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Dr. Richard E. Aquila, Major Professor

We have read this **dissertation**
and recommend its acceptance

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Accepted for the Council:

Associate Vice Chancellor
and Dean of The Graduate School

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF NISHIDA AND SARTRE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THEIR RESPECTIVE ONTOLOGIES

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Brian Douglas Elwood

May 1992

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents

Dr. Douglas James Elwood

and

Dr. Bettie Ruth Elwood

and to my uncle

Luther Samuel Carroll Jr.

and to my wife

Maria-Gloria Arnaiz Elwood

who have given me invaluable assistance

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a study in East-West comparative philosophy. It attempts for the first time to comparatively analyze the respective phenomenological ontologies of two noteworthy twentieth-century philosophers, namely Nishida Kitaro of Japan and Jean-Paul Sartre of France, and how they respond differently to the challenge of the German philosopher, Edmund Husserl. The major foci of the study are: (1) consciousness and the world, (2) pre-reflective and reflective consciousness, (3) self-consciousness and the nature of the self, (4) being and nothingness, and (5) theories of religious consciousness.

Certain remarkable similarities between Nishida and Sartre are discussed, such as the fact that both were passionately concerned with the problem of the relationship between consciousness and the world, and both were critically challenged by Husserl's contributions to the problem. It is also evident that both insisted on giving fundamental status to pre-reflective consciousness and self-consciousness in their respective theories of consciousness. They both also noted peculiar contradictions in what is known as the "self," and were critical of any attempts to regard the self as a substantial entity. These commonalities certainly justify such a comparative study, particularly since there is no recorded trace of influence, the one upon the other.

The dissertation shows that, while the two philosophers began their reflections from similar premises--albeit from very diverse backgrounds--ultimately they arrived at very different conclusions. This is especially noted in Nishida's departure from Sartre on the nature of religious consciousness. Whereas Sartre associates all religious experience with the human "desire to be God" (an impossible synthesis of "being-for-itself" and "being-in-itself"), Nishida identifies authentic religious consciousness with the "place of absolute nothingness," a curious difference when we consider the significance of nothingness in Sartre's philosophy. They are, then, led to radically distinct philosophies of religion, although starting with similar philosophical premises.

Preface

Having lived and studied in Southeast Asia for fifteen years, I have nurtured a keen interest in comparative East-West philosophy and religion. In searching for a dissertation topic I was naturally drawn to a previous interest in the Japanese philosopher, Nishida Kitaro (1870-1945). I was initially intrigued by the thought that in his life this man was both a practitioner of Zen and a reflective philosopher, an unlikely combination. Subsequent study has uncovered a wealth of material wherein Nishida develops a comprehensive ontology that expresses a fundamentally Zen intuition in essentially Western philosophical categories.

As my interest in Nishida continued, I became intrigued by certain correlations and differences vis-à-vis the phenomenological ontology of Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980). The two men had a number of common concerns, as we shall see, not the least of which pertained to the emergence of Husserlian phenomenology in the Germany of their time. Despite certain common influences and concerns, these two philosophers began their journeys from diverse backgrounds and arrived at curiously dissimilar destinations.

It is my earnest hope that this study may, in some small way, contribute something of value to the expanding field of comparative philosophy--to what E. A. Burtt has called "world philosophy." Globalization in our time is

affecting almost every other field of human endeavor. It is the task and responsibility of contemporary philosophy to serve as a vangaurd for the causes of global awareness. As Charles A. Moore has said, "intellectual isolationism" is "deadly for philosophy."

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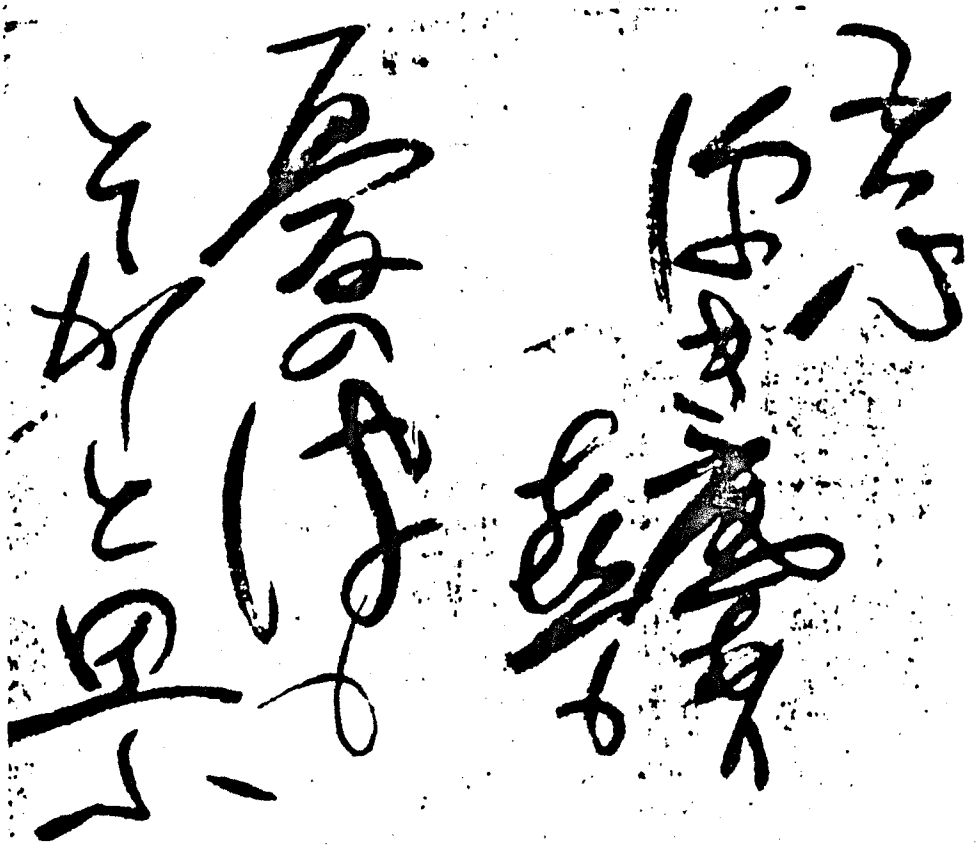
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The bottom of my soul has such depth;

Neither joy nor the waves of sorrow can reach it.

--Nishida Kitaro

INTRODUCTION

INITIAL COMPARATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

Philosophy in a Time of War

It would seem that the history of philosophical endeavor reveals the presence of a notable intensity in time of war. This study will focus on two thinkers of preeminent distinction who were both philosophically productive during the years of World War II. We shall begin with some biographical observations. It is well known that Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) was a young professor of philosophy when he joined the French army at the outbreak of World War II. On the advice of his colleague in graduate school, the philosopher-political analyst Raymond Aron, Sartre served with a meteorological corp in order that he would have free time to write. Later, Sartre became a prisoner of war when the French Army surrendered to the Nazis. During his imprisonment he assisted in the organization of an anti-fascist group and he wrote an anti-fascist play. After nearly a year, he was able to arrange to be released for reasons of health and resumed teaching philosophy in what was, by then, a German-occupied France. In his book, From Socrates to Sartre: The Philosophic Quest, T. Z. Lavine observes that,

> . . . the war and the experience of France under German rule transformed Sartre, the withdrawn, apolitical intellectual, into a political being: He became active in the

> French Writers' Resistance Movement, he did reporting for an underground newspaper, and he wrote and produced anti-Nazi plays (**The Flies**, 1943; **No Exit**, 1944). (1984:350)

Lavine goes on to say that these years of German occupation were the most productive years in Sartre's life. During this time he produced the massive philosophical treatise, Being and Nothingness, which was to serve as a systematic statement of his philosophical perspective. After the war, Sartre (philosopher, novelist, dramatist and critic) was to become one of the century's most influential men.

Sartre had begun to write Being and Nothingness during the dismal winter of 1942 in an occupied France. It appeared in France as **L'Être et le Neant** in 1943. In another part of the world, Nishida Kitaro (1870-1945), a man whom Gino Piovesana pronounced the "most demanding thinker Japan ever produced," (1963:91) had been working on a series of philosophical essays (**Tetsugaku rombunshu**) which he began in 1927. One year after the appearance of Sartre's extensive phenomenological essay, Being and Nothingness, Nishida wrote "Towards a Philosophy of Religion With the Concept of Pre-established Harmony as Guide" (1944), an essay which expresses many of the main ideas of the mature thought of what has been known, since 1927, as **Nishida Tetsugaku** (Nishida Philosophy). That same year (1944), he had three essays published in German translation under the title, **Die Intelligible Welt** (The Intelligible World). In 1945, Nishida

completed his very last essay, "The Logic of Place and a Religious World-View." He died two months later.

These essays not only involve an explicit concern with the philosophy of religion; they are also an articulation of Nishida's final and general position with respect to an extensive range of philosophical questions. That Sartre was, during this time, writing the most systematic statement of his philosophic viewpoint--that monumental "phenomenological essay" which has come to be known by some as the "principle text of modern existentialism"--is more than a coincidental happenstance of the literary world during the war years. As we shall see, many of the principal themes expressed during this time exhibit a startlingly synchronous similarity despite the cultural distance and the lack of interaction between the two thinkers. Any disparate character associated with cultural origins, however, may be attenuated, in part, by their mutual proximity to the global trauma of World War II as experienced concurrently in European and East Asian theaters. It is, in any case, inevitable that we should wonder about the effects of such conditions on the thought of such prolific and influential scholars. We have already noted above, Professor Lavine's observation with regard to the evident transformation in Sartre after the experience of the Nazi occupation of France. The "apolitical intellectual"

was said to have become a "political being." Any analogous and demonstrable transformation in the life of Nishida was certainly not as dramatically conspicuous as in the case of Sartre. Careful scrutiny will show, however, that Nishida was far from being an intellectual with apolitical sensibilities.

In this study we cannot consider the matter in any great detail, but it is pertinent to note that in his The Failure of Freedom, one of the staunchest critiques of Nishida, Arima Tatsuo contends that Nishida and other Japanese intellectuals of the Taisho Era (1912-1926) were possessed of an apolitical orientation that made them partially responsible for the decay of the constitutional form of government in Japan and consequently for the emergence of the destructive anticonstitutional and imperialistic powers that led Japan into war. Arima hypothesizes that "social realities eluded their grasp," (1969:6) and that they pursued an escapist freedom external to social process. Nishida is implicated in this critique as being representative of the predilection for an asocial religiosity involving a passive submission to reality. The inadequacies of Arima's viewpoint, however, have been carefully exposed in a thesis in history by Terrence Wiley, entitled "Aspects of the Life and Thought of Nishida Kitaro" (1973). Wiley takes note of comments recorded in Nishida's

diary which are conveniently ignored by Arima. These comments unambiguously demonstrate **Nishida's disapproval of totalitarian imperialism.** Wiley's biographical observations also record the highly significant fact that Nishida's attitudes and his "internationalism" led to the censoring of his works and brought him under attack of right-wing groups.

Wiley also does not fail to note that, although he was sixty-eight years old and had been in retirement for ten years, Nishida was not reluctant to come forward at a time when the tide of ultranationalism had intensified and, in 1938, deliver lectures in opposition to the extremism entitled "The Problem of Japanese Culture." Nishida had been invited to give the first lectures at Kyoto University in a series of lectures which it sponsored in the hope of checking the rise of emotional ultranationalism and concomitant anti-intellectualism. And it was evidently, "precisely because his personality could not be easily maneuvered into becoming an instrument of political propaganda," that Nishida was invited to deliver such lectures, as Yoo Chul Ok observes in a dissertation entitled "Nishida Kitaro's Concept of Absolute Nothingness in its Relation to Japanese Culture." (1976:49) In these lectures Nishida warns against ethnocentric conceit and makes cautious criticisms of Japanese culture, saying that

its strong points are simultaneously its weak points. Ultimately he seems to be encouraging Japanese to appreciate their uniqueness in terms of what they can contribute to world culture.

In the Fundamental Problems of Philosophy (1934), he reiterates an emphasis expressed concerning a logic beyond what is Oriental or Occidental:

> We can learn the path along which we should truly advance only as we both (East and West) deeply fathom our own depths and attain to a profound understanding of other cultures. (1970:254)

After the war, continuing in the same vein, Nishida wrote an article entitled "The Principle of the New World Order," urging Japan in a direction away from a narrow chauvinistic nationalism toward the position of a worldwide perspective. Yoo Chul Ok observes that in this article Nishida urges Japan not to demean herself "by making the Emperor system an authoritarian imperialism, but to transcend herself, her land and tradition, and to participate in the formation of a new universal world (Sekai teki sekai)." (1976:52) Much more could be said to show that Nishida was, at least, far from being unaware of social and political realities. Those readers who are concerned with the issue in relation to the history of philosophy should be encouraged to peruse the 1973 Wiley thesis mentioned above.

Although there may be a sense in which no one of significant influence can be wholly absolved from responsibility with respect to the rise of imperialistic territorial expansionism and the resultant effects of the war, it is more than clear that those who single out the foremost philosopher of Japan must both ignore the aspects of biography discussed by Wiley and misinterpret the content of Nishida's philosophy. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the emergent interest in Nishida in the West and, among other concerns, help to show with Wiley that,

> . . . Nishida's introspective life demonstrates his personal growth and development rather than a flight from social or political responsibility. (1973:1)

We trust that the absurdity of Arima's orientation will be elucidated not only in terms of its deficient appreciation for Nishida's self-critical intellectual and personal development, but also in terms of its presumption in interpreting Nishida as an escapist recommending passivity. The truth is that Nishida, even in his early years, expressed a voluntaristic and vitalistic perspective. In any case, it must ultimately be clear that any socio-political analysis which reduces the works of creative genius to a few dubious psychological and deterministic explanations and fails to demonstrate a sensitive struggle with the depth of concerns that the relevant thinker has revealed, can only burden the world with a "failure of intellectualistic

criticism."

The Origins of the Kyoto School

a. "**Nishida Tetsugaku**" ("Nishida Philosophy").

Since this study is made primarily with the Western student of comparative philosophy in mind, it would seem to be apropos to devote more space to a descriptive exposition of Nishida's background than to that of the comparatively well known Sartre. We shall consider some additional relevant facts in relation to Nishida's biography in part one of this study. At this point we are concerned more with the sphere of intellectual influence which set the stage for his work. As we have already noted, the term "**Nishida Tetsugaku**" came into common usage at the end of the Taisho Era (1912-1926). We did not mention that, prior to Nishida, the term "**Tetsugaku**" was restricted in usage to references with respect to Western philosophy.

It is inevitable that in attempting a generalistic critique of Taisho intellectuals, Arima was obliged to turn his focus on Nishida. In a work by Gino Piovesana entitled, Recent Japanese Philosophical Thought 1862-1962 (1963), it is noted that Nishida "is the only Japanese philosopher of recent times around whom a philosophical school has been formed." (1963:85) The school referred to here is the so-called **Kyoto-ha** which developed at the University of Kyoto. The Kyoto school of philosophy is not only a school

of thought; it is a way of exercising philosophical thought. This way is characterized, as Frederick Franck notes in The Buddha Eye, by a

> . . . staunch faithfulness to, and rootedness in, the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, coupled with a complete openness to Western thought and a commitment to bring about a meeting of East and West, a "unity beyond differences." (1982:2)

The foundation of such labors was laid by Nishida and the work was carried on in different ways by those who followed. Nishida, Tanabe Hajime (1885-1962), and somewhat peripherally, Watsuji Tetsuro (1889-1960) and Kuki Shuzo (1888-1941), comprise the principle exponents of the first generation. Those of the second wave were such thinkers as Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, Nishitani Keiji, Takeuchi Yoshinori, Abe Masao, and Ueda Shizuteru.

b. Japanese philosophy prior to the Taisho Era.

Prior to the Meiji period (1868-1912), philosophy as a discipline independent of religion did not exist in Japan. Piovesana tells us that Nishi Amane (1829-1894), one of the pioneer teachers of philosophy in Japan, introduced the term "**Tetsugaku**" (the science of wisdom) because it was thought that there was nothing to parallel this kind of thinking in the Japanese tradition. Most scholars tend to interpret the emergence of "**Nishida Tetsugaku**" as an endeavor to express insights of a primarily Zen character in a systematic fashion which relates to Western philosophical concepts.

Although there is no reason to doubt such a perspective, it would seem that it treats Nishida's thought as an unprecedented phenomenon devoid of any specific lines of continuity with endemically Japanese thought. We may recall that Arima had focused on Nishida within the scope of a critique of intellectuals of the Taisho Era. But since Nishida's writings extend primarily from 1910-1945 and his first major work, An Inquiry into the Good (Zen no Kenkyu) [1911], appeared during the transition between the two eras, we cannot presume too much without considering the preceding Meiji period. Nishida did, in fact, associate with two thinkers respected among the ranks of the Meiji intelligentsia: Inoue Enryo (1858-1919) and Inoue Tetsujiro (1855-1944).

Concerned to treat Nishida within the context of lines of continuity in the development of modern Japanese philosophy, Robert Wargo, in a dissertation entitled "The Logic of Basho and the Concept of Nothingness in the Philosophy of Nishida Kitaro," chose to devote his first chapter, "Nishida's predecessors," to the two Inoues. Although Nishida never claims to follow the Inoues and shows no special interest in their respective philosophical vocabularies, Wargo insists that they are significant to a study of Nishida in both historical and philosophical terms. Wargo observes that they are historically significant in

that they are representative of the incipience of a trend which survives to this very day. Characteristic of this trend is a shared interest in German Idealism, Buddhism, and the problems of consciousness. The tendency of some Marxist historians to characterize this trend as an idealistic current of philosophy, however, is somewhat dubious. Philosophically, the Inoues were evidently persuaded of the **inadequacy of the standpoints of both traditional materialism and idealism.** Wargo observes that,

> Philosophically, the two Inoues felt that the traditional philosophical positions of idealism and materialism were incapable of providing an adequate theory of the nature of the world because each theory was an answer to a question which was framed in such a way that it precluded the possibility of an answer. Each theory attempted to describe the world with the unquestioned assumption of a radical dichotomy of subject-object. This became for them what one might call "the problem of standpoints." Both sought the solution for this problem in the concept of a middle path as expressed in the Buddhist tradition. (1972:17-18)

Wargo argues that as simplistic as the solutions offered by the Inoues are, Nishida develops his thought in response to the same central core of insight into the problem of standpoints. In this dissertation it shall be argued that, like the Inoues and Nishida, Sartre was perturbed by the inadequacies of the standpoints of traditional theories of idealism and materialism. Furthermore, Sartre viewed the inadequacy as deriving from presumptions regarding the purported subject-object dichotomy. In the process of

developing an alternative standpoint as a dénouement of his critique of traditional standpoints, however, he was to find himself entangled in the disconcerting effects of his insistence on another ontological dualism for which he could perceive no solution. With the same core of concerns Nishida developed a system of thought which not only endeavors to penetrate the inadequacies which perturbed the Inoues, but which, as we hope to demonstrate, could just as well purport to absolve the impasse in which Sartre found himself in the more conclusive statements of Being and Nothingness.

c. Western influence during and after the Meiji Era.

If there is, as is postulated in this dissertation, a striking similitude of focal concern in the thought of Nishida and Sartre, then it is of relevance to the historian of philosophy to consider the background of common and diverse influences relating to both thinkers. We will begin with a more general consideration of Western influence in Japan. Since our concern with the history of philosophy is an indirect one, we cannot go into this matter in any great detail.* Initially we should mention that during the Meiji

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* Some articles which discuss the influence of Western philosophy in Japan: (1) Kasulis, Thomas P., "The Kyoto School and the West," from The Eastern Buddhist, Vol. XV, no. 2, Autumn 1982, pp. 125-144. (2) Ruiz, F. Perez, "Philosophy in Present-day Japan," from Monumenta Nipponica, Vol. XXIV, nos. 1-2, pp. 137-168. (3) Shimomura, Torataro, "The Modernization of Japan, with Special Reference to

Era, when under the name **"Tetsugaku"** Western philosophy was first introduced into Japan, it was offered as a special course at the Imperial University in Tokyo. The first chair of Philosophy was held by one of the Inoues mentioned above: Inoue Tetsujiro (1854-1944). This Inoue is said to have had great interest in Kant, Schopenhauer and Hartmann. Next to take the chair was Dr. Raphael von Koeber, a student of Eucken, who was invited to Tokyo where he introduced German classical idealism. Robert Schinzinger, in his introduction to Nishida's three essays published under the title Intelligibility and the Philosophy of Nothingness (1958), lists three schools as gaining influence at this time and cites possible interpretations:

> 1. German idealism, particularly Fichte. His philosophy of "Tathandlung" was apparently congenial to the heroic impulses of the Meiji Period.
> 2. American pragmatism, whose anti-speculative common-sense philosophy appealed to the Japanese in their inclination toward immediate practicality.
> 3. Bergson's irrationalistic philosophy of the "elan vital" which had a special appeal to Japan's feeling for life and nature. (1958:22)

The influence of German thinking continued into the Taisho period (1912-1925). In an article entitled "Main Trends of Contemporary Japanese Philosophy" (1955), Gino Piovesana

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Philosophy," from Philosophical Studies of Japan, Vol. VII: 1966, pp. 1-28. (4) Piovesana, G.K., "Main Trends of Contemporary Japanese Philosophy," from Monumenta Nipponica, Vol. II, 1955, pp. 60-74.

observes that, "Besides Kant and Hegel, Husserl's phenomenology began to be known after 1921, and later it was Heidegger who became a favored author." (1955:63) Piovesana also notes that the interest shown in phenomenology and also in the existentialism of Heidegger and Jaspers was due to there being something about them particularly well suited to the Japanese ethos. Later in his article, Piovesana even records the observation that after the war the publications of the works of the "Kyoto school" give the impression that the school, which had earlier been associated with idealism, had become a center of existentialism.

However that may be, it is pertinent to note with Piovesana that the esteem which Western existentialists had among those of the "Kyoto school" did not extend to either Sartre or Camus. Naturally Sartre was in vogue for a while by those of Marxist sympathies. We should recall, however, that Sartre's announcement that, "Marxism is the inescapable philosophy of our time," did not occur till the publication of The Critique of Dialectical Reason in 1960. Prior to this announcement, it is doubtful that there was very much interest in Sartre at all. In any case, shortly after the war the Marxist school of thought in Japan had become the only significant competitor and critic of the Kyoto school. Both the Kyoto school and existentialism in general had become targets of their vigorous criticism. Sartre, of

course, eventually came under severe criticism from Marxists in Europe. In any case, consideration of the aforementioned would seem to suggest that Sartre's actual philosophical situatedness in reference to Japan has been somewhat less than clear. For this reason an aspect of the impetus behind this dissertation is the concern that the apparent ambiguity of Sartre's philosophical status in post-war Japan cannot be cleared up simply by references to his Marxist predilections. And, be that as it may, superficial impressions of Sartre could easily have blinded some scholars from perceiving serious points of potential philosophical encounter which can now be readily disclosed.

Generally speaking, the advent of strong interest in German idealism, existentialism and phenomenology paralleled the inception of original philosophical thought in Japan apart from the expressions of philosophy from within the strictures of particular religions. The Kyoto school is a conspicuous representative of originality in serious philosophy and it is becoming increasingly clear to Western scholars that it cannot be associated either with mere imitation or with endeavors merely syncretic in character. In an article in The Eastern Buddhist entitled "The Kyoto School and the West," Thomas Kasulis observes that,

> It is sometimes assumed that the early figures in the Kyoto School were primarily interested in East-West synthesis or East-West dialogue, but the actual writings

> of Nishida, Tanabe and Watsuji, for example, contain very little dialogue and only a very restricted kind of synthesis. (1982:126)

Despite this, the Kyoto school was intensively involved with Western philosophy. We should consider with Kasulis, perhaps, that after Japan's military success against Russia and China during the Meiji period, she had the luxury to become more introspective and began to consider more earnestly what the proper relationship between Western and Japanese ideas should be. With the technological revolution in the background, the issue of whether the adoption of Western science committed the Japanese to adopt certain Western philosophical and religious viewpoints, emerged in the later Meiji period as a crucial polemic among the intelligentsia. Many became reconciled to the view that the Japanese need not adopt Western religion, but remained perplexed as to the matter of Western philosophy. For the serious Japanese thinker, for example, the question of how one could adopt Western science and yet retain Eastern morality was of profound concern. For this reason, Kasulis conjectures that the question gives "a clue to the motivation behind the philosophizing in the first phase of the Kyoto school's development, particularly in Nishida's own writings." (1982:28) In any case, the issue of what philosophical motivations are associable with the development of the Kyoto school and how they may relate to

the interest in Western philosophy is an on-going concern that we hope will be further elucidated in this dissertation.

In connection with this, it is clearly of interest to note, with Schinzinger, that "Nishida's philosophy, no matter how much influenced by Western thinking, has its roots in his own existence and returns to it." (1958:25) It is curious to consider that, despite his involvement with Western philosophy, Nishida never wrote anything explicitly for a Western audience even though he had some familiarity with several Western languages, particularly German. Certainly he could have sought the kind of international acclaim received by his lifelong friend, D. T. Suzuki. Evidently, however, Nishida perceived it as his mission to express a distinctively Japanese philosophy which gives appropriate solicitude to general logical postulates and to Japanese historical and cultural uniqueness, while at the same time relating to the categories of Western philosophy and, potentially, to the concerns of a transcultural world philosophy.

At this point we may recall, with a major figure in the Kyoto school, Takeuchi Yoshinori, that Nishida was the first in Japan to manifest the philosophical genius "to build a system permeated with the spirit of Buddhist meditation, by fully employing the Western method of thinking." (1972:4)

So, although Nishida never wrote for a Western audience, his relevance to Western philosophy exists partially in the challenge presented by his development of a new "logic." This new logic has characteristics which should be of interest not only to phenomenology and existentialism, but also to process philosophy, pragmatism, and even to the analytic tradition. Nishida is, most conspicuously, of serious interest to the field of the philosophy of religion. His endeavor to elucidate the fundamental relationship between philosophy and religion, and his endeavor to talk in a language which transcends the traditional doctrinal framework of both Buddhism and Christianity by expressing an integration between the philosophical presuppositions of each are particularly notable.

In the first section of this introduction we initiated some comparative reflections on Nishida and Sartre by considering them chronologically with reference to World War II. Now, we have noted the significance of Nishida as founder of the Kyoto school and we have briefly considered Japanese philosophy prior to that in the Taisho Era. We have also made a brief survey of Western philosophical influence in Japan during and after the Meiji period. Although, when we commenced to speak of the Kyoto school, we mentioned the need to devote more space to a discussion of Nishida's background, it would seem to be apropos at this point to

devote a section to some aspects of Sartre's background which have not been touched on. We do this, in part, for reasons which may surprise some readers. Having considered the relevance of Western thinking for **Nishida Tetsugaku**, we shall turn now to consider, in part, the relevance of Eastern thought for Sartre and phenomenological existentialism. This will be done by way of an account of a little known interaction which occurred between Sartre and the Japanese philosopher, Kuki Shuzo, back in 1928. It should be noted that the time when this interaction took place was immediately after the end of the Taisho period when the term "**Tetsugaku**" was no longer restricted as a reference to Western philosophy.

A Discovery of Interaction between Kuki Shuzo and Jean-Paul Sartre

a. Kuki's remarkable bequest to Sartre.

Due to aristocratic origins, the Japanese philosopher, Shuzo Kuki, was known as "Baron Kuki." In 1921, he went to Europe for more than eight years to study at the universities of Heidelberg, Freiburg, and Marburg with Rickert, Husserl, and Heidegger, respectively. Later, he moved to Paris to study under Bergson. During this time, he studied French language and aspects of the history of French philosophy with a young French student by the name of Jean-Paul Sartre. After Kuki returned to Japan he received a professorial position at Kyoto Imperial University. Here he

joined a number of influential philosophers in the 1930s who came to be associated with the well-known "Kyoto school." The central figure at this school, of course, was Nishida Kitaro.

In 1987, a curious little monograph entitled Shuzo Kuki and Jean-Paul Sartre was published for the Journal of the History of Philosophy (Monograph Series). While he was in Japan in 1966, Sartre acknowledged having had weekly discussions with a Japanese philosopher named Kuki Shuzo--a colleague of Nishida at Kyoto University--back in the twenties, although he revealed nothing about the content of their meetings. In 1976, Professor Akio Sato discovered a notebook marked "Monsieur Sartre," while cataloging Kuki's papers. This notebook even included a page in Sartre's own handwriting. Later, an American scholar named Stephen Light began a shrewd piece of intellectual detective work and compiled the above-mentioned monograph.

His careful research reveals that the "Baron Kuki" had weekly talks with Sartre in 1928. These talks probably took place from September to November, soon after Sartre's initial failure at the strenuous examinations for the **agrégation de philosophie** given that June. Curiously enough, it is now evident that the Baron Kuki played a crucial role at this time in introducing Sartre to the thought of both

Husserl and Heidegger.* In contradiction to the general view provided by Simone de Beauvoir--that Sartre first learned of Husserl from Raymond Aron in 1932--the new research reveals that prior to Sartre's 1932 conversation with Raymond Aron, Kuki had introduced Sartre to phenomenology four years earlier. We are thus provided with an intriguing cross-cultural nuance in the accounts of early interchange in the history of existential phenomenology.

Although Sartre was at that time unable to give Husserl or Heidegger serious attention, Stephen Light notes that,

> . . . it was Kuki's distinct role to have turned Sartre's attention to Heidegger and phenomenology, to have given Sartre an **agenda**, no matter that it could not be immediately attended. (1987:23)

We are even given to understand that when Sartre traveled to Germany, in 1933, he carried a letter of introduction to Heidegger which was provided by Kuki. In any case, the numerous startling details pertaining to influence and counter-influence, which were unearthed by Stephen Light, are not only fascinating in their own right, but consideration of them also provides a unique vantage point from which to view philosophical currents. It is precisely such a vantage point which can provide the appropriate

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* With respect to Heidegger, Yasuo Yuasa observes that, "Although it is probably not known outside Japan, it was Kuki who instilled in Sartre an interest in Heidegger's philosophy." (ed. Parkes: 1987:158)

background for the introduction of the areas of interest which this comparative study focuses on, as well as vindicate its general purpose from the outset.

As challenging as Kuki remains in his own right and as compelling as this anecdote of interaction is, this is not the place for any kind of exhaustive survey of the matter. However, in developing a study of Nishida Kitaro, whose erudite interaction with several schools of Western thought is well-known and in juxtaposing his work in a comparative analysis with Sartre, it is of interest to note that the latter was not wholly deprived of interaction with the East despite his reticence on the matter. Furthermore, recognition of Kuki's association with Sartre is particularly pertinent to the descriptive development of the background of our concern with Nishida. Not only was Kuki a noteworthy Japanese philosopher associated with the Kyoto school, but he had actually studied under many of the contemporaneous Western philosophers who captivated Nishida. By that time Kuki, in an article on Bergson, had already made reference to Nishida as "perhaps the most profound thinker in Japan today." (Light, 1987:11)

b. Kuki and Nishida: contrariety or complementarity?

As was noted previously, Nishida (1870-1945) and Tanabe Hajime (1885-1962) had initiated a current of philosophy which after World War II became known as the Kyoto school of

philosophy, or **Kyoto-ha**. Although Kuki Shuzo (1888-1941) held both Nishida and Tanabe in the highest esteem, he always remained only distantly associated with the "Kyoto school." As for Nishida's view of Kuki, we can observe that his esteem for Kuki became evident after Kuki sent him a copy of his Propos sur le temps (Considerations on Time). By that time Nishida was already renowned as the first original thinker in modern Japanese philosophy. On December 21, 1928, he wrote a letter to Tanabe in which he informed him about Kuki's book. In the letter he observes of Kuki that, "Here is a man of real **Bildung**. It would be good to have him here at Kyoto as a lecturer." (Light, 1987:23) For students of the history of philosophy it is likely that the mutual deference displayed by these two men only serves to accentuate curiosity about the divergencies between them.

Both of them eagerly assimilated Husserlian phenomenology. As Stephen Light observes, however, unlike Nishida, Kuki "remained distant from Hegelian phenomenology." (1987:11) Light also makes note of Professor Omodaka Hisayuki's assessments wherein Kuki is set apart from Nishida's intellectualism and Tanabe's voluntarism by virtue of his emphasis on affectivity. Light also cites the Japanese philosopher Kogawa Tetsuo as noting of Kuki that he was "too liberal for those adhering to the Nishida-Tanabe line of Japanese idealism, . . . too artistic

for those of Marxist circles," and "he never belonged to any mainstream, right or left." (1987:11) Evidently, although Kuki displayed a meticulous dialectical rigor, he related strongly to the Bergsonian critique of rationalism and manifested an élan of delicate and passionate sentiments. Kuki viewed it as criminal to fashion a "veil" of philosophical abstractions. True philosophy, he contended, is "To seize the palpitation of life, to feel the shiver of life . . . ." (See Light, 1987:11)

It will be observed, however, that the categorial delineations indicated above are overly simplistic. Professor Omodaka's assessment which regards Nishida's thought as representative of an "intellectualism" is probably more misleading than it is helpful, although as we have seen it is clearly apropos in contradistinction to the anti-intellectualism that emerged among the ultranationalists during and prior to the war years. In any case, in the interest of avoiding presumption as regards Nishida's motivations, we should at least be attentive to the development of his thought. Partially via the influence of Bergson, for example, one of the early stages of thought occurred in a revision of ideas found in An Inquiry into the Good (Zen no Kenkyu) [1911], which resulted in a form of voluntarism which had been blended with pantheism. This early "pantheistic voluntarism" was certainly distinct

from the "intellectualistic" tradition in the West represented by the orthodox scholastic philosophers. Describing this early pantheistic voluntarism in a dissertation on the development of Nishida's thought, the scholar and translator David Dilworth notes that Nishida's,

> . . . early affinity for James and Bergson, and his recasting of Leibniz' Monadology via Fichtean insights after Zen no Kenkyu, clearly illustrates the conjunction in his mind, and therefore the compatibility, of voluntaristic and pantheistic thought structures. (1970:88-9)

We might also note that Stephen Light observes of Kuki's article, **"Bergson au Japon"** (1987:71), that it could serve as a philosophical self-portrait in tracing the uniqueness of the development of Japanese philosophy from "neo-Kantianism to Husserlian phenomenology by way of the Bergsonian intuition." (1987:12) Certainly Nishida's work is a prime example of this trend. Be that as it may, some will find it germane to consider whether Nishida's stomach for "abstract rationalism" either does him discredit or deprives him of the élan of delicate and passionate sentiments, leaving him stranded in some dismal world of abstractions.

It should be recognized that there is a danger of being radically misled by viewing Nishida's philosophy in contradistinction to Kuki's by virtue of the latter's allegedly greater emphasis on affectivity. There is clearly a sense in which Kuki emphasizes affectivity. We should

consider Nishida, however, in a clear light. Nishida, who in the early part of his career had already popularized such terms as "pure experience," never manifested any reluctance to recognize the limitations of "abstract rationalism" and logical analysis. Also, Nishida's appreciation of the affective aspect is already apparent in An Explanation of Beauty (**Bi no Setsumei**) [1900], in which he is critical of those who value only logical truth and reject intuitive truth as the mere fancy of poets. Speaking of such intuitive truth he states that, "This kind of truth cannot be expressed in words. Indeed, this is the so-called 'open secret' (**offenes Geheimnis**) of Goethe." (1987:217)

It is clear that he holds fast to this standpoint in an article written later in 1931 entitled, "Goethe's Metaphysical Background," wherein he states that,

> It needs no saying that poetry is originally and essentially a product of intuition, and that intuition is the essence of the poet. This is especially true of Goethe. To him, all being becomes the object of intuition. (Schinzinger, 1958:151)

So we must wonder why Nishida's legacy leaves him to be so strongly associated with the "intellectualism" of traditions of "abstract rationalism." We need only look to Nishida's lecture of 1938 entitled, "The Problem of Japanese Culture," for clarification on Nishida's actual agenda, at least as it was to become manifest in the later years. Speaking of a "logic underlying Oriental culture,"

Nishida inquires,

> Is it, as many people think, simply emotional? I do not deny that Japanese culture is a culture of emotion; I made a remark myself elsewhere to the effect that Japanese culture is **rhythmical.** Nevertheless it is only through the attainment of reality that we can be creative, can live in truth. We must, therefore, obtain a logical grasp of our way of life at its very foundations . . . (Ryusku, 1958:862)

So, it would seem that Nishida intentionally chose his involvement with logic and rational discourse for special reasons which derive from a certain sense of mission and not at all from any predilection to scorn the affective side of life. In any case, this should become clear in the course of this study. We can say, then, that there are more reasons to consider Kuki and Nishida in relation to each other than may be initially apparent. In any case, we may expect to find scrutiny of such relations heuristic to our intentions in this dissertation.

c. Voluntarist predilections in Kuki and Sartre.

Keeping this in mind, we return to our consideration of the significance of the encounter between Kuki and Sartre. At this point we may recall the notebook marked "Monsieur Sartre" which was discovered among Kuki's papers by professor Akio Sato. This notebook was entirely devoted to French philosophy. As Stephen Light remarks, it is important to note that although Bergson and others had already been absorbed by Japanese intellectuals prior to World War I,

"French philosophy was not paid the attention of its German counterpart." (1987:15) Evidently Kuki, partly through his lecture courses at Kyoto University, was instrumental in introducing French philosophy to more Japanese. It is likely that the notebook in question was a part of Kuki's preparatory endeavors for these lectures. The notebook reveals concern with Descartes, Pascal, Comte and Maine de Biran, for example. It also gives some focus on contemporary French philosophy. The first section is devoted to Leon Brunschvicg (1869-1944), Emile-August Chartier (pseud. Alain) and to the Catholic Maurice Blondel (1861-1946).

It is interesting that, in relation to contemporary French philosophy, Light comments on the influence of Alain's stoicism on Sartre's Being and Nothingness (L'Être et le Néant) and also makes the observation that "Kuki's valorization of the voluntarist element in **Bushido** would lead him to an especial appreciation of Alain's stoic ethic." (1987:18) Voluntarist and stoicist concerns are again apparent in the notebook's later references to Blondel's **L' Action** (1893), in which he criticizes the nihilist position as a futile attempt to escape from the problem of our condemnation to action by willing our nothingness. The futility is exposed when we see that in wanting to negate the will we merely confront the emergence of another will, the will **not to** will. Curiously enough, it

is in the context of an apparent discussion of Blondel's critique of a "**volonte de néant**" that we find the page of the notebook which was written in Sartre's own hand.

We can only imagine the interchange which occurred, in relation to these issues, between the young Sartre--who was eventually to become the leading exponent of existential phenomenology in France--and the older and matured Kuki who was to assume a similar status in Japan. We know that concern with contingency was to occupy a position of centrality in the respective philosophies of each. It was conspicuously central to both Nausea (**La Nausée**) and Being and Nothingness (**L'Être et le Néant**). It is no wonder that the young Sartre regarded contingency as his principal philosophical intuition. As for Kuki, it was the focus of his The Problem of Contingency (**Guzensei no Mondai**) [1935] which was a serious elaboration on his 1932 doctoral dissertation.

It was, however, already in connection with his concern to disclose an ethic founded on the contingency of existence that we find the emergence of Kuki's "valorization of the voluntarist element in **Bushido**" in his essay entitled, "Considerations on Time" ("**Propos sur le temps**") [1928].*

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* In Japanese Religions, Robert Ellwood and Richard Pilgrim explain that the term "**Bushido**" ("way of the warrior") primarily indicates "the ideals and values of the feudal

In this work he draws a distinction between Oriental time, a "time of transmigration," and linear time. With regard to Oriental time he distinguishes two different attitudes. One attitude being a Buddhistic pessimism in which the supreme evil is the perpetual repetition of the will. The other being the voluntarist element of **Bushido**--the tacit precepts of chivalric conduct and morals in Japanese knighthood--in which this supreme evil is the supreme good. In this regard, Kuki states that "**Bushido** is the affirmation of the will, the negation of the negation, in a sense the abolition of **nirvana**." (See Light, 1987:49) Kuki cites Kant's remarks that there is nothing which can be considered good without restriction, with the exception of the good will itself. In regard to this Kuki states that,

> It is this very idea that **Bushido** affirms. The infinite good will, which can never be entirely fulfilled, and which is destined always to be deceived, must ever and always renew its efforts. For **Bushido** it is the good will in-itself which has an absolute value. (1987:49)

And so, in regard to the "time of transmigration," **Bushido** would recommend that we "Confront transmigration without fear, valiantly. Pursue perfection while maintaining a clear consciousness as to its 'deception.'" (49) In the

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samurai: loyalty, bravery, discipline, duty, and a fearless willingness to meet death in the service of these ideals and one's superiors." (1985:38)

same light, and somewhat reminiscent of Camus' The Myth of Sisyphus (Le Mythe de Sisyphe) [1942], Kuki is critical of the tragic damnation which the Greeks saw in the myth of Sisyphus. Of the perpetual beginning anew he inquires, "Is there misfortune, is there punition in this fact? I do not understand. I do not think so. Everything depends on the subjective attitude of Sisyphus." (1987:49) Such an attitude must be affirmative of the will against all odds.

With Nishida's Buddhistic orientation in mind, some will think that we have here stumbled upon an aspect of the divergency between Kuki's philosophy and that of Nishida. But we get a different picture if we take note of the footnote Kuki appended to this discussion of **Bushido**:

> In placing Buddhism and **Bushido** in opposition I take into account only their basic tendencies. The development of positive elements in the thought of Mahayana Buddhism, on the one hand, and the influence of Buddhism on certain particular aspects of **Bushido**, on the other hand, are incontestable. There cannot be the least question of denying the great value of Buddhism. (1987:64)

Furthermore, and we have already noted Nishida's own voluntarist predilections, students of Nishida cannot help but be acutely aware of the influence of Hegelian dialectical negation and his frequent use of the expression, "negation of the negation." In Nishida's final essay, for example, in speaking of the world as a "self-identity of

absolute contradiction," he says that "it forms itself within itself, or is creative, in the mode of self-affirmation, or as the negation of the negation." (1965:210) In conjunction with this Nishida asserts that there is nothing we must will apart from this actual world. In the course of this study, it should become clear that the "affirmation of the will" and the "negation of the negation" which Kuki associates with **Bushido** is very much an expression of Nishida's Buddhistically oriented philosophy.

So, it would seem that we are again confronting what is only an apparent divergency and which may be concealing an interior complementarity. Albeit skeptical in regard to Kantian epistemology, Kuki associates the idealist ethic of the "good will" with the "way of **Bushi**" (**Bushido**) and suggests that it is specifically here wherein we can account for the influence of Kantianism in Japan. No stranger to Kant, Nishida has been characterized as having made an effort to "synthesize the transcendental philosophy and Bergsonism." (1987:72) We may recall Kuki's remarks about the predominant currents of thought in Japan. Aside from the **Bushido** and Kantian current, there is the Zen or **Dhyana** and Bergsonian current. Kuki comments that the Bergsonian method, as a grasping of the **durée** by a "simple and indivisible intuition of the spirit," is akin to Zen. Kuki

notes two principle points of analogy:

> (1) The Bergsonian idea of the **duree**, expressing itself in the image of "flowing water," is precisely the fundamental idea of Buddhism: the ceaseless flight of things, a watery flux; (2) when Bergsonism admits the possibility of at the same time, and on the same terrain, "accepting the thesis and antithesis of antinomies," it is very near the paradoxical truth enunciated by Zen: **Nirvana** is Buddha, Nothing is Being. (1987:74)

It is interesting how Kuki associates Nishida with both points. With regard to the first he observes that "Nishida, our contemporary philosopher, accords a very great importance to intuition." (See Light, 1987:97) With regard to the second point, he notes that the Orient is attracted by dualistic comprehension and cites the **Yin** and **Yang** of the **I-Ching**, the **Li** and **Ki** of the Sung school, etc. Then, he remarks that, "The philosophy of Nishida often presents itself as a dualism of **noema** and **noesis**, of scientific knowledge and the postulate of the will." (1987:97) Also with regard to the second point, Kuki makes the curious observation that: "to examine French philosophy through its great philosophers is almost always to find dualism. A monist system such as the one of Spinoza or Hegel is unfindable in French philosophy." (1987:94) It is in regard to the presumed dualism of Nishida cited above and what was to become evident as yet another dualism of French philosophy, Sartrean ontological dualism, that this study was conceived. Consequently, it is at last possible to

understand the reasons we have chosen to take this circuitous route in order to introduce our comparative study.

In Quest of Total Perspective

It has been our intention not only to provide some characterization of the philosophical background of the two philosophers we are going to concern ourselves with in this study, but also to clarify the sense in which the events in the history of philosophy, of themselves, render comparative considerations imperative. Both Nishida and Sartre were intrigued, for example, by the emergence of Husserlian phenomenology and both were perturbed by what they regarded as inadequacies. That Sartre's struggle with Husserlian thought was seminal in the development of his philosophy is well known. The general influence of the existential-phenomenological tradition on the Kyoto school is also well known. But that the Japanese philosopher, Kuki, was instrumental in a process which involved the transmission of German thought to France and which would eventually, with Sartre, "lead to the possibility of phenomenology's naturalization in France," (1987:25) has only recently been disclosed.

Furthermore, the apparent incongruity between Kuki and the Kyoto school could make consideration of significant aspects of conceptual propinquity difficult; and this all

the more so since Nishida's motivations with regard to Western philosophy are often misconceived. It is, therefore, in the interest not only of general cultural and philosophical rapprochement that we undertake this study, but it should be clear that there is also a sense in which it is compellingly exigent to the very history of existential-phenomenological thought itself.

