Zen
and the
Modern World

Zen and the Modern World

A Third Sequel to
Zen and Western Thought

Masao Abe

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Contents

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chapter 8 were translated by James Fredericks. They are both revisions of a presentation given at the Rakuyū Kaikan of Kyoto University on November 17, 1974, as a memorial lecture for the thirtieth anniversary of the FAS Society founded by Hisamatsu Shin'ichi. Previously published material has been edited for consistency in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and italicization.

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Editor's Introduction

Multiple Levels of Significance of Abe's Works

Masao Abe's first book published in English, *Zen and Western Thought* (1985), edited by William R. LaFleur, is a collection of essays on comparative philosophy of religion. This highly acclaimed volume has won a major award from the American Academy of Religion, and it has remained a mainstay of reading lists in studies of Zen Buddhism and its relation to the Western intellectual tradition culminating in existentialism and phenomenology. Since that time, there have been two sequels, both edited by Steven Heine: *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue* (1995) and *Zen and Comparative Studies* (1997). The current volume is the third sequel, or the fourth in this series of collected essays on Zen Buddhism as seen in the context of Western thought by one of Japan's leading contemporary thinkers and scholars of Buddhism.

In addition to this series, several other noteworthy publications by and about Professor Abe are available in English. These include Abe's examination of the founder of the Sōtō Zen sect, *A Study of Dōgen: His Philosophy and Religion* (1991), edited by Steven Heine, and his approach to interfaith dialogue in *Divine Emptiness and Historical Fullness: A Buddhist–Jewish–Christian Conversation with Masao Abe* (1995), edited by John B. Cobb Jr. and Christopher Ives. Abe also coproduced two translations, *An Inquiry into the Good* by Kitarō Nishida (1991), with Christopher Ives; and, with Norman Waddell, *The Heart of Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō* (2002), a collection of translations first published in *The Eastern Buddhist* journal in the 1970s. Furthermore, Abe edited a book about one of his mentors in *A Zen Life: D. T. Suzuki Remembered* (1986), and Abe's remarkable impact on a couple of generations of Western scholars is explored in *Masao Abe: A Zen Life of Dia-*

logue (1998), edited by Donald W. Mitchell. In recent years, Abe has also published numerous books in Japanese, including *Kongen kara no shuppatsu* (Arising from the Root), *Kyogi to kyomu* (Falsity and Emptiness), and *Hibutsu hima* (Neither Buddha nor Demon). Some of the material in these books consists of essays that date back twenty or thirty years, and some of it is newer material.

The significance of Abe's works and approach to understanding Zen Buddhism and religion as a whole, as well as their influence in Japan and the West, is quite extensive and functions on several thematic and methodological levels. First, Abe, as one of the main heirs to the philosophical legacy of Nishida and his followers, is a major representative of and commentator on the Kyoto School, which has sought a critical, comparative linking of Eastern and Western thought. Second, Abe, who has been called the leading exponent of Zen Buddhism in the West since D. T. Suzuki, has articulated the meaning of Zen thought in a uniquely compelling way. It is at once true to the original tradition and appropriately relevant to a variety of comparative standpoints, ranging from biblical Judeo-Christianity to modern existentialism, phenomenology, and post-modernism.

A third point about Abe's significance is that he has consistently engaged in constructive philosophical and interfaith dialogue with leading figures in the West, such as Paul Tillich, Hans Küng, and Eugene Borowitz, as well as dozens of other junior and senior colleagues, students, and disciples. As the titles of three of the books mentioned above indicate—two of the books are by Abe *(Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue* and *Divine Emptiness and Historical Fullness: A Buddhist-Jewish-Christian Conversation)*, and one is about him *(Masao Abe: A Zen Life of Dialogue)*—Abe's approach based on constructive, mutually respectful, yet critical intellectual interaction and dialogue has always lain at the heart of his lifelong mission. Fourth, Abe has been committed to the ideal that comparative philosophy must not be an abstract intellectual exercise but needs to be linked to concrete historical events and to the most important social and ethical concerns, such as the nuclear age, the Holocaust, and the role of religious experience and faith in an environment of global technologiza-

tion and modernization. Finally, Abe's publications in English generally reflect the role of an exponent or representative of Japanese thought (especially Zen Buddhism and the Kyoto School), and his publications in Japanese reveal that he has emerged as a genuinely original and innovative philosopher conveying an important message that relates traditional Buddhist notions of nothingness and awakening to the contemporary scene. Abe's own philosophy should be seen against the backdrop of Zen and the Kyoto School but not evaluated in a way that limits its approach to this context.

The articles in this collection demonstrate all these levels of significance and particularly highlight the importance of Abe as a Zen thinker engaging in dialogue in Part I and a Kyoto School commentator in Part II. The book culminates with the highlighting of Abe as an original modern philosopher in Part III.

In Part I on social issues, chapter 1, "Two Types of Unity and Religious Pluralism," contains a discussion of how the mutual transformation of world religions is made possible through interpreting the issues of monotheism and a realization of Nichts (Nothingness), two types of unity or oneness, and the relation between justice and wisdom. Chapter 2, "The Meaning of Life in Buddhism," examines life and death in human existence from the perspective of the Buddhist notion of the timelessness of the unborn and the undying. Chapter 3, "Ethics and Social Responsibility in Buddhism," distinguishes and discusses the relation between two main dimensions of religion in Buddhist and Christian perspectives: the vertical dimension that is concerned with the salvation of the individual, and the horizontal dimension that involves the salvation of all humankind. Here, Abe explains the role of the FAS Society, which was based on Zen principles and founded by Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, the renowned Zen teacher from Kyoto's Myōshin-ji temple of the Rinzai sect.

In chapter 4, "Faith and Self-Awakening: A Search for the Fundamental Category Covering All Religious Life," there is a description of Wilfred Cantwell Smith's approach that clarifies the nature of faith as distinguished from belief. This chapter explains Smith's emphasis on the personalistic, historical-compara-

tive, and global-and-integral aspects of religions and contrasts these with the Buddhist standpoint of self-awakening. In chapter 5, "Religion and Science in the Global Age: Their Essential Character and Mutual Relationship," Abe explains what he thinks to be essential to the issue of the complex relation in the modern world between the religious and scientific worldviews. He then elucidates this theme from the Buddhist notion of dependent origination that is neither mechanistic nor teleological.

In Part II on Nishida and Kyoto School philosophy, chapter 6, "Nishida's Philosophy of 'Place,'" contains a discussion of the crucial notion of "place" or topos *(basho)* in Nishida's philosophy and the various meanings of this notion in terms of true reality, logic, classical Western philosophy, especially Aristotelian logic, and Mahayana Buddhism. This article was the third in a series of three articles, all of which originated from a presentation given by Professor Abe on the occasion of the Nishida Kitarō Memorial lectures in Kyoto on November 17, 1979. In it Abe shows how Nishida opened up a new spiritual horizon to work out a distinctive philosophical logic called Absolute Nothingness, or place.

In chapter 7, "Philosophy, Religion, and Aesthetics in Nishida and Whitehead," Abe explains the relation between the philosophical, religious, and aesthetic dimensions in Nishida's holistic approach to Absolute Nothingness in comparison with Whitehead's process philosophy.

Chapter 8, "The Problem of 'Inverse Correspondence' in the Philosophy of Nishida: Comparing Nishida with Tanabe," creates a philosophical dialogue between the two seminal figures in the Kyoto School representing the standpoints of Zen, or self-power *(jiriki)*, and Pure Land, or other-power *(tariki)*, respectively. Note that the original delivery of these essays was during a peak period in Abe's discussion of Nishida's philosophy, when he delivered and published numerous essays, several of which have been translated and published in English.[1]

In Part II, Abe is particularly concerned with clarifying the relation between the relative and absolute levels of nothingness, which is perhaps the central teaching of the Kyoto School.

Part III reveals key features in Abe's original philosophy.

Chapter 9, "Evil, Sin, Falsity, and the Dynamics of Faith," analyzes the similarities and differences of the key terms referring to deficiency and deception and also describes how these states are related to the awakening of faith through an awareness of inherent human limitation. In chapter 10, "Toward the Establishment of a Cosmology of Awakening," Abe puts forward his own distinct philosophy of awakening for the post-modern world and the possibility for the overcoming of nihilism that tends to consume the contemporary intellectual and spiritual environment. Post-modernity is not merely a temporal extension of the pre-modern and the modern. It represents a new socio-historical situation that in the depths of nihilism creates a spiritually challenging opportunity for human self-reflection, self-awareness, and self-transcendence based on primordial time and space prior to the act of reflection. This state culminates in the Buddhist Vow of compassion and an ongoing ethical commitment to relate spiritual transcendence to concrete social and ethical issues.

Abe's Relation to the Kyoto School

Abe spent much of three decades as a visiting scholar at some of the leading colleges and universities in America, including the University of Chicago, Claremont Graduate University, Columbia University, Haverford College, the University of Hawai'i, and Princeton University, among others. He is probably best known as a representative of the Kyoto School of philosophy, which is the single main example in modern times of traditional Japanese thought that was influenced by and conversant with Western philosophy and religion and has developed a comparative perspective on a global stage. As indicated above, the current volume is particularly notable for containing several outstanding articles about the Kyoto School in Part II, in addition to two essays in Part III translated here for the first time demonstrating Abe's own philosophy that articulates Kyoto School themes.

The Kyoto School was developed by Nishida Kitarō in the second decade of the twentieth century with the publication of *An Inquiry into the Good* and has included the works of some of his main followers, such as Tanabe Hajime and Nishitani Keiji, along

with several dozen other thinkers.[2] Abe was particularly influenced by Nishitani as well as Hisamatsu, in addition to the famed interpreter of Zen for the West, D. T. Suzuki. At the time of the publication of *Zen and Western Thought* nearly two decades ago, the writings of the Kyoto School thinkers, including Nishida, Tanabe, and Nishitani, were first being translated and disseminated in the West. Abe's book was received as part of a general opening up of interest and examination of this dimension of Japanese philosophy and its relevance for Buddhist studies and comparative philosophy as conducted in Western academe.

A further discussion of the background for understanding Nishida and Tanabe, as well as Abe's relation to them, has been provided by James Fredericks (with revisions by Steven Heine), who translated several essays in this volume, and is included as an introduction to Part II's study of Kyoto School philosophy.

Since the publication of *Zen and Western Thought*, the atmosphere surrounding the reception of Abe's work has been affected by two main developments in the world of Japanese studies. One is a turn in methodology in which philosophy and textual studies more generally have come to be viewed through the lens of cultural studies in a socio-historical context. That is, pure philosophy has become suspect, and writings about comparative religious thought are studied primarily in terms of their implications for society and politics. The other development is that the Kyoto School in particular has been scrutinized for its role in Japanese politics during the imperial era leading up to World War II, and whether Nishida and others were apologists for the imperial regime and atrocities committed in connection with the military effort has been a source of heated debate.

Somewhat like Martin Heidegger and Paul de Man, who were accused of harboring what in some cases was explicit support for the Nazi regime, Nishida Kitarō as a professor in a state university of Japan during the Pacific war has recently been criticized for his alleged complicity with Japan's ultranationalists. Tanabe's criticism of Nishida was derived in no small part from his own sense of repentance *(zangedō)* or *metanoia* that was expressed in a major book immediately at the conclusion of the war.

For criticism of Nishida, see *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, & the Question of Nationalism*, and for Tanabe's post-war repentance, see his *Philosophy as Metanoetics*, published in 1945, which was also the year of Nishida's death.[3]

In regard to the issue of Abe and his relation to the critique of the Kyoto School, some have criticized Abe for not having apologized for his predecessors' support of Japanese aggression. This criticism, however, seems untenable for several reasons. First, while Abe is a major figure in today's Kyoto School, it must be realized that the members of the philosophical movement held their individual beliefs and positions. During the imperial era, some of these thinkers were even criticized for not sufficiently supporting the military movement. As Michiko Yusa points out, "Given the interest that Nishidan philosophy has enjoyed in Japan and elsewhere, it is curious to observe that in the late 1930s his thought was considered pro-Western and counter to the 'Japanese spirit'; his physical safety was even threatened by ultranationalists."[4] Each of these individuals had different ideas regarding the issue and thus cannot be grouped together. It is not appropriate to condone Japanese militarism during the period in question, nor should we naively absolve the Kyoto School philosophers who may have supported it. Instead, it is necessary to emphasize the complexity of the historical and political context and leave open the evaluation of particular thinkers.

Abe's work has been produced in a more recent era (over the past thirty years) and may best be viewed as independent from the debate. Unlike others who have been accused of not being forthcoming with an apology, Abe's work was not a part of the pre-war period. Clearly his writings are not nationalistic or imperialistic. In fact, quite the opposite approach can be seen through the current collection of essays that emphasize genuine intra- and interfaith dialogue to pursue the underlying unity of religious and cultural perspectives. Furthermore, as indicated above and in the acknowledgments, the writings in this volume on Nishida were mainly composed in the late 1970s or 1980s, well before the recent controversy about the political implications of the Kyoto School emerged in mid-1990s Western schol-

arship. Also, Abe's critique of European "modernity" in chapter 10 is directed primarily at the worldview of nihilism already diagnosed in the West by Nietzsche, Sartre, and Camus rather than at a particular culture or society.

While the debate about the Kyoto School is to be applauded for taking a close look at some very significant historical and methodological questions, it should be noted that Abe is not avoiding a discussion of politics. Rather, his writings in Part II express a single motivation, which is an exposition of Kyoto School thought and fulfilling the spirit of identifying an underlying unity of thought in East and West devotional and contemplative religious traditions. In that regard, he is also critical of Nishida's approach, especially in chapter 8. These writings are to be understood and appreciated for their philosophical and religious content that may well endure long beyond the political debate. Therefore, it seems unfair to hold Abe accountable for what happened before his time and for beliefs he does not hold. Abe's life and works are a testament for enduring constructive cross-cultural dialogue that is not bound to a particular socio-historical context. Rather, he seeks to clarify the nature of modernity and to go beyond its constraints and limitations from an all-encompassing religious perspective. He is to be evaluated in terms of whether his insights penetrate and achieve this breakthrough.

Part I
Zen and Society

1
Two Types of Unity and Religious Pluralism

In the contemporary world of religious pluralism, not only the mutual understanding between world religions but also their mutual transformation through dialogue is necessary. We now exist in a world in which many people question the legitimacy of not only a particular religion such as Christianity, Buddhism, or Islam but also the legitimacy of religion as such. The most crucial task of any religion in our time is, beyond mutual understanding, to elucidate the raison d'être of religion as such. In the following, I will discuss three issues that suggest how mutual transformation is possible. The first issue is the role of a monotheistic God and the realization of Nichts (Nothingness); the second concerns two types of unity or oneness; and the third deals with justice and wisdom.

First, let us consider the role of a monotheistic God and the realization of Nichts. Western scholars often discuss religion in terms of a contrast between ethical religion and natural religion (as in the work of C. P. Tile), prophetic religion and mystical religion (F. Heiler), and monotheistic religion and pantheistic religion (W. F. Albright, A. Lang), with the first in each pair referring to Judeo–Christian–Muslim religions and the second to most of the Oriental religions. This kind of bifurcation has been set forth by scholars with such "Western" religions as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as the standard of comparative judgment. Consequently, non-Semitic "Oriental" religions are often not only lumped together under a single category, despite their rich variety, but also grasped from outside without any penetration into their inner religious core. Unlike the Semitic religions, which most Western scholars recognize as having a clear com-

mon character, such Oriental religions as Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Shinto exhibit significant differences in their religious essence and hence cannot legitimately be classified into a single category. Partly to bring this point into sharper focus and partly because I represent Buddhism, I will take up Buddhism alone from among the Oriental religions and contrast it with Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Most Western scholars correctly characterize Judaism, Christianity, and Islam not as natural, mystical, and pantheistic religions but as ethical, prophetic, and monotheistic ones. All three religions are based on the one absolute God: Yahweh in Judaism, God the Father in Christianity, and Allah in Islam. In each of these religions the one God is believed to be a personal God who is essentially transcendent to human beings but whose will is revealed to human beings through prophets and who commands people to observe certain ethico-religious principles. Although we should not overlook some conspicuous differences in emphasis among these three religions, we can say with some justification that they are ethical, prophetic, and monotheistic.

In contrast, Buddhism does not talk about one absolute God who is essentially transcendent to human beings. Instead, it teaches *pratityasamutpada*, that is, the law of dependent origination or conditional coproduction as the Dharma (Truth). This teaching emphasizes that everything in and beyond the universe is interdependent, co-arising and co-ceasing (not only temporarily, but also ontologically) with everything else. Nothing exists independently or can be said to be self-existing. Accordingly, in Buddhism, everything without exception is relative, relational, nonsubstantial, and changeable. Even the divine (Buddha) does not exist by itself but is entirely interrelated to humans and nature. This is why Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, did not accept the age-old Vedantic notion of Brahman, which is believed to be the sole and enduring reality underlying the universe. For a similar reason, Buddhism cannot accept the monotheistic notion of one absolute God as the ultimate reality, but advocates *sunyata* (emptiness) and *tathata* (suchness or as-it-is-ness) as the ultimate reality. *Sunyata* as the ultimate reality in

Buddhism literally means "emptiness" or "voidness" and can imply "Absolute Nothingness." This is because *sunyata* is entirely unobjectifiable, unconceptualizable, and unattainable by reason and will. It also indicates the absence of enduring self-being or the nonsubstantiality of everything in the universe. It is beyond all dualities and yet includes them.

In the realization of *sunyata*, not only sentient beings but also the Buddha, not only samsara of the cycle of transmigration but also nirvana or enlightenment, are without substance and are empty. Accordingly, neither Buddha nor nirvana but the realization of the nonsubstantiality of everything, that is, the realization of *sunyata*, is ultimate.

This realization of the nonsubstantial emptiness of everything is inseparably related with the law of dependent origination. Dependent origination as the Dharma is possible only when everything in the universe is without fixed, enduring substance (although possessing relative, temporal substance) and is open in its relationship with everything else. We human beings have a strong disposition to reify or substantialize objects as well as our own self as if they were permanent and unchangeable substances. This substantialization of and the concomitant attachment to objects cause human suffering. The most serious case of this problem lies in the substantialization of the self, which results in self-centeredness, and the substantialization of one's own religion, which entails a religious imperialism. Buddhism emphasizes the awakening to *sunyata*, that is, the nonsubstantiality of everything including self and Buddha, in order to be emancipated from suffering. Thus it teaches no-self *(anatman)* and awakening to Dharma rather than faith in the Buddha.

The Buddhist emphasis on no-self and emptiness, however, as Buddhist history has shown, often causes an indifference to the problem of good and evil and especially social ethics. Buddhists must learn from monotheistic religion how the human personality can be comprehended in terms of the impersonal notion of emptiness, and how to incorporate I–Thou relationships into the Buddhist context of emptiness.

In Christianity, God is not simply transcendent but is deeply

immanent in humankind as the incarnation of the Logos in human form, namely, Jesus Christ. Yet the divine and the human are not completely interdependent, for while the human definitely is dependent upon God, God is not dependent upon the human. The world cannot exist without God, but God can exist without the world. This is because God is a self-existing deity. God can and does exist by himself without depending on anything else. In this regard, Buddhists may ask: "What is the ground of this one God who is self-existing?" The Christian might answer by stressing the importance of faith in God, this faith being nothing but the "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1 AV). Further, God in Semitic religion is not merely the one absolute God in the ontological sense but a living and personal God who calls humans through his word to which humans must respond.

In his book *Does God Exist?* Hans Küng says: "God in the Bible is subject and not predicate: it is not that love is God, but that God is love—God is one who faces me, whom I can address."[1]

My Buddhist reaction to this statement is as follows: Can I not address God, not from the outside of God, but from within God? Again, is it not that God faces me within God even if I turn my back on God? The God who faces me and whom I address is God as subject. The God within whom I address God and within whom God meets me, however, is not God as subject but rather God as predicate. More strictly speaking, God is neither God as subject nor God as predicate, but God as Nichts. In God as Nichts, God as subject meets me even if I turn my back on that God, and I can truly address that God as Thou. The very I–Thou relationship between the self and God takes place precisely in God as Nichts. Since God as Nichts is the Ungrund (No-ground or Abyss) of the I–Thou relationship between the self and God, God as Nichts is neither subject nor predicate, but a copula that acts as a connecting intermediating link between the subject and the predicate. This entails that God as Nichts is Nichts as God; or God is Nichts and Nichts is God. On this basis we may say that God is love and love is God, because Nichts is the uncondi-

tional, self-negating love. This is the absolute interior of God's mystery, which is its absolute exterior at one and the same time. We may thus say God is love because God is Nichts: Nichts is God because Nichts is love.

This interpretation may not accord with traditional orthodoxy. Here, however, both human longing for salvation and the deepest mystery of God are thoroughly fulfilled. Further, God as subject who meets one and whom one can address as Thou is incompatible with the autonomous reason so important to modern humanity and so is also challenged by Nietzschean nihilism and atheistic existentialism. The notion of God as Nichts, however, is not only compatible with but can also embrace autonomous reason, because there is no conflict between the notion of God as Nichts (which is neither subject nor predicate) and autonomous reason, and because the autonomy of rational thinking, however much it may be emphasized, is not limited by the notion of God as Nichts. In the self-negating or self-emptying God who is Nichts, not only are modern human autonomous reason and rationalistic subjectivity overcome without being marred, but also the mystery of God is most profoundly perceived. God as love is fully and most radically grasped far beyond contemporary atheism and nihilism.

The second main issue in discussing religion concerns two types of unity or oneness. To any religion, the realization of the oneness of ultimate reality is important because religion is expected to offer an integral and total—rather than fragmental or partial—salvation from human suffering. Even a so-called polytheistic religion does not believe in various deities without order; it often worships a certain supreme deity as a ruler over a hierarchy of innumerable gods. Further, three major deities often constitute a trinity—as exemplified by the Hindu notion of Trimurti, or the threefold deity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. Such a notion of trinity in polytheism also implies a tendency toward a unity of diversity—a tendency toward oneness.

This means that in any religion the realization of the oneness of ultimate reality is crucial. Yet the realization of oneness necessarily entails exclusiveness, intolerance, and religious imperial-

ism, which cause conflict and schism within a given religion and among various religions. This is a very serious dilemma, which no world religion can escape. How can we believe in the oneness of the ultimate reality in our own religion without falling into exclusive intolerance and religious imperialism toward other faiths? What kind of oneness of ultimate reality can solve that dilemma and open up a dimension in which positive tolerance and peaceful coexistence are possible among religions, each of which is based on one absolute reality?

In this connection I distinguish between two kinds of oneness or unity. First, monotheistic oneness or unity; second, nondualistic unity or oneness. It is my contention that not the former but the latter kind of unity or oneness may provide a genuine common basis for the contemporary pluralistic situation of world religions. How, then, are monotheistic oneness and nondualistic oneness different from each other? I will clarify their differences by making the following four points.

First, monotheistic oneness is realized by distinguishing itself and setting itself apart from dualistic twoness and pluralistic manyness. Monotheism essentially excludes any form of dualism and pluralism and, therefore, stands in opposition to them. Precisely because of this oppositional relation, monotheistic oneness is neither a singular oneness nor a truly ultimate oneness. To realize true oneness we must go not only beyond dualism and pluralism but also beyond monotheistic oneness itself. Only then can we realize nondualistic oneness, because at that point we are completely free from any form of duality, including the duality between monotheism and dualism or pluralism.

Second, in monotheism, God is the ruler of the universe and the lawgiver to humans and his being is only remotely similar and comparable to beings of the world. Although the monotheistic God is accessible by prayer and comes to be present among humans through love and mercy, his transcendent character is undeniable. The monotheistic God is somewhat "over there," not completely right here and right now. Contrary to this case, nondualistic oneness is the ground or root-source realized right here and right now from which our life and activities can properly

begin. When we overcome monotheistic oneness, we come to a point that is neither one nor two nor many but is appropriately referred to as "zero" or nonsubstantial emptiness. Since the zero is free from any form of duality and plurality, true oneness can be realized through the realization of zero. My usage of zero in this regard, however, may be misleading, because zero is often used to indicate something negative. But in this context I use zero to indicate the principle that is positive and creative as the source from which one, two, many, and the whole can emerge. Since I use zero not in a negative sense but a positive and creative sense, I may call it "great zero." Monotheistic oneness is a kind of oneness that lacks the realization of great zero, whereas nondualistic oneness is a kind of oneness that is based on the realization of great zero.

Third, the true oneness, which can be attained through the realization of great zero, should not be objectively conceived. If it is objectified or conceptualized in any way, it is not real oneness. An objectified oneness is merely something named "oneness." To reach and realize true oneness fully, it is necessary to completely overcome conceptualization and objectification. True oneness is realized only in a nonobjective way by overcoming even great zero objectified as an end or goal. Accordingly, overcoming great zero as an end is a turning point from the objective, aim-seeking approach to the nonobjective, immediate approach, from monotheistic oneness to nondualistic oneness. Monotheistic oneness is oneness before the realization of great zero.

Fourth, monotheistic oneness, being somewhat "over there," does not immediately include two, many, and the whole. Even though it can be all-inclusive, it is more or less separated from the particularity and multiplicity of actual entities-in-the-world. This is because the monotheistic God is a personal God who commands and directs people. Nondualistic oneness, however, which is based on the realization of great zero, includes all individual things just as they are, without any modification. This is because in nondualistic oneness, conceptualization and objectification are overcome completely and radically. There is no separation between nondualistic oneness and individual things. At this point the one and the many are nondual.

The view of monotheistic unity does not admit fully the distinctiveness or uniqueness of each religion united therein, due to the lack of the realization of great zero, or nonsubstantial emptiness. By contrast, the view of nondualistic unity thoroughly allows the distinctiveness or uniqueness of each religion without any limitation through the realization of great zero, or emptiness. This is because the nondualistic unity is completely free from conceptualization and objectification and is without substance. In this nondualistic unity, all world religions in their uniqueness are dynamically united without being reduced to a single principle. This is, however, not an uncritical acceptance of the given pluralistic situation of religions. Instead, the nondualistic unity makes a critical acceptance and creative reconstruction of world religions possible because each religion is grasped in the nondualistic unity—not from the outside but deeply from within according to the dynamic laws of a positionless position, in other words, a position that is completely free from any particular position as absolute.

Let me make a proposal for how world religions can be regrasped from the standpoint of nondualistic unity in a manner that fosters world peace. When the divine, whether God or Buddha, is believed to be self-affirmative, self-existing, enduring, and substantial, the divine becomes authoritative, commanding, and intolerant. By contrast, when the divine, God or Buddha, is believed to be self-negating, relational, and non-substantial, the divine becomes compassionate, all-loving, and tolerant.

If monotheistic religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam place more emphasis on the self-negating, nonsubstantial aspect of their God rather than the self-affirmative, authoritative aspect of God—that is, if these religions understand the oneness of absolute God in terms of nondualistic oneness rather than in terms of monotheistic oneness—then they may overcome serious conflicts with other faiths and establish a stronger interfaith cooperation to contribute to world peace.

The third main issue deals with justice and wisdom. In Western religions, God is believed to have the attribute of justice, or righteousness as the judge, as well as love, or mercy as the for-

giver. God is the fountain of justice, so everything God does may be relied upon as just. Since God's verdict is absolutely just, human righteousness may be defined in terms of God's judgment.

The notion of justice, or righteousness, is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it aids in keeping everything in the right order, but on the other hand, it establishes clear-cut distinctions between the righteous and the unrighteous, promising the former eternal bliss but condemning the latter to eternal punishment. Accordingly, if justice, or righteousness, is the sole principle of judgment or is too strongly emphasized, it creates serious disunity and schism among people. This disunity is unresolvable because it is a result of divine judgment.

Although his religious background was Jewish, Jesus went beyond such a strong emphasis on divine justice and preached the indifference of God's love. Speaking of God the Father, he said, "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matt. 5:45 AV). Thus, he emphasized, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you. (Matt. 5:44 AV). Nevertheless, in the Judeo-Christian tradition, the notion of the divine is persistently evident. The Old Testament preaches God's choice of the people of Israel from among all the nations of the earth to be God's people in the possession of a covenant of privilege and blessing (Deut. 4:37, 7:6; 1 Kings 3:8; Isa. 44:1–2 AV). In the New Testament, divine election is a gracious and merciful election. Nevertheless, this election is rather restricted, for as the New Testament clearly states, "For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14 AV). Thus "the terms [election or elect] always imply differentiation whether viewed on God's part or as a privilege on the part of men."[2] In Christianity the notion of the "Elect of God" often overshadows the "indifference of God's love." If I am not mistaken, this is largely related to the emphasis on justice or righteousness.

While Christianity speaks much about love, Buddhism stresses compassion. Compassion is a Buddhist equivalent to the Christian notion of love. In Christianity, however, love is accom-

panied by justice. Love without justice is not regarded as true love, and justice without love is not true justice. In Buddhism, compassion always goes with wisdom. Compassion without wisdom is not understood to be true compassion, and wisdom without compassion is not true wisdom. Like the Christian notion of justice, the Buddhist notion of wisdom indicates a clarification of the distinction or differentiation of things in the universe. Unlike the Christian notion of justice, however, the Buddhist notion of wisdom does not entail judgment or election. Buddhist wisdom implies the affirmation or recognition of everything and everyone in their distinctiveness or in their suchness. Further, as noted above, the notion of justice creates an irreparable split between the just and the unjust, the righteous and the unrighteous, whereas the notion of wisdom evokes the sense of equality and solidarity. Again, justice, when carried to its final conclusion, often results in punishment, conflict, revenge, and even war, whereas wisdom entails rapprochement, conciliation, harmony, and peace. Love and justice are like water and fire: Although both are necessary, they go together with difficulty. Compassion and wisdom are like heat and light: Although different, they complement each other well.

The Judeo-Christian tradition, however, does not lack the notion of wisdom. In the Hebrew Bible, wisdom literature such as Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes occupy an important portion in which *chokma* (wisdom) frequently appears. This term refers to both human knowledge and divine wisdom. In the latter case, as wisdom given by God, it enables the person to lead a good, true, and satisfying life through keeping God's commandments. In the New Testament, *sophia* is understood to be an attribute of God (Luke 11:49), the revelation of the divine will to people (1 Cor. 2:4–7). But most remarkable, Jesus as the Christ is identified with the wisdom of God because he is believed to be the ultimate source of all Christian wisdom (1 Cor. 1:30). Nevertheless, in Judeo-Christian tradition as a whole, the wisdom aspect of God has been neglected in favor of the justice aspect of God. Is it not important and terribly necessary now to emphasize the wisdom aspect of God rather than the justice aspect of God

in order to solve the conflict within religions as well as among religions?

On the other hand, in Buddhism the notion of justice, or righteousness, is rather weak and thus it often becomes indifferent to social evil and injustice. If Buddhism learns from Western religions the importance of justice and develops its notion of compassion to be linked not only with wisdom but also with recognizing and treating evil, it will become even closer to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in its interfaith relationship and may become more active in establishing world peace.

2
The Meaning of Life in Buddhism

Buddhism does not understand human existence as a form of life, which has death as its inevitable end. Rather, human existence is a continuous process of living-and-dying *(shōji)*. The understanding of human existence that sees life as having death as its inevitable end presumes that life is lived only in opposition to dying and seeks the conquest of death; that is, immortality, or eternal life. Here, death is always seen as alien to life, something to be overcome. In contrast to this, the understanding of human existence as a continuous living-and-dying does not view life and death as objects in mutual opposition but as two aspects of an indivisible reality. Present life is understood as something that undergoes continuous living-and-dying. Therefore, Buddhism, which is based on this realization, seeks liberation from living-and-dying rather than the mere conquest of death alone. Buddhism's aim is not immortality and eternal life through a resurrection that conquers death, but the unborn and the undying *(fushō–fumetsu)* state of nirvana realized directly in and through living-and-dying by liberation from living-and-dying itself. Herein lies the fundamental standpoint of Buddhism.

Understanding human existence as consciously aware of inevitable death implies much about the beginning and the end of human existence. Understood thus, human existence is grasped as uniquely human and distinct from the existence of other animals. The fact that a human must die suggests a definitive beginning and end of human existence. In contrast to this view, the understanding of human existence as continuously undergoing living-and-dying does not recognize any special significance to the beginning and end of human existence. By interpreting human

existence in terms of living-and-dying, or as something that undergoes arising-ceasing *(shōmetsu suru mono)*, Buddhism does not necessarily view human beings as distinct from other animals. Rather, it sees humans as part of the radical impermanence of all and undergoing the vicissitudes of arising-ceasing, which is a dimension of life for all sentient beings *(shujō)*. Thus, human existence needs to be grasped in the dimension transcending the limits of human reason.

Buddhism talks about the vicissitudes of birth-and-death in terms of samsara and transmigration through the six realms: hell, hungry ghosts, animals, fighting spirits, humans, and gods. Buddhism also recognizes that karma, the root of transmigration for all sentient beings, not merely humans, penetrates the six realms of the "triple world." Therefore, Buddhism transcends humanism and anthropocentrism; it can be referred to as being beyond humanism. Buddhism, which understands human existence as a form of life that undergoes continuous living-and-dying rather than merely as life facing inevitable death, sees the human being as a sentient being originally transcending anthropocentrism. It also discloses the way to a fundamental emancipation of human existence based upon this transcendent dimension. What is called the Dharma in Buddhism is grounded on this way.

Accordingly, life and death or birth and death are not understood in Buddhism as two different entities. They are inseparably interconnected. This is why Dōgen, the thirteenth-century Japanese Zen master, emphasized that "it is a mistake to think that you pass from birth to death."[1]

In such an understanding of birth and death, in which a person sees death as an object over there while standing within life, he or she also, by interpreting the relation of birth and death in terms of "passing away," looks upon death and the present life of the self from a standpoint removed from both realms. The person who understands in this way grasps the relation of living-and-dying while standing outside it and thereby lapses into a standpoint that is the opposite of the existential reality of the self's continuous living-and-dying. In this case, anxiety about death is not addressed experientially, and the meaning and reality

of life are never truly investigated. One should not regard the relation of living-and-dying objectively *from outside*. Awakening to this relation needs to happen *from within*. In this manner, the living-and-dying process is not seen as a sequential change from the former to the latter. Rather, we are living-and-dying at each and every moment. This does not mean, however, that we are 50 percent living and 50 percent dying. That is not so! Rather we are 100 percent living and 100 percent dying at each and every moment. We are undergoing living-and-dying in each and every moment. The understanding that human existence constantly undergoes living-and-dying is the fundamental standpoint of Buddhism.

