you know it is there, and the table is now an object of your cognition. But upon reflection, having read Kant, you realize that the table as object is an appearance, a phenomenon upon a transcendental field of consciousness ordered by a priori conditions. Do you really know the object out there beyond your mind, the thing-in-itself? And upon what basis are you reflecting upon your knowing act at this very moment? With his theory of *basho* Nishida conveys the fact that the object out there (transcendent object) and the subject in here (field of consciousness) are already inseparably interrelated in their concrete holistic situation that one is *always already* living. The fact of one’s encountering the table is environed by endless determinants, what Nishida compares to a “circle without periphery” and which he calls “true nothing,” accounting for that interrelation as a concrete whole. To analyze this situation in the terms of subject-object then is already a self-differentiation of that whole. To know a thing for Nishida means self-awareness, but this really refers to a self-mirroring in the dynamism of its self-forming formlessness. This is what Nishida has uncovered in terms of the system of *basho*.

We may make an association between this system of *basho* and the title of the collection, *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*). As mentioned toward the beginning of this introduction, this reflects Nishida’s own conversion from a voluntarism to an intuitionism. But one can also relate it to the very perspectival shifts that move from the *perception* of objects to the *reflection* of determining acts, and finally to the *intuition* of the whole *qua* self-mirroring *basho*. Thus, “when we . . . arrive at the *basho* of true nothing . . . [the will] becomes an intuition that . . . sees itself [*jikojishin o miru chokkan*]” (Z3 473; see also 453, 476–77). The standpoint of concrete experience then means intuition, holistically seeing itself without differentiation. One might also notice that if volition operates behind the constitutive acts of consciousness (see Z3 472–73) but intuition is of the undifferentiated whole encompassing those acts (see Z3 474–75), will

and intuition are two ways of talking about *basho*. Nishida has thus reformulated his pre-*basho* concepts of will and intuition in terms of his system of *basho* so as to rescue them from the charge of psychologism. Furthermore it is their inseparability that Nishida will eventually work out in his later works, as we see in “Logic and Life” (*Ronri to seimei*), in terms of “acting-intuition” (*kōiteki chokkan*).

CONTRADICTION AND GENERATION-AND-EXTINCTION

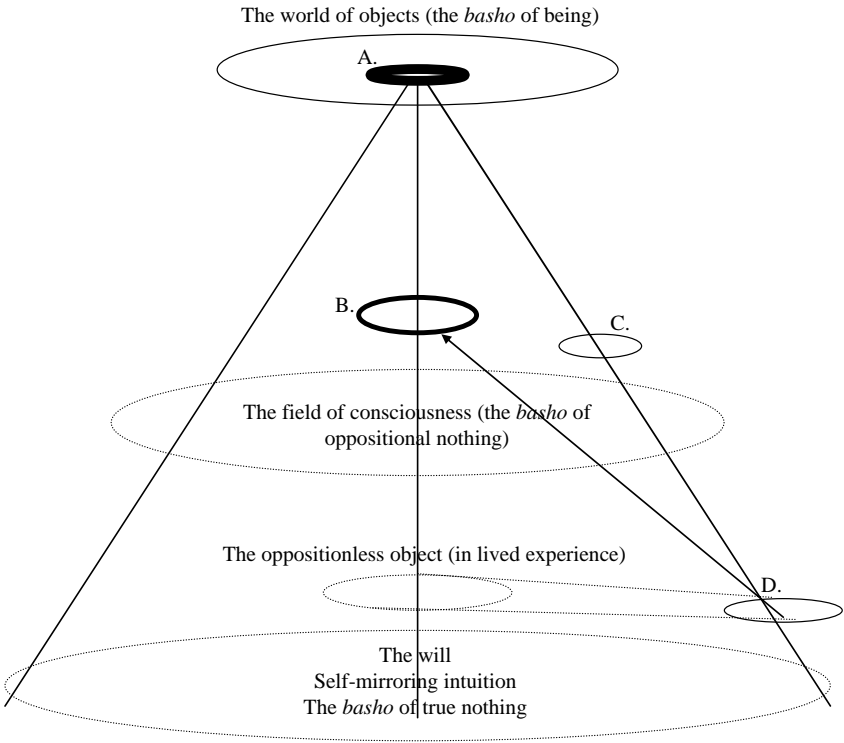
Intuition at the base of the *basho* of true nothing involves the reflective seeing of contradiction. Contradiction is a motif we find throughout Nishida’s works, and it must be understood in *both* its logical and existential significances. It is not only opposites but *logical* contradictories that are joined via their mutual exclusion at the most fundamental level of *basho*. This includes being and nothing, affirmation and negation, I and not-I, transcendent object and transcendent predicate (e.g., Z3 422, 424, 450–51, 456). But this also includes an existential dimension that Nishida speaks of in the Buddhist terms of “generation-and-extinction” (*shōmetsu*). Through the intuition of the enveloping universal implicit in the background, we are made aware of a contradictory relationship, e.g., “red” and “not-red” belonging to the species “color” (Z3 422). Nishida calls this the intuition of “contradictory unity” (*mujunteki tōitsu*). But in addition to such horizontal oppositions obtaining within each universal domain—as in the example of “red” and “not-red”—this very dynamism of unity-*cum*-bifurcation, when viewed through the vertical dimension, extends asymmetrically between the successive implacements or *bashos*, and ultimately between the transcendent object, “the true individual that becomes the grammatical subject but *not* the predicate,” on the one hand, and the transcendent predicate, “the true universal that becomes the predicate but *not* the grammatical subject,” on the other (see Z3 468). By means of this unity of contradiction, formed and forming, determined particular and determining universal, the transcendent and the immanent, are dynamically one. Nishida takes this dynamism, intuited in the concrete standpoint of nothing, to be the necessary premise for cognition rather than any duality.

This intuition encompassing contradictory unity, as the necessary premise for all subsequent thinking, must itself be free from the rules of thinking, e.g., the law of noncontradiction. The limiting domain of logical cognition is itself made possible in the recognition of a higher standpoint, a broader context (Z3 484–85). In this way, even if we cannot logically conceive of a contradictory unity, Nishida’s point is that it can and must be “seen” from that further standpoint of intuition (Z3 457–58).

In the first section of his “*Basho*” essay Nishida describes the concrete *basho* of nothing, wherein this intuition of contradiction takes place, as a *basho* of “generation-and-extinction” (*shōmetsu*), (Z3 423). Nishida borrows this term *shōmetsu* from Japanese Buddhism where it had been used to refer to the Indian concept of *samsāra*, the wheel of reincarnation, or to impermanence in general. Its more sophisticated Buddhist significance, however, connotes the momentary appearance and disappearance of each *dharma* or thing-event—what Dōgen called “being-time” (*uji*). Nishida develops this concept in terms of his understanding of the contradiction lying at the heart of existence. He takes the contradictory unity to be the nontemporal root (Z3 467) whereupon mutual transformations between opposites unfold within the dimension of time, e.g., the genesis of being out of nothing or the annihilation of being into nothing. If we take “generation-and-extinction” in its specifically human significance of “life-and-death,” we may consider its intuition, in its nondifferentiated immediacy to be an awareness of the very finitude of one’s being vis-à-vis death, one’s nondualistic absorption into nothing from out of which one’s very self is simultaneously constituted in its self-differentiation. Nishida himself must have been acutely aware of the transience of human existence as he lived through several deaths of his immediate family members. The intuition of contradiction in this sense indicates the concrete standpoint of experience-cum-reality, in its nondifferentiated depth, to be a *chiasma* wherein and whereupon life and death, self and world, being and nothing, interrelate and are differentiated.⁶¹ Nishida develops this point in his *Ronri to seimei* (“Logic and Life”) in terms of the environment as the place of the “concrete reality of life” from where we are born and into which we perish (Z8 19). We can take this to be an “existential,” or what Nishida himself comes to call the “religious” (*shūkyōteki*), aspect of *basho*. Just as Nishida will come to develop the notion of “contradictory unity” into the dialectic of an “absolute contradictory self-identity” (*zettai mujunteki jikodōitsu*) in terms of world history in his later works, he will also develop its “religious” aspect more explicitly, as noticeable for example in his discussion of “inverse correspondence” (*gyakutaio*) in *Bashoteki ronri to shūkyōteki sekaikan* (“The Logic of *Basho* and the Religious Worldview”) of 1945.

REMAINING QUESTIONS: LOGIC AND
A NONDUALISTIC EPISTEMOLOGY

How viable is Nishida’s conception and formulation of *basho*? One of the main points of his *basho*-theory was to provide a “logical”—rather than a psychological—founding for a nondualistic epistemology. The concreteness



- A. The object of cognition, oppositional object, grammatical subject.
- B. The epistemological/judicative subject, consciousness that one is conscious of.
- C. Predicates, categories of cognition, constitutive categories.
- D. Intelligibles, norms, values/validities, ideals, meanings, reflective categories.

The vertical lines from bottom to top represent the self-determination of *basho*: From D to C (or B) they are reflective (volitional) acts, and from C (or B) to A they are constitutive (cognitive or judicative) acts. But underlying these determining acts, is the act of the will (the volitional act). The circle at the bottom is really a circle without periphery, surrounded by nothing. Here the intuition sees all of these determining acts and determined objects as mirror-images of itself.

Figure 0.1 The diagram illustrates the major ideas of Nishida as they appear in his “*Basho*” essay.

of the *basho* of nothing means its immediacy prior to bifurcation. The very dichotomy implied in the various terminological pairings of realism and idealism, reality and experience, object and subject, all stem from the hylomorphic dualism traceable to the Greeks that was then developed by the neo-Kantians, among others. Rather than assuming that duality as the starting point, Nishida looks to *basho* in the dynamism of its self-forming formlessness as the most concrete standpoint. Nishida takes the determining acts resulting in dichotomies to be derivative of the self-intuition of this concrete whole. The attraction of Nishida’s *basho*-theory then is in providing a philosophical glimpse of that concrete standpoint that we all live and experience

“always already,” and from which we thus find ourselves having “fallen from grace” in the very act of reflecting upon it.

Nishida responds to the charge of psychologism by presenting his *basho*-theory as a “logic,” inheriting the broadened philosophical meaning of the term “logic” from nineteenth-century German philosophers. Nevertheless one might raise the issue in regard to the appropriateness of this language of a “logic,” with its concomitant terminology of German idealism and Kantianism. Can there really be a “logic” of nonduality? In what sense is this nondualistic epistemology, a “logic” or “logically” founded. Upon a superficial reading Nishida’s language sounds like a reversion to nineteenth-century speculative idealism. But a careful reading that takes into view what Nishida means by the “concrete” reveals much more. The issue of terminological adequacy or appropriateness in order to express the most concrete arises especially in connection to Nishida’s own allusions to the arational aspect of *basho*. While logically independent of psychological contingencies, in its very transcendence, *basho* in its concrete whole is irreducible to the logical laws of thinking. Hence in regard to that most concrete standpoint, with its contradictory unity such as of generation-and-extinction, Nishida speaks of intuition rather than conception. The problem is that Nishida has not clarified exactly what he means by “logic” (*ronri*) in this essay. By “logical” he seems to have in mind something broader than what he means by “rational” (*gōriteki*), in reference to the structure of implacements that envelops and grounds the more restricted structure of the epistemological dichotomies. Hence the “logical” founding of cognition in the concrete standpoint that is the alogical or translogical, Nishida tells us, is in fact “*peri*-logical” (*hōronriteki*), (Z3 418). This issue of the meaning of the concrete here becomes worked out more explicitly in terms of the socio-historical world in his subsequent works from the 1930s on. And the issue of what we ordinarily call logic in relation to its historical development is the topic of the second essay of this volume, “Logic and Life.”

LATER DEVELOPMENTS

In Nishida’s later developments, the view to *basho* gradually shifts from a look that penetrates through and beyond the interior depths of consciousness to a view that looks externally to the happenings of the world at large. The concept of *basho* itself almost seems to become eclipsed by the notion of “the socio-historical world.” But the latter is really an extension of the dynamic of *basho*’s self-determination, for Nishida comes to focus upon the human world as the field whereupon the determinations of *basho*, manifest in the unfoldings of the histories of peoples, take place. The concrete

standpoint at the bottom of self-awareness thus becomes seen to explicitly involve our interacting with the world. The intuition of contradictory unity also becomes developed further in terms of a dialectic that unfolds in that socio-historical world to manifest the creativity of the world's own self-formations. And this dialectic involves the interaction between the human self and the world via what Nishida calls "acting-intuition" (*kōiteki chokkan*). In his afterword to *Torinokosaretaru ishiki no mondai* Nishida states that what he negatively phrased as the *basho* of nothing is what he later comes to speak more positively as the standpoint of acting-intuition or the standpoint of historical actuality (Z7 224). We can thus view the development of Nishida's dialectical philosophy in his later works to be further unfoldings of his *basho*-philosophy. Nishida continued to think about *basho* and to rework his understanding of it, including its very "logic," all the way up to his final years.⁶²

FROM BASHO TO THE HISTORICAL WORLD OF ACTION

Nishida, as we saw in the "*Basho*" essay, grounds epistemology with his *basho*-theory upon a concrete nonduality *living* the dynamism of a self-forming formlessness. This concrete whole from which dichotomized terms stem, as "a circle without periphery," is an abysmal openness that horizons without being horizoned. Rather than erecting a bridge to cross over the dualistic gap, Nishida's *basho*-theory thus points us to a greater sea that overwhelms the gap. But it is within that place of an endlessly receding space that we find ourselves implaced in our life experiences, self-aware not in static contemplation but in dynamic and creative interactivity with the many things of the world. Intuition here is not passive but active.

After developing his theory of *basho* as exemplified in the "*Basho*" essay, Nishida's approach shifts from an inner viewing of the depths of self-awareness to an outward look to the happenings of the world. His concern moves from judgment and cognition to the dialectics of the historical world (*rekishiteki sekai*), and our implacement in that world in terms of what he calls "acting-intuition" (*kōiteki chokkan*). The most concrete standpoint is now understood in terms of our interactivity with the world. This outward shift however cannot be utterly divorced from a concern with the interiority that grounds consciousness (*ishiki*). Nishida now wants to make the point that human existence *qua* embodiment is inseparable from the world of history and action. The theme of the works of the 1930s and 1940s is the dynamism of that world wherein we are born, dwell, and die; its self-formations wherein we take part through our activities. This is still a manifestation of what he earlier spoke of as the grounding of the self in

the abysmal *basho* but now expressed in the bodily and worldly terms of acting-intuition and the historical world, and their concrete matrix. We see this shift manifest in the second essay of this volume, “Logic and Life” (*Ronri to seimei*) of 1936.

THE ESSAY “LOGIC AND LIFE”

The essay “Logic and Life” first appeared in the journal *Shisō* (*Thought*) in 1936, and was then included in a volume of essays, *Tetsugaku ronbunshū dai ni* (*Philosophical Essays*, vol. 2) in 1937.⁶³ The major theme of this essay is the dialectical nature of the historical world and our impacement in that world via acting-intuition. This involves a dialectic (*benshōhō*) of self-contradiction (*jiko mujun*) in our interactivity with the world, further explicated in terms of “self-negation” (*jiko hitei*), which proves to be of paramount importance if we are to understand the later Nishida’s thought. We also notice in this essay for the first time a concern with the relationship between life and environment, perhaps due to a challenge posed by his colleague Tanabe Hajime.⁶⁴ The issue of the body (*shintai*) becomes here a significant point in discussing the human relationship to the world. And the essay engages in detail the related issue of *technē* or “technics” (*gijutsu*), our manipulation of tools to make things and thereby reshape the world. Tying all of these together is how Nishida understands the dialectical nature of reality as a whole.

The main purport of the essay is to inquire into the source of what we call “logic” (*ronri*) by looking into its origination from out of that dialectical structure of the world (Z8 7). The point is to investigate the grounding of logic in the protological structure—which Nishida calls “*logos*”—of the world in its historical unfoldings, its “historical life” (*rekishiteki seimei*), (see Z8 255–58). Nishida thus attempts to view logic from the standpoint of “reality,” i.e., the world and its historical formation, as opposed to taking an anthropocentric view (Z8 9). Seen from such a standpoint, logic proves to be an expression of the world’s self-formation. In the following sections I examine some of the major points Nishida makes in this essay.

LOGOS: WORLD AND LIFE

Nishida looks for the root of logic in the protological structure of the world’s endless flux, what Heraclitus called *logos* (Z8 9). This world as our environment is historical and social, the *basho* whence we are born and

whither we go to die, and of which we are determinations, its operative and creative elements (Z8 16–17, 19, 29). To understand logic, we need to understand the *logos* of this world. And this requires, according to Nishida, an investigation into the dialectic of its historical unfolding and its interrelationship with human activity.

Nishida distinguishes this world into the three levels of material, biological, and historical, which are in fact standpoints for viewing the same world. In the world seen in terms of matter, things mechanically act upon one another as causes and effects. But as bodily beings, human beings, like other living beings, encounter the world biologically, involving dietary and health needs. Human beings, though, are distinct from other animals in the way they encounter the world as historical. Human life is more than merely biological, it is historical. By the “historical world” (*rekishiteki sekai*) Nishida has in mind the world wherein the human self as its individual element manifests, on its own and through its own independent status of consciously and intentionally making things, the very creativity of the world’s self-formation. And this is the world wherein we find ourselves “always already.” It provides the concrete standpoint from out of which the other perspectives to the world may then be derived through abstraction.

The dialectical structure of the world becomes most pronounced in this historical world because it is therein that the holistic system of interaction between whole and part, environment and individual, becomes explicitly creative. In the biological world, the environment conditions the organism. But the organism does not in turn alter the environment in a creative fashion. The environment is the condition of life, to which life reacts but is not yet life’s tool. Life here is not yet a “seer” (*mirumono*) (Z8 57), not yet self-aware. It is specifically human life that explicitly faces its delimitation, negation, by the environment, to creatively interact with that environment. The emergence of human consciousness signifies for Nishida then this capacity to dialectically encounter and deal with the environment in creativity. Human beings take part in the reshaping of their environment to assert their independence and autonomy. And only thus, through human individuals as its operative elements does the world become truly creative (Z8 17–18). Human existence is then, in Nishidan terms, “self-contradictory”: it is simultaneously *both* autonomous *and* a part of the world’s dialectic. The human manipulation of tools, *technē*, signifies that duplicity of human creativity vis-à-vis the world. As *homo faber* we reshape the world with tools and technology to assert our independence from it and yet simultaneously this is the world’s own self-creativity working through ourselves. The dialectic is such that human beings in their autonomous creativity are actively taking part in the world’s own self-creation.

In virtue of this dialectical structure, Nishida considers the historical world to be a “dialectical universal” (*benshōhōteki ippansha*). Nishida’s purpose is to discern how logic becomes generated from out of such a world. Throughout the essay, he makes use of the notion of *logos* to refer to this world’s dialectical structure. We must bear in mind that Nishida has in view the Heraclitean understanding of *logos*, which has to do with the unity of opposites and the flux of oppositions, as opposed to any Platonist or post-Platonist metaphysical conception. *Logos* as the dialectic of the world becomes seen as the root of what we come to call “logic.” Logic then is not independent of the world and its flux but rather tied to its dialectic.

ACTING-INTUITION

The human being fully participates in that dialectical *logos* of the world through what Nishida calls “acting-intuition” (*kōiteki chokkan*). In his earlier works, Nishida paired a certain conception of intuition (*chokkan*) with reflection (*hansei*) as well as with the will (*ishi*) in order to understand it in light of a certain dynamism. Here the concept of “acting-intuition” expresses the dialectical dynamism of human existence vis-à-vis our implacement in the world. As a concept complementary to that of the world *qua* dialectical universal, it opens for us a more immediate look into the dialectical or self-contradictory structure of reality. And this really has to do with our immediate embodied implacement in the world.

A few years earlier in the first volume of *Tetsugaku no kompon mondai*, (1933), Nishida had asserted *contra* Descartes that it is not that “I exist because I think” but that “I exist because I act.” Thinking already means acting (Z6 136). Seeing things, i.e., understanding them in view of *what* they are, already implies our acting upon them, giving them form within the context of the given historical world. “Acting-intuition” describes this dialectic of seeing things by working upon them, in interactivity with the world. This concept takes the earlier notion of self-awareness and extends it into the worldly arena of concrete action, whereby self, body, and world are inseparable. That is to say that our self-awareness is shaped as we interactively work upon the environment. The dialectic is such that we are *both* passively determined by the environment *and* actively working upon it. This is also a reference to the Greek distinction between *theoria* and *praxis*, but Nishida’s point is that they are inextricably intertwined. In the passivity of receiving information, we are negated, but in our volitional acts, we affirm ourselves, in both cases vis-à-vis the environment. “Seeing” and “acting” represent these contradictory moments as in fact complementary, interdependent, and inseparable (see Z7 101, Z8 12). For example, when

driving a car, we see the surrounding world in a certain way that is in accord with our very act of driving. This is not a theoretical seeing but a bodily seeing inseparable from the act of driving. The two moments of acting and seeing here cannot be divorced. This also brings us back to his earlier conception of intuition as signifying a standpoint *prior* to any bifurcation. The concept of acting-intuition likewise signifies our prejudicative or pretheoretical immediacy with the world. But this is now understood more explicitly in light of our dynamic interactivity with that world.

Through acting-intuition we alter the world, giving it form. And yet this also means the world's *own* self-formation, its self-determination (see Z8 39, 54, 58, 72–73). While shaping the world, we are in turn shaped by it. Our seeing in acting-intuition then signifies for Nishida, in a sense, the world's own self-awareness as it forms itself. Some years later (in 1943) he makes this explicit with the statement that the self-awareness of the human self is the world's self-awareness (Z9 528). Acting-intuition is thus our mode of partaking in the world's dialectic; a conduit through which the world *qua* historical life expresses and determines itself (see Z8 61, 69, 77).

If acting-intuition means our active participation in the world's dynamism, it also points to the significance of the body (*shintai*) as a subject or, literally, an embodied subject (*shutai*). Nishida asserts that in the very fact that the "I" intuits by acting, lies the fact of the body (Z8 84). Only with the body do we see things in acting. This is a departure from the traditional Western philosophical, e.g., the Cartesian, concept of intuition. For Nishida intuition is neither disembodied nor "de-worlded." As we intuit by acting with our bodies, the world forms itself. Nishida thus states that the world-creative pulse of historical life flows through our bodily creative acts (Z8 60, 67). On this basis he regards the human body to be an "historical body" (*rekishiteki shintai*), (e.g., Z8 70). Through acting-intuition we participate in the world's *poiēsis* and *logos* as a historical body.

This understanding of human existence in terms of acting-intuition precludes any reduction to simple terms, whether of materialistic mechanism, teleology, or idealism. Human activity is neither simply causally determined nor just guided by goals. Human beings are *both* free at each moment of acting-intuition *and* taking-part in the world's own formativity. In this way, Nishida views acting-intuition as what distinguishes human life as historical from inanimate matter that moves mechanistically in causal determinism as well as from biological life that moves teleologically for species-preservation. And in virtue of its bodily nature it also precludes any reduction to pure consciousness. Rather the world of acting-intuition is the concrete axis from which the material, the biological, and the mental and spiritual dimensions of reality can be abstracted. As such, Nishida views it to be the most concrete sphere of human existence.

WORLD, BODY, AND TECHNICS

Throughout the essay Nishida develops his philosophy of the body and philosophy of the world in their intimate connection with each other. As we saw in the previous section, the human self, existing in acting-intuition, for Nishida, is implaced in the world via bodily activities. We are born into the historical world, take part in it as historical bodies, and are constituted in co-relation with other individuals.

Implacement in the world occurs through the body (*shintai*). Self-awareness thus occurs first and foremost as self-awareness of the bodily self (Z8 65). As one intuits and acts through the body, the world in turn forms itself via our working bodies. Through our embodied implacement in the world, I and world are thus of one “body,” and our activity is the world’s activity. This, however, is no mere monism but rather involves a dynamic dialectic whereby the made is making and the making is made. That is, while making the world we are made by the world and vice versa. And this dialectic of the world’s self-formation and human activity is mediated via the body that implaces one in that world.

As mentioned earlier, Nishida distinguishes the human body as a “historical body” (*rekishiteki shintai*). Taking part in the world’s historical life as a creative element in the world’s self-formation, the human body, as opposed to being merely biological, is historical. A merely biological body is not yet truly creative, not yet an embodied subject, not quite fully independent of the environment that conditions its being. On the other hand, the body as historical is a creative element of the world. While conditioned by the environment, it in turn works upon and reshapes that environment—a creativity that is at the same time the world’s own self-formativity. Hence the human body for Nishida expresses the dialectic or “self-contradiction” of being free and being determined, that is, being independently creative on the one hand and being dependently created on the other. In other words, the historical-bodily self is both formed and forming as an element born out of the world that is also formed and forming in these formative acts. This dialectic is what in subsequent works Nishida will come to describe as a movement “from the made to the making” (*tsukuraretamono kara tsukurumono e*).

The historical body in its dialectical interactions with the environment thus embodies the historical life of the world. Nishida here is taking off from, and developing further, Haldane’s thesis concerning the holistic coordination and mutual adaptation between the biological organism and its environment (see Z8 18–19).⁶⁵ Nishida agrees with Haldane that life, in distinction from mere matter, expresses the dialectical relationship between living organism and its environment. But he adds that it is only with human

life that we see the individual reacting to environmental delimitation by creatively transforming the environment. Only human beings can confront their negation directly, so that while the environment creates and determines their being, humans in turn create and determine the environment, e.g., the land nourishes us with food, and we in turn alter the land to increase its productivity (Z8 162). This dialectical dynamism of human being and environment is what Nishida calls “historical life.” This dialectic of historical life is made explicit and self-aware only in human life as possessing the historical body.

Human existence is furthermore technological (*gijutsuteki*). The distinctive creativity of the historical body has to do with its manipulation of tools. It makes and uses tools to make things. And in doing so it alters the very world that gave it birth (see Z8 16–18). But as we alter the environment with tools, the technologically altered environment in turn alters us, e.g., in the development of means of production. The body, taking part in this technological activity, is moreover itself a tool for making things, including making other tools (Z8 32). Nishida adds that through the use of one’s body as tool, one incorporates other things into the body as its extension (Z8 31), while conversely the body itself in its interaction with things becomes a thing of the world. This also means that the world, as a realm of instruments, itself becomes a tool *as well as* becoming an extension of the bodily self (see Z8 52–53, 67). The body mediates our relation to other tools, and tools mediate our relation to the environment of things. Through body and tool, self and environment are thus interconnected. And yet the very things that we make and use still stand apart from us. To that extent there is a severance in this interconnection between humanity and world. This is the reason behind Nishida’s characterization of “technics” or *technē* (*gijutsu*) as a “continuity of discontinuity” (*hirenzoku no renzoku*) between body, tool, thing, and world (see Z8 64). In this way, amid discontinuity human beings, by embodying the world’s historical life, partake in the world’s creativity. No longer dictated by the biological *telos* of species-maintenance, humanity in creative interaction with its environment is free to establish societies, which Nishida regards as the “species of historical life” (Z8 65).⁶⁶ *Technē* in that sense is the means whereby life confronts the negating forces of the environment and transcends the bounds set by those conditions. Such technological activity, expresses the free creativity characterizing the human body as historical from the merely biological and merely material.

It is on the basis of this tool-manipulating character of the historical body, embodying the historical life of the historical world, that Nishida speaks of the human body as the bearer of *logos* (see Z8 48). Earlier we mentioned Nishida’s reference to *logos* as the dialectical structure of the

world. Life in particular expresses the dialectic as manifest between individual and environment. Hence *logos* is also the world's creativity of which human beings are its creative element. It is in that sense that the human body as historical body, with its technological productivity, bears the world's *logos*. On its basis human beings order their world, render the irrational rational, make things with tools, speak languages, and form societies.

DIALECTICS

The *logos* of reality, for Nishida, is dialectical. Throughout the essay Nishida develops his notion of this dialectic involving the world, individuals, and their relationships. What is unique about Nishida's dialectic is that it occurs through the mediation of self-negation (*jiko hitei*), which he also considers a "continuity of discontinuity" (*hirenzoku no renzoku*). What is the dialectic of negation? We find that this dialectic involves a *chiasma* of vertical and horizontal interrelations manifest in various types of relations—such as individual-environment, person-person, subject-object—and happening through the dimensions of both space and time. Nishida explains this dialectic using the different concepts of dialectical universal, inverse determination, self-negation, continuity of discontinuity, and contradictory identity. I shall discuss these concepts below and also how Nishida's conceptions of time and of *logos* are related to the dialectic.

1. *Dialectical universal and inverse determination*: Nishida calls the structure of the historical world, "the dialectical universal" (*benshōhōteki ippansha*). We briefly touched upon the dialectic involving the mutual determinations of individual and environment, part and whole, taking off from Haldane's thesis (see Z8 18).⁶⁷ We encounter the world that affects us and in turn alter it; determined by the world, we determine it. The food we receive from the environment, our upbringing by parents, our relationship with friends, the weather, etc., all affect our state of being; and we in turn go on to alter those conditions. The world wherein we are implicated is the *basho*, "place," and medium (*baikai*) of this dialectic. Nishida had already established a few years earlier (1933), e.g., in *Tetsugaku no kompon mondai* (Z6), that this also means the self-determination of that world as the dialectical universal.

And what on the vertical level is the self-determination of the universal, on the horizontal level means the interdeterminations among individuals implicated in that world (see Z8 61–62). The dynamic interaction of individual elements constitute the very movement of the historical world. To describe this we find Nishida referring to group theory in mathematics according to which the symmetry noticeable among objects of a specific

group gives that group its very structure. In the same way it is the creative elements of the world, in their mutual relations, that make that world what it is. The vertical self-determination of the universal then is nondifferent from the horizontal determination of individuals among themselves. But the latter on the vertical level proves to be in reverse the determination of the universal by the individuals. For Nishida this means that at the “extremity” (*kyokugen*) of the self-determination of the world of the dialectical universal, the individual in turn determines the world in “inverse determination” (*gyaku gentei*). In other words, while implaced and determined by the world in its historical and social self-determination, the human individual possesses the capacity to determine its history and remodel society (see Z5 278).

For Nishida then dialectic involves both vertical and horizontal dimensions. On the vertical level, each individual creatively expresses the world’s own self-creation. Thereby the one world disperses itself into a multiplicity of individual points, each expressing that world from different angles. Each individual in turn, as the “extremity” of that world, is simultaneously dependent, independent, *and* interdependent. The individual is dependent on the world as its expression but is also independent in its creativity, which in inverse determination determines the world itself. At the same time, individuals on the horizontal dimension of the dialectic are codependent with one another in their mutual interactions. As both independent of and interdependent with one another, individuals are also independent of and interdependent with the universal. And as the interdetermination among individuals is the self-determination of the universal, so is the individual’s self-determination. That is, the many individuals’ self- and codetermination is simultaneously the universal’s self-determination *qua* world (Z8 41, 54). The world of codependent individuals is thus the world of the dialectical universal. This is also connected to Nishida’s idea that our acting-intuition is at the same time the world’s own self-formation via acting and seeing. That is to say that historical events cannot be understood simply in terms of causal mechanism nor in terms of teleology or vitalism. They occur in terms of this dialectic of the historical world whereby the universal *is* the particular in self-determination (Z8 91, 93).⁶⁸ We see in this idea a development of Nishida’s earlier understanding of *basho* as a *concrete* universal, but here extended to the arena of world historical actions. His understanding of the concrete universal in terms of the simultaneity of vertical and horizontal interdetermination, moreover, distinguishes his dialectic from Hegel’s dialectic of mere process.⁶⁹ This vertical-horizontal dialectic between universal and individual is played out in various realms and levels.

The horizontal dialectic occurs among individuals as persons in terms of “I and thou,” and also in a quite different way in the cognitive process

between the epistemological subject and the object. Occupying the extremity of the world's self-determination, human individuals possess a certain degree of independence from the enviroing conditions, which coincides with the establishment of human society. In such independence, we are enabled to mutually recognize the free creativity of one another in our interpersonal relations, in the encounter of "I and thou." The dialectic of "I and thou" is such that their mutual encounter as independent beings, i.e., as persons irreducible to material, instrumental, or biological terms, is also one of interdependence. As the "I" is unable to negate its other without negating itself, the "I" must face the other as a *thou*. And such interpersonal encounter is what allows for the genesis of society (see Z8 19, 20). This is a development of his earlier (1932) grounding of the "I-thou" relationship in *basho*, or what he called the "universal of nothing" in the essay *Watashi to nanji* ("I and Thou") in *Mu no jikakuteki gentei* (*The Self-Aware Determination of Nothing*).

With the establishment of human society, cognition becomes possible, in turn manifesting a dialectical structure in the subject-object relationship (e.g., Z8 25–26). In their absolute opposition, subject and object can never be synthesized, and yet they are inseparable in their mutual reference. They cannot be regarded as independent substances as Descartes would have it, but neither can their opposition be erased in a Spinozistic transcendentalized oneness or resolved in an ultimate sublation as Hegel might have it. In their mutual implacement in the world, their opposition remains as the world's own dialectical self-determination. Ultimately the dialectic on the horizontal plane must refer to the dialectic on the vertical plane as the self-determination of the dialectical universal, which however is determined conversely in inverse determination.

2. *Self-negation*: What makes these various interdeterminations possible in the first place is mutual self-negation. What characterizes Nishida's dialectic is that it is a dialectic of "self-negation" (*jiko hitei*). In contrast to a dialectic that would subsume opposites under a sublating concept (i.e., Hegel), this dialectic unfolds the interrelations of opposites and independents via mutual self-negation. So what is a dialectic of self-negation? In the dialectic of life, for example, organism and environment are mutually negating: the environment conditions the individual and conversely the individual acts upon the environment to alter those conditions. Each negates the other for the sake of self-affirmation. Such mutual negation constitutes the self-formation of historical life (Z8 58). But this negation of the other cannot happen without *self-negation*. One must also negate one's own self vis-à-vis the delimiting conditions of one's state of being. Co-relative determination among individuals requires mediation via their mutual self-negations (Z8 19). Otherwise they would remain utterly independent,

having nothing to do with each other. Mutual self-negation is what inverts independence into interdependence and correlativity (Z8 13) to enable self-determination and hence self-affirmation in the first place. It is in this sense that Nishida also calls it “absolute negation” (*zettai hitei*), that is, a negation of negation that desubstantializes negation itself. Nishida is rendering here the Mahāyāna concept of emptiness (*śūnyatā*) in explicitly dialectical terms. But self-negation as such occurs not only on the part of individuals but also on the part of the universal. The universal’s self-determination *qua* individual means its self-negation *qua* universal (see Z8 91). Through the universal’s self-negation, the one becomes the many to establish the world of individuals. This brings us back to Nishida’s earlier discussion of the *basho* of true nothing, the concrete standpoint of a holistic situation, that makes room for phenomena via self-differentiation. It is an extension of that earlier epistemological idea into the sphere of the socio-historical world. The self-negation of the dialectical universal on the vertical plane furthermore means simultaneously self-negation among individuals on the horizontal level. In negating itself, the world affirms the individuals implaced in it. And in turn the individuals through mutual self-negation contribute to the world’s creativity. Self-negation thus mediates the dialectic on all levels and dimensions as a *chiasma*. As such it is the activity or process of the *basho* of true nothing as a nonsubstantial medium in the worldly sphere. And this is what makes inverse determination possible in the first place.⁷⁰

3. *Continuity of discontinuity*: An alternate way in which Nishida describes this dialectic of self-negation is in terms of a “continuity of discontinuity” (*hirenzoku no renzoku*) that we mentioned above. The interrelation of terms in their mutual self-negation means that they are continuous in their very discontinuity with one another. In contrast to the continuity of substance via self-identity, their dialectical unity is nonsubstantial, a unity mediated by difference (see Z8 92). In the previous year (1935) Nishida had already explained that on the basis of a nonsubstantial mediation, the “placial” medium (*bashoteki baikaisha*) of nothing, discontinuous beings can form a continuum (Z7 19). This is what Nishida has in mind when he speaks of the “substance” of the dialectical world being self-negation (Z8 99). What he really means is the opposite of “substance.” Precisely as *basho*, “place,” delimited by nothing, does the medium stand *under* (*substantia*). Hence its self-negation is what allows for the intercontinuity among discontinuous individuals. This concept also makes the dialectic understandable not only in spatial terms but also in temporal terms. Thus, in time, it means continuity among discontinuous moments as all implaced within an “eternal present” that determines itself in each moment. And so in history, the dialectic moves with the self-negation of each momentary event in a continuity of

discontinuities (Z8 84–85). Dialectic then at all levels, of time and of space, happens as a continuity of discontinuity. Nishida's characterizations of dialectic in terms of self-negation and in terms of a continuity of discontinuity are hence complementary and refer to one another. And together they make possible the conception of a "contradictory self-identity" (*mujunteki jikodōitsu*).

4. *Contradictory self-identity*: Self-negation and discontinuity point to identity in contradiction. Because of its dialectical nature, reality for Nishida, and the world as a whole, is "self-contradictory" (*jiko mujun*). On the basis of self-negation, i.e., nonsubstantiality, things contain their opposites. The prime example for Nishida would be life, which contains the capacity for illness along with health and the very interaction between birth and death as an essential determinant. The world of life is thus a world of birth-and-death. Interacting via mutual self-negation, opposites are identified in their codependency as belonging to a whole. Contradictory self-identity is then another designation for the structure of the actual world, the dialectical universal, in its self-determinations. Nishida tells us that the dialectical universal, determining itself via self-negation, is self-identical in its self-contradiction, a contradictory identity of particulars and universal, mediated through self-negation (Z8 94). The actual always involves this tension of contradictories constituting its self-identity. This explains why the actual is never static but always moving from particular to particular, present to present. And from the standpoint of the individual self, this structure of self-contradictory identity is the same logical structure informing acting-intuition.⁷¹ Bearing in mind the Heraclitean sense of *logos* as the harmony of opposites in strife and in perpetual flux, this "logic" of self-contradictory identity must then be what Nishida means by *logos*. Through this *logos* of *genesis kai phthora*, generation and destruction, the world is alive, continuing in its self-contradictions. The world as such is a contradictory identity perpetually forming itself into its unstable identities (see Z8 37). It is in the later works that Nishida will come to articulate this idea more clearly in terms of an "absolutely contradictory self-identity" (*zettai mujunteki jikodōitsu*).

5. *Time*: Nishida's dialectic, in its emphasis on the simultaneity of co-implicated opposites, brings to the fore the spatial aspect of synchronous elements working together within a space. And yet as we have already seen, time plays an important role in Nishida's dialectical understanding of reality as well. His discussion of time involves all of the above dialectical characterizations: self-negation, continuity of discontinuity, and contradictory self-identity. The medium for this dialectic of time is the present (*genzai*). Rather than moving mechanistically from cause to effect or teleologically from potentiality to actuality, time moves via the self-negation of each actual

present, moment to moment, as a continuity of discontinuous moments (see Z8 85, 86, 98–99), The present, as an individual actuality, is discontinuous with every other moment in time. And yet in its momentariness it negates itself to make way for others. Hence it is independent but not substantial. While passing in self-negation, each present moment is yet always present. Nishida thus characterizes the present as an “eternal now” (*eien no ima*) that contains, despite the finitude of the moment, an infinity of other possibilities to be actualized in self-negation (see Z8 86, 94). Nishida’s point seems to be that the present as implying innumerable possibilities for determining past and future is the very horizontal medium or *basho* for their determinations. In the self-negating present, past and future are thus also co-present and interrelated in their mutual self-negations. In that sense, as he himself admits, Nishida “spatializes” the present and time itself (see Z6 87). This is in opposition to Bergson’s concept of pure duration—a thought-experiment that attempted to eradicate any sort of spatialization in the conception of time. Nishida’s concept, however, takes into consideration the very complexity of time in its structuring. In the same way that the universal determines itself via self-negation into individuals, the “eternal present” (*eien no genzai*) determines itself into each moment vis-à-vis all other moments, also via self-negation (see Z8 94–95).⁷² In that sense the present proves to be the self-determination of the dialectical universal in terms of time (Z8 88). The world-dialectic that is the self-determination of the dialectical universal, in terms of time, is the self-determination of the eternal *now*. Through the medium of the present, time thus stands in a complex dialectical relationship to space, that of a contradictory self-identity.

Time is established in the self-negation of the present, as a movement from self-contradiction to self-contradiction (see Z8 85). The transition at each moment of reality into what it previously was *not*, its *other*, and as containing the *not*-present of past and future in its determination, entails for Nishida the self-contradiction of the present. The nonsubstantiality of the present, encompassing the dimensions of time in its own self-negation, continually giving way for the presence of the non-present, thus allows for the flux of time. This is what accounts for historical change. And yet in this very flux, the present is at rest (Z8 90).⁷³ Only in the sense of being a self-negating medium of nothing is the present the eternal “substance” of time, the “eternal now” (*eien no ima*), moving while at rest. This means also that “one is many and many is one” (Z8 89) not only in the world’s spatiality but also in its temporal movements at each moment. In other words, the self-negation of the nonsubstantial medium, the nothing, that is one and eternal, is dialectically many, *both* synchronically and diachronically. And we ourselves, as products of the self-determination of the eternal now, are caught up in this whirl of self-contradictory motion, the flux of history, life,

and world, as continuities of discontinuities, living by dying at each moment, dying to what we were to make way to whom we shall become.

6. *Logos*: The dialectic of contradictory self-identity, involving both self-negation and continuity of discontinuity in both space and time, for Nishida, proves to be the protological structure or *logos* of the historical world, the “logic” of concrete reality and its creative process in historical life (see Z8 68, 97, 100). In this *logos* of reality, there is resonance between universal and individual, whole and part, world and element, a resonance however of mutual self-negation and of contradictory identity. We might then characterize Nishida’s conception of the world’s *logos* as a *chiasma*—i.e., a cross-configuration or intersection—of multilevels and dimensions of dialectical determinations.⁷⁴ The *chiasma* is not only inclusive of the vertical and the horizontal dimensions. The determinations of this dialectical structure occur in regions or directions that Nishida calls “linear” and “circular” (e.g., Z8 33). By these terms Nishida has in mind the foundations of time and space, for which reason he regards the dialectical world as in itself a contradictory “coinciding” of time and space. The world’s matrix *qua* dialectical universal is a multidirectional *chiasma*—vertically and horizontally, in time and in space, microcosmically and macrocosmically—of interdimensional self-negation. The *logos*-structure of *basho* in these chiasmatic manifestations is then what Nishida means by the dialectical universal. This is the world that, irreducible to the material or the biological, Nishida calls historical. We find ourselves implaced first and foremost in this dialectical *chiasma* of self-negation, wherein we are born, dwell, and die, and wherein our being is generated upon the abyss of nothing (see Z8 38). What we ordinarily call “logic” is thus founded upon this dialectic of historical reality and our acting-intuition, the historical world as its medium, *basho*. Logic becomes possible only on the basis of *logos* as such.

Nishida’s purpose in this essay was to inquire into the source of logic (*ronri*) by looking at its generation from out of the historical world as a formative act (*keisei sayō*) (Z8 7). What we call “logic” accordingly is nothing but the form of that self-formation, an expression of historical reality, on the basis of that dialectical *logos* (see Z8 97; also Z9 442, 452–53). Nishida thus claims that even deductive and inductive logic are founded upon this world *logos*. On the basis of our technological encounter with things, we make “inductive judgments,” projecting universals into those particulars, hence giving shape to the world. And on the basis of our encounter with the world *qua* universal wherein we are *always already* implaced, we make “deductive judgments,” deriving particular conclusions from that universal *fact*. He believes that both induction and deduction, taken in those broadly construed senses, are thus founded upon our prelogical encounter with the dialectical world via acting-intuition. Even logic

with its ideality is then still a part of the world and its dialectic. In the next collection of essays, *Tetsugaku ronbunshū dai san* (*Philosophical Essays*, vol. 3), Nishida will attempt to take this examination of logic to its completion (see Z8 257–58).

THE RELEVANCE OF NISHIDA'S PHILOSOPHICAL WORK

Now that we have discussed both essays and their surrounding context, we attempt an assessment of Nishida's philosophy in light of both the philosophical milieu from out of which his work emerged and of our own contemporary world. As already emphasized, Nishida developed his *basho*-theory in the "*Basho*" essay in response to the epistemological dualism of modern philosophy and the need to logically found that response. His alternative to starting from the subject-object dichotomy was to take note of the concrete immediacy of a contextual whole that dynamically differentiates itself, which he calls the *basho* of true nothing because its stance is undifferentiated, unobjectifiable in relation to other objects. About ten years later in his essay "Logic and Life," that holistic situation becomes further developed in terms of the world of historical events and human interactivity. *Basho* is now understood from the viewpoint of the world itself as the medium of spatio-temporal interrelations via mutual self-negations. The concrete standpoint that is prior to the subject-object bifurcation is now explicated in terms of our embodied implacement in that world of dialectical interactivity. The concrete universal is not simply what determines itself into judgments upon the field of consciousness but the very dialectical world that determines itself in the world-creating activities of human beings. Epistemological dualism then is not viable from the perspective of his later thinking as well. We find ourselves accordingly implaced in the self-creating world as its creative elements rather than being transcendental subjectivities separate from the world. And yet, Nishida is careful to emphasize the dynamism of this dialectic to preclude any monism of mystical absorption. That is, the individual, despite his implacement, retains an autonomous creativity, and only thus can he partake in the creative world as its creative element. The conception of *basho* precludes monism on the one hand and dualism on the other. The concrete situation of reality-cum-experience is in our implacement within, or envelopment by, that *peri*-logical structuring of the world.

Nishida's dialectical philosophy responds also to the age-old issue of the relationship between the one and the many. This issue can be construed in a variety of ways, whether epistemologically, cosmologically, or theologically, among other ways, and has taken through a variety of twists and turns

over the two millennia of Western metaphysics starting with the Greeks.⁷⁵ In reply to that metaphysical problem, Nishida's explication of the concrete precludes any reductive answer to show instead its *chiasmatic* nonduality. His theory of *basho* was an attempt to systematically elucidate that concreteness of reality-cum-experience, while providing a more feasible alternative to epistemological dualism. And his look to the predicate in the structure of judgment was a turn away from the constraints of Aristotelian substantialism that views reality reductively under the projective lens of Indo-European grammar. Rather than viewing reality as based upon the self-identity of substantial beings, Nishida looks to its dynamism and to our concrete experience of it as embodied beings in interaction with one another and other things. In response to the speculative metaphysics of the past, many thinkers in the recent two centuries have also looked toward what they regarded to be the more immediate and concrete. And yet in comparison to Nishida, Hegel's dialectic that focuses on the development and actualization of the concept *qua idea* is insufficiently concrete in its conceptual orientation. Bergson, like Nishida, also looked to the dynamism of reality, but Bergson's focus upon linear movement in time in his conception of pure duration proves to be an abstraction from the integral whole of concrete reality. And Husserl's early phenomenology in focusing upon the field of consciousness still objectifies that field without taking note of the pre-objective and worldly context operative behind that objectification. Of course, one might ask whether this is also true of his concept of the "life-world" (*Lebenswelt*) that he takes up in the mid-to-late 1930s in his *Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*.⁷⁶ From Nishida's perspective, however, none of these great thinkers has adequately treated concrete reality and its dynamism wherein we find ourselves *always already* implaced via our embodied existence. Nishida traces the obscuring of this dynamism that is of a self-forming formlessness all the way back to the Greek beginnings of European thinking that conceived the ground of reality as form vis-à-vis matter (Z6 335). A look to Nishida's works may suggest some answers to the quandaries that the history of philosophy have left unanswered, and ought to contribute to our thinking in regard to these endless issues.

Ever since Nietzsche in the nineteenth century, there have been Western intellectuals proclaiming the end of metaphysics and with it its dualistic assumptions. A noteworthy and recent example was Jacques Derrida (1930–2004). Derrida critiqued Western thought for assuming hierarchical dichotomies, such as male-female, mind-body, nature-culture, object-subject, etc., to be simply *given* rather than constructed. The paradigmatic example would be Plato's metaphysical dualism of mind-body, *idea*-image. Maurice Merleau-Ponty is another twentieth-century thinker who

sought to break away from Western dualism, in particular, Descartes' mind-body dualism. In *The Phenomenology of Perception* he attempted to rearticulate that dualism on the basis of one's body as lived.⁷⁷ His later work *The Visible and the Invisible* looks further to the chiasmic overlapping, interdependence, and reversibility between such dichotomous terms as mind and body, self and environment, subject and object. To such discussions Edward Casey has most recently contributed his account of place and emplacement.⁷⁸ Aside from Casey, many other contemporary Western philosophers have started to take note of the ontological and/or epistemological significance of "place" in its various senses. In light of such developments, Nishida's understanding of place as a kind of *triton genos* that permits the genesis of dichotomous terms and envelops their interactivity as their receding abysmal background is suggestive. Nishida's work on *basho* and world-dialectics has much to contribute to these developments in Western philosophy by providing a perspective that is well grounded in *both* the Western and the Eastern traditions.

This brings me to the issue of a global philosophy. That we no longer live in culturally isolated regions requires the activity of philosophizing to be done within a global context. And this certainly ought not to be taken as the global universalization of a single voice belonging to a particular region that would silence voices from other regions, enforcing conformity to that universalized standard. Rather philosophers need to be aware of these different voices coming from different parts of the globe. Our situation today is not so utterly distinct from the situation Nishida found himself in. Living at a time when his own country was rapidly undergoing change in the incorporation of diverse modes of human existence offered by both Western and Eastern traditions, Nishida's sagacity could not have ignored that world-context. In this respect we may look to the comparative dimension of Nishida's own philosophizing that brings many insights from the Buddhist tradition into dialogue with Western philosophy.⁷⁹ Nishida had the capacity to discern the good and the bad in both East and West, with the caution not to fall into various ideological trappings, whether of a pro-Western capitalist-modernist or a leftist-Marxist-communist or a right-wing nationalist-imperialist.⁸⁰

One hundred years later, today, the globalizing trend of modernity is even more pronounced. Some thinkers of the twentieth century have commented upon the feeling of homelessness or uprootedness resulting from the global advancement of technology and capital. The increase in speed, efficiency, and ease in both transportation and communication around the globe has abolished distances, bringing the far near and the near afar. Consumerism on a mass scale threatens indigenous cultures with homogenization. But at the same time we are also confronted with an abundant

multiplicity of different and conflicting modes of life previously isolated from one another. In the confusing turmoil of the shrinking of the globe, there is a sense of disorientation resulting from displacement. Nishida's thinking then is not only relevant to those age-old philosophical issues we touched upon above but also pertinent in light of worldly happenings and where we are to stand vis-à-vis that global context. For in this present context, different cultural or socio-historical worlds, with incommensurable modes of thinking, with their varying languages and life-traditions, are brought into mutual encounter on a global scale. Despite differences, each is forced to find a place within that wherein they are mediated with one another. Each must discover itself in its other to find itself anew, even create itself anew, in what in Nishida's terms would be a "continuity of discontinuity."⁸¹ For the discontinuous to truly meet, however, in Nishida's terms, would mean mutual self-negation, not simple self-assertion that forces itself upon others. That is to say that globalization can take the route of the self-assertion of a cultural sphere at the expense of others, i.e., the universalization of a single lifeworld; or the route of mutual self-negation among cultural spheres via an openness that allows for differences. Needless to say the first alternative is violent and may tend toward war. The second alternative is more desirable. In terms of Nishida's philosophy this would require the conception of the global world as a *basho* wherein the many cultural lifeworlds or socio-historical worlds themselves are implaced. To view the world in such terms, as the *place* wherein we are implaced, may also help to counter humanity's plundering of nature. To keep in mind that our relationship to nature is not unidirectional between user and used but rather a dialectical intersection of which we are but one element, as Nishida's philosophy shows, may contribute to preventing further environmental hazards.

Looking at Nishida's philosophy as a whole, an understanding of the concrete in terms of a field or place, *basho*—taken internally as well as externally, mentally as well as physically, in terms of time as well as in terms of space, taking into consideration the very complexity of reality that encompasses differences and contradictions—has much to offer us today, when we find ourselves faced with this postmodern world of difference and multiplicity, uprootedness and homelessness. And its understanding in the face of an absolute nothing, furthermore, would take into consideration the finitude of human reason vis-à-vis human existence as embodied and implaced in the world. It recognizes the alterity of the source of being and knowing that is always in excess to human conception, the self-forming formlessness as irreducible to form. This retrieves a forgotten sense of humility to counter our *hubris*. Confronting the uprooting power of globalized technology, we cannot but "turn" to an appropriation of place if we are to retrieve any *authentic* sense of a "home."

A NOTE ON THE TRANSLATION

The translation of these two essays was a collaborative effort between me and Shigenori Nagatomo. We began the translation process in 2004 by working off of each other's suggestions. After completing the translations in 2006, we went through about five drafts of the two essays, improving the English and correcting errors and typos. Nishida's writing is known among native readers for its terse and difficult style. Hence it was necessary for us, in our initial translation efforts, to render the originals as accurately as possible. We also aimed to render the translation as smooth as possible but without sacrificing the meaning—as so often happens in translations. In the same way that reading Kant, Hegel, Husserl, or Heidegger—whether in the German original or in English translation—is no simple matter, Nishida's ideas are not always easy. To simply edit Nishida's writing style by eliminating phrases or whole sentences and conjoining the remaining fragments does not do justice to the unfolding of his ideas in the original text. Nishida's philosophy can stand on its own as a world-philosophy in dialogue with major Western thinkers, and ought not be confined within the circles of Asian philosophy. But his ideas will not be taken seriously outside of the circles of Asian and comparative philosophy as long as his writings are butchered or inaccurately rendered in translation.

I would also like to say a few words at this point to our readers concerning Nishida's highly specialized concept of *basho*, literally meaning "place." Because Nishida's specific usage of the term *basho* entails all of the senses of "place," "universal," "predicate," "nothing," and "self-determining act," among others, which the literal English translation of "place" would not sufficiently cover, the translators have decided to retain the Japanese word "*basho*"—in Nishida's own technical use of the term—in the text translations rather than rendering it only as "place."

Each essay is divided into numbered sections as in the original. At the beginning of each essay we have inserted a synopsis for the section in italics so as to summarize important points without going into details. As evident, Nishida repeats the same and related themes through each section but with a distinction in the particular nuances. Each section, while returning to the themes already covered, draws out the implications of the previous section so as to clarify those themes further.

The translators would like to note, in addition, that any word or phrase enclosed in brackets is an insertion that they added to the body of the text for the purpose of making the text clearer and/or translation smoother whenever deemed appropriate.

Passages put in parentheses, as explained in our notes, are passages that Nishida himself added to the original journal versions of the essays. Nishida

inserted them in the essays when they were republished in the book anthologies collecting his essays, i.e., *Hatarakumono kara miru mono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*) and *Tetsugaku ronbunshū dai ni* (*Philosophical Essays*, vol. 2).

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Basho

NISHIDA KITARŌ

1.

Translators' synopsis: *Nishida begins the essay by introducing the reader to his conception of knowing as involving layers of envelopments or implacements via the self-mirroring of basho.*¹ He distinguishes this approach from the more traditional and modern epistemology that begins with subject-object or hylomorphic dualism. He compares his concept of basho to Plato's *chōra* but faults the Greeks for failing to develop the positivity operative in its formlessness. Each level of implacement involves a contradiction between its members, a relation seen only from the standpoint of the background universal. Nishida explicates the field of consciousness in terms of oppositional nothing that still presupposes true nothing as its enveloping ground. It is from that most concrete ground that the intuition of the most basic contradictory unity between being and nothing, and in existential terms, generation-and-extinction, occurs. Basho at this level, in the abysmal depths of—but also engulfing, environing—consciousness, is the mirroring mirror transcending all beings as its mirror images.

Epistemology these days distinguishes three things: object, content, and act, and treats their interrelations. I think however that at the bottom of this distinction what is being considered is simply an opposition between the cognitive act, continually changing [*utsuriyuku*] in time and the object transcending it. But in order for objects to relate to one another, constitute a single system, and maintain themselves, we ought to consider not only what maintains that system but also what establishes the system within itself and wherein the system is implaced.² That which *is* must be implaced in something. Otherwise the distinction between *is* and *is not* cannot be made.³ Logically it

should be possible to distinguish between the terms of a relationship and the relationship itself, and also between that which unifies the relationship and that wherein the relationship is implaced. Even if we attempt to think in regard to acts, taking the I as a pure unity of acts, insofar as the I is conceived in opposition to the not-I, there must be that which envelops the opposition between I and non-I within itself and makes the establishment of the so-called phenomena of consciousness possible within itself.⁴ Following the words of Plato's *Timaeus*, I shall call the receptacle of the *ideas* in this sense, *basho* [*place*; *χώρα*, *chōra*].⁵ Needless to say, I am not suggesting that what I call *basho* is the same as Plato's "space" or "receptacle place."

Although this is a very simple idea, we think that material bodies exist within space and interact within that space. Even traditional physics concedes to this. Otherwise we may think that without things there is no space, and that space is nothing but the relationship between material bodies or, further as in Lotze,⁶ that space is within things.⁷ But if we are to think in such terms, the related and the relation must be one. It would be, for example, like physical space.⁸ However, that which relates physical space to physical space is no longer physical space, and there must further be a *basho* wherein the physical space is implaced. On the other hand one might think that when the related are reduced to a system of relations, we conceive a single whole established by means of it, and that there would be no further point in considering something like a *basho* that establishes it. But strictly speaking, in order for any sort of relationship to be established as a relation, there must be what we can take to be the terms of the relation. For example, a form of knowledge requires content. Even if we can conceive a single whole unifying the two together, there must be a *basho* wherein it can be mirrored.⁹ But one might also say that this designates nothing but an [epistemologically] subjective concept. But if we take the object to be independent, transcending the subjective act, the *basho* wherein the epistemological object [*kyakkantekinaru taishō*] is established must not be subjective;¹⁰ the *basho* itself must be transcendent.¹¹ And when we look at the act [itself] by objectifying it, we look at it by mirroring it upon the *basho* of such objects of thought. Even if we think that the meaning itself is objective, the *basho* wherein that thing is established must be objective as well. One might say that this sort of thing is a mere nothing [*mu*].¹² Even nothing, however, possesses objective significance in the world of thought.

When we think of thing-events there must be a *basho* wherein they are mirrored. Initially we may think of this as the field of consciousness. To be conscious of something one must mirror it upon the field of consciousness. However, we must distinguish the mirrored phenomena of consciousness and the field of consciousness that mirrors them. We can even say that there is no such thing as a field of consciousness apart from the very continuity of

the phenomena of consciousness. There must however be a field of consciousness that does not move in contrast to the phenomena of consciousness that go on changing in time from moment to moment. By means of it, phenomena of consciousness are mutually related and connected to each other. On the other hand one may think of this as a single point, the self [*ware, ga*]. But when we distinguish what we mean by the interior and the exterior of consciousness, the phenomena of my [*watashi no*] consciousness must be what are within the domain of my consciousness. The I [*watashi*] in this sense must be that which envelops the phenomena of my consciousness within. I think that we can recognize the field of consciousness if we start from the aforementioned standpoint of consciousness. The act of thinking is an act of our consciousness as well. The content of thought is primarily what is mirrored in the field of our consciousness. It designates the object in virtue of its content. Epistemologists today distinguish content and object and regard the content as immanent and the object as transcendent.¹³ The object is thought of as something that utterly transcends acts [i.e. of consciousness] to stand on its own. Thereupon we go beyond the field of consciousness. It is thought that there is no field of consciousness for the object [in-itself]. However in order to relate consciousness and object there must be that which envelops them both. There must be a *basho* wherein they are related. What could it be that enables their relationship? If the object transcends the act of consciousness, if the object is completely outside of consciousness, we would be unable to think—from within consciousness where we find ourselves—even the fact that the content of consciousness signifies an object or to say that the object transcends that act of consciousness. In terms of the [epistemological] subject, the Kantian school conceives the transcendental subject, that is, consciousness-in-general, as confronting the world of cognitive objects.¹⁴ But can we claim [merely] on the basis of the epistemological subject that we transcend consciousness and go beyond the field of consciousness? Even if this may be the extremity of the field of consciousness, it cannot be its disappearance. The field of consciousness conceived psychologically is that which has already been thought. It is nothing but a kind of object.¹⁵ The field of consciousness that is conscious of this field of consciousness, even at its extremity, fails to transcend it. Even with respect to the field of consciousness that we think of as actual, there is always behind it that which further transcends actuality.¹⁶ The so-called field of consciousness as defined by experimental psychology is nothing but a mere domain of calculable sensory perception.¹⁷ Consciousness however must contain meaning. The consciousness that recollects yesterday must envelop yesterday in its meaning. We can therefore say that consciousness is the self-determination of something universal. Even sensory consciousness can be

said to be a phenomenon of consciousness insofar as it includes the possibility of subsequent reflection. If we are to say that the universal as one extremity cannot be attained, we must say that the individual is also an extremity that cannot be attained.¹⁸

The Kantian school takes cognition to involve the unification [*tōitsu*] of matter by means of form. But behind this idea, the constitutive act of the [epistemological] subject would have to be postulated. That is, form is conceived to be something that equips the subject. Otherwise, it would not carry any cognitive sense. That which has been merely constituted by form is nothing but a transpositional [*chōtairitsuteki*] object.¹⁹ Moreover if we were to say that objective [*kyakkanteki*] form constitutes objective matter, it would be an objective act incapable of yielding any sense of cognition.²⁰ We cannot just regard the opposition between form and matter and the opposition between subject and object to be immediately the same. That which constitutes the object of the judicative act must involve an opposition different in significance from that between form and matter. What constitutes the immediate content of judgment would have to involve the issue of whether it is true or false. The *basho* that establishes the opposition between form and matter must be different from the *basho* that establishes the opposition between truth and falsity. In the *basho* that establishes cognition, it is not only that form and matter are separate but their separation and conjunction must be free. In such cases we can consider that subjectivity is extrinsically added in the face of the transpositional object.²¹ Even Lask²² conceives of the object of a completely allogical lived experience [*taiken*] as fundamental matter in opposition to fundamental logical form.²³ But as he himself acknowledges knowing must also be one kind of lived experience.²⁴ Even though he speaks of the content of lived experience as allogical matter, this is not the same as so-called sensory matter. We must say that the content of lived experience is translogical rather than allogical, and even *peri*-logical [*hōronriteki*] rather than translogical.²⁵ We can say this in regard to the lived experiences of art and morality as well. What we mean by the standpoint of cognition must be one manner whereby lived experience mirrors itself within itself. To cognize means nothing other than for lived experience to form itself within itself.²⁶ The oppositional relationship between form and matter is established in [this] *basho* of lived experience.²⁷ The so-called subject-object opposition is established within it as the true I—that which endlessly mirrors itself within and which contains infinite beings by becoming nothing.²⁸ We can say neither that it is the same nor that it is different. Nor can we call it being or nothing.²⁹ We cannot determine *basho* by means of so-called logical form. Instead it is *basho* that establishes logical form. No matter how far we proceed with forms, we cannot go beyond so-called form. The true form of forms must

be a *basho* of forms. Even in Aristotle's *De Anima*, following the Academics,³⁰ the soul is conceived as "the place of forms."³¹ That which ought to be called in this sense the mirror that illuminates itself, not only serves as the *basho* of the establishment of knowledge but also establishes emotion and volition. When we speak of the content of lived experience in most cases we are already considering this in cognitive terms. This is why we think of it as alogical matter. True lived experience entails the standpoint of complete nothingness, a free standpoint separate from knowledge. Even the content of emotion-and-volition [*jōi*] would have to be mirrored in this *basho*.³² It is due to this that intellect, emotion, and volition are all considered to be phenomena of consciousness.

Taking *basho* as discussed above, the act would be the relationship that appears in between mirrored object and mirroring *basho*. Considering further what has just been mirrored, it would be a mere object with no working activity [*hataraki*] at all.³³ But even behind such objects there must be a mirror that mirrors them, a *basho* for their existence. Of course, if it is just the case that this *basho* is a mirroring mirror and the object is simply implaced in it, we would be unable to see any object at work [*hataraku*]. It is for this reason that I conceive everything—as mere objects of cognition—to utterly transcend [our] acts *within* what we may call the field of consciousness-in-general³⁴ that mirrors them by completely emptying the self.³⁵ But if consciousness and object were completely unrelated, neither could we speak of any mirroring of this [object] nor would it even be possible for us to speak of its implacement in it. We might thus regard the act of judgment as that which connects the gap between them. Not only can we think of the object as transcending the act on the one hand. We must also consider, on the other hand, the field of consciousness as transcending the act and enveloping it within. Accordingly when we think of the field of consciousness-in-general as endlessly extending by accommodating objects [within it], we can [in turn] regard the objects as occupying various positions within that field of consciousness-in-general and as capable of being mirrored in various forms. While the so-called world of meaning is established here through the analysis and abstraction of objects in various ways, we can think of the act of judgment on the other hand as mirroring such objects in various positions and relations. With the mutual separation of the transcendent object and the field of consciousness-in-general, whereby acts cannot be said to belong to either, we accordingly come to think of the epistemological subject as the unifier of acts. On the other hand if we regard things as existing in space in accordance with commonsense, as long as we conceive things and space as distinct, we have no choice but to regard things as capable of standing in various relations in space and as variously changing their shapes and positions. Herein we are led to posit something like force

[*chikara*] in addition to thing and space. If we can thus think of things as possessing force, as substances of force, we can also conceive of what is meant by physical space by considering force as an attribute of space.³⁶ I would like to conceive knowing by considering it as an attribute belonging to the space of consciousness.

While epistemology, starting from the idea of the subject–object opposition, has previously conceived of knowing as the composition of matter by form, I would instead like to start from the idea of self-awareness wherein the self mirrors itself within. I think that the fundamental meaning of cognition is that the self mirrors itself within itself. From knowing the interior of itself, it amounts to knowing things outside of itself.³⁷ That which is given to the self must first be given within the self. Or we may conceive the self to be a unifying point that posits knower and known, i.e., subject and object, form and matter, in mutual opposition within the interior of the consciousness of what we call self. Yet we cannot consider such a unifying point to be the knower. It is instead nothing but what has already been objectified and known. It would be the same if we were to think in the [opposing] direction of an endless unity instead of this unifying point. To know must primarily mean to envelop within. But when the enveloped is external to the enveloping, just as we can think of material objects as implaced in space, it means nothing other than that it simply *is*.³⁸ [But] when we think of the enveloping and the enveloped as one, something like an infinite series is established.³⁹ Accordingly when we think of that oneness as endlessly including matter within itself, we can also conceive what is endlessly at work, a pure act.⁴⁰ But we still cannot say that it is the knower. However once we think of it as further enveloping such things implaced within itself, we can speak of knowing for the first time.

In regard to the relationship between form and matter, cognition is not simply a formative constitution. Instead knowing must mean to internally envelop the opposition of form and matter. And if we take matter as a lower-level form, we can even say that the knower is the form of forms. It must be something like a *basho* that transcends pure forms and pure acts and establishes them within. It is due to this reason that, as Lask states, the [epistemological] subject may be considered to be the destroyer of the epistemological object.⁴¹ Just as we can think of material objects as divisible in space, so can we think of the objects of thought as divisible in the *basho* of thinking. Just as material objects are infinitely divisible in space in various senses, so objects of thought are divisible in the *basho* of thinking.⁴² On the other hand, if we are to think of the knower in the aforementioned sense, it may be thought that the significance of the subject–object opposition becomes lost and that the sense of unity or act disappears in the [epistemological] subject. And we can even say that the meaning of the subject

disappears. Although we cannot delve into this issue at the moment, in cases such as the simple implacement of things in space, as both things and space are mutually external, space bears no sense of an [epistemological] subjectivity. But when the substantiality of things is altered into the relationship of the *basho* wherein they are implaced, things are reduced to force.⁴³ But [when speaking of] force, we must conceive the substance of force. And [likewise] relationships require their terms. Where is such a substance to be sought? If we were to look for it in the original thing, this would entail the thing's remainder thoroughly irreducible to force. And if we were to [further] reconceive this in terms of space itself, we have no choice but to think of something like points as the terms of spatial relations. But if what becomes the substance of relations is simply something like a point, force would have to disappear. That which truly envelops the relationship of force within must be something like a field [*ba*] of forces. Accordingly, in the field of forces, all lines must possess directionality [*hōkō*]. And [likewise] in the *basho* of cognition, conceived as enveloping pure acts within, all phenomena must possess directionality.⁴⁴ The reason why one might think that the significance of the subject-object opposition gets lost when conceiving the knower as the enveloping, is because *basho* is regarded as external to what is contained [within it]. Mere empty space would not be what truly envelops physical phenomena. That which we ought to regard as truly enveloping the various objects within must be that which mirrors its own forms within itself analogous to how various forms are established within space. In saying so, one might even say that the sense of "being implaced" gets lost or even that the meaning of *basho* that expands endlessly while enveloping objects disappears. But we can conceive the conjunction of these two senses in the field of consciousness that envelops all epistemological objects while remaining separate from them.

If to know is to mirror one's self within itself, and if by act we mean that which can be seen in the relationships between the mirrored thing and the mirroring *basho*, what sort of a thing would be Lask's so-called oppositionless object that completely transcends acts?⁴⁵ Even such objects must be implaced in something. In order to recognize that which *is*, we recognize it in contrast to that which *is not*. But *that which is not*, recognized in opposition to *that which is*, is [thus] still an oppositional being. True nothing must be that which envelops such being and nothing; it must be a *basho* wherein such being and nothing are established. The nothing that opposes being by negating it is not true nothing.⁴⁶ Rather true nothing must be that which forms the background of being. For example, that which is not red as contrasted with red is also a color. [But] that which possesses the colors, that wherein color is implaced, must [in itself] not be a color. Red as well as that which is not-red [e.g., blue] must be implaced in it. Insofar as we are

determining the object of cognition, I think that we can push forth the same idea into the relationship between being and nothing. In this sense something like the “place wherein X is implaced” [*oitearu basho*], in the case of something like color, may be thought of as a thing. As in Aristotle we might say that the quality [*seishitsu*] inheres [is implaced] in the thing.⁴⁷ But in that case it would mean that the thing possesses its attributes, losing the sense of *basho*. In contrast to this when we regard things as thoroughly dissolved in relations, we can think of what contains being and nothing as a single act.⁴⁸ But we would still have to conceive of a latent being behind the act. Although we may speak of a substanceless activity [*hataraki*] or pure act [*sayō*] in contrast to substantial being,⁴⁹ if we eliminate latency from the act, it would no longer be an act. [Thus] something like *basho* must be conceived further in the background where such latent being is established.