Of course, it may be that we can only speculate as to the extent of Kuki's influence on Sartre, who was at the time of their interaction yet twenty-three. Be that as it may, we have in this section attempted not only to pay homage to some fascinating but as yet little known facts in regard to the history of existential phenomenology, but we have also endeavored to elucidate the diversity of philosophical currents evident in Japanese history. In the process we have expressed reservations about those perspectives of Nishida which would pigeon-hole him under the labels of "intellectualism" and "abstract rationalism."

In any case, although this is meant to be a comparative study, it should be observed that even if our concern was with Nishida alone, the character of his thought is such that we would inevitably be concerned with the development of "total perspective in philosophy," or what E. A. Burtt calls "world philosophizing." It is our hope that in the course of our research we can recall what that great

champion of East-West comparative philosophy, Charles A. Moore, said with regard to the conferences on East-West philosophy held at the University of Hawaii in the sixties:

> . . . we have looked far beyond the provincialism and parochialism and intellectual isolationism --and narrow nationalism--which so widely prevail and which are so deadly for philosophy. Philosophy must be characterized by total perspective or it is not philosophy. (1968:548)

Few have labored toward the goal of "total perspective" as Nishida has done and he would doubtlessly encourage any endeavor to elucidate his historical-cultural situatedness in relation to philosophy as a whole, East and West. If this dissertation can contribute to such endeavors, it will have fulfilled the intention inherent in its conception.

World Philosophy: Toward a Comparative Existentialism

Embarkation on any kind of intercultural sojourn can result in severe vertigo even for the most hardened of explorers. There is often the sensation of standing in a void without any stable reference point. In the case of the comparative considerations ahead, we may hope that much of the impending vertigo may be dispelled by awareness of the fact that Nishida's arduous studies left him with a truly comprehensive perspective on the various traditions of thought in both the East and the West. Still, it is inevitable that in any comparative study of this kind, if seriously undertaken, we may anticipate having to confront suspicions about what could appear to be culturally

congenital bifurcations deriving from deep-seated presuppositions. It is our hope that this study will, indeed, promote such a confrontation and that we will often be impelled to ponder, along with E. A. Burtt, whether there is truly a crucial feature which radically distinguishes the East from the West and what its significance might be in our contemporary "global village." It will be of interest to keep in mind that Burtt believed that there is such a feature and that it

> . . . lies in the fact that Western thinkers trust reason as providing the way to whatever truth and insight man can gain, whereas Eastern thinkers are deeply convinced that ultimate truth can be achieved only by passing beyond reason and the limitations essential to it. (1962:675)

It would be difficult to deny that there is good historical evidence that what Burtt claimed has indeed been the general trend. However, not only are there notable exceptions (e.g. Christian mysticism), but there are Western philosophers who have stressed the significance of a preconceptual level or variety of consciousness. Apropos of this, is the Sartrean notion of the "pre-reflective" **cogito** which we shall encounter later in this study.

Despite his intensive involvement with reasoning, Nishida remains very much an Eastern thinker fitting the characterization given above. For this reason Western readers of Nishida are often advised to have both a basic knowledge of Buddhism in general and of Zen in particular.

In this regard it would be appropriate to consider a statement of Kasulis pertaining to the philosophical significance of Zen and the **zazen** (meditation) experience:

> Thus, if one wants to know reality, one does not analyze it, one does not accumulate empirical data about it, one does not reason logically about it. One just perceives it in its prereflective, preconceptual showing of itself. In this respect Zen seeks to avoid all reductionism as well as all transcendence in the usual Western sense of the word. Thus, the phenomenological structure of the **zazen** experience itself is critical to understanding the nature of verification or authentication in Zen. In fact, one might say that the character of the primordial givenness of the **zazen** experience and its relationship to other modes of consciousness is a central issue in Japanese thinkers from Dogen to the present Kyoto School philosophers. (1982:137)

If we may take this statement to be descriptive of the situation, then it should be abundantly evident that it would be improper to imagine that Nishida's intention was to utilize reasoning somehow in order to **produce** Buddhistic results of a soteriological (i.e. **satori**) character, as it were. Certainly the impetus behind his agenda remains, at least primarily, philosophical.

It may be suggested that he sought to **rationally** demonstrate the futility and inadequacy of attempts at conceptual reductionism and that he may have also sought to develop a language which philosophically expresses a religiosity apart from the usual Western categories of transcendence. But he was perhaps, as suggested above, primarily concerned to characterize the relationship of the

primordial givenness of pre-reflective consciousness, as experienced in **zazen**, with other modes of consciousness. In this, it may be said that he sought to express a kind of Eastern soteriological concern in what we might call Western "gnosiological" (pertaining to **gnosis**, knowledge) terms. In any case, if for Nishida, coming to "know reality" is a matter of direct pre-reflective intuition, it would be conspicuously non-sequitur to conclude from this that the activities of intellection require preclusion. No matter how patently manifest the fallacy of such a conclusion may be, it is a conjecture foundational to this study that it remains a common presumption conditioned and crystallized, perhaps, by the plethora of mystical expressions about the ineffability of "ultimate reality."

Clearly, however, it would be an unfortunate and unnecessary fatuity if our sensitivity to, and deference for, such "ineffability" were to preclude any of the concern we have with what remains intelligible and communicable. And yet, it may be that this very kind of conditioned judgment is a major debilitating factor in the endeavors of East-West comparative philosophy to disclose the philosophically analogical or even the homological. And so, no matter what we may speculate about Kuki's influence on Sartre, the evident heterogeneous origins need not prevent us from treating Nishida's view of consciousness, in terms of the

"eye that cannot see itself," as something of a Buddhistic counterpart to the pre-reflective **cogito** expressed in Sartrean existential phenomenology.

For very different reasons the motivations inherent in Sartrean ontology would seem to be far from soteriologically oriented, although we should not lose sight of the generally tacit influence of Stoicism on Sartre and his appreciation of the Heideggerian emphases on "authenticity" and "historicity." Sartre's skepticism with regard to the convolutions of epistemology, and its preoccupation with the quest for an apodictic foundation, if anything, even seem to have encouraged ontological delvings originating, in part, from what was evidently a kind of gnosiological impetus, albeit with apparently derivative ethical implications. In any case, the point here is that any discernible difference in motivation does nothing to modify the fact that both Sartre and Nishida insist on giving pre-reflective consciousness an undeniable centrality in the development of their respective systems of thought. The eventual repercussions of such a focus in each case, however, will lead in somewhat different directions which we will attempt to explore in the following chapters.

Earlier in this introduction we noted Kuki's suggestions regarding French and Oriental dualism. Without rescinding such an observation we should like, now, to make

some qualifications which should also help to terminate our introduction to this study. If Kuki has called Nishida's thought dualistic, it should be noted that one could just as well argue that, paradoxically, in Nishida's thought there is also a consistent emphasis on the non-dualistic condition of experiencing. In Suzuki's preface to Viglielmo's translation of Nishida's work of 1911 (A Study of Good [Zen no Kenkyu] 1960), entitled "How to Read Nishida," he remarks that,

> . . . the West starts intellectually with a dualistic world, whereas the East keeps the feet firmly on the ground of emptiness, which is a world of concrete existentialism and not a logical framework of abstraction. (1960:iii)

Since Nishida's thought is at once expressly dualistic and persistently logical, and yet still maintains an emphasis on the non-dualistic condition of experiencing and concrete existence, paradoxically it must be a "non-dualistic dualism." Nishida once remarked that,

> Reality is both being and non-being; it is being-**qua**-non-being and non-being-**qua**-being. It is both subjective and objective, both **noema** and **noesis**. Subjectivity and objectivity are absolutely opposed, but reality is the unity of subjectivity and objectivity, i.e., the self-identity of this absolute opposition. (1970:246)

It is in relation to this kind of dualism that we will compare and consider the Sartrean dualism of the two "regions of being," wherein he elucidates a distinctive viewpoint with regard to being and non-being,

noema and **noesis**, objectivity and subjectivity, et cetera.

Although Sartre felt compelled to maintain the hiatus of an insurmountable ontological dualism, he was emphatic, as we shall see in the following chapters, about the radical immediacy which the one being has to the other. For Nishida, the "natural world" and the "world of consciousness" do stand in opposition, yet they are "as two sides of the same thing, only under different aspects" (1958:91) We shall see how Nishida works with the contradiction by presenting an architectonic modality which renders status to **three** spheres of being: the natural world, the world of consciousness and the "intelligible world."

For Nishida, being is always a being within. In conjunction with this, he offers a logic of "place" (**basho**) which expresses meanings of being in reference to the determination by the specific universal in which such being has its "place." When a contradiction or paradox appears, a deeper layer of determination is sought in a more enveloping universal. Ultimately, the most concrete and enveloping "place" is nothingness. This nothingness is not a being and does not have its "place" in anything else. In later writings Nishida describes the "place of absolute nothingness" as the final **basho** within which distinct levels illustrating progressively more concrete manifestations of the "absolute present" can be discerned. This "world of the

absolute present" is a "historical world" and a world of self-conscious individuality. The "material world" and the "biological world" exist as subordinate dimensions of the "historical world."

It is interesting to contrast Nishida's three-tiered ontological motif with Sartre's insoluble ontological dualism. In this dissertation we shall consider this and related matters in reference to certain general thematic concerns which will comprise the focus for our comparative analysis: (a) consciousness and the world, (b) pre-reflective and reflective consciousness, (c) self-consciousness and the contradictions of the self, (d) being and nothingness. It should be noted at the outset that these themes are emphatic concerns of each philosopher which are structurally interrelated in both systems. Initially, in part one, we shall focus on Nishida's early notion of "pure experience." After exploring this notion to some extent, we shall endeavor to differentiate Nishida's notion from that of James, from whom Nishida borrowed this terminology. In the process of doing this, we shall be considering Nishida's philosophy of "pure experience" in relation to some relevant facets of James' "radical empiricism" and Sartre's existentialist opposition to phenomenalism.

Having established this background, in part two we

shall turn to compare aspects of Nishida's and Sartre's theories of consciousness in relation to aspects of the theory of consciousness developed in Husserlian phenomenology. We do this not only because of the mutual significance of Husserl to both Nishida and Sartre, but also to explore certain analogous predilections common to all three. This hermeneutic will eventually facilitate a comparative analysis in which we differentiate aspects of Sartrean and Husserlian phenomenology in terms of analogous distinctions differentiating Patanjalian and Sāmkhya yoga, and then attempt to elucidate Nishida's orientation in relation to the distinctions developed.

In part three of this study we shall examine the origins of Nishida's notion of **Jikaku** (self-awareness) [1917] and draw certain comparisons with Sartre's notion of non-positional self-consciousness. We shall then probe deeper into Nishida's concept of **Jikaku** in relation to the "problem of meaning and existence." Having done this, we shall consider Nishida's characterization of the problem in terms of Husserlian phenomenology. With this background, in part four we shall turn to Nishida's mature thought (as exemplified in his works of 1930 and 1945) and consider it in relation to Sartre on the issues of self-consciousness, existential anguish and the problem of the elusive character of the "self" and its apparently self-contradictory nature.

Our discussion will include certain concerns related to ontology and the philosophy of religion. After discussing the "problem of the self" and viewpoints on death (1945), we shall examine Nishida's ontology of "enveloping universals" (1930) in relation to Husserl and Sartre. Then we shall return to Nishida's final essay (1945) to consider further the dimension of "absolute nothingness" in relation to Sartrean nothingness.

Now that we have provided the reader with a general outline of our intentions, we wish to stress the unfinished character of this study. In many respects, we have only scratched the surface of the wealth of comparative concerns associable with the focus of this study. This study is in no sense intended to be the final and consummate word on this topic. It is, on the contrary, our hope that it may be a precursor to other studies which pursue a comparative analysis of Sartre and Nishida in other directions. One such direction, for example, might pertain to issues relating to the field of ethics which we have touched on only indirectly. Primarily, we hope that this study will contribute in a modest way to the general endeavor of East-West comparative philosophy, underscore the significance of such endeavors and emphasize the intimate relation between the concerns of the philosophy of religion and those of logic, epistemology and ontology.

Before commencing with our study, we should attempt to clarify the rationale behind the decision to compare aspects of the philosophy of Nishida with aspects of Sartrean phenomenological ontology. Some may wonder, for example, why we did not choose to compare Nishida with Heidegger. It is well known that important studies by Japanese and Westerners alike have been made with respect to Nishida and Heidegger. And this topic remains, in our estimation, a fertile field for investigation. The "topological" thinking evident in Heidegger's later thought offers some strikingly similar inclinations to that of Nishida. It is unfortunate that Nishida only had occasion to be aware of Heidegger's early thought which he came to regard as failing to escape subjectivism. It is interesting to speculate as to possible interaction between the thinking of Nishida and Heidegger after the latter's "turning" (**Kehre**). Ultimately, Nishida and Heidegger both express a kind of topological logic of correlation which rejects the tendency of Hegelian and Marxist dialectics to view the positive and the negative as resolved in a higher synthesis, opting instead to preserve the incessant flow of their opposition and complementarity.

There was significant interest in Sartre in the years following World War II. Apparently some Japanese scholars were intrigued by Sartre's announcement that "existentialism is a humanism." Unfortunately, there apparently has never

been any significant comparative study with respect to Sartre and Nishida. It is interesting to speculate as to Nishida's reaction to Sartre. Sartre's opposition to subjectivistic idealism could well have been of interest to Nishida. Furthermore, the lack of "dialectical thinking" which Nishida reports as disappointing with respect to Heidegger can hardly be associated with Sartre.

In any case, we are intrigued by the possibilities of comparison with Sartre not only because of significant similarities, but also because of the apparently radical divergencies. Why, for example, does Heidegger echo Lao-tzu in appreciating the significance of "emptiness" in the case of a jug, a wheel or a room and express this as a metaphor for the human being, whereas Sartre's tendency is to characterize nothingness as "a worm in the heart of being"?* Why, again, does Nishida associate religious consciousness with the "place of absolute nothingness," whereas Sartre is compelled to discard the religious inclination as the yearning to be God, an impossible synthesis between "being-for-itself" and "being-in-itself"? Why does Sartre find himself up against an irresolvable dualism which Nishida is unperturbed by? These ontological divergencies are compelling, not only because they lead to

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* See "Das Ding" (the thing) in Vortrage und Aufsatze (Poetry, Language, Thought), (Pfullingen: Neske, 1967).

radically different philosophies of religion, but especially because they derive from an uncanny similitude of foundational premises.

Finally, we should say that our primary bibliographical agenda for this sojourn will involve, in relation to Sartre, a focus on his The Transcendence of the Ego (La Transcendance de L'Ego) and Being and Nothingness (L'Être et le Néant). For secondary resources on Sartre we shall use Stephen Light's Shuzo Kuki and Jean-Paul Sartre, and we should acknowledge the influence of Thomas King's Sartre and the Sacred. As for articles, we are encouraged by William Bossart's essay, "Sartre's Theory of Consciousness and the Zen Doctrine of No-Mind," and by Gerald J. Larson's "Classical **Sāmkhya** and the Phenomenological Ontology of Jean-Paul Sartre."

As for Nishida's writings, we shall be concerned primarily with his An Inquiry into the Good, translated by Masao Abe and Christopher Ives, in part one of this study. In part two, we shall initially focus on Intuition and Reflection in Self-Consciousness and later turn to a compilation of essays translated and introduced by Robert Schinzinger, entitled Intelligibility and the Philosophy of Nothingness. Finally, we shall focus on Nishida's final essay, "The Logic of **Topos** and the Religious Worldview," as translated by Yusa Michiko, as well as that translated and

introduced by David Dilworth in a volume entitled Last Writings: Nothingness and the Religious Worldview. Some of the notable articles we will use which are germane to Nishida are: David Dilworth's "Nishida's Final Essay: The Logic of Place and a Religious World-View," Lothar Knauth's "Life is Tragic: The Diary of Nishida Kitaro," Matao Noda's "East-West Synthesis in Kitaro Nishida," Gino Piovesana's "The Philosophy of Nishida Kitaro 1870-1945," Takeuchi Yoshinori's "The Philosophy of Nishida, an Interpretation," Valdo Viglielmo's "Nishida Kitaro: The Early Years," and with respect to both Nishida and Sartre: David Dilworth and Hugh Silverman's "A Cross-Cultural Approach to the De-Ontological Self-Paradigm," to mention only a few.

PART ONE

THE STANDPOINT OF PURE EXPERIENCE

CHAPTER I

THE INCEPTION OF A CENTRAL CONCEPT

We shall begin this study with four primarily expository chapters on the early thought of Nishida Kitaro who is considerably less known to western scholars than the French existentialist, Jean-Paul Sartre. For the most part, we shall not commence with any attempts at comparative analysis till chapter five.

Published in 1911, only one year after he became assistant professor at Kyoto University, A Study of Good or An Inquiry into the Good (**Zen no Kenkyu**; hereafter abbreviated as **ZnK**) won immediate acclaim and was the launching of Nishida's career. It is also in this work that we find the initial formulation of a current of ideas to be developed and refined over the next thirty-five years in voluminous writings. Although he later came to see the work as immature and overladen with a kind of psychologism, he also came to see the concept of "pure experience"--which constitutes the integral foundation of **ZnK**--as central to each philosophical turning point that was to come. The so-called "standpoint of pure experience" was still the essential generative root in the unraveling of such later concepts as "self-consciousness" (**jikaku**), "place" (**basho**) and the "place of nothingness" (**mu no basho**). Because of the pervasive importance of the concept of "pure experience" throughout Nishida's writings and in connection with other

important ideas, it is necessary to begin our study by considering this concept and viewing it in the context of Nishida's early work in which it first appeared.

It has been claimed that apart from the notion of "pure experience" ZnK would be a mere rehashing of Berkeley, Spinoza and German transcendentalism. As it turns out, however, Nishida has in his own original fashion, transformed categories drawn from these sources through the mediation of James' "radical empiricism" and Bergson's vitalism. The result is an expression of a standpoint which has profound existential and religious import. In his study of Nishida's diary, Life is Tragic, Lothar Knauth characterizes Nishida's early work from 1897 to ZnK as a period of "initial consolidation" in which individual and religious experience are emphasized. It is necessary for us to examine portions of Znk, not only because of the pervasive importance of the concept of "pure experience" which was initially formulated in this work, but also because our own concerns and our comparative considerations in relation to Sartre will eventually focus on the existential and religious standpoints of the respective philosophers. It is also imperative for us to consider ZnK in order that later we may properly view aspects of the formulation of Nishida's "logic of Basho" in terms of its germination from this early stage.

ZnK is divided into four sections: (1) "Pure

Experience," (2) "Reality," (3) "The Good," and (4) "Religion." The first three sections are intended to lead up to the religious and existential concerns of the last section. It is already indicated in the first section that Nishida considers "pure experience" to be the quintessential religious intuition. The religious nuances of Nishida's concept of "pure experience" will be of particular interest to us in this study and in relation to Sartrean phenomenological ontology for reasons which can only be disclosed gradually in the course of our investigations. At this point we can only indicate that our concern here will eventually lead us to ponder how it can be that two philosophers of such diverse origins can express similar premises with regard to their respective theories of consciousness and then be led to conclusions which are often diametrically opposed, particularly in reference to their respective philosophies of religion. Because of the nature of our concerns, in this chapter we will focus primarily on the first section entitled "Pure Experience" and the final section entitled "Religion," making comparative observations with regard to Sartrean phenomenological ontology along the way.

We may recall at the outset that in his introductory chapter to Being and Nothingness (L'Être et le Néant; hereafter abbreviated as **EN**) Sartre commends the progress made by Husserlian and Heideggerian phenomenology in helping

to eliminate many "embarrassing dualisms" from philosophy. Dualisms are considered embarrassing because they oblige us to elucidate the relation between the dual realities which are proposed, often a somewhat ill-fated task. The Cartesian view of the mind as spiritual substance and matter as pure extension in space, for example, leads us to the perplexing problem of the relation of two fundamentally independent substances. In general terms, Sartre finds the dualisms of appearance and essence, appearance and being, interiority and exteriority, potency and act to be especially embarrassing. Although he commends the success which Husserl and Heidegger had in eliminating these embarrassing dualisms, he finds their progress to be negligible. It is of interest to consider how Sartre would have viewed Nishida in this context.

In the first section of **ZnK** we encounter Nishida's initial expressions with respect to the relations involved in the classical dualisms of mind-matter, subject-object, et cetera. Such "dualisms" are to be regarded as the superimpositions of abstraction upon immediate experience. In expressing his view of the immediacy of experience prior to such superimposition, Nishida borrowed the phrase "pure experience" from William James. It seems that he had aligned himself with the Jamesian rejection of the atomistic psychology developed by classical British empiricism. He also associated himself with the Jamesian rejection of the

epistemology of sensationalism found in modern positivism. Some doubt has been cast on the degree to which Nishida actually appreciated James' intent at this stage in his career, but it is clear that he found the terminology of "pure experience" most useful in these initial attempts to develop his central notions which only much later become refined into an explicitly Buddhistic ontology.*

On the first page of ZnK Nishida indicates that the phrase "pure experience" is intended to be synonymous with that of "direct experience." The manifestations of such experience are said to be exemplifiable in numerous ways. It is recognizable in experiences as varied as the perception of colors, the experience of infants and even a certain genre of artistic and religious **Erlebnis** (experience). However, whatever its specifiable manifestation, Nishida characterizes such experience as pertaining to the moment of seeing or hearing which precedes any judgment "that this seeing or hearing is related to something external or that one is feeling this sensation." (1990:1) It is, rather, a standpoint which pertains to that which occurs prior even to the judgment "of what the

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* The discrepancies between the Nishidean and the Jamesian notions of "pure experience" were made the subject of careful study by David Dilworth entitled, "The Initial Formations of 'Pure Experience' in Nishida Kitaro and William James" (1969). Our own concern with the divergency from James will be the focus of chapter five, part one.

color or sound might be." (1990:1) This standpoint is said to be given when one experiences directly one's conscious state prior to any dichotomization into subject and object or whole and part. In such experiences we may know reality "just as it is," and we are said to come to know it by entirely abandoning the "artifices of the self." Nishida explains that experience in this sense is called "pure" in order to signify "the state of experience just as it is without the least addition of deliberative discrimination." (1).

In concluding this initial chapter, we take the opportunity to observe that there appears to be a certain kinship between "pure experience" and Sartre's notion of a "pre-reflective **cogito**" wherein there is no judgment or knowledge regarding oneself as conscious of an object, but only an implicit consciousness of being conscious of an object. We can also note that Nishida's reference to the "artifices of the self" is reminiscent of Sartre's notion of "bad faith."

We will return to consider such analogies later in this study. Presently, we turn to further examine the characteristics of Nishida's concept of "pure experience."

CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS OF NISHIDA'S CONCEPT OF "PURE EXPERIENCE"

The Emptiness of "True Consciousness"

Dilworth sees Nishida's divergence from James as already evident in the expressions at the beginning of **ZnK** which pertain to pre-reflective, pre-conceptual experience. He explains that, unlike James,

> . . . Nishida's main point is to empty experience of all content--i.e. intellectual content, meaning content--by a reductionism of all mental phenomena to present experiential immediacy, which is its 'purest' form. Or again, it is to find such experience already 'empty,' prior to the superimposition of intellectual meanings. (1969:96)

If this is an apt portrayal of Nishida's intent at this stage, it may be that the Buddhist doctrine of emptiness or **sunyata** is an implicit concern here, as Dilworth himself suggests. Apart from our interest in relating Nishida's preconceptual immediacy of experience to Sartre's "pre-reflective **cogito**," we may in passing note the affinity between Nishida's non-substantialist account of consciousness and that of Sartre. We may recall Sartre's insistence that "consciousness has no content." For Sartre, all "content" is on the side of the object. Even the ego cannot be considered an "inhabitant" of consciousness.

If we follow Nishida through the stages of his thought we can discern that after taking a rather circuitous route, in which his concepts are refined through interaction with

Hegelian dialectics, one can begin to see expressions in Nishida's writing which indicate a view which is in some respects similar to Sartre's but with some significant differences. Dilworth has observed that sixteen years after ZnK, in his From the Acting to the Seeing (Hataraku mono kara miru mono e) (1927), Nishida asserts that "true consciousness" reflects the object truly as it is because it itself is truly empty. Although Sartre's relative reticence with respect to "authenticity" is as notable as the penetrating intricacy of his discourse on inauthenticity, or "bad faith," Nishida's talk of "true consciousness" brings to mind Sartre's assertion that, "The first procedure of a philosophy ought to be to expel things from consciousness and to reestablish its true connection with the world . . ." (1956:11)

Memories and Abstract Thoughts

In speaking of the kinds of psychical phenomena which constitute "pure experience" Nishida observes that not only feeling and perception but all mental phenomena are directly experienced "in the present." Memories of the past and abstract thoughts are also directly experienced. Recollection of the past may take place in the present, although "When one makes judgments about it, it ceases to be a pure experience." (1990:4) Drawing from James' Principles of Psychology (1890), he states that the mathematical concept of a triangle, which is representative

of all triangles, is an expression of representative elements and, as such, is "nothing more than a kind of feeling." And so not only memories of the past but also the abstract elements of conceptual representation are to be considered as kinds of feelings in the present.

Is Pure Experience Simple or Complex?

Having said this, Nishida endeavors to elaborate further on the characteristics of "pure experience." He discusses, for example, the question whether "pure experience" is simple or complex. When we consider such experience in terms of memories or abstract concepts, it would certainly appear to be complex. However, he says, no matter how complex "pure experience" is, "at the moment it occurs, pure experience is always a simple fact." (1990:5) Furthermore, an analysis of this one simple event is no longer "pure experience" itself. Secondly, this does not mean that it is limited to a single area of interest. Although the "focus of consciousness is always in the present," and in this sense "pure experience" may be identifiable with the sphere of attention, it cannot be limited to its focus since it takes place in a continuation of time. Nishida explains that, "Without adding the least bit of thought, we can shift our attention within the state where subject and object have not yet separated." (1990:6) Finally, the so-called "purity" of direct experience "does not arise from the consolidation of what psychologists call

simple mental elements;" it has to do with the "strict unity of concrete consciousness." (1990:6)

A Single System of Consciousness

Consciousness, Nishida explains, is not something arising as a fusion of single psychic elements; rather, it constitutes a "single system." (6) To exemplify this point he claims that the basic unitive and direct form of the system of consciousness in a child is never lost even though it is out of the indeterminate agitation of the consciousness of the newborn child that several diverse conscious states develop. According to Nishida, the systematic and spontaneous development of consciousness does nothing to mitigate its strict unity nor does it cause us to lose the "standpoint of pure experience."

In his chapter entitled "Thought," he elaborates on this idea of a systematically developing consciousness. He takes the view that the systematic development of consciousness in no way contradicts the "standpoint of pure experience." Such systematic development is the "original form of consciousness." As long as consciousness remains self-developmental, we remain grounded in "pure experience." Nishida claims that this holds true with respect to perceptual and representational experiences. He cites Goethe's experience of composing a poem while dreaming, as an example of how, "When a system of representations develops by itself, the event as a whole is a pure

experience." (1990:7) The claim here is that when a representational experience is "strictly combined with a sensation" and "its unity occurs by itself," the representational character of the experience does not mitigate its character as a whole, that is, its concrete immediacy. However, when representational experience is reflectively "detached from the unity realized in the present and related to some other consciousness, it is no longer a present experience, for it has become meaning." (7)

If representational experience and "pure experience" arise from a "single system of consciousness," Nishida is no less emphatic as to the ultimate overall unity of consciousness over time and between individual consciousnesses. From the "standpoint of pure experience," the unity of consciousness never entails any absolute distinction between itself and other unities of consciousness. Nishida asserts that,

> If we acknowledge that my consciousness of yesterday and today are independent and at the same time one consciousness in that they both belong to the same system, then we can recognize the same relationship between one's own consciousness and that of others. (1990:44)

The Spontaneous Character of Consciousness

Nishida also explains that a "system of consciousness" differentiates and develops even though it is unitary like an organism or a dream. Stating first that "all

consciousness is impulsive," he refers to the suggestions of voluntarist thinkers that "the will is the basic form of consciousness" and that the form of the development of the will is in a broad sense equivalent to "the form of the development of consciousness." These considerations are intended to lend support to the description of the unifying action of consciousness manifest in the concrete immediacy of direct experience. In direct experience "there is no gap between the demands of the will and their fulfillment" and it is in this aspect that "pure experience" can be seen as "an animated state with maximum freedom . . . ." (1990:8) The basic characteristic of will in this sense has to do with its action in the present rather than with desire in regard to the future. The will in the present is the "impulsive" or spontaneous will as distinct from the "selective will."* Nishida explains that from the viewpoint of the "selective will" it may appear that the control of the "impulsive will" is a constraint. However, he says, "In a selective will, freedom has already been lost; yet when we train the will, it again becomes impulsive." (8)

* Nishida's "selective will" is comparable to Sartre's "voluntary deliberation." It is deceptive in character and indicates a loss of freedom. Similarly, Sartre asserts that "voluntary deliberation is always a deception." (1956:581)

The Relation between Meanings or Judgments and Pure Experience

At the close of this first chapter Nishida embarks on considerations regarding the precise relation between meaning and "pure experience." Citing Schopenhauer's The World as Will and as Idea (**Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung**) [1819], Nishida also observes that, unlike the will, the unity of the action of thought is merely subjective. The will, on the other hand, unites subject and object in a state prior to conceptualization and as such is always in the present. Anticipating Nishida's later thought, we might say here that in the fulfilled will there is no longer any distance between the willing noetic act and the willed noematic object. As regards this pre-conceptual state, Nishida asserts that "it is devoid of meaning." (1990:8) Meanings and judgments of experience are said to be mere indicators of a relationship with another experience and never an enrichment of the content of the experience itself. In Dilworth's view, Nishida is expressing here a kind of "Zen phenomenalism" of present immediacy, although he chooses to avoid any explicit allusions to Zen. Meanings and judgments are said to emerge from the uniting of "present consciousness to past consciousness." This is said to be necessarily the case since "we cannot leave the sphere of pure experience" which is always focused in present immediacy. (1990:9)

Still, with meaning and judgment we confront the unifying action of consciousness which strives to unify past and present consciousness "in a greater system of consciousness." When one has determined that a certain sound is the sound of a bell, "one has merely established the sensation's position relative to past experiences." (1990:9) This same unifying action, however, in giving birth to meaning and judgment, also brings the destruction of the unity endemic to "pure experience." In other words, they imply external relations. According to Nishida, meaning and judgment are said to be **states of both unity and disunity** in different degrees. One may observe that when judgments are strictly disciplined, as when one becomes proficient at a craft, they manifest a unity which exhibits the "form of pure experience." Apart from the special case of proficiency in an art or craft, there must be a "unifying consciousness which makes these relationships possible." (1990:10) This "unifying consciousness" must exist in the "background" of the disunities evident in the consciousness of external relations which constitute meaning and judgment. Similarly, "development through differentiation is the activity of a still greater unity." (10) Hence, in Nishida's view, "pure experience" and judgment "are different facets of one and the same thing." (10) They are representatives of "both sides" of the same "identical consciousness."

The Origin of Judgment

It is evident that Nishida sees himself as contradicting the view that reflective activity and "pure experience are "totally different mental activities." (1990:13) Citing James's essay, entitled "The World of Pure Experience," Nishida makes the assertion that "even the consciousness of relations is a kind of experience--so we realize that the activity of thinking constitutes a kind of pure experience." (13) Nishida takes the view that in exploring relations thought cannot go beyond the basic "intuition" upon which it is built. This view has some affinity with Sartre's assertion that the "pre-reflective **cogito**" is homologous with the reflective **cogito**, and with his assertion that the "pre-reflective **cogito**" is "the first condition of all reflection." (1956:121) Let us consider Nishida's view of the origin of that rudimentary form of reflection known as "judgment."

Nishida begins Chapter Two of **ZnK**, entitled "Thought," by stating that in the view of psychology thought is that activity which establishes relationships among representations and unifies them. As that form which can determine the relationship between as few as two representations, judgment is said to be the simplest form. He explains, however, that judgment does not derive from the synthetical unification of two independent representations. Rather, "we are actually analyzing a single representation

in its entirety." (1990:11) He gives as an example the judgment that "a horse runs." This judgment is said to derive from the direct experience of "a running horse," of which we have only a single representation. The situation is said to be one in which "Facts of pure experience always underlie judgments . . . ." (11) Nishida adds the qualification that this does not mean that initially there is always a complete representation and that analysis follows immediately from this. He explains that there are also instances wherein an initial representation is followed by the emergence of various associations in which a particular association is eventually selected and a judgment follows.

Nishida goes on to clarify the extent of the claim about "pure experience" always being at the origin of judgment by asserting its application not only to judgment in the case of facts, but in the case of abstract logical or mathematical propositions as well. Geometric axioms, for example, are founded on "a kind of intuition." Inevitably there must be the experience of a certain "unifying factor" from which thought emerges. This is said to be true even in the case of abstract concepts wherein a comparison is made leading to a judgment. In other words, "direct experience" is also applicable to "the consciousness of relationships" at the foundation of purely logical judgment. Nishida cites Locke in support of his view that logical knowledge requires

a "step by step" procedure wherein intuitive proof is "at the root of each judgment." In those cases wherein one combines various judgments to effect a conclusion, although there may not be an actual intuition which unifies the whole, there is alogical intuition which unifies all relationships. An example of such a case is the judgment that the earth must be moving.

We turn now to consider the characteristics of the will from the standpoint of "pure experience." We do this because Nishida's notion of the will is a crucial aspect of his theory of consciousness.

CHAPTER III

THE SPONTANEITY OF VOLITION

In Chapter Three, entitled "The Will," Nishida endeavors to examine the characteristics of the will from the "standpoint of pure experience" and to clarify the relationship between the will and intelligence. In our perusal of Chapter One of ZnK we encountered Nishida's distinction between the "impulsive will" and the "selective will." In Chapter Three, however, he will attempt to elaborate on the characteristics of the will in greater detail. He begins by observing that the will generally makes action its objective. As such, it accompanies action. It remains, however, a psychical phenomenon which is inherently distinct from action as it is manifest externally. Whether or not a certain action becomes manifest, the will remains the will. For this reason, Nishida says that "action is not a necessary condition of the will." (1990:20)

Dissatisfied with our usual tendency to think of the will as possessing some particular kind of "force" available to be brought to bear on objects which we have knowledge of, Nishida proposes that will is actually only a modality of the act of attention involved in knowledge from the start. He says that, "To will something is to direct attention to it." (1990:21) He also claims that the objects of a willed act of attention are "actually facts that exist within consciousness" and that as we always will our own states of

attention, there is in this actually no distinction between the internal and the external. (1990:21) He says that this does not mean that the scope of attention is limited to the will, but that the will is something that emerges as we become absorbed in the sphere of our attentions. The character of a representation which absorbs one's attentions, depends on the "system of attention" to which it belongs. The representation of a cup of water in the memory may become an object of knowledge, but when the same representation is a focal point of one's own activity and provokes some movement (e.g. reaching for the "cup") it functions as an objective of the will. Whether the representation involved is an object of knowledge or an objective of the will, the activity remains a development within an original act of attention. The mode of this development is the "system of attention."

Nishida, therefore, proposes that representations of the will and representations of knowledge are similar and "the distinction between the will and knowing is merely relative." (1990:22) Willing and knowing pertain to distinct systems in the development of consciousness, but are never wholly differentiable. In willing we experience "strong feelings" and a general "sensation of tension." Albeit perhaps weaker, similar feelings also accompany the activity of knowing. In both cases there is a yearning, a struggle. Both activities aspire toward a certain congruence

with the object. In the case of knowing, our knowledge is said to be authentic if it coincides with objective reality. This may require an adjustment in one's ideals so as to accord with objective facts. Conversely, the effective realization of the will may require a modification in the objective facts so as to accord with one's ideals. In knowledge, we discover. In volition, we produce. Both activities aim at a certain appropriation of the object involved.

There is an apparent equivocation in Nishida's discussions as regards willing and knowing in "pure experience." Although we are led to associate "pure experience" with the realized-will and with knowledge attained, some passages encourage the reader to view "pure experience" as a process wherein the will is continually being realized and wherein knowledge is continually being attained. It may be that we can interpret it as such a process and yet regard the "standpoint of pure experience" as pertaining to the culmination of the process wherein there is no longer any dichotomy between the willing and the willed, between knowing and the known. Evidently, the distinction between willing and knowing is also abrogated when viewed from the standpoint of "pure experience." Nishida explains that,

> Together they constitute a process through which a universal reality systematically actualizes itself. The culmination of their unity is truth,

and at the same time this culmination is praxis. (1990:26)

Apropos of this, Nishida inquires as to whether "truth" can exist apart from the subject. He claims that when viewed from the standpoint of "pure experience" there is no such thing as an object divorced from the subject. Truth, he says, is that which unifies our experiential facts. Reminiscent of pragmatism, he characterizes so-called "objective truth" as the "most effective" system of representations. To know the truth is "to unify our experience." If we associate the "authentic self" with this unifying activity, he adds, "then to know the truth is to accord with this greater self, to actualize it." (1990:24)

Of course, we may wonder if there are no truths independent of the self which have to do with the "external world." Nishida notes that "external world" refers to both our bodies and to other material things. We feel, however, that we can control our bodies freely and not external objects. Changes in the external world are regarded as occuring only under "specific conditions," whereas changes in the movement of the body are anticipated. Despite such distinctions, Nishida insists that **all** changes in the external world can be regarded as changes in our "world of consciousness"--"that is, as a change within pure experience." (1990:25) From such a standpoint, he adds, fulfillment of knowledge and fulfillment of volition have

the same character.

As regards the claim that the will is free, Nishida asks what this so-called freedom is. He says that desire is something which is basically a given, that "we cannot produce it freely." (1990:25) We tend to think that we are free to desire anything, but that only means that it is possible to desire. Actual desires are imparted under specific conditions. Only when we operate in accordance with a certain "most profound motive," do we feel that we are active and free.* We feel a sense of constraint if we act in opposition to such a motive. Authentic freedom correlates with the systematic development of consciousness. This systematic development is such that one is identified with actualized motives. Nishida denies, however, that these "motives of reality" originate in some kind of "transcendental self" external to the will. There is, he says, "no such mystical power." If such a power really made such decisions, these decisions "would be fortuitous and anything but free." (25)

As we have seen, Nishida rejects what he calls the dogma of an absolute distinction between will and

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* Nishida's notion of a "most profound motive" is reminiscent of Sartre's concept of the ultimate "motive" of one's "original project." (1956:581) Generally speaking, Sartre uses the term "motive" (**mobile**) to refer to the "ensemble of desires, emotions and passions" which impel one to accomplish a particular act.

intelligence. He takes the stance that as events of "pure experience" there is no distinction. Together, they are "processes" wherein the unity is systematically realized. From another angle, however, Nishida finds it legitimate to see the same "development of consciousness" as a series of "clashes" between various systems allowing the emergence of the distinction between the ideal and the actual, and between the subjective world and the objective world. When the unifying state of "pure experience" is lost, both the desires of the will and thoughts in the intelligence, which are also a kind of desire, are states of disunity wherein the distinction between the ideal and the actual emerges. It is from these states of disunity, however, that the state of unity in "pure experience" derives.

Nishida explains that the various associations which arise with respect to an object are like extensions which are attached to it. It is these attachments which constitute what we call knowledge. This systematic extensional development in consciousness is "the activity of the will." (1990:28) Of course, since that which focuses attention on the solution to any kind of problem is the will, even the act of drinking tea is in itself an act of the will. However, if there is taste-testing, it becomes knowledge. Even so, the act of testing is still volitional. Nishida concludes that the will has a kind of primacy over cognition. The will, he says, "is a more fundamental system

of consciousness" in contrast to knowing. It is the very "center of unity." (1990:28) He explains that the distinction lies in this and not in the content involved in various activities. Although reason and desire appear to be opposed, he continues, they have some "identical characteristics." The "demand of reason" may be viewed as the demand for a greater unity, for a trans-individual unity. It may be viewed as the "manifestation of a great, trans-individual will." (28)

CHAPTER IV

THE UNIFYING INTUITION

Nishida devotes Chapter Four (Part One) of ZnK to what he describes as the intuition which unifies all relationships and which is the "pure experience" of abstract relations. In this chapter he reveals that he considers the "unifying intuition," or "intellectual intuition" (**Intellectuelle Anschauung**) to be a religious intuition which has primacy over both thought and the will. The "unifying intuition" is "an intuition of ideal, usually trans-experiential things." (1990:30) It is comparable to ordinary perception, "but with respect to content, intellectual intuition is far richer and more profound." (30) This, he observes, is often considered to be a kind of mystical ability or a capacity of the imagination and is thought to be detached from ordinary experience and from "ordinary perception." (30) However, the "unifying intuition" is **not**, for Nishida, some kind of specialized capacity which is detached from the ordinary. Even ordinary intellectual perception is a highly structured activity which manifests "ideal elements."

Citing Schelling, Nishida argues that from the standpoint of the ultimate identity (**Identität**) of "pure experience" there can be no strict distinction between "ordinary intellectual perception" and "intellectual

intuition."* Any such distinctions "derive from an intuition that transcends them." (1990:31) The unifying "intellectual intuition," he goes on to explain, is distinct only in that it is "that which deepens and enlarges our state of pure experience" and is "the manifestation of a great unity in the systematic development of consciousness." (1990:32) There would be no such thing, he says, if consciousness were merely a "thing of sensory characteristics." Such an "ideal spirit," however, demands the infinite unity to which "ordinary perceptual intuition" has no access.

Nishida also observes that both "ordinary perceptual intuition" and "intellectual intuition" are traditionally thought to be passive states. Contrary to such views, he argues that neither form of intuition is passive. He says that true "intellectual intuition" is the "unifying activity in pure experience." (32) He also likens it to the spirit of art. A certain unifying factor, he says, is operative in the complex activity of an artist at work. He warns, however, that as a creative activity, "intellectual intuition" is not a purely subjective function. Although it sounds as if it were subjective, it actually refers to a

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* Schelling asserted the identity of the subjective and objective, the ideal and real, the infinite and finite, and the unconscious and conscious. He regarded this identity as the "absolute" which we only have access to through "intellectual intuition."

state that transcends, and is the basis of, the opposition between subject and object.

Nishida also warns that we are not to confuse this intuition with the direct perception of an abstract generality divorced from concrete actuality. "Intellectual intuition" **must be grounded in concrete actuality.** All abstracted relations are rooted in and established by this intuition. No matter how far thought may be extended in exploring relations, "we cannot go beyond basic intuition, for thought is established upon it." (1990:33) In asserting that only thought can **explain** and that intuition cannot, we tend to forget that the explanations of thought require basic intuitions.

In the next chapter we shall consider Nishida's views on the "unifying intuition of pure experience" in relation to aspects of James' "radical empiricism" and Sartre's theory of consciousness in general terms. We will not, however, attempt a more probing comparative analysis until Part Two of this study, where we will consider Nishida and Sartre in relation to certain facets of Husserlian phenomenology. At this point, we can observe in passing that Nishida's denial that consciousness is merely "a thing of sensory characteristics," and his descriptions of the "unifying intuition" as an activity which is far from being passive, are reminiscent of aspects of the Sartrean theory of consciousness. Nishida and Sartre concur in asserting the

spontaneous, active and non-substantial character of consciousness. They both also reject subjectivism, idealist notions of an **independent** realm of ideas and the notion that there is a specialized mystical ability in consciousness detached from the ordinary.

Despite certain similarities, however, it is clear that Nishida's viewpoint is radically distinct from Sartre's when he characterizes "true religious awakening" as a kind of intuition. He is not dissimilar from Sartre in asserting that there is no self apart from intuition or in identifying the self with the "unifying intuition." The Sartrean "for-itself" might be called a "unifying intuition" since it organizes the intuited appearance of the "in-itself" into a "world." However, Nishida also identifies this "unifying intuition" with religious enlightenment, an identification which Sartre disallows. He describes this enlightenment as a "deep grasp of life" which the "sword of logic" cannot penetrate and which desire cannot affect.

Thus, as distinct from Sartre as Nishida appears to be in some of these characterizations, the idea that there is no self apart from intuition is reminiscent of how, for Sartre, there is no self apart from the "pre-reflective **cogito.**" Furthermore, the Sartre's "pre-reflective **cogito**" is manifest both as a "subject" and as at least a **kind** of unity. On the other hand, as we shall see, it is also the foundation of a certain sort of **struggle** for unity. For at

least in its **reflective** endeavors to unify its experiences, the self finds itself engaged in an ongoing and ultimately futile struggle. Ironically, the "self" always escapes a unity which is "always indicated" and which it is always seeking. From this point of view, then, a "unifying intuition," in Sartrean terms, must always be regarded as a quest for a kind of unity which can never be fulfilled. In the coming chapters we shall see how the characterization of consciousness as an insatiable quest for such unity has a certain religious significance for Sartre, but very different than for Nishida. We might say that it is fundamental to Sartre's "religious atheism."

In the last section of ZnK Nishida begins to express his notion of the exigent character of the religious attitude, a viewpoint which is also expressed thirty-four years later in his last essay [1945]. He asserts that the "religious demand" is an appeal concerning "the life of the self." (1990:149) It is the search for an ultimate unity, a unity which we have access to only through the "intellectual intuition" found in "pure experience." Nishida explains that the religious exigency is both the "demand for the unity of consciousness" and the "demand for union with the universe." (1990:152) It is, then, the "deepest and greatest demand of the human mind." (152) There is no "religion," he says, apart from the life of the self, and the demands of genuine religion are those of life itself.