The Buddhist view can be clarified by contrasting it with Christianity, which sees human existence not as undergoing living-and-dying but as something that must die. In this Christian interpretation, dying and the conquest of death are regarded as serious issues in which the contrast between life and death is presupposed. In Christianity, the ultimate root of human life as part of creation is clear. Our human lives originate and develop by virtue of a Creator-God who dwells eternally. But even in Christianity, life is never simply presupposed. Christianity teaches that because Adam, the primordial person, committed the sin of disobeying the command of God, the human being, in punishment, became something that must die. Life's original connection to the Creator was cut off. In Christianity, the humans' attempt to establish themselves as separate from God and therefore as autonomous beings is regarded as sin in defiance of God. For this reason, humans, while originally deriving from the eternal life of God, became something that must die. Thus, humans are seen in Christianity as something that must die not simply as a matter of natural necessity but as a consequence of sin.

As the Genesis story shows, Christianity assigns to human beings the task of ruling over all other creatures and reserves for humans alone the *imago dei* through which they, unlike other creatures, can directly respond to the Word of God. Human death is understood as the "wages of sin," the result of one's own free acts, that is, rebellion against the Word of God. Here, one can see

Christianity's anthropocentrism. Accordingly, Christianity makes a clear distinction between humans and other creatures regarding their nature and salvation, with the former having priority over the latter. This anthropocentric standpoint is intimately related with Christianity's personalism in which God is believed to disclose himself as a personality and in which a dialogical I–Thou relation between the human and the divine is essential.

Does Buddhism establish any distinction between humans and other creatures? In Buddhism, do humans have special significance among creatures? In other words, it is only by getting beyond the limitations of the anthropocentric perspective that one comes to realize human birth-and-death as an essential part of a wider problem, the generation-extinction problem common to all living beings. This transcendence of the human perspective is impossible apart from the self-consciousness of human beings. Animals, *asura* (demons), and so on, like human beings, are all undergoing transmigration, equally confined within the realm of generation-extinction. Unlike human existence, however, other living beings cannot know transmigration as transmigration. For a human, who has self-consciousness and can realize the nature of generation-extinction as such, this becomes a problem to be solved rather than a fact. When a fact becomes a problem, the possibility of solving the problem is also present; in this case, the possibility of liberation from transmigration.

Because of this characteristic peculiar to humans, Buddhism emphasizes the need to practice Buddhist discipline and attain enlightenment while each of us, though transmigrating endlessly through other forms of life, exists as a human. The rare state of being human is, in Buddhism, highly regarded; one should be grateful one is born a human, for it is more difficult to be born a human than for a blind turtle to find and climb into the right-sized hole on a log floating in an ocean. Unlike other creatures, a human is a "thinking animal," endowed with the capability of awakening to the Dharma. Here one can see the Buddhist notion of the human being's special position among all living beings. It should be clear that while both Christianity and Buddhism are concerned primarily with the salvation of human existence, the

ground of salvation recognized by each of these religions differs: in Christianity it is personalistic, whereas in Buddhism it is cosmological. In the former, the personal relationship between a human being and God is axial, with the universe as its circumference. In the latter, personal suffering and salvation reside in the impersonal, boundless, cosmological dimension, which encompasses even the divine-human relationship.

How then does the truly subjective and existential realization of living-and-dying as the original experience of moment-to-moment living-and-dying take place? The first thing is to realize that life, which is itself living-and-dying, is none other than nothingness. To put it another way, life, which is itself living-and-dying, is none other than death in its essence. In the mode of attachment described above, life, which is itself living-and-dying, is grasped as being. But when living-and-dying is realized in terms of the original moment-to-moment living-and-dying, there can be no substantialization or objectification. That is because moment-to-moment living-and-dying is in itself directly realized right here and now in subjectivity. Therefore, our living-and-dying is nothingness in that it cannot be substantialized by any means. Further, at the root of the subject, this is realized as the nothingness of subjectivity itself in that it is nonobjectifiable by any means—that is, it is death. In the realization of moment-to-moment living-and-dying, our life, which undergoes living-and-dying, is indeed realized as death.

This is the realization of what Zen Buddhism calls the Great Death rather than a simplistic view of death. In thoroughly realizing the death of life, which is itself our living-and-dying in the realization of the Great Death, the root of the living-and-dying of the self is attained. To undergo the Great Death is to die in the authentic sense by realizing that the root of living-and-dying is none other than death in its authentic sense. But to undergo death by realizing the root of living-and-dying as death is to be liberated from living-and-dying in the root and precisely thereby to live life in its authentic sense. Therefore, in the realization of the Great Death, when we thoroughly die the death of life that is itself living-and-dying, the realization of life that is itself no-life-

and-death is manifested. The realization of life that is itself no-life-and-death, that is, the realization of nirvana, is inseparable from the realization of the Great Death. Indeed, it is precisely the realization of the Great Death itself. This is the principle that living-and-dying itself is nirvana.

The second implication contained in a truly existential realization of living-and-dying moment-to-moment is the insight that life is life and death is death. In the existential realization of moment-to-moment living-and-dying, the oneness of living-and-dying never means that life and death are seen in an immediate identity. When life is lived as a living-and-dying in the primordial, nonsubstantial nothingness, one realizes that life is bottomlessly life and death is bottomlessly death. Life does not change into death, and death does not take away life. That is why Dōgen writes that "life does not obstruct death, and death does not obstruct life." In the existential transcendence of living-and-dying, we realize that, in the present moment, life is absolute, and at the same time death is absolute. Of course, although life is absolute, this does not mean that life should be interpreted only as a substantive being. Rather, to realize life as absolute is to be existentially emancipated from life itself in that very realization, which understands that life is not life. The same applies to death. That is why Dōgen writes in the *Shōbōgenzō:*

> Being a situation of [timeless-] time *(hitotoki no kurai)*, birth is already possessed of before and after. For this reason, in the Buddha Dharma it is said that birth itself is no-birth. Being a situation of [timeless-] time as well, cessation of life also is possessed of before and after. Thus it is said, extinction itself is nonextinction. When one speaks of birth, there is nothing at all apart from birth. When one speaks of death, there is nothing at all apart from death.[2]

Mahayana Buddhists take samsara (endless transmigration consisting of living-and-dying) in itself as death in its authentic sense. Death in its authentic sense is not death as distinguished from life, just as the real Nothingness is not the nothingness as distinguished from somethingness. If we grasp the process of

transmigration, not from the outside (objectively) but from within (subjectively or existentially), then we are always living and yet always dying at every moment. Without living, there is no dying; without dying, there is no living. Living and dying are nondualistically one in our existential realization. Since living and dying are two opposing principles, this antinomic oneness of living and dying itself is the greatest suffering: Death. In this existential realization, the endless transmigration of living-and-dying as such is realized as the Great Death.

This implies that the process of transmigration, insofar as it can be said to be a continuity of endless living-and-dying in which each and every moment of living from the past toward the future is radically severed by dying both from what went before and what comes after. If it is a dynamic continuity of discontinuity of the process of living-and-dying that is endless, it is realized as the Great Death. With this realization of the Great Death as a turning point, however, the endless process of living-and-dying is re-grasped in an entirely new light. It is no longer a negative "continuity of *discontinuity*" (samsara), but rather a positive "*continuity* of discontinuity" (nirvana). This turning over takes place through the radical reversion at the depth of our existential realization. Through the realization of the Great Death, the realization of the Great Life opens up.

The Zen view that this present birth and death itself is the life of Buddha represents the realization of the unborn *(fushō)* in the thought of Dōgen. Therefore, it is mistaken both to detest birth-and-death as separate from nirvana and to seek nirvana as different from birth-and-death. Since, as Dōgen writes, birth-and-death is the "practice of the Buddha Way" or the "place of the Buddha Dharma," "to think that birth-and-death is something to be eliminated is a sin of hating the Buddha Dharma." At the same time, if one clings to nirvana while seeking nirvana, that is not genuine nirvana. Genuine nirvana is realized in entering into nirvana yet not abiding in nirvana; being liberated from birth-and-death, yet playing in the garden of birth-and-death. That is the genuine memory of birth-and-death. Thus Dōgen says, "Just understand that birth-and-death itself is nirvana" and

"The coming and going of birth-and-death is the true Person." It is also the principle of birth-and-death in the true sense. Dōgen writes, "Although birth-and-death is the vicissitude of the average person, it is the liberated place of the great sage." This explains why "the coming and going of birth-and-death is the true Person." That is, we generally vacillate, lost in the delusion of everyday living-and-dying, but if we penetrate the principle of living-and-dying, abandoning all illusory views, there is a detachment from living-and-dying while undergoing living-and-dying.[3]

As the above discussion implies, the realization of the Great Death has a double connotation: negative and positive. On the one hand, the Great Death is negative in that it entails the antinomic oneness of living-and-dying as the greatest suffering—the most serious existential problem that must be solved to attain emancipation. On the other hand, the Great Death is positive in that it entails the resolution to the problem of suffering and the realization of the Great Life. This double connotation and the accompanying shift from the negative to the positive connotation are possible because the Great Death is a total, holistic, and existential realization of the endlessness of living-and-dying in which one becomes identical with the Great Death and thereby overcomes the endlessness of living-and-dying. Once we come to this existential realization, we can say with justification that samsara and nirvana are identical. Thus the realization of the Great Death is the crucial point for the seemingly paradoxical Mahayana doctrine of the oneness of samsara and nirvana. This is simply another expression for the earlier statement that the realization of Absolute Nothingness is indispensable for attaining the Mahayana notion of emptiness, which is none other than Fullness.

Ethically speaking, Buddhists clearly realize that good should conquer evil. Through the experience of their inner struggle, however, Buddhists cannot say that good is strong enough to overcome evil. Good and evil are completely antagonistic principles, resisting each other with equal force, yet inseparably connected and displaying an existential antinomy as a whole. However imperative it may be from the ethical point of view, it is,

according to Buddhism, illusory to believe it is possible to overcome evil with good and thereby to attain the highest good. Since good and evil are mutually negating principles with equal power, an ethical effort to overcome evil with good never succeeds and results in a serious dilemma. Realizing this existential dilemma innate in human existence and characterizing it in terms of original sin, Christians have propounded the necessity of faith in God who delivers man from sin through his redemptive activity. From a Christian perspective, God himself is Good with a capital "G," as can be noted in the Biblical statement, "There is none good but one, that is, God" (Mark 10:18; Luke 18:19 AV). Since the law is the expression of God's will, obedience and disobedience to the law constitute human good and evil. Moreover, it is emphasized, "Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21 AV).

In Buddhism, on the contrary, what is essential for salvation is not to overcome evil with good and to participate in the supreme Good, but to be emancipated from the existential antinomy of good and evil and to awaken to emptiness prior to the opposition between good and evil. In the existential awakening to emptiness, one can be master of, rather than enslaved by, good and evil. In this sense, the realization of true emptiness is the basis for human freedom, creative activity, and ethical life.

Thus, the following two aspects of Buddhist salvation must be noted. First, Buddhism is primarily concerned with the salvation of a human being as a person who, unlike other living beings, has self-consciousness and free will and thereby alone has the potential to become aware of and emancipated from the transiency common to all things in the universe. This is the existentialistic aspect of Buddhism. Second, a cosmological dimension is the necessary basis for Buddhist salvation, because salvation is not from sin as rebellion against God. Rather, salvation means emancipation from the cycle of birth, which is part of the transiency of the universe. This is the significance of the cosmological aspect of Buddhism. These two aspects are inseparable—the more cosmological the basis of salvation, the more existentially thoroughgoing the salvation. In this sense, the Buddhist cosmol-

ogy, which is the basis of nirvana, is an existential cosmology, and Buddhist existentialism or personalism may be called "cosmo-personalism."

Mahayana Buddhism has always emphasized "Do not abide in nirvana" as well as "Do not abide in samsara." If one abides in so-called nirvana by transcending samsara, it must be said that one is not yet free from attachment to nirvana and is confined by the duality of nirvana and samsara. It must also be said that one is still selfishly concerned with one's own salvation, forgetting the suffering of others in samsara. Based on the ideal of the bodhisattva, Mahayana Buddhism thus criticizes and rejects "nirvana as the transcendence of samsara" and teaches true nirvana to be the returning to samsara by negating or transcending nirvana as the transcendence of samsara. Therefore, nirvana in the Mahayana sense, while transcending samsara, is the realization of samsara as samsara, no more, no less, through the complete returning to samsara itself. This is why, in Mahayana Buddhism, it is often said of true nirvana that "samsara-as-it-is is nirvana." This paradoxical statement is again based on the dialectical character of true nirvana, which is, logically speaking, the negation of negation (that is, absolute affirmation) or the transcendence of transcendence (that is, absolute immanence).

True nirvana is, according to Mahayana Buddhism, the real source of both *prajna* (wisdom) and *karuna* (compassion). It is the source of *prajna* because it is entirely free from the discriminating mind and thus can see everything in its uniqueness and distinctiveness without any sense of attachment. It is the source of *karuna* because it is unselfishly concerned with the salvation of all others in samsara through one's own returning to samsara. For the sake of wisdom, do not abide in samsara; for the sake of compassion, do not abide in nirvana. This is the meaning of life in Buddhism.

3
Ethics and Social Responsibility in Buddhism

Vertical and Horizontal Dimensions

Any religion, if it is authentic, is concerned not only with the salvation of the individual person but also with the salvation of all humankind. Needless to say, these two aspects are inseparable. When religion is concerned with the salvation of the individual, however, it opens up a most fundamental dimension that is beyond time and space. The religious salvation of the individual person is not possible in a merely humanistic, secular, and relative dimension that is limited by time and space, but only in a transhuman, sacred, nonrelative, eternal dimension. In this regard, religion is concerned with a "vertical" dimension, which elucidates the height and depth, or transcendent and immanent ground, of human existence. On the other hand, when religion is concerned with the salvation of all humankind, even while deeply rooted in a vertical dimension of human existence, it is involved in the "horizontal" dimension of breadth and chronological length, or world and history. In its horizontal dimension, then, religion is involved in social transformation and the development of history.

Although these two aspects of individual salvation and the collective emancipation of humankind are inseparable from each other and are included equally by all higher religions, the relation between transcendent individual salvation and social liberation—that is, the relation between vertical and horizontal dimensions—differs among the various religions. Some religions tend to place stronger emphasis on the transcendent ultimate ground, while some others give greater priority to liberation in history. Buddhism, for instance, which emphasizes self-awakening through

meditation, may be said to lay less stress on the horizontal, socio-historical dimension than does Christianity, which places much weight on God's rule of the universe and the divine plan for creation. The issues involved, however, need further clarification, for the apparent difference in stressing the horizontal dimension in contrast to the vertical is deeply related to the difference in the understanding of the vertical dimension itself—that is, the understanding of the nature of the transhuman divine reality and the ultimate ground of human existence.

In Christianity, the transhuman divine reality is God who is creator, judge, and redeemer, and who is believed to be the ruler of the world and history. Although Jesus as the Christ or savior takes human form as the incarnation of God, the Christian understanding of the human form of divine reality is fundamentally transcendent and hence is essentially different from humankind. Human beings are not creator but creature, not judge but the judged, not redeemer but the redeemed. This is because human beings are finite and originally sinful and cannot be saved by their own acts, but only through pure faith in the self-sacrificial love of God. Although God is believed to be the ruler of the whole universe, God is also believed to express himself through Logos (the World) to human beings, while nonhuman creatures, especially in Protestantism, have no direct connection with God's World but are dominated by human beings and participate in the divine administration through them. This is the reason why human history rather than nature is, in Christianity, understood to be the stage of God's work. Furthermore, the Christian notion of God indicates a God of love and righteousness as seen from Jesus' words: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33 AV).

By contrast, in Buddhism what corresponds to the transhuman divine reality is not the one God who is the ruler of the world and history, but the Dharma, that is, the law of dependent origination. The law of dependent origination stipulates that everything in the universe, human and nonhuman beings included, is interdependent. Nothing exists independently or can

be said to be self-existing. Accordingly, in Buddhism everything without exception is relative and relational, impermanent and changeable. There is nothing absolute, eternal, or unchangeable. And so, not only samsara but also nirvana is not eternal and unchangeable, not substantial. Nirvana is also without an unchangeable substance. Therefore, we should not cling or attach to nirvana as a goal. We should be free, even from nirvana; we should be returning to samsara to save our fellow beings who are still attached to samsara.

Thus, in this dynamic movement from samsara to nirvana and from nirvana to samsara, not only samsara in the secular dimension but also nirvana in the sacred dimension are done away with. In Buddhism, not only attachment to samsara but also attachment to nirvana must be overcome in order to attain true emancipation and liberation. This means that the Buddhist understanding of transhuman divine reality is significantly different from that of Christianity. In Christianity, the vertical dimension of human existence is understood finally to establish its root-source in God, who is fundamentally transcendent and supernatural, and who is love and justice. But in Buddhism, the vertical dimension is rooted in vast emptiness. It is neither transcendental nor immanent but is a source of both transcendence and immanence, wisdom and compassion.

Different Approaches to History

On the basis of their differing understandings of the ultimate reality to be realized in the transspatial and transtemporal vertical dimension, Christianity and Buddhism also have different approaches to the issues occurring in the spatial and temporal horizontal dimension of human history. In Christianity, God is believed to be the ruler of the world and history: Creation and the Last Judgment are the beginning and the end of the world established by God. God is also believed to reveal Himself directly in the midst of human history through the person of Jesus as the Christ, and Jesus' death and resurrection, being the center of history, is the historical event crucial to human salvation. Personal salvation, as well as the collective salvation of humankind, is pos-

sible in Christianity only through the historical event of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. In short, history is understood to be the work of God whose purpose is centered on and fulfilled in Jesus as the Christ. In this scheme, nonhuman nature is regarded as peripheral, for it is the divine-human relationship that is central to Christian salvation.

By contrast, in Buddhism, *sunyata*, or emptiness as ultimate reality, is entirely unobjectifiable and nonsubstantial in that *sunyata* is neither immanent nor transcendent, being beyond even the one God. In the realization of *sunyata*, both immanence and transcendence, the secular and the sacred, are paradoxically one. Each and every point of the world is fully immanent and fully transcendent, fully secular and fully sacred at one and the same time. Again, in the realization of *sunyata*, world and history are understood to be without beginning, as opposed to Creation, and without end, as opposed to the Last Judgment. The world and history are seen as entirely beginningless and endless; thus eternity is not realized beyond the end of the world and history, but right here and right now. This is because the beginningless and endless process as a whole comes to converge in the absolute present, which constitutes the locus of awakened selfhood. This realization of the paradoxical oneness of immanence and transcendence, of time and eternity, in the here and now, however, is not the goal of the Buddhist life but rather its ground and its point of departure. Without this realization, Buddhist life and activity do not properly and legitimately begin.

The problem of human living-and-dying cannot be resolved apart from the problem of impermanence common to humankind and nature. Unless the boundless dimension is opened up—this being the dimension in which the liberation of both inorganic nature and sentient beings occurs—human emancipation from transmigration is not conceivable. The opening up of this limitless dimension common to humankind and nature, however, does not preclude the special significance of human beings in the universe. This is because it is only in human beings, who are endowed with self-consciousness, that the boundless, transanthropocentric dimension is consciously opened up. Only human beings can go be-

yond their own centrism and actualize the transhuman, boundless dimension common to humankind and nature.

This transhuman, boundless dimension common to humankind and nature is the basis or ground for Buddhist salvation; Buddhist life and activity are therefore established on this basis. In this way, Buddhists are involved in the socio-historical events of the horizontal dimension while deeply rooted vertically in the realization of emptiness, which is beyond time and space. Buddhist activity on the horizontal dimension is motivated by compassion; a soteriological concern with the other's awakening that is rooted in wisdom. Soteriological concern with the awakening of others and self-realization of one's own awakening are not two different things but fundamentally one. Just as true nirvana is the dynamic movement between samsara and nirvana without attachment to either, true awakening consists of the dynamism of self-awakening and awakening others. The endeavor to awaken to self without awakening others is selfish, whereas the attempt to awaken others without awakening to self is powerless.

The Unity of Wisdom and Compassion

Wisdom without compassion is self-centered, whereas compassion without wisdom is feeble. Accordingly, every step of Buddhist activity on the socio-historical horizontal dimension is based on the dynamic intersection between self-awakening and awakening others, or between wisdom and compassion. Indeed, the Mahayana notion of the bodhisattva emphasizes the fundamental necessity of the compassionate work of awakening others even more than it emphasizes self-awakening, as can be seen in the Four Great Vows, which are recited by all Buddhists after every service:

> However innumerable sentient beings are,
> I vow to save them;
> However inexhaustible the passions are,
> I vow to extinguish them;
> However immeasurable the dharmas are,
> I vow to master them;

However incomparable the Buddha-truth is,
I vow to attain it.

Some of my American friends have told me they found these vows somewhat arrogant, as they vow to master the immeasurable Buddhist teachings and so forth. This may indeed sound arrogant if you believe that time and history have a beginning and an end. But, in Buddhism, since time and history are without beginning and without end, then it is possible to say: However innumerable sentient beings are, I vow to save them. And as I said, the beginningless and endless process of time and history is concentrated into the present moment only if we clearly realize the beginninglessness and endlessness of time and history.

The first vow, directed toward innumerable sentient beings, concerns the salvation of others. Only the second, third, and fourth vows, which pertain to passions, dharmas and the Buddha-truth, point to one's own awakening. Thus, the bodhisattva idea expressed in the Four Great Vows gives first priority to the salvation of others as the necessary prerequisite for one's own awakening.

In this connection I would like to mention my teacher, Hisamatsu Shin'ichi (1889–1980), and his idea of FAS. Hisamatsu was a professor of Buddhism at Kyoto University who was closely associated with D. T. Suzuki, although he was about twenty years Suzuki's junior. Hisamatsu was the most outstanding Zen philosopher of twentieth-century Japan. But far more than a scholar of Buddhism, Hisamatsu was a living personification of Zen, a person who in living his daily life performed his various functions deeply from the ground of his clear-cut Zen awakening. An excellent tea master, calligrapher, and poet, and yet also a reformer of traditional Zen in Japan, all aspects of his personality and activities stemmed directly from that single religious realization he called Awakening, and his notion of FAS was no exception. For Hisamatsu, FAS represented his basic understanding of human existence on which his philosophy, religion, art, and particularly his ideas on the reformation of traditional Zen were firmly established. Hisamatsu used the English acronym FAS, because he

felt there was no suitable Japanese term to express this threefold notion.

What then is FAS? "F" stands for AWAKENING TO THE FORMLESS SELF, referring to the depth dimension of human existence, that is, the true Self as the ground of human existence. "A" stands for STANDING ON THE STANDPOINT OF ALL HUMANKIND, referring to the breadth of human existence, that is, human beings in their totality. And "S" stands for CREATING HISTORY SUPRAHISTORICALLY, referring to the dimension of the chronological length of human existence, that is, awakened human history. Accordingly, the three aspects of FAS indicate a threefold structure of human existence: the depth, breadth, and length of human existence, or, more concretely, self, world, and history. This threefold notion may correspond to some extent to the traditional Christian notions of soul, world, and God. In Hisamatsu's threefold notion, however, God is absent. In FAS, these three dimensions of human existence are grasped dynamically, and though different they are inseparably united with one another.

The first dimension, the "F," which stands for AWAKENING TO THE FORMLESS SELF, signifies nothing other than satori, or sudden awakening in the Zen sense. Traditionally it has been said that the primal concern of Zen is *koji-kyūmei*, or the investigation of self, that is, to seek out what is the true Self. This is Zen's main concern: to inquire into and awaken to one's true Self. Hisamatsu calls the true Self the Formless self—"formless" in that one's true Self, being entirely unobjectifiable, is without any form that can be objectified.

Unlike Zen masters in the past, Hisamatsu studied Western philosophy thoroughly and had a high esteem for autonomous reason as elucidated in the modern West. At a certain period in his life, Hisamatsu took modern autonomous reason as his own basic principle and through it criticized religious faith as heteronomous. But he came painfully to realize that, however much he deepened the standpoint of autonomous reason, he could never solve the problems of evil and death. The more he tried to utilize autonomous reason to break through these problems, the deeper he lapsed into self-contradiction and self-entanglement.

Finally he fell into what Zen traditionally calls "the Great Doubt." This is not an intellectual doubt, which can be overcome by another philosophical theory, but a total existential doubt realized at the extreme point of the self-contradiction inherent in autonomous reason as such. In this Great Doubt, it is not that one's self doubts something external or even something internal to one's self, but rather it is the self itself that radically doubts itself to the extent that the doubter and the doubted are one, not two. It was at the point of breaking through this Great Doubt by means of severe Zen practice that Hisamatsu awakened to his true Self. Traditionally it has been said in Zen that at the bottom of Great Doubt lies Great Awakening. In the long history of Zen before Hisamatsu, however, the kind of self-contradiction found in modern autonomous reason had never before constituted the dynamic force underlying the actualization of Great Doubt.

Traditionally, the true Self as awakened to in the Zen experience of satori has been called "the original face before the birth of one's parents" or "the true person of no rank." Hisamatsu calls the true Self the "Formless Self" in that it is completely unfettered by any form, physical, mental, or spiritual, including the forms of life and death, good and evil, form and matter, subject and object, divine and human. Formless Self, however, is not simply the "formless" as distinguished from form, for formlessness as distinguished from form is nothing but another kind of form, simply called "formless." True Formlessness is free not only from form but also from formlessness, without attaching to either one. Further, true Formlessness in this dynamic sense must not be realized outside of oneself, because Formlessness thus realized outside of oneself is grasped as an object and thereby turns into a relative form. To Hisamatsu, true Formlessness is always Self and true Self must always be formless. True Formless Self is the ultimate reality for him, and therefore AWAKENING TO THE FORMLESS SELF is the basic requirement for human salvation.

Hisamatsu is very critical toward traditional Zen. Although Zen stresses helping others to awaken to the true Self as the wondrous activity, he criticized the traditional way of Zen. He said

that if the so-called wondrous activity signifies only the process of leading other individuals to awaken to their true Self, this activity remains limited in the monastery to the problem of self without penetrating more widely beyond it. If their activity starts and ends only with the so-called practice of compassion involved in helping others to awaken, such activity will remain unrelated to the formation of the world and the creation of history; it will be isolated from the world and history.

In Zen, the all-encompassing compassionate practice ought to be for a human being to awaken to his or her original true nature, that is, to the solitarily emancipated, nondependent Formless Self that alone will form the true world and create true history.

The Scope of the FAS Society

And so, the formation of the true world necessitates the second dimension of human existence, that is, the "A," which signifies STANDING ON THE STANDPOINT OF ALL HUMANKIND. For unless we grasp racial, national, and class problems from the perspective of all humankind, we cannot solve any of them adequately. Thus, in addition to the investigation of the self, an investigation of the world is needed to understand the nature and the structure of the world.

The creation of true history also requires the third dimension of human existence; that is, the "S," which stands for CREATING HISTORY SUPRAHISTORICALLY, because true history cannot be created by an approach that is simply immanent in history, such as class struggle in Marxism or social reform in humanism. Unless we take as our basis a suprahistorical religious standpoint, we cannot create true history. Thus, an investigation of history is necessary to break through the contradiction of history and grasp the real meaning of history in its origin and purpose.

Currently, we have different peace, human rights, and other social reform movements. If these movements are pursued only from a political and social standpoint without a basis in our deep realization of the true Self, however, such an approach may not yield adequate solutions. Even though those who participate in

such movements are full of good intentions and possess a strong sense of justice, if they lack an awakening to the original nature of the self and others, their actions are without real power—or worse, they can create more confusion. On the other hand, if only the internal religious aspect of the human being is emphasized and priority is given to one's own salvation to the neglect of the affairs of the world, however serious an individual may be in his or her religious quest, he or she cannot arrive at a profound religious resolution. Mere concern with self-salvation is contrary to the bodhisattva's Four Great Vows. Nevertheless, contemporary Buddhism is apt to be removed from social realities, confined to temples, and engrossed only in the inner problems of the self.

For this reason, Hisamatsu, together with his disciples, formulated "The Vow of Humankind," which was proclaimed publicly in 1951, shortly after the start of the Korean War. The Vow of Humankind reads as follows:

> Calm and composed,
> awakening to our true Self,
> being fully compassionate humans,
> making full use of our abilities,
> according to our respective vocations,
> discerning suffering both individual and social,
> and its sources.
> Recognizing the right direction
> in which history should proceed,
> joining hands as kin beyond the differences
> of race, nation, and class.
> With compassion, vowing to bring to realization
> humankind's deep desire for emancipation,
> let us construct a world that is true and happy.

Concluding Remarks

To conclude my essay I would like to bring up my dialogue with Professor Paul Knitter of Xavier University, which took place at Villanova University with the theme of "Spirituality and Liberation."[1] As Knitter made a very clear and insightful comment on

Buddhism and my approach, I will introduce here his criticism and my response.

What Knitter said was this: "We cannot know God or experience God unless we are working for justice." I will clarify further the implications of this statement. Does Knitter mean by this statement that working for justice is a necessary worldly and practical condition for experiencing God, or is it an essential ground for experiencing God? It seems to me that by that statement, based on Liberation Theology, he is indicating that working for justice is not merely a practical condition for experiencing God but rather an essential ground or source for experiencing God. It makes such an impression on me especially when he states that by getting involved in some form of action for justice and social transformation we discover and see things not only about the world and history but also about God and the ultimate—things that we could never see through our traditional venue of prayers and meditation or our traditional understanding of religious experience.

If Professor Knitter means by this statement that our religious experience of God is deepened and expanded by our actions for justice, I can understand and agree with it. If he and other Liberation theologians mean, however, that our action for justice is the *ground* of a new religious experience of God Himself, I cannot agree. The authentic religious experience of God must come from God himself, because God is the ground and the source of liberation. Is the thesis, then, that the character of the religious experience of God may be conditioned by our actions in time and space? Our actions in time and space, however serious and important they may be, cannot be a ground or source of God-experience, though they certainly can deepen and expand it.

The same is true with the Buddhist notion of awakening to the true Self. Awakening to the true Self is self-awakening; not awakening caused by something outside the self. This is the reason why the true Self, to which one must awaken, is called the Formless self, because the true Self can never be objectified in anything. But just as God's liberation is never separate from human activities in time and space, awakening to the Formless

self is never apart from human activities in the world and history. Human actions in the world and history are indispensable for our God-experience or for our self-awakening. They are indispensable, however, not as the ground or source of our God-experience but as a practical condition or worldly occasion for that experience. We should not confuse what should be *ground* with what should be *occasion*, or what should be *source* with what should be *situation*. If we take our practice of transforming the world not as an occasion but as a source of religious experience, that would be a mistake.

Professor Knitter asked me about religious experience without activities for justice. To answer, I say this: However essential religious experience may be as a ground of activities, mere ground without a particular context is abstract. For this reason I said earlier: If only the internal religious aspect of human beings is emphasized and priority is given to one's own salvation, thereby neglecting the affairs of the world, however serious individuals may be in their religious quest, they can never arrive at a profound religious resolution. On the other hand, however important actions to transform the world may be, if they are not based on God-experience or awakening to true Self, they are also inauthentic.

And for this reason I also said earlier: If social justice movements—peace, human rights, and the other reform movements—are pursued exclusively from a political and social dimension without a basis in a deeply realized true Self or in God-experience, such approaches may not yield adequate solutions. To be precise, the ground and condition, the source and occasion, must always be combined, such that in the depths of human existence the ground of the self, the ground of the world, and the ground of history are inseparably interconnected with one another. Thus we must realize that we are always standing and working at the very node intersecting these dimensions of self, world, and history.

4

Faith and Self-Awakening

A Search for the Fundamental Category Covering All Religious Life

"What has faith to do with believing this or that? What has faith to do with being human?" Raising these questions in the opening pages of his book *Faith and Belief*,[1] Wilfred Cantwell Smith tries to clarify the nature of faith as distinguished from that of belief. He understands faith as "a characteristic quality or potentiality of human life."[2] This is an attempt to determine the essential human quality at the basis of human religious life, which is realized beyond the surface of all religions. It is important to do this in our time, especially since religious pluralism has become so prominent. An integral view of human life, though urgently necessary, is more difficult to achieve.

It is worth noting that Smith's approach has the following three characteristics: It is personalistic, historical-comparative, and global-and-integral. Let me briefly explain these three characteristics of his approach, as I understand them.

First, the personalistic approach: Smith takes religion as a dynamic movement rather than as a static system with a fixed doctrine and practice. He emphasizes the personal involvement of religious individuals in religious truth as essential to human religious life. He does not want to use the term "religion" for a pattern of observable forms. He offers two concepts, "faith" and "tradition," as substitutes. "Faith" means "an inner religious experience of involvement of a particular person: the impingement on him of the transcendent putative or real."[3] "Tradition" he takes to mean the cumulative "mass of overt objective data that constitute the historical deposit . . . of the past religious life of the community in question."[4] Tradition is nothing but a potential pattern for personal involvement, which thus becomes religious

as it expresses or elicits faith. "Faith is nourished and patterned by the tradition, is formed and in some sense sustained by it—yet faith precedes and transcends the tradition, and in turn sustains it."[5]

Second, Smith's person-centered approach does not entail a subjective, nonhistorical understanding of the matter. His personalistic approach is combined with the historical-comparative method. As a historian of religion, Smith makes a historical and comparative study of human religious ways of life across the centuries and around the world. His emphasis on the necessity of a distinction between faith and belief is based on his comprehensive survey of humankind's religious history.

As a result of the survey, Smith states that "religious beliefs have of course differed radically, whereas religious faith would appear to have been, not constant certainly, yet more approximative to constancy."[6] He also reports two things: "One is that the variety of faith seems on the whole less than the variety of forms through which faith has been expressed. The second is that such variety of faith as is found cuts across formal religious boundaries."[7]

Smith criticizes the recent Western confusion between faith and belief as an aberration. He interprets "belief" as the holding of certain ideas that constitute an intellectual position, historically varied in differing forms among the traditions, even within each tradition. On the other hand, "faith" is, in his view, a spiritual orientation of the personality, a capacity to live at a more than mundane level, and human relation to transcendence that appears constant throughout human history.