When we think of a thing as possessing a certain quality, the contrary quality cannot inhere in it. What is at work [in that thing], however, must be what contains its opposite within. What changes changes into its opposite. This is why we can immediately conceive the *basho* that contains being and nothing as itself *also* an act. But in order for a single act to become visible, a species concept must be determined at its root. Only within a single species concept can we see the mutually opposing. The *basho* behind acts is what truly becomes nothing, i.e., not just a mere *basho* but a *basho* possessing a certain content, a *basho* that has been determined. While being and nothing are conjoined in the act, we cannot say [in this] that nothing envelops being. In a true *basho*, not only is it possible for a certain thing to go on transforming [*utsuriyuku*] into its opposite. It must also be possible for it to go on changing into its contradictory and to exit beyond [its] species concept as well.⁵⁰ The true *basho* is not only a *basho* of change but also a *basho* of generation-and-extinction [*shōmetsu*].⁵¹ When we transcend the species concept and enter into the *basho* of generation-and-extinction, the sense of activity disappears and there remains nothing but mere seeing.⁵² As long as we view the species concept as *basho*, we cannot eliminate latent being. It amounts to merely seeing what is at work. On the other hand in the *basho* that mirrors even species concepts, it is not that we see what is at work. Instead we see that which envelops the activity [*hataraki*] within. A truly pure act is not what is at work but rather what envelops the activity [being at work] within. What precedes is not latent being but rather actual [*genjitsu*] being. Herein can we see the oppositionless object that fuses form and matter.⁵³

We can think of the oppositionless object in the above sense as utterly transcending the field of consciousness. But if it is completely outside of the [epistemological] subject, how does it come to be mirrored in the subject

and become the goal of the cognitive act? I think that even such objects do not lie beyond the field of consciousness *qua basho*. Instead they are thoroughly sustained [*urazuke*] by it.⁵⁴ When we think of *basho* merely as an oppositional nothing [*tairitsuteki mu*] that negates being,⁵⁵ we inevitably think of objects as transcending beyond the field of consciousness. And we come to think of objects as existing [*sonritsu*] in themselves.⁵⁶ What is ordinarily meant by the so-called standpoint of consciousness is, as I stated earlier, the standpoint of nothing in contrast to being.⁵⁷ When the nothing that opposes being subsumes everything as one species concept, that nothing becomes a single latent being.⁵⁸ [But] when we assume the standpoint of a limitless nothing by negating every sort of being, that is, when nothingness itself becomes [seen as] independent of being, the standpoint of consciousness appears.⁵⁹ We hence come to think that in such a standpoint that has transcended all being, all beings are mirrored and can be analyzed. True nothing however is not such an oppositional nothing but rather must be what envelops being and nothing. Even nothing that has negated every sort of being must still be a kind of being insofar as it is an oppositional nothing.⁶⁰ Even if we say that it extends beyond determinate species concepts, to the extent that it is something thought it cannot escape the determination of a single species concept. On this basis we come to recognize therein even the meaning of a certain sort of latent being, establishing [thus] an idealist [*yuishinron*: “mind-only”] metaphysics.⁶¹ True consciousness must be that which mirrors even consciousness in the above sense. So-called consciousness [by contrast] is nothing but that which has been further objectified.⁶²

The *basho* of true nothing [*shin no mu no basho*] must be that which transcends the opposition of being and nothing in every sense and enables them to be established within. It is at the place where we thoroughly break through species concepts, that we see true consciousness. Even the oppositionless transcendent object cannot be said to transcend beyond consciousness in this sense. Rather it is in virtue of being mirrored in this *basho* that it is seen as oppositionless. What we mean by the oppositionless object is what becomes the object of our ought-thinking [*tōiteki shii*]. It is what becomes the standard that determines with primary significance the so-called content of judgment.⁶³ If we think contrary to this, our thinking would necessarily fall into contradiction and thought would destroy itself. There is no way to conceive of the oppositionless object apart from this sense. When seeing such an object we may think that we are going outside by transcending the field of subjective consciousness that establishes the contents of opposition. But this means nothing other than that we are advancing from the standpoint of oppositional nothing to the standpoint of true nothing. And this means nothing but advancing beyond the *basho* that mirrors the shadows of things⁶⁴ to the *basho* wherein things are implaced.

This does not mean that we are discarding the so-called standpoint of consciousness; rather we are making this standpoint thorough.⁶⁵ True negation must be the negation of negation.⁶⁶ Otherwise nowhere would we be able to distinguish consciousness-in-general from the unconscious, and we would lose any sense of consciousness.

When we can say that we have no choice but to think in this way for otherwise we would fall into contradiction, that field of consciousness must be mirroring the so-called transcendent object within. In becoming truly nothing as the negation of negation, this standpoint can even negate all that are mirrored in the *basho* of oppositional nothing. The field of consciousness is able to mirror objects just as they are by truly emptying itself.⁶⁷ One might think that in this case the objects are implaced in themselves. But if an object is merely implaced in itself, it would not be capable of becoming a so-called standard for the content of consciousness. The *basho* wherein objects are implaced must be the *basho* wherein so-called consciousness is also implaced. When we look at objects themselves, we may think of this [act] as intuition. But intuition must also be consciousness. Even so-called intuition cannot depart from the field of consciousness that sees contradictions themselves. Even though we ordinarily think of intuition and thought as utterly distinct, in order for the intuition⁶⁸ to maintain itself, there must after all be something like “a *basho* wherein it is implaced.” This *basho* is accordingly identical with the *basho* wherein thinking is implaced. When intuition is mirrored in the *basho* wherein it is implaced, it becomes the content of thought. Within so-called concrete thinking, intuition must also be included. I do not think that consciousness can in any way depart from the background of universal concepts. The universal concept always plays the role of a mirroring mirror. Even when we enter into the standpoint of intuition wherein the subject–object union is thought to obtain, consciousness does not depart from universal concepts. It rather reaches the height of the universal concept. To go beyond by breaking-through the universal concept in a standpoint that is conscious of contradiction means [that] the universal concept has been objectified.⁶⁹ It is nothing but what has already been determined, the particular, possessing not even the sense of knowing.⁷⁰ The *basho* mirroring intuition must immediately also be the *basho* mirroring the contradiction of the concept.

There may be a few objections when I speak of recognizing the field of consciousness or *basho* behind intuition. But if intuition simply signifies something without subjectivity [*shu*] or objectivity [*kyaku*], it would be nothing but a mere object.⁷¹ When we say intuition, it must already involve the distinction between knower and known and moreover be their union. Accordingly, the knower does not simply entail constitution or activity [*hataraku*]. Rather the knower must be that which envelops the known,

nay, it must be that which mirrors it within. However, the subject-object union or the absence of subject and object must mean that *basho* becomes truly nothing and becomes simply a mirror that mirrors. We think that the universal is merely subjective while the particular is objective. But if we can state that the particular, as content of knowledge, is subjective while recognizing for the particular an objective given, we can probably recognize for the universal an objective given as well. In Kant's philosophy this is conceived as simply an a priori form.⁷² But at the root of such thinking is the presupposition that the objective given is constituted by the constitutive act of the [epistemological] subject. To constitute, however, does not immediately mean to know. Knowing must mean to mirror the self within itself. The true a priori must be that which constitutes the self's content within the self. For this reason, besides constitutive form, we may also think, as Lask did, of the domain category (*Gebietskategorie*).⁷³ It is through the self-determination of such a *basho* that we are enabled to see universal concepts that have been determined in the world of epistemological objects. What becomes the so-called universal concept is the *basho*'s determination of itself, its objectification.

In Plato's philosophy, the universal was conceived to be objective reality. But this did not lead to the idea that the universal that truly envelops all things would have to be a place [*basho*] that establishes them.⁷⁴ For this reason place [*basho*] was instead thought of as unreal and as nothing.⁷⁵ But there would have to be such a place [*basho*] even in the depths of the intuition of the *ideas* themselves. Even the highest *idea* is nothing but that which still has been determined, a particular. Even the *idea* of the Good cannot escape its being relative. In considering the *basho* of mere oppositional nothing as a *basho* of consciousness, one may think of this *basho* as disappearing in intuition. Furthermore, one may refuse to recognize [the possibility of] any *basho* wherein intuition is implied. However, I do not think that this *basho* is enveloped within intuition but rather that it is what envelops intuition itself. Not only intuition but willing and acting are implied in this as well. It is for this reason that we can think of volition and action as involving consciousness. Descartes conceived of extension and thought as two kinds of substance. On the one hand, he considered motion to be a mode of extension, and on the other hand considered volition to be a mode of thought.⁷⁶ But while true extension in this sense must be something like physical space, true thought would have to be a *basho* in the foregoing sense. Although we think of being conscious and mirroring in the world of objects of knowledge as immediately one, strictly speaking, we cannot mirror the content of emotion-and-volition⁷⁷ [*jōi*] in the world of objects of knowledge. The world of objects of knowledge cannot in any way escape its sense of being a *basho* that has been determined. The *basho*

wherein emotion-and-volition is mirrored must be an even deeper and broader *basho*. That we become conscious of the content of emotion-and-volition does not mean that we cognize it in knowledge. The field of consciousness common to knowledge, emotion, and volition must be that which does not belong to any one of them. It must be what envelops even so-called intuition to expand without limit. The deepest sense of consciousness must mean the *basho* of true nothing.⁷⁸ That which mirrors conceptual knowledge cannot avoid being a *basho* of relative nothing [*sōtai mu no basho*]. While in so-called intuition we already stand in the *basho* of true nothing, the *basho* that establishes emotion-and-volition must be an even deeper and broader *basho* of nothing. It is for this reason that we can think of a nothing that is without any constraint at the root of our will.

2.

Translators' synopsis: *Nishida continues his explication of basho here by beginning with an analysis of the judicative structure and the meaning of the copula in terms of implacement. He makes use of the neo-Kantian concept of "validity" in explaining the being of beings qua implacement. There is a successive series of implacements within universals, which from the reverse direction means the self-mirrorings of basho. The field of consciousness is implaced amid this series as an "entryway" leading to true nothing. Along the way, there is also the intelligible realm of pure willing, wherein the pre-dichotomized oppositionless object is encountered in one's lived experience. But it is enveloped by the basho of true nothing as the concrete standpoint. He also explicates this nothing as an absolute present enveloping past, present, and future. In addition Nishida provides his first threefold schematization of the succession of bashos.*

Let me return to my initial idea. We have no choice but to think of that which is as being implaced in something. Needless to say, *to be here* does not [itself] signify existence [*sonzai*] but instead something rather general. For example, we might consider that the various colors are implaced in the universal concept of color and that the universal concept of color is a *basho* wherein the various colors are implaced. If we are to think, as in Aristotle, that qualities *inhere* [are implaced] in a [primary] substance, and if we are to think accordingly of a secondary substance, we can think of the various colors as being implaced within the universal "color" itself. The relationships among the various colors are constituted in accordance with the system of color itself, and it must be color itself that becomes the true [grammatical] subject of judgments concerning colors.⁷⁹ Although we think of the universal as merely subjective, the so-called individual is also that which has been but conceived.⁸⁰ In this sense, in what sort of relationship

does the particular stand in regard to the objective universal? We cannot maintain that something like color itself possesses⁸¹ the various colors. [For] to speak of possessing, we would have to conceive a certain thing as being concealed behind them. This certain thing would accordingly have to be able to possess qualities completely different in kind. If this is so could we think of a particular color to be an act of color itself? Color itself is not yet a thing at work; it does not involve the relationships of time. The universal simply contains the particular, and the latter is merely implaced in the former. Just as we say that what has form is, as it were, a shadow of the formless, it is like a relationship whereby infinite forms are established within formless space itself.⁸² Needless to say, various relations unique to space enter into space. But at the basis of the spatial relationship there is also the relationship between universal and particular, and it is by means of this that various spatial relations are constituted.

In the judgment that “red is a color,” the copula signifies that objectively there is something particular implaced in the universal and that the universal is a *basho* of particulars.⁸³ The truly universal is what is identical with itself. But it must [also] envelop specific differences⁸⁴ within itself. If accordingly we only think of objects as transcending consciousness, we have no choice but to simply say that particulars are implaced within the universal. But if we are to deepen the significance of this *basho* to conceive so-called consciousness as implaced in it as well, true *basho* becomes that which mirrors its shadows within itself, a mirror that illuminates itself.⁸⁵ When beings are implaced in a being, we can say that the latter possesses the former. And when manifest beings are implaced in an unmanifest being, we can say that the former is an explicit manifestation [*kengen*] of the latter, while the latter [in turn] is acting [*hataraku*] [through them].⁸⁶ But when beings are implaced in true nothing, we have no choice but to say that the latter mirrors the former.⁸⁷ To mirror means to let the thing stand, to receive it, as it is without distorting its form. That which mirrors allows things to stand within but does not work upon them.⁸⁸ We are thinking in that way when regarding a mirror as mirroring things.⁸⁹ Needless to say, because a mirror is a kind of being, it cannot truly mirror the thing-in-itself. Instead it mirrors things by distorting them. [In this sense] the mirror is still a thing at work. In proportion to the degree to which what houses the images of other things is a being, the mirrored [i.e., the mirror image] is not the figure [*shōzō*] of another but rather merely a representation [*shōchō*] or a sign [*fugō*].⁹⁰ Furthermore, if this leads to the point whereby the sense of a certain thing being implaced in another is lost, we have no choice but to say that they are both independent [beings], merely working upon each other and interrelating. [But] if we are to say that the universal is not merely subjective but carries objectivity within itself, the significance that the particular is as

implaced in the objective universal would have to mean that the universal establishes the form of the particular within just as it is and without distortion. I am saying neither that the universal possesses the particular nor that the particular is the consequence of the universal. Nor does this entail the meaning that space merely contains things or that things are implaced in space. Universal and particular are not mutually heterogeneous as are things and space. The particular is a part of the universal and moreover it is its [reflected, mirror] image [*eizō*]. However, for the particular the universal carries no sense of *being* at all. It is completely nothing.⁹¹

In conceiving that a thing must be universal in proportion to the degree to which it is individual, that universal must be what mirrors the individual within itself. One may retort that between universal and particular, there is no [such] mirroring-mirrored relationship. However, when speaking of the implacement of something in something, there must already be some sort of relationship between the two. For we cannot say that there is virtue in a triangle. “That which is implaced” must be that which partakes in [*bunyū*],⁹² the quality of the *basho* wherein it itself is implaced. [For example,] things implaced in space must be spatial. Accordingly, insofar as that quality is essential to that thing, that is, insofar as the being of that thing is recognizable by means of it, we can say that one thing is implaced in another thing. Therefore, in order to say that one thing is completely in another, the former must be an aspect of the latter. In such cases one may immediately think of something like [the relationship between] substance and aspect. But if reflective categories are prior to constitutive categories, the fact that pure qualities, which we ought to regard as substanceless aspects, are mutually distinguished from and mutually relate to each other, means nothing else than that each [quality] maintains its own system objectively by mutually reflecting and being reflected by one another. When we remove [the idea of] substance,⁹³ conceived to be behind [our] immediate experience, we see the world of pure acts, acts devoid of substance. Even then however we are still thinking in some sense of a thing at work [i.e., productively active or functioning]. When we further remove [the notion of] the thing at work, we see the world in a pure state, that is, the world in its substanceless aspect.⁹⁴ If we can look at the world of pure acts by seeing [its] unity within, we can probably pursue this further and see something like the world in its pure state. The world of reflective categories that can be conceived prior to the world of constitutive categories must be of this sort.

When we speak of mirroring we immediately think of a single working activity [*hataraki*]. Mirroring however does not come out of activities. Rather it is from out of endlessly mirroring itself within itself that the thing at work is derived. The idea of a working activity emerges from the attempt to mirror an infinite content within a finite universal, a formed⁹⁵ *basho*. In

the *basho* of nothing that negates all being, to act [*hataraku*] is simply to know and to know is to mirror. Further transcending this standpoint, in the *basho* of true nothing, we see volition itself. The will is no mere act [*sayō*] for there must be a seer behind it. Otherwise there would be no distinction between mechanical acts and instinctive acts. The darkness behind volition can not be mere darkness but must instead be what Dionysius called “dazzling obscurity.”⁹⁶ When the content of such a standpoint is mirrored in the standpoint of oppositional nothing, we regard the free will *qua* act. It is on the basis of this idea that we consider the will as an aspect of consciousness. Prior to freedom as act, there is freedom as a state.

It goes without saying that we ought to distinguish “is” as copula and “is” as being. But to the extent that “the thing *is*” is also a judgment, there must be something commensurate in their deep roots.⁹⁷ The copula “is” signifies that something particular is subsumed within something universal. If we are to speak from the side of the universal, subsumption means the development-of-differentiation itself. We can think of judgment as the process whereby the universal particularizes itself. Needless to say, although I speak of a process of particularization, this does not immediately signify an event appearing in time. It only points to the relationship between universal and particular. If we are to think of the so-called concrete universal, the relation of judgment must be regarded as included therein. Accordingly what is truly universal must always be a concrete universal.⁹⁸ When we say that “there is a thing outside [of the mind],” this does not refer to the copula “is” but rather designates its existence. In order for this sort of judgment of existence to be universally valid, however, a concrete universal must also be acknowledged at its foundation. It is due to this that we can take the real as the [grammatical] subject of judgment.⁹⁹ The judgment of existence is established by means of a rationalization of the nonrational. What we mean by time and space are also nothing but means for such rationalization.¹⁰⁰

If we follow this line of thought, “to exist” refers to the copula from the standpoint of the concrete universal, and we can also think of the copula “is” as referring to existence in terms of the abstract universal. That things exist in the world of nature signifies the validity of judgments of existence, and that red is a color means that red is implaced in the concept of color. We can think of so-called existence as a particular case of the universal copula. When the particular is implaced in the universal, we think of it merely as being, [i.e.,] that a being is implaced in a being. For example, we can think of color as implaced in itself by forming a system within itself. [That is,] it [color] is what is called an oppositionless object.¹⁰¹ Natural existence is also a transcendent object in a similar sense.¹⁰² By contrast when beings are further mirrored in the *basho* of nothing wherein they are implaced, just as things in space are seen in images, the world of so-called oppositional

objects comes to appear.¹⁰³ From the standpoint of oppositional nothing, judgment as an act of consciousness, that is, the judicative act becomes conceivable. The act of judgment is a particularization of oppositional nothing.¹⁰⁴ Oppositional nothing is still a being mirrored upon the surface of true nothing. As a kind of being it becomes the substance of acts. But because nothing is [here really] the substance, the content of the acts of consciousness themselves is not visible, and as Lask says, we can only speak of getting it (*Treffen*) or not getting it (*Nichttreffen*).¹⁰⁵ However in the *basho* of true nothing, even such acts become the copula of the concrete universal by losing the sense of an act. That it is implaced in the *basho* of true nothing means that it is valid.¹⁰⁶ While in the *basho* of oppositional nothing we still see acts, in the *basho* of true nothing we see only what is valid.¹⁰⁷ Even Kant's consciousness-in-general,¹⁰⁸ as the constitutive [epistemological] subject of all cognition, must be a *basho* of true nothing. In this *basho*, everything that is "implaced" is valid. Herein every ontological being must change into a copulative being. Consciousness-in-general, however, is still not the standpoint of true nothing. It is merely the entryway from the standpoint of oppositional nothing to the standpoint of absolute nothing. And further, transcending this standpoint is the world of intelligible reality, the world of reality *qua* ideality.¹⁰⁹ On this basis metaphysics is established further beyond Kant's critical philosophy. That which *is* must be implaced in something. And logically the universal serves as its *basho*. Consciousness, which Kant regarded as receiving the content of knowledge by means of sensation,¹¹⁰ must be a *basho* of oppositional nothing. It must be a mirror that merely mirrors. It is in such a *basho* that the world of sensation exists. [But] consciousness-in-general is not consciousness [merely] in this sense. It must [rather] be a *basho* wherein even the so-called acts of consciousness are implaced, it must be a nothing that contains oppositional nothing, a mirror that mirrors the interior rather than the exterior.¹¹¹ Everything implaced in this is simply valid. But in the *basho* of true nothing, what is valid in this sense must therefore be the existent.¹¹²

The world of existence that is implaced in the *basho* of true nothing, in this way, is not the world of objects of pure thinking. We can think of it, instead, as the world of objects of pure willing. Just as oppositional objects are generated through the mirroring of oppositionless objects in the *basho* wherein they are implaced,¹¹³ the world of oppositional objects, that is, the world of countervalue, is established in contrast to intelligible existence, that is, the objects of pure will, implaced in the *basho* of true nothing.¹¹⁴ In this world only the good in the broad sense can be said to be real. Just as space without things is thought of as nothing, we can think of the ugly and the evil as nothing. We can say, as Augustine does, that evil is nothing [non-being].¹¹⁵ The act of willing in this world therefore corresponds to the act

of judgment in the world of cognition. But only in the *basho* of truly nothing do we see what is free. We see things that are merely at work in the *basho* of determined beings, we see the so-called acts of consciousness in the *basho* of oppositional nothing, and we see true free will in the *basho* of absolute nothing.¹¹⁶

Because oppositional nothing is yet a kind of being, there are interruptions in acts of consciousness. We can think of a disconnection between yesterday's consciousness and today's consciousness. [But] because true nothing transcends oppositional nothing to envelop it within, the I of yesterday and the I of today are immediately conjoined from the standpoint of the acting [epistemological] subject. The will conceived in this way is not only without cause but in itself would have to be eternal.¹¹⁷ In such cases we can conceive the unconscious behind volition. But behind consciousness there must be an absolute nothing. There must be that which not only negates all being but also negates nothing.¹¹⁸ It is not that the acts of consciousness that perish in time are being conscious [*ishikisuru*].¹¹⁹ Consciousness must be an ever-abiding present. One can say that in consciousness, the past is the past implaced in the present, the present is the present implaced in the present, and the future is the future implaced in the present. The so-called present is [thus] the shadow of the present mirrored in the present. What clarifies the essence of such consciousness is not the lived experience of knowledge but rather the lived experience of willing.¹²⁰ This is why we can think of our consciousness as becoming most clear in the lived experience of the will. Accordingly insofar as knowledge is conscious, we can think of it as a kind of volition.

3.

Translators' synopsis: *Nishida continues his clarification of basho with a view to its system as a whole. He begins by identifying the universal qua basho as the true underlying "substance" of judgments, which then becomes differentiated and dichotomized in terms of universal and particular, knower and known, concept and object, etc. He engages in a variety of threefold schematizations of this process in terms of different kinds of acts, existences, fields of implacement, and worlds. Moving from being to nothing, all are seen as mirror images of the self-mirroring nothing. And moving in the other direction, they are self-determinations of basho, which Nishida describes in terms of the rationalization of the arational. But this is all self-forming form, the self-mirroring basho, of which things, substances, acts, forces, potencies, etc. are all seen as pure qualities. In terms of time, Nishida identifies pure quality here with the eternal present, on the basis of which contradiction unfolds via the creation of being out of nothing. Intuition is the seeing of what*

in the following sections he calls contradictory unity in this most concrete basho, a standpoint deeper than that of all determining acts.

There must be a universal at the root of consciousness. When the universal serves as a *basho* wherein all that exists is implaced, it becomes consciousness. Insofar as the universal is further determined as universal, that is, insofar as it cannot become a *basho* that is truly nothing, we see substance on the outside and universal concept on the inside.¹²¹ Even Spinoza's substance that embraces all reality is a being in contrast to nothing,¹²² and even if it could include everything that is, it cannot include the negating act of consciousness.¹²³ That which we can truly call a substance, as the [grammatical] subject without ever becoming a predicate, must be what not only becomes a mere object of judgment but what even envelops judgment itself. When we move from the standpoint of the opposition of being and nothing to the standpoint of true nothing, the standpoint of Kant's so-called consciousness-in-general is established at its turning point. Seen from this standpoint, everything becomes an epistemological object and theoretically valid, and is nothing but an image mirrored in the world of epistemological objects. The truly real hides its form behind the world of epistemological objects and becomes the unknowable thing-in-itself. Because the standpoint of consciousness-in-general is the standpoint of nothing that envelops all being, it never thoroughly ceases being a standpoint of consciousness. However, this is not consciousness as a reality, not a consciousness at work.¹²⁴ Even acts of consciousness are nothing but epistemological objects seen from the standpoint of consciousness-in-general.

What becomes an issue here is the judicative act. The act of judgment, while on the one hand is an event that appears in time, must on the other hand be the carrier of meaning. How is consciousness-in-general, conceived as completely transcending acts, conjoined with the acts of consciousness?¹²⁵ If we take the world of inner meaning as a world of objects of a certain sort, does consciousness-in-general that sees this world of objects have the same significance as consciousness-in-general that looks at transcendent objects? Consciousness-in-general that truly objectifies everything cannot [simply] be that which transcends acts. Rather it must be what envelops all objects by thoroughly receding into its own interior. Taking consciousness as that which envelops beings by becoming nothing,¹²⁶ there must be an infinitely deep significance to consciousness. So-called consciousness-in-general is the gateway opening from oppositional nothing to true nothing. The acts of force, unknowable from the standpoint of oppositional being, become acts of consciousness from the standpoint of oppositional nothing. And by transcending consciousness-in-general that is the gateway to true nothing, they become in the broad sense acts of will. We see the act of judgment precisely from the standpoint

of consciousness-in-general. We can think of judgment and volition as opposite sides of a single act.

Once we pierce through the standpoint of consciousness-in-general, we no longer see acts with any sort of content. At the extremity of the world of epistemological objects, we see only the abstract act of getting it or not getting it.¹²⁷ On the reverse side of such acts, we would have to think of the act of willing. In order to be conscious of a round square, we would have to attach the standpoint of the will behind it. Taking reflective categories as lying behind constitutive categories, we enter the world of the voluntary will by breaking through even the restriction of reflective categories. Abstract thinking and abstract willing are the two sides of a single gateway. If we pass through this gateway, we enter the world of the objects of free will. In this world, everything that *is* is a valid reality and an intelligible existence.¹²⁸ On the other hand some may say that it is invalid to conceive of existence behind valid objects. They may [instead] think that the *ought* is prior to existence.¹²⁹ However, why must we think that only the reality of the so-called natural sciences is existence? Although at this juncture we cannot enter deeply into the issue of existence, there must be something nonrational at the root of reality. This is also why we think of the real as what we can sense. But it is not only that we think of the real as nonrational. While we cannot arrive at it by means of reason, it must be that which ought to be thoroughly rationalized. What Aristotle considers as the [grammatical] subject of a judgment but not the predicate¹³⁰ best expresses this sense. The so-called world of nature unified by space, time, and the laws of causality is but one example of this. Therefore if we are to search for what becomes the subject of judgment in the aforementioned sense, the so-called concrete universal is most appropriate. We can declare the concrete universal to be the real. Insofar as the universal, serving as its root, is a determinate being, we think of a substance. When it [the universal] becomes an oppositional nothing, we think of acts that are pure. And when it becomes truly nothing, that is, in cases where it may be called a mere *basho*, we think of so-called intelligible existence. In each case we can speak of existence in the same sense.

Various senses of the different kinds of existence emerge in accordance with what I mean by *basho*. First of all when we universalize the meaning of the *basho* wherein sensible qualities are implaced it becomes empty space. But space is a kind of being as well. Further, the *basho* wherein even space is implaced would have to be something like a field of consciousness that is transcendent. When we think of sensation as immediately implaced in it, it becomes a mental act. Because the so-called field of consciousness is a negative nothing, the substance, i.e., the so-called thing, we think of as behind sensation, disappears. And behind sensation, we see mere nothing. Thereby

we can think of sensation as being generated out of nothing. It [sensation] is a pure act. But in the *basho* wherein they are implaced, acts are also a kind of existence. In consciousness-in-general serving as the gateway to true nothing, even acts lose the sense of existence and everything at once becomes an *ought*. Nevertheless, when the *basho* is further true nothing itself, we can think of this [the *ought*] again as a kind of being. That which is implaced therein is a mere intelligible existence and the *ought* is its shadow.¹³¹

Because consciousness-in-general becomes the gateway of entry into the *basho* of true nothing, things-in-themselves are negated and everything becomes an epistemological object. But in the *basho* of true nothing itself, we can further see by transcending this standpoint the substance that becomes the [grammatical] subject but not the predicate. What ought to be called the substance that becomes the subject but not a predicate, is not what transcends judgment but rather what envelops judgments within.¹³² It not only becomes the subject of judgment but further becomes its [the judgment's] end. That which is the source of judgment as well as its end is what can truly be the subject of a judgment. As an example of this, we can think of so-called natural existence as existence as well. But when we think of consciousness-in-general as the epistemological subject, the summit beyond which we cannot advance, we can no longer conceive of an existence by further transcending it. We have no choice but to eliminate intelligible existence as metaphysical. Although judgment is a single act of consciousness, however, it is not the whole of consciousness, that is, judgment [itself] is not consciousness. Aside from the consciousness of judgment, we possess the consciousness of volition. Because willing is also a phenomenon of consciousness and we think that there is the knower behind it, we may think that knowledge is even deeper than willing and that volition is also an object of judgment. But that which becomes conscious of the will is not simply what judges. That which is conscious of the will is that which is also conscious of judgment.¹³³

The essence of consciousness is to generate being from nothing and to encompass being by becoming nothing. Although psychologists set the scope of consciousness by distinguishing being conscious and not being conscious, what is it that is conscious of such distinctions? What has been determined as the scope of consciousness is that which consciousness is *of* and not that which [itself] is conscious. That which truly is conscious must be that which envelops within even what cannot be determined as so-called consciousness. When something is conceived to be latent behind consciousness, this is no longer consciousness but rather the development of force. In contrast to a certain determined standpoint, we can think of the standpoint of consciousness as the standpoint of a still higher level. The higher-level standpoint, in contrast to the lower-level standpoint, can

possess the sense of consciousness because it envelops it while becoming nothing. But when that higher-level standpoint becomes determined in some sense, we must admit a standpoint of nothing wherein it is further implaced. [And when that happens,] the sense of consciousness must disappear. The true standpoint of consciousness would have to be this final standpoint of nothing. In the depths of consciousness, there can be no other thing that would tie it together. If there were such a thing it would not be consciousness. We think of the flow of consciousness, seeing it from one direction, as transforming moment to moment through time, unable even for an instant to return to its past. But at its root there must be something that eternally remains unchanged. Yet we [still] think of consciousness as unable to repeat itself because this thing, which is eternally unchanging, is nothing. If we were able to recognize at the root of consciousness a being in some sense, consciousness would then have to be something repeatable in virtue of it.¹³⁴ At the root of consciousness, there is only eternal nothing. It is probably for this reason that we think that we see objects immediately in our internal perception. When we see an object as consciousness itself we think that there is nothing behind it and that we are seeing the thing itself. Therefore because the standpoint of true nothing is nothing but a single ideal, internal perception is also nothing but a mere extremity.

If we are to think of the essence of consciousness in the foregoing sense, volition rather than judgment must be the meaning of knowing in a still deeper sense. While it is thought that in knowing we mirror being by becoming nothing, in willing being is generated out of nothing. Behind the will is a creative nothing. The nothing that generates must be an even deeper nothing than the nothing that mirrors. This is why we think that in willing we are conscious of the self most clearly and that we attain the ultimate degree of consciousness. To make being out of nothing would have to mean that even the latent is implaced in nothing, [and] that even the latent is mirrored within. Augustine stated that God did not create the world in time but rather that time is also God's creation. Making requires matter. But just as it is stated [by Augustine] that God made matter out of nothing [i.e. *creatio ex nihilo*], what creates being out of nothing cannot simply be a form that transcends time and is separate from matter.¹³⁵ Rather it must be that wherein time is implaced as well as matter. That is, to make must mean to mirror. If we take knowing to be not simply the rendering of form onto matter but rather the enveloping of matter within one's self through self-emptying and to go on forming the self within itself, knowing must also already have behind it the sense of willing that generates being out of nothing.¹³⁶ But because in knowledge, we stand upon a determinate a priori, a determinate form, we are unable to envelop matter

while including time. In knowledge, the object bears its own system and possesses its own direction. To possess its own system and its own direction means that it stands upon a determinate universal. For that which is determined, the indeterminate stands in opposition. That which is latent is not yet truly nothing. [And] there still lies matter at the bottom of the mirroring mirror. Needless to say even if we do not take this as so-called latency or so-called matter, as in Kant's thing-in-itself or the experience of contemporary Kantianism, it is [still] matter that cannot be eliminated. The nothing of knowledge¹³⁷ is infinitesimal nothing but not true nothing. This is why in the purely intellectual standpoint of consciousness-in-general we fall into an unavoidable contradiction. Consciousness-in-general, while being the [epistemological] subject of judgment, must be that which has transcended the act of judgment. Consciousness-in-general loses the sense of consciousness. True consciousness-in-general then must instead possess the sense of volition behind it. Kant's consciousness-in-general would have to lead to Fichte's act [*jikō*].¹³⁸

Only by means of judgment's anticipation of the will at its root can consciousness-in-general possess the sense of consciousness. But the standpoint of judgment is not immediately the standpoint of willing; judgment is but one aspect of willing. The standpoint of judgment cannot thoroughly escape the sense of a determined *basho*. Even Fichte's act is not the free will at the *basho* of true nothing. Even if we accept that it stores infinite matter within itself by including infinite reflection, it cannot escape the directionality of a fixed infinity, the latency of a fixed meaning. Neither can the voluntary will emerge out of it nor can it clarify the sense of a selective will that freely sets its direction. A truly free will must be what is free in regard to the direction of infinite reflection or the sense of infinite latency, that is, it must be what includes these within. [Only then] can we thus say that from the very beginning it makes being out of nothing. Matter is also something made out of nothing. To make being out of nothing would have to entail transcendence beyond the latent direction of every act, further enveloping them within. This would mean that even matter is a mirrored image therein. The truly free must be what makes infinitely pure acts into its own attributes.

We think that in subsumptive judgments, the particular as [grammatical] subject is contained within the predicate that is universal. But in the substance that becomes the [grammatical] subject but cannot become the predicate, we can also conceive of the universal to be included within the particular.¹³⁹ Even in the judgment of things however, what becomes the [grammatical] subject is not merely a particular but must bear a universal significance for its attributes. But insofar as there is a gap between the universal that subsumes and the particular that is subsumed, a relationship between thing and quality is established, and hence we come to think of

something like a transcendent thing.¹⁴⁰ The fact that something is transcendent means that it cannot be rendered into form due to the mutual separation of form and matter. Not only that, it furthermore means that matter remains that cannot be determined even in the direction of the form rendering process. It means, as it were, that the directionality of matter is indeterminate. Insofar as matter is external to form and is accidental, we come to recognize the independence of matter and thus think of the existence of a transcendent thing. Hence in this recognition of the existence of things, we would have to think of a *basho* wherein they are implaced. If we conceive of *basho* itself as an immanent being, that is, as one kind of form, and think the transcendent to be included within the immanent, the world of force is established.¹⁴¹ Thereby while recognizing the various materiality of force, we would have to conceive of a *basho* wherein forces are implaced. The non-rationality of force, the materiality of force, signifies the transcendence of the immanent. What I mean here by *basho* wherein forces are implaced is not like the so-called force field that physicists speak of. The *basho* wherein forces are implaced as reality must be a transcendent field of consciousness. Mechanistic force and empirical content unite in this *basho* to become physical force. The beingness [existentiality]¹⁴² of mechanistic force stands implaced upon this place.

When we conceive of space, time, and force as all means for thinking, the objective *basho*, wherein given experience is itself immediately implaced,¹⁴³ must be a transcendent field of consciousness. That which is implaced in the field of consciousness in the same way that things are implaced in space would have to be the substance of volition, that is, free personhood. Just as sensation is nonrational in the world of so-called epistemological objects, that which is nonrational in the field of consciousness is the free will.¹⁴⁴ While sensation is completely external to formal thought and may be non-rational, we can think of it as rationalizable by means of constitutive thinking. That is, as stated in the foregoing, we can heap [*moru*] the transcendent within the immanent *basho*.¹⁴⁵ But when it comes to free will, this cannot be rationalized in any sense. It must be what completely transcends [any] *basho* that is determined. Just as what becomes in judgment the [grammatical] subject but not the predicate is what possesses the predicate, that which is utterly nonrational, utterly indeterminable as a *basho*, is the substance of consciousness. Hence the reality of force is maintained, in short, by means of the nonrationality of volition. We think of what becomes the [grammatical] subject but not the predicate as the substance for no other reason than that, while determinable as a so-called predicating universal, it [volition] nevertheless envelops the predicate within. That is to say, it is the *basho* wherein predicate beings are implaced. Judgment is established between [grammatical] subject and predicate. When the

transcendent is seen in this *basho*, that is, when the latent is conceived, it becomes a thing at work [productively acting]. But when this is further seen as a determined *basho*, what connects them is judgment.

When beings are implaced in a being, the *basho* is a thing. When beings are implaced in nothing and this nothing is a conceived nothing, that which previously was a *basho* accordingly becomes [seen as] a thing at work.¹⁴⁶ An empty *basho* is thus filled with force, and the *basho* that previously was a thing becomes filled with potency. To say that the transcendent becomes immanent means that *basho* becomes nothing and being becomes nothing. However there are various senses to the nothing that becomes a *basho* of being. We can first of all simply distinguish between the nothing that negates a certain thing, that is, relative nothing, and the nothing that negates all being, that is, absolute nothing. The former is space and the latter is the so-called field of consciousness. In the field of consciousness, that which previously was a thing becomes a phenomenon of consciousness, and the empty space becomes filled with so-called mental acts. Because the *basho* becomes a nothing that negates all being, all phenomena within the *basho* of consciousness is conceived to be immediate and immanent. Although mental acts also entail a relationship with the *basho* of nothing, they cannot possess the sense of being, such as of material force, nor can they be determined as [epistemological] objects of judgment. They can only become objects of so-called reflective judgments. This is why mental acts are denied from the standpoint of natural science. In the field of consciousness, as this *basho* becomes nothing it further becomes a *basho* of mere qualities and things disappear. But insofar as oppositional nothing still carries the sense of being, the *basho* that previously was a being becomes filled with potency, that is, we can think of something like the substance of consciousness or the conscious I. But we must differentiate the potency of consciousness from the potency of material force. The potency of consciousness is potency in a dynamic sense. It is a potency that in physical terms is nothing. As we enter from the *basho* of mere being into the *basho* of negative nothing, we may conceive of various teleological worlds. So-called unrealistic meanings come to possess a reality. We may think that in such cases beingness [existentiality] becomes lost. But it is only that the sense of *basho*, whereby beings are implaced in something, is altered. It does not entail the loss of the universal that constitutes the root of existence. When *basho* becomes nothing, the significance of Aristotle's claim that actuality precedes potency and that form is prior to matter becomes clear.¹⁴⁷ What we think of as potential matter can instead be seen as the immediate actual form.

As stated in the foregoing, we still see a kind of potency in the *basho* of oppositional nothing as we do in the so-called field of consciousness. In the *basho* of true nothing however even potency in the field of consciousness

must further disappear. From the standpoint of consciousness-in-general, even phenomena of consciousness must be objectified. The so-called conscious I must be something implaced in this as well. The thing at work in any sense of the term disappears, force disappears, and even the act itself of judgment is objectified.¹⁴⁸ Herein we cannot recognize truth in any sense at all. We have no choice but to say that the thing itself is unknowable. Even the reality of an individual thing is nothing but an epistemological object unified via the forms of time and space.¹⁴⁹ However, in order to say that consciousness-in-general maintains the objectivity of knowledge, there must be something transcendent at its root. Just as Kant sought the objectivity of knowledge in the limitations of the content of experience, there would have to be something nonrational instead at the basis of the objectivity of knowledge. Moreover the transcendent in this sense cannot be a so-called thing. Nor can it be force. All of these have been objectified by the epistemological subject. It cannot even be regarded as potency for potency already anticipates the category of force. In no sense can it then be objectified and be intellectually determined. Knowledge instead would have to be what is established by means of its determination. Although it is nothing in the sense that it cannot be determined at all, every being nevertheless must be further implaced in it.

The constitution of matter by forms of cognition is not the same as a constitutive act in time. The transcendence of consciousness-in-general is the transcendence of *basho* wherein both form and matter are implaced. It means thus that the universal transcends [trans-descends] to the bottom of the universal, that the immanent transcends to the bottom of the immanent, that *basho* transcends to the bottom of *basho*, and that consciousness is immersed within the depths of consciousness itself. It is the nothing of nothing, the negation of negation.¹⁵⁰ If we are to search for the substance that becomes the [grammatical] subject without becoming the predicate, truly transcending the judicative act, it can be nowhere but in this. It is ultimately the nonrational. Furthermore, everything rational is implaced in it. Therein, in a word, is the root of the nonrationality of things *qua* sensible reality. When we think of things as implaced in space, because we can think of *basho* as completely nothing in contrast to things, each of them as merely nonrational possesses the sense of independent existence.¹⁵¹ By contrast when it comes to force, although one might briefly think that the independent existence of each would disappear, because the *basho* possesses a sense of being we have no choice but to conceive a substance of force behind it. Therein our thinking falls-into contradiction.¹⁵² [But] when *basho* becomes truly nothing, such contradiction disappears and we again see each independent existence just as we see things in space.¹⁵³ Therefore if we think in reverse, we find that the root of that previous beingness [*sonzaisei*] in fact

lies therein as well. The root of so-called sensible reality was being generated from there. In what way then do we obtain, again at this juncture, the sense of existence as akin to the implacement of things in space? This is because *basho* becomes absolutely nothing. It is because *basho* absolutely transcends the beings implaced therein.¹⁵⁴ For this reason, seen from one side, we must think of it simply as what is eternal by transcending all activities. But seen from the other side, we must think of it as what is at work without end for the reason that it contains all *bashos*. In a word, it is that which takes freedom as its attribute.

The true knowing I not only transcends the working I but must also *know* the so-called knowing I. There has to be the meaning of reality in this sense at the root of our personhood, that is, there must be what generates being from nothing, that which produces even matter.¹⁵⁵ Along with the complete disappearance of the *basho* of oppositional nothing, the acts we see in relation to such a *basho* of nothing must also disappear. While acts lose the *basho* wherein they are implaced and lose their reality, the potency opposing actuality must also disappear. What *is* is something we ought to call simply pure quality. It is not that a thing is behind the quality but rather that the quality is behind the thing. Nor is it that force is behind the quality but rather that force is one attribute. Nor is it that there is potency behind the actual but rather that there is potency on this side of the actual. The world of objects of reflective categories, seen behind the world of objects of constitutive categories, must be such a world of pure quality.¹⁵⁶ If we thoroughly pursue the idea that takes the universal concept as *basho*, and when that *basho* accordingly becomes absolutely nothing, what are implaced therein would have to be pure qualities. Primordially constitutive categories and reflective categories ought not to be separated and must rather be regarded as two sides of the same thing. If we take constitutive categories as concrete and take reflective categories as their contracted abstract aspect, the world of the latter would be a world of mere abstract thought. On the other hand, if we view reflective categories to be behind constitutive categories and take the latter as particularizations of the former, it [the world of reflective categories] becomes the world of will. Will and judgment differ in whether it takes constitutive categories or reflective categories as explicit or implicit.¹⁵⁷

There may be many objections to considering pure quality as the root of reality. But what is truly immediate to us would have to be a pure quality. Needless to say this is not what the psychologists call sensation. Nor is it pure duration that is unable to return to the past even for an instant.¹⁵⁸ What can be called pure duration still is not something separate from time. It [pure quality] would have to be something even transcending such continuity. This is the world that is eternally present, being that is

implaced in the *basho* of true nothing. If the standpoint of negation is the standpoint of consciousness, and if we are to consider the *basho* of consciousness as the interior *basho* most immediate to us, that which is implaced in such a *basho* must be regarded as the truly immediate. We not only constitute the world of things and the world of force but on top of this also constitute the world of volition. Even Kant's intelligible character¹⁵⁹ that takes freedom as an attribute must also be a being in this sense.

When that which becomes the [grammatical] subject of a judgment is *basho*, things possessing qualities disappear and become substanceless acts. Furthermore when *basho* itself becomes nothing, even acts disappear and everything becomes an image. Because substance that serves as the [grammatical] subject but never the predicate becomes nothing, from the standpoint of judgment we have no choice but to call this a substanceless image. We can no longer find anywhere anything like a substance. There is only that which mirrors its own shadows within itself by making itself nothing. If we were to speak from one side, because even so-called nothing itself vanishes in the standpoint of true nothing, every being must *be* just as it is.¹⁶⁰ The fact that what *is* is just as it is, means that it is nothing as it is. That is to say that everything is an image. To see what *is* in this way is to see the thing immanently, that is, to see reality as mind [or: spirit].¹⁶¹ Because there is no other *basho* of nothing that mirrors this, each must be a self that mirrors itself, that is, it must be self-aware. Upon this standpoint, even what we call acts are nothing but images. Even potency is not what is seen behind such beings but [rather] a mere shade drawn over it. It is contained within being. To make beings from nothing means nothing but to mirror even the mirror that mirrors. Matter is not matter that has in turn been determined by the directionality of a single act. [Instead] even matter itself becomes a kind of form. By virtue of the fact that the mirror that mirrors what is behind the act becomes itself mirrored, potency becomes actual and matter becomes a thing at work. And this means the making of matter out of nothing.¹⁶² To make does not mean making in time but rather seeing, [that is,] to mirror upon the mirror of true nothing. Even our will entails seeing in this sense. One may think that seeing and mirroring are mere metaphors. But the fundamental significance of mirroring or seeing is in no other fact than that in subsumptive judgments, the [grammatical] subject is in the predicate. The predicate is the mirroring mirror and the seeing eye.¹⁶³

This fundamental quality of judicative consciousness must also be found at the root of willing, which is a kind of consciousness. Both judgment and volition are aspects of the *basho* of nothing. Phenomenologists state that there is intuition even in the depths of acts founded upon perception and that knowledge is fulfilled by tending toward it. But intuition that is the foundation of knowledge still is a consciousness that one is conscious

of [as object, noema]. It is not a consciousness that is conscious [as subject, noesis]. Consciousness that is truly conscious, that is, true intuition does not go on changing in founding acts. Acts would instead have to be founded upon it. The founding itself of acts possesses a kind of tendency toward fulfillment. Without admitting any [epistemologically] objective [*kyakkan-teki*] world of objects for emotion-and-volition, the fulfillment of the founding of acts would be meaningless. But when we can build the world of nature upon perception as the foundation, the intuition that becomes its root is not merely an addition to perceptual intuition but must be a new synthetic intuition. Intuition continues fulfilling itself, and what I call *basho* goes on determining itself. Because of this, without the self-awareness of the will, we cannot establish the a priori of the world of nature.

There are more points to discuss if we are to consider consciousness as farther behind so-called intuition. But I think that even the consciousness of contradiction must be a consciousness that has already transcended a step beyond so-called intuition. Insofar as what I call *basho* can be determined, that is, to the extent that we can objectify the universal concept, it belongs to the domain of knowledge. But if we pass beyond it, judgment loses its determining function and enters the world of will. The consciousness of contradiction designates the turning-point from the consciousness of judgment to the consciousness of will. The consciousness behind judicative knowledge in this sense, that is, the *basho* of true nothing, can in no way disappear. Ultimately it transcends even volition and, as stated [earlier], leads to the intuition of a pure state. At this juncture, we again see the transcendence of the consciousness of contradiction, the former being the transcendence of the contradiction of judgment and the latter being the transcendence of the contradiction of will. By transcending the contradiction of will, we arrive at the extremity of the standpoint of true nothing.

(The phrase “pure quality,” which I used in this section may beckon various misunderstandings. But it signifies that which is implaced in the *basho* of true nothing and which sees itself. It also means that to act [*hataraku koto*] is to see at the root of pure acts [*sayō*].¹⁶⁴ I called this, “pure quality,” only for the reason that being deeper than acts, it entails a tranquil and, moreover, the most immediate existence¹⁶⁵ and is not a thing or substance.)¹⁶⁶

4.

Translators' synopsis: *In this section Nishida extends the previous section's discussion of the rationalization of the arational now in terms of the will. He focuses on the workings of the will as the “act of acts,” the “form of forms,” responsible for all of the determining acts emanating out of the basho of indeterminate nothing.*

While experiencing the world of meanings and values, implaced upon the most concrete *basho*, the will's activity becomes manifest in its normative guidance at all of the other levels of *basho*, whereby acts of consciousness are reflected upon and objects are constituted. In this respect the will represents the vertical linear movement from the universal to the particular in the self-determination of *basho*. Nishida reminds us that ultimately from the concrete standpoint, the will's manifestations are all shadows seen in the self-mirroring of *basho*. The most concrete standpoint is that of intuition, whereby the whole prior to its dichotomization is seen in its contradictory unity.

In the foregoing I touched upon the issue of the distinction and the relationship between intelligible reality and free will. In what sort of a relationship does intelligible reality, which takes freedom as its state and free will, stand? We may conceive of the substance of free will as the highest substance. But the freedom of the will signifies the freedom of acting. And if we can think of the freedom of acting even slightly on the basis of its relation to acts [of consciousness], we cannot claim that it completely transcends the *basho* of oppositional being and nothing. We become conscious of free will always in light of the acts of consciousness implaced in the *basho* of oppositional nothing. When we further transcend this standpoint and enter into the *basho* of true nothing, even free will would have to be extinguished. Quality that is immanent and yet transcendent is neither an attribute of things nor the consequence of forces. Rather, force and thing must be attributes of quality. Neither thing nor force is the substance of qualities. Rather, quality must be the substance of things and forces. Even a single point and a single brushstroke drawn in the space of true nothing is a living reality. In this way we can understand for the first time the world of objects of reflective categories behind the world of constitutive categories. If we are to think of something like an intelligible reality, it is not what is merely at work but must also be what sees. The development of color must lie in color seeing itself, and the development of nature must lie in nature seeing itself.¹⁶⁷ The intelligible character is not what unifies this from outside of sensation. Instead it must be within sensation as that which flashes from the depths of sensation. Otherwise it would be a merely conceptualized personhood. It [the intelligible character *qua* quality] would have to be a reason that feels. From the standpoint of consciousness that is a *basho* of oppositional nothing, we can see it as mere existence in the space of things. Hence just as we can think of things as carrying force, we can further think of intelligible reality as possessing will.

Things in space are what are transcendent, conceived to exist behind the immanent. When we rationalize a quality as a [grammatical] subject, space becomes the means for [its] rationalization. Everything that appears appears in space, and space becomes the immanent *basho*. With spatiality as

the universal quality of things, everything becomes subsumed into a universal concept [i.e., of space]. When assuming the standpoint of spatial intuition, the quality as nonrational must be that which possesses a transcendent ground. Primordially, at the root of quality there is something infinitely deep, similar to what Bergson spoke of as pure duration.¹⁶⁸ The fact that we can thoroughly and deeply see the root of such qualities, means that we ought to regard immediate existence in the *basho* of true nothing as pure quality. [But] from [the standpoint of] a *basho* that has been determined, such as space, we can only say that it is something transcendent, which cannot be thoroughly quantified. But from the demand to make that transcendent immanent, there emerges the idea of force. We [thus] go on deepening [our] intuition even further. To deepen intuition means to come closer to the *basho* of true nothing. Speaking in phenomenological terms this may mean the grounding of an act. But acts can only be grounded upon “the act of acts.” The standpoint of the act of acts then would have to be the *basho* of true nothing. One might say that this is to rationalize the nonrational. It means that the substance that becomes the grammatical subject, but not the predicate, is made into a predicate.¹⁶⁹

On this basis what would be the status of space, previously conceived as *basho*? When we attempt to incorporate a quality, that which is transcendent to the self, into the self, space itself would have to be that quality, a field of forces, with empty space being filled with force.¹⁷⁰ We then come to think that space without form or sound is a universal containing everything and that form and sound are generated through the alterations of space. What is meant by force is one form that comes to appear in the process whereby *basho* attempts to immanently subsume what are implaced in it. For this reason it carries the same significance as judgment or will.¹⁷¹ Physical space must be thoroughly sensible. Separate from sensibility there would be no physical space and it [space] would become merely geometrical space. Force would then be nothing but a mathematical formula. By being endlessly extended, substance that is transcendent and which we can conceive to be behind sensation, unites with space, which we previously conceived to be mere *basho*, to become a field of forces. In terms of the standpoint of the will that envelops the nonrational within, we can characterize such *basho* as already the standpoint of volition. Hence we can think that the concept of force is generated by means of the objectification of will, and generated through a seeing that inserts the will into the bottom of things. The disunity between the *basho* of consciousness that is nothing and the *basho* of being that is implaced in it generates a *basho* of forces. The world of forces is established in the transition from the *basho* of being to the *basho* of true nothing.¹⁷² We cannot see force as long as the *basho* of that which *is* is still a determined being.

For example in cases where we think of physical objects, we take some sort of quality as the foundation and pile upon it other qualities.¹⁷³ Tactile and muscular sensations are in this way selected as foundations. No matter how far we proceed, we cannot eliminate such foundations if we are to conceive of physical objects. The idea of a transcendent thing rather appears when we attempt to determine an immanent quality and pile other qualities upon it. It occurs in the attempt to incorporate into a determined *basho* what is external to it. In this sense we can say that even when we are thinking of things, judgment is to transcend the self within itself.¹⁷⁴ If we continually advance thoroughly [in the direction of] qualities that become this sort of substance, they eventually become the most universal sensible quality. The concept of matter is established in this way. We may think that matter cannot be immediately perceived, but this only means that it is not a perceptual object that is particular. Beyond the horizon of perception, there is no matter. Just as we can think of perception as the immediate consciousness of what has been determined, ultimately we cannot escape the sense of a determined *basho*.¹⁷⁵ Perception must mean the determination of the *basho* of being, implaced in the *basho* of nothing. Therefore we cannot see the world of forces while remaining within the determined *basho* of being, i.e., the domain of perception. Within the determined universal concept of quality, we only see the mutually different and the mutually opposed. If we are to see the world of forces, we would have to break through and step beyond that determined universal concept.¹⁷⁶ We must go from the world of mutual opposition to the world of contradiction. I think that we need to think through this turning point to the utmost.

In order for us to think of the world of objects of contradictory unity, there must be an intuition at its root. Anyone would recognize that at the root of mathematical truths there is a kind of intuition. But no one would consider this to be identical to the sensible intuition of things like forms and sounds. However, if we are to assume that at the root of every judgment, there must be something universal, the judgments concerning forms and sounds would also be established on the basis of the intuition of the universal. In what way do universals at the foundation of the knowledge of sensation and universals at the foundation of so-called a priori truths differ? In order to see the truth that stands upon relationship of contradiction, we would have to see it by stepping beyond the so-called universal concept. The establishment of a priori knowledge is due to the fact that we can see so-called universals. And thus we can say that unless it is so, knowledge can not be established.¹⁷⁷ How can we further see the universal at the root of judgment once we have already stepped beyond universal concepts? Going beyond universal concepts does not signify the disappearance of universal concepts. Rather it means to deeply and thoroughly exhaust them in their

depths, to reach from a determined *basho* of being toward the *basho* of true nothing that is its root. Thereby we see the *basho* of being as itself the *basho* of nothing and see being itself as immediately nothing.¹⁷⁸ In this way we can fill the *basho* that was previously being with the content of nothing. And we come to see the relationship of contradiction within what are implied in the relationship of mutual difference and see what is at work within qualities.¹⁷⁹ The perceptual space that we see is not immediately a priori space. But it is implied within a priori space. Accordingly there would have to be true nothing behind a priori space.¹⁸⁰ Because consciousness signifies implacement in the *basho* of nothing, we can say that it is implied in a priori consciousness. Thus to go beyond universal concepts is in turn to truly see thereby the universal. A priori space is what expresses the universal in this way.

To see with this sort of standpoint is not simply to describe but to constitute.¹⁸¹ True intuition would have to entail seeing while implied in the *basho* of nothing.¹⁸² In obtaining this, we may say that intuition unites with its object by reaching the extremity of its fulfillment.¹⁸³ Unless culmination has been attained in the above sense, knowledge does not go beyond mere description. Even with the phenomenological standpoint, consciousness still cannot escape the *basho* of oppositional nothing and cannot step beyond universal concepts that have been thought. What phenomenologists call acts are acts constricted by the absurdity of universal concepts. They are but one range of objects.¹⁸⁴ On this basis we can neither see the constitution of objects on the inside nor the relations among acts on the outside. The fulfillment of acts themselves does not appear in the standpoint of phenomenology.¹⁸⁵ Aristotle stated that sensation is that which receives form without matter, like a wax seal.¹⁸⁶ But that which receives form without matter must [also] be that which does not possess any form. If such reception or mirroring signifies in some sense an activity, this must be an activity without what is at work, a mirroring without *what* mirrors.¹⁸⁷ If we take form to be the mirrored, we ought to regard it [the receptacle] as a completely formless and pure matter. On the other hand, if we are to regard the mirrored form as something particular, as matter, we can think of it [the receptacle] as pure form, as the form of forms.¹⁸⁸

In such cases, we immediately think of the mirroring and the mirrored as one, but what does this oneness signify?¹⁸⁹ This oneness does not signify a conjoining of the two from behind. It must rather mean that they are both immanent to and furthermore overlap one another in an identical *basho*. It is similar to when a variety of sounds join together upon a field of auditory consciousness, and although each sound maintains itself, a kind of melody is established on top of them. As [Franz] Brentano states in *The Psychology of the Senses*, they are phenomenally conjoined.¹⁹⁰ But although we tend to

think of the field of consciousness when regarding sensation, we do not admit this for thinking. Thus we think of the characterization of “overlapping” [for what occurs] in the *basho* of thinking as a kind of metaphor. But if there is a single intuition at the root of our thinking, we must be able to consider something like a field for thinking just as for sensation and perception. Otherwise, what phenomenologists call the progressive fulfillment of intuited content would be inconceivable. When I speak of an overlapping upon the field of thinking, I am taking the universal as a *basho* and referring to the overlapping of particulars upon it. In the case of auditory perception, we can regard a group of individual sounds as the foundation to which melody is added. [But] in a truly concrete perception, each sound is established as an element of one melody, that is, we must think of it as implaced within it. Although in space two things cannot simultaneously occupy the same space, in the *basho* of consciousness, an infinite overlap is possible. We can go on endlessly transcending *bashos* determined by universal concepts.¹⁹¹ When we are conscious of individual sounds, each sound is implaced upon a *basho* of perception. When on top of them we become conscious of the melody, the melody is also implaced in the *basho* of an identical consciousness. The claim that individual sounds are elements and that they constitute the melody is a consequence of our thinking. But in perception itself, each individual sound is implaced in the melody.¹⁹² However we can also say that melody as well, as an element, is further implaced in another perception, and that sounds and colors are [all] also implaced in a single field of perception.

If we continually deepen the field of perception thoroughly in this way, we would have to arrive at what Aristotle calls “general sensibility” (*sensus communis*).¹⁹³ This is something that simply discriminates the particular sense-content. When one speaks of discrimination, one immediately thinks of the act of judgment. Unlike the judicative act it is not separate from sensation. It distinguishes sensation by attaching to it. I regard this sort of thing as a universal concept *qua basho*. This is because the so-called universal concept is an image of that *basho* mirrored upon the even infinitely deeper *basho* of nothing. The continual fulfillment of perception means that the universal as such a *basho* goes on fulfilling itself.¹⁹⁴ We think of this as an act because its destination is endless, and it goes on fulfilling itself without end. One may thus regard the perception as containing this limitless destination as [its] intentional object.¹⁹⁵ But as a matter of fact, it is not included in it [perception].¹⁹⁶ It rather means that it [the perception] is implaced in such an infinitely deep *basho*.¹⁹⁷ Even what I call intuition signifies nothing other than that this *basho* is an infinitely deep nothing. Only because its bottom is an infinitely deep nothing, can we further establish in consciousness the whole by leaving what we can regard as its elements just as they are.¹⁹⁸

The school of phenomenology claims that acts are founded upon acts. What conjoins acts however is not any so-called founding act. It would have to be what I call the “act of acts.” Within this *basho*, acts already include the quality of will. We may thus say that on the flipside side of the conjoining of acts there is volition. However, it is not that the will immediately conjoins acts. Will is also that which has been seen implaced in this *basho*, and it is nothing but an image mirrored upon this *basho*. Even the will cannot depart further from universal concepts, it cannot escape the determined *basho*. Intuition transcends the *basho* of willing to reach the deep root of nothing. To go on subsuming the particular into the universal is knowledge, to subsume the universal into the particular is volition, and the unity of both directions is intuition.¹⁹⁹ Although it would appear contrary to reason to say that the universal is subsumed into the particular, this sense must already be included when substance is conceived as that which becomes the [grammatical] subject but not the predicate.²⁰⁰ In phenomenology, to say that perception is continually being fulfilled means that it continually progresses in that direction. In that direction, the founding act as well as the founded act enter into the sphere of a single intuition, that is, they are both implaced in the *basho* of nothing. There is no dividing line for intuition.²⁰¹ When we delimit the act that we call perception, we are already determining the *basho* of intuition by means of a universal concept. When phenomenologists speak of a lived perceptual act, categorial intuition must already be included. Therein is implaced the “I as whole.” I want to claim that this signifies implacement in the *basho* of nothing. Taking perceptual experience as the [grammatical] subject, the so-called empirical world is thus established.

Intuition determined as a perceptual act is intuition already determined by thought. When we speak of a lived perception, [that] perception is overlapped upon thinking. [That is to say,] the perceived, that which is mirrored upon the *basho* at its depth [*soko*], becomes its universal concept. We see by determining perceptual intuition. For we can conceive the possibility of a single act of consciousness to depart from a certain point and return to its origin. Even if it circles an infinite periphery from a certain point upon a single plain, it must be able to return to its original point. But one might say that this would mean that the plane of consciousness possesses a center within itself. In the *basho* of true nothing, which we may even take to be a space of infinite dimensions, what determines a single plane in this way would have to be a single universal concept. That which forms the boundary-line determining the consciousness-plane of perception must be the concept of perception in general. Perceptual intuition is hence a determined *basho*. When we can regard ourselves as implaced in perceptual intuition, we are implaced in an intuition determined by means of a universal concept and are implaced in a determined *basho*. The universal concept

thus constitutes the boundary-line of this plane of consciousness. Hence, while possessing on the one hand the sense of a determined *basho*, it possesses on the other hand the sense of *basho* determining itself. When I spoke earlier of going beyond universal concepts, I did not mean a departure from them nor their disappearance by means of this. What I meant rather was a move from the determined *basho* to a determining *basho*, to depart from the *basho* of oppositional nothing, i.e., a mirror that simply mirrors, and arrive at the *basho* of true nothing, i.e., a mirror that illuminates itself. A mirror such as this was not brought from the outside; it was there at its core from the very beginning.²⁰² In speaking of our true livedness in perceptual acts, we are implaced in the *basho* of true nothing, an endless overlapping of mirrors.²⁰³ For this reason we can even see an aesthetic content in the depths of so-called perception.

Consciousness of perception and consciousness of judgment are not originally separated. If we take the consciousness of judgment to mean that the particular is implaced in the universal, the plane of perceptual consciousness is nothing but a *basho* of particulars. And the particular is accordingly determined by the concept of the minor term [in a syllogism]. The plane of perceptual consciousness is not something fixed by means of the so-called content of sensation such as colors or sounds. Instead it is fixed by [its] particularity in its contrast with the universal. Although we can conceptually think of the major–minor configuration of a thing we can also see it perceptually. Even if by contrast it is conceptual, when given as the [grammatical] subject of judgment, we can say that it possesses perceivability. One might however say that at the bottom of perception there is something infinitely deep that refuses conceptual analysis. Although I recognize this, we can [still] regard it as a perception to the extent that we are seeing that thing by introducing a concept behind it. It becomes perception insofar as we look at intuition by illuminating it upon the reflective mirror of a concept. That which truly transcends concepts is no longer knowledge. As long as we think of intuition as knowledge by distinguishing it from something like artistic intuition, it is no longer intuition itself. We cannot see anything like what the mathematicians call continuity. Moreover, that something that we think we see behind perception, transcending concepts, would have to be an aesthetic content. As Bergson states, it is a content that we can know only by living along with it.²⁰⁴ Perception is established at the point where intuition is severed by the plane of concepts. As Husserl states, the horizon of perception thoroughly extends far and wide.²⁰⁵ But it extends parallel with conceptual thinking and not by transcending it. Instead it [the perceptual horizon] is thoroughly enclosed within it [conceptual thinking].²⁰⁶ Nothing thoroughly backs [*urauchi*] being, the predicate envelops the [grammatical] subject, and at its most extreme locus the [grammatical]

subject-plane is immersed within the predicate-plane.²⁰⁷ Being ceases, sinking into the midst of nothing. Categorical intuition is established at the point where this inversion occurs. Even Kant's consciousness-in-general is a *basho* of nothing in this sense. I claim that this inversion is equivalent to exiting beyond the *basho* determined by universal concepts, moving from minor term to major term [of the syllogism]. It is at this point that we can think of the predicate as the substance.²⁰⁸ Because the [grammatical] subject-plane, a being up till now, becomes immersed as it is into the predicate-plane, it comes to also include the sense of volition that subsumes the universal into the particular.²⁰⁹

What is a universal concept? While universal concepts may be conceived in opposition to particular concepts, in the relationship between the particular and the universal we need to think of the consciousness of judgment. Judgment means the subsumption of the particular in the universal. However, the particular concept, in the face of the particular, would have to further become a universal concept. In a syllogism, the mediating term assumes this position.²¹⁰ Although we think of logical knowledge as consisting of such an infinite process, logical knowledge is established so long as universal concepts are determinable somewhere in that process. What is it that determines such universal concepts? The highest universal concept must be that which is thoroughly universal and which transcends particular contents in any sense. That which transcends the content of all particulars in this way therefore must be a being equal to nothing. That which is truly universal must be that which transcends both being and nothing and yet envelop them within, that is, that which includes contradiction within itself. Seen from one direction, the mediating term in the syllogism must be positioned in the middle between the major term and the minor term. In a deeper sense it must be what is already there at this level. It must be something inconceivable when seen from the standpoint of mere knowledge. How then would the consciousness of contradiction be established? Logically we would have no choice but to simply think of something like Hegel's "concept"²¹¹ that goes on developing via contradiction. But what is it that mirrors logical contradiction itself? And it cannot be something logical. Once the logical is transcended there must be that which sees contradiction itself, that which takes infinite contradiction as its content. I am considering the standpoint of volition as such a standpoint. That which transcends logical contradiction and yet envelops it within is our consciousness of will.²¹²

If we are to speak in terms of syllogisms, the mediating term becomes a universal. Even in a syllogism, the mediating term takes up the main position. If we assume that the mediating term is merely included within the major term, the syllogism would be nothing but a connection of judgments. And if we are to think of the syllogism as expressive of a concrete truth that

is beyond judgment, the mediating term would include the sense of a unifying principle. Both the major term and the minor term would be implaced in it, and we ought then to regard both as its two ends.²¹³ In such cases the mediating term comes to possess the sense of what I call the *basho* of consciousness. And in the syllogism we already see a transition from the standpoint of judgment to the standpoint of will. While in judgment we go from universal to particular, in willing we go from particular to universal.²¹⁴ The standpoint of will is already included in the inductive method. In judgments of fact, the particular becomes the [grammatical] subject of the judgment, objective truth is erected by means of the particular, and the universal that roots the judgment would have to be included within the particular. Such a universal must be something different from a universal conceived merely as the major term in a subsumptive judgment. Since we regard judgments of fact as logically negatable without any contradiction, there must be at its root that which is free in transcending the so-called logical universal. This is why I think of introducing therein the standpoint of the will.²¹⁵

The will is not just an accidental act. There would have to be, at its root, that which sees acts themselves and which mirrors the directions of the acts themselves. The consciousness of volition is implaced in a *basho* transcending so-called universal-conceptual determination. We think of the free in opposing acts because an act is what has been determined by a universal concept. To transition from the standpoint of judgment to the standpoint of will is to transition from the *basho* of being to the *basho* of nothing. When we conceive being and nothing as mutually opposed what is it that puts them into this oppositional relationship? From the perspective of the [epistemologically] subjective act, we can think of them in opposition by shifting the act of thinking from being to nothing and from nothing to being. But seen from the side of the epistemological object, it means that being is implaced in nothing and is that which has been determined in the world of objects of thought, while everything else can be regarded as nothing. If we take the world of objects of thought as forming one system within itself, we consider nothing as of a still higher level than being. Nothing [however] is also an object of thinking. It becomes a being by adding some kind of determination to it. In the sense that the species is included in the genus, being is implaced in nothing. Needless to say, [even] to think of it as nothing is to think of it as an already determined being.²¹⁶ We can [then] say that prior to it there must be that which is further without determination. We can accordingly regard being and nothing as implaced therein in an oppositional relationship. However the standpoint that sees being and nothing in opposition is a standpoint that has already taken one step beyond thinking. It would have to be the standpoint of the act of acts²¹⁷ wherein so-called being and nothing are implaced. When conceived as objects of judicative acts, the

object of affirmation and the object of negation are [mutually] exclusive. But when standing upon the axis of [their] transformation, we can equally glance in both directions of the acts themselves. However, seen from the world of posited objects, just as the representation itself of red is implaced in the representation itself of color, being is implaced in nothing. It is not that things exclude space; rather they are implaced in space. Even in regard to things at work, insofar as we can think of them as things at work, we must think of a *basho* wherein they are implaced. Insofar as they can be unified by means of a universal concept, we can think in terms of acts. We cannot view the act itself directly as an object. We come to see the pure act when we regard the universal as infinitely including particulars within and further as a mere *basho* wherein they are implaced. Thought in this way, the contact of one standpoint to a higher-level standpoint does not entail a mutual bordering in the way that a straight line and a curved line border one another upon a single point. Rather it involves the infinite overlap of universals upon universals, *bashos* upon *bashos*, an endless implacement of circles within circles. When a determined *basho* of being has been mirrored in a determining *basho* of nothing, that is, when universals have been endlessly subsumed within [broader] universals, volition is established.

Seen from [the side of] the determined *basho* of being, the substance that becomes the [grammatical] subject but not a predicate is that which has thoroughly transcended this *basho* and can even be seen as what is endlessly at work. But to be conscious is to mirror upon the *basho* of nothing. Seen from this *basho* [of nothing], it is instead nothing but the continuity of an inner will.²¹⁸ If we start from the forms of Greek philosophy, which cannot avoid the sense of a determined being, even if we render matter into form thoroughly to finally arrive at pure form, it still does not mean that matter has become truly nothing. We have only arrived at an infinitesimal zero, and matter still remains as what moves. At the *basho* of true nothing, we cannot but see a true nothing that subtracts one from one. It is here that we can say for the first time that we have arrived at the standpoint of “the One” that truly envelops forms, and that as infinitesimal [prime] matter loses its developmental nature we truly see acts.²¹⁹ Taking Thomas’ [Aquinas] statement that if we knew the good we would necessarily will it,²²⁰ we still can not know the truly free will. True will must be beyond such necessity. As Duns Scotus states, we would have to regard the will as not bound even by the knowledge of the good, and [hence] as possessing freedom even in the face of the supreme good.²²¹

The contradiction of thinking *qua* thinking, would be to arrive at its root. As in Hegel’s philosophy we would probably not be able to see anything beyond this. But there must be that which sees contradiction in the depths of our minds [*kokoro*], that which mirrors contradiction. It is due to

this reason that Hegel's *idea* must move outside of itself and into nature.²²² Taking the volitional act to be established when, as in the foregoing, *basho* is implaced in *basho*, and when from the *basho* of true nothing we see the *basho* of being, we can think of universal concepts as the boundary-lines of the *basho* of being determined in the *basho* of nothing. We can look at a point on the surface of a circle as belonging to its exterior but also see it as belonging to its interior. Likewise we can look at a single thing as a *basho* of being determined according to sensation, as well as think of it as a universal concept in light of the *basho* of nothing.²²³ Freed within the *basho* of nothing, the *basho* determined becomes a so-called abstract universal concept. To this constitutive act of the universal concept, the so-called abstractive act, we would have to add the standpoint of volition. As Lask pointed out, destruction by the [epistemological] subject happens here.²²⁴

As stated before, what Husserl calls perceptual intuition is nothing but a *basho* determined by means of a universal concept. Like Bergson's pure duration, true intuition must be that which abounds with life. I think of such intuitions as being implaced in the *basho* of true nothing. That which encloses the infinitely extended plane of perceptual intuition would have to be one kind of universal concept. When perceptual intuition is conceivable, the perceptual act must also be conceivable. In order for an act to be conceivable, the act itself must be reflected from the standpoint of what I call "the act of acts." We cannot see acts immediately. In order to see one act in distinction from other acts, there must be a *basho* determined by means of a single universal concept. We see what is at work when the predicate stands in the position of the [grammatical] subject.²²⁵ Although we think that the horizon of perception spreads far and wide without end, it does not go beyond the sphere of universal concepts determined within an infinitely deep *basho* of nothing. The universal concept is nothing but the mirroring of the *basho* of being upon the *basho* of nothing. The world of concepts is established where the *basho* of being and the *basho* of nothing are in contact. The negative nothing that we think of as simply transcending being and as that wherein being is implaced is still not true nothing. Even such oppositional nothing is implaced within true nothing. The perceptual act is established when it becomes conceivable that determined being is immediately implaced in true nothing. And when we can think of that nothing as further implaced in nothing, the judicative act is established. All acts appear in cases where we can see that a single *basho* is immediately implaced in the *basho* of true nothing. Hence it becomes conceivable that the distinctions and changes between various acts are seen from the standpoint of volition.²²⁶

Because being is implaced in nothing, universal concepts, predicates, are always included within the root of acts. However, it [the universal] is not merely mirrored in oppositional nothing. Instead of being freed as an

abstract concept, it becomes an immanent object for being immediately implaced in true nothing. An immanent object is a universal concept that has been fixed in the *basho* of true nothing. Although acts are thought to necessarily include immanent objects, acts are instead implaced in the immanent object. It is by means of a *basho* determined as an immanent object that we see the act.²²⁷ Objects of acts must be thoroughly oppositional for the reason that the *basho* of true nothing is a *basho* where being and nothing overlap. Something for example like perception, even if we can think of it as including objects that are not oppositional, is not an act in the strict sense. It is still a *basho* of being enclosed by a universal concept. We cannot yet say that this *basho* is immediately implaced in nothing. In respect to the judicative act [though], clearly the oppositional nature of such objects appears.²²⁸ The will is immediately behind judgment. Judicative consciousness emerges through the fact that being is immediately implaced in nothing. If we are to arrive at Kant's consciousness-in-general by driving through Aristotle's "general sensibility" [*sensus communis*], there has to be a turn from being to nothing. Needless to say even perception, so long as we can think of it as consciousness, includes opposition. It is by means of opposition that consciousness is established. In fact, this is also why we think that objects overlap upon the field of consciousness.