In associating the religious urge with the life of the self, Nishida expresses a kind of Buddhistic existentialism. Hitherto, however, it is not entirely clear what he has in mind when he speaks of "religion." He claims that genuine religion seeks "the transformation of the self and the renovation of life." (1990:159) The true religious attitude is not based on the selfish desire for merit or the fear of punishment. It is vain and selfish, he says, to pray with the thought of rebirth in some sort of paradise as the object. In Christianity, as well, "relying on God's help or fearing God's punishment falls short of true Christianity." (1990:158) Desire for the reward of paradise and fear of the punishment of hell are mere expressions of selfishness and are in no sense constitutive of true religious motivations.

Nishida is also quick to question whether the "religious demand" could have anything to do with striving on behalf of peace for the self. Peace, he says, is a result of the genuine religious attitude. In taking peace for the self as motivation, one erroneously endeavors to find the significance of religion "by ridding themselves of any active temperament and leading a passive life with little passion and anguish." (1990:150) Not only is the motivation erroneous, but such an approach fails to confront the reality of the "religious demand" as the "great demand of life" which cannot be extinguished.

Our spiritual life is that which endeavors to unify everything in relation to the self. Inevitably, however, we find that there are limitations to how much unity we can maintain or develop with individual desires as the center. The world is not created on behalf of the individual alone, and so the individual life "inevitably conflicts with the outside world; in the inner world it inevitably falls into contradiction." (1990:150) Consequently, it is requisite that we come to recognize that there is a greater demand than individual demands--that there is the demand for "an even greater unity." (150) Although the most abiding and powerful desire is to center the self somehow in the universe of its experience, in the process of discovering the true center the individual self comes to realize the relative nature of its perspective by taking the standpoint of "pure experience." Consequently, the demand for unity becomes the demand for a greater unity--the demand for the largest experience of the self as unifying center.

We might say that what distinguishes Nishida's account of direct experience is this demand for a greater and trans-individual unity. In "pure experience" the individual gains access to this greater unity, consequently he becomes aware of the individual, psychological ego from a trans-individual or transcendental vantage point. Thus "experience," in its purest form, cannot be limited to the individual ego. There is a trans-egoical, trans-individual

aspect to the consciousness of the individual in "pure experience." We may be reminded here of Sartre's assertion that "The ego is not the owner of consciousness; it is the object of consciousness." (1987:97) Nishida is saying much the same thing in reference to "pure experience." In the course of this study, we shall see that this is borne out with greater clarity in Nishida's later philosophy.

In the preceding chapters, then, we have seen that Nishida attributes the following characteristics to "pure experience:"

a) It is a concrete, organic whole.
b) It precedes any dichotomy between knower and known.
c) It pertains to an actively creative and self-developmental system of consciousness.
d) It pertains to a trans-individual unity.
e) It is the "sole reality."

We will not attempt to examine the ethical implications of "pure experience" in this study. The reader is encouraged, however, to examine Nishida's discussions of such in **ZnK**. Having surveyed the primary characteristics of "pure experience," we turn now to consider it in reference to William James and the "problem of relations."

CHAPTER V

CONCERNING A CERTAIN AMBIVALENCE TOWARD THE ISSUE OF RELATIONS

We have seen that Nishida cites Schelling by way of insisting on the ultimate "**Identität**" of all dialectical aspects in "pure experience." This means that he takes the view that there is no absolute distinction between "ordinary perceptual intuition" and "intellectual intuition." It also means that Nishida takes exception to the view that thinking and "pure experience" are "totally different mental activities." (1990:13) Early in **ZnK** Nishida cites James' essay entitled "The World of Pure Experience," and asserts that "even the consciousness of relations is a kind of experience--so we realize that the activity of thinking constitutes a kind of pure experience." (13) In an essay published in **Monumenta Nipponica** entitled "The Initial Formations of 'Pure Experience' in Nishida Kitaro and William James," (1969) David Dilworth carefully analyzes the influence of James on the early writings of Nishida and compares their respective concepts of "pure experience." Apparently Dilworth became convinced that in these writings Nishida did not fully grasp James' intent.

Dilworth suggests that Nishida was at this point focusing almost entirely on what is actually a secondary aspect of James' "radical empiricism;" that is, he was absorbed with James' description of "a condition of

experience prior to subject-object distinctions in rational analysis . . . ." (1969:103) What may indeed be a secondary aspect of Jamesian empiricism might be said to bear a certain resemblance to a primary concern of Sartre's phenomenological ontology.

We have seen, of course, how Sartre postulates the precedence of the pre-reflective **cogito** over the substantive Cartesian **cogito.** The Sartrean pre-reflective **cogito,** a condition of consciousness prior to subject-object distinctions in rational analysis, clearly bears similarity to what Dilworth has denoted as merely a secondary aspect of the Jamesian radical empiricism from whence Nishida derives the term "pure experience." This is not the place to delve into a comparative analysis of the theories of consciousness of James and Sartre. We can observe, however, that both philosophers reject the idea of consciousness as a substantial entity. Sartre, of course, describes consciousness as a "nothingness" which is individualized by its objects, although never wholly determined by past objects. It should be noted, however, that although Sartre conceives of consciousness as a "lack of being," it is also regarded as a "being" which implies the existence of a being other than itself. The transcending "being-for-itself" exists as a "nihilation" of "being-in-itself."

To emphasize his own objections to the idea that consciousness is an entity, James entitled an essay with

the rather startling query, "Does 'Consciousness' Exist?" In this essay, James argues that the word "consciousness" stands for a **function**, rather than an entity. Later in this chapter we will consider aspects of James' and Sartre's respective theories of consciousness in relation to Dilworth's critique. First, it is imperative that we consider more carefully what it is that concerns Dilworth.

As we mentioned above, Dilworth felt that Nishida was actually somewhat ambivalent toward the issue of "relations" despite his citing of James and his evident agreement that thought is also a kind of experience. Dilworth came to the conclusion that, despite the talk of thought and "pure experience" as two sides of the same consciousness, Nishida believed that intellectual contents are poorer, more abstract editions of a richer immediacy which lies in the background. Dilworth contends that the idea that there is a background or foundation which is richer than, and prior to, the abstractions of discriminating consciousness, is incompatible with James' radical empiricism. He considers it to be reminiscent of the idea that the problem of relations can be resolved by some sort of rationalistic superimposition of a trans-experiential unifying agency.

As is clarified in his Essays in Radical Empiricism (1912), James concurs with traditional empiricism in its opposition to the rationalistic emphasis on universals and wholes as prior to parts both in logic and in being.

Contrary to rationalism, James proposed to begin with the parts and to consider the whole as "a being of the second order." (1976:22) Like Hume, he would refer plural facts "neither to substances in which they inhere nor to an absolute mind that creates them as its objects." (22) James, however, explains that it is on account of a divergence from Humean empiricism on one particular that he felt obliged to append the epithet "radical." In a radical empiricism not only are the individual elements directly experienced, but "**the relations that connect experiences must themselves be experienced relations, and any kind of relation experienced must be accounted as 'real' as anything else in the system.**" (22) James felt that traditional empiricism tended to focus on disjunctive relations, even though conjunctive relations are also parts of experience. His radical empiricism sought to do "full justice to conjunctive relations," as being true in some "supernal way," without treating them in the manner of rationalism. (1976:23)

Dilworth's concern about Nishida's apparent ambivalence with respect to relations in general is applied to the relation between thought or meaning and pure experience. According to Dilworth, in **ZnK** Nishida seems to have been expressing a "mere phenomenalism of the present instant." (1969:98) Dilworth is convinced that even though there are no explicit references to Zen in **ZnK**, his position at this

point suggests a kind of "Zen phenomenalism" in which experience is richest "in its own subjective immediacy." (1969:98) Dilworth observes that, for Nishida, since we cannot leave the "sphere of pure experience," meanings and judgments emerge "by the combining of present consciousness with past consciousness." (1990:16) They are, therefore, included within the unity of a "larger system of consciousness" even though they also suggest the "destruction" of the condition of pure experience by their implication of external relations. At this point, the reductionistic language of a "larger system of consciousness," evidently utilized to resolve the externality of relations, seems to Dilworth to suggest a Kantian type of phenomenalism. The suggestion that "in the background" or "behind" phenomenal relations there is a primordial unity which causes these relations to be established strikes Dilworth as somewhat reminiscent of the transcendental **a priori** of Kantian and post-Kantian idealism and incompatible with radical empiricism's objection to rational agents of unification.

As we have noted above, James did ally his views with the opposition of traditional empiricism to the rationalistic emphasis on wholes as prior to parts. He also held that experience is the final criterion of reality in knowledge. James believed, as we have noted above, that his radical empiricism differed from traditional empiricism in

holding that not only particular things are directly experienced, but also conjunctive and disjunctive relations. The plural parts of experience, then, are held together by relations which are themselves parts of experience. In asserting this view, James saw himself as explicitly rejecting any idea that a directly experienced universe requires an extraneous trans-empirical foundation. He says, rather, that it possesses its own fluent, continuous structure. In asserting this, James saw himself as rejecting the Kantian and Hegelian use of trans-empirical categories pertaining to the unity of consciousness in order to resolve the difficulties created by the idea that experience is a collection of disparate impressions.

As mentioned above, Sartre concurs with James in rejecting the idea of consciousness as a substantial entity. Sartre, of course, turns away from empiricism because empiricism limits knowledge to sense perception. Also, Sartre felt that he had to distance himself from any philosophy which adopts epistemological considerations as a point of departure. Both rationalism and empiricism are epistemologically-centered orientations. He is insistent in his claim that being cannot be reduced to our knowledge of being. Sartre would concur with James, however, in rejecting any rationalistic suggestion of a transcendental agency in the background. Although his view of epistemology attenuates his concern with the problem of relations,

Sartre's objections to rationalism and idealism often resemble those of empiricism. Thus, Sartrean existentialism and Jamesian empiricism are both anti-substantialist in their theories of consciousness, and they both object to any suggestion of phenomenalism or any rationalistic appeal to some kind of supernal "truth" which hides behind the scene.

We have also observed that what Dilworth regards as a secondary aspect of Jamesian "pure experience" correlates with the primary inner structure of consciousness in Sartre's descriptions. Sartre's pre-reflective **cogito** is certainly prior to the abstractions of discriminating consciousness. Dilworth, of course, was concerned that Nishida's characterization of "pure experience" as a "richer immediacy" which lies "behind" cognitive abstraction, conflicts with empiricism's opposition to both rationalism and phenomenalism. As for Sartre, although he does not characterize the pre-reflective **cogito** as "richer," he is unambiguous in expressing his sense of its importance. It is the "first condition of all reflection." (1956:121)

The pre-reflective **cogito** supersedes the Cartesian reflective **cogito** in primacy. Sartre was greatly influenced by Descartes' insistence that philosophy should begin with the absolute certainty of my consciousness of myself as a thinking being. He was struck, however, by the thought that when Descartes felt that he had discovered the ground of certainty in his reflections on himself, he must have

already been aware of his certainty; he must have been pre-reflectively aware of himself reflecting. Considering Sartre's views on this matter, one might conjecture that in describing the precedence of the pre-reflective **cogito**, the spatio-temporal adverb "behind" could be employed to indicate this priority without actually violating Sartre's intent. Can we not say that the pre-reflective **cogito** is the primary structure "behind" reflective consciousness, from which reflective consciousness arises? If so, does Sartre have some proximity to the very idealist proclivities which he rejects?

If we extend such speculations to our considerations about Nishida, we might suggest that when Nishida expresses his view of intellectual content as poorer and more abstract editions of a richer immediacy behind them, he may be expressing a view which correlates somewhat with Sartre's descriptions of the pre-reflective **cogito**, even though Sartre is adamant in his stance against the rationalism and phenomenalism which James also takes opposition to.

We would still have to ask about Nishida's notion of the primordial unity of a "larger system of consciousness" which somehow causes phenomenal relations to be established. Does Nishida not, at least in this instance, violate both James' and Sartre's opposition to rationalism and phenomenalism? In any case, our intention here is primarily to raise questions with respect to Dilworth's conclusions.

We do not wish to dismiss Dilworth's concern either that the early Nishida failed to grasp the import of James' interest in the problem of relations or that Nishida violates radical empiricism's opposition to rationalism and phenomenalism. Our intention has been to take Dilworth's critique as a catalyst for reflections on these issues in conjunction with our comparative analysis of Nishida and Sartre.

It can hardly be denied that Nishida's talk of a whole, unified "system of consciousness" as **causally** "behind" the consciousness of phenomenal relations is incompatible with radical empiricism. Still, we must recall that what James objected to explicitly was the idea of any "**extraneous,**" **trans-empirical** support. It is difficult to say exactly in what sense Nishida's primordial unity of a "larger system of consciousness" is either "extraneous" or "trans-empirical." Nishida expresses a "doctrine of internal relations" and sees himself as denying the notion of any "extraneous foundation." On occasion this view takes a "panentheistic" form in his thought. We can also recall from Chapter Three of our discussions that Nishida objects to the notion of a transcendental agent behind the active will. We have seen that he affirms the trans-individual character of "pure experience." Hence, the primordial unity given in the "larger system of consciousness," and endemic to Nishida's "pure experience," may be trans-individual, but it is not thereby trans-empirical. If the existentialist dictum is

that individual existence precedes essence, Nishida's dictum here is that experience precedes the individual.

Rather than pursue this further at this point, we shall turn now to Part Two of our investigations and attempt to consider the Nishida of **ZnK** and the Sartre of **EN** in relation to aspects of Husserlian phenomenology.

PART TWO

NISHIDA AND SARTRE IN RELATION TO CERTAIN ASPECTS OF HUSSERLIAN PHENOMENOLOGY

CHAPTER VI

A CERTAIN METHODOLOGICAL AFFINITY

Before we proceed further it is essential that we survey certain aspects of Husserlian phenomenology in order to clarify the background of Sartre's thinking and because of Nishida's own occasional proximity to Husserl's approach. In his biography of Nishida, Lothar Knauth reports that it is not till after Nishida had assumed the chair of the History of Philosophy in the Philosophy Department at Kyoto University, in 1914, that Nishida begins to mention his correspondence with Rickert and Husserl in his diary. (1965:347) The lack of any discernible Husserlian influence in Nishida's early work of 1911 suggests that any proximity in their views at this point should be regarded in terms of a certain affinity of temper.

The Influence of Descartes on Nishida, Husserl and Sartre

We may begin by observing the influence of Descartes on both Sartre and Nishida. This is especially germane since it is largely by virtue of the influence of Husserl's own divergence from Descartes that Sartre, although greatly influenced by Descartes, departs from the Cartesian tradition. In adopting "pure experience" as his philosophical starting point, Nishida was also markedly influenced by Descartes. There is, furthermore, some resemblance between Nishida's orientation toward

Cartesianism and that of both Husserl and Sartre. Like many other philosophers, Sartre was haunted by Descartes' general approach to the philosophic quest. Vital components of Descartes' approach, such as the procedure of methodical doubt, with its consequent derivation of a purportedly apodictic grounding in the self as a thinking substance, and the dualism of mind and matter wherein our ideas may or may not represent or copy reality with fidelity, form the context of much of Sartre's philosophical thinking. Existentialists are, of course, inclined to concur with Descartes in seeing the object of philosophical reflection as man himself. For Sartre, however, the awareness of existence is viewed as occurring in conjunction with emotions and with the vertigo which results from the encounter with absolute freedom.

In expressing his concern with direct experience as the only suitable starting point for the philosophic enterprise, Nishida makes reference to Descartes in Part Two of **ZnK**. Initially he observes that in proposing **Cogito ergo sum** as the philosophical starting point, Descartes' formula "was no longer a fact of immediate experience, for he was already inferring 'I am.'" (1990:39) In Nishida's view, the initial proposition, "I doubt" or "I think," is already indicative of the assertion that "I am" which is an inferential conclusion in Descartes' famous formula. He quickly qualifies this criticism, however, stating that if

he were to "assume that Descartes's 'I think, therefore I am' is not an inference but an expression of the intuitive certainty that links reality and thinking, then of course Descartes' starting point would be the same as mine." (1990:40) Nishida's primary concern at this point is that he wants to distinguish his own philosophical starting point from those who regard "thinking as the starting point and most certain standard for knowledge" rather than the direct experience or intuition of facts. (40)

Husserl's phenomenological methodology is highly reminiscent of Descartes' method of doubting. Seeking a ground of certainty amidst the precarious ambiguities of ordinary experience, Descartes formulated his procedure of doubting. This methodical skepticism about the phenomenal world had the effect of disclosing a phenomenological domain which he could not doubt. Descartes found that despite his efforts to doubt the existence of a phenomenal world which is independent of consciousness, he inevitably confronted the **appearance** of such a world. Taking a cue from Descartes, Husserl adopts a similar procedure. Instead of doubting our natural beliefs, Husserl speaks of "suspending" the "natural attitude."

By "suspending" the "natural attitude," we put in abeyance our natural beliefs about causation, an external world, et cetera. This means that we eschew any judgment concerning spatio-temporal existence (**Dasein**). In reference

to this procedural proviso, in Chapter Three of the Ideas (Ideen [1913]) Husserl introduces the Greek term **epokhé** (abstention) and intends that this notion "step into the place of the Cartesian attempt at universal doubt." (1962:99) By virtue of this **epokhé**,

> **We put out of action the general thesis which belongs to the essence of the natural standpoint,** we place in brackets whatever it includes respecting the nature of Being: **this entire natural world therefore** which is continually 'there for us,' 'present to our hand,' and will ever remain there, is a 'fact-world' of which we continue to be conscious, even though it pleases us to put it in brackets. (1962:99-100)

Although Husserl concurs with Descartes that philosophical reasoning must be rigorously scientific, he insists that its methodology should be descriptive rather than deductive. Nishida, for his part, does not propose an explicitly "descriptive" methodology. He is, however, quite clear in rejecting deductive reasoning as a philosophical starting point and in putting direct or "pure" experience in its place. The region of being disclosed by Husserl's phenomenological **epokhé** "is neither more nor less than that which we refer to on essential grounds as 'pure experience (**Erlebnisse**)' . . . ." (1962:101) Husserl proposes the **epokhé** as a philosophical stipulation determined in the course of certain "purified Cartesian meditations." Nishida's approach is, similarly, formulated on the basis of Cartesian fundamentals. Nishida requires that we "discard all artificial assumptions, doubt whatever

can be doubted, and proceed on the basis of direct and indubitable knowledge." (1990:38) Although his terms are Cartesian, the "direct and indubitable knowledge" which is the intended outcome, may have more affinity with the results of Husserl's "purified" Cartesian methodology.

In his Cartesian Meditations (**Meditations Cartesiennes** [1931]) Husserl observes that Descartes brings us to the "brink of a precipice." He admits that Descartes "had the serious will to free himself radically from prejudice." (1960:23) He is concerned, however, about the extent to which scholasticism lies concealed in Cartesian philosophy, as "unclarified prejudice," and warns us to avoid being swayed by the prejudice which arises from the "admiration of mathematical natural science." Under the influence of this prejudice we are led to believe that in positing the **ego cogito** we are dealing with an apodictic "axiom" which,

> . . . in conjunction with other axioms and, perhaps, inductively grounded hypotheses, is to serve as the foundation for a deductively 'explanatory' world-science, a 'nomological' science, a science **ordine geometrico**, similar indeed to mathematical natural science. (1960:24)

For Husserl, it is additionally an incorrect procedure to take such axiomatic grounding and then conceive of the problem as one in which we are to "infer the rest of the world" by logical argumentation and in accordance with innate principles. In Husserl's view, it was under the influence of such prejudices that Descartes erred and made

the fateful shift whereby the ego becomes a **substantia cogitans.** It is also due to this fateful shift and to inferences which proceed on the basis of the principle of causality that Descartes is said to have become the father of transcendental realism, a position which Husserl will contend is absurd.

Like Husserl, Nishida advises that we strive to abandon all assumptions and through pure intuition examine what is evident in its self-givenness. Like Husserl, Nishida is wary of a procedure which takes the **ego cogito** as an axiomatic basis and in accordance with the principle of causality proceeds to infer the existence of an independent world. The independent existence of the world is, of course, an assumption of what Husserl calls the "natural attitude." Similarly, Nishida explains that,

> From the perspective of common sense, we think that things exist in the external world apart from consciousness and that in the back of consciousness there is something called the mind, which performs various functions. Our assumption that mind and matter exist independently constitutes the basis of our conduct and is itself based on the demands posed by our thinking. (1990:38)

Although the independent existence of mind and matter is generally considered an intuitive fact, Nishida contends that such natural and common assumptions are subject to doubt. Similarly, Husserl is wary of the influence of natural assumptions, but rather than pursue a skeptical approach per se, he initiates a methodology wherein the

question of existence is put in "suspension." To Husserl this approach is mandated by the principle of pure "intuition" or evidence wherein we "assert nothing we ourselves do not see." (1960:24) It is also a methodology which he employs for the express purpose of rendering the essential structures of consciousness accessible.

Although Nishida does not employ a procedure of "bracketing" off the question of existence, he is concerned to pursue a principle of pure intuition wherein we have direct knowledge of the facts "just as they are." In his view, critical thinking requires that we "discard" the assumption that mind and matter exist autonomously. Pure intuition discloses only the phenomena of consciousness. Nishida says that "To intuit things in themselves apart from our consciousness is impossible." (1990:39) We are inclined to believe in the independent existence of mind and matter by virtue of the stipulations of the law of causality. In one instance, Nishida observes that if we take the phenomena of consciousness to be a succession of constantly changing events rather than of fixed things, the issue is raised as to what the source of changing phenomena is. In his view, however, the issue emerges as a result of a hyperbolic claim relating to the law of causality.

Nishida contends that a common, albeit erroneous, interpretation of the law of causality "requires the

existence of a fixed thing-in-itself behind a phenomenon . . . ." (1990:45) He cites Hume as having recognized the correct meaning of the law of causality. The correct meaning, he says, "is that in the arising of a certain phenomenon there is of necessity a particular phenomenon that precedes it, and that this does not require the existence of something above and beyond the phenomenon." (45) According to Nishida, the law of causality is a habit of thinking. Its inadequacy as a universally applicable law becomes evident when we consider the demand that there must have been a beginning to the world. He explains that in accordance with the mandates of this law, any posited beginning must itself have a causal origin and consequently we fall into self-contradiction. Nishida also takes issue with a further claim related to the law of causality, the claim that being cannot emerge from nothingness.

Certain Reservations about the Cartesian Cogito

Husserl, Sartre and Nishida could each be described as developing their own respective quasi-Cartesian methodologies. We have seen that, like Husserl, Nishida extols philosophy which "rids itself of all existing assumptions" and returns to the direct knowledge of "facts just as they are." Somewhat similarly, Husserl had advocated a method whereby we consider "only what we can 'see'" and "return to the things themselves" ("**auf die 'Sachen selbst' zurückgehen**"). Skeptical about the rationalistic primacy

given to clear thinking, Nishida views apodictic knowledge as grounded in the pure immediate intuition of facts as they are. As we have seen, Nishida is concerned that when Descartes expressed his famous formula (**cogito ergo sum**) "his statement was no longer a fact of immediate experience, for he was already inferring 'I am.'" (1990:39) We may recall, however, that he adds that insofar as the Cartesian dictum is not taken to be an inference but rather as an expression of intuitive certainty linking reality and thinking, then of course he favors the same starting point.

Sartre, for his part, has similar reservations about the "Cartesian **cogito.**" Sartre is concerned that in the Cartesian formula, the consciousness which asserts "I am," is not actually identical with the consciousness which thinks. Like Nishida, he fears that the Cartesian **cogito** is reflective, one act of consciousness directed upon another, and that the formula is merely inferential. As such we are dealing with a derivative and secondary proposition. Descartes' formula was expressed, of course, as the result of his procedure of methodical doubt, a procedure developed in view of the philosophic demand for apodictic grounding. The Cartesian **cogito** is a doubting consciousness. When Descartes arrives at the certitude, "I doubt, therefore I am," he is already reflecting on doubt. In Sartre's view, Descartes' **cogito** reflectively posits the doubting consciousness as its object.

Sartre expressed an early concern about this in his essay, The Transcendence of the Ego (**La Transcendence de L'Ego**; hereafter abbreviated as **TE**) [1936], wherein he observes that Descartes failed to distinguish between the reflective activity of methodical doubt and the spontaneous doubt of consciousness. As a product of methodical doubt, the **cogito** is "impure" and is ambiguously posited as both the "logical result of doubt and as that which puts an end to doubt." (1987:92) Sartre concludes that the Cartesian **cogito** is reflective and its object is not itself, but an original distinct doubting consciousness. The original doubting consciousness becomes an object of reflection, but is not itself reflective. Its sole object is directly that which is deemed doubtful. In **EN**, we see that such conclusions lead Sartre to establish the **pre-reflective cogito** as the primary consciousness. This becomes his point of departure throughout his later work.

Nishida's and Sartre's reservations about the Cartesian **cogito** should not be interpreted as a complete departure from the approach which Descartes originated. In a sense, they are simply more rigorous in endeavoring to fulfill the Cartesian project. Their concerns only express their relentless adherence to the tenor of the Cartesian quest and remain indicative of Descartes' attempt to provide a philosophic starting point that survives the severity of skeptical probing: ". . . **de omnibus dubitandum.**" Nishida's

and Sartre's simultaneous indebtedness to and departure from Descartes is also, however, similar in character to the influence of Descartes on Husserl.

As we have noted, Husserl expresses reservations about Descartes in his Cartesian Meditations (1931), wherein he is skeptical of the prejudice that, under the influence of mathematical science, would posit the ego cogito as an apodictic axiom which is intended to serve in a deductive and nomological science. In Husserl's estimation, such prejudice was operative when Descartes,

> . . . introduced the apparently insignificant but actually fateful change whereby the ego becomes a **substantia cogitans**, a separate human "**mens sive animus**", and the point of departure for inferences according to the principle of causality . . . . (1960:24)

Husserl describes this change as the rationale whereby Descartes became the "father of transcendental realism." Husserl proposes to initiate a "purified Cartesian meditation" wherein we remain aloof from such a position--a position he deems "absurd"--and whereby we may "remain true to the radicalness of our meditative self-examination and therefore to the principle of pure 'intuition.'" (1960:24)

Immediate Intuition and the Rejection of Sensualistic Phenomenalism

Like Sartre, the Nishida of ZnK rejects two-realm theories of the "phenomenal" and the "noumenal." Nishida characterizes the noumenon as "something we imagine because of the demands of our thinking." (1990:45) Our thinking

demands that we extend the law of causality to phenomena in general and posit the existence of something operating behind it. In a later chapter entitled "Nature," Nishida explains that the apparently noumenal aspect of nature is actually "the fact of direct experience in which subject and object have not yet been separated." (1990:68) In direct experience there is no separation between facts and knowing. Error can occur when we judge or recollect phenomena, but in those instances we have shifted from intuition to inferential thinking. Inferential knowledge is constructed upon intuitive experience and is subject to error. Direct intuitive knowledge, however, is "simply knowledge of facts just as they are." (1990:39)

In Part One, we saw how Nishida regards thinking and judgment to be founded on intuition. It is also significant to our observations about Husserl that we emphasize that Nishidean "intuition" does not "refer simply to the activity of sensation." (1990:41) In the preface to **ZnK**, Nishida cites the influence of Ernst Mach (1836-1916) on his thinking about "pure experience" as the sole reality. (1990:xxx) He notes, however, his eventual disillusionment with Mach. Mach, of course, expresses an extreme form of empiricism, sometimes called "phenomenalism," wherein nothing is to be regarded as real except sense data. Revoking sensualistic epistemologies as he does, Nishida's eventual disillusionment with Machian phenomenalism was

inevitable. Similarly, Husserlian phenomenology is not to be confused with phenomenalism of this genre. Later we will see that Sartre insists on viewing Husserl as inadvertently expressing a kind of phenomenalism. At this point, however, our concern is to recognize this aspect of concurrence between Nishida and Husserl wherein they both revoke sensualistic phenomenalism.

We have seen that Nishida characterizes direct intuitive experience as involving more than the activity of sensation and we have noted his view that intuition is at the basis of thinking and judgment. It is evident that Husserl ascribes these same characteristics to immediate intuition. In the context of a discussion of empiricistic naturalism he asserts that

> **Immediate 'seeing' (Sehen),** not merely the sensory seeing of experience, but **seeing in general as primordial dator consciousness of any kind whatsoever,** is the ultimate source of justification for all rational statements. (1962:75-76)

Insofar as the object-giving of "dator" consciousness is primordial, it is said to have this function as the "ultimate source of justification." Although Husserl praises the motivations of empiricistic naturalism in requiring a return to the "facts themselves," he is concerned that this requirement is confused as a requirement that knowledge be grounded in experience in too narrow a sense. Having accepted the naturalistic limitation on the range of

knowable "facts," the empiricist assumes that the "primordial dator act" which we call experience is concerned only with such facts of nature.

In Husserl's view, the essential nature of judgments can be established only through insight. In other words, it must be "shown up in and through the primordial dator intuition, and fixed through judgments which faithfully fit the intuitively given data." (1962:75) The phenomenological methodology is intended to be an absolutely presuppositionless science wherein the essential nature of judgments is disclosed through pure intuition. As such, phenomenology is designed to eschew what is perceived as the erroneous assumption of empiricistic naturalism that knowledge should be delimited to the "facts of nature," or in the case of sensualistic phenomenalism, to the facts of the senses.

CHAPTER VII

HUSSERLIAN PHENOMENOLOGY AND THE GENERAL STRUCTURES OF INTENTIONAL EXPERIENCE

Although Nishida makes no mention of Husserl in his first momentous work, **ZnK** (1911), there is some interaction with Husserl in the next prominent work of his early period, Intuition and Reflection in Self-consciousness (**Jikaku ni okeru chokkan to hansei**) [1917]. Husserl was, of course, a major influence in Sartre's philosophy. To properly understand the "phenomenological ontology" expressed in **EN** (1943) it is vital to have a grasp of certain key concepts developed by Husserl. The significance of Husserlian phenomenology in relation to both Nishida and Sartre is so pronounced that it is necessary to explicate some fundamental Husserlian concepts as a part of the groundwork for our comparative study. Despite the evident absence of Husserlian influence in Nishida's **ZnK**, the significance that Husserl's thought takes in Nishida's philosophy can already be anticipated. There are also some notable similarities which apparently developed independently. Furthermore, an examination of Nishida and Sartre in relation to Husserl will help to disclose some notable similarities and differences between their respective orientations. In this chapter we shall examine some aspects of Husserlian phenomenology with respect to the general structures of intentional experience.

The Repudiation of "Psychologism"

Phenomenology is also formulated to elude what is deemed to be another misconception of empiricism, namely, "psychologism." In his A System of Logic (1843), J. S. Mill endeavored to explain syllogistic reasoning in terms of associationist psychology. Psychological theories of knowledge and valuation have since been developed by positivists and pragmatists. Psychologism emerges as an endeavor to reduce the basic laws of logic and mathematics to generalizations about the way in which the mind works. From this perspective the order in the world, as we know it, is not given in experience but is imposed by the mind. In Husserl's view the psychologistic orientation is misconceived. He argues that there is nothing to establish that it is arrived at by an examination of the pure data of experience as given. Husserl also argues that any theory which reduces logic to psychology exhibits a vicious circularity. We cannot derive rules of inference without presupposing such rules in the first place. In order to reason in psychology we are obliged to employ the laws of logic.

In a general sense Husserl's opposition to psychologism constitutes an earnest objection to any endeavor which would found philosophy on psychology. Husserl stands at the forefront of those twentieth-century philosophers who have attempted to reaffirm the autonomy of the philosophical

disciplines with respect to psychology. Husserl's acquaintance with psychologistic perspectives was particularly intimate considering that he had himself endorsed psychologism in his The Philosophy of Arithmetic (**Philosophie der Arithmetik**) [1891]. Later, in the prolegomena to his Logical Investigations (**Logische Untersuchungen**) [1900], he began to criticize the viewpoint which he had formerly endorsed. It is interesting to consider that Nishida also revoked what he considered to be his own former psychologism as a major defect of his **ZnK** (1911).

We will see that in his later work Nishida attempts to rectify an apparent defect of **ZnK**. The most serious philosophical problem which **ZnK** fails to resolve pertains to the relation between fact, act and meaning in "pure experience." Initially, in **ZnK**, he says of "pure experience" that it has "no meaning whatsoever; it is simply a present consciousness of facts just as they are." (1990:4) Later, in chapter seven of **ZnK**, he describes true reality as "not simply an existence but something with meaning." (1990:49) Evidently we are expected to understand that, as prior to subject-object dichotomy, meaning and fact are unified in "pure experience." This original identity is, however, left unexplicated. It is also unclear how the opposition between fact and meaning is supposed to emerge **from** "pure experience." The emphasis in **ZnK** is primarily on fact or

"reality" rather than meaning or value. The effect of this emphasis is such that "facts"--whether they be the facts of reality or the rules of inferential thinking--are both reduced to the standpoint of the **psyche.**

In his 1936 preface to ZnK Nishida explains his shift in perspective:

> As I look at it now, the standpoint of this book is that of consciousness, which might be thought of as a kind of **psychologism.** Yet even if people criticize it as being too psychological, there is little I can do now. I do think, however, that what lay deep in my thought when I wrote it was not something merely psychological. (1990:xxxi)

Subsequently it became requisite for Nishida to endeavor to develop this "something" which is not merely psychological and define a standpoint on "pure experience" which is not psychologistic. In order to do this he would have to focus more on the aspect of meaning and value in "pure experience" and logically develop the relation between intuition and reflection in terms of his view of their fundamental unity.

Husserl's Opposition to Naturalism

Equal to Husserl's refutation of psychologism is his opposition to the view of the world known as "naturalism." In the Ideas he explains that it is appropriate for the specific disciplines of science to be dogmatic and to avoid a critical examination of the conditions under which knowledge is possible. Philosophy, however, requires such critical thought. In order to consider and take account of conscious events, naturalistic categories are inadequate.

Explanation in terms of natural causes is almost a mental reflex until we remember that the laws which oversee nature are themselves part of our experience. In Husserl's view, it is at this point that philosophy must commence. He hoped that by passing from the natural to the phenomenological perspective a proper foundation for science could be provided.

Husserl hoped that by "bracketing" off naturalistic claims to being and describing our normally unquestioned experience by reducing it to the purely given "performances" of subjectivity, the content and structure involved could be disclosed apart from any reference to existence. Having reduced experience to the level of subjectivity, it could then be reconstructed in the light of subsequent reflection. Without taking anything from experience, "apple," "tree," "red," "sweet," etc., can be rendered apart from anything extraneous to the essence of experience. Similarly, "perceiving," "enjoying," "valuing," "doubting," etc. can be distinguished and analyzed as distinct ego-acts.

In his introduction to his 1964 translation of Husserl's lectures entitled The Paris Lectures, Peter Koestenbaum explains that, drawing from his mentor Franz Brentano, Husserl absorbed the intentional theory of mind whereby mental acts are characterized by intentionality. (See 1964:xxvii) Whether it is a valuation, judgment,

belief, or whatever, Brentano observed that an intentional act is always **of** or **about** something. A distinctive feature of intentional acts is that their objects do not necessarily exist. For example, even though it does not really exist, a centaur (and not simply the **idea** of a centaur) can be an intentional object. Without examining the various interpretations of Brentano's theory and its scholastic predecessors, we will merely note that Husserl makes central use of it. He uses the Greek word **noesis** (the activity of mentally grasping) to designate cognitive, emotive, attitudinal and volitional ego-acts. To designate the corresponding objects involved, precisely as mentally grasped, he uses the word **noema**. An integral component of the theory of consciousness consists in the explication of the relation between **noesis** and **noema**.

In his Ideas, Husserl explains that the various noeses constitute "the specifications of **'Nous' in the widest sense** of the term." (1962:228) In the context of actual life they call us back to **cogitationes** and to intentional experience in general. This **noetic phase** could be called "psychical." Husserl is concerned, however, to distinguish his view from that of the philosophical psychologists and their influence on Brentano in the latter's sharp distinction between "psychical" and "physical" phenomena. In the Ideas Husserl explains that Brentano failed in his aim of separating the empirical domain of psychology from the

physical sciences. Husserl attributes this to Brentano's failure to take account of the separation between two distinct aspects of "physical phenomena." Husserl explains that Brentano took no account of the separation between "physical phenomena" as "material" phases (sensory data) inherent in certain mental acts and "physical phenomena" as the objective phases that **appear** by virtue of certain mental acts containing such phases. (See 1962:229) The result was that, by contrast, Brentano gave the term "psychical" a use that is unsuitable for the designation of the specific objects of psychology. Evidently Husserl also recognizes in the ambiguity that familiar inclination to develop a "psychology without a soul."

In Husserl's view the inclination to develop a "psychology without a soul" is such that it ignores the possible suspension of "psychic reality given empirically as a fact, whose **subjective states** are the experiences." (1962:230) Whether or not this reality is thought of as connected to "soul," it is still regarded as "psychic" reality, as a succession of **natural facts** which is "bound to the body and empirically regulated in certain ways." (230) Due to the existing ambiguities and his concern to regard "natural facts" only as they are given to a grasping consciousness "intending" them, Husserl opts to avoid the word "psychical" in favor of the word "**noetic.**" In addition, when phenomenological reflections are specifically concerned

with the "material" **components** of such consciousness, but again without regarding such components as "material" in the ordinary natural sense, Husserl calls them **hyletically** phenomenological reflections. When they are related to the noetic as such, that is, to the phenomenon of the intentional directedness of consciousness **through** each "material," they are **noetically** phenomenological. Having made these clarifications in his discussion of the "general structures of pure consciousness," Husserl observes that the greatest difficulties are the "functional problems."

Functional problems are those of the "constituting of the objective field of consciousness." Functional problems concern the way in which noeses bring into being the consciousness of something. "Function" in this context is something "wholly unique" which is grounded in the "pure essence of noeses." It is the viewpoint of function which is central to phenomenology. The inquiries relating to it are integral to phenomenological analyses in general. In a general sense the concern is to disclose how the unity of objective content in every "objective region" is consciously constituted and to present it in demonstrable form to reflective consciousness. This involves the systematic study of fundamental types of possible consciousness in their "eidetic" or essential generality and "phenomenological purity."

Intentional Experience and the "Gift of Meaning"

Husserl sought to employ the principle of intentionality in conjunction with the "functional" concerns indicated above. No great progress, of course, is made simply by recognizing that all forms of consciousness refer to something. Husserl's intent, however, is primarily to focus on that field of experience designated "transcendental subjectivity." In order to render this realm of experience accessible, he deemed it imperative to initiate the radical alteration of viewpoint made evident through a series of reductions. His intention is to develop an **a priori** or "eidetic" science which focuses on issues which pertain to the field of transcendental subjectivity and the factual (**faktischen**) "experiences" wherein this field is active. He hoped thereby to lay bare the pure intuitable possibilities and to set out as **a priori** the essential structures of transcendental subjectivity.

The exclusion of the presuppositions endemic to the "natural attitude" is the initial phase of phenomenological analysis. The second step is the disclosure, to pure intuition, of the pure essence of a process such as perception. This is accomplished on the basis of the observation of a particular occasion of perception, such as an instance wherein one perceives a tree, and by bringing ourselves to grasp that occasion as the instance of a universal possibility. This step is called the "eidetic

reduction." Through actual experience--but without the assumption that they are really existing **entities** of any sort--universals thereby become objects of phenomenological inquiry.

Husserl explains that skepticism is easily generated by virtue of the misleadingly conspicuous character of intentional experience. Unable to suspend the "natural attitude" some fail to direct,

> . . . their glance upon the perceiving itself, or upon the **way** in which the perceived object with its distinguishing features is presented, and of taking that which presents itself in the immanent analysis of the essence just as it actually does present itself. (1962:256)

If, however, we manage the transition from the natural standpoint to the phenomenological, the encounter with the fundamental distinction between the proper components of the intentional experiences and their intentional (noematic) correlates begins to acquire a radical significance. On the one hand, through a "real (**reelle**) analysis" of experience, wherein the experience is examined as an object like any other, we come to investigate experience in terms of distinct parts and phases. On the other hand, we come to inquire into the form of the essence indicated by the specific type of intentional experience, whether, for instance, it is memory or judgment or will or whatever.

By virtue of its noetic phase, it is the essential nature of every intentional experience "to harbour in itself

a 'meaning' of some sort." (1962:257) On the foundation of this "gift of meaning" further phases develop and themselves become "meaningful." Noetic phases comprise such aspects as the directing of attention upon the object "intended" by virtue of the gift of meaning, the continuing hold maintained on the object while the attention shifts to other objects, and the adoption of various attitudes such as belief, valuation, and the like. According to Husserl, such phases point to real components of noetic experiences, but by virtue of "meaning" they also point to correlative components not really in the noeses at all, but in the correlative noema. Corresponding to the multifarious data of real noetic content, there are data manifest in "really pure [**wirklich reiner**] intuition" and in the correlative "noematic content" or "noema." By examining this pure data of experience as it is given, Husserl hoped to evade the tendency of psychologistic reductionism.

In the case of perception there is at the base of the noematic content in question a "perceptual meaning." He describes this as the "perceived as such," but it is, of course, not necessarily identifiable with any really perceived natural object. Similarly, memory has its own "remembered as such," judgment its "judged as such," pleasure its "pleasing as such." The "meaning" (**Sinn**) which the noetic phase, by its essential nature, harbors in itself thus always has a noematic correlate in the "object" which

phenomenology seeks to examine in its "pure immanence."

To illustrate this, Husserl suggests that we consider the case of looking with pleasure at a blossoming apple-tree. The perception and the pleasure are clearly distinct from that which is perceived and gives pleasure. As seen from the natural standpoint, the apple-tree is a real apple-tree which exists in the transcendent reality of space; the man perceiving and enjoying it is a real human being experiencing the psychical state of pleasure. Between the two there subsist real relations. There are cases, however, wherein the perceived apple-tree is an hallucination and has no objective existence in the "real" world. In such a case, there is no real objective relation subsisting. Nonetheless the perception remains with just the same noetic/noematic structure.

As seen from the phenomenological standpoint, the existence of the transcendent world is thus "bracketed" out of the question. The question becomes a question concerning the nexus of noetic experiences--for example, of perception and pleasure. Such experiences are disclosed as a pure phenomenological situation wherein,

> . . . the real subsistence of the objective relation between perception and perceived is suspended; and yet a relation between perception and perceived (as likewise between the pleasure and that which pleases) is obviously left over . . . (1962:259)

This remaining relation which in its essential nature comes

before us, is said to come before us in "pure immanence." After suspending any question about existence in the "real" world, we discover that the phenomenologically reduced perceptual experience of a particular apple-tree is still a perception of a particular apple-tree in a particular garden, et cetera. The tree "has not forfeited the least shade of content from all the phases, qualities, characters" with which it appeared in the initial perception itself.

Husserl explains that noematic meaning includes nothing that does not actually appear. This means not only that any assumption pertaining to the transcendent existence of intended objects is excluded, but also that naturalistic and psychological explanations in general are put in suspension. Nonetheless, noematic meaning, as it is immanent in perception, can be detected through a "unique kind of reflexion." Although there is no loss of content, descriptive statements about intentional "experience" thus undergo a radical modification of meaning. From this modified standpoint it is still possible to inquire into the essentially given and endeavor to describe "that which appears as such." To do this, we base our description on the original perception in its noematic aspect. In the phenomenologically "pure" experience or "reduced" perception of the tree, for example, the perceptual meaning belongs necessarily to its essence and "cannot burn away." The "phenomenological judgment" must endeavor to adjust itself,

and give faithful expression, to such meaning as it is given in pure immanence.

It is, as we have seen, a fundamental characteristic of intentional experience that it has its intentional object. In Husserl's view this assertion is tantamount to asserting that, "To have a meaning, or to have something 'in mind', is the cardinal feature of all consciousness . . . ." (1962:241) It is explained, however, that "meaning" or "sense" is not to be thought of as exhausting the full noema. Similarly, the noetic side of intentional experience "does not consist exclusively of the strict 'sense-giving' phase to which 'sense' or 'meaning' specifically belongs as correlate." (1962:241) The "full noema" is said to consist in a nexus of noematic phases. The meaning-phase is said to supply only a requisite "nucleatic layer in which further phases are essentially grounded . . . ." (1962:241)

Husserl views it as a lucid conclusion to say that intentional experience is organized in such a way that under appropriate conditions meaning can be derived from it. A serious difficulty develops, however, if we insist on distinguishing the "real object" from the intentional object viewed as a real factor literally immanent to perception, that is, immanent to consciousness **noetically.** From such a view, it is as though there is a duplicate copy or "inner image" of the objects of consciousness. Husserl shows, however, that any assumption of this sort leads to

absurdity. Any such replication would be a psychological reality functioning for another as an image. In order to do this, however, there would have to be a "representational form of consciousness" on which, in the case of an appearance of a real perceptual object, would be based as a secondary intentionality on what is apparently the initial intentional directedness toward the "real" object. The substitution of the direct perception of the physical object with a merely representational consciousness, Husserl contends, leads to an inevitable and absurd infinite regress. Sartre, we shall see, is no less critical of this representationalism. Nishida's concern with such issues is not particularly evident in ZnK. It is quite evident, however, in his later work of 1917 which we shall discuss in Part Three of this study.*

In response to such difficulties, Husserl admonishes that we continue to "abide by what is given in pure experience" and "bracket" off the "real" object. This does not mean, however, that we must reject any description that suggests that perception is the consciousness of a "real world as such." The concern is rigorously to avoid adding anything to experience which is not already included

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* Reflections on Husserl and Brentano with respect to the problem of representation can be found in Intuition and Reflection in Self-Consciousness, Part Two, Sections 24-25, "The Impossibility of Reflection," pp. 74-79.

in its essence. In so doing, it becomes evident that such a consciousness is a part of its essence. What is here said to hold for perception is said to hold for all types of intentional experience, be it memory or imagination, or whatever. In all these cases the intentional object may be, for example, an apple-tree. Identical expressions may be utilized in reference to such a tree. Still, the noematic correlates in question remain essentially different for perception, memory, imagination, and the like. Physical "reality" remains an inseparable feature of the perceived and the "meaning of perception." Fiction and fancy remain characteristics of the imagined, and so forth. These features essentially belong to their respective modes of intention in correlation with the respective types of noetic experiences.

