



Why the Absolute Matters as Idealism like Never Before Nishitani, Hegel's Logic, and Freedom in the Modern World

Nishitani Keiji's work has found itself at the center of intercultural debates over modernity, but what is modernity, such that it, as target of both criticism and aspiration, provides common ground in this dialogue? To investigate this, I relate Nishitani's early thought to a recent controversy over "modern freedom" between Markus Gabriel's New Realism and Robert B. Pippin's Absolute Idealism, which stems from conflicting readings of Hegel's Logic. I aim to show that Nishitani's early reading of Hegel's Logic makes a case for favoring Absolute Idealism. While Hegel's "Idea" has often been understood as an object, Nishitani and Pippin show a way of considering it socio-historically. If the Idea of Absolute Idealism is that subjects are "given" only what they "take," then while Logic might help secure self-awareness of this Idea, the freedom in which this self-awareness is realized historically, has neither its actuality guaranteed, nor its possibilities pre-defined.

KEYWORDS: world philosophy—multiple modernities—modernism—
self-determination—life—autonomy—apperception—science of
logic—ontology—objectivity—subjectivity

John C. Maraldo has proposed that “the very question of the identity of the Kyoto School... opens a range of questions that concern the very meaning and scope of philosophy.”¹ A case could be made that these questions gain particular acuity in the controversial reception of Nishitani Keiji. He was, we are told, a (proto) postmodernist,² but still modern, all too modern³; an uncritical Buddhist⁴ and Protestant-fashioned Buddhistic reformist⁵; a stylistic pioneer,⁶ but also cut from the same cloth as the philosophical intelligentsia caught in their own abstractions.⁷ At some point, we must ask ourselves, What do we expect from this man, the philosopher, Nishitani Keiji?

As Maraldo suggests, answers to this question will hinge on what we expect from philosophy itself, which is demonstrated in one especially potent source of contention in Nishitani’s reception: his method. The simple question—What is Nishitani doing and why?—still lacks a clear answer. Granting even well-informed recognition to Nishitani’s own insistence that his project is philosophical,⁸ how to qualify this project, and whether certain qualifications—such as “Buddhist” or even “Japanese”—undermine this project, are issues remaining in suspense.⁹ Among Nishitani’s defend-

1. MARALDO 2018, 253.

2. DAVIS 2004.

3. HASE 1999.

4. PHILLIPS 1987.

5. SCHARF 1995.

6. HEISIG 2001.

7. UMEHARA 1969.

8. Cf. VAN BRAGT 1992, 29, n. 3; HEISIG 2001, 329.

9. For example, it is said that his project is, while certainly philosophical, also “intrinsically religious” (VAN BRAGT 1982, xxiv), and given the secularizing trends in twentieth-century, es-

ers, his method has become a focal point for dissatisfactions with major trends in philosophy (trends, we should remember, that are not restricted to western Europe and the anglophone world). On the one hand, Nishitani's appearance as a philosopher from a different tradition, one organized by different problems and horizons of discursive plausibility, intensified awareness of the historical blind spots of traditional "analytic" philosophy.¹⁰ On the other hand, and in light of the problem of history and attendant cultural diversity, Nishitani's reception abroad exhibits a striking (which is not to say unprecedented) lack of confidence in just what "philosophy" ought to be.¹¹ Sometimes this has manifested as re-entrenchments, including unconvincing dichotomies of "Christian" and "Buddhist" or "East" and "West,"¹² sometimes as criticisms about how academic philosophy institutionalizes and regulates itself.¹³ Still, even if we can indicate some underlying sense of dissatisfaction with the present state of academic philosophy, since Nishitani has been received in so many ways, one is hard-pressed to do justice to the manifold reasons that philosophers have had for involving themselves with his work, in either polemic or defense. Nevertheless, I propose that we have a concept that seems to get us pretty far in appreciating the complexity of Nishitani the thinker, as well as our complex reactions to his thought. Let us call that concept "modernity."

A recent development will help introduce my proposal. In a message marking the popularly successful Japanese translation of *Why the World Does Not Exist*, Markus Gabriel writes, "Precisely now, after Heidegger and

pecially American, academia (SCHULTZ and HARVEY 2010), there was understandable concern, at least initially, that a reception of his project would not even get off the ground (KING 1982). In fact, Nishitani's work was soon confronted by methodological skepticism even by those broadly sympathetic (PHILLIPS 1987; O'LEARY 1991). That it is not only an exercise in the philosophy of religion, but a "religious philosophy" (UNNO 1989), might drastically qualify the contributions his work could make to understanding collective practices (LIEDERBACH 2018), including religion itself. If anything, they might better serve as plot points on a graph of Buddhist vicissitudes in modern Japan (SCHARF 1995).

10. For an instructive study of these blind spots, see SLUGA 1999.

11. These doubts are brought into great focus in PARKES 1998.

12. Such entrenchments need not wear their hearts on their sleeves, although they sometimes do (BOWERS 1995). More frequently, they emerge out of hopes to avoid or renegotiate them; see CALICHMAN 2014.

13. See DAVIS 2020 and HEISIG 2004.

Derrida, is the time to again build a new bridge between the thinking of Europe and thinking of Japan.”¹⁴ By “after Heidegger and Derrida,” Gabriel is referring to his thesis of New Realism, a philosophical stance on history designating “the era after so-called postmodernity.”¹⁵ Intentional or not, Gabriel’s proposal suggests that the postmodernist support of a prominent connecting route is, if not already abandoned, then in need of disassembly.¹⁶ The bridge metaphor is ubiquitous, but it is worth recalling the work it is supposed to do. One place to start is with an earlier metaphor, Gadamer’s “fusion of horizons,” and consequent worries about the possibility of such fusions between different cultural and linguistic traditions. The question, as Michael Friedman explains, is, “In what sense, however, is the world *with which the alien thinker is engaged* open to our view?”¹⁷ How, in other words, do we even begin the process of horizon fusing? Some kind of orientation seems necessary, say, an ideal of rationality constitutive to any attempt at mutual understanding, an ideal on the basis of which we can charitably interpret the behaviors of “alien thinkers.” Yet, we will want a more robust understanding of this ideal, not to mention what we could mean by “alien thinkers,” if we are not to be merely “guided by our own sense of what is true and what they could reasonably believe.”¹⁸ The bridge metaphor, then, suggests that as we try to connect with one another we also relate to what underlies any such attempt.¹⁹ Accordingly, when, often implicit, claims for or against “modernity” are taken as a common substratum, we find ourselves in all manner of missed connections and consequent frustrations, which play out, not only as we try to find our ways across the bridge to one another, but even as we try to find the onramp on our own banks.²⁰ Where “moder-

14. ASANUMA 2019, 41.

15. WW 1.

16. While prominent (see LIEDERBACH 2019), it is not the only route; for discussion see LIEDERBACH 2017. For a collection of essays on the first wave of the postmodernist reception of Japanese thought, see FU and HEINE 1995, and on the second wave, see DAVIS et al. 2011.