We see the world of pure acts when the *basho* of being is immediately implaced in the *basho* of nothing. What we ordinarily think of as the world of consciousness is what signifies that world. But this world cannot yet escape the one world of objects conceptually determined as a world of immanent objects. What we can regard as an immanent object is a *basho* of being that is dependent upon²²⁹ nothing, or the *basho* of true nothing that has been determined by means of oppositional nothing. The *basho* of true nothing would have to be even deeper, transcending and extending beyond it. Even that *basho* would have to be implaced in it.²³⁰ Herein we see the world of will for the first time. As a cognitive object, it cannot go beyond the union of being and nothing. And in arriving at the union of [grammatical] subject and predicate, knowledge reaches its extremity. But when we become conscious of that union, there would have to be a *basho* of consciousness wherein such union is implaced. When we say that what *is* is implaced in something, there must be a *basho* wherein the identical thing is also implaced. It would have to be in this sort of *basho* that *both* difference on the hinter side of identity and identity on the hinter side of difference are contained. When we can think of being and nothing as transformed through union, there would have to be that which sees that transformation, a *basho* wherein the transformation is implaced. Otherwise transformation would remain there as the transformed, that is, as a certain thing, and would be unable to generate further contradictory development.²³¹ For the development of contradiction, there would

have to be a memory of contradiction. If we look at this from the standpoint of mere logical judgment, it would be to simply move continually from contradiction to contradiction. We would have no choice but to think of its unity merely as that which endlessly contains contradiction within itself. [But] to think in this way would still be to see the [grammatical] subject of judgment externally. It would not yet mean that the predicate truly becomes the [grammatical] subject. It would be to see the field of consciousness as a *basho* that has been determined.²³² For Hegel's reason to be truly immanent, it would have to be what mirrors contradiction, a memory of contradiction, rather than what includes contradiction within itself. Mere being that is there at the start²³³ would have to be a *basho* that includes everything. And at its bottom it would have to be a plane that endlessly extends with nothing there, like a formless space that mirrors what has form.

The *basho* wherein is implaced the self-identical, or rather what endlessly contains contradictory development within itself, is what I call the *basho* of true nothing. On the other hand one might say that upon arriving at the former [self-identity], there would be no need to think of a further *basho* wherein it is implaced. But the former [self-identity] is what has been driven in the direction of the [grammatical] subject of judgment and the latter [self-contradiction] is what has been driven in the direction of its predicate. To be immanent is to be a predicate, and even the substance that becomes the [grammatical] subject but not a predicate, if it is knowable to the extent that it is immanent, must start from the latter [self-contradiction]. We can say that the latter is that which is the deepest and most fundamental.²³⁴ Philosophy hitherto has not adequately conceived the standpoint of consciousness. If we are to conceive consciousness from the standpoint of judgment, we have no choice but to pursue it in the direction of the predicate, that is, to pursue it in the direction of the presumptive universal. We are unable to derive the fact of being-conscious, whether it be from the constitution of matter through form or from the development of *logos*. We would have to seek that which mirrors all objects in the culmination of the predicate. When we think about the meaning of *what* is conscious, it is already that which we are conscious of [as object] and not that which is conscious [as subject].²³⁵

Aristotle stated that there must be something universal at the foundation of what changes.²³⁶ We can see what changes to the extent that this universal is a determined *basho* of finitude [*yūgen no basho*], and we can see pure acts to the extent that it [the universal] is infinitesimal.²³⁷ However, when it turns into utter nothing, the mirror of consciousness that simply mirrors would have to become visible. Even the mirror of consciousness that merely mirrors, what I call the *basho* of nothing, must also be something that possesses logical significance insofar as we can think of a true zero that subtracts

one from one. In the still deeper mirror of nothing, even what constitutes the root of pure acts, what the Greeks called pure form, becomes an abstract universal concept to be released.²³⁸ We think of universal concepts as [epistemologically] subjective because we always think from the standpoint of the subject–object opposition. But the mirror of consciousness that mirrors abstract universal concepts must be even deeper and broader by also enveloping what mirrors objects of so-called objectivity [i.e., epistemological objects].²³⁹ Therefore because it is truly nothing it is immediate and immanent to us.²⁴⁰ By driving forward in the direction of the predicate of judgment toward its culmination, that is, by continually transcending predicates in the predicate-direction, we see the mirror that simply mirrors.²⁴¹ Upon it is mirrored the world of infinite possibilities as well as the world of meanings. When the determined *basho* of being touches upon the *basho* of nothing, we can think of the subject–object union, and if we go one step further, pure acts are established. Even the act of judgment would be an example of this. Although we see the so-called world of oppositional objects as each content generates opposition, when we transcend this standpoint even further, we come to see the world of merely mirrored meanings.²⁴² Our “free will” is that which has seen pure acts from [the standpoint of] that *basho*. For this reason volition is the reverse side of judgment. It is a judgment that takes the predicate as the [grammatical] subject. Meanings generated upon the mirror that simply mirrors, in each case, can become the volitional subjectivity [*ishi no shutai*], and this is why the will is thought to be free.²⁴³ We can think of the particular as subjectivity [*shutai*] on the basis of the will [*ishi ni oite*]. And the particular that becomes the volitional subjectivity must be that which has been mirrored on the mirror of nothing. Rather than a particular subsumed under a determinate universal concept, it is a kind of dispersion that appears by breaking through that *basho* of being.²⁴⁴

In the foregoing, I have explained that breaking through the *basho* of being enclosed by universal concepts, there is the *basho* of nothing, which we may regard as a mirror that simply mirrors and which we can see the will in the relationships of that *basho* to the *basho* of being. But I was unable to simply refer to what is implied in it. Although we can see the will in the *basho* of true nothing, it is but one aspect of acts mirrored upon the mirror of nothing. We see the will only to the extent that we see the determined *basho* of being. At the *basho* of true nothing, the will itself must be negated as well. And as acts become the mirrored, so also does the will become something mirrored.²⁴⁵ That which moves, that which is at work, must all be shadows of the eternal.²⁴⁶

(There were many points explained inadequately toward the end of this section. Please refer to my “In Response to Dr. Sōda” and “That which Knows” for clarification.)²⁴⁷

5.

Translators' synopsis: *Nishida takes up again the analysis of the judicative structure in its most fundamental form, i.e., subsumption. Subsumption is in turn understood as implacement, and Nishida reasons that it must refer to an independent system of envelopments by self-determining universals in their endless layerings, ultimately upon the self-mirroring nothing. On the basis of that enveloping nothing in its self-awareness, the mutually exclusive contradictories of the grammatical-subject dimension (transcendent object) and the predicate dimension (transcendent predicate) can be united. Nishida thus suggests that this unity of envelopment, the holistic intuition of which cannot but be presupposed for any perceptual or judicative focus upon an object, cannot be a thing like point but rather a basho, a "place," a "predicate unity" as a circle without periphery. From this standpoint of intuition, all the activities of the will, manifest in the determining acts and their determined objects, are self-mirrorings of the basho of nothing. In this section Nishida clarifies further the relationship between intuition, will, and other acts. And he speaks of the contradictory unity seen in that intuition as the nontemporal root of change among opposites and thus of time.*

We need to precisely distinguish perception, thinking, volition, and intuition. But as they relate to one another, there must be something that unifies them at their root.²⁴⁸ Grasping it would allow us to clarify their mutual distinctions as well as relationships. While there may be many other acts of consciousness beside these that we should discuss, such as memory, imagination, and emotion, for now we will limit ourselves to these four. Viewed from the standpoint of knowledge, the most immediate and immanent is judgment. And as judgment, the most fundamental would be the subsumptive judgment. Subsumptive judgments entail the subsumption of the particular in the universal. To subsume means to take the particular as [grammatical] subject and to predicate the universal of it. When speaking of subsuming, one immediately thinks of an act. Without involving such a concept [of an act], what it means rather is that the universal and the particular of a concept are immediately implaced in a subsumptive relationship. When we speak of a relation, we think of two opposing things. But to be able to think of two things in opposition, the two must be implaced in a common universal.²⁴⁹ In this sense we can say again that even as a relation, the subsumptive relationship is the most fundamental. If we were to eliminate any temporal sense from the judicative act, what remains at its root would simply be the subsumptive relationship. On the other hand one might say that we would not be able to think of acts without considering temporal relations in some sense. But we conceive of judicative acts by taking this subsumptive relationship as the basis. Needless to say, changing or activity cannot immediately arise from such subsumptive relationships.

But we can comprehend acts of judgment as completions in time of such subsumptive relationships.²⁵⁰

What does it mean to take the particular as [grammatical] subject and the universal as its predicate? When we think in this way, we always assume the subject–object opposition and think that what becomes the [grammatical] subject pertains to the objective world and what becomes the predicate belongs to the world of the [epistemological] subject. However, prior to conceiving this opposition, there must be an immediate relationship between what becomes the [grammatical] subject and what becomes the predicate, and there must be an independent system of concepts in themselves, whereby the objective [*kyakkanteki*] validity of judgments is established. How does the system of concepts maintain itself? While we can think of the universal as enveloping the particular as its basis and the particular as implaced in the universal, we can also think of the particular as possessing the universal as its basis. But we need to instead take the former to be the system of concepts themselves. The latter already involves a complicated relationship, whereby we are already conceiving of the opposition of the two worlds of subject–object and externally projecting the [grammatical] subject. Otherwise we would not be able to say that the one possesses the many. Needless to say, even while thinking of the universal as including the particular, we would also have to think of the universal as transcending itself. But we think in this way due to seeing the concept as something thought, thinking [of it] by separating concept and consciousness. Universal and particular overlap immediately without limit. And the *basho* where this overlapping takes place is consciousness. If we think in the aforementioned manner, what truly becomes the [grammatical] subject in judgment is not the particular but rather the universal. That which is completely outside of the predicate cannot become the subject of a judgment.²⁵¹ Even the nonrational becomes the subject of a judgment to the extent that it can be universally conceptualized in some sense. Thinking in this way, judgment would mean the self-determination of the universal, universals would all have to be concrete universals, and strictly speaking there would be no abstract universals. Needless to say what I mean here by judgment is not the so-called judicative act but simply what becomes its root. To regard forms as active as the Greeks did becomes possible only on the basis of a truly immediate *basho* of consciousness.

If we start, as in the foregoing, from the subsumptive relationship between particular and universal, if the universal already includes the particular in a state of immediacy without any premise, and if the foundation of judgment is set upon a tendency that inclines toward the particular from the universal, I believe then that we can think of various forms of acts from this subsumptive relationship between universal and particular.²⁵² We can

endlessly conceive of particulars under particulars and of universals above universals. When there is a fissure between universal and particular, the particulars embraced by that universal are merely distinct from one another. When the plane of universal and the plane of particulars are united, that is, when there is no longer any fissure between universal and particular, the particulars reciprocally stand in contradictory opposition, that is, a contradictory unity is established.²⁵³ Herein the universal not only just envelops particulars but comes to possess a constitutive significance. The universal becomes what is identical with itself, and universal and particular unite in self-identity. But this does not simply mean that they become one. Both planes are thoroughly distinct from one another yet approach one another without end to thus arrive at their extremities. Herein the subsumptive relationship takes on the form of the so-called pure act. Because in such cases the predicate-plane cannot be seen separate from the [grammatical] subject-plane, I call it the *basho* of nothing.²⁵⁴ Intuition whereby subject and object are united must mean this sort of thing.

Needless to say the pure act in the above sense is not yet what is at work or moves. It only means that the predicate becomes the [grammatical] subject and a substance that does not become the predicate. It means that judgment transcends and possesses the [grammatical] subject within.²⁵⁵ If we were to think of the subject-object union as a simple oneness, the relationship of subsumptive judgments would disappear. Furthermore, the claim that the predicate becomes a substance would be meaningless. However, if we continually pursue this from the subsumptive relation, in no way could the opposition of the two²⁵⁶ disappear. Intuition means that the predicate becomes [grammatical] subject. I would like to seek therein the root of all that is conceived to be an act [*sayō*]. Only in the object of contradictory opposition can we first come to think of what is at work. In order to consider consciousness as a pure act, there must be such an intuition at the root of consciousness. Ordinarily people note only the temporal quality of acts without paying sufficient attention to the distinction between mere physical acts and acts of consciousness. But in the act of consciousness there would have to be that which is nontemporal behind temporal change. Needless to say, we would have to think of the nontemporal at the root of physical acts as well, such as matter and force. But what differentiates the two kinds of acts—from the standpoint of judgment—is that the predicate would have to be the root in the act of consciousness. It is needless to say that we ought not to immediately identify logical progression with temporal change. But there must be something logical before the establishment of temporal change. At the root of time there is the possibility of changing into the contradictory, there is the unity of contradictories.²⁵⁷ We can think of acts of consciousness to be pure acts because what we conceive to be our

consciousness serves as a *basho* for the unity of that contradiction. Needless to say even in mathematics, we can say that the predicate becomes a [grammatical] subject. The unity of mathematics is a contradictory unity. But one might say that mathematics is not conscious of itself, the act of consciousness does not emerge from logical contradiction. The universal that is the root of mathematics is still a determined universal, a determined *basho*. Yet if we continually pursue this to the end in the direction of universals in subsumptive relationships, the direction of the predicate in judgments, we cannot but arrive at what I call the *basho* of true nothing. Needless to say, when transcending determined universals, judgment would have to lose, itself. However we have no choice but to arrive here if we are to continually pursue the concrete universal to its extremity.

Aristotle in book three of *Physics* argues against Parmenides who says that the infinite [or indeterminate] contains everything. We think of the infinite in this way because it is analogous to the whole. And as the matter for the completion of a volume, it is potentially a whole. But in its manifestness [*kengenteki*], it is not the whole. Instead of enveloping, it is the enveloped. Aristotle asserts that we cannot speak of the unintelligible, the infinite, as enveloping or determining.²⁵⁸ One would have no choice but to say so if one takes it as an object of judgment. But when one is conscious of what has been determined as form, even if it is *entelecheia*,²⁵⁹ there must further be a *basho* wherein it is implaced. And in the case of the *ideas*, they cannot be thus without a *basho*.²⁶⁰ If we were to separate potency and manifestation [*kengen*] through the segmentation of volume, there would [still] have to be what sees this act. The nothing enveloped by being as potency is not true nothing. True nothing would have to be what envelops being. Manifestation would then mean being implaced in true nothing. The Greeks with their intellectualism, even with Plotinus's "the One" [*to hen*], were unable to thoroughly exhaust this significance of true nothing.

When we speak of transcending the determined universal, one may think that it is utterly impossible to discuss this from the standpoint of knowledge. But it is an indispensable condition for the establishment of knowledge. Even in the merely subsumptive relationship between universal and particular, there would already have to be what envelops the two. That would be the true universal. We can see this clearly in the contradictory relationships we consider as the culmination of judicative knowledge. In contradictory relations, the knower and the known, in the least, must be in mutual contact, [that is,] the plane of the [grammatical] subject and the plane of the predicate must be merged within a certain sphere.²⁶¹ This is why we think of such knowledge as a priori. Even the object of the knowledge of contradictory unity, as itself an object, does not contain contradiction. Instead we can say that it is what has been strictly unified, or at least

does not include any otherness. In the paramount sense of the term we must say that it is objective [*kyakkanteki*]. To be contradictory refers to the predicate. We can speak of a contradictory relationship only among what has been mirrored upon the predicate-plane of a judgment.²⁶² On the side of the so-called [grammatical] subject, it constitutes the oppositionality of this or not-this.²⁶³ When we get stuck with an object of contradictory unity, from the standpoint of judicative knowledge we can no longer see the universal that further embraces this and its other. But even such an object cannot escape the possibility of predication. Otherwise it could not become an object of judgment.²⁶⁴ On this basis we cannot help but clash with the [notion of a] simple predicate-plane and pure [epistemological] subjectivity. It may be fine if we were to postulate the opposition of subject and object from the outset and thoroughly adhere to it. But otherwise we can reach the *basho* of lived experience, the world of pure subjectivity that envelops the so-called objective world [*kyakkankai*]. It is at this *basho* that the being of the copula and the being of existence are in accord.

If we take consciousness-in-general—conceivable as the subject for epistemological objects—as consciousness as well, we must consider it as distinct from the object of consciousness. From the standpoint of judgment we have no choice then but to say that it is that wherein the object is implied, the predicate. It is by means of this that the consciousness of judgment is established.²⁶⁵ If we are to define consciousness from the standpoint of judgment, it would be what thoroughly becomes the predicate but not the [grammatical] subject. The category of consciousness is in its predicate-nature. We can see consciousness objectively by taking the predicate as an object. Therein is [found] the root of the reflective categories. Although the so-called categories were hitherto viewed solely in the centripetal direction, we can also see them in the opposite direction, that is, in the centrifugal direction. Judgment is constituted from the relationship between [grammatical] subject and predicate, and to the extent that it is established as judicative knowledge at all, there must be a predicate-plane that extends behind it. The [grammatical] subject must be thoroughly implied in the predicate. We can think of the judicative act as secondary.²⁶⁶ Even with so-called empirical knowledge, as long as it is judicative knowledge, there must be a predicating universal at its root.²⁶⁷

“X is discerned by [*ishikisareru*] me”²⁶⁸ must accompany every empirical knowledge. Self-awareness serves as the predicate-plane of empirical judgments. Ordinarily we even think of the I to be a unity as a [grammatical] subject possessing various qualities like a thing. But the I is not a unity *qua* [grammatical] subject. It must instead be a predicating unity. It would have to be a circle rather than a point, a *basho* rather than a thing. The reason why the I cannot know itself is because a predicate cannot become a [grammatical]

subject.²⁶⁹ One may then ask how the universal that becomes the root of mathematical judgments and the universal that becomes the root of empirical-scientific judgments differ. While in regard to the former, as we stated previously, the plane of particulars and the plane of the universal simply merge together, in regard to the latter, the plane of the universal that includes particulars envelops them but with residue [*amari*].²⁷⁰ Primordially in judgments, that which becomes the predicate but not the [grammatical] subject is broader in scope than what becomes the subject. From the standpoint of judicative consciousness that pursues objectivity [*kyakkansei*] solely in the direction of the [grammatical] subject, we may think of this as merely an abstract universal concept. But the foundation of our empirical knowledge would have to be set in the predicate in this sense, the objectivity of qualities. The objectivity of empirical knowledge is erected on the basis of qualities carrying the sense of [grammatical] subjects but not predicates.²⁷¹ Even with space as a form of intuition, everything would have to be space [i.e., spatial] before standing in the relationship between container and contained. And this is why we think that there must be an intuition at the foundation of mathematical knowledge.²⁷² Intuition means nothing other than that the [grammatical] subject-plane becomes immersed into the predicate-plane. Even when set behind what we thus regard as intuition, the predicate-plane can not disappear. And even while containing the oppositionless object, it still retains residue. This predicate-plane is what we may conceive to be the world of our consciousness. To be that which I am conscious of means to be implied in such a predicate-plane. The object of thought is implied in it as well and so is the object of perception. Although we think of the consciousness of thinking and the consciousness of perception as distinct, this is because we conceive the distinction in light of their objects. The perceiving I must also be the thinking I. Even to think of consciousness as an act is already to think of it in light of its relation to an object. Even the act itself is something that one is conscious of. Every act, as an act about which one is conscious, is implied in an identical plane of consciousness. Thinking and sensation are conjoined by means of it.

The plane of consciousness is the predicate-plane that has enveloped the [grammatical] subject of judgment. And the [grammatical] subject-plane thus enveloped becomes an oppositionless object and its margins become the world of meaning. This is why even sensation is always enclosed by fringes,²⁷³ and there is always an intuition at the center of thought. Because we ordinarily think of knowing as the activity of the [epistemological] subject upon the object [*kyakkan*], taking subject and object from the start in oppositional terms, we think of the oppositionless object as outside of the [epistemological] subject²⁷⁴ and that only concepts are implied in it. But the so-called universal concept provides the outline of an intuition within

the plane of consciousness. And meanings refer to the various changes on the plane of consciousness effected by it.²⁷⁵ Moreover, it is something like a field of forces. Not only are meanings immanent in consciousness but so are objects. The intentional relationship is not an intending of something beyond consciousness. It is rather the line of force [*riki-sen*] of something implaced in the plane of consciousness. We ordinarily eliminate from the plane of consciousness the plane of intuition expressed in the principle of identity, to consider only what remains to be the plane of consciousness.²⁷⁶ As I stated earlier, we think only the *basho* of oppositional nothing that opposes beings to be the plane of consciousness. This is why we think that behind intuition there lies something other than consciousness.²⁷⁷ But intuition, as that which is self-identical in itself, must be included within the predicate-plane.

The real plane of consciousness is the predicate-plane that expands by transcending even beyond what lies behind what is in itself self-identical, thoroughly advancing through the subsumptive relationships between universals and particulars. Even intuition is immediately implaced in this and so is thinking. Not only oppositional objects but even oppositionless objects are implaced in it. Because it transcends and envelops all [grammatical] subject-planes, every object implaced in it is thus immediate in the same way. The distinction between various objects emerge from the relationships between what are implaced in it. When we say that the predicate-plane expands by transcending the subject-plane, we would [also] have to say that it transcends judicative consciousness. If we lose the [grammatical] subject, judgment will not be established and everything will become a pure predicate. Substance that is the unity of the [grammatical] subject will disappear and everything will become substanceless. This is how the consciousness of volition is established in the predicate-plane.²⁷⁸ Those who adhere only to the standpoint of judgment will be unable to recognize that predicate-plane. But although the will cannot become an object of judgment, insofar as we possess the self-awareness of will, there must be a consciousness that mirrors volition. Although even judgment itself is unable to become an object of judgment, insofar as we are conscious of judgment, there must be a consciousness that is over and beyond judgment. We thus have no choice but to seek this plane of consciousness in the direction of the predicate. In proportion to the degree to which the predicate-plane transcends the [grammatical] subject-plane to become deep and expansive, volition is free. And yet the will is not thoroughly separate from judgment. In the paramount sense the will is a judgment that takes the predicate as its [grammatical] subject.²⁷⁹ Volition that does not include judgment is nothing but mere motion. Judgment reaches its extremity in obtaining what is self-identical, and when it transcends the

contours of that self-identical thing, it becomes will.²⁸⁰ And thus the self-identical is always included at the center of volition. As stated in the foregoing, the self-identical is surrounded by meanings, and the oppositionless object is surrounded by oppositional objects.²⁸¹ When the predicate-plane contains the self-identical and furthermore possesses its domain, the predicate-plane is nothing in relation to the [grammatical] subject-plane. Therefore, in proportion to the degree to which it [the predicate-plane] becomes deeper, meaning comes to be included within what is self-identical, and the oppositional object comes to be included within the object without opposition, that is, the self-identical comes to take on the form provided by the will.²⁸²

Self-identity does not mean that the [grammatical] subject-plane and the predicate-plane simply become one. [Rather] the two planes thoroughly overlap.²⁸³ When the self-identical is transferred behind to the predicate-plane, meanings surrounding the [grammatical] subject-plane of self-identity are absorbed into self-identity in the predicate-plane. The self-identity of our volitional I is therefore self-identity in the predicate-plane.²⁸⁴ Since meanings external to it become included within self-identity, in volition we can think of the universal as becoming contained within the particular. Needless to say, this would no longer be what we can call a particular. Instead it would have to be an individual body. It becomes an individual body when from the plane of judicative consciousness we look at the self-identical in the volitional plane behind it.²⁸⁵ In the plane of judicative consciousness, we are likely to distinguish between objects and meanings as well as between objects without opposition and oppositional objects. When arriving at the simple predicate-plane by transcending the extremity of self-identity [though], we can regard these distinctions as having disappeared and become equivalent.²⁸⁶ From the standpoint of the simple I of consciousness, we cannot but regard intuition and thought as what we are conscious of in an equivalent manner. In the consciousness of acts, we are conscious of sensory acts as well as of thinking acts in the same way. Just as the world of voluntary consciousness becomes opened therein, the immediate conjunction of meaning and object also becomes possible.

After meaning and object become temporarily immediate while remaining two in the predicate-plane, in what sort of relationship do the oppositional object and the oppositionless object stand, what does the unity of the predicate-plane signify, and what sort of a thing is the self-identity that is transferred into the predicate-plane? Speaking in terms of mere knowledge, it is already the unity of subject-object, and it would be impossible to think of anything beyond this. But the so-called subject-object unity would be a self-identity seen in the [grammatical] subject-plane. There must be a self-identity that we can see further in the predicate-plane. The former is

mere identity but true self-identity is instead in the latter. While intuition means that a plane of *basho* becomes one with the plane of *basho* wherein it is implaced, the union of these two planes does not simply mean the union of [grammatical] subject-plane and predicate-plane. Rather it means that the [grammatical] subject-plane sinks deep to the bottom of the predicate-plane, that the predicate-plane thoroughly possesses the subject-plane implaced within itself, and that the predicate-plane itself becomes the subject-plane.²⁸⁷ That the predicate-plane itself becomes the subject-plane means that the predicate-plane makes itself nothing and becomes a mere *basho*.²⁸⁸ In subsumptive relationships, the fact that particulars continually become particulars to the end would have to mean that universals continually become universals to the end. The culmination of the universal is that wherein the universal can no longer be particularized. This means that it transcends every particular content to become a *basho* that is nothing.²⁸⁹ Speaking in terms of the judicative relationship between [grammatical] subject and predicate, this simply means the intuition of the subject-object union. Hence the consciousness of the oppositionless object does not mean that consciousness transcends itself, but rather that consciousness enters deeply into itself.²⁹⁰ We call it “transcendence” because we are looking only at the relationship among objects without thinking of the essence of consciousness itself. If we are to seek the essence of consciousness in the predicate-plane that extends while enveloping the [grammatical] subject-plane, to advance in this direction would be to arrive at pure consciousness. At its culmination, while the predicate-plane becomes nothing, the oppositional object becomes absorbed into the object that is without opposition, and everything becomes what is at work within it. We can also think of them as what are endlessly at work, as pure acts. Thus we can say that the will always embraces intellectual self-identity within itself. Just as we see in the direction of the [grammatical] subject the substance that can never be reached without end,²⁹¹ we see in the direction of the predicate the will that can never be reached without end. Ultimately, when we thus arrive at the *basho* of true nothing by transcending even the opposition of [grammatical] subject and predicate, it [the will] becomes an intuition that sees itself.

To transcend even that predicate, needless to say, would have to mean transcending knowledge. Being conscious means the predicate’s transcendence of the [grammatical] subject, and arriving at the depths of consciousness means to proceed in this direction. But in that case what we conceive from the standpoint of knowledge to be the farthest from us, would be the nearest from the standpoint of volition [now], and the relationship between the oppositional object and the oppositionless object would be reversed.²⁹² In the two opposed judgments of “X is” and “X is not,” if what becomes their [grammatical] subject [i.e., “X”] is nothing as totally indeterminate,

we can think of being and nothing as one in the manner Hegel conceived.²⁹³ And accordingly, as their synthesis, we see [mutual] transformation.²⁹⁴ In such cases if we were to seek the [grammatical] subject as an intellectual object,²⁹⁵ we only see what has been transformed. But behind it there would have to be the *basho* of nothing, transcending affirmation-and-negation, an independent predicate-plane. That which illuminates endless dialectical development would have to be this predicate-plane.

By advancing the subsumptive relationship thoroughly in the direction of the predicate, we arrive at its [the predicate's] extremity in the plane of consciousness. The plane of consciousness is what envelops the [grammatical] subject by transcending it. Even with what we sense, insofar as we can think of it as an intellectual object, there must be something universal, that is, a predicate, behind it. We can conceive of what is at work in the broadest sense when that predicate becomes the [grammatical] subject.²⁹⁶ We can therefore say that what is at work in this sense is the most immediate to our consciousness. This is why without the determination of universal concepts we cannot conceive of what is at work. It is by reversing the direction²⁹⁷ of judgment that we can think of what is at work. As we classify our empirical content into various kinds and unite them with concepts, we distinguish various acts. Consequently, as various universal concepts become further unified by universal concepts above them, we think of the unity of acts. If we continue advancing forward thoroughly in the direction of such unity of universal concepts, we would eventually arrive at the universal concept unifying all empirical content. Physical quality must be this sort of a thing, which we can regard as the content of general sensibility [*sensus communis*].²⁹⁸ What Husserl calls perceptual intuition is nothing but intuition determined by universal concepts in this sense. If we advance forward in the direction of the predicate by further transcending such determinations, we transcend perceptions to enter the *basho* of thinking. Even in this case consciousness is not separated from perception but rather perception is implaced in it as intuition. We see the mere object of thinking in the plane of its residue. The so-called self-aware consciousness is a *basho* wherein both perception and thought, in this way, are immediately implaced.²⁹⁹ And the plane of self-aware consciousness would correspond, as it were, to the *basho* of oppositional nothing. This is what we ordinarily think of as the plane of consciousness.

We can however think of an even deeper and broader *basho* of true nothing, wherein both being and nothing are implaced. True intuition is immediately implaced in this *basho* by breaking through what I called the *basho* of consciousness. Because the *basho* of oppositional nothing, as a determined *basho*, cannot further escape [its] [grammatically] subjective sense,³⁰⁰ it cannot subsume everything transcendent³⁰¹ within. True intuition would

have to transcend even that *basho*. Even so-called sensation, in its foundation, as intuition, breaks through the so-called plane of consciousness to be implaced in the *basho* of true nothing. As a true intuition, what is sensed would have to be an aesthetic object.³⁰² As *basho* becomes nothing, the oppositional object becomes absorbed into the non-oppositional object, and the object becomes filled with meaning. In this way when we immediately see what is implaced in the *basho* of intuition, i.e., the *basho* of true nothing, in what I call the *basho* of consciousness, i.e., the *basho* of oppositional nothing, it becomes what is endlessly at work.³⁰³ The *basho* of intuition is an even deeper and broader *basho* of consciousness than the so-called *basho* of consciousness; it is the culmination of consciousness. We can thus regard it as a seeing of the transcendent within.³⁰⁴ But if we see it [the transcendent] from the *basho* of intuition, what is implaced in this [*basho*] is instead nothing but its own image projected onto the *basho* of oppositional nothing.³⁰⁵ In this way seen from the *basho* of intuition, what is at work is a volitional act as the self-determination of what is implaced in it. Therefore, if from the plane of knowledge we see what is implaced in the predicate-plane of intuition, the *basho* wherein intuitions are implaced, we see it as endless acts generating being from nothing. And when seen from the plane of intuition wherein even nothing is implaced, it is the will. Because the plane of intuition expands without end, transcending the plane of knowledge, voluntary will is established in its midst.

Judgment entails the subsumption of the particular into the universal. And what changes transforms continually into its opposite. In order for us to be conscious of what changes, there has to be a universal concept containing opposites. In such cases, insofar as we regard the universal concept as implaced in the plane of consciousness and the particular as implaced in the plane of objects, we cannot be conscious of what is at work.³⁰⁶ But when the object-plane adheres to the plane of consciousness, that is, when the universal immediately becomes [seen as] a *basho* of particulars, we can see what is at work. The adhering of the object-plane to the plane of consciousness means that the object becomes [seen as] that which judges and consciousness becomes that which changes.³⁰⁷ But if the plane of objects and the plane of consciousness, the [grammatical] subject-plane and the predicate-plane, simply become one, there would be neither activity nor judgment. To the extent that we can see these things, the predicate-plane must be what envelops the subject-plane.³⁰⁸ We ought to thus think this through on the basis of the quality of judicative consciousness. The transition of what changes into its opposite would imply that there is something that cannot be determined as [a mere] predicate. And it also means that as the predicate becomes determined by it, this thing in turn becomes a predicate in relation to everything [else].³⁰⁹ Put in terms of the [grammatical] subject,

we could call this³¹⁰ the individual body; and put in terms of the predicate, we ought to call it the ultimate species.³¹¹ To conceive of what is at work, put in terms of the idea that the predicate envelops the [grammatical] subject, implies the endless approach of the [grammatical] subject to the predicate. And put in terms of the predicate-plane, it would mean that the predicate-plane is determining itself, i.e., judging.³¹²

We can therefore conceive of what is at work insofar as the predicate-plane is determined. And we can truly think of what is at work only upon the predicate-plane that is conscious of contradiction in judgment.³¹³ It is upon the predicate-plane of contradictory unity that the predicate-plane first becomes independent. While a merely determined predicate-plane serves as the root of judgment, it cannot be what is at work. Just as we can think of working activity as the approach of the [grammatical] subject-plane toward the predicate-plane, it is also the approach of the predicate-plane toward the subject-plane. To the extent that the predicate-plane has room while enveloping the subject-plane, it becomes what is at work. For the predicate-plane to be active [at work] means to determine the subject-plane within itself while enveloping it with surplus [or: residue]. It means to see the subsumptive relationship from the predicate-plane. For this reason, a single subsumptive relationship, [seen] from the predicate-plane that envelops the subject-plane with surplus, is volition. But in the domain that corresponds to the subject-plane, it is judgment. And in the subject-plane as contained within the predicate-plane, it is what is at work. However for the predicate-plane to see itself in the subject-plane means that the predicate-plane itself becomes the *basho* of true nothing. It means that the will destroys itself and that everything implaced in it becomes intuition. As the predicate-plane becomes infinitely expansive, *basho* itself becomes truly nothing and what is implaced in it simply becomes an intuition of the self.³¹⁴ That the universal predicate reaches its extremity means that the particular [grammatical] subject reaches its extremity and becomes itself.³¹⁵

I regret that after many repetitions in the foregoing discussion ultimately I could not adequately express what I was thinking. In particular I could not further enter into the issue of intuition. Rather than tackling the issue of knowing by starting from the opposition of knower and known as hitherto undertaken, I am trying to initiate [my inquiry], even more deeply, from the subsumptive relationship of judgment.



Logic and Life

NISHIDA KITARŌ

1.

Translators' synopsis: *Nishida begins the essay by introducing the reader to its topic: the generation of what is called "logic" from within the world of historical reality.¹ He connects this to Heraclitus's meaning of the term "logos." Related to the logos-structure of the world, logic is seen as a self-formative act of the world.*

We ought to think about what is logic by conceiving it in terms of how it is generated [*seisei*] rather than in its already completed form. What we call logic is something that has been generated within the historical world. We should regard it as a kind of formative act [*keisei sayō*]. In what way has it been generated in the historical world? What sort of position and role does it possess in the world of historical reality [*rekishiteki jitsuzai*]?² Having said this however, I do not mean to say that we ought to think of the generation [*seisei*] of logic in psychological or sociological terms. [For] these sciences are already logically structured.

This is not to say simply that linguistic expression is thinking per se or that thinking is linguistic expression per se. But without language in some sense, it would be impossible to think. Plato at times stated in jest that *dianoia* is a voiceless conversation.³ A judgment is a proposition. But what kind of a proposition is true and what kind false? Therein [in the answer to that question] must lie the science of logic. What Plato called *dialektike*,⁴ the method of true knowledge, was already what we consider today to be logic. Aristotle brought this to completion, and as the study of logic it has become the foundation of scholarly methodology to this day.

One might think that with the establishment of logic as the method of true knowledge, the truth or falsity of a proposition is thereby determined. However, a true proposition, as Plato states in *The Sophist*, is a linguistic expression of the real.⁵ Even Aristotle's logic is not so-called formal logic but instead is closely connected to his metaphysics. We can conceive the middle term [*baigo*] in a syllogism [*suironshiki*] to be in correspondence with the source [*kongen*] of thing-events. In Greek philosophy, reality is *logos*-bearing [*logosu-teki*]. We can thus say that, at their root, there is no separation between *logos* and reality. Yet reality is not only *logos*-bearing (i.e., representational) in the sense of Greek philosophy. To the contrary, reality in early modern science may be said to be un-*logos*-like.⁶ Accordingly *logos* and reality cannot but be separated. Aristotle's logic fell into [the status of] formal logic. But knowledge, while being in some sense the linguistic expression of reality, must also be logical. Even natural science must be logical. Kant's philosophy is a logic for the sciences. But in Kant's philosophy, knowledge is merely subjective and the thing-in-itself is transcendent.⁷ Knowledge loses the sense that it is the linguistic expression of reality. Needless to say, Kant did not [mean to] say that knowledge is simply subjective. But he sought the ground of the objectivity of knowledge in the synthetic unity [*sōgōtōitsu*] of consciousness-in-general.⁸

I do not mean to deny the objectivity of science at all. I am rather fully aware of how science regulates our lives and how it possesses a significant force in the development of the historical world. But I believe that we are today stuck in a deep and great problem in regard to reality. Historical reality is not something that we can just conceive by means of the logic of objectification.⁹ The active self [*hataraku jiko*]¹⁰ is unable to enter into the world of objects [*taishōkai*]¹¹ postulated by the logic of objectification. Therefore the world of historical reality must be inclusive of the self at work. Needless to say, the study of history [historiology] can probably be established from the standpoint of the logic of objectification as well. And social science, which takes the acting self [*kōiteki jiko*] as its object [*taishō*], may also likewise be established. These sciences, however, are established through the mere epistemological objectification of the self.¹² They [all] view the acting self from the standpoint of the intellectual self [*chiteki jiko*].¹³ On the other hand, one might say that the acting self that determines itself thoroughly is not something that can be logically conceived. One might say that the thinker cannot think about the thinker, that the eye cannot see the eye. But in short this means that the self cannot be thought in light of the logic of objectification. All the same, our self exists in the historical world as a contradictory existence [*mujunteki sonzai*].¹⁴ Having said this, however, I do not intend to ignore the logic of objectification. In one aspect, logic must persistently be in terms of the logic of objectifica-

tion. Otherwise it would not be logic. Moreover, even when speaking of a determination without a determiner [*genteisurumononaki gentei*],¹⁵ I am not simply saying that there is no object [*taishō*] in the establishment of the self. Even when I speak of the “universal of nothing” [*mu no ippansha*],¹⁶ I do not mean to say that there is nothing at all. The world of historical reality [*rekishiteki jitsuzaikai*] is not the appearance of what already exists. Instead it must be creative. That which *is* must be such that its essence [*honshitsu*] is [*soku*]¹⁷ generation [*seisei*] itself, and its generation is essence itself.¹⁸

What Heraclitus calls *logos* can probably be interpreted in various ways. *Logos* was first mentioned by Heraclitus, who said that all things are in flux and that we cannot enter into the same river twice.¹⁹ This very fact [and Heraclitus’s statements about it] cannot but make us wonder. It would seem that the deep root of logic lies within the *logos*-bearing [*logosu-teki*] unchangeability of the endlessly changing. Logic is one type of formative act. Before we can think about reality from [the standpoint of] traditional logic, we still need to try, at least once, to look at logic anew from [the perspective of] reality. Rather than deepening and broadening the forms of previous logic, true dialectic must be the logicization of reality.

2.

Translators’ synopsis: *Several significant themes of Nishida’s later thought make their appearance in this section, such as the toolmaking and bodily aspects of human existence, the dialectic of organic life vis-à-vis the environment, and the determination of individuals as the self-determination of the universal. Those three themes are brought together in his conception of the historical world and its self-determination, which in the creativity of its elements, is distinguished from the merely biological world. In dialectical terms, he designates the structure of this world as the “dialectical universal.” Nishida also includes some discussion of this dialectic in its relevance to time as the self-determination of the eternal now. And he introduces the concept of acting-intuition as the mode of human participation in this dialectic.*

While the human being has been regarded as *zoon politikon*²⁰ or *zoon logon echon*²¹ or as sensible or rational, we are rather—as [Benjamin] Franklin stated—toolmaking animals.²² But tools are not [just] made for the sake of themselves. Making tools must instead entail making things. Things [*mono*] refer to objective as well as universal things, things to which we cannot do anything, and things that change on their own.²³ Animals make things as well, and beavers are said to be ingenious architects. And certain animals are even thought to make tools. But it is inconceivable that an animal looks at a thing *as* thing, [for] animals do not possess a world of

objects [*taishōkai*]. Needless to say, I do not think of the animal's instinctive act as simply unconscious or emotive. The instinctive act of the animal must also be conscious. Among advanced animals, we can even say that they are representational. But we cannot say that animals view things as objects [*taishōteki*] nor that they objectively mirror [*utsusu*] their own [bodily] movement [*dōsa*].²⁴ The truly objective world of objects [*kyakkanteki taishōkai*]²⁵ must be something that envelops rather than merely resists [*teikō*] or negates our efforts or [bodily] movements. It would have to be a world that we can think of as that wherein we are implaced [*oitearu*].²⁶ The reason why we ordinarily think of the material world as the most objective or real is not that it merely resists us or that it negates us. Rather the reason must be that we can think of our body as implaced within it. For there is no self without a body.

Animals make things as well although an animal's movement probably does not extend beyond its bodily movement. Even if we say that animals to a certain degree possess tools, we cannot say that they truly possess tools. Tools must be substitutable. Therein the state of looking at a thing *as* thing must already be included. The eye is the most objective sense-organ. Furthermore, while the eye [-sight] of a vulture is extremely clear, it is said that it sees only rats. But we also cannot regard the animal's instinctive act as simply derived from the world of matter. It is not that the organ determines the act but instead that the act determines the organ.²⁷ The eagle's eye was made for the sake of soaring high into the sky, and the mole's eye was made for diving deep into the earth. Aristotle mentions Anaxagoras's saying that human beings are the most intelligent of animals because they have hands. We ought, however, to think rather [the reverse], i.e., that human beings came to have hands because they are the most intelligent.²⁸ The world in which biological life appears is not a mere world of mechanistic matter. It must be a world of functional matter. The matter that structures biological organs must be functional matter, rather than being merely mechanistic matter. Needless to say, even if we analyze our eyes or hands, we will not find anything other than chemical or physical matter. Life cannot be established, however, out of such a world of [mere] matter. This [world of matter] is nothing but an abstract world conceived at the extremity of what one might call the objective region [*kyakkanteki hōkō*].²⁹ Of course, it is inconceivable that biological life establishes itself out of itself. It must have an environment, and it must depend on matter. But for science even biological life is thoroughly incomprehensible. Science only clarifies the material conditions for the establishment of biological life.

Neither can we derive even the instinctive [bodily] movement of animals from the world of mechanistic matter. And yet animals still do not truly possess tools. We say that they have tools [only] because we infer by analogy to ourselves. But animals do not yet escape the realm of nature as

object [*taishōteki shizen*]. A tool must be something that has already been objectified, as separate from one's body, and that can be substituted by another. Moreover true acting is *poiēsis*.³⁰ Our acting entails a changing of the external world, a making of things. And further, things that have been made are independent things; as things [*mono*], they delimit us. In addition, the thing is also something that defines our bodily existence. Our acting is established in this world of things. It goes without saying that it is neither the world of mechanistic matter, nor the world of biological life, nor merely the world of functional matter.

What sort of thing is a thing? A thing is something that resists our movement, something that negates our movement. But when we become conscious of its resistance, already we are not just negated nor does our movement simply disappear. It means [rather] that we are already seeing something, that form is appearing. That is to say, in turn, that we are giving form [*katachi zukuru*] to something.³¹ What we visually regard as a thing is something that has been shaped [*katachi zukurareta*] by the movement of the eye. We can probably consider the tactile, however, to be what is most real to us. Our world of sensory perception is constituted where visual and tactile sensations come together. But what sort of thing is our body by which we can move things; how is it established? Just as Bergson states that the eye is the trace of the penetration of visual life through the material plane,³² we can view our sense-organs in light of their movement. Our body is a perceiving thing as well. In this sense, the body is also a kind of tool. Without a body, we would not be able to see anything by means of movement. We can think of the body as the embodied subject of movement.³³ And conversely, it is through movement that one sees [other] bodies. We make tools with our hands, and make things with tools. A tool is something separate from our body, it is a *thing*. However, it is through the recognition of tools that one comes to know one's body. The soulless machine is what enables us to know the soulful machine, that is, the organic body. Jean Paul³⁴ states that what is mechanical is more immediate to us than anything internal to us.³⁵ Having said this, naturally this does not mean that the interior can be known only from the exterior. Leibniz states that at a certain limit the machine ceases to be machine, that is, it becomes mere matter, while an organic body is a machine even to its most miniscule parts.³⁶ We know of causal relationships from the outside, but the organism must be autonomous from its very root.

How is the world of biological life, the organic world, established? One usually thinks that at the beginning of the cosmos there was only the movement of homogeneous matter and that under certain conditions, on the basis of a certain combination, it gave birth to the phenomenon of biological life. But something like biological life cannot appear out of [mere] material movement. Needless to say, if we analyze an organism in light of

natural science there probably would be nothing beyond matter. But that would be a denial [*hitei*] of life itself. Even teleological acts would be inconceivable in the world of matter. In order for an organism to be established, it must first of all be something possessing wholeness [*zentai*] while each individual thing constituting it would have to be an independent thing that determines itself. But that alone is not all. Unless there is an holistic unity, there would be no independence of individual things comprising its parts and the reverse would have to be true as well. Nay, there must moreover be mutual negation between whole and parts. Even illness is included within life. What is alive must always be in a state of potentiality for illness. Otherwise, it would not be alive. Life must be [such] a self-identity of contradiction [*mujun no jikodōitsu*].³⁷ And biological life is also no exception to this.

When I speak of the self-identity of contradiction, people may think that negation is affirmation and affirmation is negation merely in light of process. The dialectic of absolute negation, however, must be such that individual determination is universal determination and universal determination is individual determination, time is space and space is time. That an individual thing determines itself means that it becomes itself by negating others and in due time becomes universal by negating itself. And that the universal determines itself means that it individuates itself and in due time becomes an individual thing by negating itself. Therefore mutual determination [*sōgo gentei*] among individual things means that the medium [*baikaisha*] of the continuity of discontinuity determines itself; and [conversely] that the medium of the continuity of discontinuity determines itself means the mutual determination amongst individual things.³⁸ We can thus conceive life to be such a self-identity of contradiction. This is why we can say that within life there is also illness. Nay, we can say that true life even includes death. Although we ordinarily think of death from [the perspective of] life as the negation of life, real health must include illness and true life must include death. Death is essential to life. Dialectics in this sense does not mean that it allows being and nothing to oppose each other or that it lets discontinuity and continuity oppose each other. Neither does it entail thinking of nothing in light of being or thinking of discontinuity in light of continuity.³⁹ Needless to say, neither is it the reverse. This is the reason why we separate the dialectic of absolute negation and the dialectic of relative negation from each other. Affirmation must already be where there is negation. But this is inconceivable in the dialectic of acts.

As stated above, we need to regard the biological world as also a self-determination of the dialectical universal. Nevertheless what we think of as the biological world is still not truly the world of the self-determination of the dialectical universal. In the world of historical reality the individual thing must be something that we can conceive to be thoroughly determining itself. And it would have to be free and volitional. Only in this kind

of world [the world of historical reality] can we say that being is nothing and life is death. And it is in such self-determination of this world that it becomes possible for human beings to possess tools. It is not that the world of living things emerges from the world of matter and then the world of human beings emerges from the world of living things. It is rather the reverse. In saying so, one might interpret this to be a subjectivism that views the world from the anthropocentric perspective. But human beings are nothing other than individual things within the world of historical reality. Human beings are born as individual determinations of the dialectical world. This is not to view the world anthropocentrically. [Instead] it conceives what we call the world of matter as also dependent upon the world of historical reality. The world is that which always changes as well as that which does not change. The present while moving in flux is always present; it is the eternal present [*eien no genzai*]. Human beings exist as individuals in such a world. This is why human beings can know of their own action.⁴⁰ The fact that human beings possess tools must already be made possible through affirmation via the world's self-negation. Tools are things, separate from our body. Human beings not only possess things as tools but also possess their body as tool. The human being is a bodily existence and at the same time possesses the body as tool.

We human beings are born as individual determinations of the world of historical reality. That we face⁴¹ the world of things therefore does not simply mean that the individual is confronted with the universal as we ordinarily think. While we look at ourselves through and through as objects [*taishōteki*], we are at the same time always transcending the world of objects [*taishōkai*]. Therein lies the existence of us humans. Only humans are aware of death, only humans commit suicide. I stated earlier that even illness is a part of life. Likewise in true life it is not only that the part includes the whole, and is established on the basis of the whole, but also that the part negates the whole. I find Aristotle's statement that health is the *ousia*⁴² of illness to be significant as well.⁴³ In saying so, however, I do not mean to disregard the species or the universal by taking the individual in particular as primary. Individual things must be that which are born. In order to come to birth, there must be a species. In this sense, individual things belong to a species. Even the life of a species, however, must possess an environment. Without life there would be no such thing as an environment. But without an environment, there is no life. As life alters the environment, the environment alters life. Thus our dying means returning to the environment. Unless we think of it as the emergence of being from nothing, we would have to think of being born also as being born and emerging out of an environment. Furthermore, no life emerges out of a mere environment, no life is born of mere matter. Matter is either nutritious or poisonous to life and is

what eventually kills it and tends it toward death. The world from which life is born must be a world in which life and environment are dialectically one. Aristotle states that because even contraries have identical forms, the *ousia* of a lack is the contrary *ousia*, i.e., health is the *ousia* of illness.⁴⁴ (*Metaphysica* 1032b) But the *ousia* of life must be the *ousia* of *genesis kai phthora*.⁴⁵ This then is no longer a mere continuity. It must be the self-determination of the dialectical universal, a determination without a determiner. Life is established in virtue of *basho* [place] determining itself.⁴⁶ For this reason the *ousia* of life encompasses death as well and encompasses it within relative nothing. What confronts us in such a world of life is not the world of things that are merely seen as objects. The world of things as objects [*taishōteki mono*] affirms us as well as negates us and is environmental. But what confronts us humans, aware of our lives and deaths, is not the mere world of things as objects. Rather it would have to be the world of historical thing-events (the world of historical life). Our self is born out of the depths of the world of historical reality. For someone taking the standpoint of the intellectual self, what confronts us can simply be considered to be the self's world of objects [*taishōkai*], the world of matter. But as that which confronts our bodily self, it would initially have to be nature as nutritional. It would have to be the environment. Not only this, while we tend toward it in dying, it would also have to be the world from out of which we are born. It would have to be nature as biological. The objects of biological life would probably be things nutritional and sexual. This world of objects is the world of objects of instinct. The world of living things is just a world of the life of the species. We have bodies, however. And our self must be bodily through and through in the biological sense as well as thoroughly individual, linear, and temporal (it must be a historical-body). This is why we possess consciousness.⁴⁷ As a consequence, there would be no body without consciousness. The world that confronts this self is not just something like nutritional nature or biological nature but would have to be the world of historical reality. We can say that this is where we truly face [*taisuru*] objective things [*kyakkantekina mono*], that is, face historical thing-events. And we can therefore say that as the intellectual self, we are able to confront the world of intellectual objects, i.e., the material world, that thoroughly negates our self. But the world of objects cannot just be something that negates us. Insofar as it stands confronting us, it must be something that stands in relation to our life, and which must be in negotiation with our self. In short, it must be the environment.⁴⁸ It is on this basis that, as [epistemologically] objective, it can have the sense of negating us. And this can just as well be the world of death. But as I mentioned in the foregoing, the world wherein we are implaced, while being the world into which we go dying, must also be the world out of which we are born. Thus, things that confront us are not

only nutritional or sexual things but must also be thoroughly expressive. They must be things that determine us from the depths of our deaths. Hence, if we turn to reflect upon this, the fact that a thing is nutritional or sexual for a living thing would have to already mean that it is expressive. Even animals must possess consciousness in some sense. And even for animals [certain] things must be enticing. Even consciousness then would already have to be something that has emerged from the depths of the negation of biological life.⁴⁹ But while the life of living things is environmental, it is not truly worldly. They are just things born, but they are not truly living on their own.⁵⁰ It is not the self-determination of a *basho* where negation is affirmation. In the life of us humans, on the other hand, the environment is the world and the [epistemological] object [*kyakkan*] is the subject [*shukan*].⁵¹ We are born as the self-determination of the eternal now [*eien no ima*].⁵² Human beings exist where they possess tools and make things. Human beings are creative. And our lives must be historical. As the intellectual self, we possess the world of objects negating our self. We must conceive the fact of seeing in light of this.

If we are to conceive the relationship between life and environment in light of the foregoing, true life would have to thoroughly include negation within itself. That is what historical life is. It is upon this world of historical reality that we endlessly confront the environment and face the world of death. Therein lies the life of the species. We are born of our parents, and our parents are born of their parents. Life does not emerge from matter. Life that is temporal and the world of matter that is spatial stand thoroughly opposed to each other. We can thus think therein of an infinite dialectical process. The dialectical process thus would have to be something essential to one aspect of life. But to conceive life only from this particular standpoint cannot escape being an abstract view. The true environment would have to be a *basho* from which we are born and into which we go dying, that is, it must be the world. Concrete life that is truly creative exists as the self-determination of that world. There is no life that is not creative. For this reason, the world of true life must be expressive. The mere environment is nothing but its plane of negation. It goes without saying *both* that life does not exist merely on the basis of its confronting the environment *and* that without the environment there would be no such thing as life. This is why life must thoroughly belong to a species. We are born of a species, our life is biological. The world of the self-determination of the dialectical universal, the creative world's self-determination, would have to involve the establishment of an infinite number of species. Forms appear as the self-determination of the world wherein the [epistemological] subject is object and the object is subject. We can think of the particular [*tokushusha*] as real and as determining itself because the determination, in terms of objects, occurs without

a determiner.⁵³ From the standpoint of the logic of objectification, we cannot conceive life beyond its relationship to the environment. We cannot but conceive the world as an abstraction. True life, however, is established as the self-determination of the expressive world. And we can regard the world of biological life in light of this as well.

What the physiologist Haldane says about life becomes comprehensible in light of the above as well. Life possesses an environment not only outside of the organic body but also within. Life involves a normative structure unique to the specific species and the active maintenance [*nōdōteki iji*] of its environment. Further, it cannot be a merely physical or chemical conglomeration but rather must be a persisting unity. It would have to be an individual expression of nature itself. Life has no spatial boundaries. Whether we start from the vitalist's idea of the organic body as separate from the environment or from the mechanist's idea that takes the organic body as a part of matter, we would be unable to construct the biologist's notion of life. People call this a mystery. But it is a mystery fabricated in our minds. It becomes a mystery because we think of the world as a world of mechanistic matter. As stated in the foregoing, we are in fact looking at the relationship between structure and environment. And we call this [relationship], life. To look at this sort of a relation means to look at life, and this [relation] is what becomes the axiom of biology.⁵⁴ What I regard as the formative act whereby the world determines itself must also be likewise.⁵⁵ Normative structure is one type of form. To look at this life is to see it through expressive acts. The form and the function of living things are inseparable.⁵⁶

Life possesses independence when the environment is whither we go dying and whence we are born, that is, when it is the world. Therein lies the concrete reality of life. For this reason concrete life is historical and social. The biological species forms a race [*minzoku*]⁵⁷ and becomes a *Gemeinschaft*.⁵⁸ What confronts us as the world of objective expression [*kyakkan-teki hyōgen*] is racial as well as social. Furthermore, as rational it is of the objective spirit.⁵⁹ This is why I say that a historical society is established by means of the mutual encounter in the depths of the world between I and thou.⁶⁰ For the world of reality that is both environment and world must be a world of the mutual determination of individual things. But I am not saying, as in a monadology, that there primarily exists an infinite number of individual things and then on that basis the world is established.⁶¹ Nor am I saying that they are without mediation for they relate [*sōtai*] to one another through the mediation of absolute negation, the medium of expression.⁶² This means that historical space, as it were, would have to be a space wherein lie lines always possessing the extreme limit-points of personhood on both ends.⁶³ To say that society is established as the self-determination of the

expressive world, as mentioned above, does not mean, however, that it is not biological. In the world that dialectically determines itself as time that is space and as space that is time, that which moves through time must be a thoroughly biological life. It must be that which persistently confronts the negating environment. The world of historical reality that expressively determines itself is not lacking in this sort of a negative moment. But to think of this biological life as separate from the world that expressively determines itself would be nothing but to think of life in mere abstraction. Concrete life would have to lie where environment and life are one. It must be something that includes negation within. Biological life is accordingly established as the self-negation of the world that expressively determines itself. The world that encompasses negation within itself thus must in turn be biological through and through. It must thoroughly be the world of the life of the species. But most people, in separating expression from thing, think of the expressive world as the world of mere meaning. The concrete self-determining act of the world of historical reality would thus have to be a formative act. The self-determination of the world wherein environment and life are one must be through formative acts. While we may conceive the species as particulars determining themselves, it [the species] would have to be something formed historically. In the world of mere living things, a species does not confront another species in the same way that societies encounter one another [*aitaisuru*]⁶⁴ and co-relate with each other. Species confront one another for the reason that each [species] has already been formed through the self-determination of the world expressively determining itself.⁶⁵ The species, while being established in the world of historical reality, are thus also continually perishing.

(When I say that I and thou meet each other, I do not mean that they meet without any mediation. I and thou encounter one another through the medium of expression. I am not saying that what expressively confronts the I is the thou or that what expressively confronts the thou is the I. What expressively confronts the I is a thing, the body of the thou. However, that a thing is expressive would have to mean nothing other than that the world is the world of the self-determination of dialectical life. When I speak of the world of dialectical life, it should be taken to mean the world of contradictory self-identity wherein independent things are thoroughly and respectively one. It is in such a world that we can say that things are expressions. And it is in such a world that we can say that the body of the thou, which is individual, and which confronts the I as also individual, is not something instrumental for the I but rather [simply] the body of the thou. We can say that I and thou meet each other in the world that expressively determines itself. Society in this sense is that which is formed as the world's self-determination.)⁶⁶

When I speak of formative acts, people tend to immediately think of the formation of matter by form [*keisō*], distinguishing form and matter.⁶⁷ But a formative act would have to entail the self-determination of the world wherein environment and life are one. It must mean the present determining itself.⁶⁸ Environment and life are one in that it is the self-determination of the eternal now [*eien no ima*], wherein the present determines itself. This does not mean that it is without mediation. Rather, true life must be something that mediates itself. Otherwise there would be no such thing as the concrete independence of life. Hence that which is without independence does not live by itself; it is not true life. The self-identity of the creative historical world lies in the independence of such life. The active maintenance of the relationship between the particular normative structure and the environment, which as Haldane says can be considered neither in light of vitalism nor of mechanism, is established as the self-determination of that world.⁶⁹ That is, the life of the species is established. It is upon the self-identity of the linear and the circular that the life of the species is established.⁷⁰ In the world of history, this would probably refer to society in possession of a tradition. Without tradition, there would be no such thing as society. We can then conceive that, in the world of historical life that contains negation within itself and determines itself by becoming nothing, this life of the species is continually constituting the historical world. Even with regard to the life of living things, it [the life of living things] is at the locus where the species determines itself. There is no such thing as life that is abstract and universal. This being said, it does not mean that we should just regard species as a concrete reality. The species must also be something known via the mediation of acting-intuition [*kōiteki chokkan*]. Just as Haldane says, it would have to be something seen.⁷¹ The world that determines itself as the *basho* of acting-intuition is the world that is concrete.⁷²

Heraclitus, who advocated *panta rei*, said that strife is the father of all. He states that what are mutually opposed [*sōhan*] in turn are mutually unified as one, the most beautiful harmony is born of what are different, and all things are established through strife. In order for what flows away to stand in co-relation [*sōtairitsu*]⁷³ time would have to entail synchronic existence. Burnet states that the truth Heraclitus discovered was that one is many and many is one.⁷⁴ As a consequence he [Heraclitus] became the father of the dialectical method. This is where we must search for the *logos* of the world of historical reality. Language is also a tool. We are humans primarily from the fact that we possess tools. Hence tools are things and things must be that which bear names. It is only in the dialectical world of historical reality that it becomes possible to possess language. Therein is established the *logos*-bearing human being.⁷⁵

3.

Translators' synopsis: *Nishida begins this section with an in-depth look into what he calls "life," with references to Haldane's theory of the interaction between organism and environment. Nishida goes on however to distinguish his own conception of life as historical, involving the full dialectic of human creativity as bodily and technological, from its understanding in merely biological terms. Historical life expresses that dialectic through human productivity that attains a certain independence from the environment in the external sphere. But at the same time this is also the partaking of humanity in the world of the dialectical universal.*

Animals move [their bodies] through instinctive acts. Seen from the human perspective, we may think that some of them already possess tools. However, animal [bodily] movement would have to be thoroughly in terms of instinctive acts. Even what one might think of as tools must be extensions of the body. Needless to say, we cannot clearly draw the boundary line, as a concrete reality, between animals and human beings. Nonetheless we need to conceptually make a distinction. An animal is a mere bodily existence. But human beings are not only bodily existences. They also possess the body as tool. Tools must be things. Human beings must be what are already established as the self-determination of the world of the affirmation of absolute negation. They must be established as the self-determination of the world that includes death within itself. Hence while the existence of a human being is bodily, we always think of it as that which transcends the so-called body. The human body exists where what stands persistently opposed to the self as thing, what belongs to the world of death vis-à-vis its biological body, is [nevertheless] at one with the self's body. We cannot conceive of the human body as analogous to the biological body.⁷⁶ It is not because they possess hands that human beings are rational. Instead it is because they are rational that they possess hands. What combines body and thing in this way is *technē* [*gijutsu*].⁷⁷ The human body must be technological [*gijutsuteki*]. Even an architect like the beaver cannot be regarded as truly possessing *technē*. But if we are to discuss this solely in terms of the dexterity in making things, human *technē* does not even come close to animal instinct.

An organic body does not only possess an environment on the outside but also possesses an environment within.⁷⁸ Life, according to Haldane, is the active preservation of a particular normative structure with its environment.⁷⁹ It is neither a mechanistic process nor a vitality. The interior environment means that what is linear becomes circular, what is temporal becomes spatial. As the self-determination of the eternal now wherein space is time and time is space, a structure that temporally maintains itself

as such is established. It [this structure] is the species of the living thing.⁸⁰ In the face of this structure, the exterior environment thus stands in a nutritional relationship. Life is established, not simply as life, but within this relationship. Because such life is what is established originally as the self-determination of historical life, it makes the external internal and accordingly becomes concrete, a truly independent life, that is, that which lives by means of itself.⁸¹ For the lower animals their relationship with the external world is merely physiological. But when it comes to the higher animals, we may consider them from our point of view as already possessing tools and even as possessing a certain type of *technē*. When a living thing possesses *technē*, the individual steps outside of the species. It is already no longer mere biological life but the life of affirmation in negation.⁸² It already possesses the germination of social life. Needless to say, to assert that a living thing becomes social does not mean that the living thing loses its being [i.e., belonging to] a species.

What distinguishes the species of living things and society, I think, is at the locus where the living thing, transcending itself by means of *technē*, becomes one with expressive nature. Although this is an extreme way of putting it, Frobenius states that culture is land rendered organic by human beings.⁸³ Worringer, however, states that although Egypt had a civilization, it lacked culture.⁸⁴ But this must have been a necessary consequence for the Egyptians who dwelled on a land uninhabitable without *technē*. Without *technē*, land and human beings fail to form an organic body. The Egyptians, dwelling by means of *technē*, gave birth to a distinct Egyptian culture.⁸⁵ Animal life is also established in relation to its environment. We cannot comprehend the animal's form without [taking into consideration] its relationship with the environment. But this [relationship] is instinctive. Although one might think that *technē* is merely individualistic, I think that communal life, apart from which we cannot live, is grounded upon the possession of tools. Without *technē* in this broad sense, the institution of communal dwelling would probably not exist. Such an institution of communal dwelling, for example Tönnies' idea of *Gemeinschaft*, is not something that can be regarded as mere an extension or expansion of the biological species. Rather, it must be something already established as the self-determination of the world of historical reality that expressively determines itself. It must be a species of historical life.⁸⁶ When we regard this in a merely linear (continuous) fashion, the circular may be thought of as merely abstract. But thinking cannot avoid regarding life in light of vitalism. By contrast, *Gemeinschaft*, as the self-determination of the world of historical reality, must refer to something that can be considered as a particular normative structure that actively maintains itself. We cannot regard it as simply continuous just as we cannot regard time in light of reality [*jitsuzai-teki*]⁸⁷ as a mere

continuity. We can conceive of life, however, as a sheer continuity [only] when we consider it apart from the environment. We may thus think of the environmental [on the other hand] as simply mediating. But true concrete life is not merely this sort of thing.

4.

Translators' synopsis: *This section discusses the technological and social aspect of human existence as a historical body embodying the historical life of the historical world. By refashioning the environment with tools, human beings move beyond the merely biological sphere of life. Via body and tool, the human being is interconnected with the world of things. Nishida relates acting-intuition with this toolmaking and tool-using aspect of human activity vis-à-vis the historical world and its dialectical self-formation. The inseparability between seeing and making in acting-intuition is related to the dialectic of the world's own creativity. Nishida seems to be suggesting that human existence via acting-intuition is a microcosmic mirror that inter-resonates with the macrocosmic dialectic. Historical life as such can be reduced neither to the causal mechanism of the material world nor to the teleological vitalism of the biological world nor to any ideal realm of pure consciousness.*

Our self must be active [*kōiteki*]. The existence of human beings lies in acting.⁸⁸ To act means to make things with tools. The possession of tools thus is already possible for individual things that determine themselves in the world of historical life, a world that thoroughly includes negation within itself. It is not made possible [merely] as the extension and expansion of biological life. Instead we ought to regard biological life as one aspect of the world of historical life. It is not that we are rational because we employ tools but rather we employ tools because we are rational. The linguist Geiger states that language already existed even before human beings started using tools, when they were [still] digging holes with their hands to cover themselves.⁸⁹ I think that we may say that our body already at that time was not just a body but possessed an instrumental quality. Moreover, language, [even] for primitive people, must not have been mere meaning-signs [*imi no fugō*] as we would think today. Instead it must have been deeply ingrained in their life itself. Although I do not mean to directly identify tool and language, while tools already possess the quality of things as substitutable, language must possess the quality of tools on the basis of communal labor.⁹⁰

Possessing tools, as an individual body of historical life, entails at the same time the making of things. Consequently a thing is something that opposes us and which is seen by us. Although it may be thought that seeing

and acting are different, without seeing, there is no acting. We can regard acting as a [bodily] movement that is conscious of its goal. To be conscious of the goal would mean to see the outcome externally. Therefore, there is no acting for animals that do not see things outside [of themselves], that is, that do not possess [in view] objective things [*taishōbutsu*].⁹¹ Seeing and acting [for animals] cannot in the least be linked together. We make things while seeing things. Even something like moral conduct would have to be a *poiēsis*. Otherwise it ends up being mere motive. Things are that which possess form.⁹²

Even if seeing is inseparable from acting, seeing is not acting.⁹³ One may think that acting does not necessarily accompany seeing. Seeing may be regarded as passive. But there is no seeing when faced with things lacking any sort of connection with our movement. As experimental psychologists state, it is by the movement of the eye that we see the forms of things. We think that in acting the [epistemological] subject determines the object. And we think that in perception the object determines the subject. But before we distinguish passivity and activity, we must try to think how something like the mutual determination of subject and object is possible. It is not that there is an independent substance like the subject or object. The subject–object opposition [*shukyaku no tairitsu*] would have to be by virtue of the self-identity of what are absolutely opposed to each other.⁹⁴ It is made possible as the self-determination of the dialectical world.⁹⁵ The subject–object opposition instead becomes conceivable from where we see things via acting. I stated that the thing is what is persistently opposed to the I and that our making of things with tools is *technē*. *Technē* is not something that merely appertains to the [epistemological] subject. It means that the I enters into the thing, [and that] the activity of the thing becomes the activity of the I.⁹⁶ In possessing tools, human beings are already implaced within the world of historical life. Even if we say that the eye sees things, this does not mean that matter sees things. If we say that matter reflects matter, it is no longer matter. [Rather] it would have to mean that the [epistemological] object becomes subject. That the eye sees a thing must mean that it is already technological. It must be the *technē* of historical nature. In that case, when primitive humans first came to bear stone implements, how did this become possible? We originally developed from out of the world of historical nature. As Aristotle states, “nature makes” (ἡ φύσις ποιεῖ) everything.⁹⁷ Historical nature must be *logos*-bearing. People think that *logos* was added in the process of biological evolution only when it [evolution] resulted in human beings. They are thus thinking of the world of matter that even precedes the appearance of living things. The emergence of living things from out of the world of matter, however, is already unintelligible. Even our body must be comprehended in light of the world

of historical reality.⁹⁸ It is from the locus where we make things with tools that human beings come to exist. As I stated earlier, we can understand our body in light of a machine. We know our body not from within but from without. [But] our mind does not merely reside in the encephalon. The movement of the skeleton is a movement of levers, hinges, and spirals, and the eye is nothing other than a kind of dark room. Moreover this is an activity [*shosa*] of nature. Nature is an ingenious technician. Accordingly, we cannot accomplish anything unless it is thoroughly through nature's *technē*.⁹⁹

(People may think that I am carelessly regarding the eye's passive seeing of things and its active intuiting by means of acting as one. But I am looking at both from the standpoint of the formative act of history (historical nature). Historical generation [*seisei*] must be the contradictory self-identity of active and passive. We need to discuss in detail their distinction. But we should not discuss their difference by merely juxtaposing them side by side. Instead we ought to discuss their distinction by seeing them from such a [the above-mentioned] standpoint.)¹⁰⁰

The dialectical world thoroughly determines itself as biological life. Our life is biological to the end. We are born of our parents, and in turn parents are born of their parents. Our life is species-bearing and accordingly externally possesses an environment of absolute negation.¹⁰¹ But biological life is originally one aspect of historical life that internally includes [its] negation.¹⁰² And as we are individual bodies of historical life, the [epistemological] subject becomes object and the object becomes subject.¹⁰³ We are self-contradictory realities [*jitsuzai*].¹⁰⁴ We possess tools on this basis. Therefore, to possess tools externally means in turn that we possess our body as a tool.¹⁰⁵ Needless to say, this does not only entail that the self possesses the body as tool but that it is conscious. The individual self, the real [*jitsuzai*] self, must be thoroughly bodily.¹⁰⁶ In addition to being bodily realities [*shintaiteki jitsuzai*], we also possess the body as tool. Hence all of our actions possess the quality of an expressive act. Our acting is established as individual determinations of the world of historical reality that expressively determines itself. All of our actions are historical events. That we see things by acting, means that things appear historically. Things made are what we ourselves have made. But they become separate from ourselves and become implaced within the historical world to work within it.¹⁰⁷

That we see things and that things are seen mean that nature forms things and things are formed by nature. We may as well say that historical nature determines itself.¹⁰⁸ When the world of historical life that internally includes absolute negation, determines itself, it is biological in one aspect, that is, it is the world of species. The species is a formative act, a particular normative structure that actively maintains itself. Historical life insofar as it thoroughly

faces negation is a limitless biological life.¹⁰⁹ We can regard the countless species as being formed from out of this. The standpoint of the logic of objectification demands that we think of life as simply continuous or as one.¹¹⁰ Life must be that which is established as the self-identity of what are absolutely opposed to each other, and must be established as the self-determination of the world of the synchronic existences of time. As Heraclitus stated, the most beautiful harmony is born out of opposites.¹¹¹ Active form is that in which the spatial is temporal and the temporal is spatial. The self-determination of the eternal now, wherein time is space and space is time, is through formative acts.¹¹² Through it, innumerable particulars that determine themselves, are established. Biological life is neither mechanical force nor vital force. It must [rather] be the formative act of historical nature.¹¹³ As a determination without a determiner, that which determines the innumerable selves must be itself established. This is the sort of thing that life would have to be.