The problem becomes, then, one of distinguishing essentially diverse "strata" which cluster about a central "**nucleus.**" This is so because in the variety of possible intentional experiences we may discern and isolate certain identical elements. This central nucleus is, for example, the pure "objective meaning" which in the case of various perceptions of the apple-tree is "everywhere described in purely identical objective terms." (1962:246) This identical element which is the "object **simpliciter**" may in one case be perceived, in another case it may be imagined or even depicted in pictorial form, and so forth, and yet it

continues to indicate a single central element or core of meaning. Such preliminary observations with respect to the noematic nucleus provide the background for Husserl to focus on the various modes of "attention" and to begin to explore the topic of attentional transformations in regard to both noesis and noema.

The Beam of Attention

Husserl speaks metaphorically of the "mental glance" or the "glancing ray" of the "pure ego." This glancing ray of the pure ego passes through multiple noetic layers "sometimes directly, sometimes as reflected." (1962:247) These varied attentional transformations, which by themselves do not modify the "nuclear" noematic effects correlative with the noesis, still display modifications of the entire experience on both noetic and noematic sides. We may perceive, for example, an entire tree at a given moment and a part or phase of this tree at another. We may attend to another object or consider a process at another moment or we may begin to reminisce, and so forth. Considering only the case of perception, if we assume a fixed idea of some given noematic content, we may observe that the fixing of the "beam of attention" belongs to the idea itself since the beam itself is also a phase of experience.

The beam of attention may be intense, as when something is especially noticed, or it may be barely noticed at all. Distinct from these "actuality modes" is also the mode of

non-actuality or inattention, the mode of the "dead enjoyment of consciousness." (1962:248) Such modifications, however, are not only those of experience in the noetic aspect, but they also influence the **noemata** on the noematic side without dissolution of the noematic nucleus. From the noetic side we may observe that certain noeses are conditioned by modes of attention. Such modes of attention--the "wandering glance," the alternate augmentation and diminution of attention span, and the like--indicate a "special dimension" of correlative modifications noetic and noematic. Husserl proposes that the systematic and eidetic study of this special dimension is one of the fundamental tasks of general phenomenology.

These attentional formations are said to possess the character of subjectivity. Husserl describes the beam of attention as radiating from the "Pure Ego" and terminating in the "objective." He insists that the shaft of attention "is not separate from the Ego, but itself is and remains personal." (1962:249) He is careful, however, to observe that the object is the goal in relation to the Ego only, but ". . . is not itself 'subjective.'" (249) The "personal ray" is an act of the Ego itself; it is this Ego that "does or suffers, is free or conditioned." (249) If the personal ray is an act of the Ego, it is asserted concomitantly that the Ego "lives" in such acts. This life of the Ego in its acts signifies the "pure Ego" in the general mode of the

cogito, living in intentional experience as "free essence." But in the stream of experience, what is external to this personal **cogito** (outside the Ego's actuality) still "belongs" to the Ego "in so far as it is the field of potentiality for the Ego's free acts." (1962:249)

Having developed the preceding themes in this fashion, Husserl found it opportune to investigate structures of "higher-level noeses" as well. He proceeds, then, to consider judgment, sentiment and will. In the so-called "higher" domains of consciousness, multiple noeses are constituted hierarchically in a complex network of superimposed layers "within the unity of a concrete experience." (1962:250) These noeses are constructed in conjunction with noematic correlates which are also correlatively unified. The law of the essence, Husserl asserts, is that there is no noetic phase without a noematic phase belonging specifically to it. We will reserve any further discussion of such structures for those chapters wherein we can consider such structures in relation to Sartre and Nishida. We turn now to consider some salient features of Sartre's departure from Husserl.

CHAPTER VIII

SARTRE'S DEPARTURE FROM HUSSERL

Sartre's "Phenomenological Dialectic"

In Chapter Six of this study we observed that Husserl, Sartre and Nishida can be described as developing their own respective quasi-Cartesian methodologies. Like Husserl, Sartre and Nishida are committed to a radical, "meditative self-examination" and consequently to the "principle of pure intuition" or the evidence of the actually given, wherein we assert nothing we ourselves do not "see." Despite this common bond, these three philosophers have forged three distinct approaches with divergent results. Sartre's early writings reveal a concern to contribute to the scientific development of phenomenology. Generally speaking, it is clear that Sartre embraces the phenomenological project to render reality immediately accessible to the subject. In this connection he maintains certain reservations toward any tendency which he interprets as positing a non-given entity. Sartre's skepticism toward the postulation of non-given entities resulted in a critical re-evaluation of Husserlian phenomenology.

Sartre is adamant in his adherence to the principle of intentionality. He insists, however, that the intentional relation is such that the world is given to the subject unmediated. Largely by virtue of his insistence on the lack of mediation in conjunction with somewhat cursory studies of

Husserl, Sartre feels compelled to reject Husserl's transcendental egology. Sartre also deviates from Husserl on the issue of objectivity in relation to being and deems it necessary to reject the Husserlian technique of phenomenological "reduction." Correlative with his deviations from Husserl, as he interprets him, Sartre develops his own version of the principle of intentionality and presents an alternative notion of phenomenon. Although some of Nishida's reservations about Husserlian phenomenology are reminiscent of Sartre's deviations from Husserl, we shall see eventually that Nishida's version of the principle of intentionality tends to vindicate certain aspects of Husserl's viewpoint which Sartre severely repudiates. At the same time, his thinking remains radically distinct from that of Husserl.

Before we consider such issues it is opportune to take a broad view of Sartre's and Nishida's respective orientations toward phenomenology. Sartre's EN is an audacious and remarkable work which is intended as a "phenomenological ontology" that builds on the seemingly incompatible philosophies of Husserl, Heidegger and Hegel. The result of such diverse influences is a complex merging of phenomenology and dialectic. Similarly, while demonstrating a marked proximity to the phenomenological approach, Nishida also employs a prolific amount of dialectical reasoning. In this connection, we may note that

Nishida is not especially attracted to the early Heidegger because he feels that Heidegger failed to engage in dialectics. In his Fundamental Problems in Philosophy (Tetsugaku no kompon mondai) [1933] he explains that: "Heidegger's philosophy is not dialectical; it is merely an interpretative phenomenology." (1970:95) Sartre's divergence from Heidegger primarily concerns his dissatisfaction with the notion of **Dasein** as a starting point. Sartrean phenomenology is distinguished by its insistence on the **cogito** as starting point. The result in Sartre's philosophy might be described as "phenomenological dialectic."

Despite Husserl's extension of phenomenology via the doctrine of the constitution of meaning, Sartrean phenomenology makes no **special** room for epistemology. Sartre and Nishida share a similar dissatisfaction with any approach that tends to restrict philosophy to epistemology. Like Heidegger, Sartre is also evidently satisfied that there is no intrinsic incompatibility between a phenomenological orientation and an ontology. In any case, Sartre's intention to express an ontological evaluation of consciousness and its object, coupled with the disrepute which ontologies based on the notion of substance had suffered since the "rediscovery" of the intentionality of consciousness, paved the way for Sartre's employment of the notions of "in-itself," "for-itself," and so forth, which

had already had a certain relevance in Hegel's Science of Logic (Wissenschaft der Logik) [1816].

Sartre's appropriation of dialectical reasoning is manifest in his concern with recognizing the ontological significance any opposition which he could not eradicate. His existential dialectic pertains to relations of opposition such as is indicated in the title of his phenomenological essay, Being and Nothingness. Dialectical methods are differentiable from analytical reasoning in that they specify certain relations as especially significant rather than operating on isolated facts. This is not to suggest that dialectical methods are non-analytical, but only that they are required to temper analysis and give it perspective. R. D. Cumming argues that even before Sartre came to regard his philosophy as "existential," when he described it only as "phenomenological," his orientation "was already dialectical, in spite of the fact that Husserl repudiated dialectical method as well as existentialism." (1981:61)

If this is the case, then we can say that Sartre's method was dialectical not only before it became Marxist, but even before he explicitly adopted the label of existentialism. We should also recognize, however, that Sartre's methodology employs a "criterion of immediacy" with repect to concrete phenomenological experience, rather than the negative abstraction immediacy assumes in the

Hegelian dialectic. As a Marxist, Sartre's social history dramatizes certain "moments of truth." There can be such revelatory moments because they are manifest in the form of existential dislocations, rather than in the mode of an Hegelian synthesis. The immediate experiences which Sartre finds to be dislocating are emotionally disruptive experiences, such as the "nauseous" experience of existence itself. Sartre's own existential dialectic is an "affective logic" influenced, in part, by Heidegger's analysis of the affective dimension.

The Sartrean Notion of "Moments of Truth"

Evidently, Sartre identifies Heidegger's "lack of affectivity (**Ungestimmtheit**)," wherein existence becomes "satiated (**überdrüssig**) with itself," with a nausea wherein no specific satisfaction or dissatisfaction is present to consciousness. This condition of non-affectivity is somewhat reminiscent of the mode of inattention or the "dead enjoyment of consciousness" which we have observed in connection with Husserl's descriptions of the "beam of attention." (1962:248) The description, however, goes beyond a mere reference to a mode of the non-actuality of attention or any lack of affectivity. Reminiscent of Heidegger's **überdrüssig** is Sartre's term "superfluous" (**de trop**). Nausea is described as the disclosure of the contingency of one's existence or the consciousness of being "superfluous." This nauseous experience of one's own

existence is, in Husserlian terms, an **Erlebnis** or an experience "as lived from within" as opposed to "empirical" experience. In such experiences there is an immediacy wherein one is simultaneously conscious of the experience at the same time that one is conscious of the intentional objects of the experience.

In Heidegger's existential analytic there is no sudden moment of truth such as that expressed by the protagonist in Sartre's novel, Nausea (**La Nausée**) [1938], wherein suddenly, clear as day, "existence has unveiled itself." Existence, for Sartre, is concrete, individual being here and now. In contradistinction to existence, "Being" is all-embracing and objective rather than individual and subjective. Existence, for Sartre, always has a subjective quality in reference to human reality. When Roquentin, the protagonist of Nausea, faces bare existence he experiences a vertigo. Existence in its bareness strikes him as purposeless, meaningless and contingent. "Things are divorced from their names," he comments, and when we confront them in their bare existence they are loathsome and intimidating.

All this becomes especially pronounced in the famous chestnut-tree vision wherein Roquentin is looking at the knotty roots of a chestnut-tree in a park. Suddenly it flashes on him that everything around him, the tree, the fountain, the man digesting his food on a bench, and so

forth, had not the slightest reason for being there. It seemed to Roquentin that all existence is merely contingent, superfluous and absurd. He felt nauseous thinking that "Every existing thing is born without reason, prolongs itself out of weakness and dies by chance." (1964:133) Roquentin's shattering vision has become a classical expression of the helplessness and existential nausea felt by human beings in the face of a world which is experienced as **de trop**. The significance of the nauseous experience of existence is carried over into Sartre's phenomenological ontology in **EN**. "Nausea" is described as the "taste" of the facticity and contingency of existence. Sartre states that "a dull and inescapable nausea perpetually reveals my body to my consciousness." (1956:445) This is not a mere metaphor deriving from physiological disgust, he claims; it is on the foundation of this fundamental nausea that all empirical nauseas (such as those caused by spoiled meat, excrement, et cetera) are produced.

For Sartre, the "taste" of the facticity and contingency of existence is evidently a confrontation with the naked existence of things and of the body, as they are apart from the words, associations and explanations we append to them. Similar to Hume two hundred years earlier, Sartre's nausea indicates an irrational existence and suggests that there is no explanation why there is any world at all rather than nothing. In Sartre's view, however, this

nausea is immediately felt through a "reflexive" (but non-reflective) self-awareness that is somehow coincident with the awareness of objects. Sartre's view of the contingency of existence is such that apparent "laws" appear to be of our own making and there is no pre-established order in existence or pattern in human nature. Like Hegel, Sartre associates "essence" only with what has been. Essence, for Sartre, is one's past. Each person creates his essence, then, as he lives. As concrete and individual being here and now, existence is said to precede essence. It is existence and not essence which is directly given to consciousness. It can be said that the direct intuition of existence is the foundation of EN. Sartre's "phenomenological dialectic," his emphasis on the contingency and facticity of existence, and his notion of the self-creation of human essence are aspects of his thought which distinguish him from the more "scientifically" oriented Husserl.

Sartre's Rejection of the Husserlian Technique of "Reductions"

Earlier we observed that despite any phenomenological dissimilarity of emphasis already evident between Sartre and Nishida, they display a mutual concern with experiential immediacy in terms of "moments of truth." We have seen how Sartre and Nishida both embrace the Cartesian (and Husserlian) concern with direct intuitions regarded as

devoid of assumptions. We have also seen how both repudiate the primacy rendered the Cartesian **cogito** insofar as it is construed as embodying an act of reflection. Nishida rejects the import of "**cogito ergo sum**" as an inference, but accepts it as an intuitive certainty linking reality and thinking. Sartre rejects it as derivative, reflective consciousness and supplants it with the pre-reflective **cogito** as point of departure. If it is suspected that there would be an infinite regress wherein this pre-reflective consciousness would need another antecedent consciousness **ad infinitum**, this is not the case for Sartre, since it is for him of the very nature of consciousness that to be and to "know" itself are identical. In other words, self-consciousness does not require that the self be posited as an object by a distinct act in the first place. Thus Sartre asserts,

> If we wish to avoid an infinite regress, there must be an immediate, non-cognitive relation of the self to itself. (1956:12)

For Sartre, consciousness of an object is always consciousness of being conscious of an object. He explains that,

> . . . the necessary and sufficient condition for a knowing consciousness to be knowledge **of** its object, is that it be consciousness of itself as being that knowledge. (1956:11)

Insofar as this "self-consciousness" does not imply that the self is necessarily posited as an object, then it is the "nature of," that is, somehow "internal" to, all

consciousness to be self-consciousness. In other words, "every positional consciousness of an object is at the same time a non-positional consciousness of itself." (1956:13) This non-reflective consciousness of consciousness is the "pre-reflective **cogito**" or "non-positional" self-consciousness.

Concomitant to Sartre's notion of the pre-reflective **cogito** as a "non-positional" self-consciousness is his adoption of the Husserlian principle of intentionality, wherein consciousness is said to be intentional or directive and to point to a transcendent object other than itself. Sartre claims that Husserl misunderstood the essential character of intentionality. In his view, the intentionality of consciousness implies that "transcendence is the constitutive structure of consciousness; that is, that consciousness is born **supported** by a being which is not itself." (1956:23) Sartre uses this principle later to express his view of "being-in-the-world" and in positing the existence of a "being-in-itself" which is exterior to consciousness. Sometimes "being-for-itself" is itself called a "transcendence." Often "transcendence" refers to the process whereby the "for-itself" goes beyond the given in a further project of itself. Concomitantly, "being-in-itself" is called a transcendent being.

Another fundamental principle of Sartre pertains to the transcendence of the ego and the "translucent emptiness" of

consciousness. In his view, it is more truthful to say "there is consciousness of the tree" than "I am conscious of the tree." The ego "is far from being the personalizing pole of consciousness . . . ." (1956:156) Sartre explains that consciousness makes itself personal:

> . . . for what confers personal existence on a being is not the possession of an Ego--which is only the **sign** of the personality--but it is the fact that the being exists for itself as a presence to itself." (1956:156-7)

There is never, for Sartre, an "ego consciousness" but only "consciousness of the ego" (and even that only as a correlative of a certain sort of reflection). In his view, there can be no "ego" **in** consciousness. The ego is not an "inhabitant of consciousness." Neither is it the "owner of consciousness;" it is an object of consciousness. Consciousness itself is completely empty or translucent. The ego "appears to consciousness as a transcendent in-itself, as an existent in the human world, not as **of the nature of** consciousness." (1956:156)

This does not mean that it is a material object, rather; it means that it is not a subject behind or within consciousness which directs consciousness. This might seem to indicate the view that consciousness is general or universal. For Sartre, however, consciousness remains particular in that the objects "intended" are particular objects. Consciousness in each person is individual and self-conscious. He explains that the ego pertains to our

psychic states, qualities and actions. Consciousness determines these states, and these states in turn constitute the ego. When consciousness reflects back on itself it reflects on the pure interiority of the "pre-reflective cogito," which can only be lived by making it an object. The ego is the result of this endeavor of consciousness to retrieve itself. Its relation to all the psychic objects of consciousness is roughly analogous to the relation of the unity we call the "world" to physical objects.* But whereas physical objects are not created by consciousness, psychic objects are dependent on consciousness and are in one sense constituted by it.

In this connection Sartre also repudiates Husserl's "transcendental ego." In the next section we will pause to consider if Sartre's critique is warranted. For now, we wish to note that his claim is that such an ego, as that which is reflectively posited as unifying our individual acts of consciousness, would necessarily pre-exist and underlie all individual acts of consciousness. In Sartre's view, such an ego would be akin to an essence which precedes our actions and which would be identical in each person. Sartre also thinks that such an ego would be something of an inhabitant of consciousness, thus obfuscating its character

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* In TE, Sartre proposes that "The ego is to psychical objects what the world is to things." (1987:75)

as absolutely and "translucently" intentional. As Sartre characterizes it, consciousness is not merely intentional, it **is** "intentionality." The most distinctive feature of EN consists in the radical distinction made between consciousness as intentionality and the non-intentional objects intended. He considers these to be two distinct types of being, that of "being-for-itself" (**être-pour-soi**) and "being-in-itself" (**être-en-soi**). Whereas the "for-itself"--the being of consciousness--is the nihilation of the "in-itself," conceived as a lack of being, a desire for being, a relation to being, "being-in-itself"--the being of the phenomenon--is non-conscious being and always overflows the knowledge we have of it.

His rejection of the "transcendental ego" and his version of the phenomenological doctrine of intentionality effected for Sartre an argument in support of his philosophy of existentialism, wherein the immediate intuition of existence, which is prior to essence, is the pivotal concept. If consciousness is totally "translucent" and thereby devoid of content, and if the transcendental ego is understood as a form of "content," then the being of objects cannot be construed as the constitutive product of a transcendental ego.

The Sartrean existentialization of intentionality has the further consequence of rendering the Husserlian technique of "reduction" (or "**epokhé**") ineffectual.

Upholding the principle of intentionality without reservation, Sartre insists that every act of consciousness is a "revealing intuition" of a being other than itself. There is, then, no privileged act by which we can "suspend" the existence of this being which consciousness is not, in order to contemplate the being of consciousness in itself. Ultimately, for Sartre, there can be no epokhé in the Husserlian sense because consciousness can never be isolated from the existing world; consciousness is never alone.

We will turn now to consider further these matters which distinguish Sartre's viewpoint from Husserl's. Although this may seem like a gratuitous exercise at this point in our study, it is necessary to highlight these issues in order to set the stage for the comparative analysis which comes later, wherein we shall find that Nishida sometimes appears to be closer in proximity to Husserl than to Sartre.

Further Consideration of Sartre's Standpoint

Sartre's earnest desire to disclose reality in terms of a "phenomenological ontology" led him to a severe rejection of both representational and idealist theories of knowledge. Evidently he feared, in part, that Husserlian transcendental idealism rendered the world a construct of a transcendental consciousness not subject to the principle of intentionality active in the world. How appropriate is Sartre's assessment? Maurice Natanson contends that by denying the Husserlian

method of phenomenological reductions, Sartre adopts "a theory of intentionality which can only be understood within the natural attitude." (1973:154) It may appear that the movement toward pure subjectivity and the disinterested observer within the transcendentally reduced realm negates the very possibility of confronting the problem of existence. One might wonder, however, if it is not an erroneous assumption that the disinterested observer is an uninterested observer. By dismissing the method of reductions, does Sartre not risk underestimating the import of possible transcendental insight for man in the concrete world? We may wonder, with Natanson, if Sartre has not missed the "existential force of reduction." (1973:154) It may be that there is a vantage point hidden from the "natural attitude" which can only be disclosed through transcendental inquiry.

In any case, we must ask if Sartre, in rejecting the phenomenological reductions, is not perhaps over-zealous in his opposition to idealism. If it can be said that his repudiation of idealism is, at points, the predominant agenda in his rejection of reduction, then we can ask if Sartre is himself entirely faithful to his Cartesian rootedness in the rigorous eschewal of presuppositions. Indeed, there is no assurance that Sartre fully appreciates certain basic characteristics of the reductive procedure. Taking Sartre's view, one would tend to conclude that the

Husserlian epokhé explicitly denies the independent existence of the world. There is, however, no such denial involved. What is put in suspension are judgments regarding the existence of the world. In his preface to the English edition of the Ideas, Husserl states quite unequivocally:

> Our phenomenological idealism does not deny the positive existence of the real (realen) world or of Nature--in the first place, as though it held it to be an illusion. (1962:14)

Husserl employs his reductive procedure with the intention of shifting attention away from thinking under the constraints of the "natural attitude" and abiding only with that which is self-evident. He wanted to insure that the essence of experience could be considered apart from any addendum. If, then, Sartre wants to take issue with Husserl's "constitutive analysis" there is no reason for him not to attempt the first step in the reductive procedure since there is no detriment to the "natural thesis" and no denial of intentionality. By putting the "natural thesis" in suspension, it is not thereby negated. Husserl's epokhé allows, for example, the phenomenological exploration of a perceptual experience as an experience of an object in the "real world as such." It is only the judgments concerning the existence of such a real world, as opposed to the immediate perception of a world as so judged, which are put in suspension. If Husserl can be said to assume an idealistic judgment to such questions, then he has himself,

in that moment, left the domain of his own initial epokhe.

Sartre's critical view of Husserl's "transcendental ego" similarly shows little concern to interact with Husserl's concepts in more specific terms. Although we may follow Sartre in locating the alienation endemic to the "natural attitude" with the predilection to identify consciousness with the "psychological ego," we may wonder if Sartre's reasons for dismissing the "transcendental ego" are warranted. Certainly we may complain that Husserl's terminology is confusing and inappropriate. Sartre, however, does not confine his critique to matters of terminological ambiguity. He neglects, in fact, to betray any recognition of Husserl's own distinctions between the "transcendental ego" and the "psychological ego." We need only recall the severity of Husserl's critique of psychologism, to recognize that the "transcendental ego" is not to be construed in the manner of Sartre, as an inferred or hypostatized entity.

We may recall that from the psychologistic perspective, the order in the world is imposed by the mind. Husserl objects that this perspective is not based on the examination of the pure data of experience as given. Similarly, the "transcendental ego" is not to be construed as an object for naturalistic inquiry which is some sort of mental or psychological component responsible for imposing order on the world. Although we do not see the

"transcendental ego," Husserl took the view that it is possible to uncover the layers of experience and disclose its presence as ultimate subject of all experiences. It is ironical that despite Husserl's fervent repudiation of psychologistic philosophy, his claim that transcendental consciousness is irreducibly egological has rendered his own philosophy psychologistic in the viewpoint of Sartre and other critics. Even if we follow Sartre, however, in positing the primacy of the pre-reflective level of consciousness as ego-less, and view the ego as a product of relective consciousness, the precise character of his departure from Husserl over the "transcendental ego" is not entirely clear.

For Sartre, the ego exists as an object for reflective consciousness. Sartre, however, never denies the existence of an active, organizing and individual pre-reflective consciousness. What he insists on is that the "transcendental ego" has no **raison d'être** since it is consciousness itself which makes possible the unity and the personality of the individual. Sartre already expresses this concern in his essay entitled The Transcendence of the Ego (**La Transcendence de L'Ego**) [1936]:

> I quite recognize that Husserl grants to the I a special transcendence which is not the transcendence of the object, and which one could call a transcendence "from above." But by what right? And how account for this privileged treatment of the I if not by metaphysical and critical preoccupations which have nothing to do

> with phenomenology? Let us be more radical and assert without fear that all transcendence must fall under the epokhé. (1987:50-1)

Sartre denies that the I (ego) is of the same nature as transcendental consciousness. Transcendental consciousness does not require an ego "from above" to make possible the unity and personality of the individual; consciousness unifies and individualizes itself. In EN, Sartre describes it as an impersonal spontaneity which "makes itself personal" by virtue of its "presence to itself." (1956:156-7)

In what sense, however, is there a radical divergence here from Husserl's own distinction between the "transcendental ego" and the "psychological ego?" Has Husserl ever asserted that the "transcendental ego" is **not** a "transcendental consciousness" which unifies and individualizes itself? By "pure ego" Husserl meant the individual purged of all psychophysical reference and content. It is that which is left over once the natural world, including the empirical-psychological ego, is "bracketed" off. What does Husserl mean, then, when he insists that transcendental consciousness is irreducibly egological? Is it really so different from Sartre's view that transcendental consciousness is individualized? And if the "transcendental ego" can be said to be virtually equivalent to "transcendental consciousness individualized," then what is the meaning of Sartre's rejection of it?

Can we, however, really assert such an equivalence? Perhaps Sartre is right to emphasize the distinction between "transcendental consciousness individualized" and the "ego." It may be that it is inappropriate to call "transcendental consciousness" an "ego." Still, its intimate relation to the ego and its individualized character seems to suggest "egological" characteristics, albeit radically distinct from those of the "psychological ego" and its various states. It seems that Sartre could have distinguished his own viewpoint from Husserl's without completely dismissing the "transcendental ego." Some may find Sartre's critique excessive and even suspiciously reminiscent of the orientation of those psychologists which Husserl criticized for the overstatements inspired by their zeal to develop a "psychology without a soul."

Sartre objects to Husserl's references to the "pure ego" as the "unifying factor" of consciousness, since consciousness unifies itself. Insofar as Husserl's terminology may seem to suggest some sort of objective, unifying element apart from consciousness itself, we can understand Sartre's objection. We can see it as a significant warning against the hypostatization of consciousness and as an emphasis on "presence to itself" as the characteristic by which consciousness "makes itself personal." Still, having heeded such concerns, it is possible to construe the "unifying factor" as precisely that

characteristic of consciousness whereby it unifies itself. In Chapter Four of this study, we have seen that this is the direction which Nishida takes in his duscussion of the "unifying intuition" as the "unifying factor" of consciousness. Having noted Sartre's warning, we can appreciate Nishida's "unifying intuition" and Husserl's "transcendental ego" as a factor or characteristic, rather than as any kind of distinct reified element "from above."

We have expressed the critical view, then, that Sartre's disapproval of the phenomenological reductions is fueled by his opposition to idealism and that he fails to give it due attention. We have also taken the standpoint that, despite Sartre's objections, the realm of the "transcendental ego" which is to be disclosed through the reductions by viewing it in isolation from the "world" and the empirical ego is roughly analogous to what, for Sartre, is the being of "transcendental consciousness individualized." We will adopt the view, then, that overlooking Husserl's own opposition to psychologism, Sartre's critique of the "transcendental ego" is somewhat spurious. Despite this, we must admit that Husserl's choice of terms invites the kind of confusion which infuriates contemporary linguistic analysts.

At this point we may recall that Sartre's critique of both the phenomenological reductions and the "transcendental ego" also pertain, in part, to his conviction that they

violate the principle of intentionality. Despite their divergence on these matters, we might question whether or not both Husserl and Sartre have not made hyperbolic claims for this principle. Is there no point at which there is a collapse of the noesis and the noema into a unity, where the doctrine of intentionality breaks down? If intentionality is aubiquitous characteristic of experience, then the non-objectifying apprehension of transcendental subjectivity itself, made possible by the transcendental reduction, would seem to constitute a significant exception. It would seem to constitute a reversal of the vector of intentionality. In such a case, the "beam of attention," "glancing ray," or "pure look" of the "transcendental ego," is disclosed to itself. Insofar as the transcendental reduction is designed to effect such a disclosure without objectifying the transcendental realm, it seems to be a procedure which aims at breaking down intentionality.

It may be more appropriate to speak of the principle of intentionality in reference to the character of consciousness in the "natural attitude." To get to the "eidetic reduction" and the "transcendental reduction," Husserl saw the suspension of the "natural attitude" as a prerequisite. The shift away from the mode of intentionality manifest in the "natural attitude" sets the stage for the "eidetic reduction" wherein pure essences are rendered accessible. This, in turn, sets the stage for the analysis

of the "experience" of transcendental subjectivity. At this stage, being-as-such is examined and becomes **cogitatum** for the ultimate subject. Intentionality itself thus assumes the character of **cogitatum.** The final subject which asks the transcendental questions, however, cannot itself become a **cogitatum,** even though it is a quintessential feature of all experience.

Earlier we noted that in TE Sartre proposed to radicalize the Husserlian **epokhé** by making "all transcendence" fall under it. Purified of all egological structure, the "transcendental field" is said to recover its original transparency. What me might speak of as a Sartrean notion of the "natural attitude" is that condition wherein consciousness constitutes the ego "as a false representation of itself, as if consciousness hypnotized itself before this ego which it has constituted . . . ." (1987:101) In a kind of Sartrean phenomenological reduction, however, it can happen that,

> . . . consciousness suddenly produces itself on the pure reflective level. Perhaps not without the ego, yet as escaping the ego on all sides, as dominating the ego and maintaining the ego outside the consciousness by a continued creation. On this level, there is no distinction between the possible and the real, since the appearance is the absolute. There are no more barriers, no more limits, nothing to hide consciousness from itself. (1987:102)

Here we see the initial description of the notion of "pure reflection" found in EN. In his chapter on "Temporality,"

Sartre explains that "pure reflection can be attained only as the result of a modification which it effects on itself and which is in the form of a katharsis." (1956:224)

In shifting away from the common standpoint of "impure reflection" and assuming the standpoint of "pure reflection," Sartre thought that consciousness can cease its flight from itself and grasp itself as the constitutive source of the ego. "Impure reflection" is said to arise as a result of the failure of consciousness to be identified with itself. It is consciousness in its endeavor to become its own object. Properly explicated, consciousness in Sartrean terms is not only a flight **toward** objects, but a flight **away from** itself. In "pure reflection," however, consciousness confronts its own spontaneous upsurge. Sartre explains that consciousness,

> . . . noting what could be called the fatality of its spontaneity, is suddenly anguished: it is this dread, absolute and without remedy, this fear of itself, which seems to us constitutive of pure consciousness. (1987:102)

The Sartrean **epokhé**, then, is manifest as a kathartic event wherein the hynotic seduction of "impure reflection" is lifted. What is especially distinctive of Sartre's viewpoint here is that the result of this katharsis is an abiding existential anxiety.

Sartre's "pure reflection," then, is given through a katharsis effected by consciousness on itself. It is the presence of the reflective consciousness to the

consciousness reflected-on. Although Sartre may view Husserlian reduction as merely "an intellectual method, an erudite procedure," it is clear that Husserl at least intended that it effect a transformation of radical existential import. If Sartre's version of a "conversion" may be said to have a profound existential impact, Husserl conceived of his reductive procedure in similar terms. In The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology (Die Krisis der europaischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phanomenologie) [1936], Husserl describes his hope that,

> . . . it will even become manifest that the total phenomenological attitude and the epokhé belonging to it are destined in essence to effect, at first, a complete personal transformation, comparable in the beginning to a religious conversion, which then, however, over and above this, bears within itself the significance of the greatest existential transformation which is assigned as a task to mankind as such. (1970:137)

In Sartre's view, Husserl's reductions operate strictly on a reflective level as an intellectual device designed for the misguided intention of disengaging consciousness from the life-world. The basic assertion implicit in Husserl's reductions, however, is simply that we are never so immersed in the **Lebenswelt** that we can not and should not assume a standpoint whereby we can question the assumptions and norms of tradition and everyday life as experienced. Subjected to the reductions, the **Lebenswelt** is disclosed to reflection. The result would seem to be of profound existential import.

The Sartrean Epokhé

Evidently Sartre felt that in rejecting Husserlian egology and, in his view, thereby reviving the doctrine of intentionality, phenomenology could come to focus on human consciousness and its concrete relations to the existing world. As a reflexive study of a consciousness already pre-reflectively conscious of itself as engaged in a real world, it could focus on the nature of the human consciousness of things, of self and of other selves. In Sartre's view, this meant the rejection of the "reduced, neutral standpoint," given through the Husserlian **epokhé**, which he interprets as endeavoring to view consciousness in isolation from the existing world.

Toward the end of TE, Sartre suggests that if the "natural attitude" is the unrewarded effort of consciousness to escape from itself by "projecting itself into the me and becoming absorbed there," then any actual **epokhé** would have to be more than an intellectual method. Hence, the Sartrean **epokhé** "is an anxiety which is imposed on us and which we cannot avoid; it is both a pure event of transcendental origin and an ever possible accident of our daily life." (1987:103) This event is the **metanoia** which in EN Sartre calls a "radical conversion." Here we see an acute shift away from the "natural attitude," at least as it is conceived by Sartre.

In Husserl's depiction of the "natural attitude" there

is a depreciation of subjectivity in that consciousness in the context of **Erlebnis** (lived experience) is not aware of itself as constituting its objects. The phenomenological reduction was intended to restore subjectivity to the constitutive function vis-à-vis the world. Apart from Sartre's difficulties with the apparently idealistic implications of the "constitutive function of consciousness," Sartre also had difficulties, as we have seen, with the notion of the "transcendental ego" involved in it. Concurrent with Husserl's views on psychologism, Sartre had banished the psychological-empirical ego to the transcendent realm of objects. The Sartrean **epokhé**, however, will not allow any residual "transcendental ego." The common view that consciousness is in some way inhabited by an ego is, in Sartre's construal of it, a characteristic of "natural attitude" belief. Sartre thus depicts the "natural attitude" as a state of alienation which is acutely deceptive. In its being, transcendental consciousness remains free of an ego. In order to put itself into the state of the "natural attitude," it must therefore disguise itself. The Sartrean **epokhé** would dispel the disguise by banishing the ego from consciousness.

We have suggested that the Sartrean **epokhé** is expressed in his notion of "pure reflection." As we have seen, in EN Sartre discusses "pure reflection," the pristine presence of the reflective consciousness to the consciousness

reflected-on, and "impure reflection," the "for-itself's" contemplation of its psychic states, in the context of his discussions differentiating between "original temporality" and "psychic temporality."* In these discussions Sartre is concerned to explicate the relation between the "original temporality" of the pre-reflective **cogito**, in which there is a "non-thetic consciousness [of] enduring," and "psychic temporality" which is constituted as a derived knowledge of oneself as an enduring ego. Reflection, whether pure or impure, is consciousness of the "ekstatic" temporal dimensions (past, present, future); it is "a consciousness of a consciousness which endures." (1956:212) Reflection is "a non-thetic consciousness [of] flow and a thetic consciousness of duration." (1956:221)

Sartre explains that reflection encounters the being of the reflecting consciousness as the "reflected-on, **par excellence**." It is "the being-which is always only as itself and which is always this 'self' at a distance from itself, in the future, in the past, in the world." (221) Reflection discloses temporality "as the unique and incomparable mode of being of a selfness--that is, as historicity." (221) We encounter, however, two temporalities: the "original temporality" of which we **are** the temporalization and which

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* See the chapter entitled "Temporality" in **EN** (Part Two, Chapter Two, Section Three) [1956:159-237]

constitutes itself, and "psychic temporality" which is derived and "is incapable of constituting itself, for it is only a successive order of facts." (1956:223) Psychic temporality cannot appear to the pre-reflective cogito, which is "pure ekstatic presence to the world." It must, therefore, be revealed to reflection.

It is here that Sartre says we must distinguish between pure and impure reflection. It is "impure reflection" which reveals and constitutes "psychic temporality" as a derived knowledge of the "psyche" or the succession of psychic facts. Impure or constituent reflection includes "pure reflection" as its original structure, but it is given first in daily life. As a reflection on oneself as a succession of states, happy one moment and despondent another, "impure reflection" is a knowledge of oneself. As a knowledge, however, it is an attempt to secure and capture the "for-itself" as an "in-itself." "Impure reflection" is manifest as a kind of decision to regard the "for-itself" in the mode of its past, which is "in-itself," and affirm this past as its nature or essence. It is "impure reflection" that deduces a hidden ego which has had the succession of past states and somehow causes the present actions of the self.

"Pure reflection," on the other hand, is both the original form and the ideal form of reflection. It is the consciousness of the self-constituting "original

temporality" which we are. "Pure reflection" is the foundation on which "impure reflection" appears. Although "pure reflection" is the original form of reflection, it is "never first given" and "must be won by a sort of katharsis." (1956:218) By effecting a katharsis on itself, the "for-itself" becomes reflectively aware of itself as a pre-reflective presence to itself. "Pure reflection," thereby, "discovers temporality only in its own original non-substantiality, in its refusal to be in-itself." (1956:221) Sartre explains that reflection is in "bad faith" insofar as it constitutes itself as a revelation of the "for-itself" as an "in-itself," rather than as a revelation of the temporal and non-substantial historicity of the "for-itself." Only pure reflective consciousness, won by a kind of katharsis, "can discover the For-itself reflected-on in its reality." (1956:228)

Sartre affirms that reflection is a knowledge, "of that there can be no doubt." (1956:218) The positional character of reflection is such that it affirms the consciousness reflected-on, as its object, by denying that it is this object. On the other hand, Sartre asserts that reflection "is a recognition rather than knowledge." (1956:219) This apparent equivocation, however, is dispelled somewhat when we consider such expressions in terms of the two kinds of reflection. Clearly, "impure reflection" is characterized as a "derived knowledge" of the

states of the **psyche** in a "positional" sense. Strictly speaking, however, "pure reflection" is not a "knowledge" since it does not "posit" the reflecting consciousness as a distinct object.

As an awareness of itself, "pure reflection" would seem to be more of a "recognition" (**reconnaissance**) than a knowledge. Indeed, Sartre asserts that "Pure reflection is never anything but a quasi-knowledge; but there can be a reflective knowledge of the Psyche alone." (1956:226) Although "pure reflection" is merely a "quasi-knowledge," it has the virtue of being a wholly apodictic recognition of the "for-itself" which is concerned not with the remote past, but with the present as it slips into the past by virtue of the flight of consciousness from itself.

As regards the notion of "impure reflection," given Sartre's view of the structure of consciousness as pure spontaneous act and continuous self-creation, the origin of "impure reflection" cannot be associated with anything external to consciousness itself. Insofar as "impure reflection" is in "bad faith," consciousness must be construed as imposing this deception on itself. This is the rationale behind many of Sartre's cryptic statements. In TE, he already speaks of a consciousness "which imprisons itself in the world in order to flee from itself." (1987:81) "Frightened by its own spontaneity," consciousness is said to flee from itself. What better way is there for

consciousness to flee from its own spontaneity than to disguise itself as identified with the successive states of the ego?

Evidently, however, consciousness can cease its flight from itself and break the spell of the ego. If we think of "impure reflection," which is "given first in daily life," as a Sartrean rendition of the "natural attitude," then we can conceive of "pure reflection" as a return to the original structure on which "impure reflection" is founded. "Suddenly producing itself" on the "pure reflective level," consciousness can maintain the ego outside itself by a continuous creation. The katharsis of this Sartrean epokhé is an event which consciousness effects on itself and as such is the foundation of a presuppositionless ethic wherein total responsibility for one's actions must be located in the living individual's consciousness. By shifting to the standpoint of "pure reflection," wherein consciousness confronts itself as the constitutive origin of the ego, one can no longer retreat in "bad faith" and must assume responsibility for one's life.

Although Sartre rejects Husserl's phenomenological epokhé, it would thus be misleading to suggest that the procedure is irrelevant to Sartre's thinking. The notions of pure and impure reflection are at least partially analogous to Husserl's notions of reflection in the "natural attitude" and in the phenomenologically neutral attitude. Although

Sartre objects to any reduction which would in effect isolate consciousness from the existing world, his modified epokhé discloses the constitutive and free capacity of consciousness over its own condition. On the other hand, Sartre's radical divergence from Husserlian constitutive phenomenology seems to close the door to a unique methodology whereby we might hope to explore the pure reflective level with which Sartre has expressed concern. The radicality of Sartre's departure from Husserl can be explicated in reference to the implications of Sartre's theory of intentionality, which is only comprehensible from within what Husserl regards as the "natural attitude."

A Significant Dissimilarity with Respect to the Principle of Intentionality

Although Husserl had endeavored to distance himself from both traditional idealism and realism, the origins of Sartre's objections to Husserlian constitutive phenomenology can be traced to his arduous concern to avoid expressing any semblance of idealism. The ambiguities evident in Husserl's use of the term "constitution," however, should be noted, as Natanson has been careful to do. (see 1974:94) "Constitution" in Husserl's usage may be understood differently in various contexts. In some cases it may refer to the logic of meaning-construction. In other cases, however, Husserl seems to be suggesting a kind of "world-creation" wherein not only the structure of meaning

is produced by consciousness, but the nature of reality as well.

If intentionality is the essence of consciousness, we are obliged to inquire if the intended objects of consciousness are independently "there" for consciousness. Husserlian phenomenology appears to deny that such an independence is the case. As meaning-giving acts, the acts of consciousness are constitutive of objects (at least as these objects are regarded as constituents of noemata). In other words, an object is what it is by virtue of the meanings which consciousness actuates. For this reason, intentional analyses ultimately become constitutive analyses designed to reveal how the meaning of things is primordially constituted through consciousness. Husserl asserts that unities of meaning presuppose a meaning-giving consciousness which is "absolute." He says that it is absurd to philosophize and fail to notice that,

> . . . the whole being of the world consists in a certain "meaning" which presupposes absolute consciousness as the field from which the meaning is derived . . . . (1962:153)

This "field" is "an existential field of absolute origins." However we may interpret such assertions, Husserl insists that his notion of the "constituting of the natural world in absolute consciousness" is **not** an expression of a subjective idealism which would transform the world into a subjective illusion.

Sartre, of course, seeks to avoid any implication of world-creation early on in EN by attempting to show that the being of the object perceived is independent from the being of the perceiving consciousness. Without entering into the intricacies of some of Sartre's arguments, we can note here that the independence of the being of the perceiving consciousness from the being of the object perceived is for him, in part, a necessary implication of the principle of intentionality. The radically intentional character of consciousness, for Sartre, is such that it always implies the existence of a being other than itself.

At the heart of the controversial introduction to EN is the so-called "ontological proof" which professes to distinguish two "absolutely separated regions of being." The "proof" is an expression of the Sartrean version of the principle of intentionality. That consciousness is intentional means to Sartre that "transcendence is the constitutive structure of consciousness"--that it comes into being "**supported** by a being which is not itself." (1956:23) Evidently Sartre had initially felt that he concurred with Husserl with respect to intentionality. Husserl had presented consciousness and the world as having different natures. In Part Two of the Ideas, Husserl initiates a "psychological phenomenological" inquiry into experience wherein he examines the realms of the **cogitatio** (noesis) and the **cogitatum** (noema). Immanent contents of consciousness

are thereby distinguished from objects transcendent to consciousness. Husserl goes so far as to inquire how it is that consciousness can become involved with a transcendent, substantial world which is manifest as "something alien," an "otherness."

If consciousness and its transcendent objects are heterogeneous, how can we explicate their involvement? This is the dilemma which Husserl poses to traditional epistemologies, and this is also the rationale behind the procedure of phenomenological reduction which Sartre rejects. Sartrean "phenomenological ontology" can be understood as an endeavor to respond to this dilemma. But it does so in a manner which does nothing to mitigate the aforementioned heterogeneity. In fact, his rejection of the phenomenological reduction is an objection to its apparent neutralization of the epistemological fissure between subject and object. In **EN**, we are given to understand that consciousness and object do not belong to the same fundamental stratum and are not of a common essence. For Sartre, they are heterogeneous modes of being. The being of consciousness ("being-for-itself") puts its own being in question "as not being the being of the object." Since these modes of being cannot be reduced to each other, Sartre rejects the phenomenological reduction of Husserl. Departing from Husserl's "phenomenological idealism" Sartre's own "phenomenological ontology" is an expression of

an irreducible ontological dualism.

In **EN**, Sartre has decided that Husserl is an idealist who has been "totally unfaithful" to his principle of intentionality. He maintains that Husserl has made of the noema an "unreal" object "whose **esse** is **percipi**." (1956:23) Husserl's inquiry into the noetic-noematic structures did lead him to describe the noematic object as one whose "**esse** consists exclusively in its '**percipi**.'" (1962:265) He states this in the context of describing the noematic object as an object "in the logical sense," which is "wholly dependent." He insists, however, that his assertion is as far removed as can be from Berkeley's famous formula. The **percipi** in this context "does not contain the **esse** as a real (**reelles**) constituent." (1962:265) The dependent relation is one in which the **eidos** of the noema and the **eidos** of the noeses "belong **eidetically** together." Husserl's use of the term "**reelles**," as we have seen, specifically refers to the psychological treatment of the parts and phases of experience as an object like any other.