The third characteristic of Smith's approach lies in the global and integral vision of "a unity or coherence of humankind's religious history."[8] In his book *Towards a World Theology*, this global vision is evident. It is presented historically and also theologically. Smith insists that to suggest a unity of humankind's religious history "is not to propose that all men and women have been religious in the same way. It is, rather, to discern that the evident variety of their religious life is real, yet is contained within an historical continuum."[9] For the historian, "To say that *A* and *B*

share a common history is not at all to suggest that *A* equals *B*, or even resembles it. Rather, it is to affirm that they are historically interconnected; that they have interacted with the same things or with each other, or that one has 'grown out of' or been 'influenced by' the other; more exactly, that one can be understood only in terms of a context of which the other forms a part."[10] Accordingly, Smith takes each religious life, Christian, Buddhist, or Muslim, as a personal participation in the ongoing process of religious history in terms of Christianity, Buddhism, or Islam.

Further, on the basis of this integral, global vision of the human history of religion, Smith offers a "Theology of Comparative Religion,"[11] which is an appealing and significant proposal in our time. It is a "theology for which 'the religions' are the subject, not the object,"[12] "a theology of the religious history of humankind,"[13] or "A theology of the faith history of *us* human beings."[14] Emphasizing that truth is apprehended historically, Smith talks about the importance of the awareness of our human involvement simultaneously in the historical and the transcendent. His personalistic approach combined with the historical-comparative method, and his new vision of a "theology of comparative religion," or a "World theology," are realized in a context that has simultaneously historical and transcendent dimensions.

I hope this clarification of the three characteristics of Smith's approach is not off the mark. With all appreciation for his approach, however, I must raise a question. This question concerns his point of view, which takes "faith" as a "foundational category for all religious life, and, indeed, for all human life."[15] My question is inevitable, particularly from the point of view of Buddhism, which Smith regards as an important movement within the religious history of humankind.

Dealing mainly with the early Buddhist movement, Smith says that Buddhism is atheistic in the sense that it dispenses with the idea of divinity. However, Smith continues, the concept of nirvana developed and emphasized by Buddhists is "some sort of counterpart to the Western concept 'God'; or at least, it played a role significantly comparable to that played by the concept 'God.' "[16] According to Smith, although the Buddha affirmed

that within the ocean [of life], nothing persists; he affirmed a "further shore" or "other shore" as the transcendence. He also preached the moral law as the enduring Dharma, the truth about right living. "All else is evanescent. But the Saddharma, the True Law, is eternal."[17]

Smith insists that "the [early Buddhist] movement is religious because through it men and women's lives were lived in what the Western world has traditionally called the presence of God. Through their systems of beliefs, they were enabled to live lives of faith. They tasted transcendence; and accordingly their lives were touched by compassion and courage and serenity and ultimate significance."[18]

Concerning Smith's interpretation of the early Buddhist movement, I have two interrelated questions: One is whether the early Buddhist movement is exhausted by using the term "faith" as Smith understands it. Does his interpretation in terms of faith really touch the core of the early Buddhist movement, let alone Mahayana Buddhism? If the answer to these questions is negative, which I am afraid is the case, then the second question is whether it is legitimate to comprehend all human religions, Buddhism included, under the single term of "faith." Smith understands it to be a foundational category for all religious life, and indeed for all human life. This interpretation not only confuses the distinctiveness of various forms of religion but also obscures what is a foundational category for all religious life, and indeed for all human life. Smith's generalization of the term "faith" is expressed as the relation to the transcendent. It is not possible to comprehend all human religious movements by delineating the characteristics of faith in the Semitic religions, such as faith in Yahweh, the Father of Jesus Christ, and Allah. On the other hand, his generalization of the term "faith" is only possible by making ambiguous the authentic meaning of Buddhist notions such as nirvana, Dharma, and emptiness. Although it is urgently necessary, as Smith insists, to find a global and dynamic category to comprehend the whole process of the human history of religion, it is questionable whether we should take faith as the foundational category.

To make my point clear, let me ask whether the core of meaning of the early Buddhist movement is exhausted by the term "faith" as Smith understands it. What is the heart of the early Buddhist movement and the Mahayana Buddhist movement? The early Buddhist movement has an aspect of faith in Dharma or faith in nirvana, as Smith argues. This aspect alone, however, does not give faith a central place. What is central and essential to the Buddhist movement in general is not faith in Dharma or faith in nirvana but awakening to Dharma or self-realization of nirvana.[19] Gautama Buddha is none other than one who awakened to Dharma, or who attained and realized nirvana with his whole existence.

The Buddhist movement launched by the Buddha is a movement in which, just as Gautama Buddha did, each and every one may awaken to Dharma or attain nirvana with his or her whole existence, that is, become *a* Buddha. The Christian movement gives a central place to faith in Jesus Christ as the Messiah. This may be called a movement in which each and every one pertains to the Christ but not a movement in which each and every one becomes a Christ. Because of its emphasis on faith in Jesus as the Christ, Christianity, while it may be called the "Teaching of the Christ," can never rightly be said to be the "Teaching of becoming a Christ," except for a few views that have not been regarded as orthodox. By contrast, due to its emphasis on awakening to Dharma, Buddhism can be said to be the "Teaching of becoming a Buddha" as well as the "Teaching of the Buddha." Smith insists that faith "does not vary so much as, nor quite in accordance with, the variations of overt religious pattern."[20] In the above sense, however, it is hardly said that Buddhists live only in a different pattern or form from that of Christians, while their faiths do not vary so much.

It is necessary now to elucidate the basic standpoint of the Buddha. Shortly before his death, Gautama Buddha addressed Ananda, one of his ten great disciples, and others who were anxious over the prospect of losing the Master:

> O Ananda, be ye lamps unto yourselves. Rely on yourselves and do not rely on external help. Hold fast to the Dharma

> as a lamp. Seek salvation alone in the Dharma. Look not for assistance to anyone besides yourselves.[21]

Obviously when he said to his disciples, "Do not rely on external help," and "Look not for assistance to anyone besides yourselves," he included himself in terms of "external help" and he excluded himself in terms of "assistance." He said this despite the fact that he, Gautama Buddha, had been a teacher of Ananda and the others for many years. It may not, however, at first be clear how the following two passages in his statement are related to each other: "Rely on yourselves" and "Seek salvation alone in the Dharma," or "Be ye lamps unto yourselves" and "Hold fast to the Dharma as a lamp." In this address, the Buddha did not identify the Dharma with himself. He identified the Dharma with the individual disciple and, further, he emphasized this identity at the very time of his death.

In Buddhism, the Dharma is beyond everyone—beyond even Gautama Buddha, the initiator of the Buddhist movement. This is the reason why it is often said, "Regardless of the appearance or nonappearance of Tathagata (Gautama Buddha) in this world, the Dharma is always present."[22] Dharma has a universality and transcendent character that is beyond time and space. Who is qualified, however, to talk about Dharma in its absolute universality? Is one who does not realize the Dharma qualified to talk about it? Certainly not. In the case of such a person, through his conceptual understanding and objectivization, the total universality of the Dharma becomes an empty or dead universality. Hence, only one who realizes the Dharma with his whole existence can legitimately talk about it in terms of universality.

Although Dharma transcends everyone including Gautama Buddha and is present universally, there is no Dharma without someone to realize it. Apart from "the realizer," there is no Dharma. The Dharma is realized as the Dharma with its universality only through a particular realizer. Gautama Buddha is none other than the first "realizer" of Dharma. He is not, however, the one and only realizer of Dharma. In the sense that Gautama is a realizer of Dharma with its total universality, he may be said to be a center of the Buddhist faith. Yet he is certainly not the only

center of the Buddhist faith, since everyone can become a center as a realizer of Dharma, a Buddha. The significance of Gautama's historical existence is equal to that of every other realizer of Dharma, except that Gautama was the first.

How can we hold these two apparently contradictory aspects of Dharma: its total universality and its dependency upon a particular human for realization? The answer lies in the fact that one's realization of the Dharma is nothing but the self-awakening of Dharma itself. Your awakening is, of course, your own existential awakening. It is your awakening to the Dharma in its complete universality, and this awakening is possible only by overcoming your self-centeredness, that is, only through the total negation of your ego-self. This self-centeredness, or the self-centered ego, is the fundamental hindrance to the manifestation of Dharma. Therefore, when self-centeredness is overcome and selflessness is attained, in other words, *anatman* or no-self is realized, Dharma naturally awakens to itself.

When Dharma awakens to itself in you, you attain your true Self; the selfless self that is the true Self. Accordingly, the self-awakening of Dharma has a double sense. First, it is your self-awakening of Dharma in your egoless true Self. In this case, one may say that you are the subject of awakening of Dharma, and Dharma is the object of your awakening. Second, it is the self-awakening of Dharma itself in and through your whole existence. In this case, Dharma is the subject of its own self-awakening, and you are a channel of its self-awakening. This double sense only indicates the two aspects of one and the same fundamental reality, that is, the awakening of Dharma in which the subject-object duality is originally overcome, or better, which is prior to the dichotomy between subject and object.

It was precisely on the basis of this self-awakening of Dharma that Gautama Buddha said without any sense of contradiction, "Rely on yourselves" and "Seek salvation alone in the Dharma." The statements, "Be ye lamps unto yourselves" and "Hold fast to the Dharma as a lamp," are complementary and not contradictions. One's self as ultimate reliance is not the ego-self but the true Self as the "Realizer of Dharma." Just as Gautama's awaken-

ing is the self-awakening of Dharma in the double sense mentioned above, so anyone's awakening to Dharma can and should be the self-awakening of Dharma in the same sense.

This is the basic standpoint of Buddhism. It was clarified by Gautama himself through his life after his awakening and particularly, as mentioned above, as he approached death. This basic standpoint of Buddhism, that is, the self-awakening of Dharma, can hardly be grasped by the term "faith" even if it is understood as the relation to the transcendent. Smith's characterization of faith as the relation to the transcendent, I am afraid, confuses rather than clarifies the nature of human religion. What kind of relation a particular religion in question has with the transcendent is crucial for understanding the distinctive nature of that religion. Both faith and self-awakening may be said to indicate equally the relation to the transcendent. Their relations to the transcendent, however, must be said to be radically different from each other. Though not necessarily theocentric, faith is usually theistic. As we see in Smith's own definition of the term, "faith is man's participation in God's dealing with humankind,"[23] or "faith is man's responsive involvement in the activity of God's dealing with humankind."[24] On the contrary, self-awakening is clearly not theistic because in self-awakening there is no room for God to whom humankind must respond, although, roughly speaking, it may be said to be a kind of relation to the transcendent named Dharma.

Given this fundamental difference, further differences between faith and self-awakening may be expressed in three points:

First, in faith as human participation or responsive involvement in the activity of God, *will* is included on the sides of both human and God as the essential factor of their relationship. Even in its generalized form, faith is a matter of human free will in relation to the positive or negative response to a transcendent will, although some intellectual component is also involved. On the other hand, the self-awakening of Dharma in Buddhism is completely free from will and intellectualization, whether human or divine. It is no less than self-awakening to *tathata*, that is, suchness or as-it-is-ness. The problem of free will is accounted for in

Buddhism by karma, which is to be overcome through the self-awakening of Dharma.

Second, in faith as human responsive involvement in the activity of God, the self is indispensable as the agent of free will, although ego-self or self-centered self must be overcome. One result is that the human and nature are grasped differently in their relationship to God, the transcendent. The self-awakening of Dharma is possible only through the realization of *anatman*, or no-self. Once a human realizes his no-self, or the absence of an eternal self, he simultaneously realizes no-self-being, or the nonsubstantiality of everything in the universe. Accordingly, in the realization of *anatman* implied in the self-awakening of Dharma, the solidarity, rather than the difference, between the human and nature is realized in terms of nonsubstantiality. The teaching of dependent origination, instead of the doctrine of creation, comes to the scene in this connection.

Third, in faith as human responsive involvement in the activity of God, the self is teleological by nature. It is oriented by time and purpose. It is future-oriented and aim-seeking. Contrary to this, self-awakening is essentially free from teleological orientation. As the realization of suchness or as-it-is-ness of everything including oneself, self-awakening of Dharma is not future-oriented but absolute-present-oriented. It is transtemporal, being beyond temporality in terms of "God's time" as well as in terms of the past-present-future of secular time.

This, however, does not mean that the self-awakening of Dharma or the realization of suchness is timeless. Instead, every moment of time is realized as the beginning and the end simultaneously. This is the meaning of its being absolute-present-oriented and of its being free from teleological orientation. *Telos*, that is, the end or the purpose, is not given by the transcendent but is projected under the given situation along the flow of time through the self-determination of Dharma, in other words, through the self-development of suchness. The principle of dependent origination is effective not only in terms of space but also in terms of time.

As stated in the three points above, the self-awakening of

Dharma, which was realized by Gautama Buddha and which motivated the early Buddhist movement, is categorically different from "faith," characterized by Smith as human participation in God's dealing with humankind. I suggest that throughout the religious history of humankind there are two not easily reconcilable types of religion, the religion of faith and the religion of self-awakening. The religion of faith, which may also be termed the religion of grace, is exemplified by Christianity, Islam, and some forms of Hinduism and Pure Land Buddhism. The religion of self-awakening, which may also be called the religion of self-realization, is illustrated by early Buddhism, most forms of Mahayana Buddhism, and to some extent by forms of Christian mysticism, such as Neo-Platonism, that emphasize self-discipline and self-awareness.

To grasp the unity or coherence of humankind's religious history as Smith rightfully intends, one should not overlook the difference between these two types of religious movements. Instead of comprehending the whole of religious history of humankind by the category of faith, one must seek a more generic and more fundamental category through which both the religion of faith and the religion of self-awakening can be understood in their distinctiveness.

Before going on to ask what the most generic category to comprehend the unity of humankind's religious history could be, let me briefly discuss Mahayana Buddhism and its understanding of faith and self-awakening.

Like the early Buddhists, Nagarjuna emphasizes the importance of faith as the entrance to nirvana and the indispensability of wisdom for attaining it. The following well-known quotation from *Mahaprajnaparamita-sastra* shows his understanding of this point: "The great ocean of the Buddhadharma can be entered by faith whereas its other shore can be attained by wisdom."[25] To reach the other shore of the ocean of Buddhadharma, you must attain nirvana by going across the flux of samsara, which is the end of the Buddhist life. If one remains in nirvana apart from samsara, however, one cannot be said to attain the real end of Buddhist life, for one is still not completely free from selfishness

and attachment in that, while enjoying the bliss of attaining nirvana, one forgets the suffering of fellow beings still involved in samsara.

The *Prajnaparamita Sutra*, one of the earliest and most important Mahayana sutras, emphasizes that the real end of the Buddhist life does not lie in attaining nirvana by overcoming samsara but rather in returning to the realm of samsara by overcoming nirvana through compassion for one's fellow beings who are still in suffering. Although it is necessary to reach the other shore (nirvana) by giving up this shore (samsara), *prajnaparamita* (perfection of wisdom) is not realized only by that attainment. To reach the other shore is not really "to reach the other shore." By giving up the other shore and returning to this shore, one can attain *prajnaparamita*. This is the reason Mahayana Buddhists emphasize, "For the sake of wisdom one should not abide in samsara: for the sake of compassion one should not abide in nirvana." Indeed, the real nirvana and the perfection of wisdom lie in the unhindered and free movement back and forth between this shore (samsara) and the other shore (nirvana).

It is precisely at this point that Mahayanists talk about the identity of samsara and nirvana. It is not a static but a dynamic identity that can be realized only through the negation of samsara and the negation of nirvana. The realization of this dynamic identity of samsara (immanence) and nirvana (transcendence) is not faith in the transcendent. It is the self-awakening of Dharma (suchness), which is neither immanent nor transcendent and yet both immanent and transcendent. Just like the early Buddhist movement, it is not faith in the Buddha but the ideal to become a Buddha through self-awakening of Dharma that is the quintessence of the Mahayana Buddhist movement. The difference between the early Buddhist (and Theravada Buddhist) and the Mahayana Buddhist movements is found in the static versus the dynamic understanding of nirvana.

The Mahayana Buddhist movement has given rise to various forms across the centuries in China and Japan. Rich diversity among the various forms of Mahayana Buddhism stems from the different paths recommended for how to become a Buddha. For

instance, Zen Buddhism emphasizes "becoming a Buddha through seeing into [one's] Original Nature" by seated meditation and koan practice. The school of esoteric Shingon Buddhism, however, stresses becoming a Buddha immediately with this body through the attainment of the *sammitsu*, or three secrets of the Buddha. Pure Land Buddhism, which, unlike most other forms of Mahayana, strongly emphasizes pure faith in Amida Buddha as the pivotal point for salvation, talks about becoming a Buddha through *nembutsu.* Just like the Christian, for the Pure Land Buddhist, "faith" in Amida Buddha is absolutely essential for his or her salvation. But unlike the Christian and the followers of other theistic religions, the final result is to become a Buddha. Here again one can see the inadequacy of trying to comprehend the whole of humankind's religious history under the term "faith."

We cannot comprehend the whole process of the human history of religion under the term "faith," because one must recognize the existence of the religion of self-awakening, which is not easily commensurable with the religion of faith. What then is the most fundamental category by which we can comprehend it? My proposal is that, in contrast to Smith, if we evoke the threefold notion of "Lord," "God" and "Boundless Openness," the third is the ground of the former two. It is the most fundamental category by which we can comprehend the various religions of humankind in a dynamic unity. This threefold notion is an application of the Buddhist *trikaya* doctrine, or the notion of the three bodies of the Buddha, to the pluralistic situation of world religions in our time [*trikaya* is explained in chapter 8, n. 4—Ed.]. I propose the term "Boundless Openness" as a reinterpretation and generalization of the Buddhist notion of "emptiness." I suggest the possibility that it can serve as the fundamental category to comprehend the whole history of the development of religion, and it may also be useful as the underlying principle for the dynamic unity of world religions today.

5

Religion and Science in the Global Age

Their Essential Character and Mutual Relationship

This is a brief introduction to a topic of great magnitude. I will first discuss what I consider essential to the issue of religion and science and then elucidate the problem from the Buddhist point of view.

Modern science may be said to be a human enterprise through which the human and nature are investigated as objectively as possible, that is, without subjective judgment. It is fundamentally free from anthropocentric interest such as value, meaning, and purpose. This mode of science was methodologically established by the Cartesian idea of Mathesis Universalis and the Baconian method described in Novum Organum. It was a complete replacement of the Aristotelian theological-biological approach by an approach based on mathematics and physics. Present science is the radical development of this approach.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the West, serious conflicts arose between Christianity and science, as epitomized by the controversy revolving around Charles Darwin. It could, however, very plausibly be argued that Christian theology acted as an important catalyst in the development of modern science, since the idea of God as ruler of the universe made men sympathetic to the idea that God had arranged things in an orderly way and that there were natural laws that could be discovered if one tried hard enough. The assertion that science could not have arisen without the stimulus of theological ideas, however, certainly does not demonstrate that those theological ideas have any genuine basis in reality.

In our time, it is sometimes said that those who still maintain that there is a conflict between religion and science are naïve and

old-fashioned, because contemporary theologians, having as a rule abandoned the view that the Holy Scriptures are literally the word of God, are well disposed toward dialogue and mediation between Christianity and science. Simultaneously it is suggested that the peculiar characteristics of twentieth-century science render it far less inimical to religion than was the science of the nineteenth century. I do not think, however, that this is the case. While on the surface the problem may seem to have diminished somewhat, if one looks at the deeper dimension it cannot but be realized that science poses a serious and even deadly threat to religion.

Let us examine the essential character of both science and religion. At the risk of oversimplification, one may say that science is concerned with the answer to the question "How," whereas religion is concerned with the answer to the question "Why." As used here, "How" refers to the process of cause and effect or means, while "Why" refers to purpose, or raison d'être. Science can provide an answer to the question of how a flower blooms, or how humans come to exist. It cannot, however, answer the question of why a flower blooms, or why humans exist. It can explain the cause of a given fact but not the meaning or ground of that fact. It is religion, not science, that can offer answers to the question "Why."

Pre-modern science, which was based on the Aristotelian teleological-biological approach, gave a teleological answer to the question "How," because everything in the universe was then understood organically, that is, in terms of living entities. And a teleological answer to the question "How" was not necessarily incompatible with a religious answer to the question "Why." The teleological view of the world offered by science was rather harmonious with the theistic view of humans and nature as explained in Christianity. With the advent of modern science, however, the situation radically changed. Modern science, which is based on mathematics and physics, gives a nonteleological and mechanistic response to the question "How" that is quite incomplete with the religious answer to the question "Why." This is especially the case with a theistic religion such as Christianity, which is inextri-

cably rooted in the notion of a personal God who is the creator, redeemer, and judge of the universe. The modern scientific mechanistic view of the world is entirely indifferent to human existence. In the mechanistic view, not only physical matter but also biological life and even human psyche and spirit are reduced to entirely lifeless mechanistic phenomena. This can be seen in contemporary molecular biology, experimental psychology, and genetics.

Unlike the teleological view of nature in pre-modern science, the modern scientific mechanistic view of the world grasps everything in the universe as dead, that is, in an entirely inhuman and insensitive manner. Such a mechanistic view of the world is not only incompatible with but also inimical to religion, which is concerned with the answer to the question "Why," in other words, the question concerning the final meaning or the ultimate ground of individual human existence in the world. It is inimical to religion because it deprives everything of its meaning, value, aim, and purpose. It may be said that the mechanistic answer to the question "How" as seen in modern science has cut off horizontally the religious answer to the question "Why." In so saying I have an image in my mind in which a vertical line, representing religion, which seeks the ultimate ground of human existence, is severed by a horizontal line, representing science, which is mainly concerned with the cause and effect of things in the universe. As a result, the human being is left hanging. It is today a serious task for religion, which is primarily concerned with the ultimate meaning of human life, to find a way to embrace the meaning-negating realm of science, which pervades in the modern world.

The modern scientific mechanistic view of the world has created a still more serious problem for religion. It has brought forth atheism and radical nihilism. The mechanistic view of the world damaged the spiritual basis on which all the teleological systems in religion up to now rested and opened up nihility at the base of the world so that there can be no place for God. It also opened up the abyss of nihility at the bottom of human existence. The kind of existentialism developed by Jean-Paul Sartre, who insists that one's subjectivity can be established only in the real-

ization of that nihility, is a direct consequence of the awareness of the nihility brought about by modern science. Contemporary atheism is not merely a materialistic atheism but rather a much more radical, existential atheism that tries to take nihility without God as the basis for subjective freedom. In this regard we must pay special attention to Friedrich Nietzsche, who proclaimed the arrival of nihilism about a century ago through his sharp insight into the nature of science and human destiny.

In his book *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche presents his unique idea of the three stages of human history as follows:

> Once upon a time human beings sacrificed human beings to their God, and perhaps just those they loved the best . . . then, during the moral epoch of mankind, they sacrificed to their God the strongest instincts they possessed, their "nature," *this* festal joy shines in the cruel glances of ascetics and "anti-natural" fanatics. Finally, what still remained to be sacrificed? . . . Was it not necessary to sacrifice God himself—? To sacrifice God for nothingness—this paradoxical mystery of the ultimate cruelty has been reserved for the rising generation; we all know something of this already."[1]

To the first stage Nietzsche ascribes the sacrifice of all primitive religions and also the sacrifice of the Emperor Tiberius in the Mirtha-Grotto on the Island of Capri. It may be said that this first stage corresponds to the time of the Old Testament, which records this kind of sacrifice in the case, for example, of Abraham and Isaac. It would also be safe to say that the second stage represents the time of the New Testament and the following Christian era in which the death and sacrifice of Jesus have been seen as the redemption of original sin inherent in human nature. The third historic stage in which we "sacrifice God for nothingness" announces the advent of nihilism in the Nietzschean sense.[2]

It may be said that we have already arrived at the third historic stage, which Nietzsche described above. As he predicted, we are now experiencing nihility without God, which has been

opened up by modern science at the base of the traditional notion of God. How to cope with this nihility without God is the most pressing problem emerging from the conflict between science and religion.

In this regard, the following two points must be emphasized if religion is to remain viable in its dialogue and confrontation with science.

According to Nishitani Keiji, "It is necessary for religion to reexamine the basis of its world-view, because for a religion, such a world-view is not like clothes that one can change whenever he pleases. It is to religion just what water is to a fish. It is the indispensable condition by virtue of which religion can actually come into existence. Water is neither the life of the fish as such, nor its body, yet it is fundamentally linked with both. For a religion to change its world-view is a matter no less fatal to it, than for a fish to change from salt water to fresh."[3]

What is even more crucial and important for religion is to reexamine and reinterpret the traditional notion of God or the traditional understanding of the "ultimate" in religion and his/her or its relation to the human being and the world. With regard to this second point, Buddhism, which is fundamentally nontheistic, is in a somewhat different situation from Christianity, which is basically theistic. As I said before, religion provides an answer to the question "Why." Christianity gives a theistic answer to "Why" in terms of the will of God, the rule of God, and accompanying notions such as creation, incarnation, redemption, and last judgment. On the other hand, Buddhism provides a nontheistic answer to "Why" through its emphasis on dependent origination, emptiness, suchness, and so forth.

A theistic answer to the question "Why" in Christianity, such as the will of God and the rule of God, is incompatible with the modern scientific mechanistic answer to the question "How." This is because the former strongly emphasizes the personality of the ultimate while the latter is essentially impersonal. The personal God and his personal relationship to humans are quite incompatible with the mechanistic view of the world. To overcome this incompatibility, various theological attempts have been made

in the realm of Christianity. One of the most remarkable of these attempts is that of Process Theology, as exemplified by the efforts of John Cobb. Process Theology is based on the philosophy of Whitehead, which is in turn based on modern science and mathematics. According to Process Theology, the ultimate is not the personal God but creativity, which is somewhat impersonal. In Process Theology both God and the world are equally understood as outcomes of the principle of creativity. God and the world as thus understood are mutually interpenetrating in terms of concrescence in which our individual occasions of experience are dynamic acts of becoming. The notion of the ultimate as creativity in Process Theology is certainly much more compatible with the modern scientific mechanistic view of the world than the traditional Christian notion of a personal God. I wonder, however, if it is really compatible with modern science, because the basic notion of process is not completely free from a teleological character, however much the momentariness of events that constitute the process is emphasized. This is clearly seen when creativity as the ultimate is understood to be realizable only in actual instances of the many becoming one, and when creativity is possible only through an open future and closed past, that is, through the irreversibility or unidirectionality of time. I wonder if Process Theology can legitimately overcome nihility without God, which is opened up at the bottom of contemporary human existence by the modern scientific mechanistic view of the world.

In Buddhism, the nontheistic response to the question "Why," as expressed through the notions of dependent origination, emptiness, and suchness, is compatible with the modern scientific mechanistic answer to the question "How," because the Buddhist notions, though deeply religious, are somewhat impersonal. To say that Buddhist principles such as dependent origination, emptiness, and suchness are impersonal does not mean that Buddhism is indifferent to human affairs. On the contrary, Buddhism as a religion is essentially concerned with the salvation of humankind. In this respect, there is no difference between Christianity and Buddhism. In other words, both Christianity and Buddhism are equally concerned with human salvation. The

foundation on which human salvation becomes possible, however, is understood differently in Christianity and Buddhism. In Christianity the foundation of human salvation is understood to be personal, that is, as the personal relationship between the human being and God. On the other hand, in Buddhism, the foundation of human salvation is not personal but impersonal and common to all beings. Human salvation and its foundation, though inseparable, must be distinguished. This distinction is important because the present conflict between science and religion is to a great extent related to the foundation of human salvation.

The Buddhist notion of dependent origination maintains that everything is interdependent with every other thing, both in regard to its existence and its ceasing to be. Nothing whatsoever is self-existent and independent. For instance, bigness and smallness are interdependent; there is no such thing as bigness as self-existing apart from smallness or smallness as self-existing apart from bigness. Bigness is bigness and smallness, and yet they are completely interdependent. In the same way, good and evil are interdependent; it is an illusion to think of good as self-existing apart from evil or to think of evil as self-existing apart from good. Good is good; evil is evil. There is a distinction. Yet good and evil are completely interdependent. Again, in the same way, the absolute and the relative are interdependent. It is erroneous to conceive of the absolute as self-existing apart from the relative or to conceive of the relative as self-existing apart from the absolute. The absolute is the absolute, and the relative is the relative, and yet the absolute and the relative are completely interdependent. In this way, everything is interdependent; nothing is independent. This is the Buddhist notion of dependent origination.

Accordingly, dependent origination or interdependence itself is neither absolute nor relative. Since it is neither absolute nor relative, it is also called emptiness. It is, however, not a mere emptiness. On the contrary, precisely because they are interdependent, the absolute is really the absolute and the relative is really the relative; good is really good, and evil is really evil; bigness is really bigness, and smallness is really smallness. Everything is just as it is. Their differences are clearly realized. And yet their

interdependence is realized as well. This is the reason emptiness is also called as-it-is-ness or suchness. Emptiness is not a mere emptiness, but rather fullness in which the distinctiveness of everything is throughly realized.

I hope it is now clear that dependent origination, emptiness, and suchness are just different verbal expressions of one and the same reality. In Buddhism, the ultimate is not God or creativity but dependent origination. Buddhism is a religion that teaches us how to awaken to this truth of dependent origination. A human who awakens to this truth is called a Buddha.

In the notion of dependent origination, emptiness, and suchness, everything is realized as reciprocal and reversible. There is nothing one-sided or unidirectional. Accordingly, the Buddhist notion of dependent origination as the ultimate is completely free from any teleological character. In this respect, it is compatible with modern science. Yet it is not merely mechanistic, because it is an answer to the religious question "Why." In brief, it is neither teleological nor mechanistic.

Christianity provides the most positive answer to the question "Why" in terms of the will of God. In contrast to this, Buddhism answers the question "Why" with "It is so without 'Why.'" "Without 'Why'" as an answer to the question "Why" is quite compatible with the modern scientific mechanistic answer to the question "How." The crucial task for Buddhism, however, is this: How can it, on the basis of "without 'Why'" as its ultimate ground, formulate a positive direction through which ethics and history can develop? In other words, how can a new teleology be established on the ground of suchness, which is neither teleological nor mechanical?

Science without religion is dangerous because it necessarily entails a mechanization of humanity and consequent loss of individual autonomy and spirituality. On the other hand, religion without science is powerless because it lacks an effective means through which to actualize the ultimate reality. Science and religion must work together harmoniously. It is an urgent task for we who are approaching the global age to find a way to integrate science and religion.

Part II
Nishida's View of Reality and Zen Philosophy

Editor's Introduction to Part II

Philosophy of Nothingness

This introduction to the section of the book dealing with the Kyoto School is provided in the interest of making the reader familiar with the thoughts of Nishida Kitarō, especially some of his technical terminology such as the place of Absolute Nothingness *(zettai mu)*, the notion of absolute contradictory self-identity *(zettai mujunteki jikodōitsu)*, and of course the principle of inverse correspondence *(gyakutaiō)*, the issue that ties all three chapters together. In addition, since Abe's articles offer an extended discussion and attempted resolution of the conflict between Nishida and his younger protégé at Kyoto Imperial University, Tanabe Hajime, some background on this matter will be offered as well. As indicated in the Editor's Introduction, Abe's aim is to at once explain and critique—in the name of fulfilling the ideals of—his Kyoto School predecessors. His single-minded concern is with the implications of Absolute Nothingness for understanding the essential nature of religious experience. In this regard, he compared critically Nishida's philosophy with that of Whitehead in Chapter 9. These articles, along with the philosophical essays in Part III, were composed in the 1970s prior to a recent debate about the political significance of the Kyoto School activities during World War II.

Western philosophical thought was introduced into Japan only after the Meiji Restoration, which began in 1868. Nishida, a lay practitioner of Zen, began publishing his philosophical responses to the problems posed by

neo-Kantian thought in 1911. Although Nishida's early work was marked by his struggle with the language and problems of neo-Kantianism, his aim was by no means merely to add his own footnotes to the work of the German Idealists. In a series of articles and books, Nishida began to work out a truly original philosophy reflecting the cultural standpoint of the Japanese people, especially their religious and aesthetic experience. Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, and Hegel are major figures in the West's own quest to articulate a logic appropriate to its cultural traditions. Nishida took for himself the task of developing a logic *(ronri)* for East Asian civilization. Nishida's logic of the East takes as its guiding principles the notions of nothingness in the Mahayana Buddhist sense of "emptiness" or *sunyata*, and paradoxical contradiction.

After his initial experiments with neo-Kantian thought,[1] Nishida can be said to have taken a distinctly East Asian turn in his philosophy with his notion of Absolute Nothingness, or a notion that has clear affinities with the traditional Buddhist doctrines of nothingness *(mu)* or emptiness *(sunyata* or *kū)*. In Nishida's approach, objects appearing within consciousness belong to the realm of being, and the field of consciousness within which objects appear is the realm of non being. Is the field of consciousness absolute, that is, the most concrete and irreducible level of reality? Or is there a realm or level of reality within which both subject and object mutually arise? Nishida spoke of this realm as the "place" *(basho)* of Absolute Nothingness, the most concrete level of reality. If relative nothingness (consciousness) transcends the concrete world of subjectivity and objectivity, then Absolute Nothingness is the place that encompasses both subject and object. The reality of the historical world arises concretely in the form of a continuous self-determination of the place of Absolute Nothingness.

Nishida's favored metaphor for Absolute Nothing-

ness, "place" *(basho)*, is related to Plato's notion of *topos*, which in the *Timaeus* (529a-c) is understood as the "matrix of all becoming." For Nishida the place of physical objects is the most abstract level of the real. In this matter Nishida's thought shows affinities with Whitehead's notion of the fallacy of misplaced concreteness. The place of biological and historical life is more concrete. The most concrete level of reality, however, is the place within which both the physical world of objects and the field of consciousness itself are nested, that is, the place of Absolute Nothingness.

The logical structure of Absolute Nothingness is a double negation. This brings us to Nishida's notion of absolute contradictory self-identity. If relative nothingness is the negation of being, then Absolute Nothingness must be seen as the negation of that negation. It does not imply the sheer negation of relative being but rather the negation of the negation of that being, in the form of the radical affirmation of beings as they are in themselves. The logical structure of Absolute Nothingness as a double negation can also be understood in terms of philosophical anthropology. Absolute Nothingness is realized in the negation of the Cartesian ego and the overcoming of the dualism of subject and object. In the overcoming of the illusion of the self as an autonomous and substantial *res cogitans* within a world of objects, the existential realization of Absolute Nothingness constitutes a form of awakening *(kaku)* to the immediacy of all things in what the Zen Buddhist tradition calls "suchness."