When speaking of nature in modern times, people only think of the sensible or the law-abiding. Nature, however, must be that which gives birth [*umu*]. It would have to consist of formative acts. The so-called world of matter is what we conceive of in terms of physics. The immediately given is not something like what the psychologists call sensation. Instead it would have to be perceivable, something possessing form.¹¹⁴ The world of experience means the world wherein things are naturally formed. That a thing is formed thus would have to mean that a thing appears, a thing is seen.¹¹⁵ If some consider this to be a mystery, it is [only] because they are taking the conceived to be the real. Even the world of biological life is a world of form and function [*kinō*]. For this reason even a physiologist like Haldane states that we perceive life and that this is the axiom [*kōri*] of physiology.¹¹⁶ Even the eye of a living thing is a product of historical nature. The structure of the eye cannot be understood without visual acts. Bergson states that the structure of the eye is a trace of the visual act penetrating matter.¹¹⁷ Such a technological structure of nature simultaneously entails the seeing of things, [and] the appearing of things objectively [epistemologically, *kyakkanteki*]. Unlike Bergson who thinks that the *élan vital* [vital force, life-force] proceeds by penetrating matter,¹¹⁸ we must think of nature, wherein time is space and space is time, as continually forming. Nature makes continuously via seeing; to make is simultaneously to see. Life in this sense must be formatively [*zōkei*] artistic.¹¹⁹

The world is whither we go dying and whence we are born. Life is established as a determination in *basho*,¹²⁰ wherein time is space and space is time. Historical life that contains absolute negation within itself, the world—wherein in one aspect as absolute negation we encounter our absolute death—is the world of death. Biological life and the world of

species are established as the affirmation of such absolute negation. That is to say, various biological forms are constituted by means of historical nature. This, however, must be the formation of historical life in such cases as well. It is not that life comes out of matter.¹²¹ Consequently, as the self-determination of the eternal now, the seeing of things must already be included in it. Otherwise, the forms of living things cannot avoid [being] meaningless combinations of matter.¹²² While we must conceptually distinguish [mere] biological life and human life, we cannot concretely draw a simple dividing line. Even human life is thoroughly animal. But it is [also] a concrete historical life in virtue of the fact that it possesses things as tools. Accordingly, making is seeing and seeing is making. The world of biological life, however, is also originally established as such a world of acting-intuition. Hence even the world of biological life, at its root, is also a world whereby historical nature sees by making.¹²³ As Aristotle says, what comes later in the order of development, is what precedes in nature; what comes at the end of *genesis*¹²⁴ is the earliest in nature.¹²⁵ As biological life, the environment that is the affirmation of negation is merely nutritional. The historical body, so to speak, does not yet exist.¹²⁶ Consequently, it [biological life] does not yet possess an environment in light of self-awareness. Environment and life are still continuously one. There is only teleological nature.¹²⁷ Many people think of life in terms of such a model. However, true life, as the affirmation of absolute negation, [and] as the continuity of discontinuity, is a formative act.¹²⁸ On this basis, the environment becomes instrumental. We can think in this instance of the relationship between life and environment in terms of form and matter. In relation to form, matter must be conceivable as the means of its actualization [*jitsugen*]. But even the world seen from this standpoint is still not the concrete world of historical life. The truly concrete world of historical life must be the world of acting-intuition.¹²⁹ What we call tools must possess the quality of things already seen.

In modern times, under the influence of natural science, we think of the mechanistic world as the world of objective reality [*kyakkanteki jitsuzai-kai*] and regard formative acts as [epistemologically] subjective.¹³⁰ But as Aristotle stated, people are born of people,¹³¹ *energeia* [actuality]¹³² precedes *dynamis* [potency],¹³³ and form does not emerge from matter.¹³⁴ Needless to say, it is questionable whether what was stated above¹³⁵ can be said from [the standpoint] of Aristotelian logic. But [in regard to it, with Aristotelian logic,] we can probably only think of something like a teleological act. It is for this reason that in modern times, in regard to the issue of [epistemological] objectivity, it [Aristotelian logic, teleology] had to yield its seat to the theory of mechanism. A truly formative act, however, would have to be something established as a self-determination of the

world of historical reality, a self-determination of the eternal now.¹³⁶ It is historical life seeing itself.¹³⁷ One may say that acting and acting-intuition are not identical. However, there is no such a thing as acting that is concretely not an acting-intuition. Acting must be an event within the world of historical reality. Even the physical experiment of a physicist must be a seeing via acting within this world of historical actuality. Hence even the activity of the physicist must be dialectical.¹³⁸ The world of experiential reality must be a world wherein things are seen via such acting-intuition. Even the entirety of scientific knowledge is based on this. But what I mean by acting-intuition is not just seeing things with eyes. Our being active would have to mean that we work with tools.¹³⁹ The eye too must be a tool. Without the eye, consciousness would not see things. And accordingly the eye must in turn be something that is structured through the act of visual-perception. The eye sees things, as the self-determination of the world of historical reality. We must regard our possession of tools as thoroughly possible in the world of historical reality. When biological life becomes historical life, all that is environmental is instrumental.¹⁴⁰ While as a biological life our existence is bodily to the end, we have the possibility of possessing all things as tools. And this in turn means that things become our body.¹⁴¹ In its paramount sense, we can say that our self enters the world of tools. For the self to enter the instrumental world means in one aspect that the self disappears.¹⁴² And this also means seeing the I from [the standpoint of] things. It means seeing one's own body as a thing, to possess it as a tool.¹⁴³ This is why people say that we can understand the structure of our body in terms of mechanics. Our actions are always [epistemologically] subjective-objective. In their subject-region or temporal region, we see the body; and in their object-region or spatial region, we see a thing.¹⁴⁴ We thus go on forming the world [epistemologically] subjectively-objectively.¹⁴⁵ The fact that we form [things] points to the continuity of the *technē* of historical nature. What was made is not something that emerges from the depths of the self's consciousness; it is not what the I made.¹⁴⁶ Instead it is something discovered. Many inventors have this sort of experience. Even the many equipments that we today casually take for granted originally were things discovered in this manner. But although I say that they were discovered, this does not mean that they were there just as they are from the very beginning. They are created things. The world of historical reality is a creative world.

There may be objections to conceiving the mechanistic world on the basis of the formative act of acting-intuition. But when we say we possess tools, while things become our body, the body in turn becomes a thing. That the I becomes a thing means that the I is losing the I.¹⁴⁷ Ultimately this means that the I, after a fashion, disappears. In the world of

acting-intuition, in the world of historical reality, when the body becomes a thing and the I has been erased, the world becomes instrumental. [And] when the world is thoroughly conceived as instrumental, it is the mechanistic world.¹⁴⁸ Physics, insofar as it is conceived according to the model of our bodily movement, is intuitive and macroscopic. But even in [such] cases when we think of the mechanistic world, we have already taken a standpoint that loses the seeing of things.¹⁴⁹ And even when we speak of the microscopic, we think of it being established as the extremity of one region [*hōkō*] of the world of acting-intuition and as possessing its reality in virtue of it. But on the other hand in the region where they are made into our body, things disappear. At its extremity, this becomes the world of consciousness. Here as well there is no longer such a thing as seeing things.¹⁵⁰ To possess things as tools in turn means to possess the body as tool and to see by acting. To thoroughly possess the body merely as a tool, at its extremity, means the separation of self from body and to become simply a seeing self.¹⁵¹ It is upon this basis that we can think of something like the conscious I.

Even though we can think of the mechanistic world as one aspect of historical reality and the world of consciousness as its other aspect, this is possible only with the process of acting-intuition as its axis. Our making of things with tools already must be a process of dialectical self-identity. The world of historical reality is established neither with the mechanistic world as its root nor with the world of consciousness as its root. Even our body is that which is formed as well as that which forms. What is given is not simply that which is sought but is also that which seeks. From the standpoint of the affirmation of absolute negation, even our free volitional self is that which is made and which is created. Formative act means creative act. And furthermore it is that which creates, it is *creata et creans* [created and creating]. Hence although what is made is what the I made, it is also what is separated from the I, what is discovered, and what is seen.¹⁵² But because we are [simultaneously] creative and created as the self-determination of the world of the affirmation of absolute negation, we are not simply bound by the world of objects and can thus consider ourselves free. We are individual bodies of the world of historical life that contains within itself absolute negation.¹⁵³ Having said this, one may think that I am considering the world of historical reality *qua* one organic body as teleological. But true life, as I mentioned above, means that the world, as a determination without a determiner, determines the world itself and things appear throughout the world. It is the world of true experience. This means that historical nature is continually forming itself via *technē*. Even culture is the continuity of such nature. We exist in such a world as bodies in acts of expression.

5.

Translators' synopsis: *Nishida continues his discussion of the historical body as technological, its manipulation of tools in reshaping the environment, etc. But he further develops the relationship between world and individual in terms of their mutual creativity, and equates logos with that dialectic. Nishida makes use of group theory to explain this relationship between the world and its elements. He also explains the dialectic in terms of the very important ideas of mutual self-negation and inverse determination. And he includes a discussion of how temporal movement can be understood in terms of this dialectic without reducing it to mechanical determinism.*

As I have stated in the foregoing, if the world of historical reality refers to the world wherein we are born in addition to seeing things by acting, that is, the world of acting-intuition, then the world of historical life, as formatively acting, must already be *logos*-bearing. The circular, the spatial, negates the linear, the temporal, and in turn the latter negates the former; matter negates spirit and spirit negates matter. Historical life comes to be established as the self-determination of such a dialectical universal. The fact that we possess things as tools is already dialectical. Herein must already be something seen as object. This accordingly becomes already possible as the self-determination of the world of acting-intuition.

When we say that we make things with tools, the tool must be something substitutable and already an object. This must then mean that we possess the body as tool while ourselves being bodily. While it is needless to say that this would be impossible in the world of mere matter, it is also impossible in the world of biological life. When as the self-determination of the dialectical world we say that we human beings possess tools, all that confronts us and is environmental, as I mentioned above, is instrumental. While that which is environmental for biological life is nutritional, that which confronts human life is both instrumental and nutritional.¹⁵⁴ From the standpoint that we possess tools, such a world is thoroughly instrumental. By contrast, from the standpoint that we possess the body as a tool, the world is thoroughly under the light of consciousness. The self-determination of that world must already be expressive. Things are not only instrumental but must be expressions of themselves. At the same time they must bear names; they would have to become objects of nomination [*meimeisayō*]. The mechanistic world and the world of consciousness must be two opposing regions [*hōkō*] of the world of dialectical self-identity. I believe that there is [thus] a reason why Bergson joined consciousness with movement.¹⁵⁵ What we might take as the self-determination of such a world would be perception.

Although tools are not signs, as what are already objectified¹⁵⁶ [*taishōka*] and substitutable, they must possess names and be linguistically expressible.

While language involves mere signs, it must have the quality of a tool in the broad sense. Human beings, while being toolmaking animals, are also animals possessing language. Geiger claimed that ancient etymologies express the [bodily] movements of humans, and that language existed before humans came to possess tools.¹⁵⁷ Even if there may be objections to this [theory], in any case, we cannot say that animals possess tools on the basis of their instinctive acts. To our regret even language derives its origin from the instinctive expression of animals (although it may be the case that, as Comte states, it is not that it is linguistically expressed because it is comprehended but rather that it is comprehended because it is linguistically expressed).¹⁵⁸ In order for an expressive sound to be established as speech [*gengo*], it must possess the quality of signifying something that is an object. The world of historical reality, while simultaneously making things with tools, must be a world of discourse. For language to be established, needless to say, the communal life of human beings, society, must already be in place. What is meant by *Gemeinschaft* is not a result of the addition of something rational to a biological species. Rather it must be established as the self-determination of the world of acting-intuition, it must be a species of historical life.¹⁵⁹ It is not that people are rational because they possess hands but rather they possess hands because they are rational.¹⁶⁰ Therefore the species of living things, at its root, must also be that which is formed by historical life. An acting body (that is, historical body¹⁶¹) must not only be what makes things with tools but also what speaks. The animal body is [however] not something that speaks. The human body must be that which is formed from the world of *logos*. That the animal body becomes a speaking body does not entail the overcoming of the animal body or the disappearance of the body. To the contrary it means that it [the body] is deepened, [and] becomes concrete.¹⁶² By departing from our biological body we come to possess things as tools and to technologically transform things into our own body, whereby the technological body [*gijutsutekishintai*] becomes constituted. When the world becomes one's own body through this sort of departure from the biological body, we can think of the self as losing its own body. And upon this point we may consider that we enter into the world of the merely named, the world of intentional objects [*shikōteki taishō*], the world of consciousness. This does not mean, however, that our body disappears. Instead it means that our body deepens to the extent of becoming a speaking body. And in fact, we already are that which speaks when we say that we possess tools. In the world of speaking bodies, language also possesses the quality of a tool. To name something means to already be using it. While at the extremity of the technological expansion of the biological body we arrive at [*dōchaku*] the world of mechanistic objects, at the extremity of the technological expansion of the body of *logos* we arrive at a

world of objects further transcending this. When this happens, language is a tool, and logic is *technē*. There is no such thing as a body separate from the biological body. For this reason even in the depths of our thinking, there is something that is at work historically. But this does not mean that *logos* arises out of the biological body.

Things are objects, they bear names, and when we say that we possess tools, they must already be logical. It is not that the biological body possesses things as tools but rather the body bearing *logos* [*logosutekishintai*] possesses them. A thing must be something that expressively confronts the I. And for the reason that it expressively confronts the I, it must be something that thoroughly determines itself by separating from the I. There must therein be a continuity of severance. Ordinarily we think that things are material and that our body is also material, and that we move things by employing the material body. But this is a movement of matter, wherein there is no possession or employment. Besides, it would also be unintelligible to say that the I possesses a body. When things work upon each other, people immediately think of a continuity. I would like to first think of this, however, in terms of a relationship. To think of things from the standpoint of the expressive historical world, let us first think of activity [*hataraku*] in light of relationships. Although continuity is a relationship, relationships do not necessarily entail continuity. If we say “continuous,” with two things becoming one, we can no longer speak of an activity. We may initially regard things as discontinuous [to one another]. We can then say that a somewhat definite relationship is retained among things, that is, they possess form.¹⁶³ Needless to say, this alone would not allow us to speak of “possession.” To speak of “possessing,” something in some way must have been selected. And it would have to be something that is within it [this possession] but furthermore transcends it. But again if that is all, it is not yet that which is at work.

When I speak of relationships, people may simply think of it [such talk] as subjective or abstract. But the fact that things work upon each other [i.e., properly function together], indicates an objective [*kyakkanteki*] relationship. The real world must be a world of objective relationships among things. To the degree to which things are mutually independent of one another, the relationship may be thought of as objective. That is, in order to say that form maintain itself, it [form] must be a relationship of things themselves.¹⁶⁴ We must conceive that things are conjoined [*ketsugō*] by means of themselves, that is, they possess their own law of combination and form is established among themselves. On this basis I cannot help but be reminded of something like what mathematicians speak of as a group [*gun*].¹⁶⁵ If we regard zero as the primary element by taking addition and subtraction as the law of conjunction, a single group is established. If we

regard one as the primary element by taking multiplication as the law of conjunction, another group of numbers is established. The primary element provides no sort of alteration when conjoined to any element whatsoever. It is something that we ought to call nothing [*mu*]. Nevertheless, the group is established because this thing [the primary element] is within its system. What follows is still an undeveloped idea. But our self is that which we can regard as a nothing in the face of the phenomena, i.e., elements, of our consciousness. Although any phenomenon of consciousness must be “mine,” this does not mean that it [the self] therefore undergoes change. It is something utterly like a *basho*.¹⁶⁶ Having said this, however, I am not saying that it is just simply nothing. It [the self] is [rather] something that exists in the midst of the system of consciousness. And because it exists, our system of consciousness is established and possesses a single form (that is, an individual form).¹⁶⁷ One thinks ordinarily that the uniting transcends the united. Needless to say, this certainly has to be the case. But if that is all there is to it, it [unity] would be something extrinsic. Accordingly the system would not be what possesses unity in itself; it would not be a form that maintains itself. In a form that maintains itself, the transcendent would have to be immanent and nothing would have to be being.¹⁶⁸ I am not so familiar with mathematics nor am I attempting to theorize about concrete things on the basis of something abstract like numbers. However, the historical world is that which forms itself. Our self as well forms itself as a historical reality.¹⁶⁹ To persistently think of the primary element of a group as a nothing allows us to think of that which is creative and that which is continually forming itself without end. We may also regard numbers as a creation of our thinking self. I stated in the beginning that life contains death within itself and that historical life contains absolute negation within itself. We can say, however, that life [including historical life] is that which thoroughly forms itself in the foregoing sense. In the same way that a group is established within a group, we can conceive the various lives as being established *as* that which form themselves *within* that thing that forms itself.

(Even though I say that the creative world forming itself is [can be understood] in light of group theory,¹⁷⁰ I do not mean conceive the world [merely] in analogy with group theory nor do I mean to think of the world mathematically. It is rather the reverse. I am attempting to clarify even the essence of numbers in light of the self-constituting act of the historical world that is creative.)¹⁷¹

I stated that we can already think of the self of consciousness as a form that maintains itself, and that furthermore by delving deeper into this, we can think of it as creative. But our self, as I mentioned above, lies in making things with tools. The concrete self must be an expressive self. The self that is merely conscious is not creative, it is not the historical self. Our self is

established from the self-determination of the world. Hence it is thoroughly bodily. The self is not born out of the depths of consciousness. Even if we understand the world to involve combinations (that is, interworkings) of things implaced within it, which as a consequence give rise to new things, those things are still things that are always implaced within that world. And just as they are things at work within the world, it [the world] must be a system in group-theoretical terms. No matter how we engage in work, we are unable to go outside of the world. And the things that we make, as things, are also what are at work within this world. Therefore even what negates us must be contained within this world (as if a reverse element of the group). Otherwise, we would be unable to say that the world possesses its own form. It would not be an objective world.¹⁷² It is not only that our activity is negated from the side of things, but that we are also killed by them. Moreover, out of the interdetermination among things in this world, new things are born in this world. And this world is a world that gives birth to us. While being the world of death it is also the world of birth. Thus in order to say that such a world maintains itself as a single system—as what I have been calling a determination without a determiner—it must contain a nothing within that is absolute. (We can [then] say that what we call God is something like the primary element of the historical world).¹⁷³ When I say “creative,” people think of the merely linear and temporal. But that would be equivalent to thinking of what life means in terms of vitalism. To be truly creative would have to entail inclusion within of absolute negation, [so that] the spatial is negating the temporal and the temporal is negating the spatial. This must be in terms of formative acts. We can ascribe formativity only to that which first contains inverse determination.¹⁷⁴ We can even regard what we call the self of consciousness as formative only insofar as it contains inverse determination.¹⁷⁵ Self-awareness is that which contains such inverse determination. Our self, however, does not persistently contain inverse determination. For this reason one might think of it primarily as temporal.¹⁷⁶ It is not truly creative. Our concrete self, bodily self, must be the creative element within the creative world. The operative element within the creative world is that which makes things through action.

We ought to regard every self as a creative element in the creative world in light of group theory. And as a self-determination of that world, our bodily self, while being formed, is also that which forms others; that is to say, it makes things by acting. This means then that the creative world forms itself, wherein appear forms. Therefore the fact that forms appear as self-determinations of the creative world, that is, that the world forms itself, means that we see things. Things possess form. This is why I say that seeing is through acting [*hataraku*]. The self-determination of creative elements within the creative world involves seeing through acting. That the world of

visual perception determines itself means that the eye sees form (in the narrow sense). And that the world of auditory perception determines itself means that the ear hears sound. While it is needless to say that we came to see forms and hear sounds with the emergence of the eye and the ear, as Bergson states, we can think of the eye as the creation of visual life.¹⁷⁷ The world of biological life that is conceived as lying behind it, or even the material world, must be included in the midst of the historical world. We may call this the formation of the historical world via *logos*. Reason is the formative act of the historical world. Even the physical world is at bottom something creative. The historical world's expression in group-theoretical terms is what we conceive of as the world of physics. Bohr states that we can compare today's world of physics that has transcended intuition with the world of free will, and that we can even incorporate biological phenomena into the world-picture of physics by relying on the perspective of quantum mechanics.¹⁷⁸ This does not mean that at bottom the world is so-to-speak material but rather the reverse must be the case. To say that reason is the formative act of the historical world does not mean that the root of the historical world is reason or that the course of history is always rational [*gōriteki*].¹⁷⁹ I am not conceiving of reality in light of forms that have been formed. We can see forms as the self-determination of the historical world. I am not saying that just because physical phenomena can be conceived in light of group theory physical reality [in itself] is unintelligible. What appears in light of group theory is the form of reality itself. But this is not its concrete expression.

(There are probably a variety of things we ought to think of in regard to formative acts and group-theoretical structures. But I think that we can say that the world of contradictory self-identity, the creative world, that includes self-negation within itself, possesses a group-theoretical structure. Even the laws of the quantum world that are mutually complementary are group-theoretical. As I state later in this anthology of essays,¹⁸⁰ this probably means that the world determines itself individually. It is the world that contains the [epistemological] subject.)¹⁸¹

Although we make things by acting, things are born of themselves, that is, they appear and are seen. We can even think of our body as being born of the world of things. The world of acting-intuition, the world wherein we are living in actuality [*genjitsu*],¹⁸² must be a creative world. And containing an absolute nothing within, this [world] must be a world that goes on forming itself without end. Just as groups are established upon groups, it is a world wherein form is established through form. This is the particularization of the world. Living things as well are formed as self-determinations of this world. Aristotle has already divided the composition of the animal body into: (1) composition from matter such as earth, wind, water, and fire;

(2) composition of the organization of bones and muscles, etc.; and (3) composition of the organs such as face and hands. And furthermore he states that the order of temporal generation and the order of nature, the order of reality in terms of *logos*, are in reverse.¹⁸³ However the world of biological life is not a world that contains inverse determination [*gyakugentei*] within itself. It is not the world of forms that are independent in themselves, not the world of objective forms. It is not the world that lives on its own; its environment is the world of death. It is not the world that determines itself, it is not the true world. In the historical dwelling of us humans, [on the other hand,] however, we can say that the world determines itself, that it is a world that forms itself.¹⁸⁴ It is a world that thoroughly includes inverse determination, a world wherein forms maintain themselves. When we say that human beings possess tools, we are already the creative elements of the creative world that forms itself. And because this is the world that includes absolute negation, we can say that what confronts the I is expressive and that we are born of this world. I say so not because I am attempting to think of the world anthropologically. It is rather the reverse. I am thinking of the world that gives birth to human beings. The true world of dialectical matter is the world that forms itself [epistemologically] subjectively–objectively and objectively–subjectively.

Our bodily self is born out of that world that forms itself. To be born means neither the emergence of being from nothing nor the appearance of that which already is. [Rather] it means that nature is *logos*-bearing. Everything that forms itself, being born of the world that forms itself, is functional [*kinōteki*]. The bodily structure of a living thing must be functional. Moreover although form without function is inconceivable, neither can we think of function without form. As the operational element in the historical world, our body not only is at work instinctively but must also be that which make things by means of tools. Not only that, it must also be what speaks. Our body must be a historical body. For this reason it is truly *logos*-bearing.

We are born of parents and our parents are born of their parents. We did not accidentally emerge from nothing. Therein we can discover the species of a living thing. A species possesses form. Each living thing is that which possesses its respective standard form. The birth of a thing means the appearance of that which has form. Things are not merely born in time but neither are they merely born in space. As Haldane states, they must be expressions of a whole that transcends so-called space.¹⁸⁵ This must mean that the dialectical world determines itself. We are born, we engage in work, and we go on dying, as operative elements of that world. This does not mean that there is a self separate from the species. In the world of historical life, society is the species. Even what we mean by the “*ought*” is demanded, as mentioned previously, by the world of historical life as an operative element

rather than from the depths of our self of consciousness.¹⁸⁶ This is because our bodily self is *logos*-bearing.¹⁸⁷ However that we are at work through our species means that we give form [*katachi zukuru*] and that we see forms through acting. The same can be said of the functional acts of animals. Only that which forms itself through the species exists in the historical world with self-identity. But because human beings are creative elements of the world of historical life, to work is to see and to see is to work. We are not just born and formed; we also see forms. Therein lies the sense that we are in touch with eternity.¹⁸⁸ We can say that only humans possess a *logos*-body and formatively build unique [*koseiteki*] forms. This does not mean that it is not done by way of the species. Rather it is connected to the primordial origins of the establishment of the species. Things are not simply born in time; they are born in time-and-space, and born as the self-determination of the eternal now. The self-determination of the eternal now entails the building of form.¹⁸⁹ The self-determination of the eternal now wherein absolutely time is space and space is time would thus have to be thoroughly formative and creative as historical life. Because we are the operative elements of that world, [our] working is seeing and [our] seeing is working. We can say that while we are born we are also not born. Animals are merely born, they are nothing but process-driven things. Only human beings possess a present.¹⁹⁰

6.

Translators' synopsis: *This section develops further the topic of the previous two sections, namely the possession of tools by human beings as operative elements formative of the world, which is also related to their bodily nature. Our embodiment mediates us to the world so that via our bodily activities, the world's self-determination is equal to the self-and co-determination of the individual. From out of this originary implacement of ourselves as embodied beings in the historical world, Nishida then derives logic, mathematics, language, ethics, and the world of science. These are all founded upon our acting-intuition, and through the acting-intuition of our historical bodies, the world's historical life is continually developing.*

On this basis I would like to return to where we started and think about logic.

As operative elements in the historical world, human beings make things by means of tools. Things are in themselves independent and that which are seen. In turn they are also what determines us. Even our body is seen from the outside rather than from within. It is seen from the world of things. And furthermore it is born of the world of things. I am born of my parents and

my parents are born of their parents. Our bodily self is formed via species. However we are not merely biologically born and neither is our body merely biological. But in saying so I do not mean that our self is what transcends the body. I mean rather that our body is *logos*-bearing. There is no such thing as a self without a body. For our body not only possesses biological functions but *logos*-bearing functions as well. Our bodily self is not merely born through the biological species but born also through the historical species.¹⁹¹ For this reason we may think that, as operative elements of the historical world, we not only possess things as tools but the biological body as tool as well. Or rather, that we possess things as tools at the same time entails that we possess the so-called body as tool.

As I stated in the beginning, we can think of life neither vitalistically nor mechanistically. Rather it must be thought of as the world determining itself and as the self-determination of the dialectical universal. The real must be that which lives on its own; that which lives on its own is the real. Each thing existing in this [reality] thoroughly determines itself as independent, that is, it becomes individual and determines each other as a continuity of discontinuity. And the consequent, as an independent element in this world, in turn determines the maker. However, that which is the maker in this world is also that which has been made in that world. This means that the mutual determination of individual things is the self-determination of the medium, that is, of the continuity of discontinuity, and in turn the latter is the former. Insofar as that which makes is again that which has been made in that world, the inner is the outer and the outer is the inner. And this is the world that determines itself, the world that forms itself, and the world wherein we see things.¹⁹²

Our self exists as an acting self, and we possess tools and make things with tools. Tools are already things and are not extensions of the body.¹⁹³ Therein there must already be a continuity of severance [*danzetsu*].¹⁹⁴ *Technē* means that we employ things as tools and in turn make things by their means. *Technē* means that the I becomes thing and the thing becomes I, that things arise naturally in the mode of subject-object oneness, [and] that we are at work as historical bodies [*rekishitekishintaiteki*].¹⁹⁵ In the historical world, things possess names and are via *logos*. That which thoroughly opposes the self must be that which expresses the self. Hence what we mean by *technē* is already logic.¹⁹⁶ Aristotle states that human beings dwell by means of *technē* and *logismos*.¹⁹⁷ He also states that *technē* occurs when a universal judgment concerning things of the same species arises on the basis of experience.¹⁹⁸ The behavior [*kōdō*] of the historical body must be logical. Implaced in this historical world, we make things by means of tools and as its consequence things arise. The continuity of discontinuity among these things is what is meant by the causal relationship. I am not denying

the causal principle. Rather because continuity is not the basis, the causal principle is originally a continuity of discontinuity. The fact that nature does not make any leaps is but a requirement of thought. In our experiential world, things are discontinuous.¹⁹⁹ Laws are merely their unchanging relations (they are forms of the world). Moreover, in terms of history we ought to regard them as endless repetitions by the same generation.²⁰⁰ The inductive method is the logic of such a technological world. In the inductive method, the universal merely possesses the sense of a technological mediator. The inductive world is the world of tools.

We make things with tools. When we say that we possess things as tools, we possess our body as a tool as well. Our body is what is seen from the outside. From the combination of operative elements, another operative element is generated [*shōjiru*]. Hence the new operative element is also what is implied in that world and which is operatively at work. In the world conceived in such a light, as things at work, bodily elements conceived as the initial starting point, we are also made from the combination of operative elements in this world. This world as such is a world that determines itself, that is, an objective [*kyakkanteki*] world. It is a world that forms itself. Its unchanging forms are what we come to think of as laws in this world. We can thus consider bodily elements as identical elements²⁰¹ within the world of group theory. This world of the self-determination of the universal is the world of deductive logic.²⁰² Bodily things are included in this world. The individual is included in the universal. To possess things as tools means that we thoroughly possess the world as a tool. But that the world becomes one's body means that the self disappears. Therein the self in turn becomes determined as the world's self-determination.²⁰³

We make things with tools. But within this world things are independent and they determine us. And we are [thus] things made from this world as well. Implied in the historical world, we create things. But we are also created from the historical world. [And] this means that the world determines itself and that we see things. In this sense that we are implied in the world and that we are enveloped by the world, the world is in terms of the logic of objectification.²⁰⁴ The universal of the logic of objectification attempts to thoroughly envelope us as things. It is in light of this [fact] that we as universals see things.²⁰⁵ On the other hand, formal logic refers to the logic of the world of names. This does not mean, however, that formal logic is for this reason merely [epistemologically] subjective. In the world of historical reality, things possess names. There is no seeing of things by means of this alone, and they would only possess instrumental significance. Seeing does not entail mere passivity. [Rather] it is always by acting that we see things. Otherwise they would just be something like mental images. From the world of perception to the world of physical experiments, all are the world

wherein things are seen through acting. While in the former the self's body becomes a tool, in the latter things thoroughly become tools. When we finally transcend our bodily intuition that is the starting point, we may think of this as non-intuitive. But when I say that we see things with the eye, it is not that we just passively mirror them. Rather we see things externally in conjunction with the movement of the hands. This means that we are seeing things already through the historical body [*rekishitekishintateiki*]. The body is already in possession of instrumental significance. For this reason, when I speak of transcending, I in fact mean the continual deepening of the historical body.²⁰⁶

We need to consider the fact that we make things with tools, that things are what are seen, and that we are also made from the world of things. As such, the world of acting-intuition is inductively logical in the sense that we make things with tools, and it is deductively logical in the sense that we are made from the world of things.²⁰⁷ We think of the inductive method to be the logic of discovery. But its universal always only possesses a hypothetical sense. It means nothing more than that if one does *this that* should follow. It is a law obtained through experiment. Accordingly while we make things with tools, our body is also that which can be seen from the outside as a tool. While possessing things as tools, we possess our body as a tool. As long as our body is seen from the outside, a world is there. The world is the *basho* wherein we are implaced. The mechanistic world exists in the sense that our body as a tool is implaced in the world of tools. Therein the inductive universal becomes the deductive universal.²⁰⁸ The inductive method becomes the logic of discovery. Judgment, so to speak, refers to the acting of the historical-bodily self absorbed within the world, the acting of the objective [*kyakkanteki*] self.²⁰⁹ Although there could be objections to saying that judgment immediately involves acting, acting is not something that merely happens subjectively [in an epistemological sense]. It must always be thought of as the self-determination of an operative element of the dialectical world.²¹⁰ Even in cases where we say that we are working with our physical body, we are at work as operative elements of the world of biological life. And this fact of acting means that, as the individual thing becomes absorbed into the world by negating itself, the activity of the self as something implaced in the world is the self-determination of the biological world. This is what it means to be alive. Our body is a historical body; it not only possesses hands but also possesses language. While the fact that we are active as historical bodies means that the self is absorbed into the historical world, we can also say that we are acting, engaging in work, insofar as this is the self-determination of the expressive world. Hence as long as human beings are rational, they are active as truly living things. When we say that we possess a tool, that tool is something that already has a name. Our bodily

self realizes itself as a creative element in the historical world, and historical life realizes itself through our body. The historical world forms itself through our body, and our body is the organ for the rationalization of the non-rational. While possessing the body as tool, we are thoroughly bodily existences [*sonzai*]. To become absorbed into the world does not mean that the body disappears or that it merely becomes universal. Rather it means that it is deepened and penetrates [*tettei*] to the bottom of the body. For this reason, it neither entails the negation of the species nor its negligence. Instead it allows the species to come through; it mediates the species. That we let the species come through means that we are born of a species and that we are engaged in work in accordance with it. This in turn, however, entails that we form the world of the species.²¹¹ The life of the species refers to the (already *logos*-bearing) formative act wherein the world determines itself. And it also means that through the life of the species we form the world. That we are born of parents means that we give birth to offspring. Aristotle states that animals are slaves to their species.²¹² Although generally speaking we may be slaves to our species as well, the life of the species itself is originally based on the self-formation of historical life. And [further] our species-life is creative. Just as even in biological life something like sudden mutation occurs, we are continually bursting through the established life of the species. This moreover does not mean that we are an abstract universal or that we are separate from the body. The species must always be a creative principle.

Ordinarily we think that the senses and reason are opposed to each other. Needless to say, they are mutually opposed. But from the standpoint of historical reality we would have to consider them by incorporating the body between them. We ought to regard them as two ends of one continuum. Even when we say that we see things with the eye, it is not that we see things by means of the eye but rather through bodily life. The bodily self refers to an operative element in the historical world. To see is to form. Even if I speak of thinking, I do not mean that there is no body. [And] although I speak of reason, I do not mean that it is floating on air separated from the world of historical reality. That which becomes the [grammatical] subject of judgment must be something intuitional,²¹³ something identical to itself. That which is identical to itself and is truly intuitional is accordingly not merely the [grammatical] subject or the object [of perception] but must be that which can be called a self-determining universal.²¹⁴ That the universal determines itself must mean that it forms itself. [And] to form means to form by means of the body. This entails seeing by acting. The body is that which is seen as well as that which sees. Knowledge as well must refer to something based on the acting-intuition of the *logos*-body. Even scientific experiments must be an acting-intuition of the tool-possessing body.

Judgment would have to entail the acting of the *logos*-body. Factual judgments are established from the fact that I am born in such and such a place and exist in such and such a place.

We possess things as tools but [these] things already possess names. As the continuity of discontinuity, we possess things as tools. Our body is thus historical from the start and our actions must be historically formative. It is not only impossible to conceive of the material world but also of the world of biological life in the depths of our lives. At the bottom of our self, the bottom of our historical life, we touch upon that which is creative with infinite depth. But simultaneously in the region of objects we thoroughly possess things as tools. At its extremity, we arrive at [*dōchaku*] the world of the names of things, the world expressed through signs. And we think of this as the world of things themselves that transcends our intuition. The world of names, however, does not begin from that extremity. Rather, in the world of historical reality, when we say that we possess things as tools, it [this world] in one aspect is already the world of names; things already possess names.²¹⁵ Hence we are already logical in our everyday lives. In our daily lives, things are representational and the world is formal-logical. We act [*kōdō*] formal-ly in our daily lives. We can say that [even] in ancient times when the civilization of mechanics had not yet been developed, people saw the world formal-ly and were acting formal-ly. Even to this day in our daily lives, we are thus no different. From that world of everydayness, in the region [*hōkō*] where we can say that we possess things as tools, the world becomes bodily. ([And] for the reason that to possess a thing as tool means that the I becomes a thing and fades) in turn where the I disappears, we arrive at the world expressed by mere signs. We arrive at Heraclitus's world that the god of Apollo neither declares nor conceals, but rather expresses through *sema*.²¹⁶ This is a world wherein the inductive universal is the deductive universal. With the disappearance of both thing and I, it is a world of mere *sema*. Accordingly insofar as we can express the world by means of signs, the world is syllogistic [*suironshikiteki*], [that is,] Mill's world of deduction (the world of the mediating universal).²¹⁷

Without body, there is no I. Yet we possess the body as a tool. Our body is that which can be seen from the outside as well. But our body, while being what are seen, is also seeing. There is no seeing without a body. We see the world as having form in proportion to which the body is given form. This is why we can say that without a body, there is no such thing as the I. This is the same for animals. The body is thus *logos*-bearing. What we understand by the world of reality must be that which at some point is in contact with our body. Hence, seeing with the body would have to be the starting point. In Kant's philosophy as well, what is meant by objective [*kyakkanteki*] knowledge is established through the delimitation of intuition. Our body,

on the other hand, is not merely perceivable but also *logos*-bearing. There is no understanding without speaking, and there is no speaking without understanding. That our body, as an operative element of the historical world, possesses *logos*, at the same time means that objects are thoroughly expressive.²¹⁸ Our seeing means that such a world forms itself as the world of historical life. Thus even our body is that which sees. To perceptually see things has this significance as well. But this simply means seeing [things] merely biologically and bodily. At the extremity of the region where we possess things as tools, that is, in the region of objects, there is no more seeing. It is a world simply expressed by signs. It is the world of unchanging form expressed in numerical relations. This is the so-called world of physics.²¹⁹ But furthermore we know it through our *logos*-body. Acting-intuition means that individual things determine themselves in the world of the dialectical universal. That individual things determine themselves in that world means that the self, possessing things as tools, attempts to become the world. This means then that the self loses itself and that the world in turn determines itself, that is, the world forms itself. And this means that we are seeing by acting. That is [what is meant by] intuition. For this reason, our bodily self, which as an individual thing determines itself in the world of the dialectical universal, possesses not only things as tools but its body as a tool as well. And [for the same reason] it intuits while forming.²²⁰ Thinking does not signify a departure from one's body, but rather thoroughly becoming [*tessuru*] one's body. Acting-intuition becomes thinking at the locus where the self loses itself, in the region where one possesses things as tools and they conversely become the self's body. Thinking is acting-intuition that has lost its seeing. We can conceive that "seeing," where the self loses itself, is merely mirroring. This is consciousness. Consciousness is intuition that has lost the sense of formation, a noncreative acting-intuition. Therein is mirrored the mere shadows of things. We must be already included therein, where we make things with tools, as moments of acting-intuition. The world of *homo sapiens* stands upon the world of *homo faber*. Our acting does not occur from the bottom of consciousness but is born as the formative act of the historical world. Our bodily self, as an operative element of the historical world, is [absorbed in] thinking [*shiiteki*]. Although one may think that the thinking self is that which has lost the seeing of a bodily self, our bodily self must be that which is born of the world of historical reality.²²¹

Syllogistic logic is logic of the world expressed essentially by signs. As long as it is conceivable that things are expressed by signs, the world of things is the world of syllogistic logic. The major premise must always be hypothetical. At its root, there has to be the world of acting-intuition. It is from there that things are named and made into signs. To set the coordinates means rendering things into signs from the standpoint of the acting

self. And it is from there that the world of physics begins. From the standpoint of historical life, the logic of the syllogistic universal refers to the logic of external mediation in our acting. It is the logic of the instrumental world and not the logic of reality.²²² The abstract rationalist, on the other hand, attempts to conceive that world as reality and to think conversely of the world of acting-intuition from there. [But] as long as our bodies can be seen as tools, we can think of ourselves as also implaced in this world. In saying so, however, I do not mean that scientific knowledge is merely pragmatic. The locus we can think of as transcending our bodily self in the historical world is the locus where we are born. We are born in time and space. Our bodies acquire form temporally and spatially and according to the force of things. Therein is the world of biological life. The conceptual world is not simply a world of tools but also a world that forms. The body in turn becomes a tool.

There is no seeing of things in the world expressed by signs. Instead we may think of it as a world transcending intuition. But insofar as this is a world that lives on its own and that maintains itself, it expresses itself in the form of numerical relations. Although the world of numbers is a world of signs, it is one kind of a world of acting-intuition that forms itself.²²³ Poincaré stated that the ground of all mathematical induction is in the intuition that if one step is possible, the same step can be infinitely repeated.²²⁴ I think that we can seek this in the self-awareness of our self. That the I becomes self-aware in a single step as "I" means that therein is contained an infinite repetition. In our self-awareness therefore the temporal is spatial and the ordinal is cardinal. Our self is not that which opposes the world by departing from it as the subjectivist thinks;²²⁵ it is not like the eye that just sees. Our self is an operative element in the world. This follows as long as we can think of ourselves as acting. Our self is self-aware for the reason that it is a creative element in the creative world. It is also due to this reason that our self, as stated in the foregoing, possesses a quality like the primary element in a group. The self-awareness of our self and the ground of mathematical induction is in this locus, where it is nothing [*mu*] and yet being [*u*],²²⁶ and wherein it is creative. Thus number is not simply the [epistemologically] subjective form of our self. Rather it would have to be the form of self-determination in the creative world. The world that possesses names, the world that is expressed by signs, while being the world that is seen, must in one respect be the world that forms itself numerically. In this sense, the knowledge of mathematical physics must be objective as well. The variety of all scientific knowledge, as long as each possesses a system of group theory,²²⁷ is also objective. To possess a group-theoretical system means that each possesses a sense of self-awareness of historical life.

Through the acting-intuition of our historical body we possess things as tools, and at its extremity the world [itself] becomes a tool and an extension of one's body. But at the same time this means that the self is negated and disappears. Furthermore, our historical body is a creative element and our self is creative. Our activity [i.e., productive activity] therefore involves acting-intuition and to act means to see. Our true self-awareness does not entail consciousness. True self-awareness lies where there is creativity. At the extremity of the region where we possess things as tools, the world of things comes to involve signs [*fugōteki*]. One might think that therein we can transcend the bodily self. But our self as the creative element of the creative world does not just disappear.²²⁸ It is in this sort of a (boundary-) world that the world of numbers is established as the self's formal creative act. Although the world of numbers thus involves signs, therein is already the fact of seeing. This is why mathematical knowledge is considered to be intuitive.²²⁹ The so-called scientific world must also be thoroughly authenticated via acting-intuition on the basis of acting-intuition whereby one sees things with the body. This [scientific world] however, in short, is the world of mediation, and not the world of historical life per se. It is not the world wherein our self is implaced as a creative element. Here our body is that which is seen but not that which truly sees.²³⁰ The world of true reality must be the world wherein we are implaced. Most people, however, think the reverse. Needless to say, as I stated above, I do not think that the scientific world for this reason is [epistemologically] subjective. That we employ tools means that we proceed by following things. And as long as we can see our body therein [in the world] as a thing, that is, as long as the acting of the self is mediated, we must think of it [the body] as objective. But this only means that one's body is thoroughly included in it [the world] as a tool. For example, even something like physiology sees our body as a tool. But to the extent that on its basis we can conceive of our self as seen, it is a study of concrete reality.

Spengler states that mathematics is an art, like the plastic²³¹ [*zōkei*] arts and music, wherein our soul expresses its own portrait in that environment.²³² Our self is an operative element in the creative world. Self-awareness is due to this creativity. It is for the reason that we are the creative elements of the world that mathematical induction is based upon our self-awareness. The creative world expressively determines itself. We can say that when the world of historical reality, the world of acting-intuition, determines itself with signs, it expresses itself numerically. I find Kronecker's claim that natural numbers are God's creation to be significant.²³³ The world of numbers is the world of the dialectical universal wherein individual things determine themselves with mere signs. What we can conceive to be the objective world determining itself, therefore, mathematically

determines itself at the extremity of the region wherein we regard things instrumentally. This is why mathematical physics is considered to be the most objective [science]. Needless to say, it [physics] also must start from our body's acting-intuition. That the physical world is mathematical and non-intuitive, however, does not mean that knowledge in physics is [epistemologically] subjective. Instead it means on, the contrary, that it [knowledge in physics] becomes objective and becomes the expression of true reality that expresses itself.²³⁴ Only those who think of numbers as forms of subjectivity think of such a world as subjective.²³⁵ Something like biological life would be incomprehensible in the region where we regard things instrumentally. Instead we must already see things therein as participating in formative acts. As a science of objects [*taishō kagaku*], however, even something like physiology moves in the region of mechanistic explanations.

We work with things. But our body, while being what engages in work, is that which sees. To give form is to see. The world of acting-intuition when seen from our self, i.e., the world of the present, is the creative world that expressively determines itself when seen in reverse from the standpoint of the whole, i.e., the world of historical reality. Logically it is the world of the dialectical universal wherein the inter-determination of individual things is the self-determination of the universal and the self-determination of the universal is the interdetermination of individual things. In this world of acting-intuition, our self possesses things as tools and even possesses the body as a tool. But things are expressions and possess names. At the extremity of the region of regarding things instrumentally, we arrive at the world that determines itself with signs. This is the locus where we lose our self and no longer see things. In short, it is the instrumental world. But our bodily self, from the very beginning, exists as the creative element of the creative world and as seeing things. Even when attaining it [that world], the life of our historical body must include the fact of seeing. This is what objective thinking entails. Our historical body is that which is born of the world of historical life, and conversely our *ought* must be a demand of the self-formation of historical life. Aristotle states that people naturally desire to know.²³⁶ The eyes delight in seeing and the ears rejoice in hearing. The *logos*-bearing body demands thinking. But it is not possible to intuit by means of thinking. The claim that we can intuit reality by means of thinking is self-contradictory. Reality does not enter into conceptual knowledge. [For] it is the world of the so-called thing-in-itself. Thinking involves nothing but an endless process. Needless to say I am not saying that the thing-in-itself is unknowable in the sense of Kant's philosophy. What I mean by objective knowledge, in content, must be an expression through signs of the world of historical life that expressively determines itself. The thing-in-itself is that which thoroughly determines itself expressively.²³⁷ Objective knowledge

must start with our sense-organs and be verified through them. This is because our body is an organ for the self-expression of historical life. However in objective thinking, our sensations become signs. For this reason, while as the expression of the thing-in-itself objective knowledge cannot thoroughly depart from acting-intuition, neither can it be regarded as intuitive. Our sense-organs are neither creative nor formative. Therein our historical body is not what sees. This is why the logic of objectification is simply the logic of mediation.²³⁸ But our historical body is *logos*-bearing.²³⁹ The world of things is instrumental. And we still possess historical-bodily life even where the so-called bodily self is lost. Even there is it still creative.²⁴⁰ Our self is thus creative and engaged in acting-intuition only²⁴¹ in the world that expresses itself via signs, that is, in the region of the so-called knowledge of objects, in the world of mere numbers. This is why the world of numbers is regarded as *ideal* [*idea-teki*].²⁴² And accordingly we can think of the world that determines itself in light of the *ideas* [*idea-teki*] as numerical. I think that this is also the reason why in ancient times Pythagoras regarded number to be the essence of reality and why Plato in his later years thought of the *ideas* as numbers as well. As the world contains within itself something like the seeing eye, we may perhaps think of this in terms of group theory. Our body is formatively acting when it is both that which engages in work and that which sees.²⁴³

(Just because I have often remarked in the foregoing that the world is bodily, it does not mean that I am thinking of the world pantheistically. What I mean by body has the sense of the historical body. We can then understand word becoming flesh²⁴⁴ by means of this as well. And on the other hand, we can also say that the variety of social realities are also bodily.)²⁴⁵

7.

Translators' synopsis: *Nishida continues his discussion from the previous sections of our relationship with the world as bodily beings manipulating tools. But he focuses here on the dialectic involved in our interaction with the enviroing world, a dialectic of mutual self-negation, also described in terms of the continuity of discontinuity and the unity of mutual opposition. This leads to a discussion of the contradictoriness of human creativity as simultaneously taking part in the world's self-formation and as discontinuous and independent. And the mutual encounter between such individual selves, "I and thou," is what establishes society. The social world then emerges as an aspect of the historical world, from out of its dialectic.*

We make things with tools. Even if we say that things are that which have been made by us, they are apart from and independent of us. They are that

which appear. Like things that appear in nature, they possess form; and like nature, they are at work in confronting us. Of course we must distinguish artifact and nature. I am not suggesting that I refuse to recognize that distinction. But there is no such thing as a self that is not bodily. Our self must also be what is born of historical nature. We cannot think of our self as having come from beyond the historical world. But we cannot say that our self was born of nature if we think of nature as merely material. Nay, neither could we even say that our body was just born out of there. We must think of historical nature wherein we make things and things appear. If the world were merely materialistic, the fact that we make things and that we work would be completely eliminated. We can [then] think of nature as eternally unchanging and of ourselves as being born and dying in impermanence. Even nature as conceived by such people [who think such thoughts] is nothing but the unchanging relationship of things appearing in the historical world. It is merely that which we can think of as repeating without end.

Everything that we can regard as an operative element in the creative world must be creative. But even something like matter, insofar as we can think of it as a historical reality, must be conceived in this way. However, it is not that which sees. It is nothing but that which has been thoroughly considered in the instrumental region of historical life, conceived at its extremity. From the standpoint of historical life, the material world is the instrumental world, the mechanistic world. We think of it thus as uncreative. And for this reason people think of it as unborn and undying. In contrast to this, they accordingly think of the creative as, in turn, simply what goes through generation-and-extinction. When it comes to biological life, many think of it as creative and involving birth and death. And yet although biological life is that which creates forms, it is still not that which sees. Biological life is environmental. What I mean by the environmental world is not the world that already becomes a mere tool of life, but rather the world that becomes the condition of life. And we might say that it is therein that we are implaced. But it is not the world from which we are born. We cannot think of the origin of life as within the environment.

Seeing is not merely passive. People who think so are always presupposing that I and thing are co-related and work upon each other, that the I is sensitive as passive and volitional as active. If we are to discuss this on the basis of such an idea, we may say that seeing is merely passive.²⁴⁶ But we ought to problematize this premise itself. What sort of a thing is the I that is regarded as encountering and mutually working with the thing? To be able to say that it mutually works with things, we must consider the body. In order to say [that we] see things with the eye, there must also be the structure of the eye. By being given form, the eye can see things. Accordingly that which gives form to the eye is not mere matter but rather biological life.

We are said to possess will [*ishi*]. Even what we mean by will, however, is not something that employs the body from outside of it. Rather it is that which bodily determines itself from, as it were, the depths of the body. An abstract free will is nothing. Moreover it fails to move anything. Thus in order to say that we see things by possessing eyes or that we move things volitionally, something creative must be at work there. That is what I call historical nature and what I mean by the formative act.²⁴⁷ And from the standpoint of the self, this is what I also call acting-intuition. To create is to form and to form is to see. Our true self exists as a creative element of this historical world. What I call acting does not merely refer to the will. It is to make things outside [of the self]. Accordingly this does not occur at the same time from mere consciousness. Instead it occurs from that which transcends so-called consciousness. It occurs from the creative demand. Hence there is no such thing as an acting that is not intuitive. What is called volition is the reduction of acting-intuition into intuition. In response one might ask from where the opposition of perception and will, passivity and activity, occurs. But it is our life itself that is self-contradictory. Everything creative is self-contradictory. Life possesses an environment; it is thoroughly environmental. The environment, however, does not give birth to life. Instead life is what negates the environment; that we live means that we go on negating the environment. In such a way, the fact that the world of the dialectical universal is continually determining itself refers to the historical life that is formatively acting. For this reason, as environmental life, we possess perception in the region of self-negation. Conversely, we possess the will in the region of self-affirmation that thoroughly affirming one's self.²⁴⁸ Even in the lives of animals, life is creative. While being perceptual it is instinctive as well. One might think that in our historical life will and perception are thoroughly opposed to each other. But even in biological life, life is already dialectical, acting-intuitional, and formatively acting. To be conscious does not merely mean something like mirroring. It already has the sense of forming, the sense of seeing things by acting. Consciousness is dialectical. We can think of something like a mirroring consciousness only at the extremity of the self-negation of historical life. On the other hand, we may thus think of the will as what is acting.

When I say intuition, people immediately think of mere artistic intuition. Artistic intuition, however, refers to something established as a certain instance of acting-intuition. Art arises out of this ground of historical life. It [art] then does not mean that we are entering into a life that is somewhat different. Conversely, life in this everydayness itself is in one aspect artistic. We make things with tools; things themselves are independent and are what are seen. And accordingly they are things at work confronting us. In turn we are born of the world of things; and the fact of our being at work

means that the world determines itself and forms itself.²⁴⁹ What I mean by artistic intuition is established in that world of historical life, in the region of seeing things.

In what sort of a world is intuition established? And conversely what sort of a world is the world that intuition establishes? Needless to say, we cannot think of what intuition means if we think of the world merely materialistically. But neither can we think of intuition if we consider the world biologically or teleologically. Those who take such a view, have no choice but to think of intuition as simply unrealistic. What intuition means must in each instance be something thoroughly independent, that is, it must be the self-identity of the mutually opposed. As Heraclitus stated, beautiful harmony emerges out of strife.²⁵⁰ Intuition is established as the self-determination of the world where all elements are creative.²⁵¹ As I stated at the beginning of this essay, true life must be that which includes absolute nothing within itself, that which includes an absolute negation. What I mean by acting-intuition is established as the self-determination of such life. True intuition does not mean, as ordinarily thought, that the self loses itself or that thing and I become one. It means that the self becomes creative. And that the self becomes creative does not mean that the self departs from the world, but rather that the self becomes an operative element of the creative world. It is for this reason that we think that the self is where we are at work, and that we see the I where we make things. For the artist, the true self lies in his piece of work. Therein our body becomes that which sees in addition to what is at work. I call this living by dying. Living by dying does not mean the disappearance of the body or the resurrection of the deceased. Rather only those who truly live with the body truly see things through acting. The world becomes one's own [*jiko no*] body. Those who truly create and truly see are only those in whose pulse historical life flows. We can understand Fiedler's theory²⁵² of the origin of the artist's creative act from this standpoint as well. That the entire body becomes eye means that creative life is working through the eye. And from such a standpoint we can extend this to comprehend Riegl's aesthetic will as well.²⁵³ This is because historical life works through the race [or a people].

In the world of historical reality, there would have to be individual things that thoroughly determine themselves.²⁵⁴ That is, the thoroughly temporal and creative must be included therein. There is accordingly an utter severance between that which makes and that which is made. That which has been made, in its own right, is something independent. And it is that which opposes A as well as opposing B. In such a case, we think a thing to be that which is seen and that the I is passive.²⁵⁵ Even though things are separate from the I and oppose the I in discontinuity, they exist in the same world as the I.²⁵⁶ That things confront us in such a relationship means

that we see things. Usually we regard only such relationships to be what we call intuition. That we make things means that we make things with tools, and that we make things with tools means that as bodily things we in turn are made by this world. In such instances, born of the world of things, we are endlessly desire-ridden, and things are mediating.²⁵⁷ That alone, however, would not make the self creative. When we are creative, things are neither things merely seen nor merely mediating. Things must be expressions of our lives, that is, they must be expressions of historical life. In such cases, it is neither that things merely lose their characteristic as seen nor that they stop mediating. To the end, things are simply what are seen and also mediating. Things are thoroughly things. But when things become expressions of life as things in the historical world, we see the self in the thing, regard the thing as the self, and think of the I and the thing as one.²⁵⁸ Even our body is seen as a thing within the historical world. And along with being a tool it is also what sees. Furthermore, our acting is an act of expression. We continue seeing things through acting. This is what acting-intuition is. To see is to work. But in such cases, it is not that the self disappears or that it merely becomes a thing as one ordinarily thinks. To the contrary, it means that the self becomes a true self, becomes a creative element, and thoroughly becomes an individual thing that determines itself.²⁵⁹ Our self as a creative element in the creative world, while confronting that which thoroughly expresses itself as object, also always confronts a creative element in the depths of its own life, the thou. An individual thing confronts an individual thing. Needless to say, we can further think of this in various terms, such as of the relationship in facing the creator. In any case, a creative element in the creative world is made from a combination of other creative elements and must also be what makes other creative elements. This is why I say that in the depths of the historical world, there is the opposition between the I and the thou, and that otherwise there would be no such thing as a historical world.²⁶⁰ Here lies the ground of the historical reality of society. The I does not confront the thou in the region of things. That the I confronts the thing and that the I confronts the thou, are confrontations in two opposing regions. Even in biological life, while we confront the nutritional environment in the region of things, we confront the parent or the child in the region of life. But the world of living things is not creative; it is not the world that lives on its own. That which confronts [us] as object is merely nutritional and not the expression of life. In the world of historical reality, while we confront expressions in the region of things, persons encounter persons as creative elements. We accordingly intermingle through the medium of expression. Although biological life determines itself merely morphologically, historical life goes on forming itself expressively.

Let me return here to the issue of logic. As operative elements in the historical world, we make things with tools. Things are what appear objectively and are seen. To make things does not mean simply to consciously think of them but to act with the body. Therefore it is not only [epistemologically] subjective but would already have to be a historical fact that is subjective and objective. To be able to say that we act, we must possess desire [*yokkyū*]. Whence does desire come? What we mean by desire does not just happen out of consciousness. It has to be what occurs from out of the depths of our body. Needless to say, desire must also involve consciousness. However, it is not that there is a body because there is consciousness but that there is consciousness because there is a body. Hence the body must also be what has been formed historically. But what I mean by our body is not merely the biological body. The human body must be a historical body. This is why it involves consciousness. Although we may think of consciousness as transcending or separate from our body, consciousness must thoroughly be the self-affirmation of our bodily self. Hence even the fact that we make things with tools and things appear by means of this must in a word be the work of historical nature.²⁶¹ Our bodily self would have to be formed from there as well. Perhaps some may think that this ignores our volition. A merely abstract will would not be a maker of anything.

Our body however is what sees as well as what is at work. To become seer is to become creative, to become a creative element in the creative world. Accordingly this does not mean, as people have previously thought, that the body disappears or that the self disappears. It means rather the return of true life to itself. The casting-off of body-and-mind²⁶² does not simply mean becoming empty. The world becomes expressive to the I, who as a creative element sees with the body. Things appear as expressions of life. Only upon such a standpoint can we say that expressions move the I. To see means to see with the body. Seeing is inconceivable without the body. When at work, we possess things as tools. But the body is a thing and is that which is seen from the outside. While being a bodily existence, we also possess the body as tool. In saying so, I do not mean that the body disappears. [I mean that] the body becomes that which sees. The body becomes formatively active and creative. This is why forming means seeing. We can say this even of animals insofar as they are conscious. The oppositional contradiction between activity and passivity is not merely a matter of human beings. It has to be the essence of life. What is creative is what is self-contradictory. This is why pessimistic philosophers think of life as suffering.²⁶³

Things bear names. And in working with tools, our everyday life is already *logos*-bearing. It [our life] must be dialectical as a continuity of discontinuity. The world is a world of tools in the region wherein we are

said to possess things as tools. We also possess our body as a tool. As we possess our own body as tool, the world is also a world of names. Therein we come to think that we transcend our body or that the body disappears. But it does not mean that we depart from our body. Whenever we think, it is always within a certain place [*basho*] and at a certain time of the historical world. Our thinking is thoroughly delimited by history.²⁶⁴ We possess things as tools, things become our own body, and [thereby] thing and body become one. What I mean by *technē* is this continuity of discontinuity.²⁶⁵ Within the domain where things become our body we may regard this as so-called *technē*. But when we transcend it to become *logos*-bearing we may consider it as inductive logic. Inductive logic, when seen from our life, is technological. But even *technē* must already be logical.²⁶⁶ As Aristotle states therein must already be something universal.²⁶⁷ But this must be thoroughly hypothetical.

Our self nevertheless is creative as an operative element in the creative world. To create thus means to give form as well as to see. It is not that we receive our body from the world of things by standing outside of it. Rather we are within the world of things. Thereby does our possession of things as tools becomes possible as well. For our body is a historical body.²⁶⁸ Many people think of expression as merely [epistemologically] subjective because they are looking at the world simply as an object. But the world [itself] must be expressive when we consider the fact that we are in the midst of the world as operative elements and that we are at work inside the world. The world is the self-expression of historical life and our bodily self is its element. In life, the element must be that which thoroughly determines itself and be independent. We go on seeing things by acting. Accordingly as long as we are creative, the thing is the I, the I is the thing, and I and thing are one, that is, they can [both] be regarded in terms of intuition.²⁶⁹ Therein we are self-aware, we are alive, and the I exists. There is no I without acting-intuition. Even [with] the self of consciousness, we may think of each phenomenon of consciousness as independent within the field of consciousness, and furthermore take all to be one as the consciousness of the self. And we become self-aware in proportion to the degree to which each individual consciousness, consciousness in each moment, is independent.²⁷⁰ We are the most self-aware at the time of [making a] decision. But we do not know our self in the self-awareness of mere consciousness. Self-awareness of the self of consciousness is based upon the self-awareness of the bodily self. This then means becoming creative.²⁷¹

While making things with tools, we are also seeing things and intuiting them by acting. Intuition means forming and creating. In saying so I am not thinking of the world subjectively [in an epistemological sense] but rather mean that our bodily self becomes an operative element of the world. Our

body, while being what is at work, is also what sees. At its root, animal instinct as well is nothing other than this. It is the formative act by which the world goes on forming itself. While at the beginning [of this essay] I (abstractly and conceptually) distinguished between animal instinct and our possession of tools, in the world of animal life, we cannot say that an individual thing thoroughly determines itself; it is not truly creative. Having said this however, of course, I do not mean that animals are simply uncreative. Insofar as they are living, animals must also be creative. However, although the world of animal life continues constituting the morphology of the species, the world of human beings, who are historical-bodily, goes on forming society. Society is the species of historical life. Social form is a form that is seen. The world becomes expressive in the standpoint of acting-intuition. That which confronts us is thoroughly expressive. The world becomes the expression of life. In such a standpoint it becomes conceivable that, as Frobenius states, society is continually constituted by the demonic (*Paideuma*).²⁷² But as I stated earlier, the fact that we face an expression does not mean that the I immediately faces the thou. What expressively opposes the acting self is thoroughly a thing. The I and the thou do not relate to one other as objects. Rather they relate to one another in the depths of one's life. They do not relate to one another in the region of being at work but mutually relate in the region of being born. This relationship is like the relation of a child to its parent. Put in this way, one might regard it as simply linear. But the child relating to the parent entails the parent relating to the child. It entails a mutual encounter between creative elements. There can be no life without this circular opposition. Kant's "kingdom of ends"²⁷³ is abstract because it failed to conceive the natality of our self. The I noematically faces expressions in the world wherein, as it were, the I noetically faces the thou. And that which we call society is established as the self-determination of such a world. On this basis society is established by means of the I facing the thou. Tarde²⁷⁴ as well states that the relationship wherein the [epistemological] subject faces an object, which itself is an embodied subject [*shutai*], is not the relationship of facing a perceivable object. It is rather [like] sensation facing the sensible, desire facing the desired, faith facing that which is believed. In a word, it is to face a person, to face that which cannot be negated without negating oneself (*Les lois sociales*).²⁷⁵ And he thinks of this as the psychological foundation of the social structure. But this does not simply mean that it is direct or without mediation as is ordinarily thought. One may perhaps say that it is unmediated in the region of objects. But from the region where we face things, we can neither know what a person is nor even know what the self is. Even to know what the self is, we [must] know it through the process of history and know it by means of acting-intuition. We may call this mediation via expression.

We become self-aware out of the depths of history. Even self-reflection does not mean a return to the self by arriving at [*dōchaku*] things but rather means knowing the self via expressive acts. This is made possible by seeing the thing as an expression of the self, [that is,] through medium of expression. It is from there that the self's body becomes that which is seen. Expressive acts refer to the process of history. Therefore it is not that social consciousness is established through the combination of [a multiplicity of] individual consciousness, but instead that individual consciousness is established on the basis of social consciousness.

Our real self is the bodily self, and we make things with tools. Things are that which are seen, and to make things in one aspect is to continue seeing things. When our self becomes a creative element, things become expressions of life. This is an instance of what I mean when I say that the world becomes instrumental and becomes the self's body in the region where we possess things as tools. Although one may think that the bodily self disappears therein, the historical-bodily self does not disappear. Instead our bodily self becomes active as a creative element and the flow of historical life permeates our body. Herein lies the origin of the artist's productive act. But the intuition of the artist refers to the acting-intuition of the technological body whereby tools become extensions of the body when we possess things as tools. One thus thinks of this in terms of perception. But in the region of seeing things as expressions of life, our historical-bodily self as a creative element continues seeing things without end as expressive. We can think of the world as thoroughly determining itself in expressions. Things bear names because the world of our everyday life is such a life. In departing from the world of historical actuality wherein we see things by acting, in the region of seeing things as tools and seeing the world instrumentally, we arrive at the world of signs. Even though it started from the standpoint of acting-intuition, this is a world that can no longer be stated in terms of intuition. To the contrary, in the region wherein we continue seeing things as expressions of our life, that is, in the region wherein the world creates itself, we possess the *logos*-world, the world that transcends our intuition and is expressed by mere language.²⁷⁶ The former is what we consider to be the world of objects of the natural sciences, and the latter is what we think of as the world of objects of the cultural sciences or historical sciences.²⁷⁷ Accordingly even if we regard them both as a world of objects, they differ in character. We can conceive of one in the region wherein things appear, and conceive of the other in the region wherein forms appear, the region of formation. The universal of the former is what we call an abstract universal, and the universal of the latter is what we call a concrete universal. The definite noun straightforwardly determines itself and forms itself. To continue seeing the world intuitively from the beginning means to see via definite

nouns. Behind the principle of self-identity lies an intuition.²⁷⁸ In the region wherein we continue seeing the world intuitively and individually without end, we can probably conceive of history in what may be called its “once-ness.”²⁷⁹ The various cultural sciences, however, are established by taking as their objects forms that have been formed through acting-intuition. In historical actuality, things are expressions and possess names, and our body is historical and *logos*-bearing. The world of historical actuality always possesses such a peripheral world with actuality as its center. Nay, without possessing such a periphery,²⁸⁰ it would not be the world of historical actuality. The world of the actual is not the world of blind intuition. Even the world of perception is not blind. There is no such thing as a world of experience that is not *logos*-bearing.²⁸¹ The dialectical universal as the logical form of acting-intuition, in one aspect, as an individual unity, is a concrete universal. But in another aspect, in negating the individual thing, it possesses the quality of an abstract universal as well. The self-determination of the dialectical universal is the logic of a creative process wherein we see things by working with the body and the world continues forming itself.²⁸² The forms of cognition refer to forms whereby historical life determines itself through *logos*.

I stated, however, that our intuiting does not mean the I and the thing becoming one so that the I disappears, but rather that we become creative elements and things become expressions of life. I [also] stated that it is the permeation of historical life through our body. I cannot consider intuition as a mere passive observation as many people do. Even artistic intuition does not refer to such a thing. Our body as a creative element of the creative world is first all impulsive. We possess an endless desire. Our lives are biological. However, our self is not a mere biological-bodily self but rather a historical-bodily self. As creative elements of the historical world, we possess an infinite *ought* in the depths of life. People say that desire and reason are mutually opposed. But abstract-logical reason is not something that becomes a demand for our lives, nor does it move the self. If it cannot become a demand for our lives, neither will it come into conflict with other demands. What we call the rational self must be a sublimation of the historical body. Reason is a formative principle of the historical world. Accordingly the demands of our biological body is also formatively acting. But it cannot be acting-intuition. And for this reason it is not genuinely creative. When the world becomes an intuition²⁸³ and determines itself in expressions, as creative elements we come to know the *ought* in the depths of the life of the self. Rather than [simply] being in the depths of one’s self, [however,] the content of the *ought* would have to be the content of the life of the historical world that expressively determines itself. Personhood must refer to that which signifies the creative element of such a world.²⁸⁴

As operative elements of the historical world, the fact that we possess our body as a tool in addition to being bodily existences, means that the world of historical reality is instrumental and thoroughly determines itself instrumentally. In this sense we can say that the world of historical reality is thoroughly materialistic and mechanistic. We can say that it universally determines itself. The instrumental is the universal. While being instrumental, however, our body is also that which sees. We can say therein that we possess our body. The world of historical reality expressively determines itself and goes on seeing itself through acting-intuition. This is the formation of historical nature. This is why history begins with society. And society possesses ideologies. Even if we say that primitive society is not [individually] unique [*hikoseiteki*] in terms of tools, as what forms itself it must already determine itself in expressions. There would have to already be something [individually] unique therein. The totem probably takes on the role of such formation. Lévy-Bruhl²⁸⁵ states as follows. The mentality of primitive people, in comparison to us today, is extremely affective and dynamic, that is, it possesses a wholeness.²⁸⁶ Whether we take perception or representation, [to them] it is not so-to-speak [epistemologically] objective as it would be for us today but rather affective and dynamic.²⁸⁷ And it is acquired when they become members of society (when they are born as human). For this reason it is what possesses social content, for example a totemic content. Because of this, when the law of participation²⁸⁸ dominates, people consider it as undeveloped or [epistemologically] subjective. But the world of historical reality that expressively determines itself, from the beginning, refers to such a thing. And the world of historical reality thoroughly develops in accordance with such a prototype. Even primitive people in some sense must possess tools. Communal society is established by means of the possession of tools. Even within primitive society there has to be a materialistic foundation. We proceed from such a society in the direction of thoroughly instrumentalizing things. We move toward so-called civilization. But the mechanization of the world that results from proceeding in this region means the loss of historical life. Conversely even in the nonrational totemic region, historical life gets lost and the merely nominal [*meigōteki*]²⁸⁹ world is established. This is also the region wherein acting-intuition becomes lost. Historical life lies where [we] endlessly go on intuiting through acting.²⁹⁰ Historical actuality refers always to that which is intuited by means of acting, that which possesses an objective form. Our self, which as a creative element is historical-bodily, while intuiting by acting, hearkens to the voice of the infinite creator in the depths of this historical life. The *ought* does not arise from the depths of our heart as we ordinarily think, but rather must be what is based on the self-formation of objective life. Likewise artistic intuition means the self-formation of

historical life. However, this is nothing but the acting-intuition of the technological-bodily self.

What sort of a thing is the logic of historical life? It must be something different from the logic of object cognition and its quality. It is not a logic of mediation that is instrumental.

8.