It would seem, then, that Husserl was stating here that the being of the noematic object is wholly dependent on our perceiving it, but with the qualification that this perceiving does not thereby constitute the being of the noema as a real (**reelles**) psychological-analytical objective element in consciousness. Noemata are themselves, of course, the residuum of the transcendental reduction which, as we

have seen, Sartre rejects. Sartre, then, prefers to speak of "phenomena." For Sartre, Husserl's general approach raises a disturbing query: Is the being of a "phenomenon" manifest to consciousness identical to the being of the existent object? Husserl, of course, has suspended questions concerning existence. For Husserl, the being or reality of a particular thing is manifest to consciousness with an intuitable "essence." When we know the essence, we know the true being of the thing. Generally speaking, Husserl takes reality to be manifest as essence. As essence, reality is phenomenal. Basically, then, reality and phenomena appear to have the same status. In other words, the status of the "phenomenon of being" is fundamentally indistinguishable from that of the "being of the phenomenon." In Husserl's viewpoint, this is seen as the case when we compare the phenomenon of the existing thing with the being of the thing. As we have seen, he claims that when suspending judgment about the existence of a thing, it still appears to be what it is.

In Sartre's view, there is a radical difference between existing and existing-as-an-aspect-of-a-thing. The concrete existence which we have access to is fundamentally distinct from its objectification by consciousness. In his view, both Husserl and Heidegger err in that, although they do not exactly equate phenomena and being, they have rendered them homogenous. Sartre insists that the **being** of the phenomenon is not itself either a phenomenon or something hiding behind

the phenomenon. Being is the condition of the disclosure of all phenomena and the ground of that quality of things which reveals the essences of things. The being of phenomena, then, is a condition of phenomena, but is not itself reducible to phenomena.

Although being is coextensive with phenomena, it is not subject to the phenomenal condition of existing only as an object for consciousness. Sartre concludes that we are aware of it pre-reflectively. This is the existence revealed to consciousness through pre-reflective awareness, as is experienced in nausea and boredom. Access to existence is given through the pre-reflective **cogito** as an immediate revelation. Since there is nothing **in** consciousness for this consciousness **of** being to be conscious **of**, it can only be the consciousness of the being of the phenomenon itself, on which consciousness radically depends.

The preceding discussions provide us with some structure whereby we can distinguish Nishida, Sartre and Husserl in terms of their respective orientations to the phenomenological reductions, the doctrine of intentionality, and matters pertaining to ontological dualism and idealistic monism. This background structure will be relevant not only to the next chapter, but also to portions of Part Three and Four of this study.

CHAPTER IX

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Husserlian Phenomenological Reduction and Patanjalian Yoga

As we have seen, the radicality of the Sartrean version of intentionality disallows any sort of interruption wherein the Husserlian natural standpoint can be "suspended." For Sartre, the existence of a being **other** than the being of consciousness is necessitated by the radically intentional character of consciousness. If the Husserlian **epokhé** were actually carried through, the dissociation from the existing world would, in his estimation, collapse consciousness into itself. It could result only in some sort of yogic "annihilation of consciousness." Sartre, then, insists that

> . . . only reflective consciousness can be dissociated from what is posited by the consciousness reflected-on. It is on the reflective level only that we can attempt an **epokhé**, a putting between parentheses, only there that we can refuse what Husserl calls the **mitmachen**. (1956:122)

Hence, we have associated the "Sartrean **epokhé**" with "pure reflection," and "impure reflection" with a kind of "natural standpoint."

In view of Sartre's analysis of Husserl, it is especially interesting to note that the Husserlian technique of phenomenological reduction has been compared with yogic meditation with some provocative results. In his article,

"Phenomenological Reduction and Yogic Meditation," R. Puligandla observes some parallels between Husserl's procedure and that of the yogic methods expounded by Patanjali. Puligandla takes the view that Patanjali provides clearcut procedural guidelines for effecting the reductions which phenomenologists emphasize but never tell exactly how to perform. Although Sartre interprets Husserl's technique as a "methodological fiction" constructed for specific analytical purposes, the aim of the technique in general terms is to intuit the essence of things in their primordiality, thereby securing direct, apodictic and presuppositionless knowledge. This aim is common to both Husserlian phenomenology and Patanjalian Yoga. As Puligandla observes, both are "looking for self-validating knowledge." (1970:25)

Puligandla interprets both Husserl and Patanjali as claiming that a suspension of the "natural attitude" is a prerequisite for such knowledge. In his view, what is approached through the phenomenological **epokhé** is accomplished yogically through the various **aṅgas** which are observances and exercises for purification. Both Husserl and Patanjali maintain that the resultant "knowledge" consists in the direct intuition of objects in their primordiality. For Patanjali, this knowledge is called **artha** and is distinguished from **śabda**, which is knowledge based on words, and **jñāna**, which is knowledge based on perception and

reasoning. **Artha** is the true knowledge of direct, primordial or originary intuition (**prajñā** or **buddhi**) and is given in the state of enlightenment (**samādhi**). This state is the last of the three stages of concentration which are the final three **aṅgas**. The final goal is **mokṣa** or sustained, total liberation.

Regarding "Things-in-themselves"

Puligandla observes that yoga coincides with Kant in maintaining that intellectual, perceptual and conceptual knowledge is restricted to phenomena. He adds, however, that it departs from Kant's assertion that man cannot know the "noumena." Sartre, of course, denies that there is any noumenal dimension "behind" phenomena. Puligandla, on the other hand, contends that it is in the nature of the intuitive knowledge of the yogi to have knowledge of "things-in-themselves." It is also his interpretation that, despite disagreement on the question, Husserl's conviction that phenomenology must turn away from traditional, prejudiced and "metaphysical" views in order to gain access to the primordial intuition of the "things themselves," indicates the suggestion that phenomenology can have knowledge of things-in-themselves.

Knowledge of things themselves is given in "immediate 'seeing' (**Sehen**)," which is,

> . . . not merely the sensory seeing of experience, but **seeing in general as primordial dator consciousness of any kind whatsoever**, is the

> ultimate source of justification for all rational statements. (1962:75-6)

Similarly, Nishida speaks of "immediate intuition," a term which "does not refer simply to the activity of sensation" and which is the ultimate basis of rational judgment. (1990:41) In Nishida's view, direct knowledge is knowledge of facts in intuitive experience. Such facts are the "phenomena of consciousness" which we make judgments about, judgments which can be erroneous. Inferential judgment is extraneous to the direct intuitive experience of the facts. If there is a noumenal dimension for Nishida, it is an "aspect" of experiential facts or the "phenomena of consciousness" which can **not** be known through thinking. We may recall from part one of this study that, concurrent with empiricism, Nishida expresses skepticism about the idea of trans-experiential realities. Any notion of the noumenal which Nishida might entertain, then, can **not** be construed as trans-experiential. At the beginning of Chapter Twelve in ZnK, Nishida expresses his own version of the "noumenon." Nishida identifies the "noumenal aspect of nature" with "the fact of direct experience in which subject and object have not yet separated." (1990:68) The Nishidean noumenon remains "unknowable" in the usual sense of "knowledge." It is not, however, trans-experiential.

If Puligandla is right, it may be said that the yogi and the phenomenologist share Nishida's concern with absolutely apodictic, presuppositionless and self-validating knowledge. With subtle differences this knowledge is, at least in part, found in the immediate, originary intuition of "things themselves" or with what Nishida renders as the "noumenal aspect of things." In Husserlian terms, this is the noematic or objective side of conscious experience viewed after the **epokhé**. What is "bracketed-off" by Husserl's phenomenological **epokhé** is thinking in the "natural attitude." As we have noted, by putting the natural thesis in suspension we do not abandon or negate it; it is merely "suspended" as an investigatory and uncoerced expediency.

The judgment **simpliciter** from which we abstain is merely modified into a "bracketed judgment" so that it cannot govern the focus of attention. Although Nishida does not utilize such a modification, "pure experience" is described as distinct from the peripheral addition of judgment. The "purely experienced," however, is not given as any kind of resultant "residuum" of a procedure. In fact, in **ZnK** Nishida refuses to speak of the experienced apart from the consciousness which experiences. In any case, Nishida generally characterizes "pure experience" as distinct from

judgment. It remains distinct, however, as the foundation upon which all kinds of judgments are based. Judgment, then, is not merely suspended as an investigatory expediency; "pure experience" is, by definition, originally distinct from judgment and yet it is intimately connected to it. As we noted in part one of this study, "pure experience" is the origin of judgment. There is nothing, then, to affirm or negate either procedural (Husserl) or performative (Patanjali) directives which might render "pure experience" accessible.

We have noted that Puligandla views phenomenology and yoga as having a common aim. He thinks, however, that yoga recommends certain specific directives as to how to "perform" the so-called "reduction," whereas Husserl does not. We can observe, in this context, that Nishida does not present "pure experience" in terms of procedural directives as Husserl does, nor does he mention specific performative directives as Patanjali does, although we are free to conjecture as to the influence of Nishida's history of Zen practice. Despite this, it is clear that Nishida shares Husserl's Cartesian concern with presuppositionless knowledge and with the immediate intuition of "things themselves." We might say that he shares some of Husserl's philosophical motivations without forsaking a religious orientation which is more akin to Patanjali's yoga. Although Nishida develops a philosophy of "pure experience," his

concern with "pure experience" remains intrinsically religious. As an expression of Zen "**satori**" (Zen term for "flashes" of enlightenment), "pure experience" resembles the yogic experience of **samādhi**, wherein there is "the fusion of the subject and the object." (Puligandla, 1970:24)

An Important Distinction between Husserlian Phenomenology and Yoga

Even though Puligandla begins his article by asserting that phenomenology and yoga share common aims, toward the end he makes an important distinction. Reminiscent of Sartre's critique, he observes that ultimately Husserl's phenomenological reductions are "logico-epistemological devices" intended to give philosophy the status of a rigorous science without grounding in any presuppositions. In Puligandla's view, Husserl is unable to abandon this goal in order to bring the phenomenological reduction to the point where,

> . . . with the collapse of the noesis and noema into a unity, the doctrine of the intentionality of consciousness itself breaks down; for here, with the onset of transcendental subjectivity, it would no longer be possible to talk about consciousness on the one hand and its intentionality on the other. (1970:30)

This is, of course, precisely the transformation which Sartre disallows. Puligandla finds that Husserl did not "push" the reductions "beyond the reflective stage to the pre-reflective, pre-conscious." (1970:30) Sartre, of course, insists that the Husserlian **epokhé** can only take

place on the reflective level. Whereas Sartre disparages Husserlian reduction for its lack of efficacy, Puligandla claims that any limitation should not be construed as a defect of Husserl's work, since the extent to which one pursues the phenomenological reductions depends on what one's goals are. Despite this, Puligandla grants that there is a kind of inconsistency in the attempt to realize a rigorous epistemology through transcendental subjectivity since epistemology requires a matrix in which the subject-object dichotomy is maintained in a manner which disallows the investigation of the noetic in subjective isolation.

Sartre, who decries the "illusion of the primacy of knowledge," is as critical of epistemological orientations as he is of Husserlian transcendental reduction. Sartre, of course, objects to the conception of the noema as a "mere correlate" of noesis. By way of this objection, however, Sartre would seem inadvertently to preserve the subject-object dichotomy upon which the "illusion of the primacy of knowledge" is founded. In any case, as we noted above, Sartre thought that if the transcendental reduction could effectively isolate consciousness from the existing objects of its intention, it would result in a contraction of consciousness into itself, or a collapse of intentionality, which would disallow phenomenological investigation of anything, including consciousness.

Certain Similarities between Sartrean Phenomenological Ontology and Sāmkhya Yoga

In the preceding discussions we took note of Puligandla's observations that there are certain similarities between Husserl's phenomenological reductions and Patanjali's yogic meditation. Not only do Husserl and Patanjali concur in seeking apodictic and "self-validating" knowledge, they also seem to agree in tracing the constitutive origins of the world to transcendental subjectivity. For the yogi, the "natural attitude" wherein one senses a separateness between consciousness and the existing world is a product of illusion and ignorance. In his immersion in pure subjectivity, the yogi "realizes that the whole manifested universe is nothing but his own essence." (Puligandla, 1970:29) Sartre, of course, rejects the notion that individual consciousness and the manifest material universe belong to the same fundamental stratum. Dismissing "phenomenological idealism," Sartre presents his own "phenomenological ontology" as an ontological dualism wherein consciousness and objects are founded on irreducible and heterogeneous modes of being.

Sartre struggles against the idealist predilections in Husserl by insisting on the ontological status of the intentional object and, through his "ontological proof," purports to distinguish two "absolutely separate regions of being." In the light of Puligandla's analogies between

Husserlian phenomenology and Patanjalian yoga, then, it is of special interest to note the existence of a study which explores similarities between Sartrean phenomenological ontology and the philosophy of Sāmkhya yoga. In his article, "Classical Sāmkhya and the Phenomenological Ontology of Jean-Paul Sartre," G. Larson observes a number of parallels between the thought of Sartre and the views expressed by classical Sāmkhya. At this point in our study it is pertinent to consider some of these analogies.

Larson observes that both Sartre and classical Sāmkhya "set up a fundamental dualism between consciousness, on the one hand, and undifferentiated nature or being, on the other." (1969:53) In classical Sāmkhya this dualism is expressed in terms of **puruṣa** (individual consciousness) and **prakṛti** (undifferentiated being). Sāmkhya maintains this fundamental dualism in terms of opposite and irreducible poles which function in a kind of dialectical interaction. Unlike Patanjali's yoga, Sāmkhya refuses to see the world as an illusory projection of consciousness, as a kind of product of consciousness, and thus it cannot be identified with any idealistic monism. It also refuses to see consciousness as a product of the world and hence rejects materialism and naturalism. Like Sartrean phenomenological ontology, Sāmkhya takes an intermediate stance between idealism and mechanistic materialism or naturalism. In itself the **puruṣa** is "a kind of translucent emptiness, a

pure witness." (Larson, 1969:51) As such, **puruṣa** is "at once the source of man's freedom and his suffering." (1969:50) "Ignorance" is viewed as a kind of "natural attitude" resulting from the mutual presence of **puruṣa** and **prakṛti** to each other, and is the reason for the appearance of the manifest world. "Salvation" involves the unraveling of these two in their dialectical interplay. In an "unnatural" reversal of ordinary knowledge, the Sāmkhya yogi hopes to realize **puruṣa** in itself apart from its hypnotic involvement with **prakṛti**, thereby overcoming the natural standpoint of "ignorance."

Although Sartre clearly rejects the idea of any yogic salvation which would defy the ubiquity of the principle of intentionality, he does allow for the possibility of a certain "radical conversion," a pure reflective "event," wherein there is liberation from our natural state of alienation. The result, however, is existential anxiety rather than "salvation." Sartre also posits a fundamental dualism of irreducible modes of being analogous to that of Sāmkhya: "being-for-itself" (individualized consciousness) and "being-in-itself" (the unconscious world). Like the Sāmkhyan **puruṣa**, "being-for-itself" is the pure and non-substantial being of consciousness. Like the Sāmkhyan **prakṛti**, "being-in-itself" is the non-conscious being of the phenomenon and is a fully self-identical plenitude. Like the Sāmkhyan **puruṣa**, "being-for-itself" is a presence to

"being-in-itself" (**prakṛti**). Without the presence of the "for-itself" to "being-in-itself" (**prakṛti**), the "in-itself" can **not** be manifest either as a totality (in the sense of a "world") or as a differentiated being with parts. Without consciousness, there can be no differentiation, plurality or meaning. Left to itself, "being-in-itself" is simply undifferentiated, meaningless massivity. It "is opaque to itself precisely because it is filled with itself." (1956:28) Despite its dependency on consciousness for meaning and differentiation, "the in-itself has no need of the for-itself in order to be." (1956:791) Even if "being-for-itself" were to cease to exist, "being-in-itself" would endure as an undifferentiated and meaningless "solid" (**massif**).

Another significant observation in Larson's comparative analysis is that both classical Sāmkhya and Sartre's phenomenological ontology "strip consciousness of all content." (1969:54) **Puruṣa** is described as a pure witness apart from "impure" reflective self-awareness. It is, essentially, a "pre-reflective **cogito**." The **puruṣa** in classical Samkhya is non-personal and individual. Similarly, Sartre's transcendent "being-for-itself" is non-personal in its immediate relation to itself, although it is always individualized by virtue of its necessary connection with the "in-itself"--a connection which Sartre refers to as "facticity" (**facticité**). As a result of this necessary

connection, the "for-itself" is individualized in reference to a body, a "world" and a past. A pure nothingness in relation to itself, it is only by virtue of this facticity that the "for-itself" can be said to exist. Emphatic as to the non-personal translucence of transcendental consciousness, Sartre was, we recall, impelled to banish the ego from the "for-itself" and align it with the "in-itself."

Husserl and Patanjali, Sartre and Sāmkhya

We may observe now that Husserl, Patanjali, Sartre and Sāmkhya yoga all express a certain construal of the commonplace and "natural" orientation to the world. We have noted that Husserl and Patanjali recommend certain steps toward negating the predisposition to adopt the natural standpoint, albeit with different goals in mind. Sāmkhya yoga, of course, shares in the soteriological goals of Patanjalian yoga. It also recommends a radical, even "unnatural," reversal of our natural orientation. We have said that although he rejects Husserl's reductions, Sartre proposes his own version of an **epokhé**. As "pure reflection," the Sartrean **epokhé** is a liberation from the deception ("bad faith") which leads us to identify transcendent consciousness with the ego and its passing states. Sartre also, however, emphasizes the pre-reflective and brute awareness of existence. This is the disclosure of the being of phenomena which is not itself reducible to phenomena. As such, it pertains to the rationale or "ontological proof"

supporting his dualism, a dualism which in certain respects is reminiscent of the ancient Indian metaphysical system of Sāmkhya yoga.

It is of interest, therefore, to consider that although Sartre and Sāmkhya express similar dualisms, they can be said to differ over the same crucial principle which is the pivotal issue over which Sartre departed from Husserl. As Larson observes, it is by virtue of his adherence to the principle of intentionality that "Sartre would not allow the possibility that [this] consciousness could exist in a state of isolation apart from what it is conscious of." (1969:56) Although Sāmkhya yoga shares in Sartre's antipathy toward idealistic monism and expresses an ontological dualism similar to that of Sartre, it does **not** share in Sartre's critique of the notion of a realized transcendental subjectivity apart from the existing world. The goal for Sāmkhya is to realize **puruṣa** in itself apart from its incessant dialectical interplay with the being of **prakṛti**. The possibility of a realized transcendental subjectivity is a soteriological concern of both Patanjalian and Sāmkhyan yogas, distinct as they are. For Husserl, on the other hand, it appears to be more of an epistemological concern.

Having described analogies which align Sartre and Sāmkhya against Husserl and Patanjali, we may also see that Sartre's departure from Husserl and Patanjali over the possibility of a realized transcendental subjectivity

appears to align Husserl, Patanjali and Sāmkhya against him. This distinction between Sartre and Sāmkhya radically differentiates the ultimate character of their respective ontological dualisms even though their dualisms are mutually distinguishable from the nuances of idealistic monism evident in both Husserl and Patanjali.

Locating Nishida's Standpoint

We have seen that, like both Husserl and Sartre, Nishida expresses concern with the Cartesian quest for direct and apodictic knowledge free of artificial assumptions. He also describes and rejects certain expressions which are reminiscent of the perspective called the "natural attitude:"

> . . . we think that things exist in the external world apart from consciousness and that in the back of consciousness there is something called the mind, which performs various functions. (1990:38)

In **ZnK**, Nishida explains that it is by virtue of the law of causality that we are compelled to believe in the independent existence of mind and matter. This belief, however, is an inference based on the law of causality and as such it is an assumption. In contrast to this, direct and apodictic knowledge is non-inferential and is the intuitive knowledge of facts or of the "phenomena of consciousness." Ordinarily we believe that there are two types of experiential facts--"phenomena of consciousness" and "phenomena of matter"--but according to Nishida there is

only one: phenomena of consciousness (noema). He explains:

> Material phenomena are abstractions from phenomena of consciousness that are common to us all and possess an unchanging relation to each other. (1990:43)

In terms of Patanjalian yoga, Nishida's direct knowledge resembles **artha** (knowledge from immediate intuition), as distinct from **śabda** (knowledge based on words) and **jñāna** (knowledge based on perception and reasoning). For Nishida, judgments deriving from inference are extraneous to the direct intuitive experience of facts. Inferential judgments, however, are founded on direct intuitive experience. In our discussions we have observed that Husserl says much the same thing when he characterizes "immediate seeing" as the basis of rational judgment. In order to disclose immediate intuitive experience, however, it is requisite that the judgments or inferential thinking characteristic of the "natural attitude" be modified by an **epokhé**. After the **epokhé** has been effected, the objects of immediate intuition are the "things themselves" and they constitute what Husserl calls the noematic side of conscious experience. The noematic side of conscious experience is what Nishida calls the "phenomena of consciousness," albeit without apparent need of a reductive procedure since the notion of "material existence" is already deemed an abstraction effected from the natural standpoint.

We have seen that Sartre criticizes Husserl for

rendering the noema "unreal" despite Husserl's characterization of it as "irreal." Insisting on the ontologically real status of the noema, Sartre argues for the independent and irreducible "**being** of phenomena" by attempting to demonstrate that the perceived object can **not** be identified either with the act of perceiving them or with some sort of essential unity of infinite "appearances." In contrast to this, Nishida asserts that the phenomenon of which we are conscious **is identical** with our being conscious of it. He states that "A present phenomenon of consciousness and our being conscious of it are identical; they cannot be divided into subject and object." (1990:39) In speaking of a present phenomenon as "phenomenon of consciousness," Nishida clearly wants to emphasize the absolute dependency of the immediately experienced phenomenon on consciousness.

In chapter six of ZnK Nishida states:

> From the perspective of direct knowledge that is free from all assumptions, reality consists only of phenomena of our consciousness, namely, the facts of direct experience. (1990:42)

Any assumption that suggests a reality given apart from the scope of the "phenomena of consciousness"--whether it be material existence, a mind or ego "behind" consciousness, or a noumenal realm "behind" the phenomenon--is explained as the attempt of non-critical thinking to systematically organize the facts of direct experience. Philosophical thinking, however, is highly critical thinking which,

properly speaking, discards all such arbitrary assumptions and starts from direct, apodictic knowledge.

Nishida claims that from the point of view of direct knowing, "phenomena of consciousness are the sole reality." It is only because of the demands of non-critical thinking that we come to extend the law of causality to phenomena in general and posit the existence of something operating behind it. We assume the existence of a "thing-in-itself" because "similar phenomena of consciousness always arise in a certain combination." (1990:43) However, Nishida explains that, from the perspective of "pure experience,"

> . . . the unchanging combination of phenomena of consciousness is the fundamental fact, and the existence of the thing is simply an assumption made for the sake of explanation. (1990:43)

Although Sartre also rejects two-realm theories of the phenomenal and noumenal for much the same reasons as Nishida, he is adamantly opposed to monistic and phenomenalistic characteracterizations such as are suggested by Nishida's assertion that "the phenomena of consciousness are the sole reality." As we have seen, Sartre insists that consciousness and the objects which appear to consciousness can **not** belong to the same fundamental stratum, can **not** be identical. The being of the thing perceived can **not** be relative or reducible to our perception of it. Replacing Husserl's "noema," Sartrean "phenomena" are grounded in the transphenomenal "being-in-itself" and is thereby wholly

independent of the consciousness to which it appears. This being does not depend on consciousness for its existence. Without reason or justification it is **already there**. "Being-in-itself" is superfluous (**de trop**). It is never exhausted by any of its appearances, even though it is fully present in each of its appearances. This means that there can be no noumenon "behind" the phenomenon; there can be no dualism within the "in-itself" between noumena and phenomena.

Sartre's ontological dualism is supported by his contention that to be a conscious human being is to be aware of an hiatus between consciousness and its objects. To be a conscious being, Sartre contends, is to be conscious of not being identical to the being of the object confronted or the being of causally determined things ("being-in-itself"). The primacy given by Sartre to the pre-reflective **cogito** supports this contention since, like the **cogito**, it is both intentional and reflexive. As intentional, pre-reflective consciousness is always consciousness of a transcendent object. As reflexive, it is non-positionally aware of itself (present to itself) **as** consciousness of an object. Already at the pre-reflective level, consciousness is directly an awareness of something other than itself and simultaneously an awareness of itself.

Even at the pre-reflective level, then, Sartre views consciousness as self-consciously distanced from the objects

of which it is conscious. Non-positional consciousness "knows itself only as an absolute inwardness." (1987:41) The pure interiority of pre-reflective consciousness is such that it can only be lived, not contemplated. Once consciousness contemplates itself, it can reflect on its interiority only by making it an object. Sartre's characterization of the pre-reflective **cogito** in the terms mentioned above contradicts Nishida's description of the knowledge given through direct pre-reflective intuition. In Nishida's description of direct intuition at the pre-reflective level, there is no assumed opposition between the **being** of the conscious subject and the **being** of the object of which the subject is conscious. Self-consciousness is not described as any kind of pure "interiority."

We will not attempt, at this point, to consider how Nishida does describe self-consciousness. What we want to recognize now is that although both Sartre and Nishida give primary status to pre-reflective experience, there are fundamental differences in their respective characterizations of it. For Sartre, the pre-reflective **cogito** is the basis of the reflective Cartesian **cogito** and supplants it in primacy as apodictic foundation. The pre-reflective **cogito** is characterized as "non-thetic" or "non-positional" self-consciousness. Strictly speaking, there is no "knowledge" in pre-reflective consciousness. Still, there is an implicit consciousness of itelf as

consciousness of an object. Although "knowledge" in the ordinary sense is an impure reflective product, phenomenological insights remain possible for Sartre by virtue of the "pure reflection" whereby reflective consciousness can have an immediate presence to itself.

Like Sartre, Nishida observes that consciousness of the self implies the distinction between the thinking self and the self of which it thinks. In making this distinction, however, this thinking self must become the object of yet another thinking self and so forth, ad infinitum. Like Sartre, Nishida argues that if we are to avoid the infinite regress, there must be an original pre-reflective intuition upon which consciousness is founded. Unlike Sartre, however, **this original intuition is an intuition of the pre-reflective unity of subject and object**, rather than the pre-reflective consciousness of being conscious of a transcendent object which it is **not**. That which knows and that which is known must exist first as a unity. This means that, for Nishida, not only is there a primordial unity between consciousness and its objects, but there is also a unifying and self-identical consciousness underlying both the consciousness of the thinking self and that of the self which is thought. Contrary to this, a fundamental characteristic of consciousness for Sartre is its intrinsic lack of self-identity.

For Nishida, the "fact" of immediate experience prior

to the addition of the "fabrications of thinking," is one wherein there is "still no opposition between subject and object and no separation of knowledge, feeling, and volition; there is only an independent, self-sufficient, pure activity." (1990:47) Nishida describes pre-reflective "pure experience," wherein subject and object pre-exist reflection as a unity, as an independent, self-sufficient and pure activity. It is this pre-existent unity of consciousness and the objects of consciousness which he considers to be "true reality."

Nishida explains that it is usually thought that there are "two realities," the subjective or mental reality and the reality of the material object, which can exist independently. It is then deduced that the phenomena of consciousness arise from their mutual activity. Nishida claims that this is a total mistake. "Subject and object" as well as "mind and matter" are simply two different ways of looking at a single fact. The dichotomy is not inherent in the fact itself. Sartre's ontological dualism, of course, must be distinguised from the common view of the two realities of "subject and object," "mind and matter," in that the the **psyche** is conceived as the organized totality of one's past states and, as such, is the natural object of transcendent consciousness. Nevertheless, Sartre's postulation of the existence of two "modes of being" radically contradicts Nishida's insistence that there is

only one single mode of being.

According to Nishida, "all phenomena of consciousness are established in the same mode." (1990:53-4) For Nishida, such "phenomena of consciousness" refer not only to volition and emotion, but even to "events in the natural world, which are usually deemed phenomena of the external realm." (1990:54) Nishida insists that "a purely material world apart from consciousness is an abstract concept." (54) True reality, he contends, is never extraneous to the phenomena of consciousness. It is realized in direct experience, and "always comes forth in the same mode." All the varied èxperiences are one reality and they are all established by means of this same fundamental mode. We may recall from Part One of this study that there is always a "unifying factor." Nishida explains that "the unifying power at the base of our thinking and willing and the unifying power at the base of the universe are one and the same." (1990:56)

Taking the preceding into consideration, then, it is apparent that, unlike Sartre, Nishida resembles Husserl in regarding the idea of an independently existing material world as a product of an inference which exemplifies a common and natural misapplication of the law of causality. Husserl, of course, sought to suspend this "natural attitude," by effecting an **epokhé** which "brackets-off" all judgment (negative or affirmative) about the independent

existence of a material world. Ostensibly, this reduction is performed as a methodological expedient requisite for phenomenological investigation. Like Husserl, Nishida makes a departure from the "natural attitude," which assumes the independent existence of a material world, and inquires into the nature of immediate reality prior to the addition of the "fabrications of thinking."

Although Nishida stipulates a departure from the common view as a requirement of the "critical thinking" of philosophy, he is also making the stronger assertion **that immediate intuition is itself intrinsically free of the assumptions related to the common view.** It is not merely necessary, then, to eschew the assumptions endemic to the "natural attitude" in order to investigate immediate intuition, but it is a fundamental characteristic of immediate intuition itself that it is already devoid of the "fabrications of thinking" and that it offers no evidence for the assumptions which typify the "natural attitude."

We have seen that, although Sāmkhya concurs with Sartre with respect to the assertion of ontological dualism and the repudiation of idealistic monism, unlike Sartre, Sāmkhya continues to allow for the possibility of isolating **puruṣa** from **prakṛti** and associates the realization of transcendental subjectivity with spiritual liberation. Presumably Sartre would regard yogic "annihilation" in the same manner whether we speak of Sāmkhyan or Patanjalian

yoga. Despite its atheistic orientation (another similarity to Sartre) the ultimate goal of Sāmkhya yoga, like Patanjali's yoga, is final liberation and total freedom from bondage (**mokṣa**). One would expect, however, that Sartre might find it intriguing to discover an ancient Indian yoga which is in proximity to his phenomenological ontology on those pivotal issues which were the basis of his departure from Husserl.

If the **samādhi** experienced by yogis is a "contraction" of intentional consciousness into itself, then it must also be a collapse of the correlates of intentional consciousness into a total fusion. There is also said to be a loss of residual self-consciousness in the state of **samādhi**. As such, in reference to this state, not only is the principle of intentionality overthrown, but it would seem that the pre-reflective, non-positional self-consciousness which Sartre claims is the character of the pre-reflective **cogito** can **not** be maintained. Nishida, of course, does not adopt Sartre's view of pre-reflective self-consciousness. On the contrary, Nishida's view of pre-reflective intuition leads us to associate his views more with Patanjalian and Husserlian idealism. Whether or not we can describe Nishida's "pure experience" as a "contraction" of intentional consciousness into itself, it is an intuition of an original fusion of noesis and noema. This "fusion" should be understood as **pre-existing all intentional experience.**

Husserl has described the **eidos** of the noema and the **eidos** of noesis as being "eidetically together." For Nishida, this eidetic togetherness is **the primordial unity of two unities** and precedes all differentiation and intentional directedness.

Despite Nishida's apparent proximity to Husserlian and Patanjalian idealism, he does not highlight transcendental subjectivity in isolation from the world. It is difficult to designate his monistic tendencies as overtly idealistic since he defines the primordial, dynamic and self-developing **unity** of the noetic **and** noematic aspects as itself being the ultimate irreducible being. It would seem that the ultimate irreducible "being" for any idealism must be the constituting noesis itself. Sartre, of course, postulates two distinct and irreducible beings in the manner of Sāmkhya. Despite his ontological dualism, however, it should be borne in mind that Sartre always objects to the idea that consciousness is ever, or can ever be, isolated from the being of phenomena.

Although Nishida posits a primordial unity between the noetic and noematic aspects, given in pre-reflective experience, we should note that he fails to elucidate the origins of the intentional dynamic in his ZnK. Assuming the dynamic, there are points at which Nishida has proximity to Husserl's constitutive analysis. Generally speaking, Nishida characterizes consciousness as a "unifying activity" and

material phenomena as the "unified." It does not appear, however, that Nishida is any more willing than Sartre to entertain the notion of a realized transcendental subjectivity in isolation from the world. In chapter thirteen of **Znk** Nishida states that:

> . . . just as purely objective nature apart from the subjective unity of spirit is an abstract concept, a purely subjective spirit apart from objective nature is an abstract concept as well. (1990:74)

In concluding this section, we may observe that Nishida emerges as an independent thinker, differing in significant ways from both Husserl and Sartre, yet at the same time showing similarities to both at certain other significant points. Our comparative considerations have brought many issues to light. Prominent among these issues is a provocative query: Must we necessarily view pre-reflective experience as a non-positional self-consciousness which tacitly posits the existence of a transcendent object or is pre-reflective experience fundamentally a fusion of consciousness and its objects? Related to this query is the issue of whether or not we are obliged, with Sartre and Sāmkhya, to postulate an ontological dualism.

We turn now to consider Nishida's notion of self-consciousness in more depth by examining his early notion of **Jikaku** (self-awareness) as it was first developed in 1917.

PART THREE

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE PROBLEM OF MEANING AND EXISTENCE

CHAPTER X

THE EARLY VERSION OF **JIKAKU**

It has often been said that **ZnK** contains all of Nishida's later ideas in rudimentary form and that his later work is essentially a clarification and elaboration of the concept of "pure experience." Largely for this reason, we have focused on **ZnK** in Part One and Two of this study. Whereas this has been an essential step in the process of our study of Nishida, it has been somewhat confining with respect to aspects of the issues which we would like to address in relation to Sartre.

Although Nishida does not develop his notion of "**jikaku**" (self-awareness) in **ZnK**, it is in conjunction with his efforts to philosophically deepen the basic standpoint of his maiden work that he moves from the standpoint of "pure experience" to that of "**jikaku**" and attempts to explicate the internal relations between intuition and reflection, fact and meaning, being and value, et cetera. It is opportune, then, that after some consideration of historical context, we proceed to examine aspects of the standpoint of **jikaku** and consider it in relation to Sartre and Husserl. The first two chapters of Part Three will be primarily expository.

The Historical Context of the Generation of the Notion of Jikaku

We have already observed that the philosophical development of Nishida's notion of "pure experience" is expressive, in part, of his grounding from an early age in the Zen experience. The extent to which he succeeds in expressing this notion philosophically may suggest that, properly speaking, Zen experience is not so much "anti-intellectual" as it is trans-intellectual. We may also observe that Nishida's unprecedented philosophical expressions of Zen took place in the historical context of a Japan wherein there was no standing tradition of systematic philosophy. Well versed in the religious literature of the East, he turned to Western philosophy in hopes of developing a conceptual framework whereby he could express a distinctively Japanese "**tetsugaku**" (philosophy). It is in this historical context that the inception of Nishida's notions of "pure experience" and "**jikaku**" must be seen to have taken place.

Nishida's **ZnK** came at a time when the decline of the influence of Hegelian idealism in Western philosophy had given rise to opposing strands of thought. An anti-metaphysical and generally atheistic strand was manifest in the development of dialectical materialism, positivism and empiricism. Common to these schools of thought was the rejection of all trans-empirical **a priori**

principles and the disapproval of traditional idealism and two-realm theories of the phenomenal and the noumenal. On the other hand, a strand of thought was developing in opposition to any strict adherence to materialism or "empirical fact" and more concerned with the metaphysical and religious issues which the former strand of thought had depreciated. This other strand of thought became manifest in **Lebensphilosophie** (e.g. Bergson) and in existentialism.

Modern psychology was engendered in the midst of the tensions between these strands. Psychology at this time sought the status of an empirical science based on directly ascertainable facts. A supportive philosophical orientation developed in relation to the endeavors of psychology in this direction. The vanguards of this trend were such thinkers as William James (1842-1910), Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920) and Ernst Mach (1838-1916), to which we have made some reference. Generally speaking, these men advocated a kind of modified empiricism. All of them emphasized experience in its pure and direct form. This emphasis was generated in the historical context of a sense of urgency brought on by a dissatisfaction with both traditional metaphysics and modern philosophies of materialism and Comtean positivism. It was in this same context in the history of philosophy that Nishida fashioned his notions of "pure experience" and "**jikaku.**"

In Part One of this study we saw how Nishida was

attracted to James' "radical empiricism" wherein immediate experience is said to include not only singular terms, but also the relations between terms. Significantly, Nishida extends the consciousness of relations to include even the truths of mathematics, the so-called "abstract science." In his philosophy of "pure experience," empiricism becomes radicalized to the extent that it comes around full-circle, so to speak, and begins to manifest rationalistic elements. According to Nishida, even the truths of mathematics are given credence by virtue of the evidence of "pure experience." Constituting more than perceptual experience, his "pure experience" also includes the "intellectual intuition" of **a priori** truth. As "nothing but our pure experience deepened and broadened," "intellectual intuition" extends the range of knowing in "pure experience" to encompass the complex relations involved in mathematics, as well as logic, metaphysics and even religion. (1990:42)

Despite the extent to which Nishida identified with William James' "radical empiricism" or with Ernst Mach's positivism, he retained an idealistic proclivity. Nishida's proximity to certain forms of idealism becomes especially evident in the neo-Kantianism of the next stage of thought expressed in his work of 1917, Intuition and Reflection in Self-Consciousness (**Jikaku no okeru chokkan to hansei**; hereafter abbreviated as **JOCH**). In this work we see that he is beset by tensions brought on by concurrent

sympathies with the historically antipathetic philosophies of positivism and empiricism on the one hand, and idealism on the other. This tension was, as we have seen, already manifest in **ZnK**. We may recall how, for David Dilworth, Nishida's fondness for arguments of a speculative and idealist sort prevented him from ever wholly embracing James' "radical empiricism." Nishida was content to express his philosophy of "pure experience" in idealistic terms, whereas James had pursued his own analysis as a critique of transcendental idealism.

Jikaku as a Prototypical Category

In **JOCH**, Nishida expresses the intention to unify Kantianism and Bergsonism in terms of certain modifications which he envisioned for the system devised by Johann Gottlieb Fichte. He hoped to elucidate a transition from formal **a priori** truths of mathematics to knowledge of empirical fact. In order to do this he needed a formal logical principle to which he could give ontological status. If he could do this, he felt he could free himself from the impasse imposed by the constraints inherent in Kantian epistemology and lay the groundwork for plausible metaphysics. Following Fichte's lead, Nishida found such a "formal" idea in the principle of identity which is generally thought to be a mere analytical truth.

Certainly the neo-Kantians, notably Hermann Cohen, had endeavored to ground knowledge of empirical content in

formal a priori truths. Nishida departs from the neo-Kantians, however, in the significance which he ascribes to the unity of jikaku (self-awareness) as prototypical category. He insists that the intuition of self-identity is the true underpinning of logical identity. In other words, the logical principle of identity, which is generally regarded as a simple analytical truth, is founded on the rudimentary intuition of self-identity experienced in jikaku. That is to say, the assertion that "A is A" is imbedded in the self-conscious intuition that "I am I." In this view, self-identity has the character of an a priori synthesis and it is the intuition of such synthesis which is the basis for the development of the concepts of number, space, time, and so on.

In discerning the unity of self-consciousness in connection with logical identity, Nishida was following Fichte's lead, as noted above. In taking this view of logical identity, Fichte dared to do what Kant had disallowed: he elevated a formal principle to ontological status. By following Fichte on this, Nishida felt that he was, in effect, expressing an urgent need for metaphysics beyond the confines of Kantian epistemology. Nishida proposes to ground both meaning and empirical fact in the unity of self-consciousness. In doing this, he rejects the strict dissimilarity which Heinrich Rickert and other neo-Kantians ascribed to meaning and fact. In the preface

to the revised edition of JOCH (1941) Nishida explains:

> I opposed to their sharp distinction between value and being, and meaning and fact, an overall unity of the two pairs from a position of self-consciousness, which is an internal union of intuition and reflection. (1987:xxv)

We should pause to note that the Japanese term "**jikaku**" is much broader than our English term "self-consciousness" which conveys only a partial picture of the whole range of meanings in Japanese. As Nishida understands it, "**jikaku**" expresses the rich and complex nature of consciousness covering the entire realm of human experience: consciousness of the natural world, of the world of consciousness itself, of the world of ideas and even of "absolute nothingness" wherein there is "neither seer nor the seen." "**Jikaku**" should be taken to indicate a direct intuition beyond the subject-object relation, in the manner of "pure experience." It should not be taken as a merely psychological concept (for this, the Japanese language has another term: **jushiki**). Yusa prefers to translate "**jikaku**" as "self-realization." (Yusa, 1983:261) The same is true for such esteemed scholars as Shimomura, Koyama, and Kosaka.

Similar to Fichte's **Tathandlung** (the original "act" of self-consciousness), Nishida's concept of **jikaku** denotes the **a priori** self-consciousness of the "transcendental ego" as distinct from the "self-consciousness of psychology." This central conception was originally suggested to him by a supplementary essay in Volume One of Josiah Royce's The

World and the Individual. Evidently Nishida had come to see this discovery as a natural elaboration on his initial concept of "pure experience." In itself, "pure experience" is a static and universal concept. When it is viewed as an act in a particular individual, however, it may be seen as self-consciousness.

Nishida found that this elaboration had the additional virtue of rendering the internal relationship between intuition and reflection more intelligible--something which he had failed to do in **ZnK**. Intuition, as we have seen, is incessant, direct consciousness. Reflection is "indirect consciousness" and may be viewed as external to the process of intuition. As Nishida explains,

> **Intuition** is a consciousness of unbroken progression, of reality just as it is, wherein subject and object are not as yet divided and that which knows and that which is known are one. **Reflection** is a consciousness which, standing outside of this progression, turns around and views it. (1987:3)

Nishida proposes that the notion of **jikaku** illuminates the internal relations between intuition and reflection. He explains that:

> When in self-consciousness the self makes its own activity its object and reflects upon it, this reflection is the very process of the self's development and as such is an unending progression; it is not an accidental happening, but is the intrinsic nature of consciousness as such. (1987:3)

Essentially, then, consciousness is manifest as a self-developmental, self-conscious process of reflection (in

the sense of mirroring itself).

If we consider Nishida's notion of **jikaku** in terms of the discussions which we had earlier with respect to Sartre's theory of consciousness, we may recall that Sartre's non-personal "being-for-itself" is not individualized by the possession of an "ego," but, rather, by virtue of the fact that it "exists for itself as a presence to itself." (1956:157) Somewhat similarly, Nishida's **jikaku** is a "presence to self" which is manifest as a process of the self's development and, as such, as an "unending progression."

Nishida claims that **jikaku** elucidates the relation between intuition and reflection. "Intuition," for him, is a direct awareness of "reality just as it is." Somewhat in the manner of the consciousness of "original temporality" in Sartre's "pure reflection," "intuition" is the consciousness of "unbroken progression." Nishida's "intuition," however, is a direct and pre-reflective awareness of the "world" as much as it is a "pure reflection" on consciousness itself. In any case, Nishida's notion of "reflection," here, is reminiscent of Sartre's notion of "impure reflection." As Sartre's "impure reflection" is a consciousness of "psychic temporality" in the "positional" sense of a "derived knowledge," so is Nishida's "reflection" a consciousness which, "standing outside of this progression," looks back to view it.

As distinct from Husserl who regards intentionality as the most fundamental structure of consciousness, Nishida regards **jikaku** as the most fundamental structure of consciousness. Although Sartre is especially emphatic as to the intentional nature of consciousness, he also insists that consciousness is pre-reflectively self-conscious. As the fundamental structure of consciousness, Nishida's **jikaku** is said to be the basis of both "intuition" and "reflection." Like Sartre's pre-reflective **cogito**, **jikaku** is the foundation of the reflective **cogito** and of knowledge itself. Since there is no consciousness without a knower, the radical structure of consciousness must, necessarily, always be that of self-consciousness.

The character of Nishida's **jikaku** is such that, that which knows and that which is known are, together, the "self." Borrowing from the Roycean notion of the self as a "self-representative system," he began to develop his notion of a "self-conscious system" wherein the self copies the self in an infinite process. Unlike Royce, Nishida applies this system not only to the "absolute self," but to all forms of consciousness, including reflection. Nishida, however, distinguishes this sense of the self copying the self from the concept of reflection given in psychology. In psychology, he explains, the reflecting self and the reflected self exhibit a similarity, but are regarded as chronologically distinct mental states and are "united only

by that feeling of self-identity which James compared to the brand on cattle belonging to the same owner." (1987:4) Nishida's concept of "self-conscious reflection," on the other hand, suggests the transcendental identity of the self in a manner reminiscent of Kant's "transcendental unity of pure apperception."

Contrary to the psychological view, Nishida proposes that our ability to recall the past "is possible only because of a self-consciousness that already transcends time." (1987:4) The psychological view is secondary and oblique. The ability to recall the past, he says, is founded on a primary and trans-individual self-consciousness. It is still the self which distinguishes and judges the self in terms of its varied mental states. The self which does the thinking and the selves which are thought are "immediately identical." Self-consciousness, then, is "consciousness of the transcendental unity of the self." (4) This underlying unity is said to take the form of an "internal 'ought.'" (**Sollen**).