17. FRIEDMAN 2002, 47.

18. LEAR 2008, 4.

19. Grappling with this bedbug of comparative philosophy, Thomas P. Kasulis writes, “Often the lack of cross-cultural agreement is not over this idea or that argument, but over something more holistic” (KASULIS 2002, 7).

20. Such issues come to an illuminating head in PARKES 2015.

nity” plays a foundational role—and does so as target of both criticism and aspiration—it evinces less a ground of general agreement, more an expanse of differential problems. While the metaphor of a bridge has purchase, it misleads if we take our foundations to have already been set. We are still very much in the process of figuring out how to lay stones in the choppy waters that connect and divide us.

Furthermore, if modernity is a problem that connects and divides intercultural exchange, then it does not make sense to restrict the problem to a moment of “Western” culture.²¹ Recently, R. I. Moore has contended that we are now positioned for it “to appear both necessary and possible” to rationally and systematically write world history,²² and C. A. Bayly has begun to make good on that promise by attempting to tell a story of “the birth of the modern world.” In the period that lies roughly between 1780 and 1914:

the societies of the world became more uniform.... At the same time, societies became internally more complex and more stratified. Differences of wealth and power between societies became more glaring. This is the phenomenon which people in many different societies have understood in many different ways as “the modern.”²³

That said, could there be any unified phenomenon behind these different understandings? A classical response has been to point to a unique center of origin, to wit, western and central, perhaps Christian, Europe; however, Eurocentric offerings have become increasingly implausible to even those who believe in some kind of unity to the modern phenomenon. The new institutional and ideological patterns appearing across the globe, S. N. Eisenstadt summarizes:

did not constitute simple continuations in the modern era of the traditions of their respective societies. Such patterns were distinctly modern, though greatly influenced by specific cultural premises, traditions, and historical experiences. All developed distinctly modern dynamics and modes of inter-

21. The discussion in this paragraph is indebted to LIEDERBACH 2016.

22. BAYLY 2004, xix.

23. BAYLY 2004, 12.

pretation, for which the original Western project constituted the crucial (and usually ambivalent) reference point.²⁴

That “modernity” is differentially inflected is the thrust behind the thesis of “multiple modernities,” which raises the question anew. As Eisenstadt recognizes: “In acknowledging a multiplicity of continually evolving modernities, one confronts the problem of just what constitutes the common core of modernity.”²⁵

If Nishitani’s reception is any indication, such a common core is inherently problematic. For his part, Nishitani has consistently held that this can be understood in terms of the historical “self-awareness of human self-sovereignty.”²⁶ We perhaps stand to gain a better appreciation for Nishitani’s ambivalent reactions to modernity, as well as our own reactions in confronting his thought, if we had an account of what makes such an historical “self-awareness” so unsettling, where- and however it is achieved around the globe. To overextend the bridge metaphor somewhat, we could use an account of the waters in which we are building, an account that, presumably, will not make them any less choppy but could at least apprise us of what we are dealing with. The following study aims to contribute to such an account by considering how to understand the problems inherent in the “self-awareness of human self-sovereignty” or freedom as the common core of modernity. Specifically, I intend to develop an approach to treating modernity’s ontological premises.

I carry this out in three sections. The first is dedicated to a recent controversy over “modern freedom” between Markus Gabriel and Robert B. Pippin. Both are prolific and systematic writers, which raises formidable challenges for any charitable evaluation of their claims. My window on the controversy, then, is narrowly framed by their conceptions of a priori freedom, the freedom attributable to human subjects, as such, apropos anything that could be an object for them. Both philosophers have more robust conceptions of political freedom, but their differing accounts of the former

24. EISENSTADT 2000, 2.

25. *Ibid.*, 3.

26. NKC 1:60. “Religion, History, Culture” (1937). See also, NKC 4:442 (“The Foundation of Later Modern Spirit”; 1946).

have implications for how they spell out the latter.²⁷ To get to the problem of freedom as the common core of modernity, I propose, we make a start by considering modernity's ontological premises, which, for these philosophers, would be freedom in its *a priori* sense. With this purview, I refer to their positions as New Realist and Absolute Idealist respectively.²⁸

The second section offers a philosophical introduction to Nishitani's early venture in ontology, "The Going Beyond of What Stands Against" (1925; hereafter "Going Beyond"), and his argument for the "priority of the subject" and "validity of idealism." Although Nishitani's interwar writings have been a catalyst for controversy, and his postwar writings a fount for inspiration, his early work remains almost entirely unexamined.²⁹ Nonetheless, they have great significance as points to connect the present renaissance in German Idealism to the more global reception of the substantive issues tackled by that tradition, including freedom and the ontological premises of modernity. Nishitani's "Going Beyond," then, has both contextualist and philosophical relevance: on the one hand, it shows the philosopher working through the basic problems of modern thought, decades before systematically treating the themes for which he is now better known, including "nihilism" and "emptiness"; on the other, it speaks to the issues central to

27. I welcome Bernard Stevens's suggestion that we "clarify what is meant by the philosophical concept of modernity" (STEVENS 2011, 231), and I agree that it is possible to distinguish different registers in which modernity plays itself out. Yet, Pippin and Gabriel give us good reasons to think that "ontological" modernity cannot be easily excised from "practical-political" modernity (STEVENS 2011, 234). The present examination of *a priori* freedom is meant to bid pause before concluding that "ontological" modernity must be "the age in which the being of beings is deprived of its own essence in order to be submitted to a cognitive and objectifying reason" (STEVENS 2011, 234).

28. Pippin and Gabriel develop their views through novel, and so not uncontroversial, readings of post-Kantian philosophy. We cannot appreciate their work without also engaging that tradition; yet that opens a host of exegetical issues that cannot be responsibly treated in a single study. For the present, I invite the reader to consider the merits of these positions as a possibility for engaging that historical tradition. For readers familiar with that legacy, the following can provide a new window; for those unfamiliar, I hope to motivate engagement (see note 27). Especially to the latter reader, I mention that, despite the differences that I emphasize, Gabriel and Pippin are quite close relative to the overall hermeneutical landscape (see GABRIEL 2019, 7).

29. For interwar controversies, see HEISIG and MARALDO 1994; HAROOTUNIAN 2000, Chp. 2; PARKES 2011. For Nishitani's early anglophone reception, see UNNO 1989. And for exceptions that prove the rule of Nishitani's early writings, see MORI 1997 and 2013, SUGIMURA 2023.

the controversy presented in the opening section. While “Going Beyond” is steeped in the debates of the twenties, the introduction provided will focus less on the interlocutors that Nishitani explicitly addresses, instead trying to demonstrate the philosophical significance of his arguments for today. The task is to gain some appreciation for the reasons that Nishitani gives for preferring Absolute Idealism over proposals like Gabriel’s New Realism.

The third section concludes the study by addressing the link between the two senses of freedom, a priori freedom (modernity’s ontological premise) and freedom as common core (its historical “self-awareness” and realization). I propose that Absolute Idealism could help us better understand “modernity” by helping us understand why the modern world is so problematic and, by the same token, why it may very well be that the Absolute matters as Idealism as never before.