The logic of double negation is not unknown in the West. Nishida's Buddhist view of nothingness can be clarified by comparing it with Hegel's *Aufhebung* (Sublation). "The rational is the real," Hegel declares in his famous aphorism. In Hegelian dialectics, contradiction is overcome at a higher level through the sublation of opposites until history reaches its end in the final synthesis

(the absolute *Begriff* [Comprehension]). Nishida, in keeping with his East Asian Buddhist background, did not understand reality in terms of the dialectical overcoming of contradiction in the form of historical progress. Rather, contradiction is seen as constitutive of reality itself. Instead of being overcome by means of sublation, in Absolute Nothingness, contradictions are realized in suchness.

Therefore the logical structure of Nishida's notion of ultimate reality does not lead to the self-identity of all in a historical fulfillment. Instead of the dialectical overcoming of all contradiction in the final Begriff, Absolute Nothingness requires a paradoxical logic of the contradictory self-identity of opposites. In it the totality and interrelatedness of all are realized paradoxically in terms of both contradiction and self-identity. In this respect Hegel's final Begriff can be contrasted with Nishida's principle of absolute contradictory self-identity. In the continuous arising of the real, understood in terms of the concrete self-determination of Absolute Nothingness, negation and affirmation exist simultaneously without any final reconciliation.

Since the place of Absolute Nothingness implies neither the nullification of difference nor that everything ultimately will form a simple self-identity, and since it is the place out of which the contradictory self-identity of subject and object arises, how then are we to construe the relationship between the self and Absolute Nothingness? In what sense is the "place," within which this inverse correspondence of subject and object arises, absolute and universal? In his final essay, "The Logic of Place and the Religious Worldview,"[2] Nishida addresses this question with his notion of "inverse correspondence" *(gyakutaiō)*.

If the place of Absolute Nothingness is the absolute, can it be said to stand in opposition to the subject as a relative, finite being? Whenever two things are in oppo-

sition, a dualism results. The place out of which both the subject and object arise has been objectivized by the subject, at least to some degree. In this case, Absolute Nothingness is not in fact the true absolute. In his final essay, which treats the problem of a philosophy of religion based on his notion of Absolute Nothingness, Nishida explored the relationship between the self and the place out of which the self as a subject stands in opposition to a world of objects.

Absolute Nothingness, to be the true absolute, must entail some form of self-negation. The true absolute cannot stand in opposition to anything. Therefore Nishida argued that the relationship between the finite subject and the absolute must also form an absolutely contradictory self-identity that always arises in terms of an inverse correspondence of simultaneous affirmation and negation. In theological terms, God (or the Buddha) remains the true absolute only to the extent that God undergoes a self-negation and no longer stands in opposition to the self. At the same time, God and the self can never be thought of as identical. Instead, they are dynamically related in terms of an inverse correspondence of negation-*qua*-affirmation.

In Chapter eight, building on the principle of inverse correspondence, Abe finds two aspects to the absolute that can be said to be implicit in Nishida's philosophy. Aspect A of the absolute has to do with the relationship between God (or the Buddha) and the self as seen in religions of grace, such as Christianity and Pure Land Buddhism. Here the absolute and the self are related each other to by an inverse correspondence understood in terms of transcendence and immanence. In Aspect B of the absolute, Abe highlights the relationship between the self and the place within which the God/self relationship arises. This aspect helps clarify the character of religions of awakening, such as Zen. Here, too, the relationship between the self and the ab-

solute must be understood in terms of an inverse correspondence.

But Abe believes that the inverse correspondence at work in religions like Zen is not the same as the inverse correspondence that one finds in religions like Christianity. In Aspect A of the absolute, Abe sees an irreversible inverse correspondence. The absolute remains the true absolute to the extent that it undergoes a self-negation in relationship to the relative, but God never becomes the self and the self never becomes God. In Aspect B of the absolute, however, inverse correspondence is indeed reversible. In the place of Absolute Nothingness, the Buddha (or God) and the self are thoroughly interchangeable. Because there is the self, there is the Buddha. Clarifying these two varieties of inverse correspondence does much to clarify the differences between religions of grace and religions of awakening.

A final point of concern for this introduction to Abe's approach has to do with the differences that distinguish the work of Nishida Kitarō and that of Tanabe Hajime. On the issue of Absolute Nothingness, the differences between Nishida and Tanabe, whose philosophies together form the intellectual foundations of the Kyoto School, are too subtle and complex to summarize here. But since Abe refers to the conflict between Tanabe and Nishida at some length, supplying some background may prove helpful.

Tanabe was Nishida's younger colleague in the Philosophy Department of Kyoto Imperial University. After their earlier collaboration, Tanabe gradually broke away from the course being charted by Nishida. For present purposes let it suffice to say that Tanabe criticized the image of place as a metaphor for Absolute Nothingness, claiming that Nishida's approach inevitably declines into a form of contemplation based on the innate powers of the subject for intuition. Given this shortcoming, Absolute Nothingness as construed by Nishida becomes

the object of intuition or mystical contemplation. Understood as a place, it is known in terms of a mystical gnosis akin to Plotinus's idea of emanation. In contrast to Nishida, Tanabe argued that Absolute Nothingness is not known intuitively but rather *metanoetically* in the existential transformation of the subject through repentance *(zangedō)*. In this respect Tanabe shows the influence of Christianity and Pure Land Buddhism on his thinking, with their emphases on grace and ethical conversion and Kierkegaard's love of irony. Nishida, whose position seems more reminiscent of Zen, is more aesthetic in character, at least according to Tanabe.

In an effort to resist what he took to be Nishida's mysticism and intuitionism, Tanabe thought of Absolute Nothingness in terms of an "absolute mediation" *(zettai baikai)*. For Tanabe, Absolute Nothingness is not the place where the roots of all dualities (including subject/object dualism) can be intuited. This is known by means of the death and resurrection of the subject by what True Pure Land Buddhists call other-power or by what Christianity calls grace. Since Absolute Nothingness is not known in terms of intuition but only in the subject's *metanoia*, it has no existence apart from its concrete mediation by the self relating to others concretely and ethically within the finite world. Thus Tanabe's absolute mediation can be contrasted to Nishida's notion of Absolute Nothingness as place.

6
Nishida's Philosophy of "Place"

Without a doubt, Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945)[1] is the most outstanding philosopher of modern Japan. In his early thought, Nishida formulates the notion of "pure experience." Preceding the separation of subject and object, pure experience is a direct experience "without the least addition of any deliberative discrimination," a knowing "in accordance with facts completely relinquishing one's own fabrications."[2] In his first work, *An Inquiry into the Good*, Nishida argues that pure experience is the "sole Reality," or "True Reality," and from that perspective attempts to explain a variety of issues. Although Nishida later develops his thought, the problem of "True Reality" and the systematic treatment of philosophical issues on that basis remain his constant concerns. After identifying True Reality with pure experience in *An Inquiry into the Good*, Nishida locates it in the Fichtean "self-consciousness" *(Selbstbewusstsein)* and "act" *(Tathandlung)*, maintaining that ultimate Reality is absolutely free will realized at the base of human existence. Unlike Fichte, however, Nishida does not describe free will as having a strong rational character; rather, he describes it as intuitive and mystical, as a "seeing" at the base of that which "acts," a "seeing without a seer," as it were. He thereby arrives at the standpoint of "place" *(basho)*[3] that transcends all action.[4] It is Nishida's notion of place (and his so-called logic of place) that distinguishes him in the history of philosophy.

In his preface to *From the Actor to the Seer*, Nishida discusses his essay "Place": "[With this essay] I think I have grasped that which has long dwelled at the base of my thought. I have turned from Fichtean voluntarism to a kind of intuitionism."[5] Yet even if we regard Nishida's philosophy of place, with the aforemen-

tioned "seeing without a seer," as a kind of intuitionism, we must realize that it is not divorced from logic. Nishida considers both intuition and reflection (rational thinking) essential to us and tries to synthesize them at their common base. As clearly indicated by *Intuition and Reflection in Self-Awakening*,[6] the title of a book Nishida wrote after *An Inquiry into the Good* and before *From the Actor to the Seer*, the basis of the unity of intuition and reflection is self-awakening.[7] At this point Nishida's exposition of his philosophy of place begins to center around an exhaustive investigation—through the mediation of Aristotle's *hypokeimenon* (substratum)—of the fundamental significance of judgment as the subsumptive relationship between a subject and a predicate. Nishida thereby gives intuitionism a logical foundation in terms of a completely original logic of place.

To understand Nishida's philosophy of place, we must answer several questions: Why does Nishida's view of intuition as the basis of will, and his consequent move beyond Fichtean voluntarism, require the mediation of Aristotle's *hypokeimenon?* How does his logic of place provide a logical[8] basis, beyond mere intuitionism for seeing without a seer?

As mentioned before, Nishida Kitarō develops his logic of place through the mediation of Aristotle's *hypokeimenon*, an approach inseparable from his consideration of the structure of judgment. Why is it necessary for Nishida to consider the structure of judgment in his examination of the problem of True Reality? Why is it only through a critical evaluation of the structure of judgment that he arrives at the logic of place as the logic of Reality? To clarify these issues we must now return to *An Inquiry into the Good*, Nishida's initial philosophical standpoint.

In *An Inquiry into the Good*, Nishida regards pure experience as True Reality and argues that "the phenomenon called consciousness is the sole Reality" (consciousness here understood as pure experience).[9] This argument, that consciousness as pure experience constitutes "the sole Reality," echoes the stance of extreme idealists, such as Berkeley and Fichte. Yet when we speak of consciousness, or the phenomenon called consciousness, we usually mean consciousness that is objectified or reflected upon

as an object of consciousness, and hence overlook immediate and direct consciousness.[10] We normally conceive of consciousness from the outside, but when we stop objectifying it and return to its base, which is the true subject of consciousness, consciousness is nothing other than pure experience. It is precisely this pure experience free from all objectification that Nishida regards as True Reality.

In pure experience, the intellect, emotions, and will are still undivided; they are a single activity without any opposition between subject and object. Since that opposition arises from the demands of thinking, it is not a fact of immediate experience. In immediate experience, there is only a single, independent, self-sufficient event. There is neither a subject that sees nor an object that is seen. In the instant of immediate experience, so-called True Reality is immediately present. It is like becoming enraptured by exquisite music, forgetting ourselves and everything around us, and sensing that the universe is but one melodious sound. Since the thought that the music is the vibration of air or that one is listening derives from reflection and thought apart from the true state of that reality, at that point we are already separated from True Reality.[11]

Nishida seeks True Reality, then, in consciousness, or in the direction of "Subjective"[12] Existence. This subjectivity is not, however, a subject standing in opposition to an object, for here True Reality is grasped from a self-extricated point free from the subject–object structure of ordinary experience. Accordingly, immediate and direct consciousness is no longer seen as mere subjective consciousness but as essentially self-transcendent and self-extricated consciousness, which is none other than pure experience. The problem of consciousness is central in Nishida's philosophy, then, for to Nishida, who searches for True Reality within Subjective Existence, the problem of True Reality is inseparable from that of direct consciousness.

As indicated by the above discussion, Nishida's philosophy rests from the outset on an original standpoint that diverges from the various perspectives found in Western philosophy.[13] After finishing "Place," Nishida wrote an essay titled "The Remaining

Problem of Consciousness," which was later included in volume II of *Mediation and Experience*.[14] In this essay, Nishida argues that Western philosophy has only considered consciousness that has been objectified as an object of consciousness, rather than immediate and direct consciousness, which is the true subject of consciousness. He points out that even Kant's consciousness in general *(Bewusstsein überhaupt)* and philosophy after Kant deal with consciousness that is somewhat objectified and, strictly speaking, not consciousness that is now conscious, or consciousness that is the subject of consciousness. Thus, subsequent to *An Inquiry into the Good*, Nishida investigates this immediate and direct consciousness as True Reality and eventually insists that consciousness that is now conscious is the place of Absolute Nothingness.

Yet even if we seek Reality within Subjective Existence and probe deeply into immediate self-extricated consciousness and pure experience and deepen—as True Reality—Fichte's *Tathandlung*, absolute free will, and intuition, we cannot totally free ourselves from subjectivism. However deep our experience, we cannot lay a firm logical foundation for the Reality found therein, for it is still unclear how True Reality realized within Subjective Existence relates to the objective world. The absolute free will and intuition sought in the depths of Subjective Existence *qua* True Reality become increasingly tinged with mysticism and removed from objective, conceptual knowledge. Unless we clarify their relation to conceptual knowledge, we cannot establish a logical basis for absolute free will and intuition. "Logical" here does not indicate mere valid induction or deduction or conceptual verification but the establishment and confirmation of Reality in an integrated and ontological sense. In contemporary Western philosophy, especially much Anglo-American philosophy, the term "logical" implies the view of linguistic analysis and hence has an anti-metaphysical nuance. In contrast, Nishida's usage of it in his formulation of the logic of place is ontological and metaphysical in the sense of the self-awakening of unanalyzable and unobjectifiable ultimate Reality. His understanding of logic parallels that of Hegel, who says, "Logic coincides with Metaphysics, the science of things set and held in thought—

thoughts accredited as able to express the essential nature of things."[15]

Now, in giving a logical basis to True Reality conceived intuitively in the depths of Subjective Existence, any hint of subjectivism must be overcome. To unite True Reality and objective conceptual knowledge upon one logical foundation, Nishida decided to shift the direction of his thought, look to Greek philosophy, and take up Aristotle's *hypokeimenon*. In Aristotle's philosophy, the *hypokeimenon* is the substratum that underlies natural things and is hence an objective rather than Subjective Reality. It is in accordance with natural existence that Aristotle defined an individual being as the subject that cannot become predicate. Aristotle states in the third chapter of his *Metaphysics Z*, "Now that which underlies a thing is that of which everything else is predicated, but it itself cannot be predicated of anything else."[16] In this way the *hypokeimenon*, individual concrete being, is understood in Aristotle's philosophy as the grammatical subject of judgment.

In his investigation of the problem of Reality, Nishida thus turns his attention from Subjective Existence to Aristotle's objective existence and substance, from consciousness to nature or the individual entity. He does not, however, abandon the direction of Subjective Existence or consciousness. With feet firmly planted thereon, he tries to connect the direction of Subjective Existence to the direction of nature or substance and in that way extricate himself from subjectivism. It is in this attempt to include objective existence within Subjective Existence, to envelop the individual in consciousness, that judgment becomes problematic.

As explained later in this paper, the purest form of judgment is subsumptive judgment, which is the ground of conceptual knowledge in a strict sense. Nishida's shift from consciousness to judgment as the basis of his analysis of Reality derives from his desire to (1) eliminate any hint of subjectivism inescapable in the Subjective direction, (2) link the will with intuition and with conceptual knowledge, and (3) establish a thoroughgoing logical foundation of Reality on the basis of (1) and (2). Because Aristotle's concept of substance indicates the individual entity, which is defined according to the structure of judgment as the subject

that cannot become predicate, Nishida comes to consider the problem of judgment.

Judgment establishes conceptual knowledge, that is, *knowing* in a strict sense. Judgment consists of the subsumption of a particular subject by a universal predicate, so a subsumptive judgment is the purest and most fundamental form. For example, in the judgment "A dog is a mammal," the predicate "mammal" is attributed to the particular subject "dog." The subject concept "dog" is subsumed by the more universal predicative concept "mammal." Not only dogs, but also cats, goats, cows, tigers, and many other animals are mammals. We can therefore conceive of mammals in general, in which a dog is subsumed as a particular mammal along with the other members of the group. The predicative mammal abstracts only the common characteristics of dogs, cats, goats, cows, and tigers—suckling—while disregarding the peculiar character or specific difference of dogs, the subject in the above example, which sets them apart from other mammals.

In formal logic, the more universal concepts ignoring the specific difference of a certain object are termed "superordinate concepts," and they are abstract concepts. Continuing from the judgment "A dog is a mammal," however, we can make the following judgments: "A mammal is an animal," "An animal is a living thing," "A living thing is a thing." All of these are subsumptive judgments constitutive of conceptual knowledge. The subject "mammal" is subsumed in the more universal predicative concept "living thing," and the subject "living thing" in the more universal predicative concept "thing." By progressing from mammals in general to animals in general to living things in general and to things in general, we arrive at more universal concepts and greater degrees of abstraction.

In Nishida's philosophy, a general predicate of this sort is termed an "abstract universal" or "conceptual universal."[17] This terminology indicates universals arrived at by establishing ever more abstract or generic superordinate concepts—universals in which intention decreases as extension increases through the removal of specific difference. Although this revolves around the

subject–predicate relation, a truly particular entity is not subsumed here in its uniqueness. Instead, by virtue of an attribute common to that particular and others—for example, the attribute of suckling held in common by dogs, cats, and certain other animals—the particular entity is subsumed in a more universal generic concept, such as mammal. Judgments, then, are based on an inherence relationship between an object and its attribute. Accordingly, although this subsumption of particulars by universals constitutes judgment, the judgment proffers an abstract universal through the removal of the specific difference of the various particulars included within it. Such a judgment, while subsumptive, could be more correctly termed an "inherence judgment,"[18] and this is the type of judgment usually found in formal logic.

In contrast, a truly subsumptive judgment encompasses a particular without marring its distinctive character or removing its specific difference. For example, "dog" is not stripped of its specific difference and enveloped in the generic predicate "mammal" as something that suckles; and likewise, "mammal" is not stripped of its specific difference and subsumed, as a "living thing with self-locomotion," in the more generic concept "animal." Instead, "mammal," the underlying subtratum establishing dogs, concretizes and particularizes itself as a dog. This is the case not only with a dog, but also with a cat, goat, or cow. Each is equally and respectively a particularization of the underlying substratum "mammal." Again, "animal," the underlying substratum of mammals, in the same way concretizes and particularizes itself within itself as "mammal." One may say that this is the case not only with mammals in general, but also with oviparous animals, viviparous animals, and other types: They are equally particularizations of the underlying substratum "animal." With truly subsumptive judgments in which a substratum self-determines itself as a particular entity, the entity preserves all of its particularity, which is enveloped within something more universal. It does not lose its specific difference as it does when subsumed by an abstract universal—instead, a particular is grasped as the self-determination of a concrete universal (concrete in the sense that it concretizes rather than abstracts). A universal in this sense differs

from an abstract universal, for it includes the principles of particularization and individualization.

In a true subsumptive judgment, therefore, as distinguished from an inherence judgment, that which is more universal is not more abstract but, conversely, more concrete. The intension and extension of the concept increase and decrease together. Nishida terms the universal established in this type of subsumptive judgment a "concrete universal" or "universal of judgment" in contradistinction to the abstract universal of inherence judgments, which is termed a "conceptual universal"[19] Nishida's terminology reflects the fact that it is concrete universals that truly establish subsumptive judgments as such.

As discussed above, there are two kinds of subsumptive judgment. One is subsumptive judgment in the formal sense of subsuming a particular subject by removing its specific difference and enveloping it with an abstract universal. This type of subsumptive judgment is called an inherence judgment, for it is through an attribute inherent in a particular subject (e.g., the attribute of suckling inherent in dogs) that a subsumptive judgment is established. The other kind of subsumptive judgment is subsumptive not in a formal sense but in a true sense, in that the particular subject is fully subsumed just as it is without any removal of its specific difference. In other words, it is subsumed by a concrete universal, not by an abstract one.

In the first type of subsumptive judgment, an inherence judgment, extension increases as intension decreases. This inverse relationship indicates that to subsume a particular subject in a universal predicate is to move outward from the former toward the latter. Here the subsumptive relationship between a particular subject and a universal predicate is somewhat objectified from outside the judgment; the judge stands outside the judgment and conceptualizes a particular subject (e.g., dog) by subsuming it in an abstract, universal predicate (e.g., mammal). The result is a subsumptive judgment in the formal sense.

In true subsumptive judgment, however, the intension and extension of the concept increase and decrease together, for the universal is not more abstract but more concrete. This indicates

that to subsume a particular subject in a universal predicate is not to move out of the particular toward the universal, but for the universal (a predicate, e.g., dog). Here the subsumptive relationship between a particular subject and a universal predicate is not objectified from without; instead, it is a self-determination or self-particularization of the universal predicate within itself.[20] In other words, the universal predicate as the underlying substratum (e.g., mammal) individualizes itself within itself as a particular subject (e.g., dog). Here the judge is not standing outside of the judgment but rather is identical with the universal predicate. The judge and judgment are not two but one, because in this kind of subsumptive judgment, as we saw before, subsumption is the self-particularization of the universal predicate. The result is a subsumptive judgment in the true sense.

To shift from the first type of subsumptive judgment to the second, that is, from the abstract universal to the concrete universal, we must undergo a radical change in our way of thinking: from the analytic and objective way of thinking to the nonobjective, holistic, and Subjective way of thinking.

Although we have clarified the distinction between the abstract universal and the concrete universal, or, in Nishida's terminology, the conceptual universal and the universal of judgment, we must now consider the relationship between the two.

In judgment, a subject denoting a particular is subsumed in some form by a more universal predicate. We can search endlessly for something universal in the direction of the predicate and, likewise, something particular in the direction of the subject. In inherence judgment, we come to more universal universals by continually removing specific difference, and more particular particulars by adding specific difference. For example, the term "dog," in contrast to general mammals or animals, refers to a particular, yet there are many kinds of dogs, such as poodles, terriers, and retrievers. In relation to the many species of dogs, dogs in general is a generic concept and hence constitutes a universal. By adding specific difference to dogs in general we arrive at something more particular, for example, "retriever." The term "retriever," however, is still a generic concept, a universal, and

by adding specific difference to this we can particularize it a "Labrador retriever" or "golden retriever." In this way we can particularize without limit by continually adding specific difference and thereby to enlarge limitlessly the content of concepts by decreasing extension. From the perspective of inherence judgment, we usually think that we arrive at an individual at the extreme limit of the addition of specific difference, the individual being the last subject to which predicates have been attached.

But do we actually arrive at an individual at the extreme limit of the addition of specific difference? Clearly, in principle, we cannot. To whatever extent we particularize a given concept, it still fails to describe an individual as such. Even if we add specific difference to the generic concept "dog" and proceed to "retriever" and "golden retriever," we cannot arrive at this golden retriever here and now, at this dog, at this particular thing named, for example, Ralph. We can infinitely approach it but can never arrive at it. This means that individuals cannot be truly embraced by conceptual universals; in this sense, they transcend all conceptual knowledge.

Aristotle, therefore, regarded individuals as "subjects that cannot become predicates,"[21] as Substances that transcend conceptual knowledge. For example, "golden retriever" is certainly more real and concrete than "retriever." The term "golden retriever," however, can become a subject, as in "Ralph is a golden retriever." The term "golden retriever" is still abstract and unreal. Even if the dog called "Ralph," existing here and now, becomes a subject and we attach various predicates to it, the dog itself cannot become a predicate. Even if we say, "That is Ralph," "That" and "Ralph" are the same thing, and "Ralph" in this case cannot be deemed a predicate in the same sense as the predicates up to this point. In this way, "Ralph," as an individual, can be called the last subject, which cannot become a predicate. An individual possessing such a character is posited as a Substance transcending all concepts. The individual standing as this last subject, or transcendent subject, is beyond any relation between subject and predicate. It transcends every judgment, is conceptually unknowable, and hence is transrational. Aristotle himself thought

that to arrive at a true individual entity (i.e., a Substance), one must go beyond concepts and make a leap through intuition.[22] He also believed, however, that a Substance must be thoroughly defined, for anything that is not completely defined is unformed matter *(hyle)* and therefore differs from a true Substance.[23]

An individual, the subject that cannot become a predicate, and in that sense the final subject or transcendent subject, cannot be subsumed by a conceptual universal. According to Nishida, therefore, to subsume the individual and so to make its transrationality understandable rationally, we must shift from the perspective of the conceptual universal to the standpoint of the universal of judgment. Again, the universal of judgment is a concrete universal, which diverges from abstract universals in that it includes the principle of particularization or individualization.[24] It encompasses all particulars and all individuals within itself and determines them as its own self-determination. This is the essential meaning of true subsumptive judgment, which is why the reality of the Aristotelian individual forces us to adopt the universal of judgment rather than the conceptual universal.

Nishida is not satisfied with Aristotle's view of individuals, however. Aristotle's individual is a seen individual, not an acting one. If an individual is moved by an unmoved Prime Mover, it must be said not to change or act by itself.[25] Moreover, Nishida considers Aristotle's examination of single individuals insufficient. Because an individual can be an individual only in opposition to other individuals, Nishida examines the relationship between one individual and another. (This is a natural result of his understanding of an individual as an actor.) He thus understands this relationship as a dynamic interaction between two or myriad acting individuals. His analysis includes the factors of time and space, in that the spatial and temporal "world" is inseparable from the individual.[26]

Nishida also contends that we cannot deal adequately with "the actor" and "the world" through the universal of judgment. This view brings him to an examination of the "inferential universal"[27] in the depths of the universal of judgment. The inferential universal is a concrete universal, understood by Nishida ever

more profoundly as he developed his thought; he terms it "self-awakened universal,"[28] and "intelligible universal,"[29] and, finally, a "dialectical universal."[30] (Detailed discussion of these important concepts is beyond the scope of the present essay.)

Nishida spoke of a subsumptive judgment as "a particular lying in the place of a universal."[31] He viewed a particular as "that which lies within" a universal and a universal as the "'place' within which the particular lies."[32] (Here, subsumptive judgment is taken as true subsumptive judgment.) To use the above example, the concept "dog," along with other concepts having similar particularity, is subsumed by the concept "mammal," which is in turn subsumed by the concept "animal." In this sense, "mammal" is the "place" within which "dog" lies. "That which lies within" expresses the judgment's subject dimension, while "place" expresses the judgment's predicative dimension. The predicative dimension is consciousness; the subject dimension is that toward which consciousness is directed. As the predicative dimension (place) grows more encompassing, consciousness grasps more fully the dimension of the subject.

Why did Nishida conceive of judgments as constituted by "that which lies within" a "place"? Judgment is usually understood as an action or *function* of consciousness, and this view presupposes the subject making the action of judgment and the object of the act of judgment. In this case, according to Nishida, judgment is objectified as something *(etwas)*, for to view judgment as a functioning or an action, even though judgment is essentially "knowing," is to posit it as some known entity.[33] In the midst of "knowing," it is not realized even as a type of functioning. Nishida, who stood entirely within immediate, direct consciousness rather than objectified consciousness, removed all traces of such reflective consciousness by concentrating on the form of judgment and describing the pure form of subsumptive judgment as a relationship between a place and that which lies within it. We must now turn from this abstract explanation of Nishida's view of judgment to the concrete, positive reason for his view by examining the nature of the concrete universal.

According to Hegel, a concrete universal contains a principle

of individualization,[34] through which it develops distinctions within itself while maintaining self-identity. This self-differentiation is completely self-determined.

To Nishida, for a judgment to be established, there must be something single and undifferentiated at its base. In other words, something intuitive precedes judgment.[35] For instance, to establish a judgment, "A horse is running," there must be a preceding intuition, "A running horse,"[36] which is an undifferentiated entity. This concrete intuition, which Nishida earlier called "pure experience," is not fixed and closed: it may include distinctions and develop them from within, generating such judgments as "A horse is running."

Hegel views the ultimate concrete universal as an Idea and judgment *(Urteil)* as a primordial division *(Ur-teilen)*.[37] Nishida's concrete universal roughly corresponds to Hegel's, although he describes it quite differently. To both thinkers, a concrete universal is not determined from the outside by something else. As something undifferentiated, it forms itself from within. Nishida thought that judgment is based on this sort of intuitive concrete universal, and it is from this perspective that he sets forth place and "that which lies within."

We cannot fully clarify the true meaning of place without returning to Aristotle's problem of the individual, which eventually leads us to the relation between the Aristotelian individual and the Hegelian concrete universal. Aristotle's individual is "the subject that cannot become predicate;" in other words, the transcendent subject beyond predication, the final subject. Beyond all conceptualization, it is a true Substance. Such an individual, however, is transrational in that it cannot be subsumed by a conceptual Universal and can be known only by intuition. Yet Aristotle also held that a Substance must be definable. For individuals to be known, there must be a universal that can encompass them. But can the Hegelian concrete universal truly subsume the Aristotelian individual? This problem can be solved only if we shift from the standpoint of the abstract universal to the standpoint of the concrete universal. Based on Nishida's theory of place and his criticism of Hegel, I view this issue in the following way.

Hegel conceives of the ultimate concrete Universal as Idea, which develops dialectically "in itself" *(an sich)*, "for itself" *(für sich)*, and "in and for itself" *(an und für sich)*.[38] This dialectical logic includes negative mediation and the sublation-preservation *(Aufhebung)* of contradiction. The idea goes outside itself while developing dialectically; it "self-externalizes" itself *(Selbstentausserung)*.[39] It does not, however, merely leave itself; in going outside itself through self-negation, it simultaneously returns to its own interior, and in this way it never loses its self-identity. In this self-determination, it encompasses everything within itself.

Can this concrete universal totally subsume the Aristotelian individual, "the subject that cannot become predicate," the Substance that defies all predication and conceptualization? Hegel posits the concrete universal as that which is most universal and general. In terms of the form of judgment, it is the last predicate, the most subsumptive predicate, which encompasses everything. Even if it is deemed the most subsumptive final predicate, it is never the most generic concept, for clearly it differs from an abstract universal. It is dialectical, not analytical; it includes self-negation within itself. Nevertheless, when this concrete Universal is defined as Idea, can it truly subsume a particular in its individuality? Can this universal completely subsume an individual without marring its uniqueness and transrational concreteness?

However dialectical and self-negating Hegel's concrete universal might be, insofar as it is Idea, inevitably the individual's singularity is universalized and its transrational concreteness rationalized. For this reason, scholars criticize Hegel's view of the individual in various ways. Hegel's philosophy of history has been criticized for his notion of the "trick of reason" *(List der Vernunft)*,[40] which manipulates individual figures through passion in history. Furthermore, his philosophy as a whole has been attacked as being panlogistic. The arguments marshalled by Feuerbach and Kierkegaard and the appearance of Life Philosophy all derive from the realization that even essentially transrational entities are rationalized in Hegel's panlogistic rationalism. Due to this panlogistic character Hegel's concrete universal cannot en-

compass Aristotle's individual in its transrational concreteness. Also, in regarding the Idea or Geist as the ultimate universal, Hegel's standpoint is not completely free from a coloring of subjectivism similar to that in Kant and Fichte.

Nishida's philosophy, which attempts to free itself from all subjectivism by grappling with Aristotle's individual, harbors a critique of Hegelian philosophy that naturally differs from the criticisms mentioned above. Nishida argues[41] that when the concrete universal is the Idea, though it is dialectical, it is something called "*absoluter Geist*," which rationalizes the individual's transrationality;[42] and insofar as it is *something*, there must be a "place" in which the Idea itself lies. This does not mean that Hegel's Idea is *something* in the ordinary sense, for it includes self-negation within itself. But, since it is not absolute nothingness but *absoluter Geist*, strictly speaking, it is still not completely free from somethingness. However universal and all-inclusive the Idea may be, insofar as it is not pure place but is still *something*, or "that which lies within," we must ask about its place. Hegel's Idea, therefore, is not the final transcendent predicate and hence not the ultimate concrete universal.

To Hegel, the Idea is the ultimate concrete universal, which subsumes everything in its self-unfolding. In one sense, Hegel's Idea is the place in which all things lie and hence the most subsumptive place. Insofar as this place in which all things lie is nothing other than the Idea or *absoluter Geist*, not Absolute Nothingness, however, we must ask about the place in which that Idea itself lies. Since the Idea is the most subsumptive place in which all things exist, the place in which this Idea lies cannot be a place that is substantial or being. Rather it must be the place of no-thingness. As discussed above, however, the Idea itself is not a mere something *(etwas);* as the concrete universal with a dialectical character, it includes the principle of self-negation within itself and therefore has a fundamental character of unobjectifiable no-thingness. Accordingly, the place in which this Idea lies cannot be the place of relative nothingness, that is, "nothingness" as a counter-concept to "somethingness." Rather, it must be Absolute Nothingness, which is completely beyond the duality of

somethingness and nothingness and encompasses even Hegel's Idea with its character of nothingness. This place (Absolute Nothingness), not the Idea, is the ultimate concrete universal. We no longer need to, or are able to, inquire into the existence of the place in which Absolute Nothingness lies, for Absolute Nothingness is in no sense "something" at all or "that which lies within," but is "the place in which everything positive and negative lies." Absolute Nothingness itself is place; nothing else can be called the true place.

Absolute Nothingness, not Hegel's Idea, is the ultimate concrete universal. We can demonstrate this by asking whether Hegel's Idea is the last predicate. In terms of the form of judgment, Hegel's Idea, as that which subsumes everything within itself, is the ultimate predicate. On the other hand, the ultimate subject, that is, Aristotle's individual, is the subject that cannot become predicate, the transcendent subject that is beyond ordinary subject–predicate judgment. Likewise, according to Nishida, the ultimate predicate in the true sense must be the predicate that cannot become subject.[43] Hegel's Idea is not the ultimate predicate in this sense, for it can be the object of a judgment (i.e., a grammatical subject in statements that the Idea is such and such). Since it is thus objectifiable, the Idea cannot be regarded as completely beyond subject–predicate judgment as such. The true ultimate predicate, that is, the predicate that is never a grammatical subject, cannot be subsumed by any superordinate predicate and hence can never be determined or defined in any way. It is completely undeterminable and undefinable. It is nothingness and cannot even be determined as the Idea or God. Absolute Nothingness is determined neither as no-thingness nor as being. (That is, we cannot say that Absolute Nothingness is such and such.)[44] In this sense, we can conceive of such Absolute Nothingness as the true final predicate.

The argument that the ultimate concrete universal is not the Hegelian Idea but rather Absolute Nothingness as the place in which the Idea itself lies, serves to answer the question of the nature of the concrete universal, which can truly subsume the Aristotelian individual. The concrete universal that can subsume the

individual in its uniqueness and transrationality is clearly not "something" or "being." Assuming the concrete universal has a dialectical character like Hegel's Idea, as long as it has an aspect of being something in some sense, it cannot truly subsume the individual as the individual. Only when the concrete universal is a universal no-thingness can the individual be encompassed without damage to its uniqueness and transrational concreteness. Since subsuming does not differ from knowing, the individual is known as the individual only from the standpoint of place (Absolute Nothingness).