Nishida observes how Fichte denies the notion that the fact of our thinking is based on the prior fact of our existing. Citing Heinrich Rickert's assertion that "meaning precedes and surpasses all existence" (**Der Sinn liegt über oder vor allem Sein**), Nishida proposes that thinking precedes existence. Like Rickert, he asserts that the object of thought is not transcendent existence, but a

transcendental "**Sollen**" ("ought") and belongs to the realm of value. Self-consciousness, then, as the "self knowing the self," or the "thinking which thinks thinking," is "value consciousness recognizing value consciousness itself." (1987:6) Concurring with Fichte, Nishida asserts that self-consciousness is a basic, immediate and inexplicable fact. Also in accord with Fichte, this self-consciousness is characterized as intuition and is regarded as **an act unto itself.**

Nishida, however, expresses reservations about Fichte's insistence that to be conscious of the self we must distinguish between the thinking self and the self which it thinks. Reminiscent of Sartre, Nishida expresses concern that if we do this, "this thinking self must become the object of yet another thinking self, and so on infinitely." (1987:7) We may recall Sartre's proposal that already at the pre-reflective level there is necessarily a kind of self-consciousness wherein the self does not posit itself as an object. Sartre explains that if self-consciousness required that the self be posited as an object, then this would suggest an infinite regress wherein any instance of self-consciousness would require that, if the **cogito** reflects on itself, this **cogito** in turn would appear to require another **cogito** and so on **ad infinitum.** Sartre explains that it is rather the case that "the necessary and sufficient condition for a knowing consciousness to be

knowledge **of** its object, is that it be consciousness of itself as being that knowledge." (1956:11) Hence, the pre-reflective **cogito** is already a rudimentary self-consciousness.

Nishida and Sartre on Self-consciousness

In his work of 1917, Nishida comes to regard "pure experience," when viewed as an act in a particular individual, as manifest in the form of self-consciousness. This self-consciousness is "an immediate and basic fact of consciousness which cannot be further explained." (1987:7) He observes that Fichtean self-consciousness is a phenomenon of immediate experience which resides only in the activity of thinking. In other words, "to intuit the self means to actualize this activity." (7) To the objection that Fichte's view suggests thinking without a subject or an activity without an agent, Nishida responds that "at the level of the actual" the self is operative as reflection or thinking, and apart from the activity of thinking "there is nothing we can call the self." (7)

Similarly, in reference to pre-reflective self-consciousness, Sartre says that, "In fact the self cannot be apprehended as a real existent." (1956:123) The "ego" for Sartre, however, is produced by the activity of the reflective **cogito**. We see here the proximity of Nishida's theory of reflection and that of Sartre. In the introduction to her translation of Sartre's **EN**, Hazel Barnes

observes that in speaking of the pre-reflective **cogito** as a "non-positional self-consciousness" Sartre uses the phrase "**conscience non-positionelle [dė] soi.**" She notes that he puts the "**de**" in parenthesis in order "to show that there is no separation, no positing of the self as an object of consciousness." (1956:xii) Thetic or positional self-consciousness, which is a deliberate reflective consciousness, is termed "**conscience de soi.**" To some extent Sartre's notion of **conscience non-positionelle [de] soi** approximates Nishida's **jikaku** as a self-awareness wherein self as subject and self as object are indistinguishable.

Despite Nishida's description of **jikaku** as "the self **thinking** the self," it would appear that he is attempting to develop a notion somewhat akin to Sartre's non-positional, pre-reflective self-consciousness. Echoing Sartre's assertion of homology between the pre-reflective **cogito** and the Cartesian **cogito**, Nishida characterizes the endeavors in his work of 1917 as an attempt to "locate the profound inner relation of intuition and reflection in self-consciousness." (1987:7) Furthermore, as is the case with Sartre's pre-reflective **cogito**, Nishida's **jikaku** is viewed as the basis of reflection. As the basis of reflection, **jikaku**, like Fichtean self-consciousness, resides somehow **within** the activity of thinking.

Still, the pre-reflective **cogito** is a self-consciousness only as the consciousness of "something."

The immediate presence of the reflective consciousness to the consciousness reflecting, however, is what Sartre refers to as "pure reflection." As self-awareness within the activity of reflection, Nishida's **jikaku** would seem to suggest "pure reflection." He does not characterize it strictly, however, as a form of reflection. Although Nishida seems to appropriate Fichte's characterization of self-consciousness as an immediate and inexplicable intuition which resides in the activity of reflection, he eschews the Fichtean distinction between the thinking self and the self which is thought. Nishida observes that in the case of an object other than the self,

> . . . that which thinks and that which is thought are separate and the act of judging differs from its content. Only in self-consciousness, which is the self thinking the self, content thinking content itself, are these two one. (1987:7)

We can perhaps consider this latter relation between the thinking self and the self which it thinks as partially reminiscent of Sartrean "pure reflection."

By way of distinguishing his notion of "pure reflection" from Cartesian representationalism, Sartre asserts that it is not knowledge, rather, it is a "bond of being." Even as a "bond of being," however, it is not a perfect identity of the reflecting self and the self which it reflects. The unity of the two is the unity of a "nihilation." Sartre, of course, characterizes consciousness as existing by making a nothingness arise between it and the

object of which it is conscious. In "pure reflection" there is an even deeper nothingness between the reflecting self and the self reflected on, than there is between the initial pre-reflective **cogito** and its content. The fractured unity, which is said to characterize the "bond of being" disclosed in "pure reflection," is but an aspect of the fracturing which Sartre ascribes to the "for-itself." In disclosing a "bond of being," "pure reflection" continues to presuppose some kind of distantiation between the reflecting self and the self which it reflects. In this respect, Sartre's notion of "pure reflection" appears dissimilar from Nishida's notion of **jikaku** which is indicative of an original self-identity between the reflective self and the self reflected.

Insofar as "pure reflection" discloses a "bond of being," Nishida's **jikaku** is more suggestive of "pure reflection" than "impure reflection." Certain passages, however, imply that **jikaku** incorporates both notions of reflection. On the one hand, it indicates the immediate presence of the reflective self to the self reflected-on. On the other hand, it suggests that this immediate presence can simultaneously serve as a vantage point for the self to contemplate its psychic states. In Sartrean terms, such a suggestion would involve a type of "impure reflection" which is founded on "pure reflection," a kind of "pure-impure reflection." Although Sartre does not entertain such a

notion, the suggestion is at least structurally analogous to his description of the homologous relation between the pre-reflective **cogito** and the **cogito.**

In any case, we have established that although there is a certain resemblance between Sartre's "pure reflection" and Nishida's **jikaku,** Sartre's notion is ultimately indicative of an originally fractured unity, whereas Nishida's **jikaku** is an intuition of an originally undivided unity conceived as the basis of the schism between the reflective self and the self reflected. Earlier we suggested a certain proximity between Sartre's "pre-reflective **cogito**" and **jikaku. Jikaku,** however, is a more inclusive notion. Although it is suggestive of a pre-reflective intuition which is simultaneously self-conscious, it also tends to incorporate the reflective **cogito.** In a sense, **jikaku** is more suggestive of Sartre's notion of the being of the **cogito** itself, the "for-itself," as a being of which the reflective and the pre-reflective **cogito** are homologous modalities. Somewhat similarly, **jikaku** is the locus of the inner relation between pre-reflective intuition and reflection. **Jikaku,** however, does not suggest the Sartrean **cogito** which is self-conscious only in the mode of not being the object of which it is conscious. **Jikaku** is a notion of self-consciousness wherein the self "reflects the world within itself." In a sense, the content reflected is continuous with the self reflecting it. Nishida goes so far as to describe **jikaku** as "content

thinking content itself."

Finally, Sartre's unwavering characterization of consciousness as an incessant flight from perfect identity with itself also renders the comparison ineffectual. This flight is an insatiable quest for a unity which remains an unattainable ideal. Unlike the primordial self-identity disclosed by Nishida's **jikaku**, the Sartrean **cogito** reveals itself as a fundamental lack of self-identity.

CHAPTER XI

THE PROBLEM OF MEANING AND EXISTENCE

In the previous chapter we noted Nishida's characterization of self-consciousness as the "self thinking the self." In the view which he presents, self-intuition is said to take the form of "content thinking content itself" or "value consciousness recognizing value consciousness itself." In taking this view of self-consciousness Nishida hoped to repair certain deficiencies of ZnK by locating the profound inner relation of intuition and reflection. In this chapter we will consider Nishida's notion of **jikaku** as the locus of this relation and the implications of this with regard to the problem of meaning and existence.

In order to properly defend his notion of **jikaku** as the locus of the relation between intuition and reflection, Nishida deems it necessary to counter the suspicion that the view which he adopts trades "on a confusion of intellectual value and mental activity." (1987:8) The first three sections of JOCH are a discussion of various problems pertaining to the distinction between intellectual (logical) meaning or value and intellectual activity (reflection). In the course of this discussion Nishida takes issue with the notion that there is an autonomous realm of meaning and value which transcends "conscious activity at the level of the actual." He approaches this by way of a critical appraisal of Rickert's sharp distinction between

intellectual value and intellectual activity. Without going into Rickert's views, we can observe that although Nishida does not wholly dismiss them, he is led to ask "whether consciousness of the 'ought' is really so unconnected with conscious activity at the level of the actual." (1987:8)

Nishida's View of Logical and Mathematical Necessity

In reply to his query Nishida wonders if "consciousness of the 'ought'" does not control our actual conscious activity. He considers "mathematical necessity," for example. He says that when we think about a mathematical problem,

> . . . mathematical necessity is the power which determines our combinations of ideas, it is a force in the realm of fact. In immediate experience, from the fact that we **must** think in this way arises the fact that we **do** think in this way, and an ideal which cannot have such effects at the level of actuality is not really an ideal. (1987:8)

Nishida recognizes that some will object that such views rely on an egregious confusion about causality. He observes that many will deny that truth has any inherent power to realize itself, and claims that it only becomes actual when conceived by an individual, that is, "only with the aid of a factual cause." He inquires, however, whether such notions as "individual" and "factual cause" can be formed without the prior "unification of experience" in accord with the forms of time and space. If they cannot, he asks, "do they not already presuppose consciousness of the 'ought' on

which these forms are based?"

Nishida proposes that truth possesses an inherent power to determine consciousness. For example, he says, when we judge that 2 + 2 = 4, we are complying with a requirement of reason which is a necessary fact with no source exterior to it. He comments that we usually regard that which is unified in accord with the "forms of space, time, and causation" as real, and we think of a "system of truth" as ideal. He asserts, however, that if the latter is unreal we must say that the former, which is founded on the latter, must be "even more unreal." (1987:9)

Restating the problem in terms of Rickert's distinction, Nishida inquires how it is possible for a strictly distinguished transcendent realm of logical meaning or value to become immanent in the act of judgment. In formulating his position on these issues, he insists that "immediate consciousness possesses meaning" and that "meaning is real as a fact of consciousness." (1987:10) He adds that the result of any attempt to reduce the consciousness of meaning to the status of a mere sensation or feeling, however, fails to describe meaning "any more than an analysis of its material could pass as an adequate account of a work of art." (10) Although meaning cannot be reduced to the status of sensation, neither can it be described as mere fantasy. Nishida observes:

When Rickert speaks of the consciousness of an

> 'ought,' it is probably not to be considered real; but neither can it be identified solely with his transcendent meaning, value as such, for it is that wherein value has appeared in the form of existence. (1987:10)

Nishida reasons that if the consciousness of meaning is regarded as mere fantasy, rather than an "irreducible fact of immediate awareness," then we could interpret it psychologistically in terms of the law of causation and deduce it to be some sort of "mental product." If it is real, however, then we seem to confront an "unbridgeable chasm." The problem is formulated thusly: "How is it possible that the consciousness of a particular person at a particular time and place conceives a particular meaning?" (1987:11) Nishida explains that the conviction that the consciousness of meaning belongs to the real is largely based "on the fact that we can conceive it in accord with the categories of existence." (11) The "aporia," or theoretical puzzle, which concerns Nishida here, then, takes the form of an inquiry into how there can be such a conjunction of "meaning" and "existence." On the one hand, he explains, consciousness can be unified under the aspects of truth, beauty and goodness, which are meanings based on value, and on the other hand it can be unified under the aspects of time and individuality which are categories of existence.

If we try to resolve the issue by saying that, to think that something exists is itself a consciousness of meaning and thereby reduces the fact of existence to nothing more than "a meaning in consciousness," then "everything would become meaning, and existence and reality would utterly disappear." (1987:11) This is, of course, precisely the dénouement which Sartre earnestly seeks to avoid when he criticizes Husserl for treating the noema as an "unreal" correlate of noesis. Nishida observes, here, that there is a host of other problems even if we avoid a reduction of existence to meaning. For example, what do we think about when we think meaning? What is it that thinks meaning? And in his curious fashion: "Does meaning think the meaning of meaning?" If meaning is a real and immediate fact of consciousness, does it become real by its own means? In any case, while "we cannot explain the consciousness of meaning from existence" it also seems clear to Nishida that the existent thing cannot be derived from meaning.

Having expressed his concerns in terms of an aporia about the conjunction of meaning and existence, Nishida begins to inquire into what it really means to say that something exists. He observes that, experientially speaking, to say that a certain thing exists means only that an identical experience can recur many times over. Closer

inspection leads us to doubt whether the repetition of an experience in time can really be the recurrence of the identical experience, and not merely a similar one. In any case, a reduction of existence to experience implies the subjective idealist view that there is no existence apart from the subjective self and that the existence of things external to consciousness is only a fabrication of the mind.

According to Nishida, stricter reflection leads us to conclude that, like the existence of things, the existence of the self is merely the recurrence of identical, or more precisely, similar experiences. The consequence of this is that "we are unable to give any stronger grounds for the existence of our psychological self than for the existence of things!" (1987:15) If we are to explain existence in terms of unchanging self-identity, that which corresponds to such a definition in our immediate experience "is neither the thing nor the psychological self but the consciousness of the logical 'ought.'" (15)

Arguing that a judgment of non-identity presupposes knowledge of identity, Nishida claims that consciousness of an identical "ought" is presupposed when we judge the psychological self to be non-identical. He observes that Rickert might object that what is identical is not the "consciousness of an 'ought'" but the "ought" or value itself. Nishida notes, however, that Rickert rejects the notion of **existence as unchanging self-identity** and

maintains a strict distinction between a realm of value (cognitive objects) and the world of existents. In looking over these arguments, Nishida concurs with Rickert in viewing the recurrence of identical or similar experiences as inadequate to yield the notion of existence. He adds that it "merely permits these experiences to be unified under a common rubric." (1987:15)

In JOCH, under the heading, "A System of Pure Thought," Nishida presents his claim that **"existence and value (the 'ought') are two inseparable aspects of experience."** (1987:25) He argues that if--setting aside the question of its adequacy as a definition--we are to associate "existence" with whatever is identical in itself, even if it is beyond temporal and spatial existence, then we can apply the term to the "ought." He postulates that existence and value are aspects of one experience and that their unity "resides in self-consciousness." (1987:31) He also claims that the fact of self-consciousness is "based on the consciousness of the logical 'ought'." (31) These conclusions are arrived at through a procedure of argumentation wherein he explicates his view of self-identity.

Self-Identity in Self-Consciousness

Initially, he contends that the judgment of the law of identity, "A is A," expresses the fact that we have focused on a specific object of thought and the idea that this

cognitive object is self-identical. According to Nishida, the judgment of the law of identity does not exactly indicate a repetition of the same consciousness in time; rather, it indicates the inception of a new consciousness, a consciousness of a higher order. This "new consciousness" is the consciousness of the "ought." Although it is of a "higher order," it is still manifest only within temporal continuity.

Nishida explains that it is incorrect to regard the law of identity in abstraction from the internal development of consciousness. We experience the judgment of the law of identity immediately from within the developmental process of consciousness, a process characterized by "internal necessity." Therefore, in the judgment "A is A," the initial "A" is not to be regarded as "static and isolated." It is active and developmental. As such, it "must bring along with it 'is A.'" (1987:26) That which is identical, here, is neither "A" as the subject nor "A" as the predicate. The subject and the predicate are merely the means whereby the identity is made apparent.

Taking this view, Nishida refutes Rickert's claim that transcendent meaning or logical value is in no way dependent on the internal development of consciousness. Contrary to Rickert, Nishida maintains that,

> . . . there is an inseparable relationship between what we could term the phenomenology of judgment and meaning itself. Rather than saying that

> judgment is an expression of meaning, we should say that it is its activity. It does not determine meaning extrinsically, but is the particularizing act necessary for meaning itself, apart from which meaning cannot be conceived. (1987:26)

Apropos of this, Nishida objects to Rickert's strict distinction between the perceived color "white" and the act of perceiving white. In Nishida's view, Rickert neglects to note that apart from the experience of perceiving, the notion of "whiteness" has no basis. Similarly, as regards judgment, "a truth which totally transcends thinking can have no meaning for us." (1987:28)

Following this assessment of the relationship between thinking (judging) and logical meaning or value, Nishida begins to consider the relationship between thinking or judging and its objective referent, the existing thing (a theme which he will often return to in **JOCH**). He begins by observing that we generally suppose the object of thought or the "existing thing" to be self-identical and external to the subjective activity of thinking. We think of the "objectivity" or truth of knowledge as consisting in the subject's conforming to the transcendent object. Nishida objects, much as we have seen him do in **ZnK**, by asserting that this view involves an arbitrary assumption that objectivity and subjectivity are separate and independent. To be able to think an objective referent independent of subjectivity, he explains, "subjectivity itself would first have to be raised beyond individual subjectivity." (28)

Pure Objects of Thought and the Objects of the Natural World

Rejecting the notion of the separation and autonomy of subject and object as a deeply ingrained "species of dogmatism," Nishida cites Paul Natorp in proposing that the opposition between subject and object should be viewed as a relative one. Taking this view, he says, the assertion that "something exists" no longer refers to things existing apart from immediate experience. The "world of existence," Nishida explains, "is one department of the world of objects of thought." (1987:29) Although "pure objects of thought" such as mathematical principles cannot be identified with the objects of natural science, he continues, the objectivity of the latter is based on the objectivity of the former. He claims that the "objectivity of existence" is founded on the objectivity of an "ought." A mathematical truth does not exist in the same sense as the objects of natural science. It does exist, however, "in the elementary sense of having an unchanging self-identity." (29)

In claiming that the objectivity of an "ought" is the basis of the objectivity of the existing things of natural science, Nishida maintains that the consciousness of an "ought" is "the most immediate and concrete experience we have." (1987:30) He explains that it is the most immediate because it precedes and grounds the distinction between the thinker and the thought. It is the most concrete because "it

includes within itself various fundamental relations." (1987:30) It is this consciousness of an "ought," associated with Fichte's "Act" (**Tathandlung**), which cannot appear among the empirical states of consciousness. Superficially, he says, when we consider the content "A" in abstraction from the concrete experience that "A is A," the content "A" may seem self-sufficient and independent, just as the content "red" may seem autonomous in relation to the idea that "red is red." He claims, however, that closer consideration reveals that we cannot think of the content "red" as independent and self-identical without presupposing the "ought" which "obliges us to conceive it thus."

Nishida observes that we commonly tend to contrast particular contents with the universal relations which unify those contents. We also tend to think of the contents as "isolated fragments which of themselves cannot engineer the establishment of any relation." (1987:30) From this view we get the traditional distinction between the matter and form of knowledge. In contradiction to this, Nishida asserts that in immediate consciousness the relation between one moment of consciousness and another is "set up by" the content itself. Relation and quality are distinct only in that they are different ways of viewing the same content of consciousness.

We tend to think of a judgment of identity as founded on a "relation." We think of that which is related as

"quality." Assuming this, we can say that thinking of "red" as independent, and being conscious of the "ought" whereby "red is red," are different aspects of what is originally an identical experience. Nishida contends, however, that in immediate experience there is only the "self-development" of a particular content of consciousness. He says that,

> When we are conscious of the basis of this content in its static aspect, it is thought of as an existence transcendent to us, and when we are conscious of it in its aspect of dynamic unfolding, we think of it as the consciousness of an 'ought,' or else merely as a subjective psychological activity. (1987:30)

However, since for Nishida there is "no objective referent of thought" apart from the subjective unifying function, we are obliged to see the self-identity of the object in terms of the "act of transcendental apperception."

According to Nishida, then, the true reality is given in terms of the spontaneous act of judgment that A is A. In this there is no mutually opposing subject and object. There is only a single experience or "act" which can be seen from different aspects. He also says that the relation between spirit and matter should be regarded in a similar fashion. Such assertions are largely a reiteration of Nishida's earlier philosophy of "pure experience." At this stage, however, he is asserting that the possibility of a reduction of these basic concepts to aspects of a single activity "is most effectually shown from the contentless thought experience 'A is A' for here the experience and the object

of thinking are **immediately one in the Act.**" (1987:31 [emphasis mine]) Similarly, as we have noted above, existence and the "ought" are to be regarded as aspects of the single experience of self-consciousness (**jikaku**). Nishida claims here that the fact of this **jikaku** is "based on the consciousness of the logical 'ought' 'A is A.'" (31)

Attempts to Explore a Link between Meaning and Existence

Citing Fichte, Nishida views the judgment "I am I" as coterminous with the fact that "I exist." He asserts, in turn, that the fact that "I exist" is founded on the consciousness of the logical "ought" that A is A. Subjectively, "A is A" denotes "consciousness returning to itself;" it is the dynamic consciousness of "ought." Objectively, however, it denotes the self-identity "A" which is the "independent self-existence of an object transcendent to us." (1987:32)

We may wonder how it is possible that the static self-identity of "A" and the dynamic "ought" of "A is A" can be unified in a single "act." Nishida explains that the true relationship between the two aspects can only be seen intuitively from within the act. He says that the unity he is speaking of is not the unity of two sides of one "thing"; it has, rather, "the deeper meaning of an autonomous living unity." (1987:33) It is the immediate unity of knowing and existence, of subjective activity and objective fact.

Nishida insists that, "We can find the basis of this unity only in **self-consciousness.**" (1987:33) The fact that "I know myself" immediately means that "I am," and vice versa, "a self being by definition that which knows itself." (33) The form of self-consciousness, "I am I," underlies all consciousness. "I am I" is an assertion of the law of identity, "A is A." He explains that we fail to recognize the connection only because we tend to regard the "I" as having a special existence separate from thoughts such as "A is A."

Nishida replies to the objection that ordinary consciousness is not founded on recognition as is self-consciousness, that psychological conceptions of "re-cognition" are not relevant in this context. They are, he says,

> . . . mere derivatives of the fundamental re-cognitive activity whereby all consciousness maintains and develops itself, and which is nothing other than self-consciousness, which I see as the basic structure of all consciousness. (1987:34)

Psychological conceptions are, in his view, relevant to the "natural world" where knower and known are separate. In the "natural world" the knower is objectified as the "psychological subject." He claims, however, that "the true transcendental subject" (which he identifies at this point with Kant's "consciousness in general") does not appear in the "natural world."

According to Nishida, neither subject nor object can have autonomous reality. He also claims that there can be no concrete existence apart from self-consciousness. He explains that when perception and sensation are viewed as objects for "pre-reflective consciousness unaccompanied by self-consciousness," we fail to see their concrete reality. "Concretely considered," empirical consciousness must "include the knower within itself." At a certain depth, empirical consciousness becomes consciousness of an "ought." He claims that this, in turn, "is recognized as self-consciousness." (1987:35) This self-consciousness is "not a later consciousness copying an earlier content"; it is not a case of "pictorial reproduction." It is, rather, the internal development of consciousness.

CHAPTER XII

NISHIDA'S EXPLICATION OF VALUE CONSCIOUSNESS IN RELATION TO HUSSERLIAN PHENOMENOLOGY

In the preceding chapter, we outlined Nishida's initial formulation of the problem of the relation between meaning (value) and fact (being) as he presented it in the first six sections of JOCH, a work which he has described as "a document of a hard-fought battle of thought." (1987:xxiii) We should not imagine that the author regarded his endeavors to solve these problems to be satisfactory. Indeed, in reference to the entire project, Nishida predicts that he may not be able to escape criticism that he has broken his lance "and capitulated to the enemy camp of mysticism." (xxiii) Part One of JOCH is Nishida's initial attempt to explicate his understanding of the fundamental relationship between value and being in the light of self-consciousness. In reference to Part One, he admits that later reflection revealed to him how problematic the project really is and forced him to express doubts about it.

We have seen that Nishida expresses a view of existence as founded on the consciousness of an "ought" and deems the distinction between the worlds of meaning and reality to be a relative one. We also saw that he explicates a view of a "system of self-consciousness" on the basis of

the rudimentary logical judgment of the law of identity. Before we begin to consider all this in relation to Husserl and Sartre, it is important to note that in section eleven of JOCH Nishida will reconsider his entire approach and attempt to come at the issue from a different direction. He will attempt to determine the viability of explaining the empirical world as a system which is identical to that of "formal thought experience." In his preface he notes his dissatisfaction with these attempts as well: "I was forced to conclude that between these two stretch many chasms difficult to bridge." (1987:xx)

In section twelve Nishida makes another attempt to bridge the chasm. Using his notion of the passage from logic to mathematics as a prototype, he attempts to explicate "the transition of internal necessity from a merely formal system of logical thought to an experiential system having content." (xx) This is one of the basic ideas of this work. Nishida hoped that he could describe how form acquires content, or how the abstract progresses to the concrete, and thereby clarify "the nature of the internal development of experience, or the **élan vital.**" (xx) Despite this effort, he continued to regard it as difficult to make the transition from the "world of thought" to the "world of reality."

The Psychologistic Confusion Between "Contents of Judgment" and the Judgments Themselves

We have seen that Nishida's initial concern with respect to these problems was to attempt to locate the "profound inner relation" between intuition and reflection. This endeavor had begun, of course, in **ZnK**. At this stage, however, he hoped to locate this relation in his notion of **jikaku** characterized as "self thinking the self." Self-intuition, in this sense, is said to take the form of "content thinking content itself" or "value consciousness recognizing value consciousness itself." He wants, however, to avoid giving the impression that his view trades on a confusion between intellectual (logical) value or meaning and intellectual activity, or between judgment (content) and judging. We can see just how appropriate this concern of his is when we recall Nishida's criticism of his **ZnK** for psychologistic tendencies and then consider the aforementioned confusion in terms of the misconceptions which Husserl has attributed to psychologism.

As we noted in Part Two of this study, Husserl objected to the psychologistic tendency to reduce the laws of logic and mathematics (contents of judgment) to generalizations about intellectual (mental) activity. In the **Prolegomena** of Husserl's Logical Investigations (**Logische Untersuchungen**; hereafter abbreviated as **LU**) [1900], we find a vigorous protest against the "prejudices"

of psychologism (1970:154f.). Rules for the regulation of the psychical are regarded by some as psychologically founded. It is, therefore, thought to be "clear that the normative laws of knowledge must be grounded in the psychology of knowledge." (154) The criterion for validity, in effect, is deemed to be extra-logical. Not only is logic thereby grounded in psychology, but it becomes a branch of the corpus of psychology.

To conceive of logic in this manner renders reasoning synonymous with thinking and reduces the status of the logical laws of judgment to that of psychological norms which regulate the activity of judging. It is inappropriate in Husserl's view, to regard "logical laws" as, in themselves, normative propositions in the manner of precepts which impose standards of conduct. They are not, he says, "propositions whose content can prescribe **how** judging shall take place." (1970:155) In Husserl's view, the consequences of psychologism are devastating. Not only does it mean the destruction of the autonomy of logic, but also that of philosophy itself. Against psychologism, Husserl's concern is to demonstrate the **a priori** status of logic and its independence of empirical fact.

In LU, then, Husserl expressed a vigorous protest against the misconceptions of psychologism. He pinpoints as a major defect the failure of psychologism to distinguish between the **content** of judgment and the **act** of judging. In

his estimation, the result of this oversight is that psychologism erroneously makes the former the object of scrutiny while deceiving itself that it is examining the latter. With respect to these confusions Husserl observes that,

> Logical laws have first been confused with the judgements, in the sense of acts of judgement, in which we may know them: the laws, as **'contents of judgement'** have been confused with the **judgements themselves.** (1970:102)

Here the word "judgment" is utilized in the sense of "acts of judgment." Clearly Husserl's emphatic distinction here is suggestive of Rickert's "sharp distinction" between the content of judgment or "value" and the "activity" of judging with which Nishida is concerned, as we saw earlier.

In discussing Rickert's distinction, Nishida cites an essay of Rickert's entitled, "Judgment and Judging." He explains that Rickert distinguishes three aspects of judgment which must never be confused: psychological process, intended meaning, and logical content. As psychological process, judgment is simply one psychological event among others. From a logical standpoint, however, judgment (content) is the "bearer" of the meaning intended by the psychological process of judging. Rickert also distinguishes the transcendent (objective) side of this meaning from the immanent (subjective) side. The transcendent side is the "content of judgment" (**Urteilsgehalt**) or "value." This transcendent meaning, e.g.

2 + 2 = 4, is regarded as being independent of the psychological activity of judging and as standing apart from any particular instance of judging. The transcendent meaning becomes immanent meaning when it has become immanent as the intended meaning of the act of judging. The immanence of the transcendent meaning is the so-called "consciousness of the 'ought.'"

Under the influence of Fichte, Rickert formulated his transcendental idealism in terms of an epistemology which has nothing to do with the endeavor to discern connections between thought and existence. Knowledge is admitted only as the affirming or negating of a pre-existent logical content. This affirming or negating is the "act of judging" and is held to be radically distinct from the judgment as logical content. Although Nishida accepts the notion of the "consciousness of 'ought,'" he is uncomfortable with the notion of a transcendent meaning **independent** of "conscious activity at the level of the actual." The notion of an independent and passive realm of transcendent meaning strikes him as incomprehensible. Although he does not want to entertain the confusion which leads to psychologistic misconceptions, he wonders if it is necessary to regard the logical content of judgment as wholly autonomous and seemingly inert. Is it not, rather, "an activating force moving us from within?" (1987:8) And if it is not, he asserts, then "it becomes something utterly without

significance for us." (1987:8) As an activating force its activity is indicative of the emergence of a new consciousness, a "higher order" consciousness.

We have noted that for Husserl, as for Rickert, a radical distinction between judgment (content) and the "act of judging" is imperative. It is helpful to understand the importance of this distinction in terms of Husserl's repudiation of psychologism as formulated in the LU prior to the phenomenological reductions of the Ideen. Husserl's struggle against psychologism can be made clearer through an examination of his stance toward the dispute over the normativity of logic. We turn, then, to consider Husserl's views on this dispute in hope that we will gain some basis whereby we can consider Nishida's concerns in relation to Husserl's standpoint on judgment (content) and judging, logical necessity and the distinction between the real and the ideal.

The Dispute over the Normative Aspects of Logic

Before he begins to explore the standpoint of psychologism in the LU, Husserl discusses the dispute over the practical character of logic. Under the influence of Kant, the definition of logic as a technology had come under attack. The controversy had nothing to do with the mere question of whether it is possible for logic to have practical aims or to conceive of it as a practical discipline. Kant had certainly recognized the importance of

the practical application of logic. The question which emerged, Husserl observes, is "whether the definition of logic as a technology really touches its **essential character.**" (1970:75) Against the definition of logic as a technology some thinkers proposed the autonomy of a **pure** logic. Husserl expresses concern, however, that

> . . . even distinguished protagonists of the autonomy of a **pure** logic, such as Drobisch and Bergmann, have put the normative character of the discipline among the features essential to its notion. (1970:78)

We may wonder if the concept of normativity is not suggestive of the same sort of relatedness toward an aim as is suggested by the notions of "technology" and "practicality"? Is normative science not technology?

Husserl proceeds to propose that all normative disciplines are founded on theoretical disciplines,

> . . . inasmuch as its rules must have a theoretical content separable from the notion of normativity (of the 'shall' or 'should'), whose scientific investigation is the duty of these theoretical disciplines. (1970:81-2)

The task, then, is to analyze what is meant by such a "shall be" or "should be" as opposed to what is. This "theoretical content" of logic is reminiscent of what, in Nishida's reading of Rickert, is the transcendent meaning of judgment (logical content), a "transcendent meaning" whose immanence is a case of the consciousness of "ought." The notion of "ought," however, suggests normativity, much as do the words "should" or "shall."

Husserl's analysis begins by indicating that "should" must relate to a certain demand in "a wider sense of demand." In the wider sense of demand there may be no one who demands and even no one on whom the demand is made. When we say, "A soldier should be brave," we may be making the assertion apart from anyone requiring this. Husserl claims, then, that the assertion is actually analogous to saying that "only a brave soldier is a 'good' soldier, which implies that a soldier who is not brave is a 'bad' soldier." (1970:82) In Husserl's analysis, the concept of a normative judgment is demonstrated to presuppose an underlying valuation whereby the concept of "good" or "bad" arises in relation to a class of objects. The question of whether or not this valuation is "objectively valid" is the underlying ground of the determination of the character of "should" propositions.

Husserl calls the definition of what shall count as "good," the "basic norm." The basic norm is the unifying principle or the central reference point with respect to each normative discipline. Theoretical disciplines do not have such a central reference point. According to Husserl, we tend to identify the notion of a normative discipline with that of a practical discipline or a technology, because "A normative interest is naturally dominant in the case of real (**realen**) objects." (1970:86) He claims, however, that we cannot sustain such an identification. Practical

disciplines require normative disciplines to fulfill the "narrower task of fixing norms." Normative disciplines, in turn, are founded on theoretical disciplines "in the sense, namely, that it must have a theoretical content free from all normativity." (1970:87) Alongside the basic norm, normative propositions must have their own theoretical content.

We have seen that Husserl is critical of the tendency to include normativity among the essential features of pure logic. An aspect of this is his repudiation of the tendency to conceive of reasoning as synonymous with thinking, thereby reducing the status of the logical laws of judgment to that of psychological norms which regulate the activity of judging. It is inappropriate, in Husserl's view, to regard "logical laws" as, in themselves, normative propositions in the manner of precepts which impose standards of conduct. They are not, he says, "propositions whose content can prescribe **how** judging shall take place." (1970:155) It eventually becomes clear that although Husserl is severely critical of psychologism, he is also serious in his repudiation of the anti-psychologians who fail to distinguish theoretical laws from normative precepts.

Thus far, it would seem that Husserl's emphasis on the autonomy of theoretical content from the notion of normativity stands in opposition to Nishida's concern with the "**consciousness of the 'ought'**" as the immanence of

meaning. A wholly autonomous theoretical (logical) content would be, for Nishida, "something utterly without significance for us." (1987:8) Nishida, we recall, views theoretical content as "an active force moving us from within," exhibiting "internal necessity."

To exemplify this internal necessity, Nishida cites the case of "mathematical necessity," which he characterizes as "a force in the realm of fact." (8) Theoretical content, he says, operates in compliance with necessity. It is part of the essential character of the "ought" that, in immediate experience, "from the fact that we must think in this way arises the fact that we do think in this way." (1987:8-9) It is within its nature, in other words, to have active and immediate influence at the level of actuality. As such, it is never separable from consciousness, nor is it ever entirely autonomous of normativity.

In the philosophy of Rickert, the concept of reality tends to dissolve into the concept of value. The case is similar with Nishida. The internal necessity of theoretical content is "the good," conceived of as the development and completion of the self. We are to understand the good in terms of the "true nature of the reality called the self." In **ZnK**, Nishida had already asserted that,

> Internal demands, which are the basis of value judgments, and the unifying power of reality are one, not two. The view of existence and value as separate comes from an act of abstraction that distinguishes objects of knowing from objects of

> feeling and willing; but in concrete reality existence and value are fundamentally one. (1990:126)

The "good" is coincident with "the laws of reality called the self." The direct intuition of an "ought" is in itself "good." The notion of viewing the "internal necessity" of theoretical content as the "good" would seem to suggest that even theoretical disciplines may be regarded as possessing a central reference point, or "basic norm." The basic norm of a theoretical discipline would be coincident with the "laws of reality called the self." Nishida admits, however, that "abstract knowledge and the good do not necessarily coincide." (1990:126)

Husserl's Injunction against Naturalistic Reductionism

Although Husserl regards theoretical disciplines as the foundation of normative disciplines, theoretical content remains strictly distinct and "free from all normativity." (1970:87) This is necessarily the case for Husserl whose concern is to demonstrate the **a priori** status of logic. It is possible that the notion of coincidence with the "laws of reality called the self" as a norm for theoretical disciplines would strike him as suggestive of a psychologistic misconception wherein the so-called "laws of thought" are taken as natural laws. Correct thinking, in this view, is characterized by "its conformity with certain laws of thought." (1970:101) The laws of thought are regarded as natural laws "characterizing the peculiarity of

our mind **qua** thinking." (1970:101) The disastrous result of the naturalization of logical laws would be "the most extreme probabilism." (101)

Husserl explains that natural laws cannot be known **a priori** or established by insight alone. Natural laws can be established and justified only by induction from singular facts of experience. He says that, "Induction does not establish the holding of the law, only the greater or lesser probability of its holding; the probability, and not the law, is justified by insight." (1970:99) The laws of "pure logic," however, must be more than mere probabilities; they must have **a priori** validity. They must be established and justified in terms of "apodictic inner evidence," and not merely through induction. In this context we may consider whether or not Nishida has naturalized the laws of pure logic and, thereby, inadvertently reduced them to mere probabilities.

Certainly, in viewing "the good" as conformity with the "internal demand" of the "laws of reality called the self," Nishida has no intention of reducing logical necessity to any form of probabilism. The direct intuition of logical necessity is expressed in terms of the apodictic, **a priori** validity and reality of the logical judgment. What seems to distinguish him at this point is his insistence that logical necessity has no reality apart from its characteristic immanence to immediate consciousness. We may inquire, here,

if the notion of the "internal demand" of logical necessity, as an expression of conformity with the "laws of the reality called the self," may appear to suggest that Nishida has succumbed to a kind of psychologistic naturalism.

In fairness to Nishida, we must consider if we cannot distinguish the "laws of the reality called the self" from naturalistic or psychologistic views. It may be inappropriate to associate the "self" in this context with the "psychological self" which Nishida, like Husserl, relegates to the naturalistic standpoint. The psychological subject, we recall, is the knower objectified in the "natural world." The "true transcendental subject," on the other hand, "does not appear" in the natural world. (1987:34) Unlike "things" in the natural world and unlike the psychological self, the logical "ought," which is an internal demand of the "true transcendental subject," has self-identity through time.

Another angle from which we may consider if Nishida has, in Husserlian terms, succumbed to a psychologistic naturalism pertains to the question whether Nishida regards logical laws as causally regulating the direction of our thinking. We have seen how Nishida is not wholly comfortable with Rickert's rigid distinction between the activity of judging and the content of judgment. Nishida is concerned that such a view tends to disconnect the content of judgment from immanence at "the level of actuality." We have also

seen that, like Rickert, Husserl draws a rigid distinction between "acts of judgment" and "contents of judgment," characterizing the confusion between the two as a psychologistic error. Husserl describes one such confusion as pertaining to judgments whose contents are laws. If this content, or law, is confused with judging or knowing the law, then we have confused the ideal with the real and "the law appears as a **governing power** in our train of thought." (1970:102) In such a view logical laws appear as "motive powers in thinking." They are regarded as presiding causally over the course of our thoughts, as "laws of thought." They are viewed, in effect, as natural laws.

Nishida's view of logical or mathematical necessity as "an active force moving us from within," of course, is suggestive of the aforementioned view of logical laws as "motive powers in thinking." Logical or mathematical necessity appears to have a kind of causal precedence wherein the way in which we think arises from the fact that we are caused to think in that way. This theoretical necessity is associated with a "unifying power," the same unifying power which governs the unity of natural reality. Finally, all this ties in with the confusion between logical law as content of judgment and the judging or knowing of such content. Insofar as Nishida is unable to wholly distinguish logical content (ought) from the "consciousness of 'ought'" in the activity of judging, he may seem to

approximate that which Husserl has characterized as a psychologistic confusion.

It is doubtful that Husserl would find Nishida's view of logical necessity, as presented in JOCH, compatible with his own. Nishida's presentation of logical and mathematical necessity is suggestive of a confusion which Husserl associates with Erdmann, between the impossibility of denying logical laws and the impossibility of performing such a denial. Husserl says of this that "we logical absolutists think these two concepts so little identical, that we deny the non-performability altogether, while maintaining the impossibility." (1970:158) Although the denial of logical laws rarely occurs in the case of "normal" people, it cannot be said that it does not occur, if only among certain geniuses and lunatics! However that may be, Husserl claims that,

> Logical impossibility, as absurdity of an ideal content of judgment, and psychological impossibility, as the non-performability of the corresponding act of judgment, are heterogeneous notions. (1970:158)

Husserl notes that the logical absolutist makes use of the impossibility of contradicting laws of logic to argue for the "eternity" of such laws. He explains that this talk of "eternity" only means that "every judgment is bound by the pure laws of logic without regard to time and circumstances, or to individuals and species." (1970:159) This "boundedness" may be construed as Husserl's version of

the "consciousness of the 'ought.'" This boundedness, of course, is not meant psychologically in terms of some sort of "thought-compulsion." Husserl would say that any content of judgment which clashes with such principles is absurd and the actual judgment is simply incorrect.

It becomes clear from the above that, in his treatment of logical necessity, Husserl's attack on psychologism is an attack on relativism. The reduction of logical laws to empirical contingencies ultimately indicates the relativization of knowledge. From such relativization the necessity and truth of logical laws is viewed as a function of the contingency of fact. Husserl says that, "Psychologism in all its subvarieties and individual elaborations is in fact the same as relativism, though not always recognized and expressly allowed to be such." (1970:145) The relativist attempts to deduce truth from a psychology of human nature, logical necessity from factual contingency, or the ideal from the real. Husserl characterizes the distinction between the real and the ideal as "the most fundamental of epistemological distinctions." (1970:193) He observes that many have drawn the distinction, but that they do not always grasp its epistemological essence. Even the extreme empiricist, David Hume, "draws a fundamental distinction between 'relations of ideas' and 'matters of fact.'" (193)

According to Husserl, it is imperative that one gain a

clear grasp of what the ideal is, "both intrinsically and in its relation to the real, how this ideal stands to the real, how it can be immanent in it and so come to knowledge." (1970:193) The basic question, he says, concerns whether the idealist is right in holding that any attempt to reduce ideal objects of thought to real particulars is doomed to fail. But he claims that empiricism totally misunderstands the relation between the ideal and the real, as well as that between truth and inner evidence. Inner evidence is not some sort of "accessory feeling" attached to certain judgments by natural necessity. It is, rather, "nothing but the 'experience' of truth." (1970:194) Truth is only experienced in the sense in which something ideal can be experienced in real activity. He posits that, "**Truth is an Idea, whose particular case is an actual experience in the inwardly evident judgement.**" (194)

As is the case with perception, the unseen or unexperienced does not indicate non-existence; similarly, the lack of inward evidence does not indicate untruth. When we experience an agreement between the meaning of an assertion and the "self-given **state of affairs**," this is called "inward evidence." He explains thusly:

> the **Idea** of this agreement is truth, whose ideality is also its objectivity. It is not a chance fact that a propositional thought, occurring here and now, agrees with a given state of affairs: the agreement rather holds between a self-identical propositional meaning, and a self-identical state of affairs. 'Validity' or

> 'objectivity', and their opposites, do not pertain to an assertion as a particular temporal experience, but to the assertion **in specie**, to the pure, self-identical assertion 2 X 2 = 4 etc. (1970:195)

Husserl's concern with the necessity and self-identity of propositional meaning can be considered in relation to Nishida's discussion of internal necessity and the self-identity of the "ought."

Internal Necessity and the Self-Identity of the "Ought"

It may be that Nishida's standpoint can be regarded as anticipating the constitutive phenomenology of Husserl's later thought, which Sartre strongly objects to. In reference to the LU, however, if we consider Husserl's "inward evidence" as suggestive of Nishida's experience of internal necessity at the "level of the actual," there appears to be a discrepancy on the issue of self-identity. In Nishida's view, the "objectivity" wherein the self-identity of the "state of affairs" coincides with the "self-identity of propositional meaning" is not merely an "agreement" which holds between the meaning of an assertion and the actual state of affairs; rather, the self-identity of the "state of affairs" is constituted by the self-identity of the propositional meaning.

We have seen that, for Nishida, the self-identity of the "state of affairs" with respect to the objectivity of "things" has its basis in the objectivity of the "ought."

The self-identity of the object consists precisely in the "act of transcendental pure apperception." In themselves, the objects of the natural world and the psychological self both lack self-identity. The self-identity of the "real" is based on the internal necessity and self-identity of the "ideal," which is given in the "act" of the "true transcendental subject." This "act" is at once the activity of self-consciousness and the consciousness of the "relations of ideas." For Nishida, the ideal is active in the real "state of affairs" **and is the source of its self-identity.** That which is unified in accord with the "forms of space, time and causation" is founded on the constitutive activity of the ideal which, as "unifier," is beyond such forms, but never independent of them.