Translators' synopsis: *This section focuses on the dynamism of the dialectic in terms of self-contradiction. Nishida begins with a discussion of historical life as a unity of opposites and a contradictory identity on the basis of which the world forms itself. This dialectic of contradiction on the part of the world is mirrored microcosmically in the acting-intuition of human beings. So here Nishida discusses the interconnections between the world's self-formation, our acting-intuition, our bodily existence, and our manipulation of tools, all in terms of self-contradiction. And he goes on to draw a connection between this self-contradiction with the movement in history and time that occurs as a continuity of discontinuity.*

What sort of a thing is dialectical logic? We are unable to think of that which is contradictory. To think a contradiction is to negate logic itself. But to not be able to think a contradiction means to not be able to think of that which contradicts itself in terms of the [grammatical] subject. We cannot say that A is as well as *is not*, that it is both being and non-being. But red is a color and so is blue. In terms of the predicate, color can be red and can be blue. Needless to say, when we think of a thing in terms of the [grammatical] subject, there are times when what was blue becomes red. This is conceivable. Therein however must lie the category of time. It can be thought only in accordance with the category of time. The category is the predicate. And just as Kant says that time is permanent,²⁹¹ time is self-contradictory.²⁹² Judgment is established by means of the self-determination of the universal. Having said this, however, I do not mean to say that judgment is established by the predicate alone. The abstract universal, as Aristotle states, is merely contained within the individual thing.²⁹³ However the primary substance that becomes the [grammatical] subject but not the predicate must be what already possesses a universal quality. *Entelecheia*²⁹⁴ is of an *idea*. The individual thing that becomes the [grammatical] subject but cannot become the predicate must refer to that which transcends the abstract universal. Furthermore, it does not merely transcend it; it must be predicatable and be able to possess various qualities. The merely transcendent is nothing at all. If we pursue this idea [to its logical conclusion], it would have to be what possesses an infinity of attributes as in Spinoza's substance.²⁹⁵

But this would be simply nothing but an abstract universal remaining as the universal of universals. But if we are to thoroughly think of it in terms of the individual, we will probably have to think of it as what is alive. The unity of the individual thing [*kobutsuteki tōitsu*] would probably mean life. Aristotle's *entelecheia* also possesses such a sense. In life, each individual thing while being independent can be regarded as one. That which appertains to this in the substance of life is not something like a quality or an attribute, but would rather have to be that which is each respectively independent. Even when speaking of the individual thing as transcending the abstract universal, it must still be conceivable as the self-determination of a living universal [*seimeiteki ippansha*]. The concrete universal refers to such a universal. Although we think of life as referring to a continuity when thinking of it in terms of a [grammatical] subject, true life as I stated in the beginning must mean that which is thoroughly self-contradictory.²⁹⁶ Even if some say that contradiction is unthinkable, judgment is established thus as a unity of contradiction. The object of judgment²⁹⁷ is always self-contradictory. Neither is it merely the [grammatical] subject nor is it merely the predicate. The subject is the subject of a predicate, and the predicate is the predicate of a subject. Accordingly, subject and predicate are mutually opposed. As someone²⁹⁸ stated once that a white horse is not a horse and a hard rock is not a rock, we can say that the fact that red is a color is also self-contradictory.²⁹⁹ Even in the standpoint of the logic of objectification, the epistemologically considered object [*kyakkanteki taishō*],³⁰⁰ while being formal, must also be material.³⁰¹ To be unable to think of a thing means that within a certain determinate universal, that is, as the self-determination of a determinate universal, we cannot conceive what transcends it.

Although I specifically call the self-identity [*jikodōitsu*] of opposites, the unity [*tōitsu*] of contradiction, this term could become a source of various misunderstandings. Life refers to that which continues determining itself through self-contradiction. Determination itself is thus self-contradictory and moreover moves through self-contradiction. Acting and intuition are mutually contradictory. However our life lies in the place where we continue seeing things through acting. Historical life goes on determining itself through acting-intuition. The unity of contradiction does not mean that contradiction disappears.³⁰² Rather the more that it is self-contradictory, the more it is intuitional. As I stated earlier, when we intuit by acting, our self does not just disappear. Rather the self truly lives. The individual thing becomes truly an individual thing. For example, even something like mathematical knowledge is intuitive because of the self-contradictory determination of our thinking, and is a self-contradictory determination because it is intuitive. Intuition arises where there is a contradiction in

itself. The situation is similar in artistic intuition as well although the nature of the contradiction is different. When I say that what receives form gives form, I mean this self-contradictory determination of such life. Artistic intuition refers to the self-contradictory determination of technological life wherein we possess things as tools. People view artistic intuition merely from the outside. Formative acts mean that the self-contradictory determines itself. And accordingly, without determining itself, there is no such thing as self-contradiction. And that which does not determine itself, is not self-contradictory.³⁰³

To intuit by acting means that we see things in light of [our] self-contradiction. That we see things through self-contradiction means that we intuit by acting. Actuality is the self-contradiction of the absolute. It is actual because it is absolutely self-contradictory. One cannot negate it without negating one's self. Hence it is our birth and our death. I mean that we come from there and are going there. Self-contradiction does not entail the disappearance of the self. It means [rather] that the self is there. This is because the self is what is self-contradictory. It is self-contradictory to say that "I exist because I think."³⁰⁴ Furthermore, it is not that "I exist because I think" but rather that the I exists because it intuitively acts. That we possess a body is an even deeper self-contradiction than that we think. The body is the seer as well as the seen. Even direct proof does not simply mean that object and act are one, or that thing and I are one, but that we see with self-contradiction. Although to perceptually see things may be regarded as immediate, this is also a seeing by means of the movement of the bodily self. To negate this would be to negate the bodily self. Although I do not mean to equate the thinking self's direct proof and the bodily self's intuition as in mathematical theory,³⁰⁵ the bodily self is also self-contradictory. Everything creative is self-contradictory in itself and sees forms in self-contradiction.

The life of our self, possessing the historical body and engaging in acting-intuition, is itself self-contradictory. Historical life itself is self-contradictory. We cannot say that the knower is known. Our self-awareness is self-contradictory. Our body is a thing as well. Things are that which are seen. But while being what is at work our body is also what sees. Without a body there is no seeing. Our perceptual bodily self is already self-contradictory as well. People admit self-contradiction in only the thinking self for, in having separated it from the bodily self, they begin with the thinking self. But even the thinking self does not exist apart from our historical body. Things are expressions and possess names. We intuit things as [our] body by means of acting. The thinking self exists at the locus where we intuit things as names by means of acting. Apart from the historical body of acting-intuition there is neither self-contradiction nor self-awareness, and thus not even what would serve as the starting point for the thinking self.

That the world is an expression and determines itself through expression means that the world is self-contradictory. When we regard the mere [grammatical] subject as possessing a predicate, that is, when we think of it as a determination of a determinate universal, it is neither an expression nor what expresses itself. That which determines itself through expression would have to be what we cannot conceive to be the determination of a determinate universal.³⁰⁶ This is why it is expressive. But this does not simply mean that it is what ought not be determined or is indeterminate. Saying so would be the words of those who are seeing things only from the standpoint of mere thought. In one aspect this would have to mean that it is thoroughly intuitional. What is contradictory in itself in one aspect must be an intuition. The dialectical world of historical life would have to be an intuition. Intuition is to determine one's self through self-contradiction. Seen from our thinking self, we may then think of this as thoroughly expressive. Therefore in judicative knowledge, it is acting-intuition that always becomes the [grammatical] subject. This is what we consider to be the substance. A determinate universal is established insofar as the dialectical world determines itself via intuition, that is, historical life determines itself through self-contradiction.³⁰⁷ Judicative knowledge is established insofar as the [grammatical] subject is the predicate and the predicate is the subject, and intuition is visible as the self-contradiction of thinking life.³⁰⁸ The universal of judgment is the signifying model of the world of intuition that determines itself through self-contradiction. In the depths of judgment there has to be the self-contradictory determination of life. Seen from life itself, the universal of judgment is nothing but a means for the self-determination of life.

When I speak of self-contradiction, people think only of logical contradiction. But the contradiction of life means that without negating one's self, one cannot negate what negates the self. There is no eye without the seeing of things and there is no ear without the hearing of sounds. Seeing is the eye's necessity and *raison d'être*, and hearing is the ear's necessity and *raison d'être*. Although it is needless to say that without visual perception there is no visible thing and without auditory perception there is no sound, neither are things the product of visual perception nor are sounds the product of auditory perception. Things are that which negate us. We see things and hear things through self-contradiction and dialectically.³⁰⁹ And we structure forms through intuition. We can even say therein that we intuit through self-contradiction. Where there is intuition there accordingly exists a self-contradictory self. Our body however is not only sensory. Our body must be a historical body. The true self exists where we see things through acting. (That which we can see through acting-intuition is something like the *ideas*.) When we look at what we see in perception from the standpoint

of the thinking self, we think of it as not necessary but rather contingent. This is why we regard empirical knowledge as contingent. As a self-contradictory intuition of the thinking self itself, we consider only something like mathematical knowledge as necessary. But empirical scientific knowledge refers to something founded upon the acting-intuition of our historical-bodily self. Although this is a seeing through acting-intuition of something like the *ideas*, for the perceiving body, it is a perceptual seeing of thing-events. Things are that which possess names, and in the region of seeing things *qua* names, we see factual things through self-contradiction. That the I sees *this* thing at *this* place and *this* time is a necessity. To negate this is to negate the self.³¹⁰ What we call physics therefore continues mathematically composing these facts as its foundation. In the other natural sciences, the forms already seen would have to be the axioms. From the standpoint of the self-contradictory determination of historical life, when all things become instrumental and moreover become signs, the world becomes a world of mere facts.

Those who begin from the standpoint of logic think of the self-contradictory as that which has transcended a certain determinate universal.³¹¹ This is, as it were, to conceive of a nothing from out of being. But those who begin from life would have to proceed in the reverse direction. Self-contradiction lies where we intuit by acting. And what we mean by judicative knowledge is also in fact established there. Judgment is established where the [grammatical] subject is a predicate and the individual is universal.³¹² There has to be a deep self-contradiction of historical life in its very depths. Although one might ask how we can [even] conceive of something noncontradictory in a world that is self-contradictory, the very fact that this question is raised means that we are regarding the world as a single determinate universal. For we are conceiving of the world from the standpoint of abstract logic. To speak of the unity of contradiction is not to conceive a unity in terms of the [grammatical] subject. That would be impossible. On the other hand, neither does it mean to think of it in terms of the predicate. That is impossible as well. It simply means that we intuit by acting; that we are born and alive. We thus conceive the unity of the world in accordance with the demands of the thinking self as a historical-bodily self. In this case, we can think of the noncontradictory in the world of self-contradiction, but we cannot think the contradictory in a world of noncontradiction.³¹³ We may consider this, however, only in the self-contradiction of the thinking self. Life is everywhere self-contradictory. [Grammatical] subject and predicate stand opposed in the self-contradiction of life. The individual thing and the universal stand opposed. Hence the particular is always an intuition.

When we become creative as elements of the creative world, things do not remain merely tools but become expressions. Things become the

expression of life. The world is determining itself via expression, that is, it continues forming itself. We go on intuiting by acting, that is, we are dialectically determining our own self. Intuition means that historical life dialectically determines itself. Our life is thus both historical and social. Society would have to be what is formed as the self-determination of historical life and it is that which is seen through acting-intuition. Society is not the [mere] collection of individual persons. On the other hand, neither is it sheer material force nor mere authority. That which Durkheim calls social fact can not be reduced to the psychological relationships among individual persons but neither is it something transcendent. It has to be formed by historical life.³¹⁴ And so our acting self, as the operative element of the historical world, is acting insofar as it is social. And society exists only insofar as we intuit through acting. Thus as an acting self we always possess a worldview. A society that is alive as a historical reality must possess a worldview at its root. The world that determines itself via expression must possess a worldview. The totem of primitive people is also one kind of worldview. What I mean by worldview however is not merely the product of philosophers. It must be that which appears through the self-determination of historical life and founded upon acting-intuition. A worldview is established via *logos* where we, as the historical-bodily self, intuit through acting. There would be no worldview without intuiting through acting. For this reason anyone, as long as he/she is alive, is in possession of some sort of worldview. Anybody for that matter is a philosopher. Because they are historical-bodily, humans are metaphysical animals. A true philosopher must be some sort of a prophet. It is said that the word *prophet* may originally have had the sense of "one who speaks" rather than one who predicts the future. The prophet was the one who conveys on behalf of God, His will to Israel, that is, one who ought to be regarded as the "mouthpiece of God." The philosopher must be one who speaks the mission of history. The principle of participation, instead of being logically prior, must be a principle of philosophy, the logic of a worldview. Philosophy begins with participation in the *ideas*. Hence the *idea* must be what is intuited through acting. That we intuit through acting in turn means that historical life determines itself. Therein lies form. Society is such a form. Historical life begins with the giving of form. Hence philosophy must also be social. However that we intuit through acting means that historical life determines itself through self-contradiction. The standpoint of philosophy, even while based upon society, refers to the standpoint of the acting-intuition of the whole historical life. (We probably should regard this as the standpoint of the constitution of individuality [discussed] in the later essays.³¹⁵ In this essay this idea is not yet made explicit.)

What has been regarded as the core of philosophy since ancient times is the worldview based upon acting-intuition. And the logic of philosophy would have to be the dialectic of historical life. Historical life is dialectically determining itself, that is, it continues forming itself. Such formation is also [exemplified in] the appearance of temporal and spatial things. As individual bodies of historical life, we continue seeing things by acting. If judgment is established as the self-determination of the dialectical universal whereby the [grammatical] subject is the predicate, we are individuals of the historical world that mediates the formation of historical life. The reason why I started this essay with the observation that human beings are toolmaking animals, is because humans, being *homo faber*, are already individual bodies of historical life. The possession of tools also means the possession of the body as tool, and the body is what sees by working. Seeing by working means that historical life determines itself and therein forms appear. That is the historical species. Species is form. We think that because we are individual bodies of historical life, we are born of the world of historical life that determines itself through species, and we are [thus] given form by historical life. That historical life determines itself through self-contradiction means that we see things in terms of the *ideas* in acting-intuition. (That means that as a historical individual body we see via self-contradiction.) Although in saying so it may be thought that I am conceiving of the noncontradictory in light of the contradictory, the world of historical reality is always self-contradictory. Historical reality is always a self-contradictory reality. That our body is what sees as well as what is at work, bears this meaning. We are always seeing our self through acting-intuition. This means that our self has to be bodily. And therein lies the world of historical reality. That we exist through self-contradiction as a bodily self entails that the world of historical reality is self-contradictory. But the world of the acting-intuition of ourselves as a merely instrumental-bodily self, would be a world with an opaque form. Even though the world of perception, as I stated in the foregoing, is dialectical, as an objective world seen by the acting-intuition of the historical-bodily self, it is nothing but the uncertain world of *doxa*.³¹⁶ Even though the instinctive life of animals is also dialectical, we probably cannot say that it sees the world of form through acting.³¹⁷ This is why we say that animals do not possess a world of objects.³¹⁸ With the acting-intuition of the historical life of the instrumental-bodily self, the world of artistic *ideas* can be seen. The world of artistic intuition refers to the world seen by the acting-intuition of the technological body of historical life. The perceptual body is an instrumental body. This is why the arts can be regarded as perceptual or representational. Nevertheless our self, as an individual body of historical life, intuits through self-contradiction. Our body is that which sees by engaging in work. Our

potential to possess things as tools through self-contradiction stems from there. While in one aspect the world of historical reality is thoroughly instrumental, as the world of historical life it is what thoroughly forms itself and sees itself. The life of our self is absolutely contradictory. Therein is established our moral conduct. Moral conduct lies in fact that the historical-bodily self goes on forming the world through self-contradiction.³¹⁹ What is historically formed in this sense [and] seen through acting-intuition is society. Moral conduct for this reason is social. The *ought* must be that which comes out of historical life rather than from within the self. As individual bodies of historical life, we possess an infinite *ought*. Otherwise the *ought* cannot escape being abstract. Thus acting-intuition, a worldview, must lie at the bottom of moral conduct. Philosophy is the content, in terms of *logos*, of such a worldview. As an instrumental-bodily self, that is, as a technological-bodily self, we intuit artistic content through acting. However, the historical-bodily self must be *logos*-bearing. Philosophy is the acting-intuition of the *logos*-bearing bodily self. Therefore while both art and philosophy are dialectical, philosophy must [also] be an holistic acting-intuition of historical life.³²⁰ This is because historical life is *logos*-bearing. Hence moral conduct must entail the dialectical process of such acting-intuition. Philosophy must be logical. But philosophy is not constituted according to logical form as in the cognition of objects. Acting-intuition must lie at its root.

To say that the immediately given is prior to the subject–object bifurcation or that it simply contains the subject–object opposition as a potentiality would be a perspective belonging to the standpoint of the intellectual self. Even if we mean the standpoint of acting, without thinking about whence acting is established, we have no choice but to consider the immediate world as merely material or potential. From the standpoint of acting-intuition, however, the world is always dialectically formed as well as forming.³²¹ Our life is that dialectical process of the world. Our bodily self is the individual body of historical life. What I mean by our acting occurs not from the bottom of the self, conceived as opposing the world, but rather from the dialectical self-determination of the world.³²² Although we can think of this in terms of the *ought*, because our self is historical-bodily, even the *ought* occurs through the process of acting-intuition. Actuality is not immediately given. Instead it is the world wherein we are born and live. To think that it is immediately given would be the standpoint of the intellectual self. The actual world always means the world we see dialectically. Actuality is always self-contradictory. If we are to employ the term of inclusion, the opposition of the so-called subject–object is always dialectically included therein. And even while the world persistently becomes manifest from a state of potentiality, as always, it includes dialectical opposition.

Life is thoroughly self-contradictory. This means that we intuit by acting. Thus life is desiring without end. The will to life accordingly is self-contradictory.³²³ Even what we call the *ought* arises from there. The moral will is also thoroughly self-contradictory. The actual is that which has been determined. It is thoroughly finite. The infinite is not actual. Yet neither is the merely finite. Actuality would have to be the contradictory self-identity of finitude and infinity. The actuality of acting-intuition is always such a self-identity of contradiction. From the standpoint of the opposition between finitude and infinity, we can regard it as neither finite nor infinite. Potentiality does not exist outside of the manifest but is rather included within the actuality of self-contradiction. This is why *energeia* is said to precede *dynamis*. The present is included within the present. This is why I speak of the self-determination of the eternal now. It is as if a circle, wherein periphery and center are incompatible, continues moving endlessly in self-contradiction. What I mean by the present is not something like a point on a linear line, moving from past to future, as is the instant. The present must rather be the world of acting-intuition. Our self does not refer to that which is opposed to such actuality. The self is rather established through that self-contradiction of actuality. But if we look at these relationships by taking the self of consciousness as the center, the entire way of thinking would change.³²⁴ Even what we mean by time is established from the self-contradiction that involves acting-intuition. It is established from the fact that we measure via acting-intuition. Time (as Speiser states,³²⁵) must also be group-theoretical. Acting-intuition means the continuity of discontinuity that is self-contradictory. Therefore time is established as a continuity of discontinuity. Time in the real world must refer to this sort of thing.

Formal logic considers the relationship between the universal and the particular as a difference in kind [*shusa*], and regards the individual thing to be at the extremity of particularization.³²⁶ Thus the concrete, the real, is conceived as particular. But thought in terms of formal logic, particulars are [in fact] no different from universals. Although *horse* is a particular in relation to *animal*, it is general in relation to *white horse* or *black horse*. Put from the standpoint of judgment, the real is that which becomes the [grammatical] subject but not a predicate.³²⁷ But judgment is [also] established from the fact that, as Hegel stated, the [grammatical] subject *is* the predicate and the individual thing *is* the universal.³²⁸ It must be that which is established as the self-determination of the dialectical universal. The universal as the substance of that dialectical process is neither an abstract universal nor the so-called concrete universal (that is, a particular). It must rather be what we ought to consider as the universal wherein one is many and many is one.³²⁹ This substance is the world of historical reality that determines itself. And

the process of the self-determination of such a world is historical life as dialectical. We are always arriving in the present as what has been determined through acting-intuition.³³⁰ Therein we possess the body. The present must be that which has been determined.³³¹ To think of it as merely undetermined or what ought to be determined would be the standpoint of the intellectual self. Because the present is that which has been determined through acting-intuition, we are dialectically acting. We are individual things that dialectically determine themselves. And we continue moving thoroughly through acting-intuition. But no matter how far we go, the world is a world determined through acting-intuition. The finite does not become infinite. It is always the present. The world of historical reality is plastic.³³² Needless to say, the present contains infinite suggestibility. But this does not mean that what is immediately given is indeterminate. Rather the present contains infinite suggestibility because it has been determined through acting-intuition. There exist innumerable paths branching out from the present. Furthermore this does not simply mean that it moves from the potential to the manifest. We are always going from actuality to actuality. People often think that the primitive world was universal and that as it progressed it became particularized. But even the various primitive worlds that appeared in historical reality were each a particular world that had been determined. The world of today was not included therein. Although there was a path leading from it to today's world, there were other paths as well. Actuality is not merely accidental or irrational as we would think from the standpoint of the intellectual self. Rather innumerable abstract universals are established out of the dialectical actuality of acting-intuition and innumerable possibilities can be conceived therein. And this is what becomes the means or purpose of life whereby we go on moving in actuality.³³³ When we become active, as the destination of actuality there must always be an end or means that transcends the so-called actual.³³⁴ But this would always be a goal or means from within historical reality. Acting requires a foothold. On the other hand one might object that it is unintelligible to speak of a progress that transcends beyond the actual while taking it [the actual] as something determined. But that would be an idea belonging to the standpoint of analytic logic. Our life is self-contradictory. Contradiction arises out of acting-intuition. Judgment has to be through analytic logic. But for a judgment to be true it must be self-contradictory. Judgment is established through acting-intuition. But, by postulating action in advance, some may claim that we intuit because we act. Acting, however, would not arise where there is no intuition at all. And yet even if we can think of a certain world that has been determined as the basis of acting, if we are to think of it [this world] as preparatory for what comes later, it [this idea] would be a teleological worldview and not a dialectical one. At

its root the movement of history is not merely akin to continuous development but rather oppositional. What appears afterwards is not the continuous development of what precedes. Rather as particulars mutually determining themselves they are oppositional. This is why I call the development of history, the continuity of discontinuity. The understanding of historical reality then should start from the fact of “I am” rather than from the fact of “I am at work” or of “I think.”³³⁵ That the I exists means that the I intuitively acts.³³⁶ It means that the body is there.

In that case is the movement of history discontinuous or non-rational? That is not what I am saying. History continually moves from acting-intuition to acting-intuition; it goes on from present to present.³³⁷ We always continue treading upon the actual through acting-intuition. Therein lies the continuity of historical life. Acting-intuition is such that historical life continues determining [*kettei*]³³⁸ itself through self-contradiction. From the standpoint of the thinking of the historical-bodily self, we can always think of a continuous and universal world at its periphery. But we conceive this always from [the standpoint of] the actual world of acting-intuition. The thoroughly universal is nothing but the merely abstract and formal. When I speak of [moving from] intuition to intuition, people [may] think [of this as] irrational or blind. The unity of acting-intuition, however, means the self-identity of opposites. Although I stated in the preceding that there are an infinite number of paths going from the actuality of acting-intuition, various periods are always simultaneously existing in the actuality.³³⁹ While the actuality of acting-intuition has been thoroughly determined via intuition as actual, it also contains an infinity of oppositions as a dialectical unity. The movement of history is this self-identity of opposites standing in opposition. Therein lies historical life as well as true reason. Therefore this does not mean that actuality, taken as merely potential, is to go [*iku koto*] from potentiality to manifestation. Rather it means to go from actuality to actuality, from intuition to intuition, and that we are always moving in touch with the absolute. This is why I speak of the self-determination of the eternal now. I am not saying that history is not continuous. It is a continuity of discontinuity. Thus acting-intuition is a continuity of discontinuity. Even if I say that the movement of history does not quite satisfy reflective logic, I do not think it to be irrational. For true reason is the formative act of history. History is not the movement of the *ideas*. And yet historical life goes on seeing *ideas* through acting-intuition.³⁴⁰ We cannot say that there is no *ought* because we intuit through acting. For the *ought* is the contradictory self-identity of historical life. For being the demand of the actuality of intuition, it is an absolute *ought*. Although one may think that my [notions of the] self-determination of the dialectical universal or the universal of nothing ignores the particular, historical life as the self-determination of

the dialectical universal, wherein past and future exist simultaneously, goes from actuality to actuality, from particular to particular.³⁴¹ We can think of the continuity of particulars in this light as well.

9.

Translators' synopsis: *The final section begins with a focus upon the dialectic as a continuity of discontinuity, whereby concrete reality in terms of the present is always moving and yet always present. Nishida explains self-negation to be the mediation that makes possible the unfolding of time as this continuity of discontinuity and whereby past and future are simultaneously co-present. On this basis he connects the historical world's self-formation to the self-determination of the eternal now. And again he attributes the generation of logic from out of that dialectical self-formation as the logos, or life of the world.*

We may conceive historical actuality as self-contradictory in a variety of senses. We can regard it so in the following ways: in being temporal-spatial, in being [epistemologically] subjective-objective, and in particular, in the sense that past and future simultaneously exist in the present.³⁴² In turn the self-contradictory is actual. Although it is said that we cannot think what is self-contradictory, reality is thoroughly self-contradictory. Even the self that thinks that it [the self-contradictory] cannot be thought is itself a self-contradictory existence. What cannot be self-contradictory is nothing but what has been thought.³⁴³ Historical reality continually moves from actuality to actuality via self-contradiction. It is continually moving from self-contradiction to self-contradiction.³⁴⁴ The present, while we consider it to be always in motion, is always present.

People think of this sort of actuality as merely finite or continuous. But I think that to conceive of actuality as simply finite or continuous is to think of it as non-actual. To speak of the actual as finite requires us to think of it as the determination of the infinite. From this idea, it would follow that the non-actual is real and that actuality is in turn unreal. On the other hand, if in some sense we are to include infinity within finitude, we may also proceed by thinking in continuity from finitude to infinity. But the fact that time possesses fringes [*en'un*] also necessitates the consideration of the present as not only finite but already inclusive of negation.³⁴⁵ I cannot critically discuss this in detail as there are a variety of ways of conceiving this idea. I think, however, that to consider actuality merely as finite or as continuous is not to see actuality from its own standpoint but rather to see it in its relationship with others [other things]. It is to think of actuality from the standpoint of the intellectual self (the standpoint of the non-actual). I am not

saying that actuality is not finite or not continuous. But to continually move-on from actual to actual does not simply mean that what comes before is preparatory for what comes after, as is thought concerning the continuity of time. Hence it does not simply mean that what comes after is a consequence of what comes before. To see actuality as continuous, that is, to see it merely as that which has been determined continuously in some sense, as in the continuity of time, means to see actuality as non-independent. This would be to negate the absoluteness of actuality, thus rendering it as no longer actual. The world of historical reality would thereby disappear. In the world of historical reality we move on from actuality to actuality. We come in touch with the absolute. There is no absolute beyond this.³⁴⁶ An absolute conceived is not the absolute.³⁴⁷

Having said this, however, I do not mean to say that actuality is simply infinite or discontinuous. Such a thing is simply not actual. Actuality must be that which has been thoroughly determined. What then is the sense of its determination? The historical present refers to the *basho* wherein we can conceive the infinite past and future to be simultaneously existent. We ought to regard what has been determined as actual to be what has been determined by means of the relationship of synchronic existence between past and future, that is, the spatial relationship among the temporal. This is why I speak of the self-determination of the eternal now and say that the present determines itself. This has to be the sense in saying that the actual is finite. And I think that this differs from conceiving actuality as a mere manifestation of the infinitely potential. If we are to think in terms of the latter, even actuality would simply mean nothing more than the manifestation of what was potentially there, whereby there would be no such thing as opposition or creation. Even if we say that we engage in work, this would merely be in thought. With such an idea the world of historical reality would be inconceivable. Even if we say that historical actuality is finite, it would have to be that which has been determined in the sense of the unity of what are endlessly opposed, [that is,] Heraclitus's so-called harmony of opposites. This is why I call everything that is historically real, the continuity of discontinuity. I am not saying that it is not continuous. But it is a continuity of discontinuity. It is a dialectical continuity in the sense that the many is the one and the one is the many. Even species in the historical world must entail a continuity of discontinuity in this sense. Instead of being established in terms of vitalism, as the self-determination of the world, it must be something like a self-maintaining dynamic structure.

We ought to regard the historical present as the self-determination of the eternal now. Therein the temporal is spatial and the spatial is temporal. It is a self-contradictory world as the self-identity of absolute opposites. The world wherein we see things through acting, the world of acting-intuition,

always entails such a world of self-contradiction. In this way the world of historical reality moves on in self-contradiction from actuality to actuality, changing via acting-intuition. This is why I speak of touching the eternal now in historical actuality. When I speak of intuition, some may think of it as stationary. But we continue intuiting through self-contradiction. (Otherwise it would not be intuition but rather mere fantasy.³⁴⁸) We have to recognize certain things that oppose us. That we are alive entails such recognition. One might think of this as an inner necessity of our life. Yet that recognition is also a negation of ourselves. Therein one thinks that the self loses itself. Intuition is that which negates us while affirming us and affirms us while negating us. In this sense the world of historical actuality is the world wherein we see things in acting-intuition. And for this reason it is a thoroughly self-contradictory world. Put in reverse, the world of historical actuality is there where we intuit things through self-contradiction. In this way, the world continually changes from self-contradiction to self-contradiction via acting-intuition. No matter how far it goes, the world is self-contradictory. It is intuitional and actual because it is self-contradictory. Even while it goes on altering it [the world], the present is always present. As the self-identity of opposites, concrete reality continues moving through acting-intuition.

In spite of the many objections to my speaking of the continuity of discontinuity or the self-determination of the eternal now, I am convinced that the dialectical progression of the historical world must be conceived in the above manner. When I say that historical actuality is finite and moves on dialectically, one might think that it goes from potentiality to manifestation. But historical actuality has to be what has been determined as the self-determination of the dialectical world wherein past and present are simultaneously existent. It must be that which has been determined through acting-intuition. Therein we can conceive past and future to be simultaneously existent. In its progression, *energeia* must always be thought of as preceding *dynamis*. What appears in historical actuality then is what we ought to regard as particular and what determines itself. And it is continually changing from particular to particular. In the world of historical actuality, neither is the former a mere preparation for the later, nor the later a mere consequence of the former. On the other hand, this does not mean that they are unrelated or discontinuous. It moves on through acting-intuition, that is, dialectically. This is why I call it the continuity of discontinuity. That such historical actuality is moving through acting-intuition means that historical life is continually forming itself. And one might regard this as the continuity of a species. I am not saying that it is not continuous. But it is a continuity of acting-intuition. It is the continuity of a dialectic wherein the one is the many and the many is the one. Bergson says the following. We may explain a certain painting as a consequence of the

model's facial features, the artist's character, or the colors stirred on the palette. But even the artist cannot foresee the picture prior to its production. He further states that each moment of our life involves this sort of creation.³⁴⁹ Intuition in Bergson entails neither a mechanism nor a finalism. As pure duration one might think of it as nonrational or mystical. Neither does what I call acting-intuition entail a mechanism or a finalism. Creation, however, means the objective [*kyakkanteki*] appearance of form, a historical-formative act. If we are to characterize Bergson's intuition as musical, we might say that what I call acting-intuition is plastic.³⁵⁰ All of the *ideas*³⁵¹ are forms visible through acting-intuition. I regard reason to be such a self-formative act of the historical world. The form of this self-determination of historical life, through *logos*, becomes the form of logic. It is in intuition via formative acts that true reason operates. Intuition entails living one's life to the fullest. It thus means to intuit dialectically.³⁵² Bergson's pure duration is a creative evolution incapable of returning even to an instant prior.³⁵³ In contrast to the linearity of Bergson's duration, my acting-intuition ought to be regarded instead as circular. We may then conceive of an infinite plenitude in its background rather than an infinite continuity.³⁵⁴ While we might consider the eternal now, wherein past and future exist simultaneously, as absolutely nothing, we can probably also think of it as absolute being. However, to conceive of actuality dialectically is neither to merely think of it as temporal continuity nor to think of it as akin to spatial plenitude. It is to think of actuality itself as moving dialectically. Although even here one might think of the dialectical process by focusing on continuity, I am speaking of the continuity of discontinuity from the above standpoint of an absolute dialectic, a dialectic that continually moves from actuality to actuality while touching upon the absolute. It continues on through acting-intuition. What follows is not simply the result of what precedes nor is what precedes merely a preparation for what follows. Instead, from the standpoint of wholeness, the two are in a relationship of synchronic existence. This does not mean, however, that it is simply trans-temporal. Time cannot return even to a single previous instant, and past and future cannot be conjoined. One can think here that the latter is a consequence of the former and that the former is preparatory for the latter. Acting-intuition is a self-contradictory movement wherein *egressus*³⁵⁵ is *regressus*.³⁵⁶ We may regard this to mean that motion is stillness. [But] it would be a misunderstanding to automatically think of mysticism when I speak of motion being stillness. True concrete actuality must be something like this. Reason is such a self-mediating act of actuality. What we think of as immediate, such as negation in logic or the starting point of logic, in short, is nothing more than what we have conceived.

Translators' Note: The following final paragraphs, indented and placed in Japanese quotation marks in the final Japanese edition, were written and appended to the original essay by Nishida in response to the criticism of his colleague Tanabe Hajime, who from the standpoint of his "logic of species" (shu no ronri) felt that Nishida philosophy lacks any element or moment of the species or kind (shu). Nishida felt that he had already touched upon that point in the original publication of the essay in Shisō. And hence what is appended here should be considered as an expansive development or illustration of that original point.

That which, from the standpoint of judicative logic, we conceive to be immediate as the negating mediation of logic, is [itself] a requirement of logic and is not the actuality of acting-intuition. It is not the immediate mode of true life. The particular that we conceive according to the mediating terms of the syllogism is not true actuality. It cannot thoroughly escape the sense that, as the particular of a universal, it is a [mere] possibility. The particular conceived in this sense cannot be the medium of absolute negation. Actuality must be there where it touches upon the absolute (where it becomes creative) with each step. Only then can we accordingly speak of the mediation of absolute negation for the first time. In order to think of a certain particular continuum, it will be appropriate to refer to Aristotle's idea of time.³⁵⁷ But in order to think of something like the movement of the historical world, we cannot but depend upon Augustine's idea of time.³⁵⁸ In the progression of the historical world, the present must always be in touch with the absolute. It continually moves from actuality to actuality. Actuality does not only refer to the present time that we think of as continuous. The importance of Augustine's idea of time has yet to be deeply reflected upon. It seems to me, however, that we may consider historical reality through Augustine's idea of time.

What we can conceive in the historical world to be the nation-state or society is a particular. However, this is not what we ought to regard as the substance of history. A nation-state or a society must be that which has been mediated in the historical world. It is not the case that the historical world is established from the relationship between particulars. Rather a particular society or nation-state is established as the particular of the historical world. Even if it is the history of one country, once it is written as a particular of the world, it is true history. To see a particular as particular, is not identical to seeing it as the particular of the world. As Ranke stated that he can no longer write anything other than world history,³⁵⁹ is it not the case that the theme of history is not in the particular as such but rather in the particular as a particular of the world?³⁶⁰ What becomes the theme of history is that which is generated historically, such as a single nation-state or society. What structures it, as I mentioned at the beginning of this essay,

is probably something like historical nature that is the essence of living things and of society. In the historical world, we might think of this as substance *qua* subject and as subject *qua* substance.

A particular is particular as the particular of a universal. But this is not all that a particular is. In its immediacy the particular must rather be that which negates as well as mediates the universal. In such a case, as Hegel stated, the so-called universal instead becomes a particular.³⁶¹ As a concrete universal, the particular may be regarded as substantial. However what becomes the [grammatical] subject must be thoroughly predicable, that is to say, the particular must thoroughly be the particular of a universal.³⁶² Otherwise, it would be logically meaningless. We can think of a continuous substance [only] insofar as the particular is a concrete universal.³⁶³ The particular as particular becomes the continuous substance of an individual thing. This is due to its possessing the quality of a universal that itself is determined as the particular of that universal. We can no longer logically think of it as continuous, however, when the immediate that makes a particular substantial, transcends the possibility of predication. If one thus says that life, beyond this, is completely unmediated and mystical, [we find that] life to the contrary mediates itself through acting-intuition. Unity through acting-intuition hence does not refer to a unity that is continuous as conceived from the standpoint of logic but rather must be a unity such as wherein the many is the one.³⁶⁴ This is the reason why I call this the continuity of discontinuity rather than [just] continuity, and why I think of the world as [accordingly] substantial.³⁶⁵ This however does not mean that the mutually independent become one without mediation. We would have to recognize, at its root, the reality of “motion is stillness.”³⁶⁶ To say that “a moving thing does not move” should be understood in light of what I mean by “the synchronic existence of past and future,” or “the many being one.”

Logic is dialectical when it becomes the medium of life. But life does not become dialectical by means of logic. Life is dialectical from its very beginning. The reason logic is dialectical is because it becomes the medium of life. But life is not mere logic. When what becomes the [grammatical] subject transcends the possibility of predication, when the particular loses the mediational quality, it is no longer logical. But even if we say, beyond this, that it is unmediated, it is unmediated logically. This does not mean that life [per se] is unmediated. Life mediates itself through acting-intuition. And in turn I think that the dialectic of logic is established by means of the dialectic of life. My speaking of determination without a determiner or the determination of nothing refers to the transcendence of reflective logic, and does not mean nonrationality or nondifferentiation. Life that is truly concrete must transcend syllogistic mediation and in turn enable it to be

established. This does not mean that concrete life for this reason is non-rational or undifferentiated.

I think that between the dialectic conceived from the standpoint of judicative logic and dialectic from the standpoint of life itself, there is a difference that reveals opposite sides. Thus it is conceivable that there occurs a mutual difference even in regard to the ideas of substance or mediation. From the standpoint of judicative logic, we may think that the particular is continuous as the substance of an individual thing and that the universal is merely its negation. But the particular would have to be what has been mediated as the particular of a universal. Although from the standpoint of logic we may consider the particular to be the [grammatical] subject and substantial, I think that in the world of historical life, taking the particular as the particular of a universal, the universal [instead] possesses the sense of a substance. Needless to say, this is not a mere abstract universal conceived as the negation of the particular. The universal confronting the particular in this sense is not a universal but rather nothing but a particular. A true universal must be universal in the sense that the particular is the universal. What we consider to be a substance as a true particular, even logically speaking, must be something like a concrete universal.³⁶⁷ This is why Hegel states that the individual thing is universal and that the [grammatical] subject is the predicate.³⁶⁸ Even Hegel's dialectic was not simply mediational but the dialectic of concrete reality. Instead of regarding life as the medium of logic, he regarded logic to be the medium of life. [Only] from such a standpoint one can say that all things are syllogistic. Although Hegel's concrete universal still possesses the quality of a continuous substance,³⁶⁹ if we take the particular as truly universal and the universal as truly particular, it must be something like a world that determines itself.³⁷⁰ This is what we can regard as the world of acting-intuition, the world of actuality.³⁷¹ Perhaps we cannot mediate this world of dialectical self-identity from the standpoint of judicative logic. But it is not something merely illogical. It is rather that which mediates logic from within itself. Such self-determination of the world is the [individually] unique [*koseiteki*] constitutive act wherein the receiver of form gives form. A true dialectic must be the self-determination of a world that forms itself.

The particular must be the particular of a universal. But if that is all, it would not be particular but rather an abstract universal. The particular must be such that we can say that it negates the universal and includes or possesses it within itself. This is why we can think of it in terms of the [grammatical] subject or substance. But when the particular transcends the universal, when it becomes incapable of being predicated,³⁷² it is no longer even a particular. In dialectical logic, the particular must be universal and the universal must be particular, and the subject must be a predicate. In this

way we can say that it becomes the mediator of individual things.³⁷³ In proportion to which the particular becomes immediately universal, we can say that it mediates individual things from within itself. My dialectical universal refers to this self-identity of contradiction, wherein the thoroughly universal is thoroughly particular and that which thoroughly becomes the predicate also thoroughly becomes the [grammatical] subject. The world of historical reality is such a world wherein the particular is universal and the universal is particular. This is why I say that the world determines itself. The world continually moves from actuality to actuality. Actuality is not a mere particular. That it goes on moving from actuality to actuality does not mean that it is moving continuously from particular to particular. What we ought to regard as the substance of the historical world is neither the continuity of particulars nor simply the universal. But having said so, this does not mean that it is simply blind. It continually moves through acting-intuition. It is formatively acting. That which is universal while being particular is intuition. Although from the standpoint of the intellectual self, we may consider such a world as a discontinuity of continuities, from the standpoint of the acting self, we can think of it as the continuity of discontinuity. We probably should regard what moves without moving, such as the present that determines itself, as the substance of history. We can consider historical nature to be the self-determination of this substance. Although it is thought that in the historical world various races and societies continue forming history, they are in turn being formed by historical nature.

The dialectic of life means that past and future are synchronically existent in the present. While the present is that which has been determined as singular, it possesses an infinite number of possibilities on its plane. The present refers to the *basho* of acting-intuition. Therein we possess the body. Because past and future are synchronically existent in the present, the world possesses a periphery.³⁷⁴ The world is thoroughly expressive. Expression entails that the temporal becomes spatial. Our body too is spatial as well as temporal and temporal as well as spatial. Because past and future are simultaneously existent in the present, the present continues moving without end in self-contradiction, that is, the present is continually determining itself. The particular as universal³⁷⁵ goes on determining itself, that is, the particular is continually determining itself. This means that historical life goes on forming itself, that things are continually being formed, and that we continue intuiting by means of acting. Form is that which is both temporal and spatial.

As I stated in the foregoing, the present as the unity of contradiction persistently continues moving through self-contradiction, that is, it goes on moving through acting-intuition. Acting-intuition is a contradictory self-identity; it is the self-identity of opposites, such as temporal and spatial,

[epistemological] subject and object. Such self-contradictory movement of the present in turn entails that the present, while moving, does not move. It means the self-determination of the eternal now. It is a self-contradiction wherein the one is the many and the many is the one. Therefore we can regard the world as always bordering on the eternal, while continually moving. In one respect it is trans-temporal. Herein lies the reason for the establishment of the standpoint of thinking in the historical world. The present, while it continues changing, is always present. And therein lies the standpoint of reflection. Thinking, while conforming to actuality that continually moves, is a standpoint that furthermore transcends this [actuality]. While being in accordance with the present, it involves a non-temporal standpoint that envelopes past and future. We can thus regard it as reflection, a standpoint in reverse to acting-intuition. But the fact that actuality negates itself means that it affirms itself. Actuality continues moving dialectically. We can thus say that thinking in one aspect is the progressive process of acting-intuition. Actuality moves on from intuition to intuition by means of acting. Thinking becomes its means. Logic is thus technological. We possess the body as an operative element in the actuality of acting-intuition, that is, in the historical present. While actuality determines us as particulars of the universal, we determine actuality as individual things thoroughly determining themselves. This is our acting. As the operative element of the historical world our acting is always bodily. Our acting is hence technological. Past and future, however, are simultaneously existent in historical actuality. Therein lies the reason that while actuality is always the present, it is always transcending the present. The world of historical actuality possesses a nontemporal periphery. Our acting thus mediates the trans-temporal and the universal while being in accord with actuality and being bodily and temporal. We can consider it as being mediated by the eternal. That is, our acting is logical. In saying so, however, neither do I mean that it is not logical for being technological nor that it is not technological for being logical. Tools are substitutable, and they are already logical when we say that we possess tools. Conversely, logic is also technological. The syllogism refers to nothing but this form of logic. Syllogism as a constitutive form of acting-intuition is a form of reality. And the syllogism that is merely formal does not provide the objective content of knowledge. Although it is conceived in epistemology that intuition is logically mediated to become the objective [*kyakkanteki*] content of knowledge, the knowledge obtained through the cognition of an object and mediated logically is not the knowledge of historical reality itself. Historical reality is not that which has been mediated by logic; rather logic is mediated by history.³⁷⁶ We should not think that actuality, because it cannot be mediated by logic, is unmediated. Instead, actuality is always being mediated by history through acting-intuition. Even

the logic pertaining to the cognition of objects is mediated by such dialectical movements of actuality. The so-called object of cognition is what the standpoint of reflective logic demands. It possesses an hypothetical significance. From the standpoint of historical life, the so-called science of the cognition of objects is what possesses the sense of a means.

In the sense that the true is real and the real is true, the true must be that which is in light of acting-intuition. I think that we can say that truth is the self-expression in *logos* of reality. It would be a misunderstanding, when I speak of expression, to immediately think of it as [epistemologically] subjective. To express is to form, to form through acting in the world of historical reality. It means that things appear in the world of historical reality. Logic is nothing but that form of the self-determination, in terms of *logos*, of reality. That which expressively appears emerges from the depths of the historical world. Nothing can be expressed from the standpoint of mere consciousness. Even something like language is not merely a [epistemologically] subjective composition. Although when I speak of expression, one may think of it as a mere object of understanding, historical reality determines itself in expression. Even in something like artistic expression, things appear objectively. In such cases, although people say that subject and object are unified as one or that object and act become one, art does not just start from the [epistemological] subject. The element of production must instead be objective. Nay, it arises from the formative element of historical life that transcends the conceptual opposition of subject-object. This is why we see things through acting-intuition. Things are that which thoroughly transcend our [epistemological] subjectivity. This does not simply mean, however, that they were there before appearing, nor that they emerged from where there is nothing. Even in regard to physical phenomena—in answer to the question of whether seven colors exist within the white color of the prism prior to its analysis—, L. de Broglie states that we can answer: “Oui, . . . elles existent . . . mais seulement comme existe une possibilité avant l'événement qui va nous faire savoir si elle est effectivement réalisée.”³⁷⁷ He is not saying then that it is objective in the sense of so-called objectivity. The objective [*kyakkan*] world is what we can conceive to be the eternal world, seen through acting-intuition in light of actuality. But it does not refer to the eternally unchanging. It is conceived always on the ground of historical actuality. Hence actuality is that which is continually transforming.

When I speak of life, one may regard it as something only illogically understood, as a mere expressive object, and may at once think of its standpoint as hermeneutical. Life, however, must be that which can be self-authenticated. The self-authentication of life does not merely mean self-awareness in consciousness. The self-authentication of life is to express

oneself, to form oneself, and to see the self through acting-intuition. That the I exists because the I thinks is also one kind of formative act.³⁷⁸ Life as an object of the understanding refers to nothing more than the life of another, the life of the past. Before life becomes an object of the understanding or a thought, understanding or thinking itself must be self-authenticated by means of life. Even the syllogism, as the mere unity of self-identity and self-division that Hegel speaks of,³⁷⁹ is unthinkable from the standpoint of reflective logic and must be self-authenticated by means of our life.³⁸⁰ It is not rational because it is inferred; rather it is rational because it is formative.³⁸¹ Accordingly, it is inferred because it is rational. The rational is the real. Dialectic does not mean that logic mediates life. Instead it has to mean that life itself mediates logic.³⁸² There must be a conversion of standpoints between the two.

Actuality must be that which has been historically mediated through and through. We can consider it as inferable as long as it has been mediated. Actuality, however, must not only be the thoroughly mediated but [also] that which mediates itself. The movement of actuality is neither mechanistic nor finalistic but continually moves from actuality to actuality as the self-determination of the eternal now. The movement of such actuality is through formative acts. Formation refers to the contradictory self-identity that is the synchronic existence of past and future in the present. And the dialectical movement wherein the one is the many and the many is the one must [also] be through formative acts. Things continue forming things and we see things through acting-intuition. We possess the self-authentication of life in such historical creation wherein the [epistemological] subject is the object and the object is the subject. It is not that intuition is mediated by means of logic. Rather logic is nothing other than mediation in terms of the *logos* of acting-intuition. True reason is the self-constitutive act of history that continues-on from acting-intuition to acting-intuition. Hence whatever has been conceived with reflective logic is true insofar as it is through acting-intuition. Otherwise it would be nothing more than a mere subjective conviction. It is rational when the thing lives in the I and the I lives in the thing. And as the self-identity [*jiko dôitsu*] of opposites, a unity [*tôitsu*] of contradiction, this entails a movement from within oneself. When I speak of intuition, people may take it to mean that, as a subject-object unity, opposition simply disappears or that it is nondialectical. But to the contrary I think that it is what moves absolutely as the self-identity of opposites.

Although I fear that people may interpret this as [epistemologically] subjective, we can comprehend dialectical self-identity even by way of the self's unity in consciousness. Our self is a dialectical existence. But we do not only understand our self to be a unity of opposition. We intuit our self

through acting. Our self determines itself as that wherein the linear is circular and the circular is linear, and as that wherein the one is the many and the many is the one. I am not, however, attempting to think about the world of historical reality in analogy with the unity of consciousness. I am not thinking of the world as a [epistemologically] subjective unity but rather the reverse. The self exists where it acts.³⁸³ To act means to engage in work [*sagyō*] historically. To engage in work historically entails that things are historically and naturally formed, and that we intuit through acting. Therein lies the historically embodied subject. Even if by means of the logic of mediation we may be able to think of a substance, true subjectivity would most likely be unthinkable. Even when I speak of absolute mediation, the absolute is beyond the eternal, and the mediating is nothing but the merely particular. Even if the particular is there, actuality is not. In saying so I do not mean that the dialectical world is simply subjective [*shutaiteki*].³⁸⁴ In its self-negation it must be substantial. It must be both substantial and subjective. The particular must be universal. For this reason, it is productive and creative as the dialectical world. We may even look upon such a thing as society, as a species of historical life, to be subjective. That which is concretely real in the dialectical world is neither simply subjective nor merely substantial. The mediating is in turn the mediated and the mediated must be the mediating.

From the standpoint of reflective logic that takes logic as mediating, to head in the direction of dialectical logic, I believe, would be impossible. In however way one may speak of mediating that which negates logic, from the standpoint of syllogistic logic, it still thoroughly fails to escape the standpoint of reflective logic. In order to move from the standpoint of reflective logic to the standpoint of dialectical logic, there would have to be a conversion of standpoints. The standpoint of dialectical logic must not only be about mediation. It would have to be in terms of a self-identity, a contradictory self-identity. Even Hegel's syllogistic method is not simply mediational but is that which is in self-identity. Dialectic must be a logic of concrete reality.

GLOSSARY OF JAPANESE WORDS

- aitaisuru*, 相対する : encounter one another
aru, 有る : is
arumono, 有るもの : that which is
baigo, 媒語 : middle term
baikai, baikaisha, 媒介, 媒介者 : mediation, medium
basho, 場所 : place; also the title of Nishida's essay "*Basho*," 1926
basho no ronri, 場所の論理 : the logic of *basho*
bashoteki baikaisha, 場所的媒介者 : placial medium, *basho*-medium
Bashoteki ronri to shūkyōteki sekaikan, 場所的論理と宗教的世界観:
"The Logic of *Basho* and the Religious Worldview," 1945
benshōhō, 弁証法 : dialectic/s
benshōhōteki ippansha, 弁証法的一般者 : dialectical universal
bunyū, 分有 : participate, participation
chikara, 力 : force, power
chiteki, 知的 : intellectual
chōetsuteki ishi, 超越的意志 : transcendent will
chōetsuteki jutsugo, 超越的述語 : transcendent predicate
chokkan, 直観 : intuition
chokkanshugi, 直観主義 : intuitionism
chokusenteki, 直線的 : linear
chōtairitsuteki, 超对立的 : trans-oppositional
danzetsu, 断絶 : severance
Dōgen, 道元 (1200–1253)
dōgu, 道具 : tools, instruments
dōsa, 動作 : (bodily) movement
eichiteki, 叡智的 : intelligible
eien no genzai, 永遠の現在 : eternal present
eien no ima, 永遠の今 : eternal now
eizō, 影像 : image
enganteki, 円環的 : circular
en'un, 縁暈 : fringes
fugō, 符号 : sign

Geijutsu to dōtoku, 芸術と道德: *Art and Morality*, 1923

ga, 我: self

gainen, 概念: concept

genjitsu, 現実: actual, actuality

gentei, 限定: determination

genzai, 現在: the present

gijutsu, 技術: *technē*, technics, technology

gijutsuteki, 技術的: technological

gōriteki, 合理的: rational

gun, 群: group [as in mathematics]

gunron, 群論: group theory

gutaiteki ippansha, 具体的一般者: concrete universal

gyakugentei, 逆限定: inverse determination

gyakutaiō, 逆対応: inverse correspondence

handan, 判断: judgment

handanteki, 判断的: judicative

hansei, 反省: reflection

hataraki, 働き: activity, working-activity, being-at-work, working

hataraku, 働く: act, work, be at work

Hatarakumono kara mirumono e, 働くものから見るものへ: *From the Acting to the Seeing*, 1927

hirenzoku no renzoku, 非連続の連続: continuity of discontinuity

hitei, 否定: negation, denial

hōkō, 方向: region, directionality, orientation

hongaku, 本学: original enlightenment

honshitsu, 本質: essence

hontai, 本体: substance

hōronri, 包論理: *peri*-logic, i.e., the logic of envelopment

hōronriteki, 包論理的: *peri*-logical

hyōgen, 表現: expression

ichi soku ta, ta soku ichi, 一即多、多即一: one is many, many is one

iji, 維持: maintenance

ippan gainen, 一般概念: universal concept

ippansha, 一般者: universal

Ippansha no jikakuteki taikai, 一般者の自覚的体系: *The Self-Aware System of Universals*, 1930

ishi, 意志: will, volition

ishiki, 意識: consciousness

ishiki ippan, 意識一般: consciousness-in-general

ishikimen, 意識面: plane of consciousness

ishiki no ba, 意識の場: field of consciousness

ishikisuru, 意識する: be conscious (of), to discern

- jiji muge*, 事事無礙: nonobstruction among thing-events, Ch. *shi-shi wu-ai*
jikaku, 自覺: self-awareness
Jikaku ni okeru chokkan to hansei, 自覺における直感と反省: Intuition and Reflection in Self-Awareness, 1917
jiko, 自己: self
jikō, 事行: act, deed-act (Fichte's *Tathandlung*)
jiko dōitsu, 自己同一: self-identity
jiko hitei, 自己否定: self-negation
jiko mujun, 自己矛盾: self-contradiction
jitsugen, 實現: actualize
jitsuzai, 實在: reality
jōi, 情意: emotion-and-volition, feeling-and-willing
jūhōi, 住法位: abiding in a *dharm*-position
junsui keiken, 純粹經驗: pure experience
jutsugo, 述語: predicate
jutsugomen, 述語面: predicate-plane
jutsugoteki ippansha, 述語的一般者: predicating universal
kami, 神: God
kankyō, 環境: environment
Kegon, 華嚴: Ch. Huayan
keiken, 經驗: experience
keisei sayō, 形成作用: formative act
keisō, 形相: form
kengen, 顯現: manifestation
kettei, 決定: determine, determination, decide, decision
kitai, 基体: substance
kōiteki chokkan, 行為的直感: acting-intuition
kongen, 根源: source
koseiteki, 個性的: (individually) unique
kyaku, 客: objectivity
kyakkan, 客觀: (epistemological) object
kyakkankai, 客觀界: objective world
kyakkansei, 客觀性: objectivity
kyakkanteki, 客觀的: objective, epistemological
kyakkanteki hōkō, 客觀的方向: objective region
kyokugen, 極限: extremity, extreme limit
kyōtsū kankaku, 共通感覺: general sensibility, *sensus communis*
meigōteki, 名号的: nominal
minzoku, 民族: race, a people
mono, 物: thing/s
mu, 無: nothing, non-being, Ch. *wu*
mugen, 無限: infinite, endless

- mugendai*, 無限大: endlessly or infinitely great
mujun no jikodōitsu, 矛盾の自己同一: self-identity of contradiction
mujunteki jikodōitsu, 矛盾的自己同一: contradictory self-identity
mujunteki sonzai, 矛盾的存在: contradictory existence
mujunteki tōitsu, 矛盾的統一: contradictory unity
mu no ippansha, 無の一般者: universal of nothing
Mu no jikakuteki gentei, 無の自覚的限定: The Self-Aware Determination of Nothing, 1932
nai, 無い: is not
nikon, 而今: now, here-and-now
Nishida Kitarō, 西田幾多郎
Nishida tetsugaku, 西田哲学: Nishida philosophy
oitearu, 於いてある: implaced
oitearu basho, 於いてある場所: place of placement
oitearu mono, 於いてあるもの: the implaced
rekishi, 歴史: history
rekishigaku, 歴史学: study of history, historiology
rekishiteki genjitsu, 歴史的現実: historical actuality
rekishiteki jitsuzai, 歴史的实在: historical reality
rekishiteki seimei, 歴史的生命: historical life
rekishiteki sekai, 歴史的世界: historical world
rekishitekishintai, 歴史的身体: historical body
rogosu, ロゴス: logos
rogosuteki, ロゴ斯的: logos-bearing
ronri, 論理: logic
ronrika, 論理化: logicize
ronriteki kiso, 論理的基礎: logical foundation
Ronri to seimei, 論理と生命: "Logic and Life," 1936
sagyōteki yōso, 作業的要素: operative element/s
sayō, 作用: act
seimeiteki ippansha, 生命的一般者: living universal
seisei, 生成: generation
seishingaku, 精神学: cultural sciences, humanities, *Geisteswissenschaften*
seishitsu, 性質: quality
sekai, 世界: world
shakaiteki rekishiteki sekai, 社会的歴史的世界: socio-historical world
shikōteki taishō, 志向的对象: intentional object
shinjin datsuraku, 身心脱落: casting/dropping-off body-and-mind
shin no mu no basho, 真の無の場所: place (*basho*) of true nothing
shintai, 身体: body
shintaiteki jiko, 身体的自己: bodily self
shisō, 思想: thought, thinking; also the title of a philosophy journal

- shiitsuryō*, 質料: matter, material
shizen, 自然: nature
shōmetsu, 生滅: generation-and-destruction
shu, 種: species
shu, 主: subjectivity
shugo, 主語: (grammatical) subject
shugomen, 主語面: (grammatical) subject-plane
shūhen, 周辺: periphery
shukan, 主観: (epistemological) subject
shukyaku, 主客: subject-object
shūkyōteki, 宗教的: the religious
shusa, 種差: difference in kind
shutai, 主体: subject, subjectivity, embodied subject
shōchō, 象徴: representation, symbol
shōjiru, 生じる: generate
shōzō, 肖像: figure
Sōda hakushi ni kotaeru, 左右田博士に答ふ: “In Reply to Dr. Sōda,” 1927
sōgo, 相互: mutual, reciprocal
sōgōtōitsu, 総合統一: synthetic unity
soko, 底: depth
soku, 即: is, *qua*
sonritsu, 存立: exist
sonzai, 存在: exist, existence
sonzaisei, 存在性: beingness, existentiality
sōtai, 相對: relate, relative
sōtai mu no basho, 相對無の場所: place (*basho*) of relative nothing
sōtairitsu, 相對立: co-relation
suironshiki, 推論: syllogism
tachiba, 立場: standpoint
taiken, 体験: lived experience
tairitsu, 対立: opposition
tairitsunaki taishō, 対立なき対象: oppositionless object
tairitsuteki mu, 対立的無: oppositional nothing
tairitsuteki mu no basho, 対立的無の場所: *basho* (place) of oppositional nothing
taishō, 対象: object
taishōkai, 対象界: world of objects
taishō ronri, 対象論理: logic of objectification, objectifying logic
taisuru, 対する: face, encounter
 Tanabe Hajime, 田辺元 (1885–1962)
tenjiru, 転じる: turn

Tetsugaku no kompon mondai, 哲学の根本問題: *Fundamental Problems of Philosophy*, 1933–34

tōi, 当為: ought

tōiteki shii, 当為的思惟: ought-thinking

tōitsu, 統一: unity, unification

tokushu, 特殊: particular

Torinokosaretaru ishiki no mondai, 取残されたる意識の問題: “The Unsolved Issue of Consciousness,” 1926

tsukuraretamono kara tsukuromono e, 作られたものから作るものへ: from the made to the making

tsutsumu, 包む: envelop

u (or *yū*), 有: being

uji, 時有: being-time

u-mu, 有無: being-nothing (or: being and non-being)

utsuriyuku, 移り行く: continually change, transforming

utsusu, 映す: mirror, reflect

ware, 我: the self

watashi, 私: the I

yokkyū, 欲求: desire

yūgen, 有限: finite

yuishinron, 唯心論: idealism, “mind-only” theory, Skrt. *Cittamātra* theory

yūsu, 有す: possess

Zen no kenkyū, 善の研究: *An Inquiry into the Good*, 1911

zentai sei, 全体性: wholeness

zettai hitei, 絶対否定: absolute negation

zettai ishi, 絶対意志: absolute will

zettai mu, 絶対無: absolute(ly) nothing

zettai mujunteki jikodōitsu, 絶対矛盾的自己同一: absolutely contradictory self-identity

zettai mu no basho, 絶対無の場所: *basho* (place) of absolute(ly) nothing

zōkei bijutsu, 造形美術: plastic arts

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. In indicating Japanese personal names I follow the Japanese custom of putting the family name first and the individual name second.
2. *An Inquiry into the Good*, trans. Masao Abe and Christopher Ives (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990). An earlier English translation is *Study of the Good*, trans. V. H. Viglielmo (Tokyo: Japanese Government, 1960). The Japanese original is in the first volume of *Nishida Kitarō zenshū* (*The Collected Works of Nishida Kitarō*) (Tokyo: Iwanami, 2003). All references to the “*Basho*” essay, “Logic and Life,” and other works by Nishida in the original Japanese are from the 2003 editions of *Nishida Kitarō zenshū* unless otherwise noted. (The one exception is a reference to a letter Nishida wrote to Mutai taken from an older 1965 *zenshū* edition.) The references are indicated in the text with a Z followed by the volume number. When available, pagination referring to the English translation follow this, indicated by the initials of the title.
3. For details on and differences between these different methods of division, see Sueki Takehiro, *Nishida Kitarō: sono tetsugaku taikai* (Tokyo: Shunshūsha, 1983), 1:8–9.
4. *Ibid.*, 6ff.
5. The English publication is *Intuition and Reflection in Self-Consciousness*, trans. V. H. Viglielmo with Takeuchi Yoshinori and Joseph S. O’Leary (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1987). The Japanese original is found in Z2. I prefer to render the Japanese term *jikaku* as “self-awareness” rather than “self-consciousness.” *Ishiki* is the word that would be translated as “consciousness.”
6. The English publication is *Art and Morality*, trans. David A. Dilworth and V. H. Viglielmo (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1973). The Japanese original is in Z3.
7. The English publication is *Fundamental Problems of Philosophy*, trans. David A. Dilworth (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1970). The Japanese original is in Z6.
8. The English translation of that final essay constitutes the main portion of *Last Writings: Nothingness and the Religious Worldview*, trans. David A. Dilworth (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987). The Japanese original is in Z10.
9. On this and the following, see Fujita Masakatsu’s afterword to *Hatarakumono kara miru-mon e* in Z3 658.
10. We have translated the word *hataraku* for the most part with the word “act” or “activity,” and with “at work” or “working activity,” and we have translated *hatarakumono* as “that which acts” or “the acting.” It is good to keep in mind, however, that *acting* here has the sense of *working*. It has been suggested that there may be an implied critique of Marxist conceptions of labor, but *acting* as such may mean the *working* of the mind *upon* its mental objects just as much the *working* of the embodied person *upon* its environment and the *working* of an object *upon* another object (or upon the human subject).

11. For the English, see Nishida, *Intuition and Reflection in Self-Consciousness*, 3–4. Also see Kosaka Kunitsugu, *Nishida Kitarō no shisō* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2002), 131–39, 142–43. *Jikaku*, while primarily meaning “self-awareness,” also contains the meaning of “self-realization” or “self-awakening,” especially in Buddhist terms.
12. We can trace this idea of an endlessly developing self-mirroring system to the influence of Royce’s notion of a self-representative system in his analogy of a self-mapping map or the map within a map referring to itself. See Josiah Royce, *The World and the Individual* (London: Macmillan, 1904).
13. AM refers to the English translation of Nishida’s *Geijutsu to dōtoku: Art and Morality*.
14. Published in *Tetsugaku kenkyū* (*Philosophical Investigations*), no. 115 (Oct. 1925). It was then included in *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*) in 1927, as the essay preceding “*Basho*.” It can be found in Z3.
15. “*Basho*,” *Tetsugaku kenkyū* (*Philosophical Investigations*), no. 123 (June 1926).
16. The letter is dated June 8, 1926. The reference here is to an older version of *Nishida Kitarō zenshū XVIII* (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1966). In addition Nishida states here: “Instead of defining *substance* as ‘that which becomes the grammatical subject but not the predicate’ as Aristotle did, I would like to logically define consciousness as ‘that which becomes the predicate but not the grammatical subject.’ And as the transcendence of the [grammatical] subject endlessly progresses in the direction of the particular, at the same time, the transcendence of the predicate endlessly progresses in the direction of the universal. I want to look at this as what envelops beings as a nothing that endlessly becomes universal, that which absolutely mirrors, that which contains Plotinus’ *das Eine* [the One] as *Materie* [matter]. When that predicate transcends itself in the direction of the infinite and loses itself, what becomes the [grammatical] subject reaches the acme of the particular and becomes that which intuits itself” (303). This is a nice, concise summary of what the “*Basho*” essay is all about. What all of this means should hopefully become clearer in our ensuing discussion.
17. On this see Fujita’s afterword to *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* in Z3 657–58.
18. *Ippansha no jikakuteki taikai* can be found in Z4, and *Mu no jikakuteki gentei* is in Z5.
19. See Nishida’s afterword to this work in Z7 224. This essay was published a month after the publication of the “*Basho*” essay in an anthology collection of essays, *Tokuno hakushi kanrekikinen tetsugaku ronbunshū* (*Anthology of Essays in Commemoration of the Sixtieth Birthday of Dr. Tokuno*) (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1927), and was later inserted into his *Zoku shisaku to taiken* (*Thinking and Experiencing Continued*) in 1937. The English translation of this essay is forthcoming in *Philosophy East and West* 62:2 (Apr. 2012).
20. This is quite noticeable in the titles of some of the books by Cohen, Rickert, and Lask, which often begin with the phrase, “*The Logic of . . .*” It is clear that they all meant “logic” in a Kantian sense rather than formal logic. This broadened philosophical sense of “logic” was not so unusual in post-Kantian German philosophy (e.g., Hegel as well) of the 1800s. Nishida’s usage of “logic” is in response to this. He wants to provide a “logical” founding of epistemology that is an alternative to their dualism. The neo-Kantian use of the term “logic” can be traced to Hermann Lotze who, while doing what we would call “epistemology,” refused to use that term for the reason that what was called “epistemology” during the 1850s and 1860s in Germany were “psychologistic,” or more precisely psychophysiological attempts to reduce Kant’s transcendental philosophy to certain “nerve-energies.” Lotze refused to subordinate logical/epistemological validity to psychological development. He saw truth to be independent of psychology. See Hermann Lotze, “Philosophy in the Last Forty Years. First Article” (1880) in *Kleine Schriften* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1885–91), 3:467.
21. But while transcending the psyche, neither was it to be conceived as some transcendent metaphysical reality such as some sort of cosmic spirit (Z3 486).