In this way, Nishida explores Aristotle's individual, determines the nature of the concrete universal that can subsume it, and finally arrives at the notion of place or Absolute Nothingness. In terms of the form of judgment, Nishida transcends the predicative dimension of judgment and stands upon the place of the "transcendent predicate," in other words, upon the place of Absolute Nothingness in contrast to the "transcendent subject" or individual that transcends the subject dimension. Both the direction of subject and the direction of predicate are transcended, and the individual as transcendent subject is subsumed by Absolute Nothingness as the transcendent predicate.[45] This dual transcendence is characteristic of the subsumption of the individual by Absolute Nothingness. This is not a problem of mere method but a problem of philosophical principle. We herein make immediate contact with the individual for the first time. That is, through the realization of Absolute Nothingness, the individual is fully known by us in its concrete immediacy without any conceptualization. Expressed in Nishida's terms, the individual is realized as "that which lies within" Absolute Nothingness (i.e., it rests in Absolute Nothingness, its place), and in Absolute Nothingness determines itself without being determined from the outside by any other thing. This self-determination of place or Absolute Nothingness is the self-determination of the world.

Only place or Absolute Nothingness can subsume the individual without marring its uniqueness and transrationality and thereby allow it to be known precisely as an individual. We must now elaborate on the statement that the self-determination of the

individual, just as it is, is the self-determination of both the place of Absolute Nothingness and the world.

Let us assume that a golden retriever named Ralph is here before us. From Nishida's standpoint, it is only as "that which lies within" the place of Absolute Nothingness that Ralph can be truly known as a particular dog. Ralph is a self-determination of Absolute Nothingness, and this very fact means that Ralph is a self-determination of Ralph himself. What exactly does this mean?

As a dog, Ralph is a particularization of the underlying substratum "dog"; he is a self-determination of "dog." Moreover, as a particularization of "animal," he is also a self-determination of "animal," and hence of "living thing," "thing that exists," and so on. Yet Ralph is not exhausted by these. Nor is he a dialectical self-determination of the Hegelian Idea or of God's creative activity. If he were such a self-determination, his uniqueness and transrational concreteness would be marred, for the Idea and God have not completely shaken free from the character of being. Ralph must be designated as the self-determination of that which is no-thing whatsoever, that is, of Absolute Nothingness. Otherwise his concrete individuality would escape us. The individual dog named Ralph now before us finds his place in Absolute Nothingness, not in being in any sense.

Although we consider Ralph a self-determination of Absolute Nothingness, he is not the self-determination of a something called "Absolute Nothingness" that is external to or transcendent of Ralph. As we saw before, this Ralph here and now is not the self-determination of something that exists in any sense, even if it is the Idea or the creative activity of God; this Ralph is not the self-determination of anything at all. That is to say, Ralph is not the self-determination of anything external to or beyond himself—Ralph is the self-determination of Ralph himself. That "Ralph is the self-determination of Absolute No-thingness" means exactly the same thing as "Ralph is the self-determination of Ralph himself." As a unique individual, Ralph stands in infinitely deep Nothingness with nothing supporting or grounding his existence. Ralph, the concrete dog here and now, has his place

in Absolute Nothingness and, at the same time, truly has his place in himself. Consider the following anecdote:

A monk once asked Master Jōshū, "Does a dog have Buddha nature?" and Jōshū said, "*Mu!*" which literally means "no" and implies Nothingness. This is the famous Mu koan, crucially significant in the world of Zen. From the *mu* beyond having and not having or being and nonbeing, from the standpoint of Absolute Nothingness, Jōshū annihilates with one stroke the perspective of this monk, who has entangled himself in the distinction between being and nonbeing and, therefore, asks if a dog has Buddha nature. He views the Buddha nature as a kind of "something" and hence gets caught up in the duality of being and nonbeing. Jōshō demolishes the monk's standpoint with the single word "*mu*."

Nishida, too, would emphatically negate any perspective that regards a dog as the self-determination of the Buddha nature about which someone can ask "have . . . or have not." The true Buddha nature is in no sense being—it is the totally unobjectifiable Absolute Nothingness diverging from any Buddha nature about which one asks "have . . . or have not." A dog is truly a dog precisely because it is a self-determination of this true Buddha nature. Consenquently, that a dog is the self-determination of Absolute Nothingness which is not even Buddha nature does not signify empty nothingness or nihility. At another time, Jōshū responds to the same question not with *mu*, but with "*U!*" ("Having!" or "Being!")

The above *mondō* (question and answer) centers around a dog's Buddha nature, but the investigation of the Way in this dialogue is actually concerned with the questioner's own Buddha nature. As I said before, with the word "*mu*," Jōshū annihilates the standpoint of the monk who is caught up in the distinction between being and nonbeing and hence views Buddha nature as a kind of something *(etwas)*. The monk can never correctly understand the existence and nonexistence of the Buddha nature in a dog without taking leave of his own dualistic view of being and nonbeing, extricating himself from his objectification of the Buddha nature, and then realizing in his own Subjective Existence

the Buddha nature as unobjectifiable Absolute Nothingness. Only when the questioner realizes that he himself is a self-determination of Absolute Nothingness does he know that a dog is, too. He then also realizes that he is truly his own self-determination for the same reason (just as the dog is his own self-determination).[46]

When the questioner realizes this, he further realizes that all individuals are self-determinations of Absolute Nothingness and are at the same time self-determinations of themselves (this also involves a mutual determination among individuals)[47] and that precisely in this way the world is a self-determination of Absolute Nothingness. The self-determination of individuals and the mutual determination among individuals are nothing other than the self-determination of the world. In short, the self-determination of Absolute Nothingness, the self-determination of individuals, the mutual determination among individuals, and the self-determination of the world are all the same thing. I first grasp this identity of meaning when I Subjectively and existentially realize that I, writing this, am a self-determination of Absolute Nothingness and hence nothing other than my own self-determination. It is place as Absolute Nothingness that establishes the truth of this identity.

How, then, does Nishida formulate his philosophy of place as an original philosophical logic, as the logic of place? As discussed before, Nishida persistently seeks Reality in the direction of consciousness and takes pure experience, self-awakening, *Tathandlung*, absolutely free will, and then intuition to be Reality. He progressively deepens his thought by first rejecting intellectualism for voluntarism and then shifting from voluntarism to intuitionism. Through this development emerges the standpoint in which the knower and the known become one, the standpoint of knowing without a knower and seeing without a seer—in other words, the standpoint of consciousness that is truly the subject, not the object, of consciousness. To remove the threat of subjectivism otherwise inescapable in such a standpoint and lay a logical foundation for the Reality found therein, Nishida takes up Aristotle's *hypokeimenon*, for in Aristotle, Reality is pursued not in

the direction of consciousness but in the direction of objects. Defining Substance as the subject that cannot become predicate, Aristotle seeks True Reality and the foundation of judgment in the direction of the grammatical subject, that is, in the direction of objects in the sense that the subject of a proposition is an object of thought. Since Aristotle's logic concerns itself with the grammatical or logical subject, it is a kind of objective logic, the logic of objective thinking.

As mediating factors, Nishida makes use of Aristotle's *hypokeimenon* and his notion of the individual, that is, for Aristotle's logic of the grammatical subject (Substance) to be known, there must exist that which encompasses it, the place in which it lies, and this place must be sought in the plane of transcendent predicates, not in the direction of the logical subject. In Nishida's philosophy, which thus probes the structure of judgment in terms of Aristotle's logic of the grammatical subject, the foundation of judgment is found in universals rather than individuals, in the direction of the predicate rather than of the grammatical subject. The direction of predicates is the direction of consciousness, and the plane of transcendent predicates subsuming the individual as grammatical subject is place or Nothingness as the field of consciousness. By grasping the place of consciousness as the place of predicates through the mediation of Aristotle's *hypokeimenon*, Nishida gives a logical foundation to immediate and direct consciousness, to seeing without a seer, which otherwise cannot escape subjectivism and mysticism. In the process, he also lays a logical foundation for Reality.

The basis of this logic of place is Nishida's notion that the individual is the self-determination of the universal (place or Absolute Nothingness) and as such transcends generic concepts. The logic of place is a predicative logic in the radical sense, not a logic of the grammatical subject. Hence, it stands in contrast to all forms of traditional Western "objective logic," which, strictly speaking, never fully transcend the subject–predicate structure. It is not a logic about the act of seeing or of knowing, nor is it a logic about that which is seen and known objectively in terms of the grammatical subject; rather, it is a logic of place, which is

prior to and the source of both seeing and knowing and that which is seen and known. It is a Subjective logic prior to the opposition of subject and object, a logic of totally unobjectifiable self-awakening. In comparison with the logic of place, which is Absolute Nothingness, Aristotle's logic of the grammatical subject, Kant's highly subjectified transcendental logic, and Hegel's dialectical logic are all logics of objective consciousness and in this regard do not escape objective thinking. Consequently, they fall short of the logic of truly Subjective self-awakening.

The logic of place, however, neither confronts objective logic nor excludes it. Although we term it predicative logic, this does not signify logic without a subject. As its own self-determination, place and its logic grasp all grammatical subjects without marring their uniqueness. Place reflects all individuals and their mutually determining way-of-being within itself and realizes them as its own self-determination. In this regard, the logic of place is the logic of the self-establishment of the objective world and includes objective logic as a necessary factor or moment. The logic of place is not the form of the thinking of the Subjective self. Rather, it is the form of the self-expression of Reality. Since Nishida's philosophy of place is a logic of thoroughgoing Subjective and existential self-realization, it is at the same time the logic of the establishment of the objective world.

7
Philosophy, Religion, and Aesthetics in Nishida and Whitehead

"What is True Reality?" is the fundamental question that Nishida Kitarō asked throughout his long career. His first answer to this question was "pure experience," which precedes the addition of any ideation whatsoever and is prior to subject–object duality. Passing through an understanding of True Reality as the absolute free will, Nishida then arrived at the notion of *basho* or place, which is Absolute Nothingness. Through still further articulation, Nishida came to grasp true Reality as the "dialectical universal," "Self-identity in and through absolute contradiction," and finally as the "world of historical reality." In other words, in his later period Nishida understands True Reality to be the world of historical reality, which is simply another term for pure experience, the place of Absolute Nothingness, or Self-identity in and through absolute contradiction. Since the notion of the world of historical reality is True Reality as understood by Nishida in his later years, to comprehend the relation between philosophy, religion, and aesthetics in Nishida's thought we should try to understand it from the standpoint of the world of historical reality.

The world of historical reality, or the historical world, is not the world as understood to exist over and against the self. It is the world in which we are born, work, and die. It is the boundless openness in which the interrelationship between the self and the world takes place.

It is the world realized at absolute present, which includes infinite past and infinite future. It is the unobjectifiable and unconceptualizable living reality in which the human self and environment mutually determine each other. Thus, the world is always forming itself "from the formed to the forming" in terms of a dy-

namic identity of opposition and contradiction. Speaking from the determination by the human self, this self-formation of the world is understood to be directed immanently; whereas, speaking from the determination by the environment, it is understood to be directed transcendently. The historical world consists of the self-identity of these two directions, immanence and transcendence, and always includes two opposing poles. In other words, in the historical actual world the transcendent is realized in the immanent, and conversely the immanent is realized in the transcendent. Accordingly, the historical world is always confronting a crisis, and precisely because it is so, it is the living, creative, actual world.

It is the perspective of art and aesthetics that goes beyond the conceptual realm and always grasps the transcendent immanently by means of physical and bodily production; that is, *poiesis.* On the contrary, it is the perspective of learning that goes beyond the actual realm and always grasps the immanent transcendently by abstracting and universalizing the particular entities. The actual, historical world consists of the identity of these two opposing directions, represented by art and learning. Thus artistic intuition and theoretical speculation stand contrary to each other and yet, fundamentally speaking, both of them are the historical, formative function of the actual world, which is the self-identity in and through absolute contradiction between the forming and the formed. Accordingly, art is not a product of merely subjective imagination but has an artistic reality as a product of more fundamental self-formation out of the historical world.

Otherwise it is merely play, not art. Art is, however, an immanent self-expression of the objective, historical world. Thus, although true art is not separate from historical actuality, it is a kind of abstraction due to its one-sided direction. It is an objectification of life. On the other hand, learning is not a product of abstract speculation but has a universal reality as a product of more fundamental self-formation of the historical world. Even logic is a form of self-expression of the historical world in which a speculative self reflects the world in a constructive manner. Learning (including science) is, however, a transcendent self-ex-

pression of the objective, historical world. Accordingly, although true learning is not separated from historical actuality, it is a kind of abstraction due to its one-sided direction.

Now, what is the relationship between art and morality, or between artistic creation and moral practice? Again these two stand in contradiction to each other. In artistic creation the self becomes an object: the self renounces itself into an object and expresses itself characteristically in and through that object. On the other hand, in moral practice, an object becomes the self: The self creates and changes an object through its body and mind in this historical world. *Praxis* indicates the self's activity in the manner of historical formative function. Otherwise morality remains within human consciousness. Accordingly, in artistic creation the self becomes an object, whereas in moral practice an object becomes the self. Both artistic creation and moral practice, however, are self-formations of more fundamental self-expressions of the world of historical reality, which is self-identity in and through absolute contradiction between the forming and the formed.

Nishida criticized ethics in the past by saying that it usually starts from the standpoint of the moral subject based on the abstract conscious self and does not escape subjectivism even when it emphasizes reason. To overcome abstract morality we must take practice as the historical practice creating things with oneness of body-mind in the historical world.

Philosophy is established when learning and knowledge, instead of moving externally or objectively, internally reflect themselves and enter into their deepest basis; that is, philosophy actualizes itself when through self-reflection the objective knowledge turns into subjective, existential self-realization that has personal significance. In philosophy, the self reflects itself within itself. This personal, existential realization of the self is nothing but the self reflecting the world within itself and becoming a focal point of the world. Speaking from the standpoint of the world, the world reflects itself within the self and becomes an expression of the self. In short, philosophy is the self-realization of the true self and the self-realization of the true world at one and the same time.

All learning, arts, and morality touch upon the basic reality of the self-identity in and through absolute contradiction. They come into being out of the absolute relationship between the self and the Absolute. But in the direction of moral practice, for instance, we do not confront the problem of the self's existence because its direction presupposes the existence of the self.

Religion is realized when the self goes beyond learning, ethics, and aesthetics and enters into an absolute relation with the Absolute—that is, when the self faces the absolute alternative concerning whether to follow one's own self or to follow the Absolute by giving up the self. This is a crossroad of eternal life and eternal death that the self is, fundamentally, always facing.

The direction of historical and social practice as represented by morality, art, and learning is different from religion in which the self confronts the Absolute in the locus of self-existence. The former takes values in question, whereas the latter takes the very existence of the self in question. As God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, the self is asked to effect its absolute negation. At the bottom of our existence, the self perpetually faces absolute death. Through absolute death, however, we enter into eternal life that does not indicate an entrance into meditative life on the far shore, but rather the need to work in this historical world as a focal point of the Absolute and to form the world historically. In this sense, religion is the most basic fact of daily life.

Philosophy in the past viewed the world from the standpoint of the self and did not question the existence of the self. Even Descartes, who emphasized cogito ergo sum (I think, therefore I am), established his philosophy within the perspective of the conscious self and did not penetrate deeply into the basis of the conscious self by breaking through it. Nishida strongly demands the radical transformation of such a subjective standpoint and emphasizes the realization of the unconceptualizable and unobjectifiable true Reality as the Absolute Nothingness, self-identity in and through absolute contradiction, and the world of historical reality. To Nishida, the most fundamental fact in the realization

of the historical world is the fact functioning beyond the bottom of the realization of our conscious self as the self-identity in and through absolute contradiction. It is a relationship established by the absolute other in which the self relates to itself. Here philosophy and religion converge. Philosophy and religion are not, however, immediately identical. Starting from the realization of the above-mentioned fundamental fact, religion reveals the standpoint in which fact thoroughly becomes fact itself. By contrast, philosophy, starting from the same realization, presents the standpoint in which fact reflects fact itself. Thus it may be said that religion and philosophy represent two opposing directions implied in the most fundamental fact of True Reality.

Thus the fundamental fact of True Reality cannot be grasped by the objective logic that has made natural science its own model or is based on the conscious self. On the other hand, Nishida's logic of place as Absolute Nothingness is the logic of the fundamental fact of completely unobjectifiable True Reality. As Nishida says:

> My logic of place as [the logic of] the self-identity in and through absolute contradiction is nothing but a logical attempt at grasping the world from the standpoint of realization of the historical self.[1]

The standpoint of the realization of the historical self that is beyond and yet includes the realization of the conscious self is realized within the world of historical reality. Thinking, feeling, and willing all are realized in the process of historical development of the world, which is the self-determination of Absolute Nothingness. The world of historical reality is the most immediate, unobjectifiable True Reality in which learning, arts, and morality all are grounded.

Let me compare Nishida's philosophy with that of Whitehead, particularly in terms of their understandings of philosophy, religion, and aesthetics. Many scholars have already determined that the modes of thought found in these two philosophers have remarkable similarities. In his early work *Art and Morality*, Nishida emphasizes the unity of truth, beauty, and goodness, and

his emphasis shows a considerable parallel with Whitehead's discussion of truth, beauty, and goodness, in his book *Adventures of Ideas*. In my view, however, this is merely an apparent similarity, and there is a structural and qualitative difference between Nishida and Whitehead. Nishida states in the preface of *Arts and Morality*, "I pursued the internal relationship between intuition and moral will in the relationship between intuition and reflection of volitional self."[2] He discusses the unity of truth, beauty, and goodness from the standpoint of *zettai ishi*, the absolute Will. Going beyond intellect, emotion, and volition in the ordinary sense, the absolute Will is realized in the infinite depth of the free self, which can be attained only by renouncing the ordinary egoistic self. The union point of truth, beauty, and goodness is realized only in this infinite depth of the absolute Will. We hardly find an equivalent standpoint in Whitehead's philosophy of Organism, which is strongly oriented toward an approach based on speculation.

The structural and qualitative difference between Nishida and Whitehead becomes clearer when we compare Whitehead with Nishida's later work. Referring to Nishida's view of True Reality from the standpoint of the world of historical reality, I would like to note the following four points as evidence of the structural difference between the two philosophical systems.

First, Nishida's notion of the world of historical reality as the True Reality and Whitehead's notion of creativity as "the universal of universals characterizing ultimate matter of fact"[3] seem quite similar, because they both are completely nonsubstantial and the most immediate direct reality that includes change and development. In Whitehead, however, creativity, which is crucial to an understanding of process, indicates ongoingness, which is "the advance from disjunction to conjunction, creating a novel entity other than the entities given in disjunction."[4] Here we see the priority of conjunction over and against disjunction in the notion of process and creativity. This means that process and creativity are understood to be uni-directional, future-oriented, and non-reciprocal. On the other hand, in Nishida, the world of historical reality is realized in the absolute present in which past and

future work together through self-contradiction. It is not uni-directional but rather reciprocal. To introduce the terms "conjunction" and "disjunction" in Nishida's notion of the world of historical reality, conjunction has no priority over and against disjunction. Nor does disjunction have priority over conjunction. Instead, being determined by the absolute present, conjunction is disjunction, and disjunction is conjunction.

Second, this difference derives from the fact that in Nishida the realization of the world of historical reality is inseparably connected with the realization of individual self, which is realized to be a focal point of the world by completely renouncing itself. In this respect Nishida emphasizes the eternal death of the self as the essential moment for eternal life. The unity of truth, beauty, and goodness is realized only through the eternal death of the individual self and not before that. On the contrary, in Whitehead, particularly in *Process and Reality*, there is almost no reference to death even in the ordinary sense, to say nothing of eternal death. Although the perpetual perishing of actual entities is much talked about, it is not thoroughly, only partially, realized, as the following quotations show: "Actual entities 'perpetually perish' subjectively, but are immortal objectively. Actually in perishing acquires objectivity, while it loses subjective immediacy."[5] This is because Whitehead's philosophy is that of the organism, in which the notions of process and becoming are emphasized without the realization of Absolute Nothingness.

Third, it is remarkable in Whitehead that God is understood to have a bipolar nature, that is, primordial and consequent nature, and to be both transcendent and immanent in his relation to the world, as clearly shown in this quotation:

> It is as true to say that the World is immanent in God, as that God is immanent in the World. It is true to say that God transcends the World, as that the World transcends God.[6]

Unlike most Western philosophers including Hegel, Whitehead clearly emphasizes the interrelationship between transcendence

and immanence, God and world. The bipolar nature of God (and actual entities) in Whitehead, however, is essentially and qualitatively different from the self-identity in and through absolute contradiction of God in Nishida.

In the bipolar nature of the Whiteheadian notion of God, transcendence and immanence are each understood to be 50 percent in their interrelationship without contradiction, whereas in Nishida's notion of God as the self-identity in and through absolute contradiction transcendence and immanence are each understood to be 100 percent. Some may say that for both transcendence and immanence to be 100 percent is absurd and illogical, because the total would be 200 percent. Such a refutation would be made by those who are confined by objective logic, understanding everything objectively from outside. Nishida rejects such an objective logic and tries to establish the logic of *basho* (place); that is, the logic of the unobjectifiable Absolute Nothingness. From his standpoint, transcendence is fully realized only by a total negation of immanence, and immanence is fully realized only by a total negation of transcendence. Transcendence and immanence are identical through self-contradiction in the total negation of total negation. Accordingly, the self-identity of 100 percent transcendence and 100 percent immanence is possible because it takes place in the realization of Absolute Nothingness. It is a completely unobjectifiable and truly subjective or existential standpoint that embraces not only radical opposition but also absolute contradiction.

What, then, does the bipolar nature of God in Whitehead mean in comparison with Nishida? As I said before, in Whitehead's notion of the bipolar nature of God, transcendence and immanence are understood to be 50 percent and 50 percent. On that basis their interrelation and interaction are fully realized. When the totality of transcendence and immanence is understood not to be 200 percent but 100 percent, it sounds quite reasonable and without contradiction. In this case, however, the totality of transcendence and immanence, that is, the interrelationship between transcendence and immanence, is objectified from somewhere without. In emphasizing the interaction between transcendence and immanence, or between

God and the world, where does Whitehead himself stand? Does he take his stand in God, in the world, or somewhere in between?

It is impossible for Whitehead to grasp the interaction between God and the world simply by taking one of each as his stand. Neither is it possible for Whitehead to take his stand somewhere in between God and the world in grasping the interaction between the two unless he completely renounces his individual self and undergoes eternal death. We cannot, however, find evidence of any realization of eternal death and the absolute negation of the individual self. This necessarily leads us to the conclusion that, although in the Western philosophical tradition Whitehead is exceptional for his emphasis of the interrelationship between God and world, between transcendence and immanence, he nonetheless objectifies and conceptualizes the very relationship between them. (We should recall that Whitehead calls his own philosophy a speculative philosophy.) The result is his notion of the bipolar nature of God, which is structurally different from Nishida's notion of God as self-identity in and through absolute contradiction.

Thus, I must say that Whitehead's philosophy is still based on objective logic, which Nishida rejects as not being the concrete logic of True Reality. This structural difference between them may also be clear when we consider that Whitehead's notions of process and becoming do not include the realization of Absolute Nothingness, and his notion of the interrelation between God and the world has no equivalent to Nishida's important notion of *gyakutaiō*, or the inverse correspondence of polarity, which is, for Nishida, crucial to the relationship of humans and God. If in spite of this structural difference between Nishida and Whitehead, one emphasizes the similarity and affinity between their philosophical systems, one creates a misunderstanding of both philosophical systems.

The fourth difference can be seen, if we introduce the Huayen doctrine of fourfold Dharmadhatu (Dharma-world) to interpret Whitehead's and Nishida's philosophies. We may say that Whitehead's philosophy represents the *riji muge hōkkai*, that is, the world of interpenetration between the universal and the par-

ticular without hindrance, whereas Nishida's philosophy represents the *jiji muge hōkkai*, that is, the world of interpenetration between the particular and the particular without hindrance. For, due to his strong emphasis on interaction and interpretation between transcendence and immanence, or between God and world, Whitehead's metaphysics may be closely compared with the *riji muge hōkkai*, but not the *jiji muge hōkkai*.

In Whitehead all actual entities are actual occasions, but God alone is not an actual occasion although he is certainly an actual entity. This we see from the following quotation: "The term 'actual occasion' will always exclude God from its scope."[7] The word "occasion" implies a spatio-temporal location, whereas God is one nontemporal actual entity. Accordingly, the interpenetration between God and the world is not completely realized.[8] For this reason I characterize Whitehead as representing the *riji muge hōkkai*.

On the other hand, Nishida's philosophy is well represented by the *jiji muge hōkkai*. In the world of historical reality in Nishida's philosophy, individual entities thoroughly interact with one another throughout the universe. Even transcendence and immanence, God and the self, the absolute and the relative interact with one another through absolute negation *qua* absolute affirmation. This complete interaction and interpenetration between all individual entities is possible simply because it occurs in the place of Absolute Nothingness. Here again we clearly see the structural and qualitative difference between Nishida's philosophy and that of Whitehead.

8

The Problem of "Inverse Correspondence" in the Philosophy of Nishida

Comparing Nishida with Tanabe

In his final essay, "The Logic of Place and the Religious Worldview," Nishida described the relationship between God and the self in terms of an inverse correspondence. Taking the notion of inverse correspondence as a basis, he clarified the essence of religion by moving freely between Buddhism and Christianity, and between Zen and True Pure Land Buddhism. This essay does not address the differences that I associate with these religions as they are ordinarily found, but rather Nishida's profound understanding of the essence of religion itself, which rightly attracts our respect and admiration. In this free and unobstructed interrelatedness of religions, however, I am also aware of a certain ambiguity and lack of clarity in Nishida's thought.

The differences that distinguish religions such as Christianity and True Pure Land Buddhism (which I have chosen to call religions of grace) from religions such as early Buddhism and Zen (which I have chosen to call religions of awakening) are exhausted neither by their doctrines nor by their historical forms. There are, I believe, deeper differences that are rooted in the soul of these two types of religion, which are related to what Nishida called a "fact of the soul," differences of the deepest dye. For this reason, in a previous article I note that, even in the inverse correspondence of God and the self, there are two types of inverse correspondence.[1] It seems that in religions of grace, inverse correspondence is irreversible, while in religions of awakening, inverse correspondence is reversible. This is the case because in religions of grace, like Christianity and True Pure Land Buddhism, God and the self are completely inseparable, with God the Lord of grace and the self the beneficiary of grace, in a relation-

ship that cannot be inverted. In the case of religions of awakening such as early Buddhism and Zen, the absolute and the relative are related by means of dependent origination, in which form is emptiness and emptiness is form, and mind is Buddha and Buddha is mind. Both sides of this relationship are radically reversible.[2]

To further clarify this point, I distinguish between two aspects of the absolute. There is the aspect in which the absolute and the self are mutually related, that is to say, the aspect in which the absolute faces the self negatively, while the self encounters the absolute in terms of an inverse correspondence (*gyakutaiō*). I labeled this aspect of the absolute "Aspect A." In contrast, there is the aspect of the absolute that is the place out of which the relationship itself between Aspect A of the absolute and the self arises. That is to say, there is the aspect of the absolute that is the place out of which the relationship between the absolute and the self arises negatively in terms of an inverse correspondence. I call this absolute "Aspect B."[3] This does not mean that there are originally two absolutes. Instead, as I will try to clarify, in the one and the same absolute there are two aspects: the *relationship* between God and human beings, and the *place* out of which this relationship arises.

In religions of grace, the absolute and the self form an inverse correspondence, but an inverse correspondence that is irreversible. This absolute is Aspect A, not Aspect B. In religions of awakening, conversely, the inverse correspondence of the absolute and the self creates a reversible relationship. This being the case, should we not say that this aspect of the absolute is not Aspect A but rather Aspect B? This claim entails the following: In religions of grace (what I might call God-religions), a personal God (or what is called in the Mahayana Buddhist doctrine of the three bodies of Buddha the *sambhogakaya*, or "enjoyment body")[4] is emphasized. This is the central focus to which the self (which should be understood as a circumference around this central focus) returns. Religions of awakening (or what I might also call religions of nothingness), whatever else one may say about them, do not have a specified focus. They are entirely open and without any central focus. Consequently, in such religions, the self forms the circumference and the central focus at once.

Briefly stated, when I note that the relationship between the religious absolute and the self consists of an inverse correspondence, I cannot overlook the fact that I must distinguish between two different forms of inverse correspondence, that is, the irreversible inverse correspondence of religions of grace and the reversible inverse correspondence of religions of awakening. Without grasping the issue of inverse correspondence by distinguishing these two forms, I cannot grasp the reality of religions as a fact of the soul. Let this suffice as a summary of my views on this issue.

Now, I believe that it will be useful for us to review the manner in which the "absolute" is to be understood in the philosophy of Nishida. As was mentioned in the above summary, I have distinguished between two aspects of the absolute: the aspect that is the mutual relationship between the absolute and the self, and the aspect that is the place out of which this relationship itself arises. The former I called Aspect A and the latter Aspect B. To understand this distinction more properly, I must return to the following quotations from Nishida's final essay:

> The absolute *(zettai)* entails a going beyond *(zet-)* opposition *(-tai)*. But simply going beyond opposition does not lead to anything. It is mere nothingness.[5]

> The absolute, by being opposable to nothing, is truly the absolute. By facing absolutely nothing, it is absolute being. There is nothing standing objectively outside of the self. To face Absolute Nothingness means that the self faces itself in terms of a self-contradictory identity. And this must be a contradictory self-identity.[6]

The Absolute Encompasses	
not going beyond the relative	going beyond the relative
absolute immanence	absolute transcendence
everydayness	inverse correspondence
transcendent immanence	immanent transcendence

Absolute Contradictory Self-identity

Building on these reflections, I think that the following can be said. The absolute, in one respect, is beyond everything rela-

tive. If not, what I have is yet another relative and not the absolute at all. Consequently, to the extent that it is the absolute, the absolute must go completely beyond the relative. This is the absolutely transcendent aspect that belongs to the (true) absolute. Yet, as was said previously, "simply going beyond opposition does not lead to anything. It is mere nothingness."[7] "That which merely goes beyond the relative is not the absolute."[8] Consequently, the true absolute must also entail an aspect that does not go beyond the relative. That which does not go beyond the relative is the immanence of every relative being. In order to preserve this immanence of every relative being, "the absolute must include absolute self-negation within itself."[9] Herein lies the aspect of absolute immanence that belongs to the true absolute. In short, there is no path that leads from the relative to the absolute and no path that extends continuously from the human to the divine. This is where we encounter the absolutely transcendent aspect of the absolute that lies beyond us. The encounter with this absolute transcendence leads to the eternal death of the self. But in this eternal death, and only by means of an inverse correspondence, the self is able to face the absolute. As I cited in the earlier essay, "only by dying does the self encounter the divine in terms of an inverse correspondence."[10]

Thus far I have been discussing the inverse correspondence, which supplies the foundation for the absolutely transcendent character of the absolute. In Nishida's philosophy I also find a discussion of "everydayness," which supplies the foundation for the absolute immanence of the absolute. For instance, although there is no path leading from the relative to the absolute, the path leading from the absolute to the relative is unobstructed. In this way the absolute achieves immanence in the depths of the relative. According to Nishida, "The absolute becomes the self by means of a radical self-negation. The true absolute arises in the place in which the self is transformed radically, by means of the relative."[11] Everydayness appears between the nonreligious character of ordinary life and the immanence of the absolute realized in its self-negation. Even so, from the very beginning, absolute transcendence and absolute immanence are not separate from each other.

Rather, the transcendent aspect moves toward the immanent by means of its own self-initiated negation, and the immanent aspect constantly moves toward the transcendence beyond it on its own accord. This is so because the absolute is Absolute Nothingness, which includes absolute self-negation within its very nature.

The transcendent aspect of the absolute, in the midst of immanence, moves in the direction of transcendent immanence, while the immanent aspect of the absolute, in the midst of transcendence, moves in the direction of immanent transcendence. In this there is the complete self-negation of both the transcendent aspect and the immanent aspect. If this complete self-negation of both aspects exists, there is also a transformation. Each aspect transforms itself into the core of the other. When I say complete self-negation, I mean a process that does not stop until it has reached 100 percent self-negation. The transcendent aspect, going deeper and deeper, transforms itself into immanence, while the immanent aspect, going higher and higher, turns itself into transcendence. Moreover, all of this is but one action. In the midst of this double transformation, an absolute contradictory self-identity is realized. This is the true absolute. As quoted above: "The absolute becomes the self by means of a radical self-negation. The true absolute arises in the place in which the self is transformed radically, by means of the relative."[12]

Inverse correspondence is the fundamental principle that dominates Nishida's later thinking. Is inverse correspondence identical to absolute contradictory self-identity, the basic notion that preceded it, or does it differ from it? Is the former notion a development out of the latter, or is it fundamentally different? Questions such as these call for a few comments. For Tanabe Hajime, the notion of absolute contradictory self-identity was based, in the last analysis, on the standpoint of self-identity grasped as an intuition of totality. Tanabe harshly criticized absolute contradictory self-identity for not being properly philosophical and for degenerating into mysticism. Tanabe, however, did express his approval of inverse correspondence, claiming that he sincerely believed it was appropriate. Other interpreters claim that Nishida shifted from the logic of the place of absolute contradictory self-

identity to the logic of inverse correspondence in his later philosophy and so achieved a more concrete understanding of reality.

Absolute contradictory self-identity and inverse correspondence, however, should not to be thought of as separate notions. To state it a bit crudely, inverse correspondence shows the absolute contradictory side of Nishida's philosophy of religion, while its self-identity side is apparent in his notion of everydayness. As we saw above, some interpreters still see absolute contradictory self-identity as something intuited. But such an interpretation is based on the presupposition that "absolute contradictory," in relation to inverse correspondence, is to be taken as an adjective modifying the noun "self-identity." Yet this is not so. Here the adjectival form really means *sive*.[13] Nishida does not use it as language indicating a determination by a modifier. Rather, absolute contradiction, as such, is self-identity. Self-identity, as such, is absolute contradiction. Consequently, one can say that absolute contradictory self-identity is also self-identical absolute contradiction: absolute contradiction-*sive*-self-identity, self-identity-*sive*-absolute contradiction. Moreover, this *sive* is not a simple affirmation. It is a *sive-non (soku-hi)*. Seen in this light, absolute contradictory self-identity and inverse correspondence should never be thought of as distinct ideas. Inverse correspondence clearly expresses the notion of absolute contradiction.