THE LOGIC OF FREEDOM, A CONTROVERSY

This section begins to spell out the New Realist and Absolute Idealist conceptions of a priori freedom in the works of Gabriel and Pippin. The root of this controversy, as Gabriel identifies,³⁰ is their conflicting interpretations of Hegel’s “Logic.”³¹ While, when viewed at a high enough altitude, the two agree on the purposes and results of the Logic, differences emerge in their conceptions of how these are carried out and achieved. In the following section, we will return to that issue, but to contextualize their proposals, we begin with a rough introduction to the ground held in common.

The present section has three parts. The first introduces Hegel’s Logic as shared by the two positions. The second turns to Gabriel’s New Realism, introducing this conception of a priori freedom by presenting the elements of the “fields of sense ontology” on which it is based. The third turns to Pippin’s Absolute Idealist claim that a priori freedom comprises an absolute self-relation.

30. GABRIEL 2019.

31. Hegel wrote (at least) two versions of his Logic, the earlier *Science of Logic*, known as the Greater Logic, and *Part I of the Encyclopedia of Philosophical Science*, known as the Minor Logic. For a judicious introduction, see DI GIOVANNI 2010. Although the differences between the two are crucial for understanding Hegel’s development and systematic aspirations, for present purposes we can treat the two together.

Overcoming the fear of the object in the realm of shadows

With some qualification, we can say that both New Realism and Absolute Idealism inherit the legacy of Descartes by attempting to get ahead of skepticism before it becomes unconditional.³² Likewise, both reject the post-Cartesian empiricist and rationalist options,³³ which opens the door for engagement with post-Kantian philosophy. What puts the “post” in “post-Kantian” is a dissatisfaction with Kantian restrictions on human knowing, a dissatisfaction voiced by Hegel in the quote that Pippin uses to begin his study of the Logic:

Critical philosophy did indeed already turn *metaphysics* into *logic* but, like the subsequent idealism, it gave to the logical determinations an essentially subjective significance out of fear of the object.³⁴

To “fear” the object is to restrict the use of concepts to the sorts of things that could appear for our (“essentially subjective”) way of making sense, limited, as it is, by our forms of sensibility. This limitation provides a crack that serves as a foothold for unconditional skepticism. Hegel’s Logic, then, is to close this gap by showing us that we have no reason to fear the object. Conceptuality is “unbounded,” to use McDowell’s well-known phrase.³⁵

If that is the shared goal, then it is not surprising that the New Realist and Absolute Idealist readings arrive at a similar result. Although Hegel’s Logic dissolves our fear of the object, it remains, at its conclusion, a “realm of shadows.”³⁶ As Gabriel puts it, “Logic is just one part of the system, namely, the part dealing with pure thinking.”³⁷ Minimally stated, the Logic ensures that anything that can be known—including things that are not “thoughts,” such as nature and political institutions—is conceptually known, in the sense that the concepts we use to know things must respond to general con-

32. See GABRIEL 2011, Chp. 1; and PIPPIN 1989, Chp. 5. One important qualification is that the skeptical method is not Cartesian, but like in Descartes, a positive value is attributed to ancient skeptical arguments.

33. See HRS Chp. 1; WW Chp. 1.

34. HEGEL 2010, 30; cited in HRS 3.

35. See MCDOWELL 2000, 440; GABRIEL 2019, 14; and HRS 34n57.

36. This is a point that Pippin found important enough to emphasize that he made it the title of his study (HRS). See also GABRIEL 2019, 10.

37. GABRIEL 2019, 14.

siderations about using concepts at all. Coming to terms with these general considerations is not the same as knowing nature or political institutions. The Logic only concerns such general considerations *per se* and is, therefore, the “realm of shadows.”³⁸

The above has intentional ambiguities meant to capture some common ground between the two readings. In the next two parts of this section, then, let us consider how Hegel’s Logic comes to bear on each conception of a priori freedom.

New Realism and fields of sense ontology

Through the window framed by a priori freedom—the freedom that human beings, as such, have with respect to anything that could be an object for them—let us next examine the elements of Gabriel’s New Realism.

In New Realism, ontology is the systematic treatment of the “concepts we analyze,” a treatment, furthermore, bound by the Realist demand to “remain in contact with our experience of reality.”³⁹ The relationship between human beings and objects is to be parsed in terms of the elements that satisfy such an ontology, which, according to the New Realist proposal, are “objects,” “senses,” and “fields of sense.” The ontology composed of these elements is “fields of sense ontology.”

To explore the elements of this ontology, let us begin with Gabriel’s entreaty that, “We live together in infinitely many fields of sense which we are always rendering intelligible in new ways. What more could we want?”⁴⁰ That we render intelligible the fields of sense in which we live together means that we have “senses” that serve as ways into reality in virtue of being capacities for getting things right or wrong.⁴¹ To have, say, a “sense” for art is to have a capacity for rendering artworks intelligible in the field of “art,” the field of sense in which artworks exist *qua* artworks (and not *qua* clusters of particles, which appear in a different field of sense). This rendering intelligible can get it wrong because the field of sense in which artworks appear has “meaning,” a structure on the basis of which we can judge interpretations

38. HEGEL 2010, 37.

39. WW 51.

40. WW 208.

41. WW 217.

of artworks to be better or worse. Moreover, fields of sense are themselves open to interpretation. We interpret, not only artworks and art interpretations, but also what it means to interpret art at all (the meaning of its field of sense).

Fields of sense are what insulate knowledge against unconditional skepticism. An artwork only appears in a determinate field of sense, so it is misguided to claim that our engagements with art are wrong in principle. The very appearance of an artwork depends on prior criteria for making sense of it. More broadly, nothing can appear independently of “sense” and “meaning,” the possibility of making better or worse sense of the thing on the basis of its field of sense. Since our ways into reality can only be wrong in a qualified way, unconditional “skepticism is unwarranted on all fronts.”⁴²

New Realism defines objects in two ways. First, they “are those things about which we can reflect with thoughts that are apt to be true.”⁴³ Objectivity is thus defined in terms of possible discursive judgments that can be true or false (or better or worse). This definition establishes an a priori connection to the possibility of human sense-making, and, for New Realism, one way to establish this a priori connection is through Hegel’s Logic.⁴⁴ Yet, “sense” is not exhausted by the sense that humans actually make, and, therefore, objectivity is not exhausted by objects humans have made sense of. Artworks are special kinds of objects, objects that only exist for human subjects, and these are not the only kinds of objects that exist.⁴⁵

So, the second way that New Realism defines objects is in terms of “existence” or “appearing” in a field of sense. “Existence” as “appearance” has various modes, of which actual human sense-making is not exhaustive. Most generally, an object appears by setting “itself apart from other objects by virtue of its properties.”⁴⁶ For example, when we say that a whale is a fish, we have not drawn on the correct properties necessary to divide “real mereological sums.”⁴⁷ We make our divisions in light of properties, which are

42. GABRIEL 2019, 9.

43. WW 53.

44. GABRIEL 2019, 8.

45. WW 70.

46. WW 55.

47. WW 59.

themselves objects, since we can reflect on them and make judgments about them. Both fish and whales have oxygen extracting organs, but, through proper analysis and sufficient experience with these objects, we can distinguish the whale's oxygen extractors as lungs and the fish's as gills. Gabriel's Realist point, however, is that whatever mereological sum we happen to put whales into, and whether or not we put them into a mereological sum at all, whales exist.