22. Nishida states: “By considering ‘that which is at work in terms of that whereby the predicate becomes the [grammatical] subject, and by thinking of the transcendent predicate as the plane of consciousness in terms of ‘*basho*,’ I think that I have more or less initiated a logical founding . . . [allowing me to] turn from a voluntarism, such as of Fichte, to a kind of intuitionism” (Z3 255).
23. This has been noted by many commentators. See, for example, Fujita’s afterword to *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* in Z3 659.
24. In *Chokkan to ishi* (“Intuition and Will”), which was written prior to the composition of the “*Basho*” essay—it was first published in 1923 prior to its 1927 insertion in *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e*—Nishida describes such seeing in terms of an endlessly or infinitely great (*mugendai*) circle that encompasses or envelops the determining activities and their determined objects (Z3 286). He seems to have already in mind here what he will soon formulate in terms of *basho*.
25. On the general assumptions of neo-Kantianism, see Thomas E. Willey, *Back to Kant: The Revival of Kantianism in German Social and Historical Thought, 1860–1914* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978), 37.
26. This hylomorphic constructivism, whereby objects are (re-)constituted on the basis of transcendental conditions (forms and categories) residing in the realm of “pure consciousness” vis-à-vis the real, is evident for example in Heinrich Rickert (of the Southwest or Baden school of neo-Kantianism). See his *Der Gegenstand der Erkenntnis: Einführung in die Transzendentalphilosophie* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1928), 111, 151–52. And Hermann Cohen (of the Marburg school of neo-Kantianism) in his *Kants Theorie der Erfahrung* (1871) held that objects are not “given” but rather constructed by a priori subjectivity. See Klaus Christian Köhnke, *The Rise of Neo-Kantianism: German Academic Philosophy between Idealism and Positivism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 178. But the neo-Kantians viewed not just cognition but our volitional acts, expressed in morality and culture, as *also* being guided by a priori norms and values.
27. We might trace this distinction to Hermann Lotze, but it was developed further in the works of Cohen, Windelband, and Rickert. See Lotze, *Logik: Drei Bücher. Vom Denken, Vom Untersuchen, und Vom Erkennen* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1874 [1838]); English: *Logic in Three Books: Of Thought, Of Investigation, and Of Knowledge*, trans. Bernard Bosanquet (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888). Also see his *Metaphysik: Drei Bücher der Ontologie, Kosmologie und Psychologie* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1879); English: *Metaphysic in Three Books: Ontology, Cosmology, and Psychology*, 2 vols., trans. Bernard Bosanquet, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1887). In the latter book, for example, Lotze speaks of “jener Ideenwelt, die wir als ewig gültig aber als nicht seiend der Wirklichkeit entgegensetzen.” (27 German) (“that world of ideas, which as eternally valid but not as being, we oppose to actuality.” (1:32 English)). For the Baden school, see Rickert, *Der Gegenstand der Erkenntnis*, 300. Rickert took what *ought* (to be) (*Sollen*) vis-à-vis what *is* as transcendental-logical and possessing validity rather than being: “Das Logische existiert nicht, sondern es gilt” (“The logical does not exist, rather it holds [is valid]”) (Rickert, ix). For example, he regarded truth as such a value providing the objective form of the transcendent *ought* (*transzendentes Sollen*). As an ultimate standard necessary for any cognizing or judicative act, it possesses validity regardless of whether the epistemological subject affirmatively recognizes it or not (see Rickert, 232, 274). A case from the other neo-Kantian (i.e., Marburg) school would be Hermann Cohen, who conceived of thought as a “non-being” that becomes the origin of “being” through its act of definition or determination. On “non-being” see the following discussion and note.
28. This is also significant in that Nishida’s restricted understanding of “being” that reduces it to a determined object that becomes a grammatical subject can thus be traced, at least in part, to this neo-Kantian juxtaposition of “being” as the content of cognition and “non-being”

- (*Nichtseiende, Nichtsein*) as the ideal validity of logical form. But this is also the traditional Buddhist understanding of being as determinate in contrast to a being's emptiness. *U* is usually the pronunciation used in Buddhist discourse in correlation with *mu* for "nothingness" or "non-being."
29. This notion is still retained in *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* as the unifying ground for the hylomorphic constitution of objects. See *Naibuchikaku ni tsuite* ("On Internal Perception") (Z3 312) from the first half of the volume. See also the essay following "*Basho*," *Sōda hakushi ni kotaeru* ("In Reply to Dr. Sōda"), where Nishida, in critiquing Rickert's conception of the epistemological subject, asserts that the subject is to be understood on the basis of self-awareness wherein thinker and thought are unconditionally one (see Z3 481, 494, 496). And in the "*Basho*" essay itself, Nishida from the start tells his readers that he would like to begin his inquiry, not from the assumption of the subject-object relationship but rather from that idea of self-awareness that mirrors itself (Z3 420).
 30. Lask unfortunately died prematurely (he was killed in World War I) and was thus not able to fully develop his unique ideas. As the "last" neo-Kantian, he can also be said to have led neo-Kantianism, through a kind of internal self-"deconstruction," to its end.
 31. Lask took values to be logical forms or categories that form domains for beings, providing intelligibility or meaningfulness to those beings within the domain. And in judicative terms, he understood these domain categories (*Gebietskategorien*) to be domain predicates (*Gebietsprädikate*). See Emil Lask, *Die Logik der Philosophie und die Kategorienlehre* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1911), 33–34, 70, 98–99; and also his *Die Lehre vom Urteil* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1912), 127. In fact this idea influenced Heidegger, who developed it further in terms of "the being of beings" (*Sein des Seienden*), ontological difference, and the meaning of being (*Sinn des Seins*) as the horizon of time.
 32. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1028b33–37, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), 784–85.
 33. The substance in its truest and primary sense, Aristotle states, is neither predicable of a subject nor present in a subject. See Aristotle, *On the Categories* 2a11–19 and 2b15–17, in McKeon, 9 and 10.
 34. It is unfortunate that in English there is no verbal equivalent of "consciousness" as in Japanese. In the text, Nishida uses the same word as both a noun (*ishiki*) to designate consciousness as object and a verb (*ishikisuru*) to designate consciousness as act. Also see note 119 of the first essay in this volume.
 35. Bernard Bosanquet, *The Essentials of Logic Being Ten Lectures on Judgment and Inference* (London: Macmillan, 1903, 1897), 41.
 36. Hegel distinguishes the "concrete universal" as such from the "abstract universal," which is reached through the exclusion of the particular features distinguishing individuals while retaining the general. See G. W. F. Hegel's *Logic*, part 1 of his *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1830), sec. 163. *Hegel's Logic*, trans. William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 227. Nishida most likely has Hegel's idea in mind when he speaks of judgment as the self-determination of the concrete universal (Z3 409). In fact Nishida here (Z3 331) compares his own idea to Hegel's understanding of judgment (*Urteil*) as "the self-differentiation of the concept itself." *Encyclopedia*, sec. 166, Wallace, 231.
 37. One might thus also regard Nishida's logical founding of epistemology as an an-ontological (un)founding of ontology even if that is not his primary concern during this period. I use the term *an-ontological* to designate the placial structure as encompassing the opposites of both being and non-being, the ontological and the meontological, or in Nishida's terms, it is the absolute nothing (*zettai mu*) encompassing both being (*u* or *yū*) and oppositional nothing (*tairitsuteki mu*).
 38. One might raise an issue here concerning Nishida's own usage of the term "universal" (*ippansha*). Of course *basho* is not what is ordinarily called a "universal" in metaphysics; it

- is not something ideal as in Plato and not a conceptual category as in Kant. But in his analysis of subsumptive judgments, Nishida views the predicate that serves as the universal subsuming the grammatical subject as performing the role of a *basho*, i.e., place, that envelops that individual as its member. Strictly speaking, *basho* at its most concrete where it is delimited by nothing cannot be equated with any universal concept that can be distinguished from other universals as well as from its instances. Rather than opposing individuals, it envelops them, creating room for them in its “nothingness” or nonsubstantiality.
39. This idea of *basho* as a unity of contradictories becomes developed more explicitly in his later works of the fourth period in terms of an “absolutely contradictory self-identity” (*zettai mujunteki jikodōitsu*).
 40. For example, “*akai*,” literally “red,” can mean the sentence, “it is red.” Or “*samui*,” literally “cold,” can mean either “I am cold” or “it is cold.” The meaning of the latter is left ambiguous, and the focus is not so much on who or what is cold but the very situation of coldness itself. Both mean a holistic concrete situation prior to its differentiation into propositional or judicative elements.
 41. See Lask, *Die Logik der Philosophie*, 33, 55, 215ff. For Lask, this also means our immersion in the world of validity. Hence Lask states, “the knower ‘lives’ only in the truth” (“Der Erkennende ‘lebt’ eben nur in der Wahrheit”). Lask, *Die Logik der Philosophie*, 192.
 42. Lask regarded the object thus encountered to be “pre-oppositional” or “pre-objective” (*vorgegenständlich*). See Lask, *Die Logik der Philosophie*, 33, 55, 84–85, 130, 192. He also called it an “object-paradigm” (*gegenständliches Urbild*) in that it provides the standard for subsequent judicative explication and analysis, the paradigm for what would become the “oppositional object.” See the following note on the “oppositional object.”
 43. From out of that oppositionless object, consciousness then constructs the “oppositional object” in its relation to the epistemological subject. On this see Lask, *Die Lehre vom Urteil*, 136, 60, 162–63, 171.
 44. Nishida talks about it in other works as well, such as in his *Torinokosaretaru ishiki no mondai*.
 45. Lask calls it a “trans-subjectivity” (*Transsubjektivität*). See Lask, *Zum System der Logik in Gesammelte Schriften Band 3* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1924) 110. Also see Lask, *Die Logik der Philosophie*, 15.
 46. See Lask, *Die Logik der Philosophie*, 82, 86–87, 192. This was an idea significant for Heidegger as well.
 47. He describes this world as “ideal *qua* real” (Z3 432).
 48. This is what becomes unpacked in later works in terms of the world (*sekai*). What the older neo-Kantians took as a priori and what Lask took as sphere of *Erlebnis* or “lived experience,” for the later Nishida becomes the socio-historical sphere of our interactivity with the world.
 49. See Lask, *Die Logik der Philosophie*, 74–75, 99; and *Die Lehre vom Urteil*, 58.
 50. On *basho* as “horizon,” see Ueda Shizuteru, “Pure Experience, Self-Awareness, ‘*Basho*,’” *Etudes Phénoménologiques* no. 18 (1993): 80.
 51. Parallel to that understanding of “nothing,” it is important to recognize that by “being” (*u* or *yū*) Nishida means the object determined by determining acts, a thing with form that can be designated as *this* or *that*.
 52. The antecedent to, and possible influence upon, this metaphorical expression of a self-mirroring nothing, can be found in the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition. Dilworth, for example, mentions the Buddhist classic *The Awakening of Faith*, wherein the essence of enlightenment is stated to be like an empty space and contentless mirror. See David Dilworth, “Nishida Kitarō: Nothingness as the Negative Space of Experiential Immediacy,” *International Philosophical Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (Dec. 1973): 474; *The Awakening of Faith Attributed to Śāvaghoṣha*, trans. Yoshito S. Hakeda (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), 42ff.

53. On this and the following, see Plato, *Timaeus*, especially 52a-c, esp. 52a8f, in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 1254–55. Aristotle in turn interpreted Plato's *chōra* as matter (*hyle*). Nishida refers to Plato's idea of *chōra* as a precursor to his notion of *basho* on Z3 415. Nishida combines Plato's *chōra* with his own idea of self-mirroring self-awareness in his formulation of *basho* and faults the Greeks for failing to attribute any logical independence to "place" (*basho*, *chōra*) (Z7 223).
54. See Jacques Derrida, "Khōra," in *On the Name* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 89; and "Tense," in *The Path of Archaic Thinking: Unfolding the Work of John Sallis*, ed. Kenneth Maly (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1995), 73–74.
55. This idea is developed more clearly in his later works, especially "The Logic of *Basho* and the Religious Worldview" (*Bashoteki ronri to shūkyōteki sekaikan*) of 1945. At this point the ontological ramification is ambiguous since his concern is more epistemological.
56. Dilworth speaks of Nishida's *basho* as "the negative space and place of concrete immediacy" (see Dilworth, "Nishida Kitarō: Nothingness as the Negative Space of Experiential Immediacy," 466). "Negativity" however should be understood here as encompassing, while absolved from, both the "positive/affirmative" and the "negative" in their interrelational opposition.
57. On this, see for example, Yoko Arisaka's account in her "System and Existence: Nishida's Logic of Place" in *Logique du lieu et dépassement de la modernité*, ed. Augustin Berque (Brussels: Ousia, 1999), 44.
58. May one then apply Reiner Schürmann's "principle of anarchy" here to speak of the *an-arche* implied in every *arche*? Dilworth speaks of this as an "arationality inclusive of reason," the "formless matter inclusive of its self-formations," the "self-mirroring mirror inclusive of its images." See Dilworth, "Nishida Kitarō: Nothingness as the Negative Space of Experiential Immediacy," 474–75.
59. We may also discuss this in terms of positivity and negativity: every determinate being as a positivity is surrounded by an environing negativity. But each such negativity is still positive, a determinate being from the standpoint of a further negativity (see Z3 422).
60. Nishida develops this general plan set out in the "*Basho*" essay further in his subsequent works in a variety of ways. And the plan or design becomes systematized by critics as well. Failing to provide consistent presentations in his different works, Nishida leaves it up to his students and commentators to fill in the gaps.
61. Derived from the Greek *chiasma*, meaning "cross-piece" or "cross-over," and *chiazein*, meaning "to mark with an X," the term has been used in anatomy and in genetics to refer to a "crossing." One should not confuse this with a similar sounding word *chiasmus* that refers to a figure of speech involving the reversibility of two or more clauses, e.g., "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country" (John F. Kennedy). But the *chiasma* in Nishida's dialectic certainly involves a *chiasmus* as well in the sense of a reversibility between terms.
62. We see this in the title of that final essay from 1945, *Bashoteki ronri to shūkyōteki sekaikan* ("The Logic of *Basho* and the Religious Worldview").
63. *Shisō*, nos. 170 (July); 171 (Aug.); 172 (Sept.).
64. Kosaka Kunitsugu suggests this in his afterword to *Tetsugaku ronbunshū dai ni* in Z8 582. This claim, however, has been challenged.
65. See J. S. Haldane, *Philosophical Basis of Biology* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1931), e.g., 13–14.
66. And what distinguishes society as a "species of historical life" from the merely biological species is that it is made up of *persons* mutually interacting with one another in terms of "I and thou," i.e., interpersonal relations whereby one cannot negate one's *other* without negating one's self.

67. Haldane, *Philosophical Basis of Biology*, 13–14.
68. Nishida makes frequent reference to Hegel's idea of the universal *becoming* particular in several of his works. Hegel, *Werke 8: Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse (1830): Erster Teil: Die Wissenschaft der Logik Mit den mündlichen Zusätzen* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970), §166, 317. For the English, see *Hegel's Logic*, 231.
69. That is, the temporal development of the concept (*Begriff*) that culminates in the sublation of all opposition. Nishida's dialectic instead emphasizes the simultaneity of the dialectical terms in oppositional tension without sublation.
70. Inverse determination whereby individual and universal meet on the basis of mutual self-negation becomes developed later (1945) in Nishida's *Bashoteki ronri to shūkyōteki seikaikan* ("The Logic of Place and the Religious Worldview") in terms of an "inverse correspondence" (*gyakutaiō*).
71. On this, see Kosaka Kunitsugu, *Nishida Kitarō no shisō* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2002), 191–92, 223.
72. Nishida's understanding of time here is reminiscent of Dōgen's notion of time in its interconnection with being as "being-time" (*uji*), according to which each moment is distinct, yet implicative of all others as a microcosm focussing the whole of space-time-being into one momentary point.
73. One can notice the similarity of these ideas of time with Zen master Dōgen's notions of "occupying or abiding in a dharma-position" (*jūhōi*) and "here-and-now" (*nikon*).
74. See n. 61 on *chiasma*.
75. That is, epistemologically in terms of the universal *qua* concept and its many particular examples, cosmologically in terms of the universe and the individuals within it, and theologically in terms of God as creator and his many creations of the world.
76. Nishida was most likely not aware of this final major work of Husserl. See Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970).
77. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge, 1972 [1969]). Nevertheless, he has been accused of predicating his theory upon a tacit dualism in the standpoint of consciousness vis-à-vis objects in the world. In his later work *The Visible and the Invisible* he retrospectively suggests that *The Phenomenology of Perception* failed in overcoming that dualism. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968).
78. See Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993) and *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
79. The references may not always be as overt and explicit as they become in his final essays of the 1940s, especially in *Bashoteki ronri to shūkyōteki seikaikan* of 1945, where he deals with Buddhist and Christian themes. Nevertheless the influences are discernible, the most obvious being the concept of "nothing" (*mu*). The translators have pointed some of these out in the notes to the texts.
80. I am not denying here the controversy surrounding Nishida's position vis-à-vis his country before and during World War II. I think that Yusa's biography of Nishida, however, vindicates him from the charge that he was a warmongering pro-imperialist or militarist. The situation is much more complex. See Yusa, *Zen & Philosophy: An Intellectual Biography of Nishida Kitarō* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2002).
81. See Elmar Weinmayr, "Thinking in Transition: Nishida Kitarō and Martin Heidegger," *Philosophy East and West* 55, no. 2 (2005). Here Weinmayr applies Nishida's concept of "continuity of discontinuity" in analyzing such intercultural encounters.

ESSAY 1

1. See n. 5 on the meaning of *basho*. This essay was written in 1926. It first came out as an article in the journal *Tetsugaku kenkyū* 123 (June) in 1926 and then inserted in the collection of essays, *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*). Notes are supplied by the translators unless otherwise indicated.
2. Nishida here uses the phrase *oitearu*, lit., “to be placed.” To indicate this sense the translators have neologized the verb “to implac,” which almost exclusively appears in the passive form in this translation. The passive construction of this verb is significant to note because it recognizes a fundamental delimiting condition of the human being as an epistemological subject. That is to say that human beings are here taken to be “beings-in-nature.” This point has often been ignored in traditional philosophy, according to which, human beings are understood to be “outside-of nature,” by assuming the standpoint of *theoria* that observes nature from outside. Nishida’s recognition of this point is realized in his theory of *basho* (“place,” “field”) as the domain of discourse and of consciousness as well as the domain of existing things. In addition to these senses, Nishida makes the term *basho* carry the sense of ground and/or grounding. However, being irreducible to substance, it is also abysmal. The countertheoretical standpoint is also developed in his later works in terms of the lived body and its practical aspects, e.g., in his notion of acting-intuition.
3. *Is (aru to iū koto)* and *is-not (nai to iū koto)* here refer to the event of linguistically uttering (*iū koto*) that *there is* or that *there is not* a thing-event.
4. Nishida’s use of the term “envelop” (*tsutsumu*) suggests, psychologically speaking, that he is approaching the problem of knowledge by appealing to “the feminine principle,” rather than relying exclusively on “the masculine principle.” Generally speaking, the former attempts to apprehend the whole by dissolving conflicts and contradictions while the latter attempts to divide the whole in two. In philosophical terms, this means that the former methodologically regards synthesis to be more important than analysis, while the reverse is true with the latter. Even though it may seem that Nishida attempts to place equal emphasis on each of them in articulating his theory of *basho*, his goal remains to articulate the structure of apprehending the whole by examining the nature of intuition. One may also find a precursor to this idea in Emil Lask’s use of prefix *um-* that he attaches to various verbs in describing the cognitive process.
5. *Basho*, lit., “place” (*Platz* as he wrote in German in his own personal notes), is Nishida’s term for the basis of reality as a self-determining field wherein whole and many are dynamically interdependent. At this point Nishida approaches *basho* from the vantage point of epistemology, by focusing upon consciousness as the “*basho*,” wherein the dichotomization of the subject and the object of cognition occur. A few years later, as we shall see in “Logic and Life,” *basho* as such becomes broadened beyond its relation to the consciousness of the epistemological subject to mean the general and environing basis of reality involving the unfolding of the histories of peoples.

Chōra (χώρα) in Greek means “place” or the space wherein something is. In *Timaeus* (52a8f), Plato uses this word to designate that which in itself is indeterminate but serves as a receptacle for the *ideas* that form things. See Plato, *Complete Works*, ed. John Cooper (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1997), 1254–55. Following Aristotle, this “receptacle” or “place” in Plato has often been interpreted as “matter” in the Western tradition. The difference between Nishida’s *place* and Plato’s *place* is that for Nishida the receptacle is *self-determining* while for Plato it is that which is determined. Nishida’s acknowledgement of his debt to Plato’s notion of *chōra* is understandable in regard to his ontology. One may also look to Aristotle’s definition of *topos* (also translated as “place”) in his *Physics* bk. 4 (212a) as “the motionless boundary of what contains . . .” (212a20–21), the space that a body occupies or the boundary of the contained at which it is in contact with the containing. But Nishida’s application of the notion of place to logic and epistemology on the other

hand may be traceable to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* instead. Therein *topos* is regarded as "place," more in regard to language than to things, as in the settings of an argument or discursive field. See 1403a18–19 where he defines *topos* (of the enthymeme) as a heading or general class under which many particular kinds of enthymemes fall, that is, a general pattern or line of argument or strategy. See Aristotle, McKeon, 277–78. This logico-linguistic sense however may be broadly interpreted to mean the background setting or context of a speech or discourse. Another influence may be the physics of Einstein, whose theory of relativity grasped the attention of Nishida in the early 1920s prior to his formulation of the theory of *basho*. One may perhaps notice such an influence in Nishida's discussion below of *basho* as a kind of force field. On this, see Yusa, *Zen & Philosophy*, 186.

6. Rudolf Hermann Lotze (1817–81) was a German philosopher and psychologist, an important figure in German philosophy during the period when Absolute Idealism was ending and neo-Kantianism was rising. An important contribution of his was his theory of space perception (see the following note on this).
7. See Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, sec. 44, 55–57. This comment appears puzzling in light of the fact that Lotze was influenced by Kant in his understanding of space. For Lotze the root of our concept of space is not in something that is a container of space nor in the spatial relations of things but rather in the reactions to one another of each thing in its *inner* state. Also see Lotze, *Metaphysik: Drei Bücher der Ontologie*. The English is *Metaphysic in Three Books*. According to Lotze, space cannot be regarded as itself a *thing* nor as its property; it is "neither form, arrangement, nor relation of things," but rather the "principle . . . essential to the possibility of . . . forms, arrangements, and relations of things . . ." (1:§101) But neither ought we to regard space as a substratum of properties, a support for spatial relations. (1:§108) The perception of space is in fact "subjective" as "our form of apprehension." (2:§275) Spatial relations are "secondary qualities" put on for our minds, ideas imposed upon things (as in Kant) but derived from inner states of the elements of existence, which are not really relations *between* things but rather only their reactions to each other. The inner state of reaction *within* each thing in response to each other is then abstracted or drawn out into our notion of spatial extension. (1:§109, §113, §116) Saying that space is a form within our mind makes Lotze a follower of Kant, but to say that our ideas of spatial relations are "drawn out" from the inner state of things, distinguishes him from Kant.
8. Nishida seems to have in mind here "space" in the sense of a physical field.
9. Two terms appearing in this sentence are crucial in Nishida's theory: *basho* and mirroring (*utsuru*). In his epistemology, cognition occurs when things are mirrored in *basho*. What he is contending here is that the *basho* that mirrors their unity is more primordial than the mere synthesis or unification of form and matter or of conceptual understanding and sensory intuition in cognition. By confining himself to the epistemological domain, the realm of the theorizing intellect, Kant, for example, ignored this pre-intellectual placial (i.e., *basho*-) aspect of what underlies the synthesizing acts of the intellect. This also takes us into the somatic dimension that is neglected in Kant's critical philosophy. What Nishida is speaking of here may also be comparable with Yogācāra Buddhism's notion of the "great-mirror wisdom" that mirrors the world of things while in itself remaining unaffected and nondiscriminatory, discerning everything indifferently. This "great mirror wisdom" is said to obtain when the activity of the storehouse consciousness (*ālaya-vijñāna*) is radically transformed (*parāvṛtti*).
10. That is, the thing as objectified for the sake of cognition. The Japanese term literally means "objective object."
11. That is, "transcendent" in the sense of being itself undetermined by the various determining acts occurring within it. For *basho* is the very place wherein things as objectified, i.e., objects of cognition, *and* the determining acts of consciousness that objectifies them,

occur. Hence it cannot be reduced to either subject or object of cognition. With this notion that *basho* transcends both subject and object, determining act and determined thing, Nishida attempts to overcome the dichotomy of standpoints made within mainstream Western philosophy between idealism and realism. However, in the immediately following sentences, Nishida emphasizes the objective aspect of *basho* in order to counter subjectivism.

12. That is, like an empty mirror mirroring images, the *basho* is “nothing” relative to the objects (including the objectified acts) it mirrors.
13. An example from modern epistemology would be Kant for whom the thing-in-itself (*Ding-an-sich*) is the transcendent object (usually called “transcendental object” in Kantian terminology) in the sense that it lies *beyond* its appearance for cognition. On the other hand the content of cognition, as structured in accordance with the forms of intuition and the categories of understanding, is immanent to the knowing mind. A comparable example from the twentieth century may be Sartre, for whom that which is in-itself transcends, is *beyond*, that which is for-itself, that is, known to consciousness.
14. See e.g., Rickert, *Der Gegenstand der Erkenntnis*, 111 and 151–52, on the *erkenntnistheoretischen Subjekt* (“epistemological subject”) as the *vorstellenden Bewußtseins überhaupt* (“representing consciousness in general”) and also on the *Subjekt-Objekt-Verhältnis* (“subject–object relation”). In Hermann Cohen’s case this translates as the knowing or “scientific” consciousness. Both cases (Rickert of the Southwest or Baden school and Cohen of the Marburg school) exemplify the general neo-Kantian form of constructivism that calls for the (re-)construction of objects of cognition out of transcendental forms and categories residing in a “pure consciousness” confronting the real.
15. It is consciousness objectified as “the epistemological subject” or made into the grammatical subject of “I think . . . X.”
16. “Actual” or “actuality” translates *genjitsu* and designates reality that is manifest as opposed to being hidden or latent. *Gen* means “present” and *jitsu* means “fullness.” Together they mean “full presence” or “fully present.” See also the nn. 182 and 333 on this in our translation of “Logic and Life.”
17. The field of consciousness in this psychological sense is then the empirical subject *qua* object. But as Nishida stated a few lines above, there is still that which transcends its actuality.
18. The point of these last few sentences seems to be that consciousness in its very particularity, for example as being a consciousness of a certain something at a certain time and belonging to a certain someone, is nonetheless at the same time an expression or determination of something universal. And yet in that relationship there is a gap between universal as such and individual as such. No “thing” *qua* individual in-itself can be determined conceptually, it always transcends the universal predicate or its linguistic expression. The gap between the limits or extremities (*kyokugen*) on each pole—the dichotomy in epistemological dualism between the transcendent object and the transcendental subject—can only be overcome by what Nishida in his later works comes to describe as the mediation of “absolute negation.” Here they are enveloped by “true nothing.” Nishida will develop these ideas throughout the rest of the essay in terms of his concept of *basho*.
19. This refers to Emil Lask’s concept of the object at the fundamental layer of mere lived experience transcendent to the epistemological subject, in its mere givenness prior to the cognitive or judicative act that would affirm or negate it in terms of various oppositions, e.g., true vs. false. It is the material for cognitive formation. Another word for this is the “oppositionless object,” which Nishida will also use later.
20. For cognition, by definition, requires the element of subjectivity, i.e., the knower who knows. It cannot be a matter of mere objectivity.

21. Following the neo-Kantian Germans' "logicization" of epistemology in the attempt to overcome the charge of psychologism, Nishida here wants to stress that there is something irreducible to subjectivity that founds the subject-object split and the entire cognitive process. Nishida proposes to approach the problem of knowledge not in terms of idealism nor in terms of empiricism, but rather in terms of what allows for the mediation between subject and object or form and matter. He would rather conceive the medium of the form-matter or subject-object oppositions in terms of *basho* rather than in terms of subjectivity.
22. Emil Lask (1875–1915), Heinrich Rickert's doctoral student. Lask sought to provide an ontological grounding to Kant's transcendental logic in the realm of transcendental intelligible validity or values. Central to Lask's theory was the opposition between irrational fact and its value, which however are united in prejudicative precognitive lived experience (*Erleben*). Even prior to cognition or judgment, we experience the unity of form (value) and matter (sense-experience) and that unity constitutes the meaning (*Sinn*) of things, which only subsequently through judgment become analyzed into separate moments.
23. See Lask, *Die Logik der Philosophie und die Kategorienlehre: eine Studie über den Herrschaftsbereich der logischen Form* (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1911), 33, 55, 215ff. Lask describes this as an "immediate intuitable [lived] experience" (*unmittelbare anschauliche Erleben*) (55) that is irrational, logically inaccessible, only passively accessible, and alogical in terms of meaning. As sensible, this material is "being." Logical (or categorial) form on the other hand is "validity," the value that makes the sensible being meaningful, the intelligibility always tied to matter. For Lask, the two are already unified in our experience prior to judgment or cognition. We are already immersed in the world of validity, where things "hold" or are "valid" (*gilt*), i.e., are encountered with meaning.
24. Lask, *Die Logik der Philosophie und die Kategorienlehre*, 86–86, 191–93. Here he states that "[t]he knower 'lives' only in the truth and in knowing he has his life." ("Der Erkennende 'lebt' eben nur in der Wahrheit, und am Erkennen hat er sein Leben.") (192) That is to say that even prior to judgment and theoretical cognition, we already find ourselves immersed in a world of meaningfulness or intelligibility, in our lived experience. Prior to theorizing, we find ourselves lost or absorbed in the "categories" (forms) that make matter meaningful, absorbed in the face of the "logically naked" (*logisch nackt*) and "pre-oppositional" (*vorgegenständlich*) (see 33, 55, 84–85, 130, 192). "Categorial clarity" pervades all life even prior to its analysis into form and matter of grammatical subject and predicate. In opposition to Hegel's alleged "pan-logicism" (a term actually coined by Hermann Glockner); see Glockner, *Hegel* (Stuttgart: Frommans, 1940), 2:461. Lask called this "the panarchy of the *logos*" (*die Panarchie des Logos*) (134).
25. In order to translate *hōronriteki*, the translators have taken the liberty here to coin the neologism "peri-logical." The Japanese *hō* with its verb form *tsutsumu* has the sense of "envelop," "embrace," "wrap," "comprehend," "include." "Subsumptive" would not be an accurate translation as it is used instead to translate the compound *hōkatsu* so that "subsumptive logic" translates *hōkatsu ronri*. To translate *hōronri* as "enveloping logic" or "the logic of envelopment" would be accurate but cumbersome. The translators decided upon the Greek prefix *peri* (περί), which has the spatial senses of "around," "about," "round about," "surrounding," as well as the verbal sense of "enclosing" or "wrapping." With verbs it can mean "concerning" or "about." And in noun form *ta peri* means "circumstances." All of these senses together make *peri* the most appropriate term for translating *hō*. This also corresponds to Lask's use of the prefix *um-*. Hence "lived experience" as "peri-logical" is a kind of *basho*. If by *hōronri* Nishida means what he will later come to call "logic of the predicate," *peri-logic* seems the best translation for *hōronri*.
26. This is a development of Nishida's earlier notion of experience (*keiken*) as prior to the cognitive act and as the ground or root from out of which the epistemological subject vis-à-vis its object emerges. In this sense "*basho*" plays a role comparable to what his earlier

- notion of “pure experience” (*junsui keiken*) played in his *An Inquiry into the Good*. He is conceiving of experience in terms of his new concept of *basho*.
27. Thus the *basho* of lived experience is broader than and embraces the *basho* of cognition that encompasses the epistemological subject–object opposition as well as the form–matter relationship.
 28. This “true I” then is the all-encompassing *basho* that envelops within itself the narrower epistemological “I” *qua* subject along with the infinity of myriad beings *qua* objects. It is “nothing” in the sense that it escapes objectification, cannot become an object, while itself grounding the consciousness of any object.
 29. While the epistemological subject, as knower, relates to beings as its objects, this deeper and broader “I” as a *basho* un-delimited by anything opposing it, is hence not determinable or definable in relation to being or its opposite, non-being. That is, it cannot be merely affirmed or merely negated; it cannot be defined in terms of truth–falsity; it cannot be understood in relation to conceptual opposites. Nishida shall later designate this indeterminacy, absolute nothing (*zettai mu*).
 30. The Platonic philosophers and followers of Plato.
 31. Aristotle, *On the Soul (De Anima)* 429a26–29, bk. 3, chap. 4, ed. McKeon, 590.
 32. *Jō* refers to emotion or sentiment, and *i* refers to volition or willing.
 33. *Hataraki* or *hataraku* refers to the German *wirken* (working, activity, acting) of *Wirklichkeit* (actuality). It means to work in the sense of being efficacious.
 34. Nishida’s use of the phrase “consciousness-in-general” is a terminological borrowing from Kant’s and the Kantians’ transcendental philosophy but does not necessarily mean what Kant originally intended. Nishida argues that consciousness-in-general must be nothing in its undeterminateness vis-à-vis what emerges determined within it. By arguing in this way, he develops his theory of what he comes to call in later works the *basho* of relative nothing and the *basho* of absolute nothing.
 35. What Nishida calls the “field of consciousness” here then is something broader than what we would normally think of as mere subjectivity. For it encompasses the object, even when regarded alone (“in-itself”) without reference to the subject, as the place of its emergence (i.e., “mirroring”).
 36. This idea resonates with the East Asian philosophical tradition, according to which space is taken to be filled with *ki*-energy of psycho-physiological nature. It also echoes a contemporary idea of physics in which space is not a vacuum but is filled with energy, as a force field.
 37. As in modern epistemology, external things are known through the mediation of the interior, i.e., the faculties of consciousness. But by reversing modern epistemology’s orientation toward the external object by way of the cognizing ego-consciousness, Nishida through his notion of self-awareness via self-mirroring, attempts to conceive the foundation of knowledge as extending beyond the self–other, subject–object dichotomy. The source must be sought at “the very bottom of consciousness” in its lived dimension that envelops the dichotomy.
 38. In other words, the object’s being is taken to be independent of the knower.
 39. That is, an endless regress of successive envelopments of subject and object, each envelopment *qua basho* being itself enveloped alongside its external object by a deeper and broader *basho*. With each succession the envelopment becomes more expansive. Just as the enveloping subject encompasses the subject–object relation on a lower level, it itself in confronting its object is enveloped along with its object in a more expansive *basho*.
 40. We translate *sayō* as “act,” with reference to the use of the English “act” in translations of Husserl. Implicit in Nishida’s writing here is a critique of Husserl’s conception of mental acts.
 41. For Lask, the transcendent object, or “paradigmatic object” (“objective proto-image”) (*gegenständliches Urbild*), is already a unity of form (validity) and matter (sensible being). Its unity is already prejudicatively experienced, that is, prior to our cognitive judgments

about it. We experience the thing's undivided unity as meaningful. Only in the process of making a judgment about it, do we then break up its unity into separate moments, i.e., the grammatical subject and the predicate, or matter and form, particular and universal. The subject of judgment breaks up the original unity and then pieces them together "artificially" in the judgment structure. The judgment "complicates" the original unity by atomizing it into elements. So once the object is said to be reconstituted in accordance with the structure of judgment or cognition, it can no longer be regarded as truly "objective," i.e., as transcending subjectivity. The object, having undergone this transformation at the hands of the epistemological (or judicative) subject, the knower, subjectivity, must put up with that somewhat altered sense. It is in this sense that the subject "destroys" the object for Lask. See Lask, *Die Lehre vom Urteil*, 160, 162–63.

42. Both "separable" and "divisible" here translate *kabunteki*. Division in the latter sense may mean the analysis of the content of thought.
43. That is, their substantiality becomes taken to be an expression of their place as a force field of relations.
44. In the field of forces, all lines are each oriented in a particular direction or region in the three dimensions of up–down, right–left, front–back, etc. Analogously, all phenomena in the field of consciousness each involves an orientation toward some object it intends or means, whether the object be taken as real, as imaginary, or as an ideal significance. This stance of Nishida here may be comparable to Husserl's notion of intentionality.
45. The reference is to Emil Lask's notion of an "unopposed" or "oppositionless" object (*gegenatzloser Gegenstand*), or "paradigmatic oppositionless meaning" (*urbildlichen gegenatzlosen Sinnes*), somewhat equivalent to Kant's "thing-in-itself" but distinct in meaning. This refers to the fundamental level on the side of the object that is transcendent to cognition or judgment but is given to experience in its complete unity (of form and matter, i.e., meaningfulness and being). In its bare givenness to sense-experience, its meaningfulness is experienced prior to its dichotomization by judgment (affirming or negating) as true or false. Only through analysis via judgment does that object, initially experienced as without opposition, then becomes bifurcated through yes- or no-saying into opposites as true or false, and broken up into moments, i.e., the grammatical subject and predicate or meta-physical matter and form. See Lask, *Die Lehre vom Urteil*, 136, 171.
46. Thus even an object that is supposedly without opposition, the "oppositionless object," once contrasted with something else in an oppositional relationship, becomes an oppositional object. And the nothingness opposed to this being as object, then can only be relative. In Nishida, the object–subject correlation corresponds to the being–nothing correlation. Nishida later calls the oppositional nothing correlated with the object, relative nothing, and distinguishes it from the absolute nothing that would serve as the grounding place enveloping the two opposites (of being and nothing qua non-being).
47. Aristotle, *Categoriae* (*Categories*) chap. 5, 4b14–18: "[I]t is by reason of the modification which takes place within the substance itself that a substance is said to be capable of admitting contrary qualities. . . [I]t is a distinctive mark of substance, that, while remaining numerically one and the same, it is capable of admitting contrary qualities, the modification taking place through a change in the substance itself." McKeon, 14. The thing in that case, for Aristotle, becomes the *hypokeimenon* (or *subjectum* in Latin), the substratum underlying its attributes (qualities or characteristics) and which remains the same while its attributes may come and go. In other words it is that which serves as the support of its changing qualities (*symbebekota*). See also Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, bk. 1, chap. 3, 983bff, ed. McKeon, 693–94. In terms of language and logic, for Aristotle, this would also be that of which things are predicated, that is, the grammatical subject. Predicates are viewed as designating the attributes or characteristics inhering in what serves as their ontological support, the substance, designated by the grammatical subject. However, Nishida will

ultimately look in the other direction, to the predicate designating the universal (that is, *basho*) of which the grammatical subject is but one expression, for the basis of reality. He calls this the “transcendent predicate” [*chōetsuteki jutsugo*]. The grammatical subject is seen as but one possible determination of a broader reality, that is, the place (*basho*) or field that environs that apparent substance. For Nishida, it is the so-called substance designated by the grammatical subject that is then liable to change on the basis of its determination by its environing conditions. And hence what is ordinarily thought to be the “substance” is not really substantial.

48. This sentence reminds one of the Huayan (Jp: *Kegon*) perspective of the cosmos according to which everything is interrelated in harmonious nonobstruction and interpenetration (*shi-shi wu-ai; jiji muge*) so that one is many and many is one, and in a way that the emptiness of each does not obstruct its being and vice versa.
49. “Act” here translates *sayō*. Nishida may have Husserl’s notion of “act” in the sense of noetic act in mind. It also has the sense of a function with the role of producing a particular kind of effect.
50. It is important to recognize that Nishida is not only talking about the unity and transition between opposites but also between what are logically contradictory, as in being and nothing, positive and negative, affirmation and negation, plus and minus. This thought is an inheritance from Mahāyāna Buddhism, traceable to the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature.
51. “Generation-and-extinction” (*shōmetsu*) is a term Nishida borrows from Japanese Buddhism, where it has been used to refer to the Indian concept of *samsāra*, the cycle of reincarnation. As such it can also be read as “birth-and-death” or “life-and-death.” A more sophisticated Mahāyāna significance however also connotes the momentariness of phenomena or thing-events, the instantaneous appearance and disappearance of each *dharmā* (elements of existence). Nishida surely has in mind this latter connotation of the term.
52. This sentence explains the sense behind the title of the collection of essays into which this essay was inserted, *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e*. Change entails a process of transformation from “is” to “is not.” But such change that we observe in nature outside of us does not spare ourselves for the human being is a “being-in-nature.” That is, we come into existence with birth and go out of existence with death. “Generation-and-extinction” covers this same idea but with a wider application to all that is, in other words that everything is destined to go through this process of change. Nishida’s use here of the phrase “mere seeing” suggests a perspective of Buddhist enlightenment vis-à-vis *samsara*, the realm of “birth-and-death” or change. The move here from “the acting” to “the seeing” signifies a move from the epistemological domain, wherein species concepts (or conceptual categories) are active in forming objects, to the existential sphere, wherein one confronts one’s nonsubstantiality in death.
53. Thus the *basho* that mirrors even our species concepts is not reducible to a realm of mere *ideas* in the Platonic sense. Actuality here means the concreteness of *basho* in contrast to the various determinants that emerge in abstraction from it. Lask’s “oppositionless object” is the object of concrete lived experience prior to its bifurcation into opposites on the basis of our valuing judgments. This also may be relevant to Nishida’s later relating of the sense of *basho* to the lived body’s activity in its engagements with things in the world at large, taking part in the world’s ongoing historicity, such as in his notion of acting-intuition. In any case *basho* is not to be thought of as something abstract, a transcendent realm of ideas or the de-worlded mind of a solipsist.
54. *Urazuke*, while literally meaning “lining,” has the connotation of holding or supporting from the other side, guaranteeing the existence of something from its underside or from below the surface.
55. We translate *tairitsuteki mu* as “oppositional nothing.” At this stage Nishida uses this phrase more often than “relative nothing” (*sōtai mu*) although the latter does appear in this work.

- Their meanings are interchangeable in that they both connote a nothing that is not yet absolute, a nothing that is *related* to being as its *other* or opposite.
56. The phrase “oppositional nothing” connotes the subject-knower’s consciousness as relatively undetermined in facing its determinate object, the object of its cognition. In this oppositional relationship, consciousness provides the empty space wherein objects can appear as its phenomena. It is in this sense that Nishida uses the phrase “oppositional nothing.” But this nothingness is still relative to being, i.e., objects. Nishida will thus distinguish the *basho* of absolute or true nothing from this oppositional or relative nothing.
 57. See n. 56 concerning in what sense consciousness is said to be “nothing.” This being–nothing opposition is also Nishida’s appropriation of the real–ideal opposition. Nishida seeks to transcend the necessity of having to choose between these two standpoints of realism and idealism by introducing their co-relativity within the deeper and broader field of *basho*.
 58. The oppositional nothing in its opposition to objects, is still determined vis-à-vis its *other*, and in that respect is still a “being.” In other words consciousness as a nothing relative to the beings it knows, in providing the species concept for its objects of cognition, serves as their latent being.
 59. True consciousness appears upon the standpoint of limitless nothing, true nothing, a standpoint deeper than the oppositional nothing of consciousness vis-à-vis its objects. In that latter case consciousness is but one of its forms or “beings,” a noema within the background of nothing.
 60. That is, oppositional nothing, i.e., a characteristic that emerges from the field of ego-consciousness in its relationship with beings, i.e., objects of consciousness, is still a determinate being in its very co-relativity with beings. Insofar as it is relative, it is determinate, and hence, a being.
 61. The reference here is to the idealist position. “Idealist” here translates *yuishin*, lit., “mind-only,” which is the Japanese rendition of the Sanskrit *cittamātra*, a concept associated with a Mahāyāna Buddhist school named after that concept but also alternatively known as Yogācāra.
 62. Nishida is here drawing a distinction between “so-called consciousness” and “true consciousness.” “So-called consciousness” is objectified as something thought. It becomes the grammatical subject of “I think . . . X.” As an “oppositional nothing,” it is still a latent being. “True consciousness,” on the other hand, is its unobjectifiable and undeterminable place wherein the above is mirrored. The situatedness of “true consciousness” as a *basho* then transcends idealism (and the very opposition between idealism and realism).
 63. For Lask, the “unopposed” or “oppositionless” object, the transcendent object, is the standard or measure of the truth of judgment. The thing-in-itself given to sense-reception already contains an interfusion of elements corresponding to the form and the matter of judgment. But in their intimate union, they are interfused without dichotomy, prior to any bifurcation into “yes” and “no” or affirmation and negation—a “trans-oppositional unity.” In that sense the object is “oppositionless.” This precognitive, prejudicative interfusion somehow provides the standard for judicative analysis. Nishida will explain these points in terms of his concept of *basho*. A few years later they become explicated by Nishida (e.g., in his *Ippansha no jikakuteki taikai* or *The Self-Aware System of Universals*) as occupying what he calls the intelligible world (as a world of ideals or values, or in Lask’s neo-Kantian language, the realm of validities) determined by the *basho* of absolute nothing.
 64. That is, consciousness as the realm of the representation of things.
 65. The point is to penetrate deeper through one’s consciousness into the ground of consciousness. This ground is broader and extends beyond the merely thinking mind to its bottomlessness, hence an “unground,” “underground,” or abyss. In later works, Nishida comes to call the realization of this in the realm of *prāxis*, “acting-intuition.”

66. By “negation of negation,” Nishida means the negation of “oppositional nothing,” i.e., the consciousness (of objects). And the “true negation” that this “negation of negation” reaches is *basho* of true nothing.
67. In his last years Nishida further develops this idea in the concept of “reverse (or: inverse) polarity (or: correspondence),” whereby the absolute nothing negates itself (its own nothingness) to allow for the emergence of beings in their co-relativity and suchness. This also reminds us of the Mahāyāna notion of the “emptiness of emptiness.”
68. “Intuition” in this case translates *chokkakutekinarumono*, meaning the very object intuited. In other places it translates *chokkaku* or *chokkan*, intuition as an act.
69. That is, in becoming aware of a contradiction, we break through the environing hold of a universal concept *qua basho*, to attain an awareness that sees that concept itself as an object vis-à-vis its contradictory and in light of an even broader and deeper *basho*.
70. In being objectified itself, the concept, the form of the matter of cognition, is no longer the knower but now the known.
71. That is, as thing-in-itself.
72. For Kant, the a priori or transcendental form is what provides the cognitive sense of objectivity to the concept that is otherwise subjective as belonging to the epistemological subject.
73. See Lask, *Die Logik der Philosophie und die Kategorienlehre*, 70, 97ff. For Lask, the various sciences are rooted in our pretheoretical (precognitive) experiences, which differ according to their governing “domain categories” (*Gebietskategorien*)—an idea Lask borrows from his teacher Rickert and develops. For example, the category of “causality” governs the object-domain of physics. For Lask, “being” (*Sein*) as such would be a broad category encompassing all of the empirical sciences and presupposed by all other categories dealing with beings. For it is the category for a “sensible something,” cut out of, distinguished from, “nothing” (*nichts*) *qua* sensibility in general. It is the “sphere” through which sensibles become—or can be regarded as—beings. (70). And “validity” would be the broadest category as the logical form of the logical domain, “the category of categories,” applicable to all things including itself.
74. For in Plato the universal *qua* idea was seen as distinct from, transcendent to, the very place (*chōra*) of its actualization.
75. Nishida obviously has in mind here Plato’s notion of *chōra*, the receptacle of the formation (actualization) of the *ideas*, which in itself relative to the *ideas* is “nothing.” See Plato’s *Timaeus* 51a-b (Cooper, 1254).
76. Descartes, *Principia philosophiae* 1644, pt 1, principle 48. Here Descartes states that there are two ultimate classes of things: intellectual things or thinking substance, i.e., the mind, and material things or extended substance, i.e., bodies. Volition, among other characteristics, pertains to the mind, while movement, among other characteristics, pertains to bodies. See Rene Descartes, *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, trans. Elizabeth Haldane and G. R. T. Ross (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1911), 1:238.
77. Or: “feeling-and-willing.”
78. The *basho* of true nothing (*shin no mu no basho*) is the deepest and broadest *basho*, opposed by absolutely nothing. Not finitized or determined by anything else, it is infinite (limitless) and undetermined. Absolute or true nothing (*zettai mu*, *shin no mu*) as such must also be distinguished from relative or oppositional nothing (*sōtai mu*, *taishōteki mu*), i.e., consciousness as the epistemological subject in relation to its object (= being).
79. It is then the universal rather than the particular, the grammatical predicate designating those qualities, e.g., colors, and ultimately implying the system of qualities, e.g., color itself, rather than the grammatical subject, that is the *true subjectum* or *hypokeimenon*. However, even this sense of something underlying is to be broken through as we shall see. Nishida is hence moving in a direction opposite from that of Aristotle’s “logic of the grammatical

- subject *qua* substance” or “logic of objectification.” This becomes explicated in Nishida’s “logic of the predicate,” especially in his *Ippansha no jikakuteki taikai* a few years later.
80. This reinforces the point that has already been made that the true subject of judgment is the “universal,” e.g., the system of colors, that determines an individual in a judgment.
 81. The word *yūsu*, alternatively pronounced *motsu*, for “possess” is written with the same character that means being (*u* or *yū*). What is implied here then is the sense that being has something to do with the possession of characteristics or attributes. In involving the possession of qualities, being is that which is hence determined and finitized, in distinction to the indeterminacy and attributelessness of nothing.
 82. While referring to the Mahāyāna dialectic of forms and emptiness, with the latter also meaning “space,” this can also be related to the Daoist *Dao* as a chaos, formless in itself, but inherent with potential forms or images prior to the ordering of the cosmos. This notion is diametrically opposed to Plato’s notion that the *ideas*, possessing order, are prior to the *otherwise* unformed material world, and hierarchically dominant over that chaos.
 83. That is to say, “color” is the place wherein “red” is implied. “Red” is thus a self-determination (or particularization) of “color” (i.e., the system of colors).
 84. I.e., *differentia* or “differences-in-species.”
 85. This is comparable to the Indian theory of consciousness as self-manifesting light. But Nishida’s idea may be a product of Zen. In Yogācāra when the *ālaya-vijñāna* goes through radical transformation of one’s psycho-physiological constitution, a turning about called *parāvṛtti*, it turns into the “great mirror wisdom” with the purification of karmic seeds. This is a state of nondiscriminatory or nondualistic mirroring as will be made clear in n. 87.
 86. “Acting,” which can be rendered as “working” as well, here then also bears the sense of *wirklich* in German; it is actual in the sense of being active or acting that is demonstrated in its manifestation.
 87. This is the nondualistic mirroring in Yogācāra Buddhism alluded to above in n. 85. In the experience of such a state, the subject disappears into nothing for the object to shine forth. There is no longer any subjective superimposition or projection of values or forms upon objects. In Yogācāra this means that there is no longer any interference of dispositional tendencies (*samskāra*), hence no discrimination amongst phenomena.
 88. That is, it is without the superimposition or projection of a positing ego-consciousness. A contrast is here being made between working and mirroring: beings work upon beings while nothing mirrors beings. See n. 87 as well. This is also another clue to the sense behind the title of the collection of essays, *From the Working to the Seeing (Hatarakumono kara mirumono e)*.
 89. Here and in the following sentences, Nishida is speaking of the “mirror” in its mundane physical sense.
 90. In this sense, the representational theory of consciousness and cognition is based upon the understanding of the knowing subject or mind as a kind of being.
 91. The point of the last two sentences is that while particular individuals regard one another as beings, they are unconscious of the very systematic whole wherein they partake as its mirror images. From the standpoint of the particular, the whole or universal then is “nothing.” The universal is the receding background that enables the foreground to emerge. And yet insofar as a particular individual is part of the whole, interrelated with the rest of the whole, it entails the whole as the image of the whole. The foreground mirrors or manifests the implicit background. This may also be compared to a hologram, wherein each part of the holographic dry plate contains the entire information of the film. In this sense, part and whole are not separate. The relationship is one of *mutual* inclusion. This is a fundamental idea of Mahāyāna Buddhism, traceable to Nāgārjuna’s concept of emptiness as dependent origination and further developed in Huayan Buddhism’s notion of interpenetration. If we translate this in terms of human beings and the cosmos, as part and

whole they share the same root as microcosm/macrocosm, an idea noticeable, for example, in Shingon Buddhism.

92. *Bunyū* is usually used to translate Plato's "participation/sharing" ($\mu\acute{\epsilon}\theta\epsilon\lambda\iota\varsigma$, *methexis*).
93. For example, this can refer to Kant's thing-in-itself (*Ding-an-sich*) or Aristotle's substance (*ousia*, *hypokeimenon*).
94. This would be a seeing without any substantializing (i.e., reifying, hypostatizing, objectifying, or discriminating) intentionality.
95. "Formed" here translates *irodorareta*, which also has the sense of "colored." But *colored* in this context refers to the characterizations associated with those things that are formed. A distant connection may be implied between this usual understanding of the word (as "color") and the Buddhist significance of *shiki* as meaning *rūpa* or material form.
96. Here Nishida refers to Dionysius the Areopagite, an ancient Christian mystical theologian, most likely from the fifth century, who spoke of "the simple, absolute and unchangeable mysteries of heavenly Truth [that] lie hidden in the dazzling obscurity of the secret Silence, outshining all brilliance with the intensity of their darkness." *De Mystica Theologia* 997b or *Mystical Theology*, chap. 1, in *Dionysius the Areopagite on the Divine Names and the Mystical Theology*, trans. E. Rolt, (New York: Macmillan, 1940 [1920]), 191. The *basho* of true nothing is not absolute darkness but an illuminating darkness that shines through the mirroring. The word "darkness" used in this instance has two meanings: one in respect to the stance of ego-consciousness, which cannot see the dimension of the experience thematized here, and the other meaning has reference to a bottomless abyss as the (un)ground from out of which the "will" springs forth, a "ground" which in itself is undetectable and ungraspable.
97. That is, a root common to both linguistic-copulative *being* and ontological-existential *being*.
98. Nishida here borrows Hegel's term, "concrete universal." For Hegel, the term signifies the inseparability of a universal concept from the concrete and perceptible individual in that it forms the latter's essence. An example would be the universal "life" that partially constitutes the essence of living things and directs the dynamism of their inner development. Historically developing phenomena are thus unfoldings of a concrete universal. For Nishida, the concrete universal more specifically signifies the universal *qua basho* in its ongoing movement of self-differentiation into particulars making up the world of objects. Equivalent to what he earlier called "pure experience," it signifies the concreteness of a pretheoretical and lived indeterminacy in its very own self-determinations. Such a universal is contrasted to an abstract universal, a mere idea or concept having no connection to the real world.
99. In other words it is the concrete universal that determines itself and self-differentiates into the particular object as possessing certain qualities as expressed in our judgment about that object.
100. In that case even Kant's a priori forms of intuition are but mere means for the particularization of the *basho* of nothing as a concrete universal.
101. In forming a system of colors within itself, color in general encompassing all particular colors, is "oppositionless," that is, not delimited by any other color and prior to its own bifurcation or multiplication into, e.g., red and not-red.
102. Both cases, natural existence and color, are transcendent and oppositionless in the sense that they are places *wherein* mutually opposing objects *are*, but themselves are prior to multiplication that would divide them into opposing parts, and also are not delimited by any equivalent objects external to them. They transcend and are prior to oppositions (e.g., red vs. blue, inanimate vs. animate existence, etc.).
103. That is, objects opposed to each other emerge within their designated domain, whether it be the natural world of natural objects or the concept color with the various colors

implaced therein. Opposing beings emerge within that domain when the domain recedes into a background “nothing” for their foreground appearance. The *basho* containing those beings as such proves to be an “oppositionless object.”

104. This means that judgment, concerning itself with objects opposed to each other and to consciousness (i.e., oppositional being vis-à-vis oppositional nothing), is a particular expression of consciousness (i.e., oppositional nothing) as the *basho* of acts of consciousness.
105. See Lask, *Die Lehre vom Urteil*, 14. The German *Treffen* literally means “hitting” or “meeting” (with *Nichttreffen* meaning “missing,” “not-hitting” or “not meeting”). The pair of *Treffen–Nichttreffen* refers to the various positive–negative dualities encountered in acts, such as of judging, feeling, or willing. Lask regards this as the most primal, familiar, and explicit pair of opposites encountered, e.g., in the decision making process of judgment and in the taking up of positions: the value of “getting it right” (*Treffen*) and the nonvalue of missing it or error. In the judging act, it is the opposition between accepting or affirming and rejecting or negating. In the case of willing or feeling, for example, the activity is either attracted or repelled by something. In all cases, the given thing, as object of a judgment, feeling, or willing, has either value (*Wert*) or disvalue.
106. Nishida’s understanding of validity here takes over from, and is a further development of, the neo-Kantian understanding of validity, especially Emil Lask’s. It can be traced to Hermann Lotze, who first characterized the ideal norm of judgment as validity (*Geltung*) in distinction from the reality of beings, both sensible and supersensible. See Lotze’s *Logik: Drei Büdher. Vom Denken, Vom Untersuchen, und Vom Erkenn* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1874 [1838]); *Logic in Three Books: Of Thought, Of Investigation, and Of Knowledge*, trans. Bernard Bosanquet (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888); and also see his *Metaphysik: Drei Bücher der Ontologie, Kosmologie und Psychologie* (English: *Metaphysic in Three Books: Ontology, Cosmology, and Psychology*). In the latter book, for example, Lotze speaks of “that world of ideas [*Ideenwelt*], which as eternally valid [*gültig*] but not as being [*seiend*], we oppose to actuality [*Wirklichkeit*]” (27, German; 32, English). In Emil Lask’s case, of all the categorial forms, each forming its own domain of beings, providing them with significance whereby they are “valid,” “validity” itself is the “category of categories,” the *Urform*. Lask, *Die Logik der Philosophie*, 33–34; *Die Lehre von Urteil*, 127. And yet the category, including validity, never being separate from its object, is already given in experience prior to cognition and judgment. Validity is precognitively interfused with its matter, providing it with precognitive intelligibility or meaning (*Sinn*). And in relation to that “being” that is its sensible matter, validity as categorial form is “non-being” (*Nichtseiende, Nichtsein*). Lask, *Logik der Philosophie*, 7. The domain of validity then for Lask belongs neither to the epistemological subject of judgment or cognition nor to the object per se but rather to the prejudicative realm of meanings (see *Logik der Philosophie*, 15). In this prejudicative (hence, precognitive) world, we live through the categories or forms as in contexts, making it possible for us to know things. Thus we “live in truth.” (*Logik der Philosophie*, 82, 86–87). Furthermore, Lask tells us that in the prejudicative interfusion of matter and form, the matter is environed (*umgeben*), encompassed (*umgriffen*), horizoned (*verbrämt*), and enveloped (*umhüllt*) by the form (*Logik der Philosophie*, 74f). And yet each categorial form of validity refers to an excess of meaning originating from outside its domain in the allogical sphere of matter itself (*Logik der Philosophie*, 60). Nishida’s understanding of the universal predicate as a “place” (*basho*) that envelops its matter, its subject, and as ultimately referring to the irreducible and indeterminate nothing, from out of which all validities and meanings emerge, seems to take off from Lask’s ideas, further developing them in terms of Nishida’s concept of *basho*.
107. In the *basho* of nothing, where there are no determinants, there is no positing of an ego-based seer, and hence the seeing is without an acting subject. What Nishida means by

“validity” here reminds us of the Buddhist ideal of discernment vis-à-vis nondiscriminatory wisdom. This is an interesting transmutation of an originally neo-Kantian concept in Buddhistic terms. The move from consciousness *qua* oppositional nothing to true nothing is parallel to the move from working to seeing and from acts (of consciousness) to validity (in the realm of truth).

108. Or “one consciousness” (*ein Bewußtsein*) as the “original synthetic unity of apperception” (*die ursprüngliche synthetische Einheit der Apperzeption*) under which the sense-manifold is subject. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1993) and *Critique of Pure Reason*, 2nd (B) ed., trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1965) 143.
109. This refers to the realm of ideals serving as values, norms, or standards for our acts. They provide the *teloi* of acts, such as the good for moral activity, beauty for aesthetic acts and sensation or feeling, and truth for cognitive acts. To the extent that the objects of the world, as mirror images of *basho*, become manifest vis-à-vis our acts, this realm of ideals in Nishida’s system may be comparable to Plato’s notion of the realm of *ideas* that become actualized and particularized in the physical objects as their instances. This also takes off from Hermann Cohen’s understanding of the Platonic ideas as well as Rickert’s notion of the realm of values as prescribing what *ought to be* in our activities (both scientific and cultural) vis-à-vis the realm of being, what *is*.
110. Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* and *Critique of Pure Reason*, 1st (A) ed., 50, 2nd (B) ed., 74.
111. Consciousness as occurring in the *basho* of oppositional nothing is receptive of sense-matter, mirroring the outside. But by “consciousness-in-general” here Nishida means something broader and deeper with its corresponding experiential correlates and horizons within itself. It thus contains that oppositional nothing by mirroring its interior (rather than an exterior). This is what permits self-reflection in addition to the cognition of objects. As he stated a few lines above, this is the entryway to the more foundational *basho* of *true nothing*.
112. Validity then for Nishida means things in their *being* or *is-ness*, just as they *are*, in their implacement in *basho*, as self-determinations or self-mirrorings of *basho*. Beings in their very *be-ing* are thus grounded in the unground of nothing. Ontology is founded upon such *an-ontology*. This however also reminds us of Emil Lask’s understanding of categorial forms wherein sensible matter are “implaced” in the interfusion of form and matter. The category of being (*Sein*) while itself non-being *qua* validity is intertwined with the sensible matter *qua* being. For Lask, being was the ultimate category of sensible matter and validity itself was the ultimate category of categories analogous to Nishida’s final *basho*. Nishida’s contribution is in connecting this with the notion of the self-determination *qua* self-mirroring of nothing.
113. As stated before, mirroring as such is the self-determination of something broader, the concrete universal, a concrete situation (i.e., the oppositionless object), into something more limited in scope, the particular or the oppositional object that opposes the knowing subject and can be affirmed or negated.
114. The oppositionless object, for Lask, is what is given in lived experience prior to cognitive analysis. By “countervalue” then, Nishida has in mind the objects abstracted through analysis and taken in-themselves in opposition to value and the world of intelligibles. On the other hand in the will’s lived experience as pretheoretical, prior to cognition, there is no such separation. The standpoint of volition is hence deeper and more fundamental than the standpoint of cognition.
115. For Augustine (354–430 CE) evil is the privation or absence of being (*privatum esse*) and of good (*privatio boni*). It is thus not a substance. See his *Confessions*, bk 3, ch.7, §12; bk 4, ch.15, §24; bk 7, ch.12, 18; and *Enchiridion*, ch.3, §11; ch.4, §12; ch.8, §23–24. *Augustine: Confessions and Enchiridion*, trans. Albert C. Outler (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press,

- 1955). Augustine's designation of "lack/privation of being," which we might render as "non-being," is rendered by Nishida into Japanese by the same word we elsewhere translate as "nothing," *mu*.
116. Here we have Nishida's threefold scheme applicable to his "epistemology" and "ontology": the *basho* of being, the *basho* of oppositional (or relative) nothing, and the *basho* of absolute (or true) nothing, respectively determining things at work (objects of knowledge), the acts of consciousness (the subject of knowledge), and the free will and the values it experiences. The first two *bashos* are themselves each determined by the next *basho*, and the last one—the *basho* of nothing that determines the free will and the ideal values it follows—remains undetermined.
117. In other words, Nishida is pointing here to the will behind the acts of consciousness as what unifies the severed moments of consciousness in the different dimensions of time. But the will as such then would have to be in a certain sense nontemporal, transcendent to the dimensions (past, present, future) and moments of time.
118. For it is through the self-negation of absolute nothing that beings emerge, as Nishida, in his later works (especially in the 1940s) will make clear. But this also refers to the negation of oppositional nothing in the deeper domain of true nothing.
119. The original here for "being conscious" is *ishikisuru*, a verb form of *ishiki* (consciousness), which might be equivalent to something like "conscious-ing" but because this latter neologism sounds too awkward, the translators have decided to render this as "being conscious." Nishida's point is that what is *conscious of* that distinction between consciousness and unconsciousness must be deeper and broader in scope than mere consciousness itself determined, objectified, in terms of that opposition.
120. The lived experience of volition is thus equated with the eternal present as a kind of *basho* or place for the three time-dimensions.
121. Nishida here is referring to the self-dichotomization of the universal *qua basho* into a determinate universal as the universal concept on the one hand and the determinate particular object as substance on the other hand. This is simultaneously the differentiation between inner and outer, subject and object, knower and known, self and other. And yet insofar as both are *seen* here, not only the particular object but the universal concept is still noematic, objectlike, and hence not the *basho* of true nothing.
122. Benedict de Spinoza, *Ethica*, pt. 1, proposition 3, in *On the Improvement of the Understanding, The Ethics, Correspondence*, trans. R. H. M. Elwes (New York: Dover Pub., 1955). Here Spinoza tells us that things having nothing in common cannot be apprehended by means of one another and thus cannot be the cause of one another. An all-embracing infinite substance thus can have no relation to anything else since it already includes everything within it. *Qua* being, it is in contrast only to nothing.
123. That is, Spinoza's substance is still an object. To the extent that Spinoza's substance is pure being, it cannot include any negativity (non-being). The important point here is that consciousness has this moment of negation as its essential characterization, according to Nishida. If it were not for this negation, nothing would appear in the field of consciousness. That a thing appears as an object of consciousness is due to this moment of self-negation. Otherwise, thing and consciousness cannot be differentiated from each other.
124. It is not reality in the sense of a positive being, a *res*. Nishida is here speaking of the *field* of consciousness as a *basho* of nothing.
125. This is a critique of Kant's notion of transcendental subjectivity. Kant's friend Solomon Maimon (1753–1800), whom Kant considered to be the best of his critics, made a similar sort of criticism in regard to the circularity in Kant's argument. For Maimon, Kant failed to justify his claim concerning the necessary unity between the cognition of concepts on the one hand, which are logical in origin, and intuitions on the other hand, which are aesthetic in nature and empirical in content. Kant simply presupposed without warrant

this dualistic structure of cognition as involving two separate spheres of activities that must somehow be united. This position appears to be unwarranted because the dual elements of cognition are themselves not objects of empirical cognition. Moreover, Kant's transcendental subjectivity as such cannot be verified by itself but requires the empirical or psychological consciousness it grounds for verification. While transcendental subjectivity, transcending the empirical condition of its experience, is said to "accompany every 'I think . . . X,'" its *raison d'être* cannot be guaranteed unless it is supported by that empirical consciousness. See Salomon Maimon, *Versuch über die Transcendentalphilosophie mit einem Anhang über die symbolische Erkenntnis* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1965).

126. In other words, by becoming nothing through self-negation, it gives room or space for objects to emerge as beings. Consciousness as such a field then is a *basho* [place].
127. This refers to Lask's *Treffen* and *Nichttreffen* discussed earlier, the most primal formal pair of opposites encountered in judgments and the postulation of positions.
128. The reference here may be to the Mahāyāna notion of *tathatā*, the "suchness" of thing-events, undiscriminated to show their primordial *be-ing*. There is also an obvious reference to the neo-Kantian realm of values or validities as distinguished from that of beings or objects. Especially for Emil Lask, validity is already experienced or lived as inseparable from the matter prior to judgment.
129. This would be a neo-Kantian (e.g., Heinrich Rickert's) objection to Nishida. See Rickert, *Der Gegenstand der Erkenntnis*, ix, 300. For Rickert (taking over from Windelband and Lotze), beings (or objects) *are* (they *exist*) while values *are valid* (they *hold*). In distinguishing values from beings, Rickert took what *ought* (*sollen*) (to be) rather than what *is* to be the true object of knowledge, and as that which confers objectivity on our knowledge of beings. The one human judgment that can never be false or mistaken is the judgment that there is a value of truth. This value, as the ultimate norm of truth necessary for thought and knowledge, provides the objective form for the transcendent *ought* (*das transzendente Sollen*). It is "transcendent" in that its value is independent of the cognitive subject; it is valid regardless of whether the subject affirmatively recognizes it or not (232, 274). With this sovereignty of the *ought*, Rickert establishes the primacy of the practical over the theoretical, the teleology of values over the cognition of beings. However, for Nishida, even the *ought* becomes a being, as a shadow, in the light of nothing.
130. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1017b13–14, ed. McKeon, 761.
131. In the previous two paragraphs, Nishida has thus delineated for us three kinds or levels of existence and their *bashos*: (1) substances in space, (2) acts in and of consciousness, and (3) *oughts* of intelligible existence.
132. The point is that what serves as the grammatical subject of a judgment does not really refer to any transcendent thing-in-itself but rather *is basho* itself that envelops the judgment. The true substance is not the particular thing but rather the universal *qua basho* determining itself in that judgment.
133. The point here seems to be that being conscious of will in itself cannot be equated with merely being conscious of judgment although it may *also* include the latter. In other words volition is more fundamental than judgment.
134. The reasoning is that if we can find something "ontic"—a being that we can grab a hold of, objectify—then it would also be something that we can recall and repeat. If consciousness were such a thing, it would be repeatable. But instead we find nothing to grab at the bottom of our consciousness. Eternity is rather an abyss from out of and into which time continually unfolds.
135. Augustine, *Confessions* bk. 11, ch.13, §15, bk 12, ch.8, §8. Augustine states here that from out of nothing, God created the "next-to-nothing" of "formless matter."
136. If one aspect of cognition is that it entails a self-emptying to make room for the appearance of its objects but another aspect entails the activity of self-formation vis-à-vis those

objects, then it implies the movement of volition behind those formative acts. Nishida has in mind the sense of will from his own earlier works traceable to the nineteenth-century German philosophers such as Fichte, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and later, the neo-Kantians, etc.

137. That is, as an object of knowledge.
138. *Tathandlung*, also often rendered into English as “deed,” “deed-act,” or “fact-act.” See J. G. Fichte’s *Wissenschaftslehre*, in English: *The Science of Knowledge*, trans. Peter Heath and John Lachs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).
139. This second option refers to Aristotle’s understanding of substance. To contrast Aristotle’s substance or Spinoza’s substance, Nishida proposes the idea of a “transcendent predicate” that is the ultimate predicate, i.e., the predicate of all the predicates that in fact serves as the “true substance.” With it, Nishida attempts to see things from the standpoint of movement or being-in-action rather than from the fixed standpoint of *theōria*. This idea of the transcendent predicate runs parallel with Nishida’s *basho* of absolute nothing.”
140. That is, a thing-in-itself or substance as transcending its qualities or attributes, transcending the universal concepts by which it is predicated; or matter separate from, and indeterminate by, form. This is the classic problem that modern epistemology, including Kant’s, is faced with: bridging the gap between subject and object, form and matter, spontaneity and receptivity, conception and sensation.
141. Nishida here may be referring to the tension that occurs in the form of force felt in the juxtaposition of transcendent and immanent, e.g., in the intensity of sense-reception.
142. The term that is translated as “beingness” is *sonzaisei* in Japanese. With this term, Nishida captures the character of “being” as ideational and intelligible.
143. This could perhaps be alternatively rendered as “objective *basho* immediately implied in given experience itself” although the meaning would then be different. In the context of Nishida’s discussions, it makes more sense to speak of the given experience as implied in *basho* than the other way around.
144. This would imply that in spite of the semblance of rationality belonging to our cognitive activity, the cognizing mind, and its world of objects, is a narrow isle surrounded by a sea of arationality, the arationality of sensation in terms of cognition and the arationality of the will in terms of acts of consciousness. The nonrational will acts upon the nonrational sense-matter to create the order (*kosmos*) of beings—although ultimately the two are indistinguishable in the ultimate realm of the *basho* of nothing. The rationalization of the nonrational is the self-formation, self-determination, of that ultimate *basho*. Nishida’s mentioning of the will here is also reminiscent of Nietzsche’s critique of the self-deception behind rationalism in general. The rationalists have a hard time explaining their motivation behind their actions, which according to their theory must be rational. See e.g., pt. 1, “On the Prejudices of Philosophers,” of Nietzsche’s *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1966).
145. Nishida here is speaking of the process of cognition, such as according to the Kantian scheme, whereby the matter of cognition, unknowable in-itself, is made known through its assimilation and determination of its sense-data in accordance with the immanent forms and concepts of cognition. But what is distinct about Nishida’s thought is that the transcendent nonrational is already in fact nondistinct from the indeterminate *basho* that determines itself immanently.
146. That is, from the standpoint of this deeper *basho qua* nothing, what was a *basho* previously from a shallower standpoint is seen to be instead a thing at work *qua* being, i.e., the subject *qua* consciousness acting upon its objects.
147. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1049b4–1051a, ed. McKeon, 828–31. For Nishida, the indeterminate is the concrete while the determinate is abstract. This is in accord with his earlier concept of pure experience, which while indeterminate and nondualistic is the very

concrete experience serving as the source from which we derive our understanding of reality. Hence the next sentence.

148. All these things, objects as phenomena of consciousness, as products of material force or as acts of consciousness, together with the knowing ego, all disappear as what have merely been objectified from out of that *basho* of true nothing.
149. Most readers will recognize this to be an obvious reference to Kant.
150. In other words, absolute nothing [*zettai mu*] negates the relative nothing that relates to objects of cognition. This is also a development or reference to the middle standpoint of Mahāyāna Buddhist thought.
151. That is, things in their opposition to, and separation from, the cognizing (i.e., rationalizing) subject, as emerging from out of an epistemologically dark and unknowable environing ground, the nonrational, are thought of as hence independent of the rationalizing mind.
152. That is, in conceiving of force we inevitably think of some substantial being behind it even as a *basho*-like force field. The result is that even when the things thus manifest are conceived relative to that background field, we still think of some being behind the force that manifests the phenomena. The contradiction is between, on the one hand, thinking of beings as independent of each other in space and independent vis-à-vis thinking consciousness, i.e., as transcendent objects in a background of nothing, and on the other hand, thinking of things as manifestations of a force field as a substratum.
153. This reminds one of the Mahāyāna middle standpoint of double negation or double transcendence, whereby having negated the substantiality of beings by recognizing their emptiness, one also negates their emptiness so as not to fall into the nihilistic fascination with utter nothing. As a result one comes to recognize the reality of beings amid their emptiness. True nothing, as a nothing dehypostatized or unreified, for Nishida would be this standpoint that allows for such double seeing. It is on the basis of such true nothing that things can *be*.
154. In this absolute transcendence beyond what are implaced in it, *basho* becoming nothing allows for their emergence as beings. *Basho* is then a clearing, or making space, for the emergence of beings.
155. The nothing to which one penetrates in the depths of one's consciousness is thus the (un) ground of being.
156. The world of objects of constitutive categories would be equivalent to the world of physical objects or objects of cognition. The world of objects of reflective categories would be equivalent to the world of acts of consciousness in the *basho* of oppositional nothing. But ultimately even such acts are pure qualities from the standpoint of the *basho* of absolute nothing. What Nishida calls "pure quality" here must be distinguished from what he elsewhere speaks of as the qualities inhering in or belonging to an object, as in his discussion of Aristotle above. "Pure quality" is closer in meaning to what he meant in his earlier work as "pure experience."
157. That is, they differ in whether they take either of the categories as belonging to the surface side or to the hidden side. A reference is here being made to the two sides of the same thing from several sentences back.
158. The reference is to Henri Bergson's idea of *pure duration*. Henri Bergson (1859–1941) calls the relations of succession, which are irreducible to those of extension, "pure duration." He writes that "[p]ure duration is the form which the succession of our conscious states assumes when our ego lets itself *live*, when it refrains from separating its present state from its former states." Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, trans. F. L. Pogson (New York: Macmillan, 1959; London: George Allen and Unwin, 1950 [1910]), 100. If we look into the intimate depths of our experience, we plunge into such a pure duration wherein "the past, always moving on, is swelling unceasingly with a present that is absolutely new. But, at the same time, we feel the spring of our will strained to its utmost limit. We must, by a

- strong recoil of our personality on itself, gather up our past which is slipping away, in order to thrust it, compact and undivided, into a present which it will create by entering.” Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: Barnes and Noble, 2005), 164. In this continual accumulation of duration, new factors irreducible to extension or quantity are always being introduced preventing any state from repeating itself.
159. *Intelligiblen Charakter*. Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (*Critique of Pure Reason*), 1st (A) ed., 539, 2nd (B) ed., 567. The “intelligible character” of the epistemological subject for Kant is the cause of its actions (cognitions). These actions cause appearances (in the constitution of objects) but it itself does not appear and does not stand under the conditions of sensibility. It is the “thing-in-itself” on the side of the knowing subject standing behind the appearances.
160. We see here again the middle standpoint of double negation (double transcendence that amounts to a trans-descendence) inherited from Mahāyāna philosophy, namely the perspective that things or reality in general are empty and yet *are* in their emptiness (i.e., dependent origination). Nishida understands this in terms of what he here calls “image.”
161. “Spirit” or “mind” here also refers to the German *Geist*, translatable into English as either “spirit” or “mind.”
162. This making of being from nothing as the self-mirroring of a mirror would correspond to what Nishida later calls the self-negation of absolute nothing or what in Buddhist terms would be the emptying of emptiness, a Buddhist explanation of *creatio ex nihilo*.
163. Here Nishida reverses the traditional Aristotelian view in regard to substance and the grammatical structure of judgments. Ontologically speaking, the predicate is here given priority.
164. And hence the title of the book in which this essay appears is *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*).
165. This is a reiteration of his older concept of pure experience (*junsui keiken*).
166. This passage in parentheses, indented and printed in smaller print in the original, is Nishida’s own self-commentary appended to the essay for the purpose of self-clarification when the essay was included in the volume *Hatarakumono kara mirumono e*.
167. This is a difficult sentence to comprehend as long as one attempts to understand it while being anchored in what Nishida calls the *basho* of being or of oppositional nothing, that is, as long as one takes “seeing” in its ordinary subjective and homocentric sense. The meaning of “seeing” in Nishida must not be reduced to its subjective and homocentric sense but rather has something to do with the self-determination of *basho* in the formation of nature, world, or things in general. Nishida’s recommendation would be to experience oneself as implaced in the *basho* of absolute nothing, and hence to experience its “seeing without being a seer.” This mode of seeing is the same as nature’s seeing, what in Buddhist terms would be the state of “suchness,” a state nondistinct from the very creative activity of nature. We are reminded here of the ninth frame of the Ten Ox-Herding Pictures of Zen Buddhism, wherein the authentic self is portrayed as the activity of nature such as the blossoming of a tree or the flowing water of a river. That which determines itself to form itself, sees itself in its formations. In turn this will be related a few years later in his later works to our “acting-intuition,” to express the fact that we are not separate from the nature we “see” but rather give expression through our activity to nature’s own “seeing” in its development. On “acting-intuition,” see the second piece of this volume, “Logic and Life.”
168. Henri Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* [*Essay on the Immediate Postulate of Consciousness*] (Genève: Albert Skira, 1945). See ch.2, sec.3, “Le temps homogène et la durée concrète,” 83ff.
169. Nishida’s point is that the real substance to which the grammatical subject of a judgment points is ultimately itself the very non-objectifiable “predicate,” i.e., *basho*, in which the elements of the judgment are subsumed and out of which they are carved.