Also, Nishida used language such as "inversely corresponding" and, more frequently, "linking in terms of an inverse correspondence." Inversely corresponding, in effect, has the same meaning as "linking in terms of an inverse correspondence." An inverse correspondence that does not link cannot be a true inverse correspondence. This linking by means of an inverse correspondence indicates self-identity. This linking together (self-identity), however, is always by means of inverse correspondence (absolute contradictory self-identity). From this perspective can we not also see that Nishida's understanding of inverse correspondence in his final years is not essentially different from the fundamental notion of absolute contradictory self-identity that preceded it?

At the beginning of this essay, I designated the absolute as

conceived within religions of grace "Aspect A." In respect to these religions, I noted that inverse correspondence is irreversible. The absolute as conceived in religions of self-awakening I designated "Aspect B," wherein inverse correspondence is reversible. To understand this distinction more clearly, I would like to bring up for comparison the simile of the infinitely large sphere that Nishida often employed. The roots of this simile presumably lie in the *De docta ignorantia* of Nicholas of Cusa. Nishida was fond of explaining his foundational idea of absolute contradictory self-identity by using this simile.

Being infinite, this sphere is possessed of an openness that is utterly beyond determination. This being the case, there is no determinate center. To the extent that any one point is the center, all points are the center. To the extent that a point is on the surface, all points are on the surface. Consequently, we must say that there is a self-identity in the contradiction that the center and the surface are formed by every point. Besides the infinitely large sphere, Cusanus also uses the simile of the infinitely large circle. This is a circle, but of course one that, being infinite, has no designated center. What results is a center, but a center and circumference that, we can say, form a self-identity through contradiction.

How Cusanus's infinite sphere and infinite circle differ has been debated for a long time, but let me note a significant difference between the two. To be sure, since the circle and the sphere are infinitely large, both are similar in that every point within them constitutes the center and also in that the center and the periphery form a self-identity in a contradictory way. Thus, taken together, the sphere and the circle offer an appropriate simile for the philosophical absolute and the religious absolute (God). To be sure, the circle is infinitely large, but to the extent that it is an infinite circle, there is a two-dimensionality and spatiality implied. Of course, this does not imply a space that is to be associated with being or substance. This is the case because, as an infinitely large circle, its space (as being and substance) is broken open and negated. But, even though it is infinitely large insofar as it is a circle, we must say that it implies a space that is insubstan-

tial and invisible to the eye, namely, a transparent space, that is, insubstantial and invisible. As a result, then, neither is the center of the circle to be associated with being or substance. The center as well is transparent (insubstantial and invisible). Thus we must also say that the relationship between the center and circumference is transparent in the same way.

By contrast, even this transparent spatiality is broken through in the infinite sphere. This infinite sphere is not two-dimensionally infinite like the infinite circle; it is three-dimensionally infinite. It is completely opened. Therefore, the transparent center of the infinite circle is overcome by becoming completely centerless. For this reason, the infinite sphere has a more encompassing meaning than the infinite circle: It is not merely two-dimensional but three-dimensional. Thus every point is its center. Moreover, we can properly say that the relation between the center and the surface of the sphere is one of contradictory self-identity. In other words, in the infinite sphere, the spatiality and centeredness of the infinite circle are broken through. The infinite sphere is infinitely large not only in a two-dimensional way but also in a three-dimensional way. This is not the case with the infinite circle. So, for the infinite circle to become the infinite sphere, the two-dimensional transparent spatiality and centeredness of the circle must be realized *für sich* and broken through self-consciously.

Now, there is no direct and continuous path leading from the infinite circle to the infinite sphere. To reach the standpoint of the infinite sphere, the infinite circle must undergo a self-negation. Even though it is infinite, the infinite circle cannot encompass the infinite sphere. Instead, it is the infinite sphere that encompasses the infinite circle *an sich*. Moreover, it is possible to go from the infinite sphere to the infinite circle, directly and continuously. For the infinite sphere self-consciously to encompass the infinite circle in its universe, however, this infinite sphere must be broken through and become the infinite circle. There must be a self-negation of the infinite sphere. To sum up, the infinite circle cannot encompass the infinite sphere. The infinite sphere can, however, encompass the infinite circle and include it di-

rectly. Thus the true significance of the movement from the sphere to the circle and from the circle to the sphere is that the passing over cannot be accomplished without undergoing an awakening through real self-negation.

Let the religions of grace, what I labeled "Aspect A" of the absolute, be represented by the metaphor of the infinite circle. Let the religions of awakening, what I labeled "Aspect B" of the absolute, be represented by the infinite sphere. As mentioned above, in religions of grace, personal divinities like the God of Judaism and Christianity and Amida Buddha in Buddhism occupy the center. This is not a center in the sense of Being but in the sense of Nothingness—a transparent, or insubstantial and invisible center. The self enters completely into this center and is accepted by it. In no sense is this the realm of the finite. Finitude is completely broken through and gives way to the realm of the infinite absolute.

Although the self and God relate to each other in terms of an inverse correspondence in this realm, God remains the center and the self is located on the circumference. God is the Lord of grace, and the self is accepted by this grace. From this it follows that inverse correspondence is irreversible in religions of grace. Aspect A of the absolute, of course, is Absolute Nothingness: The self is embraced by the absolute in the form of a negation*sive*-affirmation. All the same, a kind of transcendence or objective quality remains. In Aspect A, God retains the character of a personal God or the Buddha's *sambhogakaya*, which calls out to the self as a "Thou." This is so because the realm of Absolute Nothingness, as represented by the infinite circle, forms an invisible and nonsubstantial space, that is, the transparent relationship between center and circumference.

In contrast to this, religions of awakening do not present us with God or the Buddha's *sambhogakaya* as the nonsubstantial, invisible center, and so neither do we find a space formed by a transparent infinite circle. This is the reason why religions of awakening are represented by the infinite sphere. This realm is not merely a two-dimensional infinity but a three-dimensional infinity. Of course, in this realm too, the absolute and the self

form an inverse correspondence, but in this case we have an inverse correspondence that is completely reversible. Here it is important to note that we do not merely say "form-*sive*-emptiness," but also "emptiness-*sive*-form." To the extent that there is the Buddha, there are also sentient beings. To the extent that there are sentient beings, there is also the Buddha. Neither side of the pair forms a center. This is Aspect B of the absolute. This aspect of the absolute forms the place of Absolute Nothingness in which there is the possibility of incorporating by means of negation-*sive*-affirmation both the personal God of Aspect A and the self that returns to this personal God. This aspect of the absolute arises not within an infinite circle but from within an infinite sphere.

Both Tanabe Hajime and Nishida Kitarō embraced the standpoint of Absolute Nothingness. It seems, however, that Tanabe looked on Absolute Nothingness in terms of Aspect A of the absolute while Nishida looked on it in terms of Aspect B. Not only did Tanabe feel a deep sense of affinity with True Pure Land Buddhism and Christianity, but he also understood Absolute Nothingness in terms of an absolute mediation, which provides a basis for the active, practical self. Through this absolute mediation Absolute Nothingness becomes actual in infinitesimal concrete events, akin to the differential in calculus. In Tanabe's world of absolute mediation, the absolute is objectified in an invisible manner because he understood Absolute Nothingness in terms of Aspect A of the absolute. In contrast to this, from the beginning Nishida thought of Absolute Nothingness in terms of Aspect B of the absolute.

As a result, Absolute Nothingness formed a "place" *(basho)* for Nishida rather than the work of mediation. This place, however, is not a space in any objectivized sense. We can say this because Nishida underscored the notion of a complete mutual negation of space and time that is realized in terms of the circular-*sive*-linear, the linear-*sive*-circular, and also the absolute contradictory self-identity of both space and time as the basic character of the place of nothingness. Of course, we should say that the place of nothingness is completely without ground, an activ-

ity entailing a constant self-determining movement from the created to the creating, the created world arising through its own self-expression and self-formation. Here activity and intuition are grasped from the nonfoundational standpoint of Absolute Nothingness.

The standpoint of action-intuition[14] unfolds in the contradictory mutuality of both. If one looks on Absolute Nothingness and its standpoint of the infinite sphere from Tanabe's standpoint of absolute mediation and its standpoint of the infinite circle, naturally Nishida's notion of nothingness amounts to a static, abstract standpoint. From the perspective of Tanabe and his infinite circle, Nishida's construal of Absolute Nothingness as the infinite sphere, to the extent that it explains the actuality of the created world in terms of the self-determination of nothingness, results in a direct and non-mediated intuition that obscures a proper understanding of action. But when Tanabe criticizes Nishida's notion of place for its intuitionism, he is not aware of the invisible and nonsubstantial space that is implicit in the standpoint of the Absolute Nothingness of his own infinite circle.

In contrast, when we look at Tanabe's infinite circle from the standpoint of Nishida's infinite sphere, we detect a transparent spatiality concealed there, a spatiality in which the absolute has been subtly objectivized. If this is the case, Tanabe's philosophy amounts to an ethical trajectory, not to true religious existence. For there to be religious existence, there must be more than mere striving for the absolute by the individual acting self; but there must also be the overturning of this kind of standpoint in the form of an inverse correspondence. In a letter addressed to Mudai Risaku, composed during his philosophical controversy with Tanabe, Nishida writes:

> The realm of mere metanoia (repentance) is the realm of ethics, not yet the realm of religion. The heart of religion as such is not something that arises from the self; it must arise from beyond. Even now, he (Tanabe) thinks the place (of Absolute Nothingness) can be discerned contemplatively beyond the standpoint of Kant. But the place (of Ab-

> solute Nothingness) cannot be discerned objectively. Is it not the place out of which the self arises? The self and the world do not comprise mere coordinate points (on a field), they correspond to each other by means of a contradictory self-identity.[15]

I find severe criticisms of Tanabe's philosophy in other letters as well. In sum, Nishida looked on Tanabe's notion of an infinite circle from the standpoint of his own notion of the infinite sphere and found it necessary to offer such criticisms. In any event, the infinite sphere offers a standpoint that surpasses the space defined by this nonsubstantial circle and includes it implicitly. The infinite sphere can project itself as the infinite circle. This means that there is the possibility of the self projecting itself to itself and that everything is projected within the self. Moreover, since this sphere is infinite and thus boundless, we can say that the self is projected within itself and that everything is projected within everything else. The infinite sphere projects the infinite circle spontaneously from within itself. The infinite circle is projected from within the infinite sphere. Here Nishida moves back and forth between Aspect B of the absolute and Aspect A, freely and without hindrance. He captures the two equally by the one term "inverse correspondence."

For example, in a poem by Daitō Kokushi, Nishida found a manifestation of this inverse correspondence: "Buddha and I, distinct for a billion *kalpas* of time, yet not separate for a single instant; opposite one other all day long, yet not opposed for a single instant."[16] Yet, on the other hand, Nishida claimed that "Complete inverse correspondence between the absolute and the human can be expressed only in the reality of the Name of the Buddha."[17] Accordingly, the standpoint of awakening (as exemplified by Daitō Kokushi) and the standpoint of grace (as exemplified by the Name of the Buddha) are grasped equally by the one term "inverse correspondence." As such, this claim does not miss the mark. It implies the unrestrained, unobstructed relationship between grace and awakening. But, at the same time, we should not close our eyes to the fact that the inverse correspon-

dence, expressed by the Name of the Buddha in religions of grace, is the irreversible aspect of the absolute (Aspect A) and in this irreversibility lies the living core of religions of grace. The inverse correspondence of religions of awakening exemplified by Daitō Kokushi is Aspect B of the absolute, which is reversible and where we see the living core of the religions of awakening.

In the distinction between grace and awakening, I find the difference between the infinite circle and the infinite sphere. This distinction is not reducible to matters of doctrine or to the historical structures that these religions have in fact taken. The distinction is rooted in the religious core of these traditions, in religion itself as a fact of the soul. I believe this to be the case. To transcend the distinction, rooted as it is in the living core of religions, and in order to move back and forth truly between the infinite circle and the infinite sphere, the infinite circle must break open its own circularity and become the infinite sphere. The infinite sphere must negate itself and become a circle. These self-negations are indispensable. That is to say, the movement between grace and awakening is not direct and continuous. Moving in either direction entails the rupture of one of the standpoints. If there is no upheaval of one's religious standpoint, how can the true meaning of the passage between grace and awakening be realized?

I am not claiming that Nishida fails to distinguish these two types of religion in his doctrine of religion. He speaks of them separately. But for Nishida, the overcoming of their separate standpoints is not grasped in terms of a mutual negation. As noted above, in Nishida the movement between grace and awakening is understood as a continuous back and forth movement. But, in all of this, there remains a certain ambiguity and lack of clarity. Without going into the issue extensively here, let us note that Nishida was able to move freely between the circle and the sphere because from the beginning his standpoint was that of the infinite sphere. This can be traced to the fact that his thought was rooted in the standpoint of the place of Absolute Nothingness. Those who take the standpoint of the infinite sphere can move continuously between the two standpoints without overturning

them. The reason for this is that the infinite sphere, out of its own innate character, encompasses the infinite circle. This, I believe, is Nishida's position.

I also believe that this is what gave rise to Tanabe's criticism of Nishida from his own preferred standpoint of the infinite circle. From Tanabe's perspective, that is, Aspect A of the absolute with its irreversibility, can we not also say that in Nishida's infinite sphere, which is the place of Absolute Nothingness as well as Aspect B of the absolute in which all is reversible, all is directly intuited? My view regarding the irreversibility of God and the human person in religions of grace is as follows. The irreversibility of God and the human being is something negative that must be overcome in order to realize the place of Absolute Nothingness. The reversibility of God and the human being should be seen as something positive that must be resurrected and grasped anew in the place of Absolute Nothingness.

To respond adequately to Tanabe's criticism of Nishida's philosophy, I must note that Nishida's standpoint of the infinite sphere does not encompass the standpoint of the infinite circle continuously and directly. In accordance with the discussion of the problem above, a radically mutual negation is required: The rupturing of the standpoint of the infinite sphere leads to the recognition of the specific character of the infinite circle, and, conversely, the inversion of the standpoint of the infinite circle indicates the specific character of the infinite sphere.

In other words, we should not be content with the one term "inverse correspondence" in our quest to get to the core of religions of grace and religions of awakening. We need to clarify the distinction between the inverse correspondence of religions of grace, which is irreversible, and the inverse correspondence of religions of awakening, which is reversible. In religions of grace, irreversibility must be overcome by reversibility: God's transcendence must be overcome, and the perfect reversibility of God and the self must be realized. On the other hand, in religions of awakening, reversibility must be transcended and founded upon irreversibility: in the place of Absolute Nothingness or the standpoint of emptiness, the personal God or the *sambhogakaya* must

be established anew. These transformations must be realized, by all means. Here, we are faced with nothing less than the issue of religious self-awareness itself, an issue that leads to the foundation of the subjective self-awareness of the human being.

We need to ask two questions. First, what is this reversibility that overcomes the irreversibility of God and the human being that we see in religions of grace? And second, in religions of awakening, what is that which forms the foundation for the standpoint of the personal God in the place of nothingness, which transcends this reversibility?

In regard to the first question, we must say that religions of grace, represented by the infinite circle exemplify Aspect A of the absolute. The transparent space described by the infinitely great circle is implicit within such religions. But more exactly, what is this transparent space? In religions of grace, the God who is the grace-filled Lord or the *sambhogakaya* (Amida Buddha, for example) is completely nonsubstantial but forms the center of all. The self forms the circumference in relation to the Lord of grace at the center. Herein lies the irreversibility of the absolute and the self in religions of grace. This irreversibility lies not only in the manner in which the self, as its core, is unified with God or the *sambhogakaya*, but also in the manner in which the self, as that which is blessed with grace and engulfed by grace, forms a circumference around the center, which is the Lord of grace. But in this case a certain kind of objectification, even though invisible and nonsubstantial, is unavoidable. This space, which holds the potential to form the infinite circle, and this subtle objectification of the absolute, which is implicit in the religions of grace, must both be awakened. In this awakening there is the opening of the infinite circle and its transformation.

Nishida talked about the devil by taking the infinite sphere and the religions of awakening as his own standpoint. In my view, he saw through the space implicit in the infinite circle and the subtle objectification of the absolute in religions of grace. To the extent that one takes the standpoint of the infinite circle, one also sees the irreversibly inverse correspondence between God and the self in the union of God and the self through grace. When

Nishida says, however, "in each and every act we touch upon God and the devil," he is expressing an insight into the background of the infinite circle. For Tanabe, the devil may not have become a problem. But for Nishida, "From one point of view, the absolute God must also be demonic in a real sense."[18] The equivalence of God and the devil, which Nishida noted in this passage, is in fact never anything but an awareness of the transparent space implicit in the infinite circle and of the transparent awakening to the objectification of God in religions of grace.

Understanding the infinite circle and overcoming the standpoint of the infinite circle, however, are two different matters. Overcoming the infinite circle entails not only realizing the identity of God and the devil but also overcoming that identity by penetrating the place of Absolute Nothingness. Only in Absolute Nothingness does one completely realize the standpoint of the infinite sphere beyond the infinite circle. Only in Absolute Nothingness does one realize the contradictory self-identity of God and the devil beyond the identity of God and the devil. "The true absolute must negate itself in order to become the devil. . . . This means that the absolute sees itself even in the demonic."[19] In these words of Nishida, we see that it is not possible to move uninterruptedly from the infinite circle to the infinite sphere. We find the deepest meaning of this opening up of the infinite sphere in the self-awakening that ruptures (i.e., overcomes through negation) the opposing quality of the devil implicit in the background of the standpoint of faith in God. Here, the irreversibility of God and human beings that we see in religions of grace is surpassed when the demonic implicit in the background of God is awakened, and we enter into the standpoint of the absolute contradictory self-identity of God and the devil in their complete reversibility.

In regard to the second question, religions of awakening, modeled by the infinite sphere, constitute Aspect B of the absolute, in other words, the absolute as the place of Absolute Nothingness. This infinite sphere is three-dimensional, and since it is infinite, it is without any particular determinate center and is radically opened up. Reflecting this standpoint, Buddhists

have expressions such as "The true Buddha is formless and permeates all" and "The world of the unhindered interpenetration of all by all." When compared with the infinite circle, which also has a transparent center, the standpoint of the infinite sphere, in which every point is dynamically the center and the circumference at once, has been criticized for amounting to the intuitive and contemplative standpoint of mysticism. In responding to this criticism, let me say that within the infinite sphere centers form themselves spontaneously. Thus, in Nishida's philosophy, which takes the standpoint of the infinite sphere, the individual is grasped as the self-focusing of Absolute Nothingness, wherein the self reflects itself from within itself. This understanding of the individual is not based on mystical intuition. It is from the beginning a matter of action-intuition. In addition, by means of its own self-focusing, the place of nothingness is able to move from the standpoint of the infinite sphere to that of the infinite circle. The reason for this is that the infinite sphere, *an sich*, includes the infinite circle.

The center of the infinite circle, however, differing as it does from that of the infinite sphere, implies something more than Nishida's self-focusing of Absolute Nothingness. Although the center of the infinite circle is transparent and nonsubstantial, it is also characterized by the presence of God, who forms an irreversible relationship with the circumference. In other words, the center is a metaphor for the absolute facing the self in the form of an irreversible inverse correspondence. The center of the infinite circle represents the Lord of grace, who incorporates the individual self even as it naturally stands opposite to the Lord of grace. Consequently, the infinite sphere, which is opened up to three dimensions, does not simply include the two-dimensional standpoint of the infinite circle. In order for the infinite sphere to affirm the infinite circle positively, the standpoint of the infinite sphere must be overcome by means of its own self-negation. In one stroke, that which lies in the background of the infinite sphere comes to the foreground, and the infinite sphere is transformed into the infinite circle.

Without this transformation, the individual, here understood

as the spontaneous self-focusing of the infinite sphere, can be taken as identical with God, the center of the infinite circle. But this identification of the self with God leads to the demonic. The religions of awakening, represented by the infinite sphere in which all points form its center, and the religions of grace, which have God at their center (mystically or demonically), are really two faces of the same reality. Tanabe's philosophy takes the standpoint of the infinite sphere, amounting to a mysticism that is not a philosophy in the strict sense. Nishida did not clearly realize the demonic character implicit within the infinite sphere, nor did he think of the absolute as a specified center within an infinite circle. Instead, he thought of the absolute in terms of the place in which the actual self-focusing of Absolute Nothingness occurs.

I believe that the renewal of the religions of grace, represented by the infinite circle, can be found in the religions of awakening, represented by the infinite sphere—a renewal that includes awakening to both the mystical and the demonic through the overcoming of their opposition. In this regard, the reversibility of the infinite sphere might serve as a basis for the renewal of the standpoint represented by the infinite circle and its irreversibility. But for this to take place, we must recognize the radical truth not only of the reciprocity of God and the devil but also of the awakening (here understood as a breakthrough) to that which is not God and not the devil. Although Nishida touched on the idea of God and the devil as reciprocal, he did not clearly elucidate the demonic character implicit within the standpoint of the infinite sphere. Consequently, without the realization of that which is neither God nor the devil, Nishida moved freely and unrestrictedly from the standpoint of the infinite sphere to the standpoint of the infinite circle and from the religions of awakening to the religions of grace.

Precisely here, I believe, lies the issue that led to Tanabe's criticism of Nishida. To review this history, Nishida restricted the essence of religion to one issue, that is, the inverse correspondence of the absolute and the self. We have seen that, while Nishida distinguished religions of grace, such as Christian-

ity and True Pure Land Buddhism, from religions of awakening, such as early Buddhism and Zen, he did not recognize how this distinction is rooted in the soul of religions. Thus Nishida did not necessarily grasp religion as a "fact of the soul" in the depths that lie beyond the differences separating religions.

In this short account, which has looked with approval on the idea of the inverse correspondence of the absolute and the self as the essence of religion, a difference was noted among religions. In religions of grace, inverse correspondence was seen to be irreversible, while, in religions of awakening, inverse correspondence was seen to be reversible. In overcoming this difference, we also noted the need to awaken to Absolute Nothingness. To capture the essence of religion more deeply in terms of the inverse correspondence of the absolute and the self, it is necessary for religions of grace to awaken or break through to the reciprocity of God and the devil. It is also necessary for religions of awakening to reach a comparable breakthrough to that which is not God and not the devil. To reach the most radical religious awakening, I believe that this problem cannot be evaded.

Part III
A Contemporary Approach to Zen Self-Awakening

9
Evil, Sin, Falsity, and the Dynamics of Faith

The apparently similar concepts of evil, sin, and falsity, when considered from our subjective standpoint, are mutually distinct and yet at the same time related. This essay examines these concepts in relation to the dynamics of the awakening of faith.

What is called evil opposes the rules of morality dictated by reason, even if it knows well what they are. The awareness of such an opposition exists because there is evil as evil. In contrast to this kind of evil, there is also what is called the "awareness of the root evil." The awareness of the root evil means the awareness of a high degree of evil. This is the kind of evil that exists when the standpoint of reason itself, which activates a persistent obedience to the rules of morality that should be able to overcome the kind of evil discussed in the previous sense (i.e., evil as evil), realizes clearly the antimoral quality of the self. This quality involves an unconscious attachment to the self itself in that, by emphasizing the rules of morality and actually adhering to these rules, it comes to be attached to the rules. The thoroughness of the principle of good that the standpoint of morality necessarily requires—in other words, the absolutization of the autonomy of reason—is aware of this self-contradictory nature within the standpoint of morality, which is that the self cannot avoid or evade the so-called Pharisaical hypocrisy (of attachment to rules).

Therefore, in its awareness of the root evil, the morality of the self is made aware of its own limits and encounters nothingness when realizing these limits. At the extreme point of this tendency, the awareness of evil necessarily becomes one with the awareness of nothingness. Therefore, in spite of the excellent in-

sight into an awareness of evil evident in Kant's philosophy, we must say that an awareness of evil that is not yet connected with an awareness of nothingness is a level of understanding that is not yet thorough.

In the midst of bottomless nothingness that fully encounters the consequences of the thoroughness of the standpoint of such a morality, when seeing the light of God transcending in the direction of the self or when hearing Buddha's voice, the self enters anew, through the awareness of nothingness, into a relation with God. When illuminated by this light of God, the absolute autonomy of human reason is already being realized, again, not simply as evil, but as sin, that is, as an opposition to the will of God that is hardly to be forgiven. In other words, the way of being of the self that has been realized as a self-opposition to immanent human reason is here realized again as the opposition to the will of the transcendent God. Therefore, this means that the fundamental subject is an axis that mediates the awareness of sin and transforms itself from the human being to God. In entrusting everything to God's will as such a fundamental subject, one takes God's will for its will, and when one discovers the basis of subjectivity through the subjectivity of God, an awareness of salvation is realized.

Within the standpoint of such a belief, nothingness related to the awareness of evil is overcome, and the self revitalizes as a new self, or a true selfhood that can bear the true nature of God. But, in this case, the true nature of God and the subjectivity of the human being are not completely identical. The subjectivity of the human being is actually cut apart from God, and the human being is seen as something that cannot possibly escape its own sinful nature, while at the same time the true nature of God appears to human reason as an absolute absurdity that is, in the final analysis, impossible to fathom. But the unity of subjectivity and the ordinary nature of truth is realized only when the subjectivity of the human being transcends the self through the awareness of sin and makes a decision based on faith to adhere to the true nature of God. Moreover, such a transcendence of the self is possible only when God loses a sense of manifesting the self-tran-

scendence of God by surpassing and crossing over the gap from the other world.

In contrast to the transcendent function of the moral self that is not the transcendence of the actual self but is simply transcendence toward a standard self established objectively within the self to seize such a self objectively, the transcending function of the standpoint of faith breaks through the whole realm of immanency. It is the entire self-transcendence that leaps into a relation with the transcending God, and in this case the objectification of the self as something that seizes the self objectively, that is entirely sublated. That is, within the standpoint of faith, along with the fact that the self of the human being is realized subjectively to the end and, moreover, is realized as a complete self that has entered into an absolute relation with God, at the same time God appears not as God in a general sense but as a subjective, humanistic God. That is, God appears as the "Thou" who voluntarily activates the will to save and tries to completely save the self of the human being. This is the very subjective, humanistic God that calls on this very subjective human "I." The God of the philosophers is a God that has a common name, but the God of the religious believers must be a God who has a proper or personal name. This is a God who has a proper name and saves this "I" that has a proper name.

Even if we say, however, that the religious self is subjective, through the attitude of faith in such a God that sees him as a "Thou," it is a subjectivity that stands only as an object that receives the action of God as the fundamental subject. It rather entrusts everything to God because of the awareness of groundlessness *(Grund-losigkeit)*, which indicates that by no means are we humans able through our own power to be subjective. By becoming the object of God's salvation, we participate in the subjectivity of God, and in this way we regain our subjectivity. At this point, for the first time, the absolute actual self that, indeed, cannot be achieved through its own power becomes a true self because of this God's subjectivity.

Yet, only in the standpoint of faith is there the possibility that absolute reality, which is itself truth, mediates between the aware-

ness of sin and salvation. In this process there is a split or divide that can be surpassed only by God, as well as a twofoldness that can become a oneness only based on God. After all, along with the fact that the self that stands on faith realizes itself as a sinful self that rebels against God with the whole existence of the self, the self returns to God with the whole of such self-existence and realizes itself as a self that believes in salvation by God. This is based on the fact that the self that thus stands on faith is endlessly divided and consists of an opposition between the side that is completely sinful and the side that is completely saved. That this self can actually exist as a complete self is based on nothing other than the reason that the self leaps into a relation with God in the midst of this division, and it becomes the container of the will of God through faith.

Therefore, the fact that there is a self that becomes one—even if the complete self as it is in itself is split transcendentally into an opposition, as indicated above, and is not split immanently into an opposition as in the case of morality—is nothing other than the manifesting of a situation that is completely the same as the oneness of God and the self, which are split transcendentally into an opposition. That is, on the one hand, even if the self is a faithless self that is contrary to God, on the other hand, because of the awareness of sin it returns to God as the faithful self that obeys the will of God. Then, the very thing that mediates the twofold split into an opposition involving the fundamental gap between such a self and God is the awareness of sin and salvation as the will of God that penetrates the self through the action of God's love.

Consequently, the reason for which it is said that the standpoint of faith has an absolutely other-power-oriented existentiality lies in the action of God's love—which affirms and absorbs the sinful self that disbelievingly contradicts the will of God to offer salvation—as the manifestation of the absolute that the human self has difficulty evading. The very thing that surpasses the twofold split into an opposition previously discussed, and that unifies this from the direction of the transcendence, is nothing other than the action of the love of such a God. Within the

standpoint of faith, the twofold that is split into an opposition to the end becomes one just because it is split in that way; but the one is not simply one, it is one because it encompasses the twofold. The self is one with God because it is dichotomized from God, and God is dichotomized from the self. That is exactly why God absorbs the self and becomes one with it.

Along with the mysterious quality of faith, we must wonder whether this standpoint of the twofoldness encompassed by oneness is a problematic feature of faith.

Even if from the standpoint of faith the absolute split between the self and God is realized, it is ceaselessly surpassed through the transcendence from God, overturned, and elevated to a subjectivity that becomes one. But it must be said that there is some function of objectification to the extent that the oneness is not a pure oneness but a oneness that includes the twofold. Nevertheless, even if we speak about a function of objectification here, it is not a function like the one found previously in the standpoint of morality that tries to grasp objectively the normative self and is transcendentally established in the inner side of the self. This not being the case, the standpoint of faith completely sublates such an objectification and breaks through the immanency, and the complete self that stands before the transcendent God is a subjective standpoint to the end. Nevertheless, this subjective standpoint participates in the subjectivity of God by realizing the *Grund-losigkeit* of the self and completely becoming the object of the salvation of God as the fundamental subject.

From the standpoint of subjectivity that thus recovers from groundlessness and can be well founded, at this point is there not an objectification of God based on the self that is made in the form in which the self becomes entirely the object of the salvation of God? This is the function of objectification that cannot be realized as an objectification that is not objectifiable. Then, the objective grasping of such a meaning of God is nothing other than the objective grasping of the self that is accomplished when grasping, in this way and at the same time, God objectively. The self grasps the self itself objectively in grasping God objectively.

If we explain this more concretely, even in the standpoint of faith that has transcended the entire self, is there not left over a tinge of the shadow of the self in the very action of the confirmation that further takes faith as properly faith? Or, in the very process that absolutely negates self and world while transcending toward God or, further, establishing the self by facing God, is there not a self-affirmation that is turned inside out?

When this process tries to penetrate subjectively the standpoint of faith, does it not necessarily actualize itself and try to break up the very thing called faith? We should say that this involves a kind of antinomy in the standpoint of faith, in that the thoroughness of the standpoint of faith is in and of itself the biggest antifaith act. At this point, we should pay attention to the fact that, even if we say that the self-affirmation that is turned inside out is actualized, this does not mean that there is a deeper awareness of the sin. Believing firmly in the certainty of salvation that appears more and more when accompanying a deeper awareness of sin is the standpoint of faith. For this reason, in the standpoint of faith, the deeper awareness of sin as egotism that rebels against God becomes proof of faith, and by no means does it mean the dissolution of faith. That is the paradox of faith rather than the antinomy of faith.

The antinomy of faith that we are trying to define here is an antinomy that is lapsed into because of an objectification of God that is not brought to an appropriate level of self-awareness. In this way, a self-attachment that is only partially brought to an awareness, which lies hidden in the root of the standpoint of such a paradoxical faith, is nothing other than the revelation of self-affirmation that creeps into the very emphasis of the paradox of such a faith. The repetition of the succession of faith and of religious decision-making—and generally, the very emphasis of the paradox of faith—is based on the persistence of faith. As a result, is there not a self-attachment that penetrates to what is called "faith"?

Such an awareness necessarily leads to the awareness of falsity as if keenly splitting oneself or to the awareness of the falsehood of the fundamental self, such that the self that can bear reli-

gious truth does not completely free itself from the standpoint of self-attachment and love of self. The self that stands on faith, at the ultimate conclusion of the subjective thoroughness of that standpoint, realizes the root falsity that still lurks at the basis of that religious truth, breaks off relations with God within the awareness of this falsity, and for one moment is made to return to the absolutely real self. Therefore, at this point, we must say that it is not that the absolute reality is itself directly the truth, but that the absolute reality is itself a matter of certainty.

One way or another, this means that even faith as self-negation is again realized as the activity of the transparent self, or as the radical self deeply refracted within itself—the most certain level of selfhood that cannot be negated by any other thing. That is the absolute self as the self that, once made transparent by negation from faith, finally negates faith again and is completed so that it takes "faith" for a falsity. Moreover, this self is a self that does not transcend falsity within the awareness of falsity, but is more and more aware of the certainty of falsity within the awareness of falsity. It is a self that stands on a reliable sense of falsity simply without any faith in truth, or a self that stands on a simple certainty of falsity without believing in any kind of truth.

By entering into a relation with God, however, the self overcomes nothingness encountered in the failure of morality and becomes the religious self, but at this moment it is drawn again into the dark abyss of groundlessness or nothingness because of the inevitable failure of faith to transcend falsity. Therefore, we must say that the awareness of falsity, along with being unified with the awareness of nothingness in and of itself, is an awareness in which the falsity that is surpassed by faith is thus made opposite to itself and is transformed into a twofoldness by being directly aware of itself once again. Now, if we call the awareness of nothingness due to the failure of morality a kind of nihilism based on the awareness of evil, this would imply the possibility of the self being overcome by believing in a transcendental divinity mediating within the human being as the nothingness faced at the very moment of the failure of immanent human reason.

Nevertheless, we must say that the nihilism implicit in the

awareness of the falsity that we are now discussing, as the awareness of nothingness directly faced because of the failure of such a transcendental divine faith, is nihilistic in the most original sense of nihilism that cannot be overcome even through the transcendental God, not to mention the immanent function of reason inside the human being. Then, if we suppose the existence of that which is called "true religion," this must refer to an experience of faith that can overcome nihilism caused by such a profound awareness of falsity.

10
Toward the Establishment of a Cosmology of Awakening

What Is the Post-Modern?