Let us next examine how these ontological elements form the basis for the New Realist conception of a priori freedom. On this conception, "the point of human freedom lies in our capacity to move forwards and backwards."⁴⁸ More generally, a priori freedom is the capacity to go beyond any sense that has been made or any sense capacity that we have attributed to ourselves. By way of summary, Gabriel writes, "We may also come to see that everything can be otherwise than the way it appears to us, simply because everything that exists appears simultaneously in infinitely many fields of sense. Nothing is simply the way that we perceive it to be but, rather, is infinitely more—a comforting thought."⁴⁹ Our actual experience of reality can be infinitely otherwise, because existence is not coextensive with our actual experience of reality.

In New Realism, the rejection of this coextension is achieved through the argument that the world does not exist. First, the world is defined as the field of sense in which all fields of sense appear. To exist is to appear in a field of sense. If the world exists, then it must exist in a field of sense. Accordingly, the world either exists in itself (which violates the law of non-contradiction), or the world is not the world, because it exists in a more comprehensive field (which violates the law of identity). Therefore, the world does not exist.⁵⁰

From this conclusion, we can derive the basis for a priori freedom. If our actual experience of reality were coextensive with existence, then our actual experience of reality would be the field of sense in which all fields of sense appear. Since that is what the world would be, our actual experience of real-

48. WW 167. Schelling, in his *Freiheitsschrift*, famously states that "the real and vital concept is that freedom is the capacity for good and evil" (SCHELLING 2006, 23). Gabriel's Schellingian way of putting the "point of human freedom" is no accident (see GABRIEL 2011, Chp. 2; and GABRIEL 2020). On the broader significance of this reference, see note 60.

49. WW 219.

50. See WW Chp. 3.

ity would be the world. Yet, because the world does not exist, our actual experience of reality cannot be the world. Therefore, existence is not coextensive with our actual experience of reality. Furthermore, since there is no field of sense in which all fields of sense appear, fields of sense are, in principle, infinite. Therefore, our actual experience of reality can be infinitely otherwise. And since our actual experience of reality is in virtue of the triad relationship between sense, object, and fields of sense, we can, in principle (which is to say, a priori), go beyond any sense that has actually been made or any sense capacity that we have attributed to ourselves.

How to actualize this freedom is another story, but the above suffices as an account of a priori freedom. Human subjects have the infinite capacity to relate otherwise to any object.

Absolute Idealism and pure thinking

For Gabriel, the fruits of the Logic should be limited to securing New Realist systematic ontology. If we are to refer to the result as “absolute,” then it is so only in virtue of its a priori guarantee of the relationship between any possible object and possible truth-apt judgments. In the Absolute Idealist reading, by contrast, this might capture the negative significance of the absolute (what we know is *not* merely relative to our ways of knowing), but a positive significance is to be found in a species of self-relating: the absolute self-relating that is the Absolute Idealist conception of a priori freedom.⁵¹

This self-relation is a species of the genus *life*, of which there are three relevant moments. First is organic inner purposiveness.⁵² An eye is an eye when it is alive and actualizing its inner purpose of seeing. That the eye has an inner purpose does not mean that the eye *intends* to see.⁵³ Rather, to say that the eye has inner purposiveness is to say that it is related to itself (its own purpose) in its work or actualization. Second, the relation between inner purposiveness and outer actualization is evaluative, that is, based on “ontological truth.”⁵⁴ When we say that one has poor sight, this is because one’s

51. For Pippin, the Logic also plays a role for the more robust, political conception of freedom (cf. HRS 20–30). Although this point is indispensable for spelling out this conception of freedom, due to space, and at the expense of some distortion, I do not explicitly attend to it here.

52. HRS 275.

53. HRS 259–60.

54. HRS 95–6, 254, 277.

eyes do not live up to their potential (the eye is not being a “true” eye). The third moment, then, clarifies why poorly seeing eyes do not fail to be eyes altogether. Finite living things reproduce themselves through their work in accord with their inner purposiveness. Insofar as they reproductively sustain themselves—the unity between their whole and their parts that is necessary to actualize what they are—they are alive.⁵⁵ Any eye, however near it is to perfection or however close it is to death, is, in this sense, “both identical with itself, is what it is, and not identical with itself, is not what it is, ...it exists in a kind of contradiction.”⁵⁶ To exist in this *self*-contradiction is for the eye to reproduce its own identity through its work.

Most forms of life are conditioned by things that are not that form of life. As a fish tries to actualize what is good for a fish life, it might be eaten by a predator. To be a finite living thing (and this includes individual human beings) is to be susceptible to falling short of one’s potential because of such contingency. Yet, the specific difference, so to speak, of absolute self-relating is that this species of life only falls short of its potential on its own terms. That absolute self-relation is *thinking*, and, insofar as it is absolute, its truth is, not only “ontological,” but “speculative.”⁵⁷

In Absolute Idealism, if we are at all to get a handle on the point of modern freedom, we need to take a cue from, and ultimately solve, the Kantian puzzle that:

The will is thus not merely subject to the law but is subject to the law in such a way that it must be regarded also as legislating for itself and only on this account as being subject to the law (of which it can regard itself as the author).⁵⁸

Hegel’s *Logic* is read as an attempt to crack this riddle at the highest level of generality—to, in other words, determine speculative truth by showing what is entailed by “the pure self-determination of thought by thought (which is thereby autonomous, wholly self-determining).”⁵⁹ The logical freedom in the self-determining activity worked out in Hegel’s *Logic* is a

55. HRS 294–5, 301.

56. HRS 96.

57. HRS 50, n. 27.

58. Cited in PIPPIN 2008, 70. See KANT 1999, 81.

59. HRS 19.

necessary condition for the possibility of autonomy in any sense-making, be it in sensuous perception, discursive judgment, or political praxis, because all sense-making is, in its own way, a thinking sense-making. If sense-making cannot make sense of itself, then sense-making *per se* would lack an actualizable inner purposiveness, a potential it could live up to, and an identity sustainable over time. Which is to say, the lives of human subjects would not be sense-making lives, but lives at the mercy of “sense” in the same way that fish are at the mercy of their predators.⁶⁰

Unlike the ontological truth within the work of finite lives, the speculative truth of thinking lies in that it is not conditioned as thinking by anything that is not thinking. Still, the activity of thinking, just like other living activities, has an inner purposiveness whose actualization is not exhausted by any external purposes. As a matter of historical fact, Hegel, the finite human being, suddenly died before completing his intended revisions to the *Logic*.⁶¹ Yet, while the contingent circumstances of his death conditioned his individual intentions, they were not conditions on thinking *per se*.