170. This foreshadows the notion in contemporary physics of space as a vacuum filled with energy rather than being empty.
171. In other words, space like judgment and will are workings that manifest the self-determination of *basho*.
172. In other words, seeing the world as a force field happens in the transition from seeing the world as a collection of substantial objects to seeing the world as the manifestation of acts of consciousness and ultimately as the self-determination of nothing.
173. “Qualities” (*seishitsu*; *seishitsuteki naru mono*) here as belonging to the realm of perception and objects, need to be distinguished from what Nishida spoke of earlier as “pure quality” (*junsui seishitsu*) which he associates with “true nothing.”
174. That is, judgment while pointing to things, transcends them and points to the field of predicates it presupposes. And each determination of *basho* while intending its object transcends it and in turn presupposes a prior *basho* transcending itself as its background.
175. Just as every perception is of a determinate object, every perception entails a background contextual environment which from a broader and deeper standpoint is in fact itself determinate. Every receding level of *basho* is thus determined from the standpoint of its further receding background *basho*. The world can thus be seen as a network of infinite finitizations, indeterminate determinations.
176. The implication is that there is an inherent connection between perception as the determination of the *basho* of being and the determined universal concept of quality. Both pertain to things as objects and the universal serves as their place (*basho*). Force appears as one turns from the *basho* of being to the *basho* of nothing, moving from the standpoint of the universal concept of quality in terms of which things are opposed or different to a deeper standpoint, which sees not merely difference but inner self-contradiction. Nishida seems to be saying here (and in the following sentence) that force emerges in this realm of contradictories.
177. This refers to the distinction between empirical and transcendental knowledge, the difference between the content of knowledge and its transcendental condition. Empirical knowledge is founded on the basis of our transcendental knowledge of the a priori, what Nishida calls here our “seeing” of universals. Nishida is mixing the language of Kantian transcendental epistemology and Husserlian phenomenology.
178. This is reminiscent of the Buddhist standpoint of seeing beings *qua* emptiness in their dependent origination and suchness. Likewise we step beyond the position of universal concepts that constitute beings to see their implacement within and grounding upon the nothing or the *basho* of nothing.
179. This would be a seeing of the productive activity of self-contradiction that generates beings out of nothing, i.e., the contradiction of birth-and-death.
180. Again we see here a three-tiered sequence of deepening but in terms of space: (1) perceptual space in the *basho* of beings; (2) a priori space in the *basho* of consciousness (or oppositional nothing); and (3) true nothing.
181. Hence “activity” (or “working activity,” “being at work”) here is founded upon, what elsewhere is discussed in terms of “mirroring.” The constitution of the world of beings is the self-mirroring of *basho*. This also corresponds to what has also been described as a “seeing without a seer.”
182. That is, true intuition is obtained when we see from the perspective of the absolute nothing underlying everything, rather than from the perspective of being that substantializes each thing. The Buddhist concept of emptiness seems to be implied here.
183. For at the extremity of its ontological fulfillment, the object is empty of substantiality. See n. 182. Perhaps we may read this as Nishida’s Buddhistic transmutation (appropriation) of the Husserlian concept of “fulfillment.”
184. That is, the act by means of a universal concept delimits the horizon wherein objects can appear. It provides the horizon—in Nishidan terms, a determined *basho*—wherein a certain group of beings can appear.

185. This is because, as stated above, complete fulfillment, reaching its limit, leads to the disclosure of the nothing wherein the act is ultimately implaced. Phenomenological seeing is limited to the description of objects within their horizontal range constituted by acts. It does not reach that complete fulfillment that discloses their underlying nothing.
186. Aristotle, *On the Soul (De Anima)* 424a17–21, ed. McKeon, 580.
187. In other words a process rather than an agent, a process involving no determinate substantial being. It is rather an act that emerges in the *basho* of absolute nothing.
188. In his discussion of the Greeks, Nishida is hinting at his own conception of *basho*. His prioritization of formless matter as mirroring and acting, moves in a direction opposite to Plato's understanding of *chōra* as well as Aristotle's understanding of the mind as receptacle. For Nishida takes the formless as self-forming. Ultimately then the *basho* of nothing for Nishida is the "form of forms" that is a self-forming formlessness.
189. Nishida seems to be moving towards his conception of the *self-formation* of the universal or *basho qua* nothing, whereby forming and formed constitute one dynamism.
190. Franz Brentano, *Untersuchungen zur Sinnespsychologie [Investigations on the Psychology of the Senses]* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1979[1907]).
191. That is, to move toward broader, more universal, concepts, and hence deeper "places" or "horizons."
192. The point here is that ontologically and phenomenologically speaking it is not that there are first the elements which then become added to one another to constitute the melody. Rather the whole, i.e., the melody, is there from the start as that *wherein* the parts, the sound-elements, are found to have their place.
193. Aristotle, *On the Soul (De Anima)* 425a27, McKeon, 582. The meaning of "common sense" is different from its contemporary usage. Aristotle means rather a "general sensibility" whereby common sensible qualities are perceived, e.g., in the immediate perception of Cleon's son rather than of an incidental collection of distinct sensible qualities that constitute "Cleon's son."
194. Hence the subject of fulfillment is really the universal itself, that is to say, the broader determines itself as what is narrower in scope, an element implaced within it. In fulfillment, as Nishida stated above, that element's implacement upon nothing—in Buddhistic terms, its emptiness—is realized.
195. Nishida seems to have in mind Husserl's concept of the intentional object as the content of the "intentional act," that is, "the full correlate of consciousness," what is referred to or what one is attentive of in any act of consciousness, whether it is inner or outer perception, memory, expectation, cognition, etc. See Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, trans. J. N. Findlay (London: Routledge, 2001 [1970]), Investigation 5, §19, §21; also Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy First Book*, trans. F. Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Pub., 1998), §36. Husserl distinguishes this from the object as it is intended (*der Gegenstand, so wie er intendiert ist*), which is *how* the object is meant in different ways, depending on the act. For example, the "Emperor of Germany" as the object intended can be intended in different ways, with distinct meanings, such as "the son of the Emperor Frederick III" or as "the grandson of Queen Victoria," etc. *Logical Investigations*, Investigation 5, §21.
196. Nishida's point is that it is not that the limitless destination (as intentional object) is contained *in* the perception but rather that the perception is implaced *in* the limitless destination (as *basho*). What is to be fulfilled, the goal of perception, is the very universal *qua basho* that directs perception in its self-determination. This turn from the intentional object to *basho* corresponds to Nishida's turn from the grammatical subject to the predicate and from the epistemological object to the field of consciousness and its underlying and enviring nothing.
197. The universal is the *basho* that determines itself in or as the perception. See n. 196.

198. *Basho qua* nothing provides the space for things to be just as they are. Nothing *qua* space is the holistic situation environing things extending beyond any singular consciousness focusing upon the intentional object.
199. For intuition is a seeing, from the standpoint of nothing, of the implacement of their inter-relationship (between knowing and willing).
200. For the grammatical subject is the self-determination of the universal as particular. While this determination is expressed in a judgment of knowledge *as* determination, its act entails the activity of the will.
201. Nishida is thinking of the nonduality between seer and seen, subject and object, and hence, ground and grounded, founding act and founded act, i.e., that in intuition *qua* self-seeing, or what he used to call self-awareness, there are no such distinctions.
202. The reference may be to the Buddhist notion of Buddha-nature or original enlightenment (*hongaku*), as also the “great mirror wisdom.” When one is awakened to it, one experiences it as a transparent illuminating light. What we are witnessing in this paragraph seems to be a grounding of the phenomenological concept of horizon upon Nishida’s notion of the self-determining, self-mirroring *basho* of nothing.
203. Nishida has in mind here the image of mirrors reflecting each other, a metaphorical image commonly used in Buddhism, as in Indra’s net in the *Avata Sūtra*. Such mirrors then in phenomenological terms would be horizons of awareness through which the self-determination of the *basho* of nothing takes shape.
204. See Bergson, *Creative Evolution*: “[S]uccession is an undeniable fact . . . It coincides with . . . a certain portion of my own duration . . . It is no longer something *thought*, it is something *lived*” (8). And: “We do not *think* real time. But we *live* it, because life transcends the intellect” (38).
205. Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, I. Buch* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1913) or *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy First Book*, sec. 27.
206. The conceptual category constitutes the horizon or domain for perception.
207. Here Nishida is thinking of *basho* as “that which becomes predicate and not the (grammatical) subject.” But “predicate” in this sense cannot be confined to the grammatical predicate of a judgment but rather means the field of possible predicates, *basho* as encompassing possible judgments that would constitute the world of objects of cognition.
208. That is, “substance,” in the sense of what underlies.
209. In other words, the two contrary directions imply one another: implacement of the grammatical subject in the predicate, the particular in the universal, being in nothing, also simultaneously means the actualization of the predicative into the grammatical subject, the subsumption of the universal into the particular, the self-determination (i.e., self-negation) of nothing into being.
210. For example, in the syllogism “All humans are mortal; Socrates is human; Therefore, Socrates is mortal,” the middle term mediating the universal (“mortality”) with the particular (“Socrates”) would be “human being,” which itself is a universal concept.
211. *Begriff*. For example see Hegel’s *Phenomenology* where it says: “Diese einfache Unendlichkeit, oder der absolute Begriff ist das einfache Wesen des Lebens, die Seele der Welt, das allgemeine Blut zu nennen, welches allgegenwärtig durch keinen Unterschied getrübt noch unterbrochen wird, das vielmehr selbst alle Unterschiede ist, so wie ihr Aufgehoben-sein.” (“This simple infinity, or the absolute concept, may be called the simple essence of life, the soul of the world, the universal blood, whose omnipresence is neither disturbed nor interrupted by any difference, but rather is itself every difference as well as their being-sublated.”) G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1952), 125; Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 100; and Hegel, trans. J. B. Baillie, *The Phenomenology of Mind* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1949), 208. The translation given here is revised.

212. Nishida has in mind here the “highest universal” to be the *basho* that envelops contradictions such as being and nothing, affirmation and negation, and in doing so transcends the logical while taking logical contradiction as the content of its seeing. He equates this with the standpoint of the will as deeper than cognition. This universal, in transcending all particular or determined conceptual contents, would be akin to “nothing,” as something beyond concepts, something that mirrors logical contradiction, to see it by encompassing it. Nishida here is taking the will to be such a “universal,” that is deeper and broader in standpoint than the *cogito*.
213. Or: two poles. So from different ends in the syllogism, “All humans are mortal; Socrates is human; Therefore, Socrates is mortal,” the mediating term “human” would include and connect in its significance both its particular, “Socrates,” and its universal, “mortality” (see n. 210).
214. We go from universal to particular in judgments in the sense that the universal contains the particular it subsumes; and we go from particular to universal in willing in the sense that the will has subsumed the universal into the particular. As one can tell from the next sentence, Nishida is here equating the former with deduction (whereby the particular is logically deduced from the universal) and the latter with induction (whereby the universal is induced from out of the particular).
215. In other words, this deeper universal *qua* ground of logical judgments must itself be allogical. As stated in the previous paragraph, that universal as what “sees” contradiction is the will.
216. That is, in thinking of it, we are already objectifying it.
217. As the standpoint of a non-objectifying act, not involving any *ego cogito*, it would be the standpoint of what Nishida elsewhere calls “pure act,” or of “seeing without a seer.”
218. In other words, even the substance thought to transcend its appearance as the thing-in-itself working behind its appearance, when seen from the standpoint of the *basho* of nothing is still a part of the continuity of volition.
219. It is not that matter, transcending form, moves and develops. Rather it is the most universal form enveloping everything else as “the One” (of the neoplatonists) that acts. Here prime matter is infinitesimal in that it is almost nothing.
220. For Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologica* and his *Summa Contra Gentiles*, the proper object of the will is the good and the will is really the inclination toward the good insofar as it is apprehended by the understanding. See his *Summa Theologica*, trans. Thomas Gilby (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964; London: R. and T. Washbourne, Ltd., 1914); *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Notre Dame, IN: Christian Classics, 1981); and his *Summa Contra Gentiles* (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, Ltd., 1924). He writes, “if the will be offered an object universally good and good from every point of view, then it will tend to it of necessity, that is, if it wills anything at all.” *Summa Theologica*, first part of the second part, Question 10: Of the Manner in Which the Will is Moved/Mode of Volition, Art. 2; trans., Gilby, 17:89; trans., Fathers, 2:635. Hence God necessarily wills Godself and God’s own being as the end of all inasmuch as he knows that he is the highest good. And as this good is the object of volition for all beings, all creatures are inclined toward the good: “the will of one who sees God’s essence necessarily clings to God, because then we cannot help willing to be happy.” *Summa Theologica*, Treatise on Man, Question 82: Will, Art. 2.
221. See Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones super libros metaphysicorum Aristotelis* bk. 9, Question 15, [A Treatise on Potency and Act: Questions on the Metaphysics of Aristotle Book 9], trans. Allan Wolter (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 2000), 360–407. It is not the case for Duns Scotus that the will necessarily follows what the intellect perceives as good. Rather the will *freely* loves the infinite good without the aid of habituation. Duns Scotus *Philosophical Writings*, ed. Allan Wolter, 71 (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons,

- 1962). Even in the case of God, who apprehends his own essence as the prime good, God retains the freedom of will. It is not that God wills certain things because they are good but rather these things are good because God wills them. The goodness of things depends on God's determination and not the other way around. In the case of human beings, Scotus separates the will's freedom from any inclination toward ends, such that the will is capable of acting contrary to them. For example, the will can act contrary to one's desires. See Allan B. Wolter, trans., *Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1997 [1986]), 153ff. The will in itself is not bound a priori to any particular or final good. However, this issue of freedom and necessity of the will in Scotus has been debated, and there are different interpretations set forth by different scholars.
222. Hegel, *Encyclopedia* §244. See *Hegel's Logic Being Part One of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences (1830)*, trans. J. N. Findlay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 296.
223. In other words, ultimately they are the same but regarded in its different aspects.
224. I.e., destruction through abstraction. See Emil Lask, *Zur System der Philosophie in Gesammelte Schriften* III. Band (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1924). For Lask, the theoretical act of judging and cognition is set in motion by the will to dominate and control the world of sensible beings. But this will itself is an expression of life (*Leben*), or lived experience (*Erleben*), which becomes actualized in different ways and which ordinarily is pretheoretical and prejudicative. For Lask, it is in this region of "life," the practical-personal region, that value (*Wert*) is *already* attached to our comportments, relations, experiencing, acting. (232) The theorizing or judging act on the other hand is life momentarily pausing, repressing itself, breaking up that experientially given prejudicative unity of the oppositionless object (the pre-dichotomized unity of value plus being). The "nonimmediate" is thus forced out of lived experience even while this very unfolding occurs through immediate lived experience itself! (219).
225. That is, the real substance of the object of a judgment is the predicate *qua* universal concept determining itself.
226. Thus the progression from perception to judgment to volition is somewhat analogous to the progression from determined being to negative or oppositional nothing to absolute nothing, or from the *basho* of beings to the *basho* of relative nothing to the *basho* of absolute nothing.
227. This would be the objectification of the universal concept, enabling the viewing of its act *qua* object (*noema*) determined by it (the acting universal).
228. That is, objects as subjects of judgments determined in respect to each other, in differentiation from each other, hence as "beings" rather than "nothing."
229. The term, *enzukerareta* here translated as "dependent upon," is in reference to the Buddhist notion of "dependent origination" (*engi, pratītya-samutpāda*). The point here is not that it is independent (hence, "dependent on nothing") but rather emerges out of the *basho* of nothing (hence, "dependent on nothing" in that sense).
230. The immanent object is a *basho* of being that is itself implaced in a *basho* of nothing and as such is the latter's determination relative to the *basho* of oppositional nothing. In that sense the *basho* of nothing itself would be deeper, broader, and transcendent in relation to it.
231. That is to say contradictory developments or alterations entail *basho* allowing for such movement and contradiction, rather than mere substantial thingliness. Hence Nishida's conception of reality as self-contradictory is inherently a nonsubstantialistic and dynamic way of viewing reality, and presupposes the placiality of *basho*.
232. In other words, it would be an inadequate objectification of that which cannot be objectified.
233. Nishida is referring to the very beginning of Hegel's system of logic in his *Science of Logic (Wissenschaft der Logik)*.

234. The point is that the predicate expresses what is ontologically more fundamental than the mere grammatical subject standing alone, for it designates a field of contradictory possibilities from out of which the self-identical can be delimited and be employed as the subject of a judgment.
235. The point is that the ground or root of consciousness cannot be objectified. As that which cannot be made into a grammatical subject of judgment, it is what Nishida has been calling the “predicate,” as the determining field of the object. It is the self-determining *basho* presupposed by any object of cognition or subject of judgment.
236. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, bk. 12, 1069a30–b20, ed. McKeon, 872. For Aristotle, that would be matter.
237. Nishida is here alluding to two levels of *basho*: changing objects are seen on the basis of a determined *basho*, which is that of being, and pure acts are seen on the basis of the field of consciousness-in-general, which takes us from the *basho* of oppositional nothing to the *basho* of absolute (or: true) nothing. This is not an equation of consciousness-in-general with the *basho* of absolute nothing. Rather consciousness-in-general is the turning point or entrance into that final *basho*. This is what Nishida means by “infinitesimal,” i.e., that it is almost nothing, zero.
238. Forms or ideas in their opposition to matter or sensation in the constitution of cognition hence are still abstractions from the standpoint of the deeper nothing whereupon they are mirrored.
239. This would be the *basho* that envelops both universal and particular, concept and sense-matter, epistemological subject and its object.
240. In other words, it is the most concrete situational domain of reality-cum-experience and can be equated with what Nishida in *An Inquiry into the Good* called “pure experience.”
241. I.e., what Nishida elsewhere calls the transcendent predicate or the *basho* of absolute or true nothing.
242. This would be the world of meanings, values, and ideals, the standpoint of the will, in its lived experience in the *basho* of true nothing.
243. That is, the will moves to actualize these meanings.
244. So the will acts not from the standpoint of determined beings, which are static objects of cognition determined by abstract concepts, but rather from the deeper *basho* of nothing.
245. Act and will, which play the role of *noesis* in relation to the lower, shallower levels of *basho*, here from the standpoint of the *basho* of nothing, are themselves objectified (as *noema*), mirrored and seen. That which takes the noetic role behind them, as nothing, can however no longer be objectified as *noema*, so that we have here no longer any separation between act and actor, function and subject; their distinction is negated in the clarity of the mirror that is nothing (imageless).
246. A reference may be detected here to Plato’s understanding of the physical realm as the fleeing image of eternity and to his metaphor of the cave wherein shadows projected upon the cave wall are mistaken for reality itself. The difference of Nishida’s philosophy of a self-mirroring *basho* must be maintained from Plato’s metaphysical and hierarchical dualism.
247. This passage in parentheses was originally indented and in small type in the original Japanese edition and serves as a short afterword or self-commentary appended to the section. The two essays Nishida refers the reader to, “In Response to Dr. Sōda” (*Sōda hakushi ni kotau*) and “That which Knows” (*Shirumono*), are the following two essays appearing in the same collection of essays constituting the book *Hataraku mono kara miru mono e* (*From the Acting to the Seeing*) wherein the present essay appears. The response is to Sōda Kiichirō’s article, *Nishidatetsugaku ni tsuite—Nishidahakushi no oshie o kou* [“Concerning Nishida Philosophy: Questioning the Teachings of Dr. Nishida”], *Tetsugaku kenkyū* 127 (Oct. 1926). In the article, Sōda discusses what he viewed to be weak points in Nishida’s philosophy of *basho*.

248. Nishida may have in mind here Kant's question as to the root of the faculties.
249. That is, a universal common to the two.
250. That is, an act of judgment is a completion or accomplishment of a temporalization or manifestation in time of the logical subsumptive relationship.
251. For the particular that is the grammatical subject, as implied within the universal, is in fact the latter's self-determination. Hence the real grammatical subject is not an independent transcendent substance or object but rather the predicate *qua* self-determining universal.
252. The "universal" here then signifies our concrete lived state or experience from out of which judgment focuses upon the specific object *qua* grammatical subject.
253. Here again Nishida is speaking of a deepening in standpoint or context as one moves from the *basho* of beings wherein beings are mutually distinct from one another to the *basho* of nothing wherein things are united and identical in their contradictory identity by virtue of the underlying and underlining nothingness (or nonsubstantiality) that constitutes their being.
254. The point of this remark is that the predicate here, at its "extremity" (or "extreme limit"), is no longer objectifiable, it is a predicate that cannot become the subject of a judgment. Hence while presupposing it, we can not see it, it is the nothing enveloping all judgments we make about other things.
255. Nishida's point here seems to be that while in itself unobjectifiable as a subject of judgment, the predicate is the subject of its self-determination, self-objectification, into the substance that allegedly from the Aristotelian standpoint becomes the grammatical subject but not a predicate.
256. "Two" here can be taken to mean the grammatical subject and predicate as well as the epistemological subject and object—for grammatical subject corresponds to the epistemological object, and the predicate signifies the epistemological subject with its transcendental field of determinants.
257. That is, time allows for transformations amongst logical opposites, e.g., the genesis of a being out of nothing and the annihilation of a being into nothing.
258. Aristotle states: "Parmenides . . . says that the whole is infinite [indeterminate]. . . . [It] is in fact the matter of the completeness which belongs to volume, and what is potentially a whole, though not in the full sense. . . . It is a whole and limited; . . . in virtue of what is other than it. It does not contain, but, in so far as it is infinite [indeterminate], is contained. Consequently, also, it is unknowable, *qua* infinite [indeterminate]; for the matter has no form. . . . But it is absurd and impossible to suppose that the unknowable and indeterminate should contain and determine." Aristotle, *Physics*, bk. 3, chap. 6, 207a15–32, ed. McKeon, 267.
259. In Aristotle's philosophy, this means the complete realization of a thing's essence, its "actuality." See e.g., Aristotle, *De Anima (On the Soul)* 412a, ed. McKeon, 554–55.
260. In other words, the final place of all conceptual universals, must itself be nonconceptual as their *basho*.
261. Here the knower (*qua* field of consciousness that provides the conceptual categories for knowing) corresponds to the predicate-plane and the known corresponds to the grammatical subject (which points to the object of knowledge). The two poles must be in contact and ultimately be in merger within what is called here the "true universal," i.e., *basho*. One may wonder in what sense this entails a contradictory relation. Certainly the grammatical subject and the predicate or particular and universal or knower and known may be regarded as opposites but not necessarily contradictories in the logical sense. Nishida however has in mind here on the one pole, the "true individual" to which all grammatical subjects ultimately point to and that "becomes grammatical subject but *not* predicate"; and on the other pole, the "true universal" to which all predicates ultimately point to and

- that “becomes predicate but *not* grammatical subject.” As mutually exclusive when conceived in terms of objects (i.e., according to the Aristotelian logic of objectification) they are contradictories.
262. The point of the last few lines seems to be that contradictory identity itself is not objectifiable as a subject of judgment. Hence it refers to the predicate, the predicate-plane *qua basho* whereupon contradictories unite.
263. The point seems to be that while the grammatical subject (i.e., the object of knowledge) cannot simultaneously possess contradictory characteristics and must be either one or the other of them, the predicate-plane as a *basho* contains the contradictories. On this standpoint of *basho* one sees or is aware of contradictoriness. So it is only on the basis of this predicate-plane that we can even speak of contradictions. Nishida is also here referring back to what he mentioned at the very beginning of this essay in regard to the distinction between *is* and *is not* and also his discussion a little later of Lask’s own distinction between “getting it (right)” (*Treffen*) and “not getting it” (*Nichttreffen*). Such primal distinctions between logical contradictories—affirmation and negation, yes and no, true and false, being and nothing, etc.—are possible only on the basis of a medium that encompasses their unity. Absolute nothing for Nishida is such an enveloping *basho* that is the contradictory identity of such opposites.
264. That is, while objectification prevents us from seeing the object’s contradictory unity, no object of knowledge (or grammatical subject of judgment) can escape that contradictory relationship it assumes in the predicate-plane. For it is an object only in its distinction from its contradictory. The identity of what *is* requires difference, but difference for Nishida specifically entails the contradictory relationship with that which it *is not*. Its predication constituting *what the object is* also implies *what it is not*.
265. Consciousness for Nishida is thus a field of possible predicates that can be predicated of an object of knowledge in the establishment of a judgment about it. It is a field for the act of predication. Judgment as such is a determination of that predicate field and the self-particularization of the universal *qua* that field of predicates into the grammatical subject.
266. It is secondary or derivative in relation to the self-determination of the predicate-plane (the universal *qua basho*).
267. The “predicating universal” (*jutsugoteki ippansha*) is a key term here. It expresses Nishida’s unique understanding of the universal as the place (*basho*) wherein its exemplars that become grammatical subjects are implied. This universal or place expresses itself in the grammatical subject by means of its relationship as the determining predicate to that grammatical subject.
268. A more literal translation would read “X is what I am conscious of” since *ishiki* means “conscious” or “consciousness.”
269. Nishida is pointing out the limitation of self-objectification. The *basho*-like nature of the self, its predicate-nature as a field of determining predicates, cannot adequately be objectified, that is, made into a grammatical subject. And hence, the self cannot truly know itself as an object of cognition. Even if it becomes objectified by a reflecting consciousness, opaqueness or translucency still remains.
270. That is, in the empirical sciences, there is a gap between the particulars experienced in the world and the universal concepts utilized to conceive them, which are never adequately actualized in those sensible particulars. But in math there is no such gap between universal and particular because its material of research, numbers, are in themselves ideal and hence universal.
271. That is, the predicate *qua* quality determines itself into the grammatical subject as an individual object of knowledge.
272. The point is that the predicate-plane *qua basho*, presupposed by any objectification, any knowledge, itself cannot be known as object. Its presupposition must be an intuition

rather than a perceptual or judgmental (judicative) knowledge that would divide it into subject and object, predicate and subject.

273. Nishida may have in mind William James's concept of "fringe" consciousness existing as a "vague halo" on the periphery of consciousness, surrounding its flowing continuum, and which James distinguishes from the "focal," "substantive," or "nuclear" consciousness that involves clear representation with thoughts. On the fringe, James states: "Every definite image in the mind is steeped and dyed in the free water that flows round it. With it goes the sense of its relations, near and remote, the dying echo of whence it came to us, the dawning sense of whither it is to lead. The significance, the value, of the image is all in this halo or penumbra that surrounds and escorts it,—or rather that is fused into one with it and has become bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh. . . . *Let us call the consciousness of this halo of relations around the image by the name of 'psychic overtone' or 'fringe.'*" William James, *Psychology: The Briefer Course* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985 [1961]), 32–33. Another definition of "fringe" is "the influence of a faint brain-process upon our thought as it makes it aware of relations and objects but dimly perceived." William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 249. What Nishida has in mind however is certainly not a "brain-process."
274. I.e., as transcending the epistemological subject.
275. The universal then shapes or delimits the "horizon" of intuition, giving birth to meaning.
276. That would be a typical Kantian dualistic standpoint that separates the intuited object as transcendent from the constitutive acts of consciousness as immanent.
277. Namely, the transcendent object or Kantian "thing-in-itself" lying beyond its appearance for cognition.
278. Nishida has in mind here the perspectival shift that moves from the standpoint of judgment that views reality in terms of individual objects (of knowledge) that are also grammatical subjects, to the standpoint of the will in the predicate-plane, viewing reality in terms of the will's activity or flow that establishes the appearance of things as objects. But while the objects themselves bear the appearance of substantiality, volition, the will's act, that establishes them indicates their nonsubstantiality.
279. The point seems to be that the will is behind the establishment of judgments via the self-determination of the predicate-plane, the plane of predicates, thus determining its object into a grammatical subject of judgment. So in that sense volitional activity is the predicate's self-determination that establishes the object *qua* grammatical subject.
280. The "self-identical" here would mean the object *qua* grammatical subject, and what transcends it would be the predicate-plane whose self-determining activity is the working activity of the will.
281. The identity of an object is constituted in relation to its environing context of meanings. It is the oppositional object arising in the *basho* of oppositional nothing. The oppositionless object on the other hand, as an implicit context prior to explicit bifurcation, provides the horizon for such constitution of oppositional objects. It is what appears immediately in the *basho* of absolute nothing.
282. This paragraph thus shows Nishida's identification of the transcendent predicate with the volitional activity in the logical structure of *basho*. That is, the transcendent predicate expresses itself in the form-constituting acts of the will and consequently in the various acts of consciousness.
283. This overlap would seem to encompass an endless series of particulars within universals, with the transcendent object that becomes the grammatical subject but not the predicate at the extreme pole of one end (the direction of particulars); and the ultimate *basho* of nothing that serves as the field of predicates but can never be objectified and hence can never become the grammatical subject at the extreme pole of the other end (the direction of universals).

284. This reiterates the point that was being made in the previous paragraph, that the volitional aspect of consciousness is identical to the predicate-plane. The predicate's determination of the grammatical subject, the universal's self-determination, is the working activity of the will.
285. That is, from the perspective of judgment, the self-identical constituted through the inclusion of environing contextual meanings, is now seen as a separate individual body, an object that can serve as the grammatical subject of a judgment.
286. Within the endless overlap between universals and particulars taking place within the *basho* of nothing, the *noematic* distinctions between universal and particular, predicate and grammatical subject, epistemological subject and object, meaning and object, oppositionless object and oppositional object, etc., i.e., the elements in relations, hence collapse and disappear in a *noetic* sea.
287. This relation between the planes or levels of *basho* is such that as the grammatical subject is absorbed into the universal predicate, the universal or predicate-plane is determining itself to constitute the particular *qua* grammatical subject. This asymmetrical reciprocity is not the simple identity of grammatical subject and predicate. Rather, as stated earlier in this essay, the copula connecting them signifies the relation of implacement, and this in turn means the self-determination of the universal predicate into the particular and the absorption of the particular grammatical subject into the universal.
288. In his later works, this idea becomes developed in terms of the self-negation of the absolute nothing as the place or space wherein correlative beings emerge. The point is that the universal's self-determination is also its self-negation that provides a clearing or room for the emergence of individual objects that can be grammatical subjects. The universal as such is a nothing in relation to the beings implaced within it.
289. In terms of grammatology, this would be what Nishida calls throughout the essay "the predicate that cannot become a [grammatical] subject."
290. This is Nishida's answer to neo-Kantian hylomorphism. Lask's oppositionless object of precognitive lived experience for Nishida is not transcendent to the whole systematic structure of *basho*. For *basho* encompasses both the epistemological subject and the object. Since consciousness is a mirror image of that *basho*, it can reach its object on the basis of this self-deepening. The transcendence of consciousness toward the oppositionless object is then trans-descendence into one's already lived holistic experience. Hence the transcendent is simultaneously immanent to the system of *basho*.
291. I.e., the "transcendent object" or "thing-in-itself"
292. In this sense one might conceive of the indeterminate lying beyond and behind the cognitive process of determination on both ends, the "thing-in-itself" transcendent to cognition on the one hand and transcendental subjectivity that renders matter with form to constitute the cognitive object on the other hand to be one. Such is the implication of Nishida's understanding of *basho* in his attempt to overcome the hylomorphic dualism of the neo-Kantians. And yet it would be a mistake to assume this to be a substantial oneness, which would again conceive it in terms of a grammatical subject. Rather it is a oneness in tension, a dynamic nonduality. This may also be taken as Nishida's modern rendition of how "suchness" in terms of Buddhism becomes disclosed in thing-events.
293. See Hegel's *Science of Logic (Wissenschaft der Logik)*: "Das reine Sein und das reine Nichts ist also dasselbe. . . . Aber ebensovsehr ist die Wahrheit nicht ihre Ununterschiedenheit, sondern daß sie nicht dasselbe, daß sie absolute unterschieden, aber ebenso ungetrennt und untrennbar sind und unmittelbar jedes in seinem Gegenteil verschwindest. Ihre Wahrheit ist also diese Bewegung des unmittelbaren Verschwindens des einen in dem anderen: das Werden." G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke 5: Wissenschaft der Logik I: Erster Teil Die objektive Logik Erstes Buch* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1969), 83. The English translation is as follows: "Pure being and pure nothing are, therefore, the same. . . . But it is equally true that the truth is not

their nondistinction, but that *they are not the same* and that they are *absolutely distinct*, and yet that they are unseparated and inseparable and that *each immediately disappears into its opposite*. Their truth is thus this *movement* of the immediate vanishing/changing of the one into the other: *becoming*.” G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books/Prometheus Books, 1969), 82–83. (The translation has been slightly modified.)

294. Nishida has in mind here the “seeing” of contradiction that implies the deeper field or *basho* wherein contradictories are implaced. The very awareness of contradiction requires this *basho* wherein contradictories can be related. This *basho* as enveloping contradictories entails a unity of contradiction or, what he comes to call in later works, a contradictory identity. And since this involves the contradictory unity between being and non-being or *is* and *is-not*, affirmation and negation, it can neither be said to *be* or *not be*. Although Nishida mentions Hegel here, his contradictory identity is one of *basho* or “place” as opposed to Hegel’s *Begriff* or *Idee*.
295. I.e., an idea or concept, a universal as object.
296. For the predicate-universal literally becoming the particular, or becoming regarded as the grammatical subject, entails its self-determination that is the working activity of *basho qua* will (but not to be reduced to volitional consciousness).
297. That is, by shifting its focus from the determination of the grammatical subject to the predicate’s own self-determination.
298. Nishida is here talking about the implicit sort of knowledge that must always be presupposed for the knowledge of an object. This simple understanding of physicality would be one such implicit and presupposed form of knowledge. And the more universally implicit, the more a priori and broader the universal concept determining its “horizon.”
299. The picture Nishida is drawing for us here is of an image of circles within circles with greater clarity and determination toward the center and less determination toward the periphery. Each broader circle transcends the smaller circle implaced within it. Moving from the center to the periphery is to transcend from the grammatical subject to the predicate-plane, moving from the perceived object to the thought object in the plane of consciousness, and eventually the intuition of the whole beyond consciousness. The whole of this circle of infinite, i.e., indeterminate, magnitude mirrors itself within itself with greater determination and precision towards the center. Its center then is its self-objectification.
300. In other words that consciousness or the subject of cognition can be objectified and made into a grammatical subject of a judgment.
301. That is, the object with which the epistemological subject is faced, implying the thing-in-itself ontologically independent of the subject’s constitutive act. When consciousness itself is objectified (or: noematized) *qua* epistemological subject (the grammatical subject of “I think . . . X”), it is simply one thing opposed by another thing as its object.
302. Aesthetic intuition then for Nishida is a mode of relationship deeper than the mere cognition of an object, for it breaks through the inevitable gap in the epistemological dichotomy between subject and object.
303. In that sense the *basho* of nothing is the source of the creativity of consciousness. Nishida here is pointing to the bi-directionality in the relationship between the *basho* of true nothing and the *basho* of oppositional nothing. In one direction, the object with which cognizing consciousness is confronted is absorbed into the “oppositionless object,” its lived experience as intuited beyond, and prior to, its cognitive structure. In the other direction, the object as what has emerged from out of that intuition is now seen as expressing the endless workings of *basho*.
304. This is Nishida’s response to the allegedly unbridgeable gap implied in the hylomorphic subject-object dualism of Kantian and neo-Kantian epistemology.

305. The broader and deeper *basho* of intuition *qua basho* of true nothing hence projects its own mirroring image onto the more confined and determined *basho* of cognitive consciousness, the *basho* of oppositional nothing. What was transcendent from the perspective of cognitive consciousness then is immanent from the perspective of intuition.
306. In other words a dualistic epistemology that dichotomizes reality into subject and object, associating universal concepts with the former and particulars with the latter, would fail to recognize the workings of *basho* that connects the two by environing and enveloping them. And the exclusionary standpoint of dualism would fail to recognize the unity between any sort of opposite, not only the opposition between subject and object or universal and particular. In this sentence the plane of consciousness to which the universal concept belongs corresponds to what Nishida has been calling the predicate-plane, and the plane of objects to which the particular belongs corresponds to the grammatical subject-plane. In the system of *bashos*, the latter is implaced in the former.
307. In other words, the object now becomes seen as an expression of the very source of judgment about it, *basho*, wherein consciousness is undergoing ongoing change.
308. This is Nishida's response to the dualism of modern epistemology and its difficulty in explaining the subject–object relationship. But as shown in the sentence previous to this one, his response is not a mere monism. For if everything were a simple one, there would be no judgment whereby the grammatical subject and predicate are distinct. Rather than dualism or monism, Nishida opts for a dynamic dialectic of nondualism.
309. By this “undetermined thing,” Nishida has in mind the ultimate *basho* that serves as the final “predicate” for all other predicates determined in their implacements within it. But he also has in mind here the nondistinction between the transcendent object *qua* Aristotelian substance and the transcendent predicate *qua basho*.
310. I.e., the indeterminable.
311. Thus there is that which cannot be determined on both ends, that is, the individual that escapes reduction by a universal concept and the ultimate *basho* of nothing that escapes reduction to any concept.
312. This refers to the correspondence between the object's (grammatical subject's) realization of its predicative determinations, *and* the self-determination of *basho* via the act of making a judgment about that object. What we have here then is in fact a three-way correspondence between the activities of object (grammatical subject), epistemological subject (consciousness, predicate), and *basho* as what embraces both epistemological subject and object, grammatical predicate and subject, in their deep ground.
313. That is, the contradiction inherent to all subsumptive judgments as the unity of two mutually exclusive elements, the grammatical subject that cannot become a predicate and the predicate-field that cannot become the grammatical subject.
314. The portion of the sentence here translated as “intuition of the self” (*jikojishin o chakkan-suru mono*) could very well be rendered instead as “that which intuit itself.” The former meaning however seems to make more sense.
315. We can say that this refers to the experience of emptiness in the Buddhist significance. That is, to arrive at the mutual extremities of the two poles would mean the realization of their lack of substantiality, their de-substantialization, whereby they are united in spite of their mutual exclusion, their contradictoriness. As not only the particular (i.e., grammatical subject) but the universal (i.e., predicate) is de-substantialized as empty in their contradictory unity, as conceptually and objectively irreducible, in a double transcendence that is a double negation, the particular (grammatical subject) becomes seen as truly what it is, empty and yet real. Hence within the “predicate that cannot become a grammatical subject,” i.e., the non-objectifiable *basho*, the “grammatical subject that cannot become a predicate,” i.e., the particular individual, *is* what it is. It remains so in its implacement within the holistic contextual situation as precognitively lived, its “place,” *basho*. This is

Nishida's rendering, in modern philosophical terminology, of the middle standpoint of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

ESSAY 2

1. This essay (*Ronri to seimei*) first appeared in the journal *Shisō* (*Thought*) serially in 1936 in nos. 170 (July), 171 (Aug.), and 172 (Sept.). It was then inserted in a collection of essays, *Tetsugaku ronbunshū dai ni* (*Philosophical Essays*, vol. 2) published by Iwanami in 1937.
2. Throughout this essay, we will use “historical reality” to translate *rekishiteki jitsuzai*. “Reality” will be used to translate *jitsuzai*, which combines the ideographs *jitsu* for “reality/real” and *zai*, meaning “country,” “outskirts,” “suburbs,” etc. The ideograph *zai* brings in the spatial connotation of the “environment” or “surroundings.” The two ideographs used together to mean “real being/existence,” thus has the ontological connotation of “reality in relation to its environment” or “spatial existence,” “being in space.” This is to be distinguished from a related term *genjitsu*, which will be translated as “actual” or “actuality.”
3. Διάνοια is Greek for thought. Nishida is referring to a passage from Plato's *Sophist*, starting at line 263e where the Visitor asks Theaetetus, “Aren't thought and speech the same, except that what we call thought is speech that occurs without the voice, inside the soul in conversation with itself?” A few lines down (264af), the Visitor calls this a “silent thought” and states that “thinking appeared to be the soul's conversation with itself.” See Cooper, *Plato: Complete Works*, 287 and 288. And in Plato's *Theaetetus* as well, Socrates regards thinking to be the soul's discussion of a certain topic with itself. The resulting judgment then is “a statement which is not addressed to another person or spoken aloud, but silently addressed to oneself” (190a). Cooper, *Plato*, 210.
4. διαλεκτική, the method of question-and-answer.
5. See Plato, *The Sophist*, 262e–263b, in Cooper, *Plato*, 302–3.
6. *Logos* is commonly understood to mean language or rationality (λόγος) and derives from the Greek verb *legein*, which means “to say.” In these few sentences Nishida seems to have in mind two opposing senses of *logos*. The Greek term *logos* came to mean reason or the expression of reason such as discourse, word, formula, definition, principle, description, theory, explanation, etc. And yet in ancient Greek thought, as with the pre-Socratics, *logos* in its more primordial sense was of the ordering or structuring of the world that makes things the way they are. Heraclitus (ca.540–ca.480 BCE) was the first to make philosophical use of this term, regarding it as the ordering or structuring of the cosmos to which human rational discourse and human reasoning is linked. It is with modern dualistic epistemology that we see the separation of *logos*, reduced to reason, from what it is purported to “represent.”
7. “Subjective” here translates *shukanteki*, which is the adjectival form of *shukan*, meaning the epistemological subject.
8. Throughout this piece we will be translating *tōitsu* as unity or unification.
9. “Logic of objectification” translated *taishō ronri*, lit., “object-logic.” “Object” (*taishō*) here connotes an object of perception, judgment, intention, cognition, or any mental activity, depending on the context. For the most part in this text, Nishida means the object of perception or cognition. So *taishō ronri* would be the logic dealing with such objects (of perception, etc.) in the subject–object epistemological structure. In grammatical terms it corresponds with what Nishida elsewhere calls “the logic of the [grammatical] subject.”
10. “Active” here translates *hataraku*, but we also need to keep in mind the sense of “work” since Nishida appears to be referring to the German *wirken* and *Wirklichkeit* with its two senses of working and actuality. The sense of *hataraku* in this piece is inclusive of the meanings of labor, productive activity, and proper functioning. The sense shifts depending on the context, but these three senses in fact mutually imply one another in this piece. The point of this sentence is that the self from the standpoint of its working-activity (*hataraki*)

cannot be objectified, cannot be reduced to the grammatical subject of a proposition. This retains the sense of his earlier focus upon the “predicate” in his “*Basho*” essay.

11. That is, the world of objects of perception or of judgment.
12. *Jiko o tan ni kyakkanteki ni taishōka suru.*
13. *Kyakkanteki* meaning “objective” is translated as “epistemological.” And *taishōka* is translated as “objectification,” being brought out into confrontation with the epistemological subject (i.e., “the intellectual self”). The former term introduces an explicitly epistemological element. Thus the sense connoted by the combination of these terms would be “epistemological objectification,” that is, making something (in this case, the self) into an object of cognition that is objectively verifiable.
14. “Existence” will be used to translate *sonzai*, which combines the ideographs *son* for “being/existence,” and *zai* meaning “country,” “outskirts,” “suburbs,” etc., thus adding the sense of “existence in space.” The connection between non-objectifiability and contradictoriness becomes more evident later in the essay. In short, the principle of noncontradiction applies only to objects, i.e., grammatical subjects, and is confined to the logic of objectification.
15. Nishida’s conception of “determination without determiner” refers to the process of determination that is without any extrinsic cause determinable as an object. It is rather a *self*-determination of the undetermined. This will be discussed in terms of the determination of the world into what exists within it or the universal into the particular or nothing into being. This obviously refers to what was discussed in the earlier “*Basho*” essay in terms of *basho* or transcendent predicate or true nothing.
16. Nishida conceives the universal as a field or place (*basho*) within which particular beings appear as its determinations. *Vis-à-vis* these determinate particular beings, the universal is undetermined, hence nothing.
17. *Soku* will usually be translated as “is . . .” and occasionally in Latin as “*qua*.” *Soku* has also been translated as “i.e.,” “is simultaneously,” “and also,” “or,” “forthwith,” “as such,” “*sive*,” etc. In his notes and glossary to Nishitani Keiji’s *Religion and Nothingness* (Berkeley, CA: 1982), 291, nn. 19, and 303, Jan Van Bragt, with reference to D. T. Suzuki, has explained the term *soku* “as the essential inseparability of two entities.” In the case of Nishida, opposites are inseparable as “two sides of the same coin.” The “is” here in its use as a copula is thus not predicative but rather establishes an identity-in-opposition.
18. This relational formula of “x is y, y is x” that Nishida makes use of numerous times in this essay refers to the relationship of identity between opposites, including contradictories that logically exclude each other. The opposites are viewed as two sides of the same coin in virtue of their nonsubstantiality—or, in Buddhist terms, emptiness—with each giving expression to the *basho* of absolute nothing wherein they are implaced. That is, the relationship is such that the opposites are identical in their very emptiness (nonsubstantiality).
19. See the Heraclitus frags. 12 and 91 in Hermann Diels, ed. and trans., *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Berlin: Weidmannsche, 1903), 68–69 and 79. However, the exact words, “all things are in flux” (*panta rei*), were produced later and cannot be found in Heraclitus’s own fragments. Frag. 12: “As they step into the same rivers, different and [still] different waters flow upon them.” And frag. 91: “[I]t is not possible to step twice into the same river, nor is it possible to touch a mortal substance twice in so far as its state is concerned.” For the English see *Heraclitus: Fragments: A Text and Translation*, trans. T. M. Robinson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 17, 55.
20. ζῷον πολιτικόν, political animal.
21. ζῷον λόγον ἔχον, animal possessing reason or rational animal.
22. Nishida is referring to Benjamin Franklin, who came up with this definition of the human being as a toolmaking animal (*homo faber*).

23. “Objective” here translates *kyakkanteki*. When the meaning is unclear, “epistemological” in brackets will be added.
24. *Dōsa* means movement that specifically has to do with the body. Thus in our translation of the term we include “bodily” in brackets to distinguish it from *undō*, which also means movement but with broader connotations.
25. Or lit, the (epistemologically) objective world of objects (of perception/knowledge).
26. Nishida here uses the phrase *oitearu*, lit., “to be placed” or “implaced.” This is in reference to his theory of *basho* (“place,” “field”). The point here is to preclude any dichotomization between subject and object. That is, as embodied, we are *already within* the world of objects and not standing opposed to it as a disembodied de-worlded transcendental subjectivity.
27. That is, the function of seeing makes the eye what it is, and the function of hearing makes the ear what it is. A few years before this essay was published, in a lecture of 1930, Martin Heidegger stated, “Possessing eyes and being able to see are not the same thing. It is the *potentiality for seeing* which first makes the possession of eyes possible, makes the possession of eyes necessary in a specific way.” See Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 218.
28. Aristotle, *On the Parts of Animals*, trans. James G. Lennox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 98: “Anaxagoras said it was because they have hands that human beings are the most intelligent of animals; it is reasonable, however, that it is because they are most intelligent that human beings are given hands. For the hands are instruments and nature, like an intelligent human being, always apportions each instrument to the one able to use it” (687a8–12).
29. *Hōkō* implies the sense of “direction” or “course” as well as of “dimension.” We shall render this with the term “region,” keeping in mind its phenomenological significance, as connoting the sense of a region of directional orientation, *both* according to which things are oriented (“seen” in acting-intuition) *and* according to which we are oriented (“see” in acting-intuition) in regard to those things.
30. *ποίησις*, making, production, creating.
31. By form [*katashi*], Nishida here is referring neither to Plato’s *eidōs/idea* nor to Aristotle’s concept of form (*morphē*) but simply to the material shape of things that can be sensibly perceived. The idea is rather Kantian, although we must keep in mind here the distinction from Kantian or neo-Kantian hylomorphism. For Nishida the form-giving subject does not transcend the world but is embodied *in-the-world*, i.e., implaced.
32. Bergson, *L’Évolution créatrice*, 1907. In the most recent English edition, see *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: Barnes and Noble, 2005), 57–59.
33. “Embodied subject” translates *shutai*, which has for the most been rendered as “subjectivity,” but can also have the sense of a “subject-body” depending on the context.
34. Nishida is referring to Jean Paul, a nineteenth-century German writer of the Romanticist movement.
35. This is in fact a question. In referring to this idea, Nishida is most likely citing Ludwig Noiré’s *Das Werkzeug und seine Bedeutung für die Entwicklungsgeschichte der Menschheit* (Mainz: I. Diemer, 1880). Noiré quotes Jean Paul as asking, “das Maschinenmäßige jedem näher und anschaulicher ist als sein Inneres?” (“is the mechanical for anyone closer and easier to intuit than what is internal to himself?”), 61.
36. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Système nouveau de la nature et de la communication des substances* (1695), secs. 10, 11, in *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. C. I. Gerhardt (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1960, [1875–90]), 4:482; and *Principes des la Nature et de la Grace, fondés en raison*, in *Die philosophischen Schriften*, 6:618. And see his *Monadology* in *Monadology and Other Philosophical Essays* (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Pub., 1965), §64:

- “[A] machine made by human art is not a machine in each of its parts . . . The machines of nature, however, that is to say, living bodies, are machines even in their smallest parts ad infinitum.” The translation here has been slightly altered.
37. This notion of the self-identity of contradiction entails both the sense of identity *between* contradictories *and* identity *in* or *through* contradiction. It is an idea Nishida worked out between 1927 and 1945. The point is that what may be contradictory and mutually negating from the point of view of the logic of objects (*taishō ronri*), coexist to constitute the identity of a living thing and its environment.
 38. The “mediator” or “medium” (*baikaisha*) of mutually determining and negating individual things, for Nishida, is really the place (*basho*) encompassing the individuals and allowing for their relationship. What *mediates* their relationships is the *medium* of their relationships. And in turn it is through such relationships of mutually determining and negating individuals that the mediation is thus a continuity through discontinuities—for it serves as the place or field for co-determining individual things.
 39. Nishida is referring to the mode of thinking that thinks of one side of an opposing pair (or pair of contradictories) as absolutely excluding its opposite or to reductively think of one side merely in light of the other as what it is *not* rather than taking each side for what it is in their co-relativity and mutual determination involving both affirmation and negation.
 40. Nishida’s point here seems to be that it is this world of contradiction that makes human existence as we know it possible; and we humans are individual determinations of this self-contradictory world. Our self-knowledge through acting and our making, possession, and usage of tools, is somehow made possible by this contradictory nature of reality that in our concrete experience is irreducible to either terms of the contradiction. In the next sentence Nishida refers to affirmation via the world’s own negation. Our mode of being, knowing, acting are affirmed through the world’s self-negation. That is, the world’s self-negation affirms our mode of being as individuations of the world, i.e., “place” (*basho*) determines itself into “the implaced,” the universal individualizes itself into individuals via self-negation.
 41. *Taisuru* can be translated—depending on the context—as “oppose” in the sense of contradiction or conflict, or “face” in the sense of encounter, or “confront.” We shall render it throughout this work, for the most part, as *confront*, which has the same ambiguity as the Japanese term. The ambiguity is in having the double connotation of both *opposing* and also of *facing*. While *opposing* may refer to some sort of conflict or opposition, *facing* does not necessarily entail any conflictual stance. However, when the meaning is clearly without any oppositional stance as in the present case, we will translate the term as *face* or *facing*.
 42. “Substance” (οὐσία). Aristotle provides a definition of *ousia* (substance) in *Categoriae* (*Categories*) 2a11–19. See McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 9.
 43. When one studies health, one must also study the nature of its opposite, disease. Thus while the primary concern of the science of health would be health itself, everything else directly relevant to health, including its opposite such as disease, would constitute its secondary concerns. For Aristotle, this is analogous to how in the study of being, one must study both its primary aspect—the attributes of substantial being (*ousia*) and the qualities that cannot exist apart from it—, and its secondary aspects—qualities relative to the concept of substantial being, including its privation or opposite. In the science of being, the study of non-being thus must also be included. Likewise in the science of health, the proper function of the human being, sickness, its very negation or lack, must also be included. Aristotle introduces the term *ousia* (οὐσία; “substance”) to signify the primary use or meaning of “being,” in distinction from its secondary aspects, the species and genera, but including its opposite or relative qualities. Thus health in relation to sickness, for Aristotle, is analogous to being as *ousia* in its relation to non-being. See Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1003a33–b18, in McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 732; and also 1032b1–1033a18, 792–93.

44. Aristotle further explains that this is for the reason that disease or illness is the *absence* of health. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1032b1–5, in McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 792.
45. *γένεσις καὶ φθορά* (“generation and destruction”). Aristotle defines change (*metabole*; *μεταβολή*), in distinction from motion proper (*kinesis*; *κίνησις*), as involving the contradictory relation of “generation/becoming and destruction/perishing.” See Aristotle, *Physics* 225a35–225b2, in McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 303. Obviously this alone is one-sided if we are to understand the whole of human existence. For this understanding defines sickness only negatively from the point of view of health.
46. Thus Nishida regards the dialectical universal’s self-determination as simultaneously the self-determination of a field or realm, which he designates as *basho* or “place.” The first essay of this volume, “*Basho*” is dedicated to this concept. *Basho* in the context of our current essay—but also carrying over from the “*Basho*” essay—is Nishida’s term for the basis of reality as a field wherein whole and many are dynamically interdependent. Thus the establishment of a living individual organism on the basis of its species is ultimately founded upon what Nishida here calls the self-determination of *basho*, wherein life and environment are reciprocally determining one another. The point is that life does not emerge out of static matter but rather out of the dynamic interaction of elements constituting the movement of the world, a movement expressive of the self-determination of *basho*.
47. Nishida’s point here seems to be that the existence of consciousness is founded upon the environment and our embodiment consisting of these various conditions.
48. The point is that the world is not simply that which transcends us as consisting of objects of our knowing activity but is rather that *in which* we find ourselves existing, that is, it is our environment.
49. That is, consciousness is made possible only on the basis of its very opposite, its negation, from the side of its environment, that delimits it and thus determines its being. It emerges from the negation of its opposite, unconscious biological life.
50. Nishida is making an important distinction here between human beings and other living things. What distinguishes us humans is that we are autonomous in that we actively create our own environment as a “world.” It is because humans thus create and possess a “world,” that they can be said to be living on their own. This does not mean that we are absolutely autonomous subjects as will be made clear. For it is the world *also* that expresses itself through human acts of creation.
51. “[Epistemological] subject” translates *shukan*. And “[epistemological] object” here translates *kyakkan*, which has the connotation of a communally or epistemologically verifiable object. When the meaning is unclear, “epistemological” in brackets will be added.
52. We are *always* a product of the very current situation in which we find ourselves.
53. That is, the self-determination of the individual is made possible by the very world that in its ground is a groundless nothing. Its emptiness provides room for individual self-determination but as particulars. The subject of determination in that sense is not the particular object but the world of which the object forms a part. The world’s self-determination—a “determination without determiner”—becomes expressed through the particular, as a particular *of* the world. The species for Nishida then is what mediates the individual living thing and the world’s self-creation.
54. Haldane, *Philosophical Basis of Biology*. Lecture 1 of this book is on this very topic of “life” as an axiom of biology and is titled “The Axiom of Biology.” See 3–40: “The conception of life corresponds simply to what we perceive when we observe the phenomena of life as such. We perceive the relations of the parts and environment of an organism as being of such a nature that a normal and specific structure and environment is actively maintained. This active maintenance is what we call life, and the perception of it is the perception of life. The existence of life as such is thus the axiom on which scientific biology depends” (16–17). And: “[T]he existence of life is the fundamental axiom of biology” (28).

55. That is, it involves a dynamic relationship between structure and environment.
56. The point here seems to be that the normative structure as a form that life takes is inseparable from the function whereby the living thing is involved with its environment. The living thing's active involvement with its environment is essentially related to the shaping of its structure. In this sense, its function is expressive of its environment. We should also keep in mind that these relationships and interactions, for Nishida, are reciprocal and thus that no one element here can be asserted to be the primal *arche* that sets off the entire network of interrelations.
57. "Race" should be taken here in the narrower sense of a tribe or ethnicity or group of people that comprise a nation or community rather than in the broader sense of a biological subspecies, the conception of which forms the basis of certain pseudo-scientific biological racial theories such as of German National Socialism. The Japanese term for the latter (biological race) would be *jinshu*.
58. "Communal society." Nishida is referring to a distinction introduced in sociology by Ferdinand Tönnies (1855–1936). Tönnies argued that there are two basic types of human groups or relations based on two forms of human will: Natural will, which is an organic or instinctive driving force, developed through "folkways, mores, and religion." And rational will, which is deliberative, purposive, and future-oriented, resting on convention and agreement. Tönnies calls groups forming, with self-fulfilling membership, around the first type of will, *Gemeinschaft* ("community"). Its relations are living organisms. And he calls groups wherein membership was due to some instrumental goal or end, *Gesellschaft* ("society"). Its relations are mechanical constructions. The family or neighborhood are examples of *Gemeinschaft*, while the city or the state are examples of *Gesellschaft*. See Ferdinand Tönnies *Community and Society: Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, trans. and ed. Charles P. Loomis (New York: Harper and Row, 1963 [East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University, 1957]), 223–231, 248–249.
59. "[O]f the objective spirit" here translates *kyakkanseishinteki*. Nishida seems to be referring to the communal spirit belonging to an ethnic group or race of people in distinction from the subjective spirit or mind of a mere individual.
60. That is to say, historical society is established on the basis of person-to-person, face-to-face, intersubjective encounters. This phrase "I and thou" was popularized in the West by Martin Buber.
61. Thus Nishida here argues against the substantialization of the individual as a *monad* or atom as in Leibniz's philosophy. For the world in which the *monads* are mutually determining must also be taken into consideration.
62. The term *sōtai*, in this context meaning relativity or relation, is used in juxtaposition with the term *zettai*, meaning absolute or absolved of relation or of opposition. While individual things are mutually relative, *basho*, as the place wherein are all things, is itself *not* a being/thing. As such, for Nishida, *basho* is "absolute." The *basho* of absolute nothing has nothing standing opposed to it. But it is an absolute that expresses itself through its own negations to allow for the existence of individual beings.
63. The reference here seems to be to the spatially represented lifeline of a person, limited by birth and by death. The spatial dialectic of co-relating individuals then somehow is connected to the temporal delimitation of the individual between birth and death.
64. The same ideographs, while when pronounced *sōtai* mean "relative" or "relate," when pronounced *aitai*, mean "oppose" or "encounter." In this context, "encounter" may be what Nishida has in mind, if he is not to be redundant in also saying "co-relate" (*sōkankei*).
65. The relationships and confrontations between the various components making up the world, whether between individuals or between groups, for Nishida, are in themselves the world's self-determinations and the world's expressions.

66. This paragraph and others similarly in parentheses (and indented and printed in smaller font in the original) are Nishida's self-commentary appended to the original publication of the text.
67. The Japanese term *keisō* here is in reference to Plato's notion of the Idea (*ἰδέα, εἶδος*). But the reference can also be extended to Aristotelian as well as Kantian and Neo-Kantian hylomorphism.
68. The literal rendition would be "the present determines the present itself." In this and other similar expressions, the translators have taken the liberty to erase the duplication in order to avoid redundancy.
69. "It is life that we are studying in biology, and not phenomena which can be represented by the causal conceptions of physics and chemistry. Nor can life be represented by the conception of a 'vital principle,' or by the veiled vitalistic conception of 'vital activity,' acting and reacting with a physically interpreted basis or environment." Haldane, *Philosophical Basis of Biology*, 28.
70. The linear is in reference to the temporality of the life of the species, its historical development, while the circular is in reference to its spatiality, that is, its relationship with its environment. Thus life, for Nishida, is a result of this dynamic process involving interrelations spanning the dimensions of both time and space, and the dialectical interplay between the whole embracing these two dimensions and its temporal and spatial elemental parts.
71. Although this citation is too vague to find a corresponding passage in the text, Haldane says: "Plants are dependent on lower organisms and animals, while animals are dependent on plants or on other animals. Hence, just as the life of any individual organism exists not only as including within itself what are often called its physical environment, so does its life, when more widely interpreted, include within itself the lives of other organisms, so that these lives are not outside its own life, though for practical purposes we usually regard separately what we can most readily treat as individual lives." Haldane, *Philosophical Basis of Biology*, 28. In living, we "see" other individuals, including members of our "species," not as objects of cognition but pretheoretically in our lived interactions with them. This is the sense of Nishida's concept of "acting-intuition" in this context.
72. The life of the species is concrete in that it involves a concrete determination of the world, that is, in accordance with the specifics of its environment and its history. As such a result of the world's own concrete self-determination, the species can thus be known only through what Nishida calls "acting-intuition" the mode of pre-epistemically knowing through active engagement with one's environment, which in itself is expressive of this self-determination of the world. This is the first appearance in this essay of Nishida's special concept, "acting-intuition" (*kōiteki chokan*). It refers to the fact that human beings act in the world and through this acting intuit the world. We know our surroundings through our very involvement with it. But "knowing" here is to be taken in a pretheoretical or pre-epistemic sense and as experiential and thus as "intuitive." Simultaneously it is through this acting of humans, that the world acts to form or determine itself. It is important thus to distinguish Nishida's use of the term "intuition" from the traditional Western philosophical conception of intuition. The traditional philosophical conception entails the immediate presence of determinate objects to which conception or thought can refer for cognitive verification. Intuition for Nishida involves acting in the world, a *dynamic* interrelationship with one's lived environment, a dialectical interplay of mutual self-negation and affirmation that undermines any claim to presence. Compared to the thinking of the two phenomenological giants, Nishida's *intuition* is closer to Heidegger's *being-in-the-world* than to Husserl's *intuition* or *Evidenz*. This is also a more dynamic expression of what Nishida earlier had in mind in his concept of "pure experience" (*junsui keiken*).
73. See n. 64 on the alternative pronunciations of *sōtai* and *aitai*.

74. See John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1930 [1892]), 143ff.
75. Language and logic become possible for Nishida thus only from out of the strife-like and the flowing characters of reality, which Heraclitus had referred to as *logos*, prior to its subsequent confinement to its formal-logical sense.
76. The human body, or human existence as bodily, cannot thus be reduced to the biological body, for it involves the contradictory identity of life and death. That is to say that only humans are explicitly aware of their own self-contradiction, i.e., death. Only the human being is being-in-the-face-of-death, or in Heideggerian terms being-toward-death.
77. To translate *gijutsu*, the Greek term *technē* rather than the English “technology,” will be used to convey the broad meaning of technics, technique, skill, art, method, craft, etc.
78. For example, Haldane states that “[t]he life of an organism is ultimately just as much bound up with its external as with its internal environment.” Haldane, *Philosophical Basis of Biology*, 67. By “internal environment” is meant the immediate environment of a particular element within the body, for example, the environment of each cell as involving its mutual interaction with other cells.
79. We find Haldane stating the following: “[T]he structural elements in organism and environment are co-ordinated with one another in a specific manner. The organism is adapted to its environment, or the environment, including the internal environment, to the organism, in such a manner that life is maintained. The environment is thus expressed in the structure of each part of the organism, and conversely . . . [W]hat appears . . . as organic structure and the structure of organic environment . . . is the expression of continuous activity, so co-ordinated that the structure is maintained. Thus we cannot separate organic from environmental structure, any more than we can separate the action of the environment from the reaction of the organism.” Haldane, *Philosophical Basis of Biology*, 13–14. And later Haldane also states, “Organism and external environment hang together in the specific manner which is a normal expression of the life of the organism” (*ibid.*, 67–68). It appears that Nishida is much indebted to Haldane’s conception of life and environment.
80. The point seems to be that the internal process of life and the external environment with which it maintains a mutual relationship cannot be separated: the spatiality and the temporality of life belong together, and so do the species and the individual manifesting and belonging to the species.
81. It is the internalization of the conditions, exceeding the bounds of the individual, that paradoxically engenders the independence and freedom of the individual.
82. That is, *technē* is the means by which a life form steps beyond the purviews set by its biological conditions, to actively engage itself in interaction with its environment that provides it with delimiting conditions in a more intentional rather than instinctive way—so that the environment’s negation of the individual becomes affirmed by the individual, i.e., appropriated, in their mutual interaction. The point seems to be that the possession of *technē* is that through which the mere animal conditioned by its species eventually becomes a social and creative animal, that is, human.
83. The reference is to Leo Frobenius (1873–1938), a Prussian-German explorer and ethnologist in the early twentieth century, an originator of the culture-historical approach to ethnology, and regarded as an authority on the art of preliterate peoples. He proposed the theory that civilization or culture is itself an organism that develops from birth to maturity and old age, and finally ends in death, and that cultures tend to be shaped by their own geography, soil, and climate. See his *Paideuma: Umriss einer Kultur- und Seelenlehre* (Frankfurt: Frankfurter Societäts-Druckerei GMBH, 1928 [1921]). E.g., see 39 where he states that “human culture is an independent organic being” (“menschliche Kultur ein selbständiges organisches Wesen sei”).

84. Wilhelm Worringer (1881–1965) was a German art historian and theoretician of Expressionism, noted for his work in aesthetic theory. His method was influenced, among others, by the art history of Riegl, also mentioned in this essay by Nishida. Another influence, also mentioned just now in this essay, was Frobenius for whom “culture is the soil rendered organic by man.”
85. See Wilhelm Worringer, *Ägyptische Kunst. Probleme ihrer Wertung* (München: R. Piper, 1927), 3, and the English version, *Egyptian Art*, trans. Bernard Rackham (London: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1928), 3: “Culture is the soil rendered organic by man.’ This is the formula of Frobenius. In this earth-born sense Egypt has no culture; but it has a civilization.” He explains that the historical phenomenon of Egypt stands “beyond the conditions of natural growth” and that the Egyptians “are . . . a product of the artificiality of special circumstances of culture or civilization, . . . [which] gave them their decisive essential character . . . that the question of the native soil of their *natural* conditions of origin remains altogether irrelevant. Egypt is a colony upon an artificial soil and has the cultural form peculiar to such a colony.” See Worringer, *Egyptian Art*, 2–3; *Ägyptische Kunst*, 3. That the ancient Egyptians gave birth to a particular kind of culture in response to a harsh environment may also be related to Worringer’s understanding of Egyptian art as abstract and transcendental. His theory is that while realistic representation as exemplified by the art of ancient Greece and Rome demonstrates confidence in the material world, abstract representation as exemplified in ancient Egyptian art, primitive art, and modern Expressionism, articulates humanity’s insecurity with materialism but greater trust in spirituality. That is, abstract art is due to spiritual anxiety under the threat of external reality, which induces human beings to abstract objects from their state of uncertainty in nature and transform them into something transcendental. And so Worringer claimed that when cultures are threatened—as in the case of Egypt as “a narrow and long strip of land between two deserts” (Worringer, *Egyptian Art*, 3; *Ägyptische Kunst*, 4)—organic forms of art reflecting harmony give way to abstract art. On his general art theory, see Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy: A Contribution to the Psychology of Style* (New York: International Universities Press, 1953).
86. That is, the communal or social nature of human life is in itself a consequence of a historical unfolding of “life.”
87. Nishida may have in mind here the lived time of human existence, which may be designated “existential” time. But it is *also* what Nishida calls historical reality that is not simply continuous in its temporality. By “linear,” Nishida means the temporal, i.e., in life or history, and by “circular,” Nishida means the spatial, i.e. in bodily, environmental, or social relations.
88. That is, we are acting beings.
89. The reference here is to Lazarus Geiger (1829–1870) and his *Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Menschheit* (Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta, 1878). Therein, in a 1868 lecture, he states: “Der Mensch hatte Sprache vor dem Werkzeuge und vor der Kunstthätigkeit” (31). For the English, see *Contributions to the History of the Development of the Human Race* (Boston: Trübner, 1880): “Man had language before he had tools, and before he practiced industrial arts” (33). Nishida may have known of this idea of Geiger’s from Noiré’s *Das Werkzeug und seine Bedeutung*, 8–9.
90. And if language is tool-like, then it must consist of substitutable elements in the same way that tools are substitutable. But despite this substitutability, it is also ingrained in the dynamism of communal life, making it thus more than a pure formal system of signs.
91. By “objective things” (*taishōbutsu*), Nishida is referring to objects of perception or of judgment, i.e., things objectified. Only humans have this capacity to objectify.
92. In this short paragraph, Nishida is explicating a feature that distinguishes us humans from mere animals, as this interconnection of seeing and acting, that is, acting with a view to a

- goal placed beyond oneself. This in turn is linked to the creativity of *poiēsis*, whereby we make things but with a view to a form projected beyond ourselves.
93. That is, seeing and acting are inseparable from each other but they are not the same thing. Here Nishida is referring to the Greek distinction of *theōria* and *prāxis*.
 94. Subject–object here is a translation of *shu-kyaku*, lit., “host”–guest, and by which Nishida is not just thinking of the epistemological dualism of neo-Kantian and like theories but referring to Rinzai’s/Lin-chi’s understanding of the subject–object in his *Record of Rinzai*, which postulates four possible ways wherein the subject and the object can interact. In saying that they are *absolutely* opposed to each other—despite their “self-identity”—Nishida means that the two can never be synthesized or, put differently, that their opposition can never be resolved. He is making a distinction between his own *absolute* dialectic and Hegel’s sublational dialectic. For an English translation of this work, see *The Zen Teachings of Master Lin-Chi: A Translation of the Lin-chi lu*, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).
 95. Thus the subject and object are not two distinct types of substances, ontologically independent of each other, as Descartes may have it. Rather the opposition and relation itself between subject and object emerges as a result of the world determining itself in such a dialectical fashion.
 96. This statement agrees with Nishida’s earlier statement in regard to the inseparability of acting and seeing. That is, in acting by means of *technē*, our seeing is not the seeing of a subject separate from the world of action, looking upon this distant world as if it is disembodied.
 97. *Hē phusis poiēi*. Aristotle states, “Now if nature makes nothing incomplete, and nothing in vain, the inference must be that she has made all animals for the sake of man.” Aristotle, *Politics* 1256b20–22, in McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*. Also see *On the Parts of Animals*, trans. Lennox, 40: “Nature does nothing in vain” (658a9).
 98. Nishida seems to imply here that the emergence of *logos* did not just happen with the appearance of humans directly from out of matter. In the same way that life cannot emerge out of mere matter, the emergence of *logos* must require some prior condition possessing the potentiality or latency of *logos*. Thus *logos* develops not out of mere matter or the merely biological but rather what Nishida calls historical nature or historical reality.
 99. This further illustrates Nishida’s point that both *logos* and *technē*, which we commonly associate with our own humanity in distinction from nature, really cannot be separated from the *poiēsis* (making) of *phusis* (nature).
 100. This passage in parentheses, indented and in smaller print in the original, is Nishida’s self-commentary appended to the first published version in its subsequent publication.
 101. To belong to a species, for Nishida, then has something to do with belonging to a specific sort of environment which delimits (i.e. “negates”) that species to shape the form it takes and within which that species flourishes.
 102. That is, the negation of the individual belonging to that biological species.
 103. The point is that as embodied individual beings, we are both knowers and what are known, both actors and what are acted upon, both subject and object. And that is our self-contradictory reality as he states in the following sentence.
 104. This capacity to take on contradictory stances, whether in regard to the self or to the other, as subject or object, is an expression of the self-contradictory nature of reality unfolding in history. This is what allows us to confront our negation head-on in the environment, to manipulate or transform the environment with the use of tools. That is, for Nishida, the root of technology is contained in the contradictoriness of our reality.
 105. As we use tools to engage our external environment, we must use our bodies to manipulate those tools.