For the last several years, people have grappled with the question of what the post-modern world should be like. This word "post-modern" remains a bit hard to manage. Post-modern does not mean simply "the period that will follow the modern." Often we think of human history in terms of three eras, ancient, medieval, and modern. We should not, however, think of the post-modern era as merely an extension of this into a fourth period. Of course, in terms of the flow of time, it is the case that the post-modern is the era that follows the modern period. In its outlook, however, the post-modern is fundamentally different from the modern. Consequently, the post-modern constitutes a disruption of our usual way of thinking of history as the flow of time from the ancient to the medieval and then to the modern.

Regarding the background of this word, let me make a simple observation. Many have recognized that the so-called modern period has taken the modern self as its basic operating principle. Today, however, humankind is confronted by various problems that cannot be dealt with from the standpoint of modernity. Therefore, it is not enough to make superficial changes to modernity. The standpoint of the modern self, which is the basis of modernity, must be radically overcome. This modern self is the standpoint of the ego that came clearly into awareness in Europe's modern period. Putting it more philosophically, I would say that starting with Descartes and continuing with Kant, a purified and radicalized awareness of the self has arisen in the West. In the history of thought, we have witnessed the emergence of an anthropocentric rationality. At first one might think that overcoming

this standpoint is a European problem and not a concern for other parts of the world. The science and technology that now pervade the world, as well as the scientific outlook that supports a mentality that amounts to nothing other than a mechanistic, objective, and analytic way of thinking, were born in modern Europe.

The same can be said about modernity's politics. Modernist politics are divided into two systems, the democratic, that is to say representative forms of government, and socialist forms. Economically speaking, Europe's modern age also gave birth to twin systems, capitalism and communism. Militarily, politically, and economically, modern Europe has enjoyed a hegemonic position in the world. As a result, Europe has asserted great intellectual and cultural influence among the world's many peoples. To claim that the basic operating principle of Europe's modern era has driven the contemporary world in a pervasive way is no overstatement. Although Asian societies have their own views of the human being, politics, and economics, we cannot say that these views have been very influential in the modern world.

But now, should we not recognize that European modernity, which dominates the world politically, economically, and intellectually, may be leading us to decline? It appears that Europe's hegemony is collapsing. After World War II, we have all witnessed an increased pluralism politically, economically, and intellectually, as well as manifestations of opposition, confusion, and other forms of turmoil that relativize the modernist standpoint. The world that confronts us today is rapidly getting smaller due to modernization, and because of this the modern world is losing its grip on the guiding principle that gave it birth. Bewilderment and confusion about the nature of selfhood are deepening. The standpoint of the modern European self, from a worldwide perspective, seems to be relative and in decline.

It is also the case, however, that the modern European self did not suddenly appear on the scene. Its background is rooted in ancient Greece and medieval Christianity. Simply put, we might say that the standpoint of the modern European self grew out of medieval Christianity, which itself grew out of ancient Greece, and is therefore the outcome of these Western historical periods.

I said earlier that the post-modern is not simply an extension of the ancient, medieval, and modern periods into a fourth era. By "ancient" and "medieval," I was thinking concretely of ancient Greece and medieval Christianity. Of course, notions of ancient and medieval are to be found outside the Western tradition as well, for example, among the Eastern nations. When we speak these "modern" days in the context of the split between the modern and the post-modern, "modern" refers to the modern European. It is this modern self that has become problematic. Consequently, the ancient and medieval periods, which form the background of modernity, refer to periods in the history of the West, that is, ancient Greece and medieval Christianity.

Let me summarize. Today, when we speak of modernity and post-modernity, we are led to the issue of the modern European self, which has come to influence the whole world and which appears to be in a period of decline. We now witness, on a global scale, a desire to challenge and overcome this standpoint. It is useful to look to traditional Eastern culture and thought in pursuit of a solution for this global problem.

The Human Being as Existence Aware of Itself

What is it that can overcome, in principle at least, the standpoint of the modern self? To answer this we will have to touch on the question "What is a human being?" and then begin anew from there.

A human being is existence that is aware of itself: We are all conscious to some degree of our existence here and now. In this we differ from beings like plants and other animals. We exist here and now while being aware of ourselves as being here and being now. This implies at least the following three points.

First, the fact that one exists in the here and now is not something that one simply feels. It is something that one knows. But beyond even this, it is not simply a matter of knowing. It is a matter of willing to exist in the here and now. By means of the will, the self chooses to exist in the here and now as well. In fact, our humanity is not a form of existence that has been placed here by another. Rather, our humanity exists of its own accord, based on

will and volition. We are not simply here as inanimate objects but as subjects. Going to a lecture, for example, may not fully be your own choice. It could be the result of obligations or pressures placed on you by other people. Even still, you would not have been moved to go to the lecture if you had not interiorized these outside conditions and made them part of yourself.

In other words, we cannot deny that we are driven by certain conditions imposed from without. Since this is the case, then we must also say that, in the final analysis, the decision to make these conditions our own is made in the depths of our existence, no matter how reluctantly. Going to the lecture may partly be due to outward pressures, but it is certainly not impossible for you to reject this pressure and the idea of going. The fact that you choose not to give up the idea of attending the lecture makes this clear enough. Despite the fact that we exist right here and right now and cannot deny that this is bound up with all kinds of external conditions, we must admit, I believe, that a free will is at work. In this free will, we ourselves determine our way of being in the depths of our existence, transcending those conditions inwardly.

Earlier I mentioned that, for human beings, existing in the here and now is not simply a matter of feeling one's existence but also of knowing it. The notion of existence as the self's existence through knowing itself, however, is inseparably linked to the notion of the self's existence through willing itself. When I say that human existence is existence aware of itself, first of all, I must caution that at the center of this self-awareness, which already is a form of self-awakening, is the linking of the self's existence through knowing and its existence through willing.

Second, when I say that human existence is existence that is aware of itself, I mean that we constantly tend to think of ourselves as being at the center of everything. This is the primordial working of the self, arising as a self-centered form of existence. In connection with the first point I made above, let me say that each person's existence arises in the here and now in terms of an awareness in which we first posit our own existence, then sustain and grasp it. This means that we each locate our individual existence at the center of all existence.

In regard to this, there are three issues that cannot be overlooked. In the first, when placing ourselves at the center of all existence, of necessity we have a perspective on everything. Without this perspective, we would not grasp our existence as centered in the midst of all existence. Of course, there is the question as to how clear and correct this perspective is, but I shall leave this question aside. Anyway, since self-awareness always carries with it a tendency to place the self at the center, we inevitably are led to construct some sort of perspective on everything. Consequently, self-awareness is not subsumed within the shell of the finite self. From the beginning, self-awareness steps outside the self in the form of a perspective on the world and at the same time includes all outer things within the self.

The second issue is that the self's need to place itself at the center of all things leads to seeing everything outside of the self as "other," separated from the self. Thus, the "other" comes to be objectified in relationship to the self that has placed itself at the center of everything. The "other" comes to be another person standing before you, or another social group, or society as such, or the world itself, or nature, or the cosmos—in other words, things scattered all about you or the totality of all these things. The tendency to objectify things, in other words, to recognize them as objects, is not simply a matter of knowledge. Objectifying things also means making them objects of the will. This means that you accept something as desirable or reject it as undesirable. Objectifying the world through knowing and by means of the will is the natural result of the fact mentioned above, that is, that self-awareness implies both knowing and willing.

The third issue having to do with the problem of self-centeredness is the following point. This inclination toward self-centeredness, since it is based on the fact that we try to set ourselves in the center of everything, implies that we also objectify ourselves. For example, one's own body, one's own mind, and one's own existence: this is what we are aware of, this is what we try to establish here and now. This being the case, we look on our own body and mind as objects. Therefore, the tendency to locate ourselves in the middle of everything is not only a matter of ob-

jectifying that which lies outside of ourselves; it means that we also objectify our existence in some form or other. In other words, when human beings spontaneously place themselves in the center of everything by means of self-awareness, we do not merely objectify the existence of everything outside of ourselves. Our own body and mind are also included in the process. The process of objectifying the existence of all existence arises from the standpoint of the self that places itself at the center of things, and this self is included in the objectifying process.

So far, I have made two major points regarding the significance of saying that our humanity is existence aware of itself. First, we not only know that we exist here and now, we also will that existence. Second, as the self places itself at the center of everything, the body and mind are also objectified from the center out.

Now, the third and most important meaning regarding the fact that human existence is aware of itself has to do with the following point. We exist while being aware of existing here and now. As we exist, we are aware of our own existence. In one sense, this means that our existence is completely subsumed within this awareness. But the inverse is also the case: Our self-awareness is completely subsumed within our existence. In other words, self-awareness subsumes existence, and at the same time existence comes right back to subsume self-awareness. Thus, self-awareness and existence are poles that include each other in the form of a dynamic tension. For this reason, I say that the human way of being is to exist by being aware of one's existence. A snake trying to devour its own tail might serve as an analogy. This image implies a dynamic tension that at no point becomes stable. It remains completely and constantly unstable. We human beings forever try to settle ourselves securely in the very midst of this dynamic instability. That is to say, we look for a secure centerpoint within this dynamic, unstable, circular, mutual grasping of existence and awareness.

As I explain above, to say that human existence is existence aware of itself means that we human beings tend to place ourselves at the center of everything. This point is not unconnected

with the point I am making now. Our self-awareness, as I also said before, is always fashioning a perspective in regard to everything. Based on this perspective, whereby we include all things within our self-awareness, we attempt to establish a center-point on which we might stand in the midst of things. Because we fail to find such a center-point, we human beings are completely unable to impart stability to our lives. We are not able to bring a sense of tranquility to ourselves. In this way, human beings are characterized by a fundamental restlessness.

If we look at this from another angle, a problem becomes apparent. As I say above, a human being is existence that is aware of itself. The fact that this awareness subsumes existence and, inversely speaking, existence subsumes awareness, means that the very being that tries to objectify others comes to be objectified itself. Let me put this more concretely. Becoming attached to another person means that we make that person an object of attachment. In fact, this is just another way of becoming attached to ourselves in the form of an attachment to that other person. Attachment to another person is really attachment to the self. Becoming attached to the self means that the self has entrapped itself. Now, however, this is entrapment of the self by itself; that is, by being entrapped by another person, we become a prisoner of that other person. This is a form of egoism. The risk inherent in being attached to another person and thus entrapping ourselves, or perhaps being entrapped by another person, becomes clear when that other person is taken away from us or suddenly dies. When the other person is taken away, we experience the pain of being robbed of our own selfhood either completely or in part. This is not merely a problem of attachment to other people. It is also the case when we can become attached to our own good fortune, position, reputation, an so on.

In other words, when we are attached to this world in such a way that we do not want to leave it, we have, in fact, become attached to the self that lives within that world in the form of attachment to the world. Attachment to ourselves leads to self-entrapment. If this is the case, self-entrapment, rooted in the actual form of our attachment to the world, in fact, is entrapment by the

world. It is nothing other than being a prisoner of the world. This is the concrete form of the relationship of the self and the world when we understand ourselves as existence that has become aware of itself. It is an egoistic relationship, and the form this egoism takes is nothing but the concrete relationship in which the human being is objectified the moment it tries to objectify something else. To objectify the world means to be objectified and to become something that is no longer a subject. Therefore let me add that self-awareness in the sense explained above is in fact self-attachment. In other words, existence aware of itself is self-attachment.

Reflection and Intuition

Thus, the human being is a form of existence that has become aware of itself, and the three points I make in the previous section therefore are implied in the term "human existence." Now let us move deeper into this issue by reflecting on what we humans beings become when we live our lives as existence aware of itself. What are we to conclude regarding the fact that our existence becomes an insistent problem that cannot be ignored?

We human beings, for whom self-awareness subsumes existence and existence subsumes self-awareness, endure an unending instability in our search for a center-point on which to anchor the self. At the same time, however, in the midst of this dynamic mutual grasping and mutually determined movement of self-awareness and existence, self-awareness has an egoistic character in which one is entrapped by both the other and by the self. Moreover, when we thoroughly examine this way of being, self-awareness, in the last analysis, amounts to nothing more than a self-contradictory existence in which we entangle ourselves in traps that we ourselves have set. This takes place when we seek what we think ought to be a center for the self. No matter where we look, this stable center for the self that we expect to find within the movement of the mutual grasping of self-awareness and existence is never found. In the end, the mutual grasping itself comes unraveled. Consequently, we recognize that self-conscious existence itself is an *aporia* (insoluble paradox) that col-

lapses into nothingness. Although this is perhaps not sufficiently evident in the simile of the snake swallowing its tail, the *aporia* of self-awareness amounts to a kind of absolute death of the self. It leads to the inevitable end of human existence in the absolute death of the self.

Before tackling this issue any further, perhaps I should address myself to a problem I only touched on earlier. To delve more radically into the standpoint of the human being as existence aware of itself, we need to face a final, fundamental *aporia* that leads us to the inevitability of the absolute death of the self. I now want to reflect on what meaning this might have.

I mention above that self-awareness and existence mutually encompass each other within human beings. This being the case, when we say that self-awareness encompasses existence, it means that self-awareness comes before existence, which means that self-awareness is the more primordial, and existence is subsequent to it. In grasping such a standpoint, right away the possibility of an opposite state of affairs is implied, that is, the standpoint in which existence comes before self-awareness. In this case, self-awareness is subsumed by existence and is subsequent to it. The two standpoints are radically opposed to each other. They are in total agreement, however, about there being a relationship of priority between self-awareness and existence, differing only as to which is prior and which is subsequent.

Of course, any standpoint that recognizes priority between self-awareness and existence is itself a problem. What kind of standpoint is this? This is a problem that might be raised here. This standpoint would seem to be one that encompasses both self-awareness and existence, a standpoint from which both can be scrutinized from the outside. To scrutinize both human self-awareness and existence from the outside is to stand beyond the self and assume a vantage point from which it is possible to look back on the self. This standpoint, in which we see a relationship of priority between self-awareness and existence, that is, the standpoint from which we can look back on the self, is the standpoint of reflection. Beyond even this, there must be a yet more foundational standpoint that is prior to looking back on the self, or a pre-

reflective standpoint. In contrast to reflection, this would be an intuitive standpoint. Indeed, I believe that intuition is the foundation out of which reflection arises from the beginning. Consequently, reflection or looking back on the self is not to be taken as the foundational standpoint. It is a secondary standpoint. In contrast, the standpoint that is not yet looking back on the self and is prior to reflection is the primary standpoint, the foundational and original standpoint. The fact that reflection is a secondary standpoint built upon the primary standpoint of intuition is sufficiently indicated by the prefix "re-" of "reflection."

If this be the case, self-awareness, from a standpoint that indicates its priority over existence, is only reflection and not the original and primary self-awareness. Similarly, the existence mentioned above is not the original and primary self-awakening. From within the standpoint of reflection, in which self-consciousness and existence appear dualistically, self-awareness arises prior to existence and subsumes it, or conversely, existence arises prior to self-awareness and subsumes it. There is a mutually intertwined arising of the two. Between the two, there is no point of absolute stability to be found. This intertwining accelerates to the point where we find ourselves caught in our own trap, and the whole process verges on collapse. This is the standpoint of the reflecting self. For this reason, I cannot say that the collapse of the reflecting self is simply a matter of disintegrating into mere nothingness. The fact of the matter is that the primordial standpoint of the original self, which is what supports the reflecting self in its foundation, arises before our eyes. Once the standpoint in which we look back on the self has collapsed, the direct and straightforward, primary self-awakening, which is prior to looking back on the self, arises before us. And this standpoint of primary, direct, and straightforward primordial self-awakening, or the standpoint of intuition, is that which extricates us from the reflecting self. This is the true meaning of the awakening that liberates us.

Above, I note that we human beings tend to look for a stable point for our existence. What can really stabilize our existence, however, is to be found within the primary standpoint of the lib-

erated self, or the standpoint of intuition, and not within the secondary standpoint of the reflecting self. Similarly, I mention above that our humanity, overcoming restrictions imposed on it from outside, determines its own way of being from within. This inner determination of the self arises authentically only from within the primary standpoint of self-awakening that is prior to reflection. The primary standpoint, which more or less abandons the standpoint of the reflecting self, transcends the framework of self and expands limitlessly in every direction. This forms the locus of self-awakening that is infinitely expanded in every direction. I will call this the "expansion of self-awareness." I chose this phrase because, as the intuitive standpoint prior to reflection, it is the primordial locus of the self. It is the locus wherein, for the first time, the opposition of our subjectivity and the objective world, as well as the distinction between the self and the other, arises. I chose this phrase because it is a locus of intuition, prior to the distinction between that which is self-aware and the contents of that awareness. The locus of self-awakening that incorporates the totality of self and other is an unlimited expansion.

The Expansion of Self-Awakening

But in regard to this expansion of self-awareness, I offer three warnings. The first warning has to do with what I mentioned in the previous section when I said that existence subsumes self-awareness and, conversely, self-awareness subsumes existence, and that the way in which the two are interrelated is always a matter of reflection. This being the case, we can go back to the first issue I raised, that a human being is existence aware of itself and, at that stage of our inquiry, self-awareness and existence are still matters of reflection. Now we can see that this standpoint of reflection is broken through and left behind, because the primary standpoint of self-awakening prior to reflection has opened up. This primary standpoint of self-awakening, as such, is simultaneously the primary standpoint of existence. In breaking through the standpoint of reflection, we are also breaking through that which is reflected on. In this manner, we return to the standpoint of existence itself prior to reflection.

Consequently, if we can call the locus the "expansion of self-awareness," wherein our self-awareness abandons itself and breaks out of the standpoint of the reflecting self, then we should also call it the "expansion of existence"—for it holds the meaning of existence prior to the differentiation of subject and object. The expansion of self-awareness, as such, is the expansion of existence. The reason for this is that the issue of whether self-awakening or existence should come first arises within the standpoint of reflection. Now we can say, however, that the standpoint of reflection has been left behind, and in the standpoint of primary intuition prior to reflection there is no question of coming first or coming last. Therefore, we might say that the expansion of self-awareness and the expansion of existence are related in terms of being "not one and not two" or "not the same and not different."[1]

The second warning has to do with the fact that the original primary locus of self-awakening, which leaves behind the reflecting self, is itself limitlessly expanded. It does not, however, sever all contact with the reflecting self. The two are in continuous contact. To be utterly separated from the standpoint of reflection cannot be said to be the locus of intuition. Both intuition and reflection, in other words, the standpoint prior to looking back on ourselves and the standpoint in which we look back on ourselves, are essentially distinct. Nevertheless, in their concrete reciprocity they converge on each other. That is to say, in returning to the source of the individual reflecting self, we abandon ourselves and return to life standing within the primary locus of intuition, or the expansion of self-awareness. On the other hand, the standpoint of intuition, that is, the expansion of self-awareness itself, does not arise objectively but only through the awareness of each reflecting self.

The third warning is that within the standpoint of intuition, that is, the expansion of self-awakening, all things come to be present in their true form as they are in themselves. Earlier, I discussed the human being, understood as existence that has become aware of itself—that is, the human being from within the standpoint of reflection—as a form of existence that understands

itself as being at the center of everything. Therefore, to the extent that one sees this world from the standpoint of reflection as something at the center of everything, things can never be seen as they are in themselves. In the locus of the expansion of self-awareness, however, the standpoint of reflection is abandoned, and with it the objectification of things by a reflecting self standing at the center of all existence is abandoned, so that things as they are in their true reality become clear. Therefore, as I noted above, the meaning of this expansion of self-awareness as such is an expansion of existence.

The History of Western Philosophy and the Standpoint of Intuition

I believe that this primary and original standpoint, the locus of the self-abandoning[2] expansion of awareness, is that which overcomes in principle the standpoint of the modern European self. This is my claim. To make this point, however, I will offer a careful inquiry into various Western philosophical views as they are illumined by this self-abandoning intuition that I have described.

In the West, when the human being as existence aware of itself was investigated, thinkers were confronted with a fundamental *aporia*. This has meant that a stable center-point in which the self makes itself the center of everything was never found immanently, that is, purely within the interior of the human being. Instead, in the West, the center-point, or the standpoint within which human beings ultimately place themselves to find stability, is thought of in terms of a transcendent dimension.

For example, in ancient Greece, Plato taught that the center-point of human beings was to be found beyond the phenomenal realm of change, especially in the Idea of the Good, which he saw as the Idea of the Ideas themselves. For Plato, the physical body is that which perishes, and the soul is the imperishable Idea. Therefore, if one grasps a human being in terms of existence aware of itself, then self-awareness and existence should be seen as radically linked in a self-contradictory way. In exploring this truth, however, Plato never found himself in a situation where he was completely caught in the trap of his own making. Instead, he

made self-awareness supreme by means of an act of transcendence into pure awareness in the realm of the Ideas. Human beings discover a final, stable locus in an ascent into transcendence by means of *eros* (love). Thus, we can say that the goal of Plato's system was to seek the Idea of the Good through *eros*.

In contrast to this, Christianity offered a deep awareness of the fact that self-awareness and existence were held together by means of a self-contradiction. Consequently, Christianity was aware that, in exploring self-awareness and existence, we fall into that trap of our own making. Paul asks, "Who shall save me from this body of death?" Is not the phrase "this body of death" the self that has fallen into the trap of self-contradiction? In the final analysis, however, Christianity's awareness of "this body of death" is an awareness of a sinful body in which there is still a reaching out to God in transcendence. Here, we encounter a thorough awareness of the individual that is not found in Plato's idealism. That which is held up as the radical center-point of human beings is not the Idea of the Good, but rather the God of justice and love who rules over all things. Augustine, whose views provided a spiritual foundation for medieval Europe, stood before God and prayed, "Our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

The notion of God standing at the center of all existence, which was characteristic of the Middle Ages, was overturned in a radical way when Europeans began to seek a basis for absolute certainty in their thinking. I speak of course of Descartes. When Descartes says, "I think, therefore I am," self-awareness is superior to existence. In a way that differs from Plato, we have a turning away from the transcendent God of Christianity to the self-awareness of the *cogito* (thought). In this way, a radical awareness of the ego is established.

The self-awareness that the Cartesian ego calls for is further radicalized in Kant. Here we have an awareness of the self as a transcendental ideal self that, while transcending all experience, is the condition of the possibility of all experience. He rejected all of the theories of transcendence prior to himself as mere illusions *(Schein)* and clarified how all human attempts to find Reality, or a

center-point for human beings to stand on by theoretical reason, fall into antinomies. According to Kant, the only standpoint within which the human self can stand is that of pure reason. Kant realized that, since self-awareness and existence are related in terms of self-contradiction, falling into the trap of our own creation is unavoidable. Moreover, Kant also rejected as illusion the idea of a center-point existing objectively in the transcendent level on which human beings could rely. Instead, he spoke of an opening up of the standpoint of pure *Sollen* (what should be done), leaving behind the entire standpoint of existence. This demolished any notion of a metaphysics of the whole of existence as so much dogmatism. In place of this discredited approach, Kant adopted the subjective and practical standpoint of the autonomy of pure practical reason. From Kant until the present, various European philosophical movements have proliferated, and various ideologies have been constructed, but all of them have Kant as their background, albeit in different senses of the word.

Also, if one examines the various Western philosophies of ancient, medieval, and modern times, a certain question raises itself over and over again. In the West, when human beings are considered in terms of existence aware of itself, self-awareness subsumes existence and, at the same time, existence subsumes self-awareness. Does the West, however, have a strict grasp of this reality? Within the human being, self-awareness and existence are interrelated in terms of self-contradiction. Consequently, when this matter is pursued to the end, we fall into the trap of our own making. Inevitably, the complete collapse of the human ego, to an absolute death, confronts us as a problem from which we must radically awaken. Has the West pursued this question sufficiently? Is the West sufficiently aware of the problem? Certainly the West became aware of this self-contradiction in its immanent dimension. But has it become aware of the problem in its transcendental dimension?

This question remains before us for consideration. Certainly, Christianity, along with the Cartesian and Kantian philosophies that sprung from it, are aware of the negation of the ego that results from the self-contradiction of self-awareness and existence.

When it comes to establishing the reality of God or the cognitional ego or practical reason, however, self-awareness is always given some sort of priority over existence. This means that the problem of the self-contradiction of self-awareness and existence in human beings is not adequately grasped in the West, and consequently the West cannot offer an adequate solution to this problem of self-contradiction. The West has tried to deal with this problem by pushing it further into the "beyond" of transcendence. But in the end, this is not a solution at all. The problem cannot be approached in this way.

Buddhism and Intuition

When one investigates this problem from Eastern and Western perspectives, ancient and contemporary, I believe we are led to the conclusion that Buddhism is particularly aware of the problem in its fundamental form. The Buddhist law of dependent origination holds that all things exist by depending on one another mutually, and that nothing arises independently. Consequently, Buddhism does not acknowledge an absolute in any sense within the transcendent dimension. The immanent and the transcendent co-exist with complete mutuality and also by completely negating each other. Implicit within the law of dependent origination is a complete mutual negation of all existence by all existence. Nagarjuna deals with this explicitly in his notion of awakening as emptiness *(sunyata)*.[3] Of course, for Nagarjuna, emptiness is not merely limited to the immanent dimension, for it includes a movement toward the transcendent in the sense of overcoming this partial viewpoint and then that particular viewpoint. There is no stable ground or center of transcendence to be found anywhere in the direction of the transcendent. Insisting that there is such a center-point is an illusion. To grasp this is to awaken to emptiness. Therefore, awakening entails a continuous going beyond the here and now, but precisely in that way it always returns to the here and now.

Overcoming a viewpoint, as such, is returning to that viewpoint. This unending paradoxical movement taken as a whole is emptiness. In other words, when a human being is grasped in

terms of existence that is aware of itself, the self-awareness aspect and the existence aspect, strictly speaking, are grasped as mutual contradictories. Consequently, a human being, understood in terms of existence aware of itself, must be understood as self-contradictory existence in the strictest sense. As an inescapable consequence, we become aware of the absolute death of the self. Therefore, the self-awareness aspect of awakening should be privileged in neither the immanent dimension nor the transcendent dimension. Also, in whatever transcendent dimension there is, there is no point that can be made into a center. Awakening to the fact that a special center of all existence is nowhere to be found is awakening to emptiness.

This does not mean, however, that emptiness is but a shadow in the fog. The awakening of primordial emptiness and my own awakening as a specific reflecting self converge at the point of self-abandonment. We always encounter emptiness in this form. In other words, a specific reflecting self discovers itself through self-abandonment within the expansion of an emptiness that is without center. Emptiness is really awakened as true emptiness only when a specific reflecting self awakens through self-abandonment. For this reason, as I said above, if we call this encounter between the awakening of a specific reflecting self and the awakening of emptiness a "center," it must be the center-point of emptiness. But to say that emptiness has a center-point in this sense never implies that it is either simply immanent or transcendent. Furthermore, the center-point of emptiness does not imply a single entity that is awakened in the awakening of a specific reflecting self. It is a center-point in which all reflecting selves in their subjectivity discover themselves in their very act of self-abandonment. In this sense, the center-points of emptiness must be said to be infinite in number. Emptiness is overflowing with such center points.

The Standpoint Prior to Reflection

As human beings operate within the standpoint of reflection, the self becomes aware that it exists here and now. Thus, we have a form of existence that exists here and now while being aware of

this fact. From the standpoint of reflection, however, the "here" is a radically delimited space, or a space that is to be distinguished from a "there." Moreover, in my view, this space, is posited prior to the self and in contrast to the self. That is to say, we think of space as something other than the self and as something objective. In this manner, we think of the self as entering into space and then occupying the here of space only subsequently. What is the meaning of space if it can be contrasted to the self and exists prior to the self? Moreover, what is this self that subsequently enters into space? If space is posited prior to the self, and the self enters into space only subsequently, what is the relationship between space and the self? Questions such as these naturally present themselves to us. Of course, these questions normally are not matters that are given a great deal of thought. This is because our ordinary mode of thinking, as mentioned earlier, is thinking from within the standpoint of reflection. To the extent that we restrict ourselves to reflection, that is, to the standpoint within which we look back on the self, these questions never present themselves to us. Once one enters the standpoint of intuition, however, the situation changes considerably.

In the standpoint of intuition prior to looking back in reflection on the self, space can no longer be contrasted to the self and posited prior to the self. Let me give an example. As I sit in my study in Kyoto, I think of where I sit as the "here" of my self. From this "here," space expands infinitely in all directions. By the mere fact of my sitting here in Kyoto, space, which extends infinitely in all directions, comes to be as such. Neither is it the case that space comes to be created by my sitting down in Kyoto, as if this were somehow prior to infinite space. There is no question of one being prior and the other being subsequent. Infinite space, as I sit, unfolds simply as space. The space and I, in a sense, are not two different things. We are not the same and yet are not separate. Therefore, what we call the here of the self does not denote the space that is posited by my sitting within. The infinite space that spreads out in all directions as I sit within my study is the here of the self. In other words, from the standpoint of intuition, there is no space without a here.

Therefore, in light of this infinitely expanded space, the delimited here of the reflecting self is not the true here. When seen from the standpoint of intuition prior to looking back reflectively on the self, the "here" and the "there" of the reflecting self are both here. Precisely because the here of the reflecting self is not the true here, the here from the standpoint of intuition is the infinite expansion of space in its entirety. The reflecting self separates itself from the world out there as everything other than the self. Everything that is there becomes objectifed from the point of view of the here. In regard to the standpoint of intuition in which all of space constitutes the here, however, other things are part of the here as well. They are grasped within the same here within which the self is grasped. The fact that, from the standpoint of intuition, all beings within the universe appear as they actually are in themselves is because they are grasped as being here.

What I am saying about the here must also be recognized of the "now." The now, which arises in the standpoint of the reflecting self, is a radically delimited point within the flow of time. It is separated from the past, which has already gone by, and the future, which has not yet come. In addition, we think of "time" as something that is simply given prior to the self. In other words, time arises objectively on its own, independent of the self. Moreover, to the extent that time is seen as other than the self, we also see the self, which is immersed in the flow of time, as something that enters into time subsequently. Thus, we inevitably think of the now as but the arising of a mere moment of time.

How can we say that time exists of itself, independent of the self, and is given prior to the self? This self, in other words, the self that we think of as subsequently entering into time, is an unreal self. Saying that "time arises on its own, independent of the self" is impossible apart from our own self-awareness. Can we not say that the expansion of awareness encompasses this view of time arising independently of the self? Must we not say that this view of time is included within the expansion of awareness? Even though this in fact is the case, the reflecting self does not notice that it has always been in the midst of the expansion of awareness,

and it objectifies both the self and time. Time as something other than the self, and the self as something that only subsequently enters into time, are grasped as a duality. In contrast to this, if we extricate ourselves from the standpoint of reflection in which we look back on the self and return to the standpoint of intuition, that is, the primary standpoint prior to looking back on the self in reflection, then the situation is entirely different.

In the standpoint of intuition, time is not given prior to the self. For example, when I move forward by taking one step, time flows along. Time arises. The flow of time is not separate from my moving forward by taking the step. In a sense, we can say that time arises from me to the extent that time does not arise of itself apart from me, and time does not exist prior to me. Even as it arises from me, however, I do not create time, insofar as an "I" apart from and prior to the arising of time does not exist. Primordially, the relationship between time and myself is not a question of being prior or being subsequent. Time simply unfolds as such as I move forward step-by-step. Time and I are always not identical and not different, not one and not two.

Primordial Space and Primordial Time

In addition, as I move forward, taking my step, I negate the fact that I am standing here. This negation of my being here is contained in every step forward I take. Therefore, if time is time as such by its arising in my taking a step, then we must also say that time consists in the negation of space. Time is really the negation of space as it spreads out in all directions. In contrast to the nondirectional and reversible character of space, direction and irreversibility would seem to be basic to time. The reflecting self thinks of time in terms of a one-directional and rectilinear movement from the past to the present and from the present to the future. But from the standpoint of intuition, which rises above the standpoint of the reflecting self, the one-directional movement and irreversibility of time take on a different character.

Within the standpoint of intuition, which is the standpoint in which true subjective practice arises, time is as follows. In the present in which there is an active intentionality toward things,

the past is turned around and transformed into the future in the sense of trying to correct the past in the direction of the future, and the future is transformed into the past in the sense that the meaning of the past changes by the goal one sets in the future. In this respect, the present, that is, the place in which such true subjectivity arises, becomes the focal point at which the future and the past are mutually transformed into each other. The present, if one thinks of it from the standpoint of a one-directional and irreversible notion of time, is the point at which past, present, and future form a continuity. It is also the place, as mentioned above, where the past and the future are mutually transformed into each other.

For this reason, the present includes within itself a deep rupture of the past-present-future sequence. The fissure left by this rupture is infinitely deep and is related to the eternity that transcends time. To put it another way, an eternity that does not pass away exists at all times within the deepest foundations of time that flows in a one-directional movement. This is the arising of the "now"—the now of our active subjectivity. Time, far more than merely a one-directional movement, is a matter of moving from now to now in which the eternal is constantly present. Consequently, this movement from now to now is not continuous: between them there is negation and rupture. Time, when seen from the standpoint of an intuition prior to looking back in reflection, has this kind of dynamic three-dimensional structure mediated by negation and our moving step by step. The activity of the subject also comes about on the basis of this dynamic structure.

When compared with space, time is often thought of as inward because of its three-dimensional and dynamic structure. In fact, time arises as the negation of space. Extension, that is, space as it appears by spreading out in all directions, is thought of as exterior. In contrast to this, time, which is the negation of this spreading out, is thought to be interior. When thought of in relation to human interiority, more consideration is given to time than space. Kant, for example, understood time in terms of an inner intuition. Husserl looked for temporality in the intention-

ality of consciousness. Heidegger thought of temporality as the fundamental structure of Being-in-the-world *(in-der-Welt-sein)* and its concrete, existential foundation. While these standpoints each have their differing nuances, they all privilege time over space.

As one would expect, however, from the standpoint of true intuition, we need to ask if this privileging of time at the expense of space is proper. The notion of looking on time as privileged at the expense of space is not yet completely free from the standpoint of looking back on the self, or the reflecting self. In the standpoint of intuition, which has truly extricated itself from the reflecting self, neither space nor time dominate over the other. They are always interrelated, yet they are not directly interrelated. They interrelate by means of a mutual negation. That is to say, as time consists in the negation of space, so also space consists in the negation of time. For example, the nondirectionality of space is never direct and simple. Space's nondirectionality consists in an essential negation of the one-directional movement of time. Likewise, the reversibility of space is never a simple reversibility. It is a reversibility that consists in a negation of time's essential irreversibility. Consequently, I have said that from within the standpoint of intuition, space, spreading out in all directions, arises by my standing here. In this claim, the "standing here" does not mean a "standing here" that is directed and free of negation. Rather, intuition presumes a "standing here" that entails the negation of the self moving forward step by step. Moreover, the exact opposite of what we said about space can be said about the directional flow and irreversibility of time. Consequently, in the background of the arising of space as space lies a profoundly temporal reality. Implicit within this deep background are various levels of the negation of the self.