Still, insofar as even pure thinking is an actualization of self-determining autonomy, it is practical in a qualified sense. Fish live with their contradictions by staying alive, sustaining themselves between perfection and death. Pure thinking lives with its contradictions by attributing to them *practical necessity*. When a finite thought about something fails to be about that something, the thought contradicts itself. This is the same kind of practical contradiction evinced, at a more complex level, when a self-avowed anti-capitalist takes his BMW to his villa to change out of his Brioni suit.⁶² A contradiction lies between what he thinks about himself in his spoken avowals and in his deeds. In the case of finite practical life, we might recognize this

60. This sets the stage for Pippin’s dissatisfaction with Heidegger, for if “to think historically” refers to the sheer contingency of *Ereignis*, then the living baby of sense is thrown out with the cold bathwater of onto-theology. For an entry into these issues, see Pippin’s reading of Heidegger’s reading of Schelling (PIPPIN 1997, Chp. 16). Although somewhat sweeping, one way to understand the dispute between the New Realist and Absolute Idealist conceptions of a priori freedom is as over how to respond to Heidegger. I thank Hans Peter Liederbach for discussion on this issue.

61. See DI GIOVANNI 2010, xiii-xiv.

62. PIPPIN 2008, 80.

contradiction by recognizing it as a reason for changing how we think about ourselves, in either speech or deed.

Pure thinking does this by changing what it thinks it is purely about, reproducing itself by determining its own possibilities. Put very roughly, Logic is pure thinking recognizing its failures to think what it thinks it is purely about (its object) and thereby producing a “pure self-determination.” As it changes what it thinks it is purely about, pure thinking finally does, so the Absolute Idealist story goes, think what it thinks it is purely about. What pure thinking is about is thinking, the productive life of thought.⁶³ Yet, this does not mean that *thinking* is only ever about thinking (or “thoughts”). As Pippin puts the general point,

Thinking is its own “object” only in the sense of what pure thinking is about—the activity of thinking necessary for it to be thinking, and necessary for it to be a thinking of (in the sense of knowing) objects.⁶⁴

To summarize how the three moments of life are inflected in pure thinking: first, thinking is alive when actualizing its inner purpose of thinking of objects; but, second, the speculative truth of thinking of objects is the self-determination of what is necessary to think about objects; and, third, since self-determination is absolute, any condition on thought is one that thought itself has produced.

Which brings us to the Absolute Idealist claim:

thinking considered purely is a productive power, and nothing can check or constrain its productions other than itself.... Anything of any kind that might count as a constraint is so only if taken by pure thinking to constrain it.⁶⁵

On the Absolute Idealist account of a priori freedom, human subjects as such are, in their relation to anything that could be an object for them, constrained only by what they take to be a constraint.

63. HRS 191, 200.

64. HRS 10.

65. HRS 201.

NISHITANI ON OBJECTIVITY

We now turn to Nishitani's early essay, "The Going Beyond of What Stands Against" (the title is more easily rendered in German, for instance, as *Die Transzendenz, or Überschreitung, des Gegenstands*). This section has two parts. The first engages the early Nishitani's reception of post-Kantian philosophy in order to diagnose a contradiction in the New Realist approach. The second presents some of Nishitani's philosophical landmarks, which offer a way to recontextualize fields of sense ontology. My contextualist claim is that, at least in 1925, Nishitani gave Logic a central place in establishing the "validity of idealism." Through engagement with the New Realist standpoint, I will try to motivate Nishitani's thesis philosophically.

Losing oneself in infinity

Nishitani's issue here is the relationship that we have to what stands against us (the *Gegenstand*) by apparently going beyond us (its putative *Überschreitung*). His aim is the "true object" (*Objekt*), that is, the meaning of objectivity. Nishitani's investigation is thereby ontological and tries to clarify the sorts of issues addressed by New Realism. To defend my contextualist and philosophical claims, I develop two points in Nishitani's critique of Fichte by motivating it in light of fields of sense ontology.

The first point concerns what Nishitani means by saying that, on his reading of Fichte, there remains a "gap" between "finite" "real development" (our knowledge of the object) and "infinite" "ideal development" (the object's objectivity).⁶⁶ Recall that in fields of sense ontology, existence is not coextensive with our actual experience of reality. While existence has an a priori connection to our possible experience of reality (we can come to know anything that is), existence has no a priori connection to our actual experience of reality (there is more than we could ever know). Since an object is a mereological sum of properties, we never know the sum of the object (see WW 55). But if we do not know the sum of the object, then it seems that we do not know whether our actual divisions correspond with real mereological sums. New Realism counters the encroaching skepticism by appeal to fields of sense, for it is only in terms of them that we can be right or wrong.

66. NKC 2: 101.

Still, if the object is more than we know it to be, then our judgments about the object are only about the object insofar as we know it presently and not as it exists. Actual knowledge of the object seems to be but knowledge of the way that the object exists for human beings at the present moment in the infinite development of knowing. This is an example of what Nishitani calls “finite infinity,”⁶⁷ “finite” because of the gap between our present knowledge of the object and the way that the object exists, and “infinite” because the gap remains throughout the infinite development of our present knowledge.

The second point concerns Nishitani’s claim that Fichte tries to address this gap by appeal to an “end” wherein “the whole is partially contained,” and yet this strategy leads to a contradiction when we consider how knowledge changes.⁶⁸ New Realism introduces such an “end” by appealing to rigid designators.⁶⁹ Say we have rigidly designated a thing with the name “whale.” Knowing what a whale is becomes the end of our knowing, and the “logical identity”⁷⁰ of “whale” establishes it as a whole, however partial our present knowledge. As our experiences with whales are increasing and as these experiences are being reflectively organized, our knowledge of whales is getting better. Yet, since we change our *sense* of the object *infinitely* as we try to know the object, our changing knowledge of the object is a knowledge approaching zero. So, referencing Plato’s *Parmenides*, Nishitani makes the point that, just as the “unity” is getting older than itself as it is getting younger than itself, our knowledge is getting better than itself as it gets worse than itself.⁷¹

This, in fact, is conceded in New Realism as the always present danger of losing oneself in infinity.⁷² For Nishitani, Fichte provides an insight that could help us avoid this danger, one that establishes a link between Kant’s and Hegel’s Logics. We will examine that link in the next subsection. For the moment, let us motivate his move by considering a logical problem that New Realism now faces: Where does the “logical identity” of the rigidly designated object come from? On the New Realist reading of Hegel’s Logic,

67. NKC 2: 101.

68. NKC 2: 102

69. WW 112–13

70. WW 114

71. NKC 2: 102–3

72. WW 173.

dissolving our fear of the object means that we can define objects as “those things about which we can reflect with thoughts that are apt to be true,” which means that we can use concepts and are licensed to draw on considerations of their use. This would include the law of identity, the application of which enables rigid designation. Recall that this law was crucial for the a priori argument that the world does not exist. Yet, if every object is identical with itself, then the world does exist as the comprehensive field of self-identity. At the same time, if the world exists, then it must exist within a field of sense, which violates the law of identity. If objects exist, then we violate this law. Therefore, for the same reason that the world does not exist, neither would objects.