We have noted that Husserl regards the distinction between the real and the ideal as the most fundamental epistemological distinction. Although even the "extreme" empiricist, David Hume, distinguishes between "relations of ideas" and "matters of fact," Husserl believes that empiricism misinterprets the relation between the ideal and the real. We recall from Part One of this study, that William James, who regarded his version of empiricism as even more "radical" than other versions, had extended the range of experience to include the "consciousness of relations." James appears to be in some proximity to Husserl in speaking of the **experience of relations.** After all,

Husserl had characterized "inner evidence" as nothing but the "experience of truth" and truth as the experience of the ideal ("relations of ideas") in real activity.

Despite a certain degree of similitude between Husserl and James, there remain fundamental discrepancies between Husserl's view of the relation between the ideal and the real and that of any empiricism, no matter how "radical." Although, for Husserl, there is a sense in which something ideal can be experienced in real activity, the "ideal" itself remains an independent **a priori** in a fashion unacceptable to empiricism. In his later thought this "absolutely independent realm of direct experience" becomes the focus of transcendental phenomenology. Husserl describes this endeavor as an "**a priori** science." In the preface to the English edition of the Ideas, Husserl explains that the work seeks to found a science "covering a new field of experience." (1962:5) This new field of **experience** does not signify certain results of speculation, but pertains to "transcendental subjectivity."

In order to make this field of experience available, a certain "readjustment of viewpoint" is required. This readjustment is the "phenomenological reduction" which we discussed in Part Two of this study. By this procedure Husserl hoped to unveil the "essential structures of transcendental subjectivity," which occupy the realm of "pure eidetic 'description.'" (1962:6) These essential

structures are immediately transparent and, unlike the deductive sciences which rely on mediate deductive knowledge, pertain to that transcendental sphere wherein there is immediate axiomatic knowledge. As an **a priori** science, transcendental phenomenology is a science of "pure possibilities" antecedent to sciences of real facts. As has already been indicated in the **LU**, this science is to be carefully distinguished from a descriptive psychology. If we perform the "transcendental-phenomenological reduction," the natural and the psychologically subjective standpoint is "transcendentalized" and "loses just that which makes it something real in the world that lies before us." (1962:8)

The Real and the Ideal

We have seen that, in reference to Rickert, Nishida raises doubts about the notion of an autonomous realm of meaning transcending "conscious activity at the level of the actual." In accord with James, we have already seen these doubts anticipated in **ZnK**. Nishida inquires if the ideal ("relations of ideas") is not directly experienced as immanent in the real. Certainly, Husserl does **not** deny the immanence of the ideal in the real or the immediate experience of the ideal in real activity. The notion of the immediate intuition of the ideal in real activity is undoubtedly Husserlian. It would seem that Husserl's concern with the relation between the real and the ideal is primarily epistemological. His concern is to stress the

importance of understanding "how this ideal stands to the real, how it can be immanent in it and so come to knowledge." (1970:193) In the Ideas we begin to see the "ideal" expressed as a realm of "pure possibilities," an "absolutely independent realm of immediate experience." (1962:5)

Clearly, for Nishida, it is appropriate to designate the "ideal" as a realm of immediate experience. We have seen him echo James in insisting that we have direct experience of the relations of ideas. In JOCH, we have seen that he asserts that "immediate consciousness possesses meaning." (1987:10) This meaning is not characterized as an "absolutely independent realm."* Nishida's views, here, should be carefully evaluated in relation to Husserl's later "transcendental phenomenology." In the present context we can only take note of certain indications in this direction. In Part Four of this study we will consider related views in Nishida's later thought vis-à-vis aspects of Husserl's later thought.

In the LU, Husserl found that logical meanings become immanent as ideally intuited objects. These objects, or "ideal unities," are the concern of pure logic. Regardless

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* In Part Four of this study, we will see that in his later thought Nishida discusses the "ideal" in terms of a realm of being which, although not wholly autonomous with respect to the other realms, is a distinct realm of being which he calls the "intelligible world."

of the circumstances under which the judgment is passed, "ideal unities" are but one meaning. Although the act of judging comes and goes, logical content does not come into existence by virtue of the act of judging and then vanish. A logical meaning is an ideal unity and as such is an identity of species.

"Ideal unities," then, are "universal objects." This does not mean that they must be "somewhere" in the world or in heaven or even in "divine mind." It is important to understand that in LU Husserl had already identified such views as forms of "metaphysical hypostasization" and characterized them as both gratuitous and logically absurd. Despite this, certain critics directed polemics against LU suggesting that Husserl had expressed a kind of "Platonic realism" wherein "ideas" and "essences" are treated as objects similar in kind to empirical realities and yet somehow in another world. In the Ideas he is careful to defend himself against such criticism. He observes that,

> If **object** and **empirical object, reality** and **empirical reality** mean one and the same thing, then no doubt the conception of Ideas as objects and as realities is perverse 'Platonic hypostatization.' But if, as has been done in the **Logical Studies**, the two are sharply separated, if object is defined as anything whatsoever, e.g., a subject of a true (categorical, affirmative) statement, what offence then can remain . . . ? (1962:80)

As Husserl observes, the general concept of "object" is not something which he discovered. It is something

demanded by the nature of all pure logical propositions. There is a sense in which the tone-quality C, the digit 2 or "the figure of a circle in the ideal world of geometrical constructions, or any proposition in the 'world' of propositions--in brief, the ideal in all its diversity **is** an 'object'." (1962:80) The critics complain that there can be no such thing as essence or "intuition of essences." Ideas or essences are said to be "concepts" and concepts are said to be "mental constructions." The terms "essence," "idea," or "eidos" are regarded as "only grand 'philosophical' names for 'sober psychological facts.' (**Fakta**)" (1962:81)

Husserl replies to such charges saying that the ambiguity of the word "concept" is such that essences are "concepts" if we assume "concepts" to mean "essences." We must, however, "be quite clear in our mind that the talk about mental products is **in that case** mere nonsense." (81) Some will speak of the number-series as a series of concepts and then later indicate that concepts are to be regarded as mental constructs. Husserl inquires, however, if numbers do not remain what they are whether or not we "construct" them. Certainly one can perform the act of counting. One can construct number-presentations. Husserl, however, insists that number-presentation is not number itself. The number itself "is a non-temporal being." (1962:82) It is, then, patently absurd to treat numbers

as "mental constructs." If we take "concepts" to be mental constructs, then pure numbers cannot be concepts. On the other hand, if pure numbers are to be called concepts, then concepts are not mental constructs.

Considered in terms of such ambiguities, we can begin to fathom Husserl's intentions in using the term "essence." Husserl's logic is, to some extent, an extension of scholastic philosophy. Generally speaking, he takes the view that logic is a science of a specific class of "objects." These are the objects which he calls "essences." Essences are given to us in our experience, in immediate apprehension. Logic, then, becomes an experiential study of essences, an "eidetic science" which avails itself of the intuition of essences (**Wesensschau**). Logical structures and logical or apodictic necessity, are the empirically discernible aspects of our experience of essences. Considered in pure abstraction, logic is **formal**. Husserl's logic becomes a **transcendental** logic, when the problem of the concrete existence and intentional constitution of logical objects is analyzed.

At the crux of Husserl's transcendental logic is the doctrine of intentionality which we discussed in Part Two. In order to understand the objects of logical and mathematical inquiry, we must examine both the object or **cogitatum** and the particular **cogitationes**, or intentional-constitutive acts in question. Whether we are

speaking of a perceptual object or a logical object, the intentional act of apprehension parallels its objective correlates. We may recall that the act is characterized as **noetic** and the objective correlate as **noematic.** Corresponding to the data of the real (**reellen**) noetic content "there is a variety of data displayable in really pure (**wirklich reiner**) intuition, and in a correlative '**noematic content,**' or briefly '**noema.**'" (1962:238)

Perception has its noema and "at the base of this its perceptual meaning, that is, the **perceived as such.**" Similarly, recollection has its own "**remembered as such**" and, again, "judging has as its own the **judged as such.**" Husserl explains the importance of taking the noematic correlate--which, in an extended sense, is referred to as "meaning" (**Sinn**)--"**precisely** as it lies 'immanent' in the experience of perception, of judgment, of liking, and so forth." (1962:238) In section ninety-four of the Ideas, "Noesis and Noema in the Sphere of the Judgment," Husserl speaks of the noema of the "**judging process**" as the "judged content of the judgment as such" which, insofar as the chief nucleus is concerned, is nothing other than what is ordinarily referred to as **the judgment.** This judged content of the judgment "is not to be confused with the matter judged about." (1962:251)

Now, if we apply the "readjustment of viewpoint" called the phenomenological reduction, in order to grasp the pure

noema of our judgment as experienced, we must "'bracket' the delivery of the judgment." (1962:252) The "natural attitude" is to trace the existence of the judgment from the delivery of the judgment, to interpret the judgment from the act of judging. Employing the phenomenological reduction, Husserl hopes that we will be enabled to confront the "full concrete essence of the judgment as experienced" which is "**the noesis of the judgment, apprehended concretely as essence**, and the **noema of the judgement** which belongs to the noesis, and is necessarily one with it, i.e., the '**delivered judgement' as Eidos.**" (1962:252) He observes that the "psychologizers," who are already disinclined to distinguish between the judging act and the judgment as essence, are likely to take offense at such a procedure. He insists, however, that the distinction between the "**passing of a judgment** and the **judgment as passed**" can lead us in the right direction, that "as **correlatively** related to the judgment as experienced we have **the** judgment **simpliciter** as noema." (252) This is how we are to understand the judgment or proposition in the "pure logical sense." Pure logic, however, is not interested in the noema "in all its bearings." (1962:253)

"Content" and "Object"

We have seen above that the judged content of the judgment is not to be confused with the matter judged about. It is crucial, then, for Husserl to draw a sharp distinction

between "content" and "object." Considering this in relation to the ordinary equivocal phrase, "the content of consciousness" (a phrase which Nishida utilizes liberally in his early writings), Husserl proposes that, "Every noema has a 'content,' namely, its 'meaning,' and is related through it to 'its' **object.**" (1962:333) In this chapter we have been concerned primarily with logical or mathematical objects. Still, whether the object is logical or perceptual, and although the acts through which I attend to the noema may vary, the intended object remains constant. An imagined triangle, a remembered triangle and a perceived triangle are identical in the noematic unity of intentionality. In this identity we confront a crucial feature of the noema. The intended triangle is "immortal." Whereas Brentano had cited "representation" as the unitive factor of the various mental acts, Nishida views Husserl as more accurate in identifying the unitive factor with the identity of noematic meaning which they share.

In his reading of Husserl, Nishida recognizes that this identity of meaning is "a relationship to an identical **object**, and is based on an unchanging **essence** given in concrete experience." (1987:87) He takes issue, however, with Husserl's sharp distinction between the transcendent object and the immanent content of perception. In his view, the rigidness of the distinction precludes the possibility of the more accurate standpoint wherein "the object which

transcends consciousness" is no more than "the internal unity of consciousness itself." (1987:78) He suggests that,

> Husserl distinguishes sharply between transcendent object and immanent content, but **in concrete experience there is nothing either absolutely transcendent or absolutely immanent,** and the distinction is simply one between opposite directions of dynamic experience. (1987:87)

Quoting from the Ideas, in **JOCH**, Nishida observes how Husserl asserts that knowledge of an object may be "imperfect," relying for content only on "the infinite adumbrations of the thing." Nishida proposes that "the same can be said for the supposedly purely immanent knowledge of mind." (1987:87) The same identity of meaning, he says, is at the nucleus of the "developmental experience" of immanent content.

Since, for Nishida, nothing is entirely transcendent or absolutely immanent, Husserl's distinctions, not only between the perceptual "object" and "content," but also that between "transcendent essence" and "immanent essence," are rendered ineffectual. We can imagine some approval from Sartre with respect to Nishida's perspective here. In **TE**, Sartre had alluded to the "awkwardness" of section sixty-one of the Ideas (1962:164), wherein Husserl distinguishes between two types of essence. Sartre, of course, was adamantly opposed to any "immanent essence" which might be regarded as an "inhabitant of consciousness."

The dynamic, developmental aspect of the experience of the immanent content of judgment, in Husserl, must be considered in relation to the act-structure, or noesis. Considered noetically, we are able to look at judgment in terms of its constitutive history. Ultimately, noesis must be understood in its active relationship to noema. By distinguishing between the two, it is not intended that we understand them to be separate. Noesis and noema imply and demand each other. This is the character of intentionality. If one adopts the phenomenological attitude, one attends to the object as "meant." This is the concern with essence. With the "intuition of essence" we are able to elucidate the subject matter of intentionality. In the phenomenologically reduced sphere, one intends the noema. We must recognize, however, that not all Husserlian essences are meanings. It is important, for example, to distinguish between the meaning of redness and the essence of redness. Husserl explains that the concern with noemata is possible in a phenomenological attitude and the concern with essences is said to belong to an ontological attitude.

We can think of essence in opposition to both facticity and particularity. For every contingent fact there is a correlative necessity. This necessity is the character of essentiality. Since direct experience yields particular elements rather than generalities, there is in every sense

perception, and simultaneously in every essential intuition, a pure essence or **eidos**. Husserl's objection to empiricism pertains not to the notion that all knowledge is based on experience, but to the delimitation of experience to the senses. Essentiality is experienced "in" the world and yet remains distinct from it. It is qualitatively distinct as a given, apart from sensory experience. By virtue of our knowledge of essence, the world has meaning for us.

Like Husserl, Nishida is adamantly opposed to the sensationalistic epistemology of empiricism. Essences cannot be reduced to the status of sensation, neither can they be reduced to fantasy. If we regard essence as mere fantasy, rather than an irreducible fact of immediate awareness, then we tend to interpret it psychologistically as mental construction. Like Husserl, Nishida insists on the unconditioned universality and essential necessity of primitive logical and mathematical axioms. Like Husserl, Nishida insists that we have immediate intuition of such. When Nishida expresses concern, then, that we can be too rigid in distinguishing the logical judgment as **eidos** from the activity of judging, he is concerned that we may be overlooking the constitutive and active relationship of the noetic aspect to the noema of judgment.

Unlike Husserl, however, Nishida is uncomfortable with distinctions which seem to disconnect the logical content of judgment from immanence at "the level of actuality." It

seems to him that, if we regard the consciousness of such content as real, then we cannot explain it as mental construction and hence we face an "unbridgeable chasm" between such consciousness and the contingent facts of existence. How can we explain the conjunction between the consciousness of essentiality as real and the real being of the world? This problem is, of course, the classical quandary that has perplexed philosophers for generations. Confronting this "chasm," Husserl found that he was strictly opposed to the approaches of sensationalistic empiricism and psychologistic naturalism to resolving the issue. Husserl's opposition to psychologism is so strong, however, that he appears to Nishida to draw too sharp a distinction between the content of judgment and its immanence in the activity of judging. What Nishida wants to "bracket-off" is only the psychologistic interpretation of the distinction in terms of the law of causation assumed in the "natural attitude." Husserl's phenomenological reduction, however, sets aside the problem of the chasm between meaning and existence, whereas Nishida wants to confront the chasm head-on.

In order to identify, describe and analyze the formal and constitutive elements of intentional consciousness and disclose their grounding in transcendental subjectivity, Husserl deemed it imperative to employ a method whereby the "natural attitude" is "bracketed off." This is, of course, the function of the phenomenological reduction. It does

not imply that phenomenology has a quarrel with the natural attitude per se, or with psychology for that matter. What is necessary is that **transcendental phenomenology** be strictly distinguished from **descriptive psychology.** We have already discussed the rationale for this in respect to Husserl's opposition to psychologism. Ultimately, the intention is to cultivate "a **transcendental-phenomenological Idealism** in opposition to every form of psychologistic Idealism." (1962:11)

Husserl hoped that the transcendental-phenomenological reduction would effectuate a transformation whereby the natural and psychologically subjective standpoint is "transcendentalized." He explains that by this conversion of meaning "psychological subjectivity loses just that which makes it something real in the world that lies before us." (1962:8) In the reduced standpoint one is,

> . . . no longer a human Ego **in** the universal, existentially posited world, but exclusively a **subject <u>for</u> which this world has being,** and purely, indeed, **<u>as</u> that which appears to me,** is presented to me, and of which I am conscious in some way or other, so that the real being of the world thereby remains unconsidered, unquestioned, and its validity left out of account.
> (1962:8 [emphasis mine])

In Part Two of this study, we saw that this "bracketing-off" of the real being or existence of the world is unacceptable to Sartre, who repudiates the methodology of reduction with the intention of conserving the existential consequences of the doctrine of intentionality. Sartre praises the author of

the LU, but is critical of the Ideas which he views as forsaking the doctrine of intentionality by the introduction of a transcendental egology.

Maurice Natanson views Sartre's "existentialization of intentionality" as having certain consequences "which are incompatible with much of phenomenology." (1973:153) Sartre is much too attracted to the phenomenological concern with immediacy to abandon it. What he relinguishes is **constitutive** phenomenology and, in Natanson's view, thereby neglects its potential to disclose the historicity of consciousness. Sartre, we recall, rejects Husserl's phenomenological **idealism** in fear that it depicts the world as created by consciousness, rather than as disclosed by an intentionality already in-the-world. Sartre's reservations about Husserl's phenomenological idealism are reflected in Nishida's observation that if we were to try to resolve the problem of the "unbridgeable chasm" between meaning and existence by reducing the fact of existence to a mere meaning in consciousness (an "unreal" noema), then "everything would become meaning, and existence and reality would utterly disappear." (1987:11) We may recall that, following some reflections, Nishida concludes that we cannot explain the consciousness of meaning **from** existence and neither can the existent thing be derived from meaning. Nishida observes that we tend to associate existence with the recurrence of a similar experience. Not wholly convinced

that unchanging self-identity is an adequate definition of existence, however, he observes that if it implies existence, then neither the "psychological self" (ego) nor "things" exist!

On the other hand, Nishida found that, unlike things and the psychological self, the consciousness of essentiality is an internal demand of the true transcendental subject and has unchanging self-identity. He presents various arguments to support his claim that the objectivity of existence has its basis in the consciousness of essentiality and repeatedly affirms that "to be" and "ought to be" are two aspects of the same experience. Rather than proceeding to investigate the immediate consciousness of essentiality by putting the problem of existence in suspension, as Husserl does, Nishida pursues the problem by attempting to reveal the bond between existence and essence. He locates this bond in the structure of self-consciousness.

Sartre, on the other hand, seems to put the "problem of essence" in suspension. Insisting that knowledge is grounded in being, Sartre characterizes our own existence as the foundation of self-consciousness, just as the "brute existence" of the world is the foundation of our knowledge of the world. It is by virtue of his notion of our pre-reflective awareness of "brute existence" that Sartre departs from Husserl's phenomenological reductions, thereby maintaining a view of intentionality **only** from within the

"natural attitude," in the Husserlian sense. In Sartre's view, Husserl reduces the being of phenomena to essence or meaning. Sartre, on the other hand, equates the being of phenomena with its existence. Existence, whether our own or that of the external world, always "precedes essence." In either case, we are said to have a pre-reflective consciousness of existence, which in this sense is given priority over knowledge. This consciousness of existence is said to be the "ontological foundation of knowledge." (1956:17)

The existence of the self, however, and the existence of phenomena are radically dissimilar for Sartre. This dissimilarity consists largely in the fact that the conscious self is a **self-conscious** being, whereas the being of objects does not refer to itself in the same manner. This dissimilarity pertains to Sartre's view of the principle of identity. For both Sartre and Nishida, the principle of identity, generally regarded as a mere analytical truth, is also a synthetical principle of being. For Sartre, however, it is strictly a "regional" synthetical principle of being, applicable only to "being-in-itself." It is said to be "synthetic" because it is delimited to that region of being which coincides with itself in full equivalence.

As regards "being-in-itself," Sartre says that "there is not the slightest suspicion of duality in it." (1956:120) "A is A" means that A exists as a "total plenitude," "in an

infinite compression with an infinite density." (1956:120) This characterization of the "in-itself" is revealed in contradistinction to the temporal self-surpassing of the being of the self, or "being-for-itself." Unlike the "in-itself," the "for-itself" "does not coincide with itself in a full equivalence." (120) The principle of identity cannot be applied to the "for-itself" which is characterized, rather, by a **lack of identity.** Apparently Sartre discerns no significant connection between the principle of identity and the pre-reflective self-conscious intuition that "I am I."

Unlike Sartre, Nishida views the principle of identity as an expression of the rudimentary intuition of self-identity given in self-consciousness (**jikaku**). We might say that it is a "regional" synthetical principle applicable directly to the essential character of the unified "system of consciousness" ("for-itself"), and only indirectly to material, perceptible objects and the psychological self ("in-itself"). Unlike Sartre, in JOCH Nishida asserts that material, perceptible objects and the psychological self **lack** self-identity in themselves. In an idealist vein, Nishida attributes the self-identity of the non-conscious being of phenomena to consciousness, to the "act" of transcendental apperception. By virtue of this "act," the self-identity and objectivity of phenomena are based on the internal necessity and self-identity of the "ought" or the

"ideal." This "act" is simultaneously self-consciousness and the consciousness of the "relations of ideas."

Although Nishida stresses jikaku (self-awareness) as the fundamental structure of consciousness, in the final sections of JOCH he seeks a deeper ground wherein there is absolute fusion of the "ideal" and the "actual" in the trans-cognitive will or "absolute free will" (section thirty-nine). This "absolute free will" is both immediate self-consciousness of the "transcendental self" and the ground of being. In Part Four of this study we will see that in his article, "The Intelligible World" ("Die intelligible Welt") [1930], Nishida characterizes the will as the essence of consciousness. He describes "self-conscious being" as "mirroring itself in itself" and asserts that, "Not intention, but will is the essence of consciousness. What is called intentionality, is but a weak willing." (1958:76)

Nishida's characterization of jikaku, as we have seen it, is an expression of an attempt to bridge the "unbridgeable chasm" between meaning and existence. Despite its virtues, Husserl's transcendental phenomenology has the unfortunate effect of at least appearing to bypass the chasm altogether by a kind of methodological legerdemain. Nishida's approach has the advantage of avoiding any such appearances and the attendant perplexities. Although he takes a different approach, he reflects many of Husserl's concerns about naturalism and psychologism. In later works

Nishida elaborates on the notion of **jikaku** in conjunction with his own method of "standpoints" which can be viewed as an alternative to phenomenological reduction.

Nishida's notion of **jikaku** begins to cut through the entire spectrum of human experience, extending to the three "layers of being": (1) the "natural world," (2) the "world of consciousness," and (3) the "intelligible world." The "intelligible world" is the world of ideas and essences. In each of these "worlds" there is a corresponding mode of **jikaku**. Nishida explains that noema and noesis are mutually correlative and interpenetrating in each mode of **jikaku**. **Jikaku** means the oneness of noema and noesis. The noesis can see itself only in reference to noema. As realms of being, each world is always a being "within." Ultimately, all the realms have their "place" (**basho**) in the "last enveloping universal" which is the **basho** of "absolute nothingness." Nishida accepts Husserl's characterization of the mutually dependent interplay between noema and noesis. However, he takes this interplay as the fundamental structure of **jikaku**. When **jikaku** sees itself, it begins with the opposition of noema and noesis. There is, however, an important exception. In the **jikaku** of "absolute nothingness" there is neither noema nor noesis. Such a state of **jikaku** is no longer self-consciousness in any ordinary sense.

Apart from "pure reflection," Sartre makes no allowance

for any unusual condition of self-consciousness. "Pure reflection," of course, remains reflective and never reaches the **jikaku** of "absolute nothingness." He also disallows the possibility of mystical experience. It is interesting, in this regard, to observe with Hazel Barnes (translator of **EN**) that, although Sartre criticizes Heidegger for restricting the "experience of Nothingness" to special states of crisis, "Sartre, on the other hand, ignores an entire set of special experiences in which the idea of Nothingness is tremendously important; namely, the entire history of mysticism." (1956:xxx)

We will consider the **jikaku** of "absolute nothingness" further in Part Four of this study. We will consider Nishida's approach as an alternative to the phenomenological reductions, an alternative which incorporates aspects of the reductions in relation to specific, progressively deepening "standpoints" operative at distinct "layers of being." Recognizing that Sartre repudiates the phenomenological reductions primarily on the basis of his concern with existence, we will distinguish Nishida's methodology with reference to his ontology of three realms from Sartre's ontology of two realms. First, however, we must pause to consider the "problem of the self" and existential anguish in the later Nishida and in Sartre.

PART FOUR

THE DE-ONTOLOGICAL SELF AND THE RELIGIOUS WORLD-VIEW

CHAPTER XIII

THE PROBLEM OF THE SELF IN THE LATER NISHIDA AND IN SARTRE

In Part One of this study we observed Nishida's early expression (1911) of his notion of the exigency of religious experience. In the chapter entitled "The Religious Demand," he established the tone for the concluding section, "Religion," which served as the culmination to his first treatment of his pivotal theme of "pure experience" and was the inception of a very long philosophical inquiry into the problem of the self. Over thirty years later, in his final essay, "The Logic of Place and a Religious World-View," we encounter the same concern, which we have seen in connection with "pure experience," to break through the ubiquitous subject-object dichotomy in favor of "seeing" or "intuition" in a deeper, and clearly religious, sense. He begins this essay asserting that philosophers cannot fabricate religion from their philosophical systems; their task is to "explain this event of the soul." He rejects the notion that religion is hopelessly illogical and "mystical," implying that his intention is to provide a logic whereby religious experience can be elucidated and drawn into a broader community of intelligent discourse.

Although Sartre adopts an atheistic standpoint, one can say that the religious exigency is of paramount importance to his view of the human condition. For Sartre, the basic

human drive is not the Freudian libido or the Adlerian will to power; it is a certain sort of religious urge. Sartre's interpretation of religiosity is somewhat singular. He asserts that, "To be man means to reach toward being God. Or if you prefer, man fundamentally is the desire to be God." (1956:724) For Sartre, however, God is the impossible but ideal synthesis of the "in-itself-for-itself" (**en-soi-pour-soi**). The drive to **be** this impossible synthesis is the "fundamental project" of mankind, one which is tragically doomed to fail. Mankind suffers, then, from a perennial religious "complex" characterized by an ultimate frustration. Although God is impossible, the religious ideal is basic to being human; hence man has abundant religious experiences. We can say, then, that Nishida and Sartre would concur that we experience a religious exigency, but differ in their respective interpretations of such. In this part of our study we hope to indicate the depth of this concurrence in the light of the overall disparity in their respective ontologies and philosophies of religion.

In his essay, entitled "Towards a Philosophy of Religion with the Concept of Pre-established Harmony as Guide" (1944), Nishida asserts that we can only enter into the "religious dimension" insofar as, along the "road of life," we confront self-contradiction in "the very depths of the self-awareness of the self . . ." (1944:37) Hence, he states that "Religion is the problem of the self." (37)

Sartre, on the other hand, would doubtless eschew such an assertion lest it imply a "religious" interpretation of the self. As we have seen, however, he is very much concerned with the "problem of the self." The problem of the self, for Sartre, is tragically religious in character. In a sense, both Nishida and Sartre equate the religious question and the problem of the self. In a sense, both also tend to characterize the self as a nothingness. In the following chapters we hope to show that despite a certain similarity of emphasis with respect to the problem of the self and existential anguish, not only do Nishida and Sartre develop radically divergent ontologies, but they express distinct orientations toward self-negation, death and religious consciousness.

Sartre, for his part, does not allow for the possibility of an autonomous religious mode of consciousness. The phenomenon of so-called "religious consciousness" merely reflects the structure of consciousness as conceived by his ontology. Nishida, on the other hand, introduces his essay of 1945 by asserting his notion of an autonomous religious dimension. He proposes that Kant was able to view religion only from the standpoint of moral consciousness. He comments on Kant:

> For Kant, religion was meaningful only as a supplement to morality. I do not find any uniqueness accorded to religious consciousness in his thought, and I wonder if he was aware of any such uniqueness. (1986:2-3) [Yusa, tr.]

Never wavering from his recognition of Kant's eminent stature and significance, Nishida sought to break through and expand the Kantian framework so as to develop a structure permitting multifarious fields of experience wherein religious consciousness is granted apriority.

The task of contrasting Nishida's orientation with Sartre's, however, is not simply a matter of relating Sartre to a post-Kantian version of idealism. In breaking through the Kantian framework, Nishida does not here exhibit his earlier inclination to pursue a neo-Kantian direction. Neither can a contrast be developed in terms of Sartre's critique of mysticism. No longer does Nishida concede to any view of religious consciousness as "mystical." In the course of his last writings, "moral" and "mystical" interpretations of religious experience give way to a pervasive Zen coloration wherein the religious is seen in the "ordinary and everyday." Concomitant with this is Nishida's insistence that the absolute is not to be found in the direction of an objective transcendence wherein God possesses a separate personality; rather, it is to be found in a Buddhistic direction of "immanent transcendence" wherein we discover that we are in the embrace of absolute compassion.

In Nishida's last writings, not only do we begin to see a distinctive religious emphasis on the "ordinary and everyday" world, but we see a correlative emphasis on the

historical world. Critical of the "otherworldliness" which he discerns in traditional Indian Buddhism, Nishida expresses a religious form of worldliness wherein he seeks a "true absolute dynamism" beyond mere passivity. When we consider this in terms of Sartre's critique of religious "quietism" and mystical otherworldliness, it becomes apparent that Sartre's criticisms cannot be applied to Nishida's views as expressed in his last writings, but in some ways even concur with Nishida's own criticisms. Rather than pursue a comparative analysis of Nishida's and Sartre's respective orientations toward religious experience per se, however, we turn first to consider some aspects of the problem of the self which, as we have noted above, is regarded by both Nishida and Sartre as intimately related to religious questions.

Existential Anguish and the Problem of the Self

In his last writings Nishida returns to his early critique of notions of rational and moral apriorities of the self. He expresses the conviction that the entire question of the self-autonomy of the moral and the rational is basically irrelevant to the fundamental religious question of the very existence of the self. As mentioned above, the very existence of the self becomes problematic when we are self-conscious of the self-contradictions of the self. He observes that,

The sorrows of human life and its

> self-contradictions have been constant themes since ancient times. But many people do not face this fact deeply. When this fact of the sorrow of life is faced, the problem of religion arises for us. (Indeed, the problem of philosophy also arises from this point.) (1965:204 [Dilworth, tr.])

Through a deep confrontation with the sorrows and self-contradictions of life we can reach the "standpoint of total freedom and self-authenticity."

The confrontation with the sorrows and self-contradictions of life is a standard characteristic of existentialist philosophy. In an essay entitled "The Humanism of Existentialism" (found in Essays in Existentialism; 1965), Sartre endeavors to defend existentialism against certain popularly held criticisms. It is generally known, he says, that the basic charge against existentialism is its apparent emphasis on the tragic side of life. He wonders, however, if those who accuse existentialism of being too gloomy are reacting not so much to its apparent pessimism as to its optimism. He inquires if what really scares such reactionaries is not the sense in which existentialism "leaves to man a possibility of choice?" (1965:33) Existential choice is self-conscious choice which we actively determine. We can, of course, remain passive. In which case we have still chosen passivity.

Freedom, for Sartre, is not merely a description of external conditions wherein man confronts alternative

possibilities. Freedom is the state of being to which "being-for-itself" is condemned. We make choices, but "we are not free to cease being free." (1956:567) If freedom is the very being of consciousness, what form does the consciousness of freedom assume? According to Sartre,

> . . . it is in anguish that man gets the consciousness of his freedom, or if you prefer, anguish is the mode of being of freedom as consciousness of being; it is in anguish that freedom is, in its being, in question for itself. (1956:65)

For Sartre, freedom (the very "being of consciousness") becomes problematic to itself in its self-consciousness. In freedom, the human being **is** both his past and his future, but only in the form of "nihilation." He becomes self-conscious of "being both this past and future and as not being them." (1956:65)

We see here a Sartrean expression of that problematicity of the very existence of the self which Nishida has identified with the religious question. Much in the same way as Nishida had asserted, Sartre finds that the very being of consciousness becomes problematic when we are self-conscious of the self-contradictions of the self. The self-contradiction cited above consists in the self both being and **not** being its past and future. This self-contradiction emerges for Sartre because it is in freedom that human reality separates its present from its past and future by "secreting" its own "nothingness." Thus,

we are also speaking here of the self-consciousness of freedom. With respect to Nishida, we may recall further that in the voluntaristic stage of his thinking (1917) he describes the self-consciousness of the "absolute free will" as the basic form of consciousness. This might be thought to have some proximity to Sartre's assertion that freedom is the being of consciousness, although, strictly speaking, Sartrean freedom cannot be equated with so-called "free will." In any case, we need to consider Nishida's view of the will in the context of his later thought. Let us consider first the character of Sartrean anguish.

We have seen that Sartre asserts that it is in anguish that man gets his consciousness of freedom. In **EN**, he cites Kierkegaard as characterizing anguish in the face of what one lacks as anguish in the face of freedom. He also notes that Heidegger, who was greatly influenced by Kierkegaard, considers anguish as the apprehension of nothingness. In Sartre's view, these two descriptions of anguish are not contradictory. In anguish we confront our utter freedom as a consciousness which is intrinsically obliged "to be its own nothingness" or which incessantly experiences itself as the "nihilation" of its past being. Thus Sartre posits that "Consciousness is a being, the nature of which is to be conscious of the nothingness of its being." (1956:86) This notion of the nothingness of consciousness is, as we have noted earlier in this study, an

intrinsic aspect of both Sartrean and Nishidean philosophy. Our concern at this point, however, pertains to Nishida's mature thought. In the discussion that follows, we shall observe some significant disparities between Sartre's and Nishida's respective viewpoints with respect to the problem of the self.

According to Sartre, the first principle of existentialism is that "Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself." (1965:36) For Sartre, this means not only that "man defines himself," but that prior to doing so he is indefinable "because at first he is nothing." No explanations can be made by reference to any fixed and given human nature. Not only is there no **a priori** meaning or value, but there is no universal or readymade human nature or essence that can be revealed by any **a priori** theory of man or any religious interpretation that purports to speak of man prior to and apart from his actual existence. Hence, Sartre means by existentialism the doctrine "that existence precedes essence, or, if you prefer, that subjectivity must be the starting point." (1965:34) Subjectivity must be the point of departure because human being is self-consciously problematic to himself, because he is responsible for what he is, and because "it is impossible for man to transcend human subjectivity." (1965:37)

In asserting that existence precedes essence, the existentialist views himself as turning the tables on nearly

all classical philosophy, from Plato to Hegel, wherein existence always derives from essence. Plato, of course, emphasized the search for essence by virtue of its inherent immutability. In Sartre's view the notion is carried down through the ages that each individual man is a particular example of a universal concept of "man." Thus it is widely assumed that the essence of man "precedes the historical existence that we find in nature." (1965:35) Existentialism, on the other hand, expresses a distinctive concern for the concrete existence of the individual. Therefore, the existentialist critique of essentialist accounts of man goes hand in hand with its critique of determinism. If there is no fixed human nature, then man must be wholly free. This means that he must be wholly accountable for his behavior and it is only in his cowardice that he turns to "deterministic excuses" seeking to hide from the "complete arbitrariness" of their existence.

Nishida, for his part, shares the existentialist concern with the concrete existence of the individual. In his last writings, however, he asserts that "what exists must have some nature." (1986:22) Nishida reasons that if we consider the autonomous action of the self to be freedom, we are already presupposing that the self is endowed with some sort of determinate nature, "for if the self were merely amorphous, there would be no autonomy." (1986:21) It is often said that to act out one's essence

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or to follow one's essence is freedom. Hence, Nishida says that "mere arbitrariness is not freedom." (1986:22) But wherein can we locate this essence of the self? Nishida denies that it is adequate to associate the nature of the self with rationality. The rational self can be anyone's self. It is not yet the unique, concrete individual and personal self which "**determines itself**" as one "focal point of the world." This personal, individual self exists in the self-consciousness of its own eternal nothingness. Although the Nishidean notion of the essential nature of the self is notoriously recondite, it is clear that its focal concern is with the "absolute contradiction" which he finds manifest in this **self**-consciousness of the nothingness of the self.

From a Sartrean perspective, the nothingness of the self is precisely the existential condition which negates essentialist notions of the self. Let us be clear, however, that Sartre does not deny that there is something we can call a human essence. Sartrean "essence," however, is only a consequence of the "for-itself's" activity or self-definition. There is no pre-established or inescapable pattern for "human nature." Each man makes his essence as he lives. We should also bear in mind that although he denies that it is possible to find a universal essence in each man which would be our shared human essence, Sartre still affirms that "there does exist a universal human condition." (1965:52) Sartre does not deny that there are certain a

priori boundaries which define the human situation in general. Although historical situations vary, there is no variance in the obligation to exist in the world, to work in the world, to live among others, and to be mortal. These limits are "neither subjective nor objective, or, rather, they have an objective and a subjective side." (1965:52) In that they are ubiquitously discernible, they are objective. In that they are **lived** and because **man freely determines his existence with respect to them**, they are subjective.

Although it may be tempting, for good reason, to characterize Nishida's view as simply another version of the essentialism which Sartre is opposed to, it is appropriate to consider whether what Nishida seems to regard as the essential nature of the self strays in any drastic sense from what Sartre deems to be the **a priori** limits which define the "universal human condition." In other words, when Nishida takes freedom to consist in acting out one's essence, is he expressing a view which departs radically from Sartre's view of the subjective side of the **a priori** limits wherein man freely determines his existence in reference to such limits? We shall have to bear this question in mind. At this point we can only make some observations. Although Nishida allows for some sort of rudimentary "essence" of the self, he does not view such assertions as invalidating his principal tenet that the self is ultimately "absolute nothingness." The Nishidean

notion of the essential human nature seems to refer to the **a priori** limits which define the universal human condition and in terms of which man freely determines himself as a "focal point of the world."

In **EN**, Sartre describes the basis of the psycho-biological condition of man and his unavoidable connection with the world and with the past under the category of "facticity." Facticity is the universal human condition. It is the "for-itself's" necessary connection with the "in-itself." By virtue of facticity we can say that the "for-itself" exists. If we were to suggest that Nishidean essence refers to facticity, however, we would depart from Sartre's perspective. For Sartre, facticity is **not** an essence of man since its meaning depends on the "for-itself" for its interpretation. Nishida, for his part, is no less emphatic as to the input of consciousness with respect to the meaning of facticity. That we act consciously, he says, means that each of us is an "expressive point of the world" and that the world is "subjectively appropriated by our self." (1986:5) Nishida explains that,

> . . . the world which stands over against us as something thoroughly objective is transformed into a world of signs within us, is grasped by us as a significative world. (1986:5)

The Self-Consciousness of Death

The essential human nature for Nishida lies in the fundamental self-contradiction of self-existence as manifest in our self-consciousness of our absolute nothingness. This self-contradiction is especially exemplified in the self-consciousness of that supreme **a priori** limit, death. All living things die. Being a living thing, I know that I too will die. This is not, however, what Nishida has in mind. In the case of this sort of knowledge of **my** death, he says, "I am objectifying myself and regard myself as a thing." (1965:204) Some say that when the flesh dies, the spirit lives on. For Nishida, the notion of "living in the spirit" suggests rationality and morality. It pertains to our access to the rational and the universal. The rational and the universal, however, are not living things. Hence Nishida says that, "For reason to be self-conscious of death has no meaning." (204) Self-consciousness of the "eternal death of the self" arises when the self confronts its own absolute negation. This can only happen to an individual since only such a being can truly know that it is an individual. Only such a being is a "true individual, a true person."

Sartre, for his part, asserts that it is not possible for the "for-itself" to be aware of its own possibility of dying. "**My** death" always remains exterior to my awareness.

Sartre explains that,

> Death is not **my** possibility of no longer realizing a presence in the world, but **an always possible nihilation of my possibles, which is outside of my possibility.** (1956:687)

Although I can imagine someone's death, **my** death is incomprehensible to me. Hence, Sartre asserts that the fact of death indicates the ultimate "triumph of the point of view of the Other over the point of view **which I am** toward myself." (1956:691) Sartre is critical of what he calls "the idealist attempt to **recover** death." In this attempt, he says, death as the end of life is interiorized and humanized. Death becomes the meaning of life "as the resolved chord at the end of a melody." Recovering death in this way means making it **mine.** By thus interiorizing death, it is individualized. No longer the great unknowable, it becomes "the phenomenon of **my** personal life which makes of this life a unique life." (1956:682)

Certainly this notion of the recovery of death whereby my life is individualized seems suggestive of Nishida's views already noted above. Although Sartre recognizes the advantage of such views and the "undeniable portion of truth" involved, he finds it necessary to review the entire question, unwilling to concede that there is any "personalizing virtue" to be associated with **my** death. Sartre's critique focuses largely on Heidegger's view of **Dasein** as **Sein zum Tode.** In Sartre's reading, the most

positive content of Heidegger's **Entschlossenheit** ("resolute decision") pertains to the notion of the attempt to "recover" death by transforming it into an **expected death.** In Sartre's view, the counsel is easier to give than to follow. Death is one thing which I cannot appropriate or "recover" as **mine.** Although Sartre deems it suitable to insist that we must live each moment as if we might die, he insists that this does not indicate that we should make death into an object of contemplation as if it could disclose the meaning of our acts. Death does not give meaning to life, it is "that which on principle removes all meaning from life." (1956:690)

This is not the place to consider Sartre's views on death in any detail. It is, however, opportune to consider in what sense the general thrust of his evaluation may be said to apply to Nishida. Unlike Sartre, Nishida emphatically asserts that it is possible to be self-aware of one's "own eternal death." Nishida is not trying to say that one can imagine or expect one's own death, or that one can reflect about it. He means **that one can become genuinely aware of one's own death.** As noted above, Nishida is not speaking of the mere reflective observation that being a living thing, I must die since living things always die. This sort of knowledge of one's death is still founded on the objectification of one's self as a thing and cannot be a genuine awareness of one's death. Sartre's view, as we have

already seen, is that we are confined to this sort of knowledge. There can be no genuine awareness of one's own death because one's own death always remains totally exterior to one's awareness. I cannot prepare for death or recover it as **mine** since it is always beyond me. Once I die, **my** death is available only to the point of view of others.

It is clear that Nishida's intention is not to counsel us to contemplate death as an object in an endeavor to appropriate one's death by transforming it into an **expected death**, in the manner to which Sartre refers. Nishida is saying something even stronger than any assertion suggesting that we can extract the meaning of our lives from our death. He is reminding us that living **is** dying. He maintains, therefore, that we cannot even have lives as self-conscious individuals without death. A plant or animal may have no knowledge whatsoever of its own death. Nishida says that, "Something which does not know of its own death does not possess a self." (1965:213) We might even say that it has no death. The more aware one is of the "eternal death of the self" the closer one approaches authentic individuality or personhood.

Nishida goes so far as to say that the awareness of the eternal death or "eternal nothingness" of the self is the "fundamental reason for the very existence of the self." (1965:205) That we know the self in self-negation is the "absolute self-contradiction" of the self's existence. This

absolute self-contradiction is the **raison d'être** of the self. The self, in other words, cannot be otherwise. That "we know the self in self-negation," does not imply the mere judgment that the self dies or that the self is nothingness. The self is not self-conscious through mere self-reflection. Only when we are genuinely aware of the eternal death of the self or "its own eternal nothingness" can we become truly self-conscious. By facing this "eternal nothingness" we can truly realize the singularity of our existence. In ratio to the degree of self-consciousness, the religious exigency emerges and we experience religious and existential anguish. This is because the self leads this absolutely contradictory existence.

Although Sartre highlights the nothingness of the self and the encounter with absolute freedom in anguish, he tends to depreciate the significance of death. For Nishida, on the other hand, the nothingness of the self **is** the "eternal death" of the self without which there would be no self. For Nishida, then, **death has an ontological significance** with respect to the existence of the self which does not appear in Sartre. This discrepancy is all the more notable when we consider that, like Nishida's self, the Sartrean self is absolutely self-contradictory; that is, the pre-reflective **cogito** is a self only as lacking a self. Sartre's view of the self as lacking a self correlates with his rejection of any notion of an essence of the self.

Similarly, as we observed earlier in this study, Sartre rejects any notion of a "transcendental self." Nishida, on the other hand, utilizes the notion generously up until he wrote his last essays.

In order to establish a clearer distinction between Nishida and Sartre with respect to the issues pertaining to notions of the essence of the self, the "transcendental self," and the "absolute nothingness" of the self, it is necessary that we consider these issues with reference to the broad background of phenomenological and ontological concerns. In the next chapter, then, we hope to briefly step back in time to consider an essay of Nishida's written in 1930 entitled "The Intelligible Universal." We do this with the hope that we will be enabled to better differentiate Nishida and Sartre with respect to the problem of the self as well as with respect to issues relating to the notion of "intentionality" and the relation between the self and the world. We hope to describe Nishida's ever-deepening levels of self-consciousness and the correlative "standpoints" in relation to the Husserlian method of phenomenological reduction previously discussed in Part Two of this study. Our intention is also that this approach will better enable us to grasp Nishida's viewpoint on religious consciousness and knowledge of the self through self-negation. Nishida began to develop his "logic of **basho**" because he found that he could not explain his understanding of religious

consciousness in terms of classical Western logic. By examining Nishida's essay of 1930, we will be considering one of Nishida's first attempts to develop the "logic of **basho**" which does not appear in mature form until his final essay--which we have begun discussing in this chapter--written in the year of his death (1945).