106. The self for Nishida is not something disembodied and separate from the world. Nor is it some sort of a universal essence. Rather in its real form it is individual, embodied, and acting.
107. Thus even what appears to be an expression of our freedom and rationality, our creativity, that makes things and makes events happen in the world, has its source as an individual determination of reality in its historical unfoldings, and possesses its clear limit at the point where our products come to operate independently of us in the movement of the world.
108. Thus our awareness of things is in itself the formation of things and the self-determination of the world. Our awareness is in resonance with the world's self-determination that forms things. This also appears to be another formulation of Nishida's concept of "acting intuition," that as we act in the world, we "see" things and things appear as what they are.
109. For it is in facing its limits or negations, that the species can transform the environment negating it and itself to transcend those limits. The shape the species takes is then a result of this tension. But the clearest example of this, for Nishida, is the human being who explicitly faces his negation with awareness.
110. This (logic of objectification) is the standpoint that Nishida opposes. It conceives of reality in terms of objects that can be grammatical subjects of judgments and dichotomized in terms of either/or oppositions. His point is that reality is not so simple; reality is not reducible to either one side or another of an opposition formulated in terms of either/or logic.
111. Heraclitus, frag. 8 in Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 67. English: "[Heraclitus said that] what opposes unites, [and the finest attunement stems from things bearing in opposite directions, and that all things come about by strife]." Robinson, *Heraclitus: Fragments*, 15.
112. That is, both the spatial-environmental factors and the temporal-historical factors must be taken into account in (surrounding and behind) each momentary determination of reality. This is reality as understood concretely, that is always "here and now."
113. Nishida has thus provided an explanation of biological life that fits neither the model of mechanism nor the model of vitalism.
114. That is, what is immediate is not raw formless matter as an empiricist like David Hume might propose.
115. The world of our immediate experience, rather than being the world of raw matter, is the world wherein things *already* possess an appearance and are seen by us.
116. See Haldane, *Philosophical Basis of Biology*, 73–76. Haldane also writes that "the existence of life is the fundamental axiom of biology" (28).
117. Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 57–59.
118. *Ibid.*, 23–24. Bergson's *élan vital* is the current of life. Bergson writes that "life is . . . a tendency to act on inert matter" (78). He also writes as follows: "[I]n life [there is] an effort to re-mount the incline that matter descends . . . the primitive direction of the original jet, . . . an impulsion which continues itself in a direction the inverse of materiality . . . [T]he creation of a world is a free act, and the life within the material world participates in this liberty . . . In vital activity we see, then, that which subsists of the direct movement in the inverted movement, a reality which is making itself in a reality which is unmaking itself." Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 202–4.
119. *Zōkei bijutsu* in Japanese designates spatial art, including painting and sculpture, that is, art that creates form in space, as opposed to a nonspatial art like music. In English this has been usually rendered as "plastic arts." In the German aesthetic tradition, "plastic arts" refers to three-dimensional spatial art like architecture and sculpture.
120. The term here is *bashoteki gentei*. Nishida is thinking of his concept of *basho*, which is the field or place of co-relativity wherein beings appear as what they are in their interrelations with one another. As co-relativity occurs not only among the beings themselves but also among the beings and the *basho* (field, place) wherein they exist, the appearance of life then would entail the determination of *basho* itself in such a way that makes life possible.

121. That is, the cause of the biological products of nature that emerge from out of history must be ascribed to life itself rather than lifeless matter.
122. The fact that life comes out of life, rather than lifeless matter, involves a creation that is a “seeing.” Nishida may have in mind what he spoke of in his earlier works in terms of “the self-awareness of nothing.” Here the meaning of “seeing” extends beyond merely humans to encompass life or world in general.
123. Thus the creativity of acting-intuition, which involves both seeing and making, which is most pronounced in human beings, is here attributed to the source of life, that is, historical nature itself.
124. γένεσις. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 981a17ff, in McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 690.
125. Aristotle, *De Partibus Animalium* (*On the Parts of Animals*) 646a25ff, in McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 659; *On the Parts of Animals*, trans. Lennox, 16.
126. By “historical body,” Nishida means the body as shaped through a long historical process and contributing to ongoing historical unfoldings. History as such would involve things like *logos* and *technē*. As only human beings are thoroughly historical, the implication is that only humans have historical bodies. This becomes clearer in the proceeding and toward the end of this work.
127. The environment of mere biological life, as stated above, is nutritional and thus merely teleological, that is, it is there for the satisfaction of biological instincts that operate for the *telos* of individual and species maintenance. Biological life relates to its environment only on the basis of its instincts, but without the sort of self-awareness that develops in human beings. Instead, it absorbs itself into its environment through these instincts.
128. “True life” as such is what becomes explicit in human life.
129. That is, in the truly concrete world, there is no separation between form and matter. What we immediately see already possesses form. And yet this seeing of form also coincides with our creative contribution to the making of the world. The very tools that we use to create things and alter the environment are in themselves products of this process of seeing and making—an activity, which, while made explicit in human awareness and creativity, is an expression of the life of historical nature, the historical unfoldings of the world.
130. That is, we think of the objective as moving in accordance with mechanistic-causal laws, and we think of the subjective as our creative re-formations of the world. Hence we divide the world into the natural and the artificial (human-made).
131. “Man begets man.” Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1032a25ff, in McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 792.
132. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1042b10ff, in *ibid.*, 813.
133. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1048a32ff, in *ibid.*, 826.
134. See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, bk. 7, chaps. 3 and 8, and bk. 9, chap. 8.
135. The reference is to the modern split between the objective and the subjective, the dichotomization between mechanistic causality and human formativity mentioned in the beginning of the paragraph.
136. Nishida thus sees his view as an alternative to both mechanistic causal theory and Aristotelian logic and teleology. He is attempting to overcome the dichotomization between mechanism and teleology with a view to a more concrete standpoint that views the world as self-determining, self-forming.
137. Again this refers to acting-intuition that has been extended or broadened in meaning beyond the acting-intuition of mere human beings. Rather the world or reality itself creates and determines itself through acting-intuition. As it makes itself, it “sees” itself within itself. It designates a shift in stance from the human perspective to that of the world or reality.
138. His activity is “dialectical” in the sense that it involves the irreducible relationships between acting, seeing/intuiting, and making vis-à-vis the world of objects.

139. “Active” here is a translation of the verb *hataraku*. It appears that Nishida is referring to the German verb *wirken* (“to work,” “to act,” but lit., “to have an effect”), which is related to the noun *Wirklichkeit* (“reality” or “actuality”). Nishida seems to intend this double-sense in German of work and reality.
140. Nishida seems to be thinking of human beings here who are different from nonhuman animals in that they are aware of their history and explicitly confront their environment and alter it to suit their needs. That is, the environment becomes a tool for world-formation.
141. As tools they can be incorporated into our being so that their use becomes second nature to us.
142. The point may be that in engaging oneself in the world of tools as a network of concerns and instrumental means, as one is absorbed into one’s busy involvement with that world, the sense of self as a separate subject disappears.
143. For one’s own body becomes a mere means for achieving certain ends or satisfying certain concerns. It is thus one thing among other things in this network of instrumental means. Taking part in the network of tools, the *I qua* body becomes a thing alongside other things.
144. That is, from within, from the standpoint of the subject, one regards oneself as a lived body acting and moving along in the linear course of time. But from without, with the standpoint of objectivity, one may regard the self as a thing interacting with other things within the plane of space.
145. We form the world from both standpoints of subjectivity and objectivity, from within and from without, in time and in space, as we engage with it and move within it, that is, in our acting-intuition.
146. Thus our seeing and acting in the world that forms things are ascribed beyond our subjectivity. We are not the ultimate causal agents behind our creations. In a certain sense we are rather conduits for the world’s self-creation.
147. An example may be in driving a car. While driving, I operate the car as an extension of my *body*, and my spatial awareness takes the periphery of the car as that of my *self*. And the next sentence in the text seems to capture the following sense: while driving, I lose awareness of my *self* as a distinct *I* separate from the vehicle that I am driving.
148. This would be the world conceived of as mechanistic matter but manipulable as tool according to the law of causality.
149. This statement is obscure. Nishida seems to mean that when we look at the world according to the mechanistic viewpoint, we are no longer “seeing” things in the sense of creatively forming them in our acting upon the world. When we see the world as such, we are no longer in tune with the world through our acting-intuition. That is, the world of matter, which thus appears, lies at the limit of our acting-intuition. It is an abstraction from the concrete world of acting.
150. That is, both viewpoints of seeing the world as mechanistic matter and of seeing the self as merely consciousness separate from matter, has lost touch with the “seeing of things.” Both realism/materialism and idealism are abstractions from the concrete world of acting-intuition. See n. 149.
151. As the body becomes absorbed into mechanistic matter as merely instrumental, the self becomes separated from the body in the other direction, as a disembodied observer, a consciousness. Nishida’s point, however, seems to be that both body conceived as part of the material world and self conceived as pure consciousness, derive from, or are abstracted out of, our acting-intuition in the world, wherein originally they are not separate. This becomes more clear in the next paragraph.
152. This again shows how seeing and making/forming, i.e., acting, for Nishida, go together.
153. This means as well that each of us, as such individual bodies, also contains absolute negation within. What Nishida calls “the self-contradictory identity” of reality becomes most pronounced in human beings out of all living beings.

154. This is what is distinct about human beings, the possession of tools and its application upon the environment. This is also what expresses our contradictory identity as the historical world's self-determination that is a dialectical determination.
155. Henri Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (Genève: Albert Skira, 1945), 101. See also the English edition of *Matière et mémoire* (1896): *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1911), 233, 267. Also see, for example, Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 91: “[T]he . . . organism is conscious in proportion to its power to move *freely* . . . [C]onsciousness here, in relation to movement . . . In one sense it is the cause, since it has to direct locomotion. But in another sense it is the effect, for it is the motor activity that maintains it, and, once this activity disappears, consciousness dies away or rather falls asleep.” And, “*The consciousness of a living being may be defined as an arithmetical difference between potential and real activity. It measures the interval between representation and action*” (118).
156. That is, made into objects of nomination.
157. Geiger, *Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Menschheit*, 31.
158. Auguste Comte acknowledged that animals are endowed with a sort of language due to a constant connection between a particular movement and a particular sensation, resulting in the substitution of the reaction of sensation in the brain for the original movement. In humans, this connection becomes voluntary and intentional. Thus human language is artificial and voluntary. He states that the true function of language is “the universal subordination of the subjective to the objective. It is only by this union of the world within and that without that we can give our spiritual world that cohesion and uniformity that are the natural attributes of the material world, qualities that belong to the material world from its greater simplicity, according to the law of the increasing complexity of phenomena in their ascending scale. It is precisely in giving this fixity that the great force of language consists, which it secures by connecting man with the external world.” See Auguste Comte, *Système de politique positive, ou Traité de sociologie instituant la religion de l’humanité*, (Paris: Institutant la Religion de l’Humanité, 1852), 2:219. The English is from *Social Statics, or the Abstract Theory of Human Order*, in *Auguste Comte and Positivism: The Essential Writings*, ed. Gertrud Lenzer (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), 2:417–18.
159. Thus our communal living, tool usage, and language are all due to this self-determination of the world, as forms of historical life.
160. “Rationality” here, like *logos*, cannot then be a consequence of the evolution of the human species. On the other hand, neither of these terms (rationality and *logos*) should be understood in the narrow sense as what pertains to mere thought or intellect. Nishida seems to be taking these terms in some broader sense that relates them to the dialectical and historical self-determination of the world that is inclusive of the potentiality of what we regard ordinarily as “rationality.”
161. It becomes more obvious in the proceeding that the human body is historical and not merely an animal body.
162. The following seems to imply that what becomes concretized is really *logos* as that which works historically and *through* the body beneath the rational mind. Thus *logos* for Nishida cannot be reduced to the reasoning process of the logical mind.
163. This reminds one of the Buddhist concepts of form (*rūpa*) and dependent origination (*pratitya-samutpāda*), and the idea that things possess their forms by virtue of their interrelationships, that is, each thing is what it is in its co-relativity with other things.
164. See n. 163 on form and relativity.
165. Nishida is referring to mathematical “group theory.” Group theory (*gunron* in Japanese) is the study of symmetry noticeable among a group of objects that gives the group structure. It is a formal method used for analyzing both abstract and physical systems. A group in this algebraic context consists of a set and an operation that together satisfy the conditions of

- group axioms (closure, associativity, identity, and invertibility). Karl Friedrich Gauss (1777–1855) and Evariste Galois (1811–32) are considered to be among the founders of group theory. This is not to be confused with set theory, which in Japanese is *shūgōron*.
166. In the previous few sentences Nishida has made an analogy between the invisibility of the primary number in relation to the particular group of numbers it founds and the invisibility of the self in relation to the phenomena of consciousness. While phenomena are then “elements,” the self is regarded as their “primary element.” The self in this regard acts like what Nishida calls *basho*, that is, it acts as a place that invisibly recedes to make room for the visible as their background or environment. See his other essay, “*Basho*,” in this volume.
167. Somewhat like Kant’s notion of the unity of consciousness, the self here is the power that unifies all activities and phenomena of consciousness. One difference may be that for Kant, this unity can be apperceived through conceptual activity. For Nishida, this self is the nothing that recedes to make room *qua* place (*basho*). It unifies in virtue of its withdrawal. Hence it cannot be objectified or made into a subject of a proposition or judgment. In that sense, it is “nothing.”
168. The point here is that the unifier cannot be just transcendent to the unified but must be immanent within the unified. It cannot just be the background space that is nothing in relation to the beings occupying the space. Rather it itself must be manifest through those very beings. Nishida is thus also referring to his notion of the self-determination of the *basho* of nothing and its manifestation through individual beings.
169. These points, that the self is like a place (*basho*) and that it forms itself through history, thus also shows how the human self manifests or mirrors the very character of the real.
170. On the meaning of “group theory,” see n. 165.
171. The preceding placed here in parentheses, but in smaller font and indented in the Japanese text, is Nishida’s self-appended commentary to his own initial text.
172. The point here seems to be that the world in its “objective sense,” that is as beyond the limited vantage point of any individual subject, must be inclusive of contradictories. As a nondualistic whole it must contain self-negation. It is only from the standpoint of the rational subject that reality becomes discriminated in terms of logical contradictories. But the world itself is indifferent to such discriminations. And insofar as the rational subject speculates about the reality of the world, its projection of the world is anthropocentric and tends toward anthropomorphism.
173. That is, in order for the world to maintain itself as what it is, *one* world, it must contain all contradictories and opposites within itself. In this regard, it must be a nothing that allows the opposing and co-relative beings to be. And while being absolute in transcending these oppositions—that is, *absolute* in the literal sense of cutting off, absolving, any opposing pairs (also the sense of the Japanese term for absolute, *zettai*)—it itself must also be manifest through the relative co-determinations of these beings. And in that sense, it is not simply transcendent but also immanent within itself. Years later (1945) in his essay, “The Logic of *Basho* and the Religious Worldview,” Nishida will discuss this notion of God or “absolute” that is not merely transcendent but also immanent in its “self-negation” in terms of an “inverse correspondence” (*gyakutaiō*).
174. “Inverse determination” (*gyakugentei*) somewhat corresponds to what Nishida eventually in the 1940s comes to call *gyakutaiō* (“inverse correspondence” or “inverse correlation”). The point is that creation occurs through the absolute’s own self-negation. The only predicate that the absolute as nothing possesses is negation. Absolved from anything else, it is opposed to nothing, and thus can only negate itself. In negating itself, nothing becomes being and the one becomes many. Thus are generated the many beings of the world. But simultaneously this means that it is being determined by its individual elements. The point of the following sentence is that our consciousness likewise must negate itself in order to

- be what it is. For in negating itself, it makes room for the objects of knowledge within its mind as an empty field.
175. The human self thus mirrors the world.
176. To the extent that the self is viewed as merely temporal, moving in a linear direction internally, determining itself internally, it is not thoroughly engaged in inverse determination with the world. It is involved in inverse determination, i.e., is self-negating, vis-à-vis the world only when the spatial dimension is also seen to come into play. Only then, as actively working upon things in the world externally can the self be viewed to be creative.
177. Bergson discusses this throughout chap. 1 of *Creative Evolution*.
178. Niels Bohr, “Quantum Physics and Philosophy—Causality and Complementarity,” in *Essays 1958–1962 on Atomic Physics and Human Knowledge* (New York: Interscience Pub., John Wiley and Sons, 1963), 1–7: “[W]e are confronted with situations reminding us of the situation in quantum physics. Thus, the integrity of living organisms and the characteristics of conscious individuals and human cultures present features of wholeness, the account of which implies a typical complementary mode of description . . . [W]e are . . . dealing . . . with clear examples of logical relations which, in different contexts, are met with in wider fields” (7).
179. Nishida here is distinguishing his own vision of the course of history from Hegel’s which reduces history to the unfolding of reason.
180. That is, the collection of essays, *Tetsugaku ronbunshū dai ni* (*Philosophical Essays*, vol. 2) into which this essay, “Logic and Life,” was inserted.
181. The preceding paragraph in parentheses is, again, Nishida’s self-appended commentary inserted into the text in smaller print and with indentation.
182. *Genjitsu*, here translated as “actuality,” conveys the sense of “full presence.” The Japanese term combines the graphs *gen* for “the present” (in time) and *jitsu* for “reality” or “truth.” Thus in its literal sense *genjitsu* conveys the sense of “reality in its full presence” or “present reality.”
183. Aristotle, *On the Parts of Animals* 646a10–b10, 16–17. Aristotle here clarifies that the first composition is of the elements or potentials, the second is of uniform parts, and the third is of non-uniform parts. And: “In generation things are opposed to the way they are in substantial being; for things posterior in generation are prior in nature, and the final stage in generation is primary in nature” (16).
184. Nishida’s point in these sentences is that the world understood in light of biology is still not the world that determines itself, the contradictory nature of which is mirrored in the determinations of human awareness. Only through human awareness and creativity does the world’s self-determination (and self-awareness) become explicit.
185. Haldane states that the spatial relations and coordination between the environment and its parts “cannot be described as existing within space; for the co-ordination embodied in them is not limited to a certain position in space, but extends indefinitely beyond any spatial position which we might attempt to assign to it.” J. S. Haldane, *The Philosophical Basis of Biology*, 14. What Haldane says here is almost descriptive of the “vertical” co-relativity in Nishida’s own thought between the absolute as the place (*basho*) of nothing and the “horizontally” co-relative thing-events within it.
186. Nishida appears to be expressing disagreement here with Kant’s moral theory. The “ought” is not just an a priori demand of reason heard from within one’s own rational self but rather is an operative element for the world’s own self-formation. The nonrational world is more fundamental for Nishida than the rational mind, even in ethics. This nonrationality extends beyond the confines of the individual self and to the world.
187. As “bodies,” we are constituents of the world and work in accordance with the world’s arational *logos*, that is, an order irreducible to human rationality.
188. We are not only determined products of a long chain of causal sequences in the dimension of time. While being determined, we are simultaneously determiners of the world. The

source of this creativity lies outside of the order of the causal chain in what Nishida often refers to as the “eternal present” (*eien no genzai*) or “eternal now” (*eien no ima*). That is, creation is a manifestation of the timeless in time in an apparent implosion when in fact the timeless is *already* immanent within time. Thus we cannot be reduced to mere matter operating in accordance with the causal mechanism of nature. This “eternal present” as “timelessness within time” also accounts for the contradictory nature of the human self that reflects the contradictory identity of the world itself. In that sense, despite our implacement within the creative world, we are free as its creative elements. Our free creativity is manifest always and only in the very moment of the now.

189. See n. 188.
190. Again this points to the creativity, the source of which transcends mere mechanical determinism within the order of time. The creativity is due to the crossing-field for the objective and subjective realms, the mutual interactivity of object and subject, within human awareness as in turn reflective of the contradictory nature of reality itself. For Nishida, the spatiality of this place (*basho*) wherein contradictions are related, as timeless, is *trans*-temporal. The *chiasmatic* matrix of spatial and temporal conditions that conjoin in the here-and-now forms a truly unique intersectional point that cannot be reduced in mechanistic or teleological terms. This uniqueness of the here-and-now that an individual person seizes in his self-awareness is what accounts for human creativity as actively involved in the world's own self-formation.
191. Thus a connection is implied between the body's possession of *logos* and its being born through what Nishida calls the historical species.
192. The last few sentences remind one of the Huayan notion of the *dharmadhātu*, the universe of interpenetrating thing-events (*dharmas*), a development of the Buddhist concept of interdependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*) as designating a spatial realm. The world's self-formation is simultaneously the interdependent formations of thing-events so that dualistic distinctions between inner and outer or cause and effect can no longer be posited.
193. To that extent they are independent of us.
194. *Danzetsu* has the connotation also of rupture or cutting off.
195. Nishida seems to have in mind the Buddhistic understanding of the nonduality of self and world or self and other in the self's correlation with others and acting within the world. While this sentence seems to contrast with his statements in the beginning of the paragraph, the point is that I and thing are neither simply one nor simply two. They are neither merely the same nor merely different. Nishida's claim is that *technē* is only possible on the basis of such dynamic nonduality. This is a Mahāyāna Buddhist way of perceiving the world.
196. This is an application or example of Nishida's own idea of the mutual negation and affirmation of self and other. Through making things in *technē* we create that which is simultaneously independent of us in being and yet expressive of ourselves.
197. λογισμός (the power of inference, reasoning). See Aristotle's *Metaphysics* wherein he states: “the human race lives . . . by art [*technē*] and reasonings [*logismos*].” Aristotle, *Metaphysics* bk. 1, 980b, in McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 689. *Logismos* can also be translated as calculation. See also Aristotle's discussion of *technē* and *logismos* in his *Posterior Analytics* 100a6–9 and 200b5–9. McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 185, 186.
198. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 980b28–981a8: “Science and art [*technē*] come to men through experience . . . [A]rt [*technē*] arises when from many notions gained by experience one universal judgment about a class of objects is produced.” McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 689.
199. By “experiential,” Nishida here means our lived experience prior to being “categorized” according to conceptual thinking. To say that our experience is originally discontinuous reminds one of David Hume's understanding of sense-experience.

200. Nishida's point here seems to be that laws are conceptual impositions demanded by our thinking upon phenomena, which in our experience are really discontinuous. Within each generation, a certain set of laws is repetitively imposed upon the collective experience of that generation so that they become second nature and taken for granted. This is what allows us to induce the universal from out of the experienced particulars. That is, the universal has already been assumed and is being imposed upon the phenomena. In this sense the universal is technical or technological; that is, by means of it, we give structure or form to the world and contribute to the world's own self-formation.
201. That is, as elements that act in the world's self-determination.
202. This may be because the individual elements forming the world can be logically deduced from the world as their universal. That is, the universal already inherently encompasses the contradictions that work themselves out dialectically through these individual elements. Nishida may have in mind Hegel here. The difference however is that the universal for Nishida is an infinite field or place (*basho*) rather than an ultimate concept or absolute *Idea* as in Hegel.
203. Nishida here develops the Mahāyāna theme of reciprocal relationship between the universal "principle" (or rather "patternment") (Ch. *li*; Jpn. *ri*) and the individual (Ch. *shi*; Jpn. *ji*). Our usage of the world simultaneously means the world's usage of us. The world and its elements are thus co-relative and bi-directional in that relationship.
204. That is, the world encompasses objects so that we ourselves as components of the world are objects as well. The world is a field of objects, including ourselves.
205. While the world is a universal as the field or place (*basho*) encompassing individual things, the self-aware individual human being is also a field of universals that makes the cognition of objects possible in light of those universals (as predicates of grammatical subjects). To say that we are universals that see things is to say that we are epistemological subjects. Insofar as seeing for Nishida involves acting, Nishida also has something broader and more encompassing in mind than the mere subject of cognition (in Kant's sense). Ultimately the cognitive subject is not merely transcendental in Kant's sense but bodily implaced in the world.
206. See n. 205. Our transcendence of the world of objects as seers and knowers of objects, thus for Nishida still involves our bodily acting. We are not mere passive transcendental seers of the world. Rather we are creative actors in the world while simultaneously being created and acted upon through the world's self-determination.
207. Nishida seems to be using the terms "inductive" and "deductive" in a loose sense. The world is inductively logical in that we induce truths through our active participation in the formation of the world, that is, our knowing or seeing entails our acting in the world. And the world is deductively logical in that we may deduce our own existence as particulars from the world as our universal, already and inherently encompassing our existences prior to their actualization.
208. This means that the world as tool becomes the world as place (*basho*). That is, insofar as our bodily acting presupposes the world as the place wherein it takes place, the truths we induce through our bodily activities are simultaneously truths that can be deduced from that presupposed world *qua basho* wherein we are always already implaced.
209. By "objective self," Nishida here seems to mean that this self is not an isolated self transcendent of, or separate from, the world. As a historical body, it is a part of the world and acts alongside and mutually with other beings. This also relates to the meaning of "subjective" in the next sentence.
210. So our acting and knowing is a part of the world's self-determination.
211. One might say that this sort of reciprocal formation between the universal and the individual, of which one finds many examples in Nishida's works, in this case between the species and its members, is another development of the Mahāyāna Buddhist idea of

interdependence, specifically of the Huayan notion of *li-shi wu-ai* (Jpn: *riji muge*), the unobstructed harmony between *li*, the universal patterning of emptiness, and *shi*, the individual thing-events.

212. Nishida may have the following passage from Aristotle's *Generation of Animals* in mind: "The business of most animals may be summed up pretty much as that of plants is—viz., seed or fruit . . ." (717a21). See Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, trans., A. L. Peck (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), 19. Also see 731a29–b9 in McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 680, and Peck, 125–27.
213. "Intuitional" here translates *chokkanteki*. The meaning is irreducible to the subject or to the object of intuition, that is, neither to the *intuitive* act on the subject's part nor to being *intuited* on the part of the object. Intuition in this context is not simply a human doing but simultaneously refers to the activity of the world forming itself through our human acting and intuiting. In the experience of this intuition, no separation is discernible between subject and object. *Intuitional* conveys this sense of the nondualistic character of the world and our acting-intuition within it.
214. This is because otherwise we would not be able to recognize it, we would not be able to "see" and "form" it. The object of perception cannot be a mere individual substance underlying predication, inaccessible as a Kantian "thing-in-itself." In the most concrete situation, the object cannot be separated from the subject. This also agrees with Nishida's earlier *basho* theory and its so-called predicate logic that was initiated in his "*Basho*" essay. Therein what determines the grammatical subject was the self-determining concrete universal. Intuition here refers to the lived holistic situation prior to the subject-object split. Intuition on the part of human beings, as in their acting-intuition, is in co-resonance or co-respondence with the self-determination of the universal *qua* world.
215. Nishida's point seems to be that in our manipulation of tools, we *already* find ourselves in the world of named things. It is not that we first encounter and use things and only then name them. It is not that the world of named things is an abstraction from a prior concrete reality of tool-manipulation. Rather we already find ourselves living in an environment wherein things have already been named. We live in a world of meanings insofar as the use of tools is concerned.
216. Heraclitus, frag. 93 in Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 79: "The lord whose oracle is in Delphi neither indicates clearly nor conceals but gives a sign." (English from Robinson, *Heraclitus: Fragments*, 57). *Sema* (σῆμα) is the Greek for sign, mark, token.
217. Nishida is here referring to John Stuart Mill (1806–73). Mill discusses deduction and its relation to the world in *System of Logic*, bks. 3 and 6, in *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, v. 6–7, ed. J. M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963ff).
218. The point seems to be that the object of perception or knowledge expresses the world insofar as we see it and know it by means of our body which is a part of the world. That is, as the world forms itself through our bodily acting, the objects that we come to know in our bodily engagement with the world are themselves expressive of this self-forming activity of the world.
219. In this sense the world of physics, as a world of objects demarcated through mathematical relations, is already a world abstracted from the world of concrete life wherein we see by acting.
220. Thus the body is a necessary component in the world's self-formation and in our own knowing or intuition.
221. So the main thrust of this paragraph is that it is the bodily self that is at the foundation of thinking and the thinking self. Even abstract thought is derived from our embodied engagement with the world.
222. Although it is ambiguous what Nishida means here by "reality," the point seems to be that logic springs from our worldly *praxis*, i.e., acting-intuition, rather than being descriptive of

- a “reality” presumed to be observable in pure *theōria*, independent of such *prāxis*—for example, the Cartesian reality of pure extension as described in geometry.
223. Thus although in one sense the world of signs and numbers transcends the world of seeing and intuition, in another sense it is still based upon the world of intuition.
224. E.g., in adding, dividing, counting in general. See H. Poincaré, *La Science et l’Hypothèse* (Paris: Ernest Flammarion, 1943 [1902]), 23–24, 28. For the English, see Poincaré, *Science and Hypothesis* (New York: Dover Pub., 1952), 13 and 16: “[I]t is only the affirmation of the power of the mind which knows it can conceive of the indefinite repetition of the same act, when the act is once possible. The mind has a direct intuition of this power, and experiment can only be for it an opportunity of using it, and thereby becoming conscious of it” (13). And: “Mathematical induction . . . is only possible if the same operation can be repeated indefinitely” (16).
225. Nishida has in mind someone like Plato, whose soul (*psyche*) is separate from the body and the material world; Descartes, whose thinking I (*cogito*) is separate from the body and world of extension; or Kant, whose unity of apperception is transcendental to the empirical world.
226. The pronunciation for the graph meaning “being” is occasionally *yū* but the pronunciation usually used in Buddhist contexts and in correlation with *mu* (“nothing”) is *u*.
227. That is, as long as the world of signs, the world of numbers, is a world constituted by groups (each forming a separate environment or “place” [*basho*]), it is founded upon our acting in the world as an operative act of the world’s self-determination.
228. And since this creativity involves the body, neither does the body disappear even in the world of signs that emerges at the extremity of the world of tool-employment.
229. What must also be kept in mind here that becomes obvious is the distinction in the understanding of “intuition” between Nishida and Western rationalists like Descartes. For someone like Descartes, intuition is the immediate comprehension on the part of the mind of a clear and distinct idea. But for Nishida intuition requires our bodily involvement in the world and thus cannot be attributed merely to the disembodied rational mind.
230. To this extent, the world of science and numbers, while founded upon acting-intuition, is nonetheless an abstraction that ignores its foundation in acting-intuition and historical life.
231. Or “formative.” See n. 119 on *zōkei*.
232. Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes: Umriss einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte* Erster Band: *Gestalt und Wirklichkeit* (München: Oskar Beck, 1923), pp. 80, 85; and in English: Spengler, *The Decline of the West: An Abridged Edition*, trans. Arthur Helps and Charles Francis Atkinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 44–45: “Es ist der Stil einer Seele, der in einer Zahlenwelt, . . . zum Ausdruck kommt” (80). English: “It is the style of a Soul that comes out in the world of numbers” (44). And: “Mathematik ist also auch eine Kunst” (85). English: “Mathematics, then, are an art” (45).
233. Leopold Kronecker (1823–91) was a nineteenth-century German mathematician. He believed that the theoretical totality of mathematics must be constructed on the basis of the intuition of natural numbers. He stated: “God made the integers [natural numbers], all else is the work of man.” See Morris Kline, *Mathematical Thought from Ancient to Modern Times* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 979, and see E. T. Bell, *Men of Mathematics* (New York: Dover Pub., Simon and Schuster, 1937), 477.
234. Thus the mathematization of physical knowledge, despite being, in one aspect, an abstraction out of the original bodily acting-intuition, nonetheless is an objective expression of reality rather than being up to the whims of the individual subject of knowledge.
235. This may include thinkers like Descartes or Kant—although for Kant, it is the commonality or universality of such subjective forms that constitutes the objectivity of knowledge. In any case, Kant still fails to make any connection between such subjective forms, even if universal and thus objective, and things-in-themselves lying beyond their appearances.

236. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 980a1: “All men by nature desire to know.” McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 689.
237. This means that for Nishida the so-called “thing-in-itself” is really the world of historical life expressing itself through signs.
238. That is, the epistemological standpoint that divides the process of knowing into sense-reception and conceptual thinking requires some sort of a mediation to bridge the gap of their irreconcilable difference. This standpoint also corresponds to the dualistic bifurcation of reality into the subject and the object of knowledge. Needless to say, Nishida wants to overcome such perspectives. One solution is the self-seeing of *basho* as seen in his *basho*-theory of the “*Basho*” essay.
239. The point is that the historical body sees not in the sense of visual sensation, in which case it would be no different than the animal body, but rather in its creativity and employment of *logos*. This corresponds to his notion of acting-intuition and the world’s self-seeing.
240. That is, even in the apparently abstract world of signs and the world of numbers separated from the world of our bodily acting-intuition, there is a creativity traceable to acting-intuition.
241. Nishida’s insertion of *only* (*nomi*) here seems odd for it is primarily not in the world of signs or numbers that our body engages in acting-intuition. For we are *already* engaged in acting-intuition prior to abstract conceptual thinking or the mathematization of what was experienced. But it may be possible that Nishida here has in mind the unique human faculty of thinking through numbers and signs, which immensely contributes to human creativity operative in our formation of the world and thus distinguishes humans from animals. The technological reshaping of the world, for example, could not happen without mathematics. For Nishida, mathematics, even in its application to reshape the world, is ultimately founded upon our acting-intuition that mirrors the very *self*-formation of the historical world. And it is herein, as the human and historical world, that we find ourselves *already* implied.
242. “*Idea*” (*ιδέα*). *Idea-teki* may also be rendered as “in terms of the *ideas*.” See Plato, *Phaedo* 100b-101c in Cooper, *Plato: Complete Works*, 86–87, and *Parmenides* 128e-135e in *ibid.*, 362–70, etc.
243. The point of these last few seemingly unconnected sentences may be that the body as working and seeing has its function within a group of other co-acting elements making up the world, so that the world can be understood in light of group theory as a group of elements, each with its own function. Even abstract thinking or numerical thinking, thinking in terms of the Platonic *Ideas*, etc. would be a consequence and expression of the place or position we occupy within the world and our corresponding function.
244. Or “language becoming flesh.” But the reference seems to be the Christian idea of “the Word becomes flesh” (see Jn 1:14, NRSV). The implication is that God’s “word (*logos*) becoming body” in Christ can be understood in terms of the dialectical universal’s self-formation into individual historical bodies.
245. This paragraph in parentheses, indented and in small print in the Japanese text, is Nishida’s self-commentary appended to the essay with its inclusion in the volume *Tetsugaku ronbunshū dai ni*.
246. That is, when seeing is reduced to the reception of visual information through the visual organs (the eye), seeing becomes regarded as merely passive, while the active function is considered as belonging to the thinking mind or the will operating behind its cognitive acts. Nishida is probably thinking of some modern epistemologists, such as Kant and the neo-Kantians, who divide the cognitive functions into passive and active functions.
247. Nishida is thus advocating here the existence of something more basic than the so-called free will that is behind our actions. Again he is opposing the perspective of the rationalists and also the free-will individualists.

248. Thus we are self-contradictory in that in our interrelationship with the environment we must negate ourselves while in our willing we affirm ourselves. In perceiving things, receiving information from them, we are self-negating; but in willing, acting upon things, we are self-affirming. The two are united in our acting-intuition.
249. This is to say that we are creative elements of the world's self-formation.
250. See Heraclitus's frag. 53 in Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 74: "War is father of all, and king of all." And frag. 80 in *ibid.*, 78: "One must realize that war is common, and justice strife, and that all things come to be through strife and are [so] ordained." The English is from Robinson, *Heraclitus: Fragments*, 37, 49. And Aristotle (in his *Eudemian Ethics* 1235a25) cites Heraclitus as saying that "Would strife be destroyed . . . there would be no harmony." See G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven, and M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983 [1957]), 194.
251. An alternate reading of this same sentence may be "Intuition is established with all elements being self-determinations of the creative world."
252. Nishida is referring to Conrad Fiedler. See his *Der Ursprung der künstlerischen Thätigkeit* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1887), in *Konrad Fiedlers Schriften über Kunst*, ed. Hermann Konnerth (München: R. Piper and Co., 1913), vol. 1, ch.5, 281–309, esp. 288–89. In English, see his *On Judging Works of Visual Art*, trans. Henry Schaefer-Simmern and Fulmer Mood (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957). "What excites artistic activity is that which is as yet untouched by the human mind. Art creates the form for that which does not yet in any way exist for the human mind and for which it contrives to create forms on behalf of the human mind. Art . . . climbs up from the formless to the formed" (49).
253. The reference is to Alois Riegl (1858–1903), an Austrian art historian who taught at the University of Vienna. See his *Stilfragen: Grundlegungen zu einer Geschichte der Ornamentik* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1975 [1893]), 20, where he speaks of the "artistic drive" (*künstlerischer Trieb*), and also 43. For English see: Alois Riegl, *Problems of Style: Foundations for a History of Ornament*, Evelyn Kain, trans. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992). On Riegl in English, see Margaret Iversen, *Alois Riegl: Art History and Theory* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993). In a talk given after this essay in 1937, Nishida speaks of Riegl's aesthetic will: "Riegl proposed the artistic will as the foundation of art—the will to give shape and form. Riegl introduced the abstracting impulse as opposed to empathy [into the vocabulary of aesthetics] . . . [A]bstraction is the denial of humanity, a movement toward 'liberation.'" Nishida, "On the Scholarly Method: A Public Talk at Hibiya Park," trans. Michiko Yusa. in Yusa, *Zen & Philosophy*, 274–75.
254. Namely, human beings as distinguished from mere living beings and inanimate matter.
255. Nishida is again referring to modern epistemological theories that divide the cognitive function into active/spontaneous and passive/receptive, that is, the thinking and the sensing. The I as merely seeing is hence passive.
256. Nishida is thinking of the world here in terms of a *basho* or place that encompasses subject and object to make the cognitive relation possible.
257. The point in the last few sentences seems to be that we are not merely passive in responding to the activity of the things that we see. We are also active, and yet in our activity of making things with tools, we are simultaneously being acted upon in our bodily nature by the world. The world's self-formation through our acting comes out in our unconscious desires, which then see the light in our creative acts for the sake of which things provide the medium.
258. This expresses a standpoint taken from Mahāyāna Buddhism, particularly Huayan Buddhism, that two things can each be thoroughly itself while simultaneously be interrelated so as to be identical in their mutual implication. In this case, I and thing are each what it is and yet the thing expresses one's self and the historical life flowing through the pulse in one's own creativity vis-à-vis the thing.

259. In other words, acting-intuition or seeing in acting is a process of individuation whereby one determines one's self as what one uniquely is.
260. Thus the creative dynamism of the historical world involves the creative interactions among individual selves, I and thou. As Nishida has already indicated, this self-formation cannot be reduced to the mere mechanism of matter nor to the merely biological.
261. Nishida is here targeting the Cartesian mind–body dualism by arguing that consciousness is linked to the body's acting in the world as a historical body that is a constituent participant in the historical world's self-formation. He overcomes dualism by looking at the whole within which both mind and body are inextricably joined together.
262. *Shinjin datsuraku*, “dropping off body-and-mind.” This is in reference to the confirmatory experience of the thirteenth-century Zen master Dōgen.
263. Nishida is implying here an inherent connection between suffering and self-contradiction. By pessimistic philosophers, he may have in mind Schopenhauer. He may also be thinking of the Buddhist understanding of suffering or dissatisfaction (*dukkha*) as related to impermanence and attachment.
264. The self is thus not a disembodied entity transcendent to the world. As embodied, we are in time and space, fully contextualized in a place and contingent to the historical world.
265. Our relationship with things in the world is a relationship that Nishida here calls “continuity of discontinuity.” This could be viewed as another development of the Mahāyāna Buddhist notion of nonuality whereby two different things are neither one nor two and yet *both* one and two.
266. *Technē* and logic are thus in a relationship of a continuity of discontinuity. Or at least there seems to be some sort of continuity between the opposite poles of our ways of approaching the real whether purely intellectually in logical terms or purely instrumentally with the body.
267. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 981a18: “[E]xperience is knowledge of individuals, art [*technē*] of universals, and actions and productions are all concerned with the individual.” McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 690. This would also be an example of the Hegelian concept of the concrete universal as applied to world history.
268. The implied point is that we come to possess tools to make things due to our being creative elements of the world's self-formation, that is, we actively participate in world history.
269. The meaning here is that in intuition—as implying the dynamic dialectic between the I and the thing—the subject–object dichotomy is lost so that I and thing are “one.” This of course does not mean a substantial oneness.
270. The implication is that authentic self-awareness is of the present, and that it is in this self-aware present moment that one is truly independent and free. The moment is the moment of decision.
271. Thus genuine self-awareness has to do with our bodily and creative interrelationship with the world of which we are creative components of its formation. At the moment of decision one becomes creative.
272. “Demonic” in the sense of the supernatural. Leo Frobenius. *Paideuma*, 173–80.
273. Immanuel Kant, *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* in *Kant's gesammelte Schriften* Band 4 (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1911), 433: “Der Begriff eines jeden vernünftigen Wesens, das sich durch alle Maximem seines Willens als allgemein gesetzgebend betrachten muß, um aus diesem Gesichtspunkte sich selbst und seine Handlungen zu beurtheilen, führt auf einen ihm anhängenden sehr fruchtbaren Begriff, nämlich den eines Reichs der Zwecke. Ich verstehe aber unter einem Reiche die systematische Verbindung verschiedener vernünftiger Wesen durch gemeinschaftliche Gesetze. Weil nun Gesetze die Zwecke ihrer allgemeinen Gültigkeit nach bestimmen, so wird, wenn man von dem persönlichen Unterschiede vernünftiger Wesen imgleichen allem Inhalte ihrer Privat Zwecke abstrahirt, ein Ganzes aller Zwecke (sowohl der vernünftigen Wesen als Zwecke an sich, als auch der

eigenen Zwecke, die ein jedes sich selbst setzen mag) in systematischer Verknüpfung, d.i. ein Reich der Zwecke, gedacht werden können, welches nach obigen Principien möglich ist.” And for the English, see Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1959), 51–52: “The concept of each rational being as a being that must regard itself as giving universal law through all the maxims of its will, so that it may judge itself and its actions from this standpoint, leads to a very fruitful concept, namely, that of a *realm of ends*. By ‘realm’ I understand the systematic union of different rational beings through common laws. Because laws determine ends with regard to their universal validity, if we abstract from the personal difference of rational beings and thus from all content of their private ends, we can think of a whole of all ends in systematic connection, a whole of rational beings as ends in themselves as well as of the particular ends which each may set for himself. This is a realm of ends, which is possible on the aforesaid principles.”

274. The reference is to French sociologist Gabriel Tarde, 1843–1904. The distinction made here is one between the subject–object perceptual relation and human relationships.
275. That is, in negating the sensible, the sensation is negated; in negating the object of desire, the desire is negated; in negating the content of faith, faith is negated; in negating the person to whom one has a relationship, an aspect of oneself is negated. This seems to be more Nishida’s reading of Tarde rather than what Tarde himself says, perhaps influenced by Nishida’s practice of Zen meditation and the Buddhist understanding of negation or emptiness. See Gabriel Tarde, “Opposition,” in *On Communication and Social Influence; Selected Papers*, ed. Terry N. Clark (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969). Also Tarde, *Les lois sociales: Esquisse d’une sociologie* (Le Plessis-Robinson, France: Institut Synthélabo, 1999).
276. Note that Nishida at times appears to contradict himself. The world of *logos*, the world of signs announces itself through the world of acting-intuition, the world that determines itself. And yet simultaneously, it is described as an opposite to the world of acting intuition. That is, language, the world of signs, is encountered in the world of acting-intuition but comes to assert a relative independence in its abstraction. This is intentional on Nishida’s part and is expressive of his own notion that the world is a contradictory identity, embracing oppositions.
277. “Cultural sciences” here translates *seishinkagaku*, literally meaning “spiritual” or “mental sciences.” Nishida most certainly is referring here to the German *Geisteswissenschaften*. This dichotomy between cultural or historical science on the one hand and natural science on the other hand is inherited from the neo-Kantians, especially Rickert.
278. This can be taken in both senses of “intuition,” i.e., something intuited or intuitable as well as an intuiting or intuiter, that which intuits.
279. That is, unrepeatability.
280. “Periphery” here seems to refer to the names and forms that give shape to the world’s “matter”—that is, “matter” taken in the broad sense of the term as “content”—giving expression to the world’s own self-determination. The absolute on the other hand, as the ultimate *basho* wherein this formation takes place, would be without periphery. Its image is of a circle without its circumference.
281. For perception, intuition, experience, along with names and forms, are all already taking part in the world’s self-formation.
282. Thus this “dialectic” is one of resonance or self-identity between the individual’s acting-intuition and the world’s self-formation, between individual and universal, microcosm and macrocosm. The dialectical universal encompasses this dynamic.
283. I.e., both intuiting and intuited, ultimately *self-intuiting*.
284. Nishida thus makes a connection in this paragraph between ethics and personality on the one hand and the world’s self-formation. (For Nishida ethics also has to do with personality

formation.) Rationality is only a sublimated surface of what is thus deeper and what extends beyond the confines of the ego to the world via the body.

285. The reference is to the French anthropological philosopher Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1857–1939).
286. Lévy-Bruhl states: “[W]hat appears contradictory to us does not seem to them [primitives]. They remain unaffected by it and seem able to adjust to the inconsistency. Their habit of thought, in this sense, would appear to be *prelogical*. This state of mind is narrowly bound up with the mystical conditioning of their whole mentality.” Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitive Mythology*, trans. Brian Elliott (St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press), 1983 [1935], 7). Elsewhere he remarks: “[T]he collective representations of primitive mentality, objects, beings, phenomena can be . . . both themselves and something other than themselves . . . they give forth and they receive mystic powers, virtues, qualities, influences, which make themselves felt outside, without ceasing to remain where they are . . . In other words, the opposition between the one and the many, the same and another, and so forth, does not impose upon this mentality the necessity of affirming one of the terms if the other be denied, or vice versa.” Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *How Natives Think*, trans. Lilian Clare (New York: Washington Square Press, 1966), 61.
287. Lévy-Bruhl, *Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1912), chap. 1, sec. 1, 27–40. In another book Lévy-Bruhl also states: “[T]he collective representations of primitives are not, like our concepts, the result of intellectual processes properly so called. They contain, as integral parts, affective and motor elements, and above all they imply, in the place of our conceptual inclusions or exclusions, participations which are more or less clearly defined, but, as a general rule, very vividly sensed.” Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *How Natives Think*, 64.
288. Lévy-Bruhl states: “[T]here is one element . . . never lacking in [the mystic relations sensed by primitive mentality between beings and object] . . . [T]hey all involve a ‘participation’ between persons or objects which form part of a collective representation . . . I shall call . . . the principle which is peculiar to ‘primitive’ mentality, which governs the connections and the preconnections of such representations, *the law of participation*.” Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *How Natives Think*, 61. On Lévy-Bruhl’s idea of participation see also his *Notebooks on Primitive Mentality*, trans. Peter Rivière (New York: Harper and Row, 1975 [1949]): “[T]he participation between an individual and his appurtenances indeed seems to be of a special nature; what is given or thought or felt in the first place is not the individual (without his appurtenances) and the appurtenances in so far as they exist apart from that individual (hair, saliva, sweat, etc.); it is the totality . . . of the individual and of the appurtenances unseparated in the feeling of them that one has . . . In order to be more faithful to the primitive mentality, it would be necessary to feel that the appurtenances are integral parts of the individual, and that it is in virtue of subsequent participations or of a beginning of reflection that they become detached from him” (13–14). “For the primitive mentality *to be is to participate*. It does not represent to itself things whose existence it conceives without bringing in elements other than the things themselves. They are what they are by virtue of participations: the member of a human group through participation in the group and in the ancestors; the animal or plant through participation with the archetype of the species, etc. . . . If participation were not established, already real, the individuals would not exist” (18). And: “In order that they [thing] shall be given, that they shall exist, it is already necessary to have participations. A participation is not only a mysterious and inexplicable fusion of things that lose and preserve their identity simultaneously. Participation enters into the very constitution of these things. Without participation, they would not be *given* in experience: they would not exist . . . Participation is thus *immanent* in the individual. For it is to it that it owes being what it is. It is a *condition of its existence*, perhaps the most important, the most essential” (192).

289. The same graphs for *meigō* can also be read as *myōgō* when taken in a specifically Buddhist context (although that is not the context here). In the latter case it would refer to the name of the Buddha uttered in prayer (e.g., *namu Amida butsu*).
290. In both regions of mechanization, civilization, and instrumentalization on the one hand, and of the merely nominal or the primitive on the other hand, historical life and its acting-intuition become lost. While historical life in both regions have been lost it is still their creative source via its own negation.
291. Immanuel Kant says that time is that in which succession or coexistence can be represented as its determinations. As such time serves as the permanent substratum of change and coexistence. See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), B224–225.
292. Nishida wants to point out that time entails the contradiction between its own permanence and the change suffered by the temporary.
293. Aristotle, *Categoriae* (*Categories*) 2a11-b8 in McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 9.
294. *ἐντελέχεια*, the state of complete actualization. In Aristotle, *entelecheia* is a thing's actuality, that is, the mode of being of a thing whose essence is completely realized, as opposed to *dynamis* or potentiality. See, for example, *Metaphysics* 1047a30: "The word 'actuality', . . . we connect with 'complete reality.'" McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 823.
295. For Spinoza, substance is infinite, eternal, and one. Equated with nature *qua* cosmos, everything else is within it. Spinoza's substance is a transcendentalization of the grammatical subject that is framed by the subject–predicate syntactic structure. In contrast to Spinoza's prioritization of the grammatical subject, Nishida moves in the opposite direction, as we already saw in the "*Bashō*" essay.
296. The contradiction here is between the universal of life and the individuality of living things, the contradiction between grammatical predicate and subject.
297. That is, a judgment in which the meaning of the predicate is *not* already contained in the meaning of the grammatical subject.
298. This "someone" was Gongsun Long (Jpn: Kōsonryū) (ca. 320–250 BCE), one of the more prominent thinkers belonging to the Chinese school of Logicians. The "white" of "white horse" is a concept of color and the "horse" is a concept of form, i.e., a thing with shape. "Color" does not contain any concepts of form, and form does not contain any concepts of color. Because "white horse" is a twofold concept of "color" and "form," it is distinct from the single concept of "horse." And when we see a stone with our eyes, we understand its whiteness but not its hardness. And if we touch the stone with our hands, we understand its hardness but not its whiteness. Hence he claims that a hard rock and a white rock are not the same. On some of his arguments, including about the white horse, see Wing-tsit Chan, trans. and ed., *A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), 235–43.
299. That is, a contradiction between the grammatical subject ("red") and its predicate ("color") or between the individual ("red thing") and the universal ("color in general"). Although logicians would not regard these as contradictory, Nishida is pointing out the mutual exclusivity between meanings and ultimately between the subject *qua* transcendent object and predicate *qua* universal, and between the individual *qua* individual, escaping predication, and universal *qua* individual in its determining act.
300. *Kyakkanteki taishō* literally could be translated as "(epistemologically) objective object (of judgment)." It refers to the object of a judgment or cognition or perception that is "objective" in the sense of being verifiable.
301. Thus in modern epistemology, such as in Kant's, Nishida sees here the contradiction (and hence, contradictory unity) between form and matter. For Nishida such hylomorphic dualism points to the dynamic nondualism of self-forming formlessness.

302. This is in fact one of the points that makes Nishida's ideas closer in content to traditional Mahāyāna Buddhist thought than Hegel's sublational dialectics.
303. The implication is that self-contradiction and self-determination go hand in hand. This becomes understandable if we take self-determination as requiring a form of self-transcendence or self-negation to make oneself into what one currently is not.
304. The reference is to René Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* ("I think therefore I am").
305. Nishida may be thinking of the axiomatic truths of geometry as well as arithmetic that are directly intuited without deduction.
306. What Nishida here means by the determinate universal would be the concept that, as predicate, describes an individual thing. But this universal as concept cannot admit self-contradiction and is not truly self-expressive in its determining act. What replaces the universal concept in this regard to be what expresses itself in its determination, for Nishida, is *basho*, the place/field wherein individual and universal, (grammatical) subject and predicate, matter and form, thing and concept, (epistemological) object and subject, can appear as such and as conjoined.
307. The determinate universal, the concept, is thus itself a determined result of the world's self-determination. Thus what is expressing itself is rather the dialectical world itself.
308. The point is that the subject–object relation of knowledge and the correlating grammatical subject–predicate relation in judgment are established due to, or founded upon, the act of intuition wherein subject and predicate are united in the self-determination of the dialectical world, that is, the self-determination of the place (*basho*) of their interrelation. Intuition as such is self-contradictory from the standpoint of thinking.
309. Nishida is thus denying any sort of one-sided idealism that would posit the real as a product of the thinking mind. Rather what we perceive and what we know is a product of the dialectical interrelation between knower and known, which is also a relation of mutual self-negation. In acting-intuition, prior to the separation of subject and object, we encounter the other in self-contradiction.
310. There is thus necessity in the realm of contingency (the realm of facts as opposed to ideas) as well in terms of what the spatial and temporal environment prescribes, which in turn constitute the self in that situational context.
311. That is, it does not fit a certain pre-given conceptual scheme.
312. The reference is to acting-intuition in its "dialectical" involvement with the world. It is only subsequently that opposites become abstracted out of that primal dynamic unity and regarded as separate elements, such as the subject and predicate of a judgment or the individual substance and the universal concept characterizing it.
313. That is, the world of contradiction encompasses the world of noncontradiction.
314. Emile Durkheim, *Les règles de la méthode sociologique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963 [1950, 1895]), chap. 1, 3–14. He defines *fait social* ("social fact") as follows: "Est fait social toute manière de faire, fixée ou non, susceptible d'exercer sur l'individu une contrainte extérieure; ou bien encore, qui est générale dans l'étendue d'une société donnée tout en ayant une existence propre, indépendante de ses manifestations individuelles" (14). For the English, see Emile Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method*, trans. Sarah A. Solovay and John H. Mueller (New York: Free Press, 1964 [1938]): "A social fact is every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint; or gain, every way of acting which is general throughout a given society, while at the same time existing in its own right independent of its individual manifestations" (13). For Durkheim, social fact was a category of facts encompassing belief, practice, action, thought, feeling, etc. which are extra-individual. See also Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. W. D. Halls (London: Macmillan, 1984): "Social facts are not the mere development of psychological facts, which are for the most part only the prolongation of social facts within the individual consciousness" (286–87).

315. Nishida is referring to later essays in the volume, *Tetsugaku ronbunshū II* (*Philosophical Essays*, vol. 2) in which this present essay is included. These sentences in parentheses are Nishida's addition to this essay on the occasion of this inclusion.
316. *Doxa* (δόξα) is opinion based on conjecture, prejudice.
317. Although all life is dialectical, in human life the dialectical interrelationship between forming and being formed, creating and being created, becomes more pronounced or explicit in our *seeing* of forms through our acting-intuition.
318. This may remind some readers of Heidegger's claim that while humans possess a world, animals do not possess a world because animals do not relate to things as . . . (such and such). For example, a lizard sitting on a rock is not aware of the rock as a rock. See Heidegger's *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*.
319. For moral conduct always entails an overcoming of self-centeredness, a transcendence or negation of the self, to see the world in light of the not-self.
320. The implication is that the holism of philosophy is related to *logos*-orientedness, that is, it is *logos*-bearing, while art is related to *technē*-orientedness, i.e., it is *technē*-bearing. But both are dialectically related to the world and founded upon acting-intuition.
321. What is interesting here is that Nishida seems to be denying that the world can be experienced in its pure immediacy as something static. Rather the world even in its "immediacy" is always already formed and forming. For we ourselves even as perceivers are always already caught up in the midst of its dynamism as its creative elements. In that sense the immediate is already mediated; or, the immediate is mediation, i.e., *medium* or *basho*. Cf. Stillness in motion and motion in stillness.
322. And thus in acting, in a certain sense, it is not I (my self) who acts but rather a dynamic source of life-activity acting through the world.
323. Nishida here may be referring to Nietzsche's discussion of self-deception.
324. This, however, is not Nishida's standpoint.
325. Andreas Speiser, *Die Theorie der Gruppen von endlicher Ordnung* (Berlin: Julius Springer, 1923). Speiser was a Swiss group theorist.
326. Nishida probably has Aristotle in mind.
327. It is the individual that can take on various characteristics (predicates) without changing its individual distinctness. This is what Aristotle calls *ousia* (substance).
328. G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke 8: Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse* (1830): *Erster Teil: Die Wissenschaft der Logik Mit den mündlichen Zusätzen* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970), §166: "[I]n jedem Urteil solcher Satz ausgesprochen wird: 'das Einzelne ist das Allgemeine', oder noch bestimmter: 'das Subjekt ist das Prädikat' . . . [B]leibt das ganze allgemeine Faktum, daß jedes Urteil sie als identisch aussagt" (317). For the English, see *Hegel's Logic Being Part One of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, trans. William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975): "[I]n every judgment there is . . . a statement made, as, The individual is the universal, or still more definitely, The subject is the predicate . . . [I]t is . . . the universal fact that every judgment states them to be identical" (231). Nishida is here noticing a contradiction implied within judgment as such.
329. Nishida is here departing from the merely Hegelian concept of the concrete universal. He is thinking of the "universal" in terms of *basho*, that is, as a "place" or "field" wherein the one is related to the many and the many are related to the one, whole is related to parts and parts are related to whole. The unity of this one-many, many-one, is relegated by Nishida to the *basho* of absolute nothing.
330. In this sense what intuition reaches is always that which has already been and is in the midst of being constituted or determined through our acting, which simultaneously is the world's dialectical self-determination. This distinguishes Nishida's sense of intuition from the intuition of Husserlian phenomenology for which the object reached in its immediate presence is static and complete.

331. The present is thus not a static now-point. It is related to the past and future in this process of dialectical determination.
332. The present as what has been determined is always finite. The world of the present as such is a plastic world, providing the material for its formation. The meaning of “plastic” here is in the sense of plasticity, as in the “plastic arts.”
333. These few previous sentences show the dialectical nature of our acting in the world wherein we are both free and determined, both agent and means of the world’s formation.
334. It is good to remember here that *genjitsu* (“actuality”) conveys the sense of *present* reality. See nn. 2 and 182 on *genjitsu* and also n. 16 from the first essay.
335. Nishida is here replying not only to Descartes but also to Marx.
336. Thus *being*, taken existentially as one’s “*I am*,” for Nishida is a more encompassing category than *thought* or *work*. Perhaps we may say that Nishida is providing an ontological foundation for Hegel’s dialectic (founded upon *thought*) and Marx’s dialectic (founded upon *labor*).
337. For time is always experienced as present in its presencing movement as long as we are bodily and thus acting beings.
338. One might keep in mind that *kettei* also has the connotation of “decision.” Self-determination then is always at the moment of *de-cision*, a discontinuity that cuts the present moment off from past and future as unique. And yet there is also the continuity with past and future, making time a “continuity of discontinuity,” and hence, self-contradictory.
339. “Actuality” translates *genjitsu*. It is good to keep in mind here the sense of presence or the present retained in the meaning of *actuality* (*genjitsu*).
340. The implication here then is that the *ideas* are not prior to historical formation as the tradition of Plato would have it, but themselves elements taking part in the creative act, themselves constituted while constituting.
341. This is one important distinction Nishida makes between his understanding of the universal and that of Plato or Aristotle, and in the end even of Hegel, which he believes tends to erase the uniqueness of the individual in order to extract from it the commonness of the universal.
342. Time and space are not logical contradictories in the sense that affirmation and negation, yes and no, are. It is good to keep in mind that Nishida takes contradiction in a broader scope than, but nonetheless inclusive of, contradiction in the purely logical sense. But on the other hand they can be interpreted as contradictories if we take the exclusivity of each in the sense that time is not-space and space is not-time.
343. That is, instead of being actual it would be abstract.
344. Self-contradiction in lieu of its de-substantialization then is what allows for change, for without de-substantialization change cannot occur, akin to how emptiness in Mahāyāna Buddhist thought allows for change. This idea is then connected to what Nishida means by the “continuity of discontinuity.”
345. The present merges into what it is not, the past and future. Nishida may have in mind William James’s concept of “fringe” consciousness existing as a “vague halo” on the periphery of consciousness, surrounding its flowing continuum, and which James distinguishes from the “focal,” “substantive,” or “nuclear” consciousness that involves clear representation with thoughts. On the fringe, James states: “Every definite image in the mind is steeped and dyed in the free water that flows round it. With it goes the sense of its relations, near and remote, the dying echo of whence it came to us, the dawning sense of whither it is to lead. The significance, the value, of the image is all in this halo or penumbra that surrounds and escorts it,—or rather that is fused into one with it and has become bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh . . . Let us call the consciousness of this halo of relations around the image by the name of ‘psychic overtone’ or ‘fringe.’” William James, *Psychology: The Briefer Course* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985 [1961]), 32–33.

Another Jamesian definition of “fringe” is “the influence of a faint brain-process upon our thought as it makes it aware of relations and objects but dimly perceived.” William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 1:249.

In regard to the temporal present, James writes that it is apprehended only “as entering into the living and moving organization of a much wider tract of time . . . In short, the practically cognized present is no knife-edge, but a saddle-back, with a certain breadth of its own on which we sit perched, and from which we look in two directions into time. The unit of composition of our perception of time is a *duration* . . . [W]e seem to feel the interval of time as a whole, with its two ends embedded in it.” James, *Principles of Psychology*, 1:573–574; and also James, *Psychology: the Briefer Course*, 145. If Nishida indeed has James in mind, then this may give us a clue as to the meaning of Nishida’s own seemingly particular use of “negation.” For in the case of time, what may appear linguistically or conceptually as a clear logical distinction between the present and its negation (past or future), in actuality (that is, as experienced) is not so clear-cut. This would be an example of what Nishida means by the “identity of contradiction” between is and is-not. In Nishida, the present and the past are held together through such “identity of contradiction,” and the same is true with the future.

346. In all of the major Mahāyāna schools of thought the transcendent is collapsed into the immanent. For example, in Huayan (Kegon) Buddhism, emptiness taken as the universal pattern (li, Jpn: ri) of all thing-events is nondifferent from their very co-being (*shi-shi wu-ai*, Jpn: *jiji muge*; literally “non-obstruction between thing-events”). Similarly Nishida here collapses the distinction between the absolute and the actual.
347. This also shows how Nishida’s so-called dialectic differs from Hegel’s, since Hegel’s absolute is a concept while Nishida regards the absolute in light of the very interrelations and interdependence of thing-events as their very field or *basho*, the world which in itself recedes into inconceivability.
348. The point is that intuition, as opposed to mere fantasy, involves our dynamic interaction with the world.
349. See Henri Bergson’s *Creative Evolution* where he uses the example of art to argue for the sake of creativity against determinism: “The finished portrait is explained by the features of the model, by the nature of the artist, by the colors spread out on the palette; but even with the knowledge of what explains it, no one, not even the artist could have foreseen exactly what the portrait would be, for to predict it would have been to produce it before it was produced . . . Even so with regard to the moments of our life, of which we are the artisans. Each of them is a kind of creation.” Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 6.
350. That is, in reference to the plastic arts.
351. Or everything akin to the Platonic *ideas*, everything *ideal*.
352. For a life that is full would seem to involve the experiencing of opposites and their oppositions.
353. See Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 164–65.
354. The background plenitude would be the place (*basho*) that negates itself *into* the background, to give space to that which appears in contrast with this background. The background entails the contexts of determination. It is thus paradoxically *plentiful* and yet *nothing*. This relates obviously to the next sentence.
355. Departure. In the context of medieval Christian theology, *egressus* has been used to mean emanation from God.
356. Return. In the context of medieval Christian theology, *regressus* has been used to mean return to God.
357. Aristotle conceived of time in his *Physics* and his *Metaphysics* as the measurement of before and after.
358. See Augustine’s *Confessions*, chap. 11.

359. Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886): “[N]ichts weiter geschrieben werden kann, als die Universalgeschichte.” See Leopold von Ranke, *Zur eigenen Lebensgeschichte*, in *L.v. Rankes Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 53/54, ed. Alfred Dove (Leipzig: Dunker and Humblot, 1890); letter to Heinrich Ritter, Feb. 18, 1835, 270. Ranke undertook the monumental task of writing a “universal” history (*Universalgeschichte*) that encompasses the events of all nations and periods in their interrelationships. See for example, Leopold von Ranke, *The Secret of World History: Selected Writings on the Art and Science of History*, trans. Roger Wines (New York: Fordham University Press, 1981).
360. That is, the particular must necessarily refer to the world. It can never be isolated.
361. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie*, §166, §175 and supplement (*Zusatz*) in *Werke* 8, 316–17, 326–27, e.g., “Das Subjekt, das Einzelne als Einzelnes . . . ist ein Allgemeines” (326). For the English, see *Hegel’s Logic*, 231 and 239, e.g.: “[T]he subject, the individual as individual . . . , is a universal” (239).
362. As substance it must be able to take on universal characteristics.
363. That is, it must be the concretion of a universal allowing us to think of it.
364. The point here is that it is neither a conceptual unity standing outside of time nor a substantial unity persisting through time, neither of which would admit of self-contradiction. Unity through acting-intuition is a unity of opposites including contradiction.
365. It is not that individual substances make up the world. Rather the world, allowing for multifarious contradictions, underlies these individuals and their interrelations. In this sense, the world as that which stands under (*substantia*) as place/field (*basho*) is “substantial,” but not in the sense of being eternally unchanging and resisting contradictions.
366. This is in reference to Zen Buddhism’s idea of stillness in motion and motion in stillness.
367. Every individual as the particular of a universal may be thought of as the determination of a concrete universal. But even in virtue of its very individuality, the fact that each individual substance is individual means it is simultaneously universal.
368. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie*, §166, §175 and supplement (*Zusatz*) in *Werke* 8, 316–17, 326–27; *Hegel’s Logic*, 231 and 239.
369. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie*, §177, in *Werke* 8: “Das Urteil . . . der Identität des Inhalts in seinem Unterschiede . . . enthält im Prädikate teils die *Substanz* oder *Natur* des *Subjekts*, das *konkrete Allgemeine*,—die *Gattung*” (328). English: “The Judgment . . . of the identity of the content in its difference . . . contains, in the predicate, partly the substance or nature of the subject, the concrete universal, the *genus*.” *Hegel’s Logic*, 241.
370. The universal and the particular are still inadequately mediated in Hegel’s system. Nishida is here offering his dialectic as an alternative to Hegel’s. For the universal and the particular to be truly immediate or simultaneous, the concrete universal must be the world (of the one and the many) that dialectically determines itself through opposites such as universal and particular/individual.
371. For the concretization of the universal, that is its dialectical determination, occurs through acting-intuition, actuality wherein the full present is in touch with the eternal.
372. That is, when it is truly singular.
373. This points to the contradictory identity between individual and environment or world. Each individual thing, once identified with the world, thus also mediates the other individual things; each is what it is in its interrelationship with the others and the world itself.
374. That is, the world in its present takes on a determinate shape on the basis of its past and future.
375. That is, the particular in expressing the world.
376. That is to say, of history and logic, history is the broader and more encompassing sphere, the medium or *basho* of logic. Everything is already mediated in the sense that it is in the historical world.

377. Louis de Broglie, *Matière et lumière* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1937), 303. For the English, see Louis de Broglie, *Matter and Light: the New Physics* (New York: Dover Pub., 1946; repr., New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1939), 272: “Yes, they do exist, but only in the way in which a possibility exists before the event which will tell us whether it has in fact been realized.” De Broglie’s full name was Louis Victor Pierre Raymond, 7th duc de Broglie, but was generally known as Louis de Broglie. He was a French physicist who lived from 1892 to 1987 and is known for introducing his theory of electron waves. He suggested in his PhD dissertation that not only light but matter might exhibit the dual characteristics of wave and particle. He won the Nobel Prize in physics in 1929 for discovering the wave nature of electrons (the de Broglie Hypothesis).
378. In other words, Descartes’ *ego cogito ergo sum* is still a formative act of life.
379. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie*, §180 in *Werke* 8, 331: “[I]ndem seine Momente zugleich als Subjekt und Prädikat unterschieden sind, ist er [der Begriff] als Einheit derselben, als die sie vermittelnde Beziehung gesetzt,—*der Schluß*” (331). And the English is: “While its constituent elements are at the same time distinguished as subject and predicate, the notion is put as their unity, as the connection which serves to intermediate them: in short, as the Syllogism.” *Hegel’s Logic*, 244. Also see Hegel, *Werke* 6: *Wissenschaft der Logik 2: Erster Teil: Die objektive Logik, Zweites Buch, Zweiter Teil: Die subjektive Logik* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1969), *Drittes Kapitel: Der Schluß*, 351–54. For the English see, Hegel, *Hegel’s Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 1969), 664–66.
380. That is, every syllogism or inference has an “objective meaning” irreducible to the propositional form. It must refer to something in the realm of objects, embodying the dialectical process of opposites, a dialectic between the ideal and the real. Nishida calls the realm wherein we experience this tension between such ultimate opposites, “life.” Life is the *basho* exceeding the purely ideal domain. This is a development from the “*Basho*” essay.
381. Nishida is thus tracing rationality or *logos* not to thought but rather to the formative act of historical life.
382. That is, life is the medium, the *basho*, of logic.
383. These sentences make it clear that Nishida moves in the direction opposite to that of idealism.
384. “Subjective” in the sense of belonging to, or being of, an embodied subject or subject-body, that is, a body that is a subject or agent of motion and creation in the world.

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