Finding oneself in the realm of shadows

Gabriel writes, “When we come upon a claim that cannot be brought into accord with any of our experiences in any way, we must have committed a mistake, for we want to explain what it means for something to exist.”⁷³ Nishitani indicates some landmarks that help us see where we might have started to lose ourselves and where we need to go. Let us call it the Kant-to-Hegel-via-Fichte route. Recall our first New Realist step: ontology is the systematic treatment of concepts that remains in contact with our experience of reality (§1.2). Nishitani states this as follows: “A true system is true not only in virtue of the systematic interrelation between concepts..., but because, at the same time, ...it can always be applied to the real world.”⁷⁴ This is a way to understand the gist of Kant’s Transcendental Logic, the Logic that deals with concepts “solely in so far as they relate a priori to objects,” objects, that is, of possible experience.⁷⁵ Still, while New Realism is willing to define objects in terms of *possible* experience (things about which we *can* reflect with thoughts that are apt to be true), Nishitani is not:

Kant’s supreme principle, that “the conditions for the possibility of experience” are “the conditions for the possibility of the objects of [of what stands against] experience” is the landmark of his monumental achievement. Still,

73. WW 51

74. NKC 2: 120.

75. TILES 2004, 102. On the connection between Nishitani’s “true system” claim and Kant’s Transcendental Logic, compare NKC 2: 120 with KANT 1998, 254; B147.

is it not possible to say that its shortcomings are also manifest? On the one hand, this expresses the imperishability of Kant's transcendental idealism, which lets the I into the ground of what stands against; on the other hand, it remains only related to possibility.⁷⁶

This commitment has implications for how Nishitani addresses the law of identity problem encountered above, as well as how we could situate New Realism vis-à-vis Kant's Transcendental Logic, the achievement that "lets the I into the ground of what stands against." The above passage states the conclusion, we are supposed to reach after walking the Kant-to-Hegel-via-Fichte route. Here is how Nishitani sketches the landmarks:

As Fichte says, $A=A$ is $Ich=Ich$. A is comprised by the self-identity of $A=A$. Yet, $A=A$ is not A 's doing. A cannot work; it cannot return to itself. That is the work of the I. A returns to itself by riding, so to speak, on the I's work. Thus, even the oneness of A is comprised on the basis of the oneness of the I.... The I reaches the empirical world from [NB:] the a priori world of shadows. It goes out into the actual world from the possible world (the a priori world of the "conditions for the possibility of experience").⁷⁷

For Nishitani, both Kant's and Hegel's Logics treat the "a priori world of shadows." Fichte's intervention is to remind us that what we encounter in the world of shadows, what Nishitani calls "pure apperception" (not in the Kantian sense, but as inflected through Fichte and, eventually, Hegel) is the I itself, so "the I in pure apperception is the philosophized I."⁷⁸ Hegel is thus read in continuity with Kant's "monumental achievement," and bringing these points together, Nishitani says, "Cognition," namely, knowledge of objects, "is comprised by entering into what stands against [Kant's contribution], by finding oneself in the world of shadows [Hegel's contribution]."⁷⁹ By finding oneself in the world of shadows (establishing $Ich=Ich$), the law of identity enters into the "ground" of what stands against, into objectivity as such. So, as Fichte suggests, A returns to itself ($A=A$) by riding on the I's work.

But even if we discern the landmarks along the Kant-to-Hegel-via-Fichte route, how do we avoid the contradiction involved in the existence

76. NKC 2: 111.

77. NKC 2: 111.

78. NKC 2: 120.

79. NKC 2: 115.

of self-identical objects? Nishitani here offers a foothold necessary for our traversal. In New Realism, everything that exists are objects. Concepts are “entities”⁸⁰ and so too the “senses” that serve as our ways into reality. Granting that “senses” are objects when they are *in* a field of sense, what are “senses” when they *sensing*? To answer such a question, Nishitani distinguishes between “static” and “dynamic Ideas.” When we justify ourselves through explicit inferences, an analyzable argument with analyzable parts seems to appear like any other object (the “static Ideas”). Yet, actual thinking requires the unification of these parts as moments of a whole, and, taken dynamically, neither the whole nor its parts are simply objects but “acts.” Nishitani explains that a dynamic Idea is “the power to unify the moments that appear in its own division.”⁸¹ Going further, such acts are only intelligible in terms of the “act of acts,” that by which “all lived experiences become a single stream.”⁸² This act of acts, as what unifies experience, is what allows reflection on acts as objects in the first place and, with respect to the object, “clearly indicates the priority of the subject and testifies to the validity of idealism.”⁸³

Nishitani closes his essay with a play on Hegel and Nietzsche.⁸⁴ The Hegelian motifs bookending his conclusion serve to respond (*avant la lettre*, as it were) to the New Realist contradiction, but the Nietzschean twist suggests that we now find ourselves in a new realm of problems.

When the subject, by enfolding all, in turn, lets all go, when the subject becomes immediate and transparent, the true object [*Objekt*] emerges. When the I breaks through the bounds of the I within the inner reaches of the I, when the I “jumps over its own shadow” and forgets even itself, the brightly shining world of actuality appears.⁸⁵

We can agree that the world does not exist in a field of sense. Nevertheless, ontological unity—objectivity as such, and not the ontic aggregate of

80. GABRIEL 2019, 16.

81. NKC 2: 117.

82. NKC 2: 119.

83. NKC 2: 121.

84. Eckhart is there too; cf. NKC 2: 101.

85. NKC 2: 122. Nishitani’s citation is *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, “On the Sublime Ones” (NIETZSCHE 2006, 91).

everything that is the case—is enfolded by “the work of the I.” Accepting the “priority of the subject” and the “validity of idealism” through the Kant-to-Hegel-via-Fichte route indicates a way for the world to “appear” or “shine” (*erscheinen*), even if it does not, strictly speaking, “exist.” What, then, are we to make of this world?

THE WORLD THAT CONNECTS AND DIVIDES

To conclude this study, I bring Nishitani back to the modernity problem. To do so, we will first need to clarify how Nishitani was thinking about the relationship between the realm of shadows and the actual world. The upshot, I contend, is that this relationship links modernity’s ontological premise (a priori freedom) with the common core that is inflected in historical actuality. This link, in turn, seems to entail something like Pippin’s Absolute Idealism and the absolute self-relation that both the early Nishitani and Pippin call “apperception.”