Now, space and time, as they are seen from within the standpoint of self-awakening, are to be distinguished from space and time in the ordinary sense as they are seen from within the standpoint of reflection. Let us call the former "foundational space and time." Within ordinary space there is a foundational space, and likewise, within ordinary time there is a foundational time.

As mentioned before, the presence of time, which seems to move in a one-directional and irreversible movement from past to present and from present to future, is deeply linked to eternity as the focal point wherein the past and the present mutually turn into each other. Eternity in this sense, and primordial space, understood as the negation of temporality, are not-two. Space as the place where relative beings interact with one another is not a fixed and substantial reality. Space, as encompassing all beings while refusing itself to be made into a being, is rooted in sheer vastness that spreads out in every direction. In this case, however, this sheer vastness and foundational time, understood as the negation of space, are not-two. In this way, the eternity lying at the bottom of time and foundational space are not-two. If this is correct, foundational space and time correspond to each other by means of a mutual negation. Now we have looked at the standpoint of intuition and subsequently the spatial and temporal framework in which self-awakening expands by means of the abandonment of the self.

The Three Ages of Human History

In the prehistoric period, I believe that human beings did not as yet have a clear awareness of themselves. Human beings and nature were fused, and nature and God were undifferentiated. Consequently, God and human beings were still not distinguished from each other. During this period when human beings and nature and God were fused, there was nowhere anything that could be called a center. Instead, everything was looked on as forming an extremely simple universe of infinite expanse. For present purposes, I will refer to this period as the era of simple cosmology. In breaking out of this simple cosmology, we witness the rise of humanity increasingly aware of itself. In the West, we think immediately of Socrates with his epigram, "Know thyself."

Ancient Greek philosophy, beginning with Socrates, marks the beginning of the clarification of the standpoint within which human beings are separated from nature and God. In this philosophy, the movement of heavenly bodies and nature are still thought of as the prototypes of reality. That is to say, in this pe-

riod, human beings thought of everything within the universe as a basis and center. In contrast to this, Christianity, which dominated the Middle Ages, went beyond Greek thought to a theocentric standpoint dominated by a God who creates and rules over the universe. After this, there is the rise of modernity in which the human ego and not God was recognized as that which takes pride in being placed in the center of all existence. This is the period of anthropocentrism. Modern Europe has adopted this anthropocentrism or egocentrism as its basic principle. I do not have to repeat here that this has now become the controlling mode of thought the world over.

If these various Western standpoints are to be compared with Buddhism, I would have to underscore the fundamental difference between Buddhism and the West. As is well known, Buddha taught *pratityasamutpada* (dependent origination) and *anatman* (non-self). These doctrines are not to be confused with the oneness of Brahman and the *atman (bonga-ichinyō)* as taught in the Upanishads. Because of this, Buddhism's awakening to *anatman* is not merely a claim about the nonexistence of the self or the negation of *atman* (the self), understood here as the unchanging reality as taught by the Upanishads. *Anatman* also negates Brahman, the cosmological reality that was thought to be one with *atman*. It is thus not only a doctrine of non-ego but also a non-cosmological doctrine in the sense that it does not recognize any cosmos undergirded by an unchanging cosmological reality like Brahman. For this reason, Buddhism rejects any notion of the Buddha as an absolute in the ordinary sense of the word. Buddhism asserts that the Buddha should be understood nontheistically.

To the extent that Buddhism is a religion that is noncosmological, nontheistic, and non-ego-based, can we not claim that Buddhism goes beyond the cosmocentrism of the ancient Greece, the theocentrism of the Christian medieval period, and the egocentricity of modern Europe? That is to say, Buddhism eschews any standpoint that would take the cosmos, God, or the human ego as a center. Instead, Buddhism takes the standpoint of emptiness.

I want to lump together the ancient, medieval, and modern periods, which have followed in the wake of the simple cosmology, and refer to them as the "period of historical consciousness." Perhaps in the time of the ancient Greeks, historical consciousness was still underdeveloped. Although it may have been rudimentary, however, we find a consciousness of history within the human self-awareness implicit in the motto "Know thyself." In contrast, while recognizing their various differences, the historical consciousness of the Christian Middle Ages and modern Europe is well known. Therefore, although these three periods differ from one another in that some show a relative lack and others an increased sense of historical self-awareness, even still we can say that they share in a consistent historical consciousness.

At the beginning of this essay, I noted in regard to the modern European ego and its quest to control the world through thought that we have come to the end of the West's march from the ancient to the medieval and now to the modern period. I said that today we need to vanquish the standpoint of the modern ego. Now I can add that this also means overcoming the Western view of history. Moreover, I also mentioned the need to elucidate the basic principle of a post-modern standpoint capable of vanquishing that ego. What is called for today is an intuitive standpoint that can free us from the reflecting self, or the primordial standpoint of self-awakening prior to looking back on the self reflectively. This, at least, is my basic claim. Consequently, I want to call the post-modern period the "era of a cosmology of self-awakening," in contradistinction to, on the one hand, the period of naïve (i.e., non-self-aware) cosmology and, on the other hand, the period of historical self-awareness. When we ask what kind of era the post-modern should be, I answer that it should be an era of self-awakened cosmology that takes as its basis an intuition prior to reflection.

In what sense can we call the standpoint of intuition a cosmology of self-awakening? It does not take the Greek cosmocentric position or the medieval theocentric position or the modern egocentric position. Thus, it is clearly not a form of historical consciousness. Yet, it is definitely not simply a prehistoric, unso-

phisticated, non-self-aware standpoint, either. Of course, as a standpoint in which one casts off self-reflection, as the primordial original self-awakening, it is a standpoint of radical self-awareness. It is in fact the standpoint in which the expansion of self-awareness by means of the abandonment of the self arises. In addition, the expansion of self-awareness is, as such, the expansion of existence. The expansion of awareness and the expansion of existence, as mentioned above, are not the same and are not different.

Now, if we can say that the unlimited expansion of existence is a cosmos, perhaps we can think of intuition, that is, intuition based on an unlimited expansion of awareness that is not the same but not different from the unlimited expansion of existence, a cosmology of self-awakening. Calling this a cosmology of self-awakening implies that it has no specific center. But here a cosmology of self-awakening differs from a simple cosmology. In a cosmology of self-awakening, everywhere is the center. In a simple cosmology, there is no real center: All existence is lumped together in an undifferentiated fashion.

What I propose is a cosmology that is mediated by a noncosmological Nothingness or emptiness. As such it differs not only from the unsophisticated cosmologies, but also from the cosmology of ancient Greece, which took the cosmos itself as the prototype of reality. The Greek cosmos was shaped by Being, not Nothingness. As a final matter for consideration, should we not also say that this cosmology of awakening is capable of vanquishing the modern European ego, the end result of the West's movement through its ancient, medieval, and modern periods? If this is the case, this cosmology of self-awakening ought to become the operating principle of the post-modern world. Its aim is not to defeat or overcome the West in a social or political sense, but to liberate East and West in a genuinely religious sense that is rooted in intuition based on emptiness.

The Cosmology of Self-Awakening and Its Unfolding

In the final analysis, I think we have to recognize that throughout its ancient, medieval, and now its modern periods, the historical

awareness of the West has consistently tried to understand the self by looking back on the self from a standpoint outside the self. During the era of unsophisticated cosmology, human beings enjoyed a naïve unity with the multitude of things within a simple cosmos. We cannot say that this entailed a looking back on the self. Socrates' motto "Know thyself" ruptured this immediate standpoint in which there was no looking back on the self, and it quite clearly marks the opening salvo of the West's drive to look back on the self from a standpoint outside the self. While each period is varied in its nuances, the awareness of our humanity attained by the West right up to the present day has been very impressive. In the final analysis, however, this attainment has brought the West only to the point where it looks back on the self from the outside. We have now come to the point where we know that, if we restrict ourselves to the West's standpoint of reflection, we will not be able to find the path that leads to the vanquishing of the alienation that separates human beings from nature and from God. Nor can we vanquish the self-alienation that lies within human beings. In my view, it is precisely here that the deepest roots of the whole crisis facing human beings today can be found.

Today, it is imperative for us to cast aside the standpoint of looking back on the self from the outside and return to the standpoint that is prior to this, the standpoint where we do not look at the self from the outside. When we look back on the self from outside, usually something—the cosmos? God? the human ego?—is made the center of everything. In contrast to this, from within the intuitive standpoint there is no specific center. The standpoint where we do not look back from the outside, however, within which we must stand once again, is not the standpoint of a simple cosmology wherein all is undifferentiated and therefore without a center. Instead, it is a standpoint that overcomes the various Western ways of looking back on the self from outside of the self by subsuming them. This standpoint itself has no center, and for this very reason, it is a standpoint that can provide a center for nature, God, and the human ego as well, in accord with the function of each. While this is a standpoint that is primor-

dially not a matter of looking back on the self from the outside, neither is reflection excluded. Rather, it provides a new foundation for reflection.

In saying that the cosmology of awakening constitutes the primordial non-looking-back-on-the-self from the outside, however, just how is it possible to say that it has the power of imparting a new foundation for reflection? It is simply as follows. We should not merely take the cosmology of awakening as the designated point of arrival. We should adopt it as our point of departure as well. As long as we take the standpoint of reflection as the norm, we look upon the standpoint of not looking back on the self as an end-point that has to be reached. As long as we envision it as a point of arrival only, it will always be seen from the standpoint of reflection. The standpoint where we do not look back at the self will be seen from the outside, in other words, in terms of reflection. It needs to be said that the standpoint where we do not look back at the self, seen from the outside, cannot be authentic. In its deepest origins, looking back on the self from the outside has always been a secondary standpoint that arises as something founded within the standpoint where we do not look back on the self. For this reason, we must utterly vanquish the usual practice of looking at the world from that secondary standpoint. Thus, moving to the standpoint where we do not look back on the self by breaking free of looking back on the self is to stand within the primordial standpoint once again.

If I may say it again more tersely, the following issue is still a problem. If we simply dwell within the primordial standpoint as such, we are not able to say that we have perfectly escaped the tendency to look at it from the outside. The primary standpoint remains primary not merely because we have returned there and remain there. The primary standpoint remains primary by our continually departing from this standpoint. By doing this we perfectly escape taking the standpoint of looking back in reflection as the norm, and make the standpoint where we do not look back in reflection the norm. In this case, we are simply standing within the true intuitive standpoint where we do not look back in reflec-

tion. In this way, by making the primary standpoint the norm and the point of departure, the secondary standpoint is also inevitably seen in a new light and grasped a second time in a new mode.

The above could also be expressed in the following way. The cosmology of awakening, here understood as a cosmos that does not have a specific center, is from the very beginning the standpoint of emptiness. Emptiness, however, should not be taken as the goal. If the point of arrival is taken to be the point of emptiness, that is, if emptiness is one's goal, then it becomes objectified. This is nothing but making emptiness into something substantial. Emptiness, however, in order to be true emptiness, must continually empty itself of itself. Emptiness is not something that can become a goal. Neither is it something within which one may dwell. Emptiness must always and everywhere empty itself.

When emptiness empties itself, it becomes the Buddhist Vow of compassion, the heartfelt Vow to awaken all beings to their primordial way of being. The Vow, if it is to be the true Vow, is not content to remain simply a vow, but inevitably becomes practice. Thus the Vow of compassion that does not become practice is not the true Vow. Emptiness becomes the Vow by emptying itself. The Vow becomes practice by emptying itself. In this necessary unfolding of the working of emptiness, the standpoint of looking back on the self from the outside, that is, the standpoint of reflection, is given new meaning and life. In contrast to this, if emptiness does not empty itself, it becomes a goal and substantializes itself. That is to say, emptiness becomes rooted in the standpoint of reflection by looking back on itself. When this happens, karma begins. Karma happens whenever we are separated from the primary standpoint of primordial awakening and take the standpoint of looking back on the self from the outside.

Since the time we left the period of simple cosmology behind us, the history of karma has been long indeed. Today, we have reached the point where all existence has been scattered and fragmented by the rise of nihilism. Now we must bring the history of karma to an end and inaugurate a history of the Vow and of practice. How shall we do this? To bring this about, we must over-

come the principle on which the modern ego is based. We must vanquish historical consciousness. Does this not require us to root ourselves in the standpoint of a cosmology of awakening? The theme of this essay has been the establishment of such a cosmology of awakening. An essay such as this is but a tiny step in this direction.

Notes

Editor's Introduction

1. Other essays delivered at this time include "Inverse Correspondence in the Philosophy of Nishida: The Emergence of the Notion," delivered in 1979 and published in 1980 in the journal *Risō* and then in *International Philosophical Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (1992); and "The Problem of Inverse Correspondence in the Philosophy of Nishida: Toward a Critical Understanding," delivered in 1980 and published the same year in *Risō* and then in *International Philosophical Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (1995).
2. See James W. Heisig, *Philosophers of Nothingness: An Essay on the Kyoto School* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001).
3. See James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo, eds., *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, & the Question of Nationalism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994). For a more sympathetic reconstruction and reassessment of Nishida's work and thought, see Michiko Yusa, *Zen & Philosophy: An Intellectual Biography of Nishida Kitarō* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002). See also Tanabe Hajime, *Philosophy as Metanoetics*, trans. Takeuchi Yoshinori (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).
4. Yusa, *Zen & Philosophy*, pp. xv–xvi.

Chapter 1: Two Types of Unity and Religious Pluralism

1. Hans Küng, *Does God Exist? An Answer for Today* (Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, 1980), p. 64.
2. *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Everett F. Harrison (New York: Bakers, 1960), p. 179.

Chapter 2: The Meaning of Life in Buddhism

1. Dōgen, *Shōbōgenzō*, "Shōji" fasc., in vol. 2 of *Dōgen zenji zenshū*, ed. Kawamura Kōdō (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1993), p. 528.
2. Dōgen, *Shōbōgenzō*, "Genjōkōan" fasc., in vol. 1 of *Dōgen zenji zenshū*, ed. Kawamura Kōdō (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1993).
3. These passages are from the "Shōji" fascicle in Dōgen, *Shōbōgenzō*, in vol. 2 of *Dōgen zenji zenshū*, pp. 528–529.

Chapter 3: Ethics and Social Responsibility in Buddhism

1. Masao Abe, "Spirituality and Liberation: A Buddhist–Christian Conversation," with Paul F. Knitter, *Horizons* 15, no. 2 (1988): 347–364; reprinted

in *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue*, ed. Steven Heine (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), pp. 223–243.

Chapter 4: Faith and Self-Awakening

1. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Faith and Belief* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. vii.
2. Ibid., p. 3.
3. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1962), p. 156.
4. Ibid., p. 3.
5. Smith, *Faith and Belief*, p. 6.
6. Ibid., pp. 10, 11.
7. Ibid., p. 11.
8. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Towards a World Theology: Faith and the Comparative Study of Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981), p. 3.
9. Ibid., p. 5.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.; see also p. 121.
12. Ibid., p. 124.
13. Ibid., p. 125.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Smith, *Faith and Belief*, p. 23.
17. Ibid. p. 27.
18. Ibid. p. 32.
19. Both the doctrines of *panca-indriya* (five faculties) and *panca-baläni* (five powers), which were expounded in early Buddhism and which provide the ground for the practice of the subsequent Buddhist movement as the necessary faculties to attain nirvana, emphasize *sraddha* (faith), *virya* (assiduous striving), *smrti* (mindfulness), *samadhi* (concentration), and *prajna* (wisdom) in this order. This indicates that to attain nirvana, *sraddha* (faith) is essential as the entrance and foundation for the Buddhist practice, but that it is *prajna* (wisdom) that all Buddhist practice aims at and ends with as ultimate. The Buddhist practice has a structure that starts from faith, goes through practice, and ends with wisdom.
20. Smith, *Faith and Belief*, p. 11.
21. *Mahaparinibbana Suttanta*, in *The Teaching of the Compassionate Buddha*, ed. E. A. Burtt (New York: New American Library, 1955), p. 49.
22. *Samyutta Nikaya*, vol. 12, *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, vol. 2: 84b.
23. Smith, *Faith and Belief*, p. 140.
24. Ibid.
25. *Mahaprajnaparamita-sastra*, vol. 1, *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, vol. 25: 63. Hisamatsu was the most outstanding Zen philosopher of twentieth-century Japan.

Chapter 5: Religion and Science in the Global Age

1. *The Complete Works of Friederich Nietzsche*, ed. Oscar Levy, vol. 27 (1911), p. 73.

2. Masao Abe, "Christianity and Buddhism—Centering Around Science and Nihilism," *Japanese Religions* 5, no. 3 (1989): 49–50.
3. Keiji Nishitani, "Nihilism and Sunyata," *The Eastern Buddhist* 4, no. 2 (Autumn 1972): 30.

Editor's Introduction to Part II

1. See Nishida Kitarō, *Art and Morality*, trans. David Dilworth and Valdo Viglielmo (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1973); and *Intuition and Reflection in Self Consciousness*, trans. Valdo Viglielmo, Takeuchi Yoshinori, and Joseph O'Leary (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987).
2. Nishida Kitarō, "The Logic of Place and the Religious World View," translated and anthologized by David Dilworth in *Last Writings: Nothingness and the Religious World View* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987), pp. 47–124.

Chapter 6: Nishida's Philosophy of "Place"

1. Nishida Kitarō was a professor of philosophy at Kyoto University from 1913 to 1928 and has been regarded as the founder of the Kyoto School of modern Japanese philosophy.
2. Nishida Kitarō, *Zen no kenkyū* (An Inquiry into the Good) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1980), p. 13.
3. Translatable as "place," "field," or "topos," *basho* is a key concept in Nishida's philosophy. Although similar to Plato's notion of *chora* (*Timaeus* [52 a-c]), the term *"basho"* indicates that which is completely unobjectifiable, an all-embracing ultimate Reality identical with Absolute Nothingness.
4. Nishida Kitarō, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1978–1989), vol. 4:209, 216.
5. *From the Actor to the Seer* (1927), from *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 4:5.
6. *Intuition and Reflection in Self-Awakening*, trans. Valdo H. Viglielmo, Takeuchi Yoshinori, and Joseph S. O'Leary, with the English title, *Intuition and Reflection in Self-Consciousness* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986).
7. The original Japanese term for "self-Awakening" is *"jikaku."* *Jikaku* is often translated as "self-consciousness," which in English usually indicates awareness of one's own existence, actions, and so forth, as distinguished from those of others. Such self-consciousness in the psychological sense is designated by another Japanese term, *"jiishiki."* In philosophical writings, particularly in Nishida's philosophy, then, *jikaku* signifies a fundamental, ontological awareness that is beyond the self-and-other-duality and hence also beyond self-consciousness in the psychological sense. Thus, in this paper, contrary to the usual translation, "self-consciousness," I use "self-awakening" for *jikaku.*
8. The terms "logic" and "logical" in this context do not indicate formal logic or the science of correct reasoning, but an ontological logic, a logic of Reality as seen in Hegel's *Wissenschaft der Logik*, tran. A. V. Miller (New York: Humanity Books, 1998).
9. Nishida, *Zen no kenkyū*, p. 66.

10. Immediate and direct conciousness is the true subject of consciousness that cannot be objectified. It is self-intuitive or self-awakened consciousness prior to the duality of subject and object. It is identical with what the Buddhist tradition calls nondiscriminating knowledge, *prajna*-wisdom, or satori.
11. Nishida, *Zen no kenkyū*, pp. 74–75.
12. The term "subjective" is a translation of the Japanese word "*shutaiteki*," which differs from "*shukanteki*," the Japanese equivalent of the English term "subjective." Like the English term "subjective," *shukanteki* presupposes the objective, that is, *kyakkanteki*, and thus has a primarily epistemological meaning. *Shutaiteki* (subjective), on the other hand, is not the subject pole of an epistemological subject–object relationship, but indicates a total practical or existential standpoint determined by one's ethic and religion. Accordingly, it is more fundamental than, and encompasses, the subject–object relationship in the epistemological dimension.
13. Even though in his early writings Nishida was influenced by William James, Henri Bergson, and others, his fundamental standpoint differs from theirs.
14. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 12:5–17.
15. Hegel, *The Lesser Logic*, sec. 324, p. 83, Wallace's translation, p. 45.
16. Nishida Kitarō, *Metaphysics* (1028 b 36 f.), from *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 4:95.
17. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 4:178–181; ibid., vol. 5:360–362.
18. Nishida, ibid., vol. 4:123–124.
19. Ibid., vol. 4:230, 337, 339–340, 347–348, 352; ibid., vol. 5:123ff. Since Hegel distinguishes the abstract Universal (*abstrackte Allgemeinheit*) and concrete Universal (*konkrete Allgemeinheit*), this distinction is not an original creation of Nishida's philosophy. Nevertheless, the notion and problem of place are peculiar to Nishida's thought and derive from this distinction.
20. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 4:178, 229, 274.
21. See note 22.
22. *Categories*, especially 2a 10–13 and 2b 15–17.
23. *Metaphysics* Z, e.g., 1036a 26–29 or 1037a 20-b 8, as well as ch. 17. The *Categories* and the *Metaphysics* differ in a number of respects, especially in that the notion of matter, *hyle*, is prominent in the latter but absent in the former. Due to the introduction of matter, (1) individuals, which counted as substances in the *Categories*, emerge as composite entities (compounds of matter and form) in the *Metaphysics*, and (2) matter is a better candidate for substantiality than are the substances in *Categories*.
24. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 3:372; ibid., vol. 4:123, 124, 190, 193, 339–340.
25. Nishida Kitarō, *The Fundamental Problem of Philosophy*, trans. David A. Dilworth (Tokyo: The Voyager's Press, 1970), pp. 163–172. Also, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 4:54–57, 98, 110–112; ibid., vol. 7:305–321.
26. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 4:136–151, 329, 338; ibid., vol. 12:290–293, 299–302, 310–319, 322–325; ibid., vol. 7:324–332, 390–398.

27. Ibid., vol. 4:350–359, 362, 384–387.
28. Ibid., vol. 5:98–99, 103–110, 125–132, 269–297.
29. Ibid., vol. 4:136–151, 329, 338; ibid., vol. 12:290–293, 299–302, 310–319, 322–325; ibid., vol. 7:324–332, 390–398.
30. Nishida, *The Fundamental Problems of Philosophy*, pp. 163–235. Also, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 7:305–428.
31. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 4:315; ibid., vol. 5:98.
32. Ibid., vol. 4:218, 269; ibid., vol. 5:98.
33. Ibid., vol. 4:314, 319–320.
34. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, 4th ed., trans. W. H. Johnston and L. G. Struthers (New York: Humanities Press Inc., 1966), vol. 2:239ff.
35. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 4:180–188.
36. Nishida uses a running horse as an example of a pure experience leading to judgments ("A horse is running") in *An Inquiry into the Good*, Part I, chapter 2. I employ it as an example of something intuitive that precedes judgment.
37. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, vol. 2:258ff.
38. Hegel, *Phanomenologie des Geistes*, hg. Von Hermann Glockner, *Hegel, Samtliche Werke* 2 (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1955), p. 301.
39. Ibid., p. 525.
40. Hegel, *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1955), p. 105. For a criticism of Hegel from the Buddhist point of view, see Masao Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, ed. William R. LaFleur (London: The Macmillan Press, and Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1985), pp. 18–21, 52–55.
41. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 12:64–84.
42. As for Nishida's view of Hegel, see "*Watashi no tachiba kara mita Hegel no benshōhō*" ("Hegelian Dialectic Seen from My Standpoint").
43. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 4:278, 345.
44. Of course it is possible linguistically to make statements about Absolute Nothingness. In this case, however, predication is of an entirely different nature than predication in statements about that which is "something" (including the Idea or God). In the latter case, the "something" as the grammatical subject is subsumed by a more universal predicate. In the former case, although Absolute Nothingness as the grammatical subject is formally subsumed by the predicate, in reality it is not subsumed by a more universal, more transcendent concept as the predicate. For there can be no more universal and more transcendent concept than Absolute Nothingness. (This is why Absolute Nothingness is the final and transcendent predicate.) Accordingly, when we make statements that "Absolute Nothingness is undefinable" or "the unobjectifiable" are entirely identical and exchangeable because the truly undefinable or the truly unobjectifiable is precisely Absolute Nothingness that is beyond and yet includes both somethingness and nothingness.
45. Masaaki Kosaka, *Nishida Kitarō sensei no shōgai to shisō* (Life and thought of Nishida Kitarō) (Tokyo: Sobunsha, 1971), p. 148. Also *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 4:345.

46. In the text, Jōshū's "Mu" is interpreted as Absolute Nothingness in that a single word "Mu" annihilates the dualistic standpoint of the questioning monk who is still caught up in the distinction between being and nonbeing concerning Buddha Nature. There is, however, another interpretation of Jōshū's "Mu," which is more positive and authentically Zen. In this interpretation, the monk challenges the master with the question "Does a dog have Buddha nature?" in order to test the master's Zen dynamism rather than merely to ask about the Buddha nature in terms of "have . . . or not" from the dualistic point of view. Accordingly, Jōshū's answer, "Mu," does not simply indicate Absolute Nothingness, which is neither being nor nothingness, but rather Absolute Nothingness as the ultimate root-source from which everything in the universe, both positive and negative, emerges. Indeed, his "Mu" is a direct and total presentation of the Buddha nature, which is beyond affirmation and negation, self and other. Thus it may be translated in philosophy as the ultimate reality or as the "place" in which everything can be established as the self-determination of Absolute Nothingness. Like every other key Zen expression, Jōshū's "Mu" represents a double-edged sword, negative and positive.
47. In Nishida's philosophy, an individual can be an individual only in opposition to other individuals. Any individual is impossible without its relationship with others. Further, their relationship is grasped by Nishida not as a static but as a dynamic interaction. There takes place a mutual determination between individuals. This mutual determination between individuals as an aspect of the self-determination of Absolute Nothingness, for each and every individual is a self-determination of Absolute Nothingness and each individual can be an individual only through its mutual determination with other individuals. The existence of each individual (a self-determination of each individual) and mutual determination between individuals are just two aspects of one and the same reality: the self-determination of Absolute Nothingness. Since the world is no less than the total network of mutual determination among all individuals, the fact that the world is the world (the self-determination of the world) is again another aspect of the self-determination of Absolute Nothingness.

Chapter 7: Philosophy, Religion, and Aeshetics in Nishida and Whitehead

1. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 10:118.
2. Ibid., vol. 3:239.
3. F.S.C. Northrop and Mason W. Gross, *Alfred North Whitehead: An Anthropology* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953), p. 598.
4. Ibid., p. 32.
5. Ibid., p. 29.
6. Ibid., p. 348.
7. Ibid., p. 88.
8. Since I have discussed this point in my essay "Mahayana Buddhism and

Whitehead" (included in *Zen and Western Thought*, pp. 154–168), I will not touch upon that issue here any further.

Chapter 8: The Problem of "Inverse Correspondence" in the Philosophy of Nishida

1. Masao Abe, " 'Inverse Correspondence' in the Philosophy of Nishida," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 32 (1992): 325–344.
2. Translator's note: The phrase "dependent origination" translates the Japanese term *"engi,"* which itself is a rendering in Chinese characters of the original Sanskrit *pratitya-samutpada*. The term refers to the Buddhist theory of causality, in which all things are the cause of all other things, there being no metaphysical foundation such as Being itself (as in Greek thought) or Brahman (as Hindu thought). Thus in early Buddhism and Zen, the Buddha is not to be taken as a divine figure or supreme being. The celestial Buddha exists because there is a mind; the mind exists because there is a celestial Buddha.
3. Masao Abe, "The Problem of 'Inverse Correspondence' in the Philosophy of Nishida: Toward a Critical Understanding," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 35 (1995): 433.
4. Translator's note: The Japanese term that Abe uses here, *"hōjinbutsu,"* translates the original Sanskrit term *"sambhogakaya,"* the "reward" or the "enjoyment" body of the Buddha. In order to account for its belief in celestial Buddhas, the Mahayana movement developed the so-called "three bodies" *(trikaya)* theory: the Buddha is understood in terms of sheer emptiness, utterly beyond all predication (the "dharma body") and as an "enjoyment body" in which the dharma body is manifest as a celestial Buddha such as Avalokiteshvara (Guanyin in China, Kannon in Japan) and Amitabha (Amitofo/Amida); the "corresponding body" *(nirmanakaya)*, the third of the three bodies, refers to the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama.
5. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 11:396.
6. Ibid., vol. 11:397.
7. Ibid., vol. 11:396.
8. Ibid., vol. 11:397.
9. Ibid.
10. Abe, "The Problem of 'Inverse Correspondence in the Philosophy of Nishida," p. 434.
11. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 11:398.
12. Ibid.
13. Translator's note: Nishida's use of the phrase *soku-hi [sive-non]* raises the issue of the specifically Mahayana Buddhist character of Nishida's logic of the place of Absolute Nothingness. In Nishida's works, the phrase is often shortened simply to *soku*, as in the formula "affirmation-*soku*-negation." In the present translation, *soku* has generally been rendered with the Latin conjunction *sive*, following Jan van Bragt's approach to the problem in his translation of Keiji Nishitani's *Religion and Nothingness* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982). Building on Nishida, van Bragt notes that,

when placed between two contradictory concepts, as in the formula "affirmation-*soku*-negation," the effect of the term *soku* is to overcome the logical impertinence of the contradiction by returning to the "place" out of which the opposing concepts are realized as such in disclosing their true reality.

14. Translator's note: "Action-intuition" *(koiteki chokkan)* is Nishida's technical term for designating individual subjectivity in relation to Absolute Nothingness. After deconstructing the illusion of the substantial subject by returning subject and object to the place of Absolute Nothingness, the task remained for Nishida to account for the phenomenon of subjectivity as a temporal activity within the world. Subjectivity is an "action" that arises as the concrete self-determination of Absolute Nothingness, not as the self-assertion of an autonomous will. In this regard, the notion of action-intuition reverses Descartes's turn to the ego as the starting point for philosophy. Instead of an indubitable *res cogitans* dualistically confronting *res extensa*, Absolute Nothingness determines itself concretely in the form of a temporal intuition of the world as a particular state of affairs.
15. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 19:366.
16. Translator's note: Daitō Kokushi (1282–1338), or "National Teacher Daitō," was a founder of the O-tō-kan, one of the most important lineages within the Rinzai Zen sect in Japan.
17. Nishida, *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*, vol. 11:442.
18. Ibid., vol. 11:404.
19. Ibid., vol. 11: 435.

Chapter 10: Toward the Establishment of a Cosmology of Awakening

1. Translator's note: The expressions "not one and not two" *(fu-ichi fu-ni)* and "not the same and not different" *(fu-soku fu-ri)* are technical terms taken from Mahayana Buddhist tradition. Both expressions are related to the Mahayana logic on nonduality whose roots go back before Nagarjuna in India and continue in the development of Mahayana thought in China and eventually Japan. Here, Masao Abe's goal is to rule out either a simple unity (which suggests monism) or sheer difference (which suggests duality).
2. Translator's note: The Japanese word translated by the phrase "self-abandoning" is *datsu-ji*, a highly unusual term in the Japanese language. Although uncommon, the term as here used by Masao Abe is rich in religious and historical connotation. Literally, *datsu-ji* may by translated into English as "omitting, leaving out, or escaping the self," which suggest "ecstasis" as a possible candidate for translation. The term also suggests "removing the self," as clothes are removed or "slipped off." The meaning of the verb *nugu*, based on that same Chinese character for *datsu*, is captured nicely by the notion of slipping out of one's clothes. Thus *datsu-ji* suggests casting off of the self, in the sense of shedding or leaving behind or escaping that which subsumes or covers. *Datsu* also can be translated as "omit" or "rise above." In this case, *datsu-ji* bears some resemblance to the

notion of Ohneselbst in German mysticism. Masao Abe's use of *datsu-ji* is clearly reminiscent of the term *shinjin datsuraku*, which appears in the *Shōbōgenzō* of Dōgen (1200–1253), one of Japan's greatest Zen teachers. *Shinjin datsuraku*, the term Dōgen uses to describe Zen enlightenment, has been translated variously as the sluffing off, the shedding or even the "molting" of body and mind. In employing the term *datsu-ji*, Masao Abe has Dōgen in mind. In a conversation with the translator, Masao Abe also related this term to Martin Heidegger's notion of Ereignis, which is often translated into English as "event" or "happening."

3. Nagarjuna is a second-century Indian logician and one of the seminal thinkers in Mahayana Buddhist thought. In his most famous work, the *Mulamadhyamahakarikas*, he demonstrates logically the inconsistency of all viewpoints *(drsti)*, not out of a nihilistic desire to assert absurdity but rather to deconstruct our obsession with viewpoints and thus to gain release from the misery *(dukkha)* that accompanies our tendency to cling to viewpoints. The nonsubstantiality of all viewpoints is what Nagarjuna (and Mahayana Buddhism more generally) calls "emptiness" *(sunyata)*.

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About the Author

Masao Abe's first book published in English, *Zen and Western Thought* (1985, ed. William R. LaFleur), is a collection of essays on comparative philosophy of religion. This highly acclaimed volume won a major book award from the American Academy of Religion and has remained a mainstay of reading lists in studies of Zen Buddhism and its relation to the Western intellectual tradition culminating in existentialism and phenomenology. Since that time, there have been two sequels, *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue* (1995) and *Zen and Comparative Studies* (1997), both edited by Steven Heine.

About the Editor

Steven Heine is professor of religious studies and history and director of the Institute for Asian Studies at Florida International University. Heine has published numerous books and articles dealing with the life and thought of Dōgen and the history and philosophy of Zen Buddhism, including *Dōgen and the Kōan Tradition: A Tale of Two Shōbōgenzo Texts* (1994); *The Zen Poetry of Dōgen: Verses from the Mountain of Eternal Peace* (1997); *Shifting Shape, Shaping Text: Philosophy and Folklore in the Fox Kōan* (1999); *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism* (2000); and *Opening a Mountain: Kōans of the Zen Masters* (2001).