Nishitani characterizes the results of the realm of shadows as follows:

The universal of universals (the standpoint of philosophical thinking) can be thought of as the reflective side of the act of acts. The I in pure apperception is the philosophized I; all the same, it is the I that faces what stands against. Only when the I takes one step outside and returns to itself does the I make contact with actual reality, and the departure point for philosophy is given; along with this and on the other side, the I becomes completely free, and philosophizing becomes possible.⁸⁶

Finding oneself in the realm of shadows entails “jumping over” this shadow and returning to oneself outside of that realm. The issue, then, is how the I relates to these two realms. The “act of acts” relates to itself (on its “reflective side”) and, “all the same,” faces what is not itself, the not-I.⁸⁷ As two “sides” of the same “act,” these should not be taken serially, even if finding oneself in the realm of shadows (the “reflective side”) establishes with logical priority that these are two sides, that “pure apperception” is always related to what stands against as that which “lets the I into the grounds” of the latter. But this raises the next set of complications, for how is the I

86. NKC 2: 122.

87. NKC 2: 121.

related to itself as it relates to the not-I, and why is this characterized as a “jump over” meant to “return to” oneself?

Consider Nishitani’s remark that “the departure point for philosophy” is “given,” and that “the other side” of this is complete freedom. On the Absolute Idealist account, human subjects as such are constrained only by what they *take* to be a constraint, a “taking” that Pippin calls “apperception.” A priori freedom, then, is the exercise of apperceptive taking in relation to any object. In the interpreter’s good luck, Nishitani speaks to precisely this issue. After claiming that the act of acts (“apperception”) “clearly indicates the priority of the subject and testifies to the validity of idealism,” Nishitani continues: “The not-I is nothing.”⁸⁸ He then picks up this “nothing” in an article from the following year, “Kant’s Aesthetic Ideas” (1926), where he writes, “Without ‘that which is to us nothing,’ there would be no actual experience in which what stands against opposes us, and, therefore, philosophy itself, as the reflection on this, would be impossible.”⁸⁹ On the Absolute Idealist account, what stands against both is “nothing” and “opposes us” because *we take it* to stand against (“constrain”) us. Nishitani appears to concur: “The I for which the ‘immediately given’ is immediate and the I that *takes* this as given are different standpoints but the same I.”⁹⁰ Indeed, he refers to this compound as a kind of “apperception.”⁹¹ For Nishitani and Pippin, human subjects are apperceptive all the way down. The “given” is “nothing” because, for it to be given at all, it must be apperceptively taken by a subject.⁹²

Finding oneself in the realm of shadows, one knows this, but that is only the beginning of a new problem. As Nishitani puts it: “the Idea”—namely, the absolute self-relation of apperception—“is no longer bound to progress toward some end... but can *freely* unfold a development of *its own*.... Where vertical continuity [pure apperception] terminates, horizontal continuity [apperceiving the actual world] opens out.”⁹³ While such a free, all-enfolding-self-unfolding movement has had a long history of being understood

88. NKC 2: 121.

89. NKC 2: 143.

90. NKC 2: 147.

91. NKC 2: 145.

92. *Ibid.*

93. NKC 2: 120–1; emphasis added.

as itself an object, Nishitani and Pippin provide language to begin taking it in a practical (and ultimately socio-historical) direction. This account, I am proposing, could help us begin concretely engaging with the problems inherent in the “self-awareness of human self-sovereignty” or freedom as the common core of the modern phenomenon.

Above, we have seen that in order to make sense of how we make sense, whatever our cultural background, we will need a Logical account of “sense” that does not reduce it to an “object” or “entity” (§2.2). By extension, to make sense of how we moderns make sense of “the modern,” or what it is to actually be “free” in the modern world, we will first need to make some Logical sense of ourselves, call it “pure apperception” or “pure thinking.” In other words, logically prior to the Realist demand that we “remain in contact with our experience of reality” is the Idealist demand that we remain in contact with ourselves. If so, then the ontological premise of modernity, or a priori freedom, might be better understood as the “Idea” of Absolute Idealism, that human subjects are “given” only what they “take.” With a Logical account of this Idea, we can start to grapple with the still very obscure suggestion that, historically speaking, the Idea is “not bound to progress toward some end,”⁹⁴ can be, in this sense, “endless,”⁹⁵ or, as Gabriel contends, endlessly otherwise. Finding ourselves in the realm of shadows might secure *self-awareness* of a priori freedom, but the freedom at the heart of the modern world, the freedom in which this self-awareness is historically realized, has neither its actuality guaranteed, nor its possibilities predefined. Logic is no historical assurance; likewise, however much western institutions are taken as reference points, they are always (a priori) *taken* as reference points and never simply given as fixed molds. “The modern,” actual freedom, itself develops as we freely (in the logical sense) “take” a “leap” and determine ourselves toward, and seek to return to ourselves in, our own socio-historical “premises” or “givens.” Still, if we, as interlocutors in philosophical exchange, can find each other, if at first only in the realm of shadows, then perhaps we can avoid losing ourselves in the *Unendlich*, the choppy waters of the modern world that divide us, and by dividing us, have proven to connect us.

94. NKC 2: 120.

95. PIPPIN 1999, Chp. 7.

* This work was supported by a Grant-in-Aid for JSPS Fellows (23KJ1203). I thank the two anonymous reviewers for their instructive comments, which led to substantive revisions to the Introduction and concluding paragraph.

REFERENCES

Abbreviations

- HRS Pippin, Robert B., *Hegel's Realm of Shadows: Logic as Metaphysics in "The Science of Logic"* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019).
- NKC Nishitani Keiji 西谷啓治, 『西谷啓治著作集』 [*Collected Works of Nishitani Keiji*] (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1987).
- WW Gabriel, Markus, *Why the World Does Not Exist*, trans. by Gregory S. Moss (Malden: Polity, 2015).

Other references

- ASANUMA Kōki 浅沼 光樹
2019 「日本哲学という意味の場—ガブリエルと日本哲学」 [*The Japanese-philosophy field of sense: Gabriel and Japanese philosophy*], *Journal of International Philosophy*, Supp. 11 (March): 33–42. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.34428/00010765>
- BAYLY, C. A.
2004. *The Birth of the Modern World: 1780–1914* (Malden: Blackwell).
- BOWERS, Russel H., Jr.
1995 *Someone or Nothing: Nishitani's "Religion and Nothingness" as a Foundation for Christian-Buddhist Dialogue* (New York: Peter Lang).
- CALICHMAN, Richard
2014 Review: *The Kyoto School: An Introduction* by Robert E. Carter, *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 40/2: 500–5.
- DAVIS, Bret W.
2004 “Provocative Ambivalences in Japanese Philosophy of Religion: With a Focus on Nishida and Zen,” in James W. Heisig, ed., *Japanese Philosophy Abroad* (Nagoya: Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture), 246–74.
2020 “Introduction: What is Japanese Philosophy?” in Bret W. Davis, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press), 1–79.
- DAVIS, Bret W., Brian SCHROEDER, and Jason M. WIRTH, eds.
2011 *Japanese and Continental Philosophy: Conversations with the Kyoto School* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).
- DI GIOVANNI, George
2010 “Introduction,” in HEGEL 2010, xi–lxii.

EISENSTADT, S. N.

2000 “Multiple Modernities,” *Daedalus* 129/1: 1–29.

FRIEDMAN, Michael

2002 “Exorcising the Philosophical Tradition,” in Nicholas H. Smith, ed., *Reading McDowell: On “Mind and World”* (London and New York: Routledge), 25–57.

FU, Wei-hsun, and Steven HEINE, eds.

1995 *Japan in Traditional and Postmodern Perspectives* (Albany: State University of New York Press).

GABRIEL, Markus

2011 *Transcendental Ontology: Essays in German Idealism* (New York: Continuum).

2019 “Transcendental Ontology and Apperceptive Idealism,” *Journal of International Philosophy*, Supp. 11 (March): 7–20. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.34428/00010763>

2020 “Schelling on the Compatibility of Freedom and Systematicity,” in G. Anthony Bruno, ed., *Schelling’s Philosophy: Freedom, Nature, and Systematicity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 137–53.

HAROOTUNIAN, Harry

2000 *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

HASE Shōtō 長谷正當

1999 “Nihilism, Science, and Emptiness in Nishitani,” *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 19: 139–54.

HEGEL, G. W. F.

2010 *The Science of Logic*, ed. and trans. by George Di Giovanni (New York: Cambridge University Press).

HEISIG, James W.

2001 *Philosophers of Nothingness: An Essay on the Kyoto School* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press).

2004 “Redefining Defining Philosophy: An Apology for a Sourcebook in Japanese Philosophy,” in James W. Heisig, ed., *Japanese Philosophy Abroad* (Nagoya: Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture), 275–85.

HEISIG, James W., and John C. MARALDO, eds.

1994 *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, & the Question of Nationalism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press).

KANT, Immanuel

1999 *Practical Philosophy*, trans. and ed. by Mary J. Gregor (New York: Cambridge University Press).

- 1998 *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and ed. by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (New York: Cambridge University Press).
- KASULIS, Thomas P.
 2002 *Intimacy or Integrity: Philosophy and Cultural Difference* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press).
- KING, Winston L.
 1982 "Foreword," in Nishitani Keiji, *Religion and Nothingness* (Berkeley: University of California Press), vii-xxii.
- LEAR, Jonathan
 2008 *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation*, paperback ed., (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
- LIEDERBACH, Hans Peter
 2016 "Watsuji's Reading of Hegel: Modernity as a Philosophical Problem in Watsuji's *Rinrigaku*," in Morisato Takeshi, ed., *Frontiers of Japanese Philosophy 8: Critical Perspectives on Japanese Philosophy* (Nagoya: Chisokudō), 356–89.
 2017 (ed.) *Philosophie im gegenwärtigen Japan* (Iudicium).
 2018 "Between the Ontological and the Ontic: Nishitani Keiji on the Problem of Encounter," *European Journal of Japanese Philosophy* 3: 169–91.
 2019 "Ex oriente lux? The Kyoto School and the Problem of Philosophical Modernism," *Tetsugaku* 3: 89–106.
- MARALDO, John C.
 2018 "The Identity of the Kyoto School: A Critical Analysis," in Masakatsu Fujita, ed., *The Philosophy of the Kyoto School* (Singapore: Springer Nature), 253–68.
- MCDOWELL, John
 2000 *Mind and World*, with a new introduction (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
- MORI Tetsurō 森 哲郎
 1997 "Religion in the Early Thought of Nishitani Keiji: The Bottomlessness of Nature," *Zen Buddhism Today* 14: 1–17.
 2013 「西谷啓治の「宗教／哲学」における「世界」理解の問題」 [On the question of Keiji Nishitani's understanding of the "world" in his "religion/philosophy"], *The Bulletin of the Institute for World Affairs, Kyoto Sangyo University* 28 (February): 67–108.
- NIETZSCHE, Friedrich
 2006 *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, trans. by Adrian del Caro (New York: Cambridge University Press).
- O'LEARY, Joseph S.
 1991 Review: *The Self-Overcoming of Nihilism* by Nishitani Keiji; *The Religious*

Philosophy of Nishitani Keiji: Encounter with Emptiness, ed. by Taitetsu Unno, *Monumenta Nipponica* 46/4: 569–72.

PARKES, Graham

- 1998 “Practising Philosophy as a Matter of Life and Death,” *Zen Buddhist Today* 15: 139–53.
- 2011 “Heidegger and Japanese Fascism: An Unsubstantiated Connection,” in DAVIS et al. 2011, 247–65.
- 2015 “Open Letter to Bret Davis: Letter on Egoism: Will to Power as Interpretation,” *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 46(1): 42–61.

PHILLIPS, Stephen H

- 1987 “Nishitani’s Buddhist Response to ‘Nihilism,’” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 5/1: 75–104.

PIPPIN, Robert B.

- 1989 *Hegel’s Idealism: The Satisfactions of Self-Consciousness* (New York: Cambridge University Press).
- 1997 *Idealism as Modernism: Hegelian Variations* (New York: Cambridge University Press).
- 1999 *Modernism as a Philosophical Problem: On the Dissatisfactions of European High Culture*, second ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell).
- 2008 *Hegel’s Practical Philosophy: Rational Agency as Ethical Life* (New York: Cambridge University Press).

SCHARF, Robert H.

- 1995 “Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience,” *Numen* 42/3: 228–83.

SCHELLING, F. W. J.

- 2006 *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. by Jeff Love and Johannes Schmidt (Albany: State University of New York Press).

SCHULTZ, Kevin M., and Paul HARVEY

- 2010 “Everywhere and Nowhere: Recent Trends in American Religious History and Historiography,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 78/1: 129–62.

SLUGA, Hans

- 1999 *Gottlob Frege* (London: Routledge).

STEVENS, Bernard

- 2011 “Overcoming Modernity: A Critical Response to the Kyoto School,” in DAVIS et al. 2011, 229–46.

SUGIMURA Yasuhiko 杉村靖彦

- 2023 「ポスト西谷の宗教哲学へ：西谷宗教哲学の受け取り直しのために」 [Towards a post-Nishitanian philosophy of religion: Reexamining Nishitani’s philosophy of religion], *Zivilisation und Philosophie* 15: 111–27.

TILES, Mary

- 2004 “Kant: From General to Transcendental Logic,” in Dov M. Gabbay and John Woods, eds., *Handbook of the History of Logic, Vol. 3, The Rise of Modern Logic: From Leibniz to Frege* (Amsterdam: Elsevier), 85–130.

UMEHARA Takeshi 梅原 猛

- 1969 「ニヒリズムの系譜」 [Genealogy of nihilism], in Umehara Takashi, ed., 『戦後日本思想大系3:ニヒリズム』 [Systems of postwar Japanese thought, vol. 3, Nihilism] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō), 3–31.

UNNO Taitetsu, ed.

- 1989 *The Religious Philosophy of Nishitani Keiji: Encounter with Emptiness* (Asian Humanities Press).

VAN BRAGT, Jan

- 1982 “Translator’s Introduction,” in Nishitani Keiji, *Religion and Nothingness* (Berkeley: University of California Press), xxiii–xlv.
- 1992 “Nishitani the Prophet,” *The Eastern Buddhist*, N.S. 25/1: 28–50.