CHAPTER XIV

NISHIDA'S ONTOLOGY OF "ENVELOPING UNIVERSALS" (1930) CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO HUSSERL AND SARTRE

In Part Two of this study, we observed that Husserl, Sartre and Nishida all share a commitment to a radical "meditative self-examination" and consequently to the "principle of pure intuition" or the evidence of the actually given, "wherein we assert nothing we ourselves do not 'see.'" (1960:24) It is curious that despite this common bond, these philosophers exhibit notably divergent inclinations. Generally speaking, Sartre concurs with Husserl in regarding phenomenology as a descriptive activity and in emphasizing the intentional character of consciousness. As we have seen, however, Sartre rejects Husserl's "phenomenological reduction" with its consequent notion of the "intuition of essences" and his transcendental egology. Sartre, of course, insists that we have intuition or immediate grasp not of essence, but of existence.

For Sartre the phenomenological technique of reduction is an impossibility. Like a wind blowing toward its objects, the reality of consciousness is wholly consumed in its intending what is **other** than it. As such, for him, there can be no "transcendental ego" added as an additional feature or content of consciousness. The Husserlian technique of reduction is deemed impossible by Sartre since, being

nothing but a "revealing intuition" of things, consciousness can never be viewed in isolation from the world. The idea of a successful "transcendental reduction" tends to suggest a contraction of intentional consciousness into itself. But we might inquire if, contrary to Sartre, such a consummated reduction could in fact represent a return of consciousness to its origins. Husserl devised his methodology in an effort to stand back from the seemingly ubiquitous vectorial (**ego-cogito-cogitatum**) structure of intentionality in order to view it from a "neutral standpoint." The term "reduction" derives from the latin "**re-ducere**" which means "to lead back to origins." Thus the final stage of the reductions, the "transcendental reduction," is conceived as leading back to the "constitutive" origins of consciousness.

In this connection we might suggest that Nishida's description of ever-deepening levels of self-consciousness as described in his essay, "The Intelligible World" (1930), involves a form of "reduction" in that it is an endeavor to trace the "self's return to itself." Nishida's methodology can be characterized as a "methodology of standpoints" expressed in terms of ever-deepening levels of self-consciousness. This methodology of standpoints, we shall maintain, exhibits some characteristics remarkably analogous to Husserl's procedure of progressive reductions. Each stage of Husserl's procedure discloses a distinct standpoint. Despite significant differences,

Nishida's standpoints can be clarified by reference to the standpoints progressively disclosed by Husserl's methodology which Sartre rejects.

As is the case with Sartrean ontology, Nishida's ontology is phenomenological. That is to say, his ontology is developed in terms of a descriptive account of experience. In his essay of 1930, he describes an ontological motif in terms of a phenomenology of progressively deepening levels of self-consciousness. Whereas Sartrean ontology remains dyadic--wherein the being of consciousness is conceived as implying the existence of a non-conscious transphenomenal being which is **other** than it--Nishidean ontology is triadic. His phenomenological survey of self-consciousness discloses a structure of progressively deepening levels of being, a path leading from three spheres of being to "absolute nothingness." He describes a three-tiered structure of being involving three "spheres of being" or "worlds."

Nishida's Progressively Deepening Levels of Being (1930)

According to Nishida, all "being" is "being **within**." "Being," he says, means "to be determined." There are distinct limits which determine a being of any sort. Being, then, indicates determination. Nishida's "spheres of being" are said to each be determined by the distinct "universal" in which they have their place. The three spheres of being are: (a) the "natural or physical world," (b) the "world of

consciousness," (c) the "intelligible world." In the ontograph on page 293 (Figure 1), we can see the three spheres of being depicted as determined within a series of "enveloping universals." The natural world is determined by the "universal of judgment." The "universal of judgment" is enveloped by the "universal of self-consciousness" wherein the "world of consciousness" is located. The "universal of self-consciousness," in turn, is enveloped by the "intelligible universal" wherein the "intelligible world" is located. All universals are ultimately enveloped by "absolute nothingness."

Nishida's "enveloping universals" are structurally reminiscent of the renowned Chinese ivory-ball carving wherein an interior ball can be discerned within another ball which, in turn, is encompassed by another ball, etc. As the entire carving is surrounded by space, all the "spheres of being" and the "enveloping universals" are encompassed by "the last enveloping universal." That is to say, they all have their "place" in this last universal. It is said to be the "last" universal, because it is the standpoint of the deepest level of self-consciousness in a progressively deepening series. We could just as well call it the "first" universal, if we were to invert the series. Strictly speaking, this universal is not a "universal" at all, it is "absolute nothingness." It is only by virtue of the last universal, which is a "vanishing universal,"

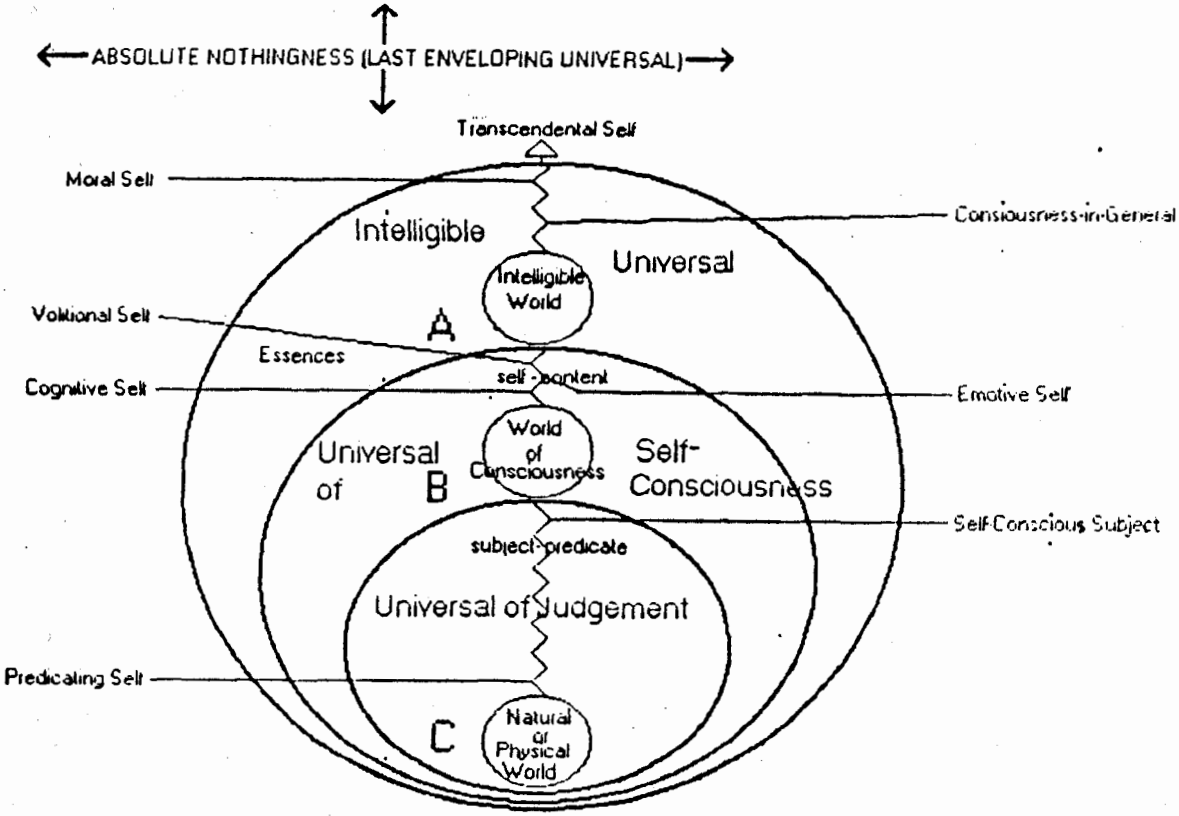


Fig. 1 Nishida's Three-tiered Structure of Being (1930)

that all spheres of being are defined as determinate "being." The last universal, however, is wholly indeterminate and cannot itself be defined as a being.

It may be helpful to recognize a certain affinity between Nishida's ontological motif and the triadic structure of being described by Plotinus (205-270). Although the Plotinian spheres of being are not characterized as determined within respective universals, the order of the series is analogous to Nishida's. For Plotinus, the sphere of matter is surpassed by the sphere of **psyche** (soul), which, in turn, is surpassed by the sphere of **nous** (intelligence or mind). We might think of the sphere of **psyche** as correlative with Nishida's notion of the "world of consciousness," which is determined by a universal that surpasses that which determines the material realm. We can also think of the sphere of **nous** as correlative with Nishida's "intelligible world," which is determined by a universal that surpasses the universal which determines the "world of consciousness." As is the case with Nishida's "absolute nothingness," all realms of reality have their being in the ultimate "One" which is itself indeterminate, transcendent and all-encompassing.

In a manner reminiscent of Plotinus, Nishida's investigations disclose progressively deepening levels of being, all of which have their place in absolute non-being. Before we examine Nishida's three realms of being, the

universals in which they are determined and the accompanying standpoints associated with them, we must describe the dominant rationale for the progression from universal to universal. The progression from universal to universal coincides with a progression from standpoint to standpoint. It is a progression induced and necessitated by the confrontation with certain existential "contradictions" of the self which are endemic to each standpoint. A specific "contradiction," or paradox, is experienced with respect to each standpoint. At each level, when a contradiction is discerned it incites a transition to a deeper level of determination. In terms of his "logic of place," we can say that when the nature of an object transcends the structural limits of the place in which it is located and a contradiction appears, a deeper layer of determination has to be sought, a more "enveloping universal."

We can consider each "contradiction" as we examine the three spheres of being, the respective "universals" in which each has its place and the applicable standpoints in each case. What Nishida calls the "natural world" is determined by, or has its place in, the "universal of judgment." The "universal of judgment" is described as the "plane of predicates." It is described as such because that which is determined by this universal is always the predicative meaning of judgments. Having its place in the predicative dimension, a particular object is not only "red" or "round,"

et cetera; it is "real" and "concrete." The standpoint of the " universal of judgment" then, correlates somewhat with what Husserl calls the "natural attitude." The "natural attitude" is the standpoint of our natural judgments and beliefs, such as those pertaining to causation, the "external" world, et cetera.

The Transition to the "Universal of Self-Consciousness" in Relation to Husserl's "Phenomenological Reduction

The first stage of Husserl's method of "reduction," we may recall, involves a "suspension" or "disconnection" of the natural standpoint. This procedure, he says, "completely bars me from using any judgment that concerns spatio-temporal existence (**Dasein**)." (1962:100) A general disregard of what is ordinarily regarded as knowledge is entailed. Specifically, Husserl is especially concerned to "bracket-off" our ordinary belief in the reality and existence of the external world. This stage of Husserl's reductions can be employed to assist us in clarifying Nishida's transition from the "universal of judgment" to the "universal of self-consciousness." First, however, we will observe that the rationale for this initial transition involves a "contradiction" which is somewhat Sartrean.

The process of determination within the "universal of judgment" is such that subject and predicate stand against each other. The "predicating self" which judges, however, is not itself determined by the "universal of judgment." The

self which predicates is also the self-conscious subject. Consciousness, then, may be seen as moving in "contradictory" directions which are juxtaposed, the direction of predication and that of self-consciousness. This assertion is structurally analogous to Sartre's description of consciousness as involving the simultaneous, but disparate directions of the reflective cogito and pre-reflective self-consciousness. In Husserlian terms, this "contradiction" pertains to the radical dissimilarity between the "empirical" or "psychological" ego in the "natural world" and the transcending self, or "pure ego." Since the self-conscious individual is a transcending self, which stands "over against" the "empirical ego" and the "natural world," it cannot be determined by the "universal of judgment," Nishida regards it as having its place in a universal which envelops the "universal of judgment."

Nishida explains:

> Self-consciousness is beyond the transcendental plane [or field] of predicates, and is essentially no longer determined by the universal of judgment. That which is determined by the universal of judgment is essentially something thought, but not something thinking. It is the content of judgment, but not the making of judgments. (1958:71)

It is necessary, then, to take a different vantage point with respect to the "being of consciousness." If we were to suspend the natural standpoint, we have seen that Husserl would not assert that this would involve a new thesis postulating denial of the "natural thesis." Similarly, in

Nishida's motif, the standpoint from the "universal of judgment" is not denied, it is "enveloped" by a more encompassing universal. The being, or "world," of consciousness has its place in the "universal of self-consciousness" which encompasses the "universal of judgment." The standpoint from the "universal of self-consciousness" is somewhat analogous to the "pure consciousness" rendered accessible by Husserl's phenomenological suspension of the natural attitude and remaining over as "phenomenological residuum."

If we consider the "universal of judgment" as something like the domain of what is ordinarily regarded as knowledge ("natural standpoint"), we may conceive of the transition to the "universal of self-consciousness" as involving a "suspension" of such knowledge. A transition to another standpoint must involve either the destruction of, or the suspension of, the previous standpoint. Since the "universal of judgment" is enveloped by the "universal of self-consciousness," the standpoint taken from it remains intact. In Husserlian terms, then, it is merely "bracketed-off" when we make the transition to the "universal of self-consciousness." The new standpoint discloses the world of pure, transcendental consciousness which is said to be determined by, and have its place in, the "universal of self-consciousness."

The new standpoint is brought on because the being of

consciousness transcends the plane [or field] of predicates determinative of the natural world and can be no longer determined by the "universal of judgment." This means that consciousness always transcends the domain of what we ordinarily regard as knowledge. What we ordinarily regard as knowledge is the content of judgment, but it is not the activity of judging or knowing. It is something thought, but it is not the thinking. The activity of consciousness, then, is not determined by the "universal of judgment." The view asserted here is not wholly alien to Sartre. Consciousness for Sartre "is not a mode of particular knowledge which may be called an inner meaning or self-knowledge; it is the dimension of transphenomenal being in the subject." (1956:10) Similarly, in viewing consciousness as transcending the "plane of predicates" Nishida is saying that it is transphenomenal, that it transcends the appearances which are the object of predication.

When Sartre asserts that consciousness is "the knowing being in his capacity as **being** and not as being known," this is what Nishida is getting at when he insists that the knowing, judging or predicating self, as self-conscious subject, is not determined by the "universal of judgment," which determines only the content of judgment or the known. We may recall that Sartre argues that in order to establish knowledge it is necessary to abandon the "illusion of the theoretical primacy of knowledge." By abandoning the primacy

of knowledge, we discover the **being** of the **knower** and "encounter the absolute." By the "absolute" Sartre refers to the being of consciousness in the subject, described as a "total emptiness" exclusive of the entire world. It is the transcending "for-itself" which stands apart from the being which it is not.

Despite certain reservations about Husserl's procedure, in proposing that we must abandon the primacy of knowledge in order to disclose the being of consciousness, Sartre is in proximity with the Husserlian suspension of the "natural standpoint" and with Nishida's transition from the standpoint of the "universal of judgment" to that of the "universal of self-consciousness." Sartre, of course, recognized his proximity to Husserl with respect to the reality of noesis, but saw himself as departing from Husserl insofar as, after having effected the phenomenological reduction, Husserl "treats the noema as an **unreal** correlate of noesis." However we may view Sartre's criticism, it is of marked historical interest to recognize that Sartre's criticism of Husserlian reduction would extend to Nishida's procedure of transitional standpoints.

Nishida explains that the transition from the standpoint of the "universal of judgment" to that of the "universal of self-consciousness" is such that that which had its place in the transcendental plane of predicates as something concrete and real becomes mere content of

consciousness. He explains:

> All that had its place in the 'universal of judgment' (as its content), now becomes **unreal**, as content of the 'universal of self-consciousness;' the meaning of its 'being' changes from that of an objective being to the subjective being of an act of consciousness. (1958:72)

This "unreal" content of the "universal of self-consciousness" is reminiscent of the noematic content disclosed through the phenomenological reduction. The esse of the noema is "wholly dependent," consisting exclusively in its **percipi**. Contrary to Berkeley, however, Husserl asserts that, "the **percipi** does not contain the **esse** as a real (**reelles**) constituent." (1931:265) As is the case with the being of Nishida's "unreal content," Husserl's noema is the unreal "subjective" being, by virtue of being the objective correlate of an act of consciousness.

Sartre, of course, insists vigorously on the real being of the world of intended objects. In his view, the intentional object cannot be treated as unreal because in doing so we would depart from recognition of the intentional structure of consciousness. Intentionality means that "transcendence is the constitutive structure of consciousness; that is, that consciousness is born **supported** by a being which is not itself." (1956:23) This support would be spurious if the intended being were somehow rendered unreal, even by way of some methodological fiction employed for analytic purposes. As we have noted earlier in

this study, however, it is important to recognize that Husserl's phenomenological idealism "does not deny the positive existence of the real (**realen**) world and of Nature . . . as though it held it to be an illusion." (1931:14)

By suspending the natural standpoint, it is **not** Husserl's intention to posit a new thesis denying the natural thesis. Similarly, the standpoint from Nishida's "universal of self-consciousness" is not a denial of the standpoint from the "universal of judgment." It is a standpoint which encompasses the natural standpoint within itself. This means that that which has its place in the "universal of self-consciousness" is both objective and subjective. Insofar as it has its place in the "universal of judgment" it has an objective character. Insofar as it also has its place in the more enveloping "universal of self-consciousness," it has the subjective character of a content of consciousness.

The Standpoint of the "Universal of Self-Consciousness"

a. Nishida's Theory of Intentionality.

Nishida explains that within the "universal of judgment" subject and predicate stand against each other. Within the "universal of self-consciousness" this same mutual opposition becomes manifest as acting self and the enacted content. As such, it displays various noetic modalities and takes form as "knowing-known," "feeling-felt," and "willing-willed." Nishida says that the

opposing poles in the "universal of self-consciousness" are "lined as a kimono is lined with a precious silk [that overlaps somewhat, and somehow, envelops the kimono]." (1958:83) What Nishida is getting at here involves a distinctive view of intentionality. Whereas Husserl regards intentionality as the structure of consciousness **per se**, Sartre sees intentionality as more than a structural characteristic; for him, we recall, consciousness **is** intentionality. Nishida (1930), on the other hand, sees intentionality as the initial stage of a continuum wherein the kind of transcendence which Sartre views as the constitutive structure of consciousness, is progressively diminished in terms of variant modalities manifest as ever-deepening levels of self-consciousness.

In the "universal of self-consciousness" Nishida sees a continuum from cognitive consciousness to emotive consciousness and, finally, to volitional consciousness (see Figure 2, page 304). In merely knowing or feeling its content, consciousness remains at a distance from it. We might say that in the initial phases of the continuum the transcendence which Sartre insists on as constitutive of consciousness remains the case. As we reach the apex of the "universal of self-consciousness," however, intentionality begins to take the form of the "will." As intentionality is intensified as will, the distantiation and polarization between consciousness and the intended object is mitigated.

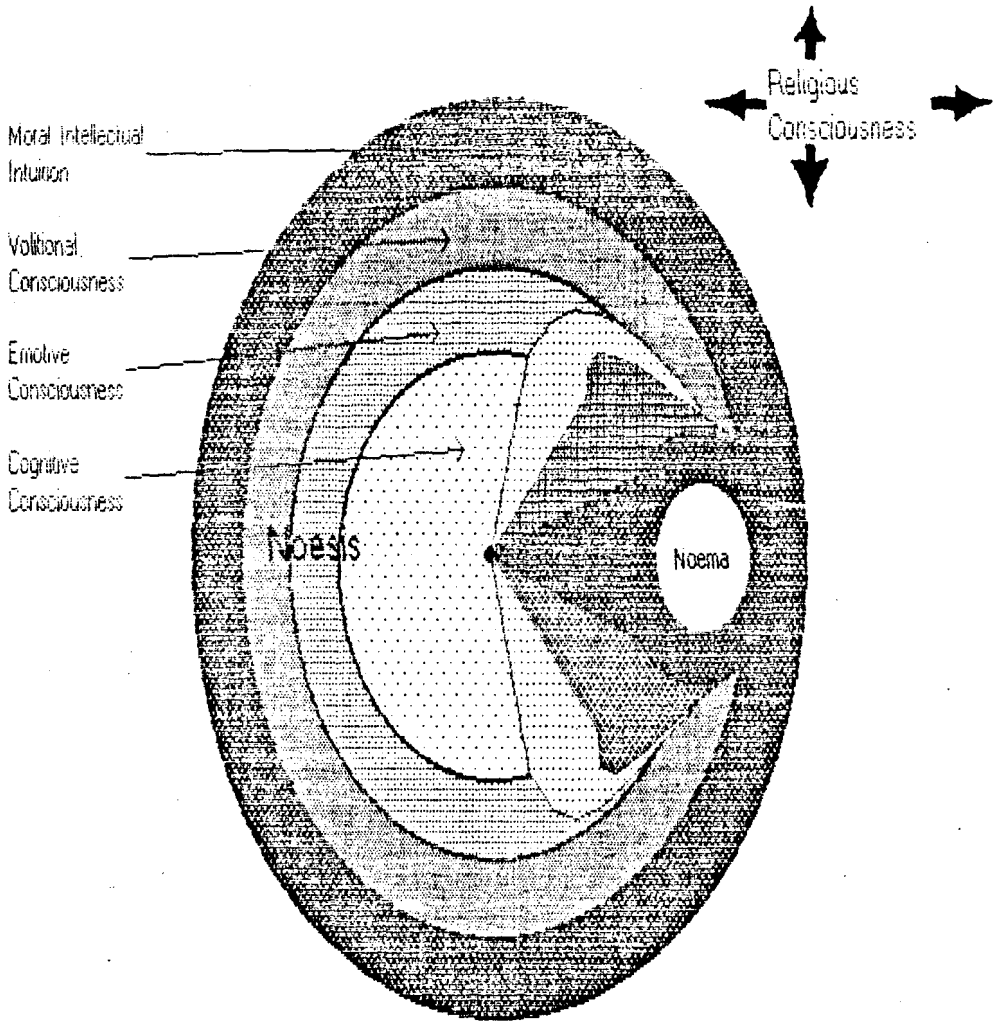


Fig. 2 The Progressive Enclosure of Noema in the Noesis

According to Nishida, in the "universal of self-consciousness" we can go deeper and deeper into the noesis in the act of self-conscious transcending. Simultaneously, he says, "a progressive enclosure of the noema in the noesis takes place, while the meaning of 'being' in the sphere of self-consciousness increases in significance." (1958:86) In the initial phases of the continuum, the noesis does not yet "enclose the noema" (see Figure 2). Nishida's notion of a "progressive enclosure of the noema in the noesis" is intended to indicate a noetic appropriation of content. This appropriation is described in progressive stages because the three primary noetic modalities represent varying degrees of the "enclosure of the noema." The cognitive self, which is the initial phase, "is not yet conscious of its **own** content." (86) In the emotive self there is a stirring of the "consciousness of one's **own** content." Only the active volitional self, however, can appropriate its content.

We can think of all this as a description of the intentional relation between consciousness and its objects in terms of something like the chromatic variations within the spectrum. The relation between emotional consciousness and its objects is a more intense form of intentional relatedness than that between cognitive consciousness and its objects. Willing is the most intense form of intentionality. Thus, Nishida asserts that "only willing is

a true knowing of itself." (1958:81) This means that only the "willing self" can approach an advanced stage of the "noetic enclosure of the noema." Here we see a reiteration of the earlier voluntarism which we have observed, wherein he proposed that the will is the "fundamental form of consciousness." We shall see, however, that Nishida's voluntarism in this context is subordinate to an emerging "intuitionism."

If we consider the being of consciousness from Nishida's standpoint within the "universal of self-consciousness" we assume a standpoint wherein the "universal of judgment" is suspended, much as Husserl suspends the "natural attitude." The being of consciousness remains unaffected like a "phenomenological residuum." As such, all the activity of consciousness operating under the "natural standpoint" of the "universal of judgment" is left standing, but it is put in relief. The result for Nishida is that, though the **content** of the "universal of judgment" becomes unreal from the vantage point of the "universal of self-consciousness," the **being** of consciousness progressively increases in reality as we deepen our self-conscious transcending through the continuum and approach a robust volitional consciousness.

In the "universal of self-consciousness" the self **determines itself** as a cognitive self, an emotive self or a volitional self. In determining itself as cognitive or

emotive, consciousness remains intentional. Nishida says, however, that intentionality is a "weak willing." Only in determining itself as an actively "willing self" can the self begin to appropriate its **own** content and consequently fulfill the "noetic enclosure of the noema." To make sense of this we must understand that, for Nishida, the self transcends the self in the depth of the self because it is absolutely free. This freedom means, "to be **not** enclosed by the object, but to enclose the object." (1958:127) The truly free self must enclose its content as its own in itself. This means that it must "form the 'place' in which the self 'is.'" (127)

b. The "Noetic Enclosure of Noema" in Relation to Sartre's Notion of Appropriation.

For Sartre, as for Nishida, the self is absolutely free and self-determinative. Like Nishida, Sartre also proffers a concept of appropriation. It is important, however, for us to differentiate their respective concepts. Sartre, of course, is well-known for his observation that total freedom implies total responsibility. Although I am absolutely free, "I am never free **except in a situation.**" (1956:590) As a being-in-the-world, the transcending "for-itself" is responsible for determining the significance of the world in which it is. Sartre's concept of "appropriation" expresses the sense in which the "for-itself" is thought to fashion the significations for

which it is responsible. Sartre observes that the responsibility of the "for-itself" is overwhelming because it is through the "for-itself" that **there is** a "world." Whatever the situation may be, the "for-itself" must assume this situation entirely. It must assume the situation "with the proud consciousness of being the author of it . . . ." (1956:707-8)

Absolute responsibility is, for Sartre, the consequence of absolute freedom. This means that whatever happens to me is **mine**. Sartre says that,

> . . . the situation is **mine** because it is the image of my free choice of myself, and everything which it presents to me is **mine** in that it represents me and symbolizes me. (1956:708)

Sartre goes so far as to say that, as the author of **my** situation I **am** the objects which surround me. Pen, pipe, clothing, house, "**it is** I." Using the example of mountain climbing, he asserts that "This mountain which I climb is myself to the extent that I conquer it." (1956:754) And when I reach the summit and attain a magnificent view over the valley and the surrounding mountains, "then I **am** the view; the panorama is myself dilated to the horizon, for it exists only through me, only for me." (1956:754)

In some cases, Sartre seems to be asserting that the situation in which I find myself is necessarily mine because of the special status of the "for-itself" vis-à-vis facticity. His assertion, however, that the mountain "is

myself to the extent that I conquer it" is at least somewhat suggestive of Nishida's talk of the actively volitional self appropriating its **own** content. Still, it would be stretching the analogy if we were to conceive of Sartre's assertion as suggesting any sort of "noetic enclosure of the noema." At one point, Sartre indicates that we find being wherein there is an "immediate inherence of the noema in the noesis" which is an inherence in itself "without the least distance." (1956:27) It is clear, however, that for Sartre the ontological status of phenomena is such that the being of the "for-itself" is always separated from the being of phenomena by an insurmountable hiatus which would seem to defy any notion of "enclosure."

"Being-for-itself" is not thought of as "enclosing" or encompassing the being of the "in-itself" if this is to imply some sort of ontological subsumption. Thus I may enjoy ownership of an object which I utilize, but otherwise it remains inert and indifferent, and can in no sense be "enclosed within the noesis." Sartre calls appropriation a "magical relation." He says that,

> I **am** these objects which I possess, but outside, so to speak, facing myself; I create them as independent of me; what I possess is mine outside of me, outside all subjectivity, as an in-itself which escapes me at each instant and whose creation at each instant I perpetuate. (1956:755)

Sartre, then, emphasizes the externality of the objects appropriated by the "for-itself." Although my situation is

an expression of the active determination of the "world" by the "for-itself," there remains a realistic element to the "world" in Sartre's estimation. The "for-itself" fashions the world by reacting to the brute givens such as the "coefficient of adversity" of things, the historical past, the significations created by others, et cetera.*

Sartrean realism is such that although there would be no "world" as we know it apart from the "for-itself," there would remain an undifferentiated plenitude of being. With respect to the relation of possession, this means that "the dominant term is the object possessed." (1956:755) Without the independent reality of the object possessed, the possessor is nothing. Sartre insists that the relation of possession "is **symbolic** and **ideal**." (1956:755) As is certainly not the case for Nishida, Sartrean appropriation is a "magical relation," a mere symbol of the ideal of the "for-itself." The Sartrean concept of appropriation is a paradoxical concept which seeks to account for both realistic and idealistic aspects in experience. Ultimately it leads back to the problem of the "in-itself-for-itself," which is for Sartre the unrealizable and ideal structure of God. In the relation of appropriation we see this structure

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* Sartre borrows the phrase, "coefficient of adversity," from Gaston Bachelard. It indicates the amount of resistance which external objects impose against the projects of the "for-itself."

manifest in the dyad of the "for-itself" possessing and the "in-itself" possessed.

As regards Nishida's concept, we may first observe that a realized appropriation is regarded as a return to the actual conditions, a return to the constitutive origins of consciousness. It is not merely symbolic or ideal. Whether or not the individual determines himself as an actively "willing self" which determines his **own** content, his "content" **is** his **own.** The individual, however, may not have become fully conscious of it as his **own.** In any case, the object appropriated is **never entirely external or independent.** In a manner more suggestive of Husserl than Sartre, Nishida outlines a structure wherein even an object of the "natural world" belongs to a realm which has its being within a universal which is **enveloped** by the universals of self-consciousness and intelligibility, and ultimately by the "last enveloping universal" which is the domain of the "transcendental self." Strictly speaking, however, this is not to say that the **being** or "world" of consciousness encloses the **being** or "world" of nature. The hiatus that remains between the being of consciousness and the being of nature, is more reminiscent of Sartre than Husserl.

This gap is evident in our ontograph (Figure 1) wherein the three realms of being are each determined by distinct universals. Despite the progressive envelopment

characteristic of the universals, the realms of being are demarcated by virtue of their relationship to the respective universals which determine them. Nishida departs from Sartre not only in describing an architectonic involving three realms of being rather than two, but also in distinguishing each being in terms of determination by universals. Nishida's dissimilarity from both Husserl and Sartre pertains largely to this structural facet of his ontology whereby the being of consciousness is determined by a universal which envelops the universal that determines the being of the "natural world." On the one hand, the enveloping structure wherein the being of "natural world" is determined is suggestive of Husserl's constitutive idealism. On the other hand, the structure of determination preserves the ontological dichotomy which characterizes Sartrean realism. Unlike Sartre, however, the "coefficient of adversity" of natural objects pertains to a realm of being which is determined by a universal which is subsumed within the same universal which determines the being of consciousness. We should add that the "unreal" noema which is enclosed by noesis in Nishidean appropriation remains real when regarded from the standpoint of the "universal of judgment," much as the real existence of things is never contested by Husserlian reduction.

Nishidean appropriation is realized by the "willing self" which he associates with the "truest form of

self-consciousness." For Nishida, the will is the basic form of consciousness and is the basis of cognition and emotion. For Sartre, of course, will (deliberate choice) and emotion are modes of the "for-itself's" original being as nihilation and freedom. The "for-itself" chooses to be passionate or deliberate. Our free choice is not the result of any deliberations; it is the context of all our deliberations. Nishida, however, is not speaking of volitional "deliberations" **per se**. He speaks of the active and spontaneous will. His "willing self," then, has more proximity to Sartre's notion of the unreflective free choice of our being, or the "original project."

In any case, it should be clear that Nishida's notion of the will is not suggestive of any sort of Schopenhauerian or Buddhistic pessimism wherein the destruction of the will, or desirelessness, is upheld as the ultimate goal. This sort of Buddhistic pessimism, of course, may be regarded as a serious misinterpretation of Buddhist teaching. The Gautama Buddha, we may recall, is said to have attempted to extinguish the will through asceticism. He eventually concluded, however, that the endeavor was futile, realizing the "middle way" as he sat beneath the Bodhi tree. Nishida counsels the affirmation of the will in the sense that it is only in the "volitional self" that the progressive deepening of self-consciousness can be fulfilled to the extent that the "Self transcends the conscious Self."

In affirming the will, Nishida can be seen as recommending something more like Kuki's "valorization of the voluntarist element in **Bushido**," which we took note of in the introduction to this study. Nishida's affirmation of the will, however, can be understood in the context of a Buddhistic notion of the "return of the self to the Self." It is, in other words, an aspect of the problem of the self understood as a religious exigency.

Taking the self to be radically self-determinative in a manner reminiscent of Sartre, Nishida takes the view that even to will the negation of the will is an expression of our absolute freedom. In seeking the negation of the will, we confront yet another will, the will **not** to will. There is for Nishida, however, a critical point at which the wholly affirmed will is transformed. We may recall that he takes intentionality (cognition, emotion) to be a form of "weak willing." The will, in turn, is "weak intuition." This means that we may become aware of a continuum wherein a truly robust will is seen as the weakest form of intuition. Intuition may be seen as a transformed will which ultimately transcends the deepening of self-consciousness. There is for Nishida an existential "contradiction" at the apex of the "universal of self-consciousness" which compels us to make another transition in standpoint. He states that "we desire in order to end desire; we live in order to die." (1958:81) The fulfillment of the will, in other words, is

accompanied by a dissolution of the will. The appropriation by the "willing self" of its **own** content, then marks the transformation of the will into intuition. Only by enclosing its content as its **own** can the "willing self" become aware of itself as a truly free self. This means that, unlike Sartre, in the case of the fulfilled will, there is no longer any nihilating distance between the willing noetic act and the willed noematic object.

The Transition to the "Intelligible Universal"

It is at the point at which the will becomes fulfilled that we begin to intuit an "intelligible world" which is something like a realm of essences. It becomes necessary, then, to seek a deeper layer of determination, a more enveloping universal, to account for this stratum of being. According to Nishida the "intelligible world" is determined by the "intelligible universal." The "intelligible universal" envelops the "universal of self-consciousness" which, in turn, envelops the "universal of judgment." Although the standpoint assumed by virtue of Husserl's "eidetic reduction" is not intended as a "deepening in the direction of the noesis" or as a transcending of the noetic sphere and does not indicate Nishida's hierarchy of universals, in taking the standpoint of Nishida's "intelligible universal" it is as though one has effectuated something like the Husserlian "eidetic reduction." Both standpoints disclose a realm of **eidos** or essence, of general

properties, "pure ideas" or forms. For Nishida and Husserl alike, these essences are realities and are not to be regarded as mere mental "products of abstraction." For Husserl, of course, they are "constituted" realities--correlates of constituting acts. From Nishida's standpoint, an "essence" is fundamentally a constituting act. In a sense, it is taken as a composite of constituting activity and the correlatively constituted object. As a "deepening in the direction of the noesis," it is a constituting activity. When viewed in the "direction of noematic transcendence," it appears as a constituted object. The entire being of this realm of "essences," however, is determined by the "intelligible universal." Nishida's notion of "essence" becomes clearer as we examine his characterization of this universal.

According to Nishida, the "intelligible universal" "contains something that transcends the depth of our conscious self." (1958:69) In order to intend something which is trans-conscious, "our Self must transcend the conscious Self." (1958:70) For Nishida, this means that the act of consciousness can intend something that transcends consciousness not simply in the direction of the noema of natural objects, but precisely in the opposite direction ("behind" rather than "in front of" consciousness). It is in this sense that he construes acts of consciousness which intend autonomous and eternal truths. Nishida describes the

transition to the standpoint of the "intelligible universal" as one in which we pass through an "entrance" which is something like the Kantian **Bewusstsein Überhaupt** (consciousness-in-general), or consciousness conceived as universal rather than as particularized. Having made this entrance we have intuitive access to the "pure ideas" or essences which Nishida associates with the Platonic notions of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful.

Like the Plotinian **nous**, Nishida's "intelligible world" is a realm of intelligible and **dynamic** realities or "ideas." In the Plotinian view, when one turns toward the **psyche** in self-contemplation, one comes to regard ones **psyche** as part of the "world-soul." We might think of the "world-soul" as something like the "consciousness-in-general" which Nishida sees as the "entrance" of noetic transcendence toward the "intelligible world." Plotinus describes advancing stages of contemplation which resemble Nishida's progressive stages of self-consciousness and are suggestive of his notion of appropriation:

> In the advancing stages of Contemplation rising from that in Nature, to that in the Soul and thence again to that in the Intellectual-Principle itself, the object contemplated becomes progressively a more and more intimate possession of the Contemplating Beings, more and more one thing with them . . . . (Plotinus, 1930:245) [tr. MacKenna]

Pursuing this self-contemplation to its ultimate culmination, we are said to transcend even **nous** and

experience communion with the "One."

It is important to recognize that Nishida denies that his notion of an "intelligible world" implies any sort of "heavenly world" transcending our real world. He explains that it is a common temptation to think in this way because we usually think of the realm of "pure ideas" in the direction of "noematic transcendence." In other words, we tend to view all ideas as intentional objects which take their place alongside of physical objects in the realm of phenomena or the "plane of predicates." In Nishida's view, however, "we are actually living in the intelligible world." (1958:125) The so-called "real" world is the world regarded abstractly. This is not generally clear to us, because when the self transcends the "willing self," the self which transcends is no longer conscious in any ordinary sense, "it is beyond the limits of reflection." (1958:84)

Considered from the vantage point of the "universal of self-consciousness," we cannot recognize any "being" which could be called an "intelligible self." Although, in the viewpoint of the "universal of self-consciousness," the noetic aspect of the intelligible realm cannot be "seen," there is a noematic aspect to the intelligible being of "pure ideas" or "essences." The standpoint of the conscious self is such that from it one can think of that which transcends this standpoint in no other way than as "idea," taken in a purely objective sense. From this

standpoint, "even the world of self-consciousness is still thought of by reflection, and as such may be rightly called a transcendent object." (1958:85) Viewed from this standpoint it remains a psychological object in the same sense as the Sartrean view of the "ego." The "intelligible world," however, "is not another world beyond and outside ourselves; we are within it ourselves." (85)

According to Nishida it is easy to make the mistake of imagining that it is sufficient to think of the "intellectual intuition" experienced by the "intelligible self" as some sort of subject-object unity. Furthermore, our tendency is to regard such unity solely in objective terms (i.e. in terms of a kind of collapse of the noesis into the noema). The resulting view remains a matter of "noematic transcendence." In the case of so-called "intellectual intuition," however, Nishida says that "the Self sees itself directly." (1958:85) Entering something like the Kantian "pure ego," the self transcends the depth of self-consciousness and witnesses its own noetic activity. This is noetic transcendence, and the self from this standpoint can no longer be regarded as the being of consciousness per se.

In Sartrean terms, it is as though Nishida is describing a version of "pure reflection" which takes place in a realm of being that transcends both the being of consciousness ("for-itself") and the non-conscious being of

the phenomenon ("in-itself"). This transcendence, however, surpasses the "for-itself's" own transcendence from the "in-itself." It is, in other words, a transcendence in the "direction of the noesis" and not in a noematic direction. The standpoint from the "intelligible universal" is the "deepening of the noesis," not its extinction. Transcending the self-conscious will, the subject becomes the "intelligible self" and, as such, can see itself directly. In seeing itself directly, the "intelligible self" has intuition of its **own** content. That is, it has intuition of "essence." This "essence" is primarily an activity itself. Only in a subordinate sense is it akin to Husserl's "constituted" essences.

The import of noetic transcendence is that the transcending "intelligible self" "has constitutive significance for the conscious Self" in that "it constitutes the object of knowledge," including the conscious self itself. (1958:97) Nishida credits phenomenology with emphasizing this "standpoint of the 'given.'" The "intelligible self," then, is ultimately given as the constituting subject and this activity of constituting is "true consciousness." Without it there can be no consciousness at all. From the standpoint of the "intelligible self," intentionality is this activity of "constituting the content of the Self in the Self." (1958:99) From the standpoint of the conscious self,

intentionality is merely an activity viewed in abstraction from this constitutive element.

Nishida's "intelligible self," which constitutes "the content of the Self in the Self" resembles Husserl's "transcendental ego" which Sartre rejects. We may recall that for Sartre, there is no such "constituting self" to constitute the content of consciousness as an intended object of knowledge. This is because, for him, content must be wholly on the side of the object. As regards the "intuition of essences," this is a version of what Nishida would consider as viewing essence by way of "noematic transcendence." Sartre, of course, is unwilling to distinguish between the noema and the transcendent object. He replaces the transcendent noema with his own notion of the transcendent being of phenomena. Ideas, essences and meanings appear as "secretions" of the "for-itself," but stand outside of it as a kind of object incommensurable with the spontaneity and radical intentionality of the "for-itself." They are, in a sense, a product of the presence of the "for-itself" to the "in-itself."

Sartre's view of the radical intentionality of the "for-itself," of course, is the basis for his characterization of consciousness as a "lack of being" devoid of content and the basis for his rejection of the "transcendental ego" and the phenomenological reductions. It is, therefore, tempting to assume that a Sartrean critique

of Nishida's transitional standpoints would be generally analogous to his criticisms of Husserl's reductions. Such an assessment may be the case to a large extent. There is, however, an additional step in Nishida's procedure of standpoints which complicates the issue. By virtue of this additional step, the authentic "transcendental Self," for Nishida, has its place in the "last enveloping universal" which is "absolute nothingness."

The "Leap" to the Ultimate Standpoint

The last step in Nishida's procedure of standpoints is necessitated by another "contradiction" or paradox. We have seen that he envisions a sort of "consciousness-in-general" at the "entrance" of the "intelligible universal" wherein the self "sees itself directly." Drawing strictly from LU, Nishida himself holds that this "seeing" is the so-called "intuition of essences" described by Husserl. As he describes it, however, at the apex of this universal there is a "moral self." "Moral intuition" is such that we experience a profound paradox. The harder we strive to achieve our moral ideals, the more we feel guilty and inadequate. Nishida explains that,

> The existence of the moral Self means consciousness of one's own imperfection, and an infinite striving towards the ideal. In the degree in which the conscience sharpens, one feels more guilty. (1958:126)

Like the "self-conscious subject" in the "universal of judgment," and the "willing self" in the "universal of

self-consciousness," so the "moral self" confronts a "contradiction" or paradox, and is compelled to transcend itself.

As is the case with the "willing self" at the meridian of the "universal of self-consciousness," the "moral self" experiences existential anguish in confronting this paradox. This means that the deeper one sees one's **own** self, the more one suffers. Nishida says that "the suffering soul is the deepest reality in the intelligible world." (1958:128) To resolve this paradox and see the "true depth of the self" means to reach religious consciousness. In the "intelligible universal" the seeing and the seen still confront each other, and so the self does not yet truly see itself. By transcending the "intelligible self" in the direction of noesis, however, one is free even of the moral free will. Here there is no longer any kind of self which could sin. As discussed in the previous chapter, this radical depth of the self is reached only by a total "negation of the self."

Because there is still a "contradiction" associated with the "intelligible world," it cannot be the basis for the authentic self. There must, then, be something that transcends even the "intelligible world." By virtue of the "contradiction" experienced by the "moral self," which is the "last contradiction," we are impelled to make a leap to "the last enveloping universal." In this last universal, noesis and noema no longer confront each other and all

contradictions dissolve. Strictly speaking, this last universal is not a "universal" at all, but "absolute nothingness." It is a "vanishing universal" in that its character as a universal vanishes as we assume the standpoint of this "universal." All the "spheres of being" have their place in this last universal, by virtue of which they are defined **as being.** The last universal, however, is itself wholly indeterminate and cannot be defined as being.

We have suggested that there is a correlation between the phases of Husserl's reductions and the stages of Nishida's progressively deepening self-consciousness. It might be suggested that Husserl's "transcendental reduction" is something like the "leap" to the ultimate standpoint of "absolute nothingness."* In the "transcendental reduction," we step back even from the eidetic realm disclosed in the earlier reduction and reveal the original observer of all experience, which Husserl calls the "transcendental ego." This disclosure is especially atypical since the form of this apprehension requires that we take a vantage point apart from the **ego-cogito-cogitatum** structure of intentionality.

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* Next to intentionality, perhaps the most significant *dénouement* of Husserl's phenomenological investigations is his "transcendental-phenomenological reduction." Through a procedure which is essentially an extended application of the phenomenological **epokhé**, Husserl reaches the "transcendental ego" which he takes to be the origin of being, objectivity, and reality.

Although the transition to the standpoint of the last universal in Nishida also involves an atypical noetic disclosure of awareness, apart from intentionality as it is ordinarily manifest, the implications for Nishida do not allow any sort of "transcendental-constitutional" analysis of subjective structures. In transcending the eidetic domain, the "transcendental self" for Nishida transcends the standpoint of knowledge and is "unapproachable by word or thinking." (1958:135) Any "content" examined from such a standpoint is determined "without mediation by concept," is immune to conceptual analysis. The standpoint of the "transcendental self" is not any sort of methodological device arrived at for analytical intentions. Nishida's viewpoint here is, perhaps, more reminiscent of Plotinus again for whom the awareness of the "One" derives neither from knowledge nor from the pure intuition of the intelligible things, but is a pure "presence" transcending knowledge.

It is with respect to the "transcendental ego" that Husserl introduces the notion of constitution. It is in this respect that we can differentiate Husserl's "transcendental ego" from Nishida's "transcendental self." Whereas Husserl's "transcendental ego" is the constituting agent of the constituted essences, Nishida associates the "constituting self" with the very "intelligible" realm which we have seen to resemble the realm of essences disclosed by Husserl's

"eidetic reduction." Evidently Nishida views the "leap" to the "transcendental self" of religious consciousness as a surpassing even of the "constituting self" since it is a transcending of the universal which determines the eidetic realm. In transcending the "constituting self" of the "intelligible universal," it transcends Husserl's "transcendental ego," at least insofar as Husserl regards it as a constituting ego.

As Sartre's "for-itself" transcends all "being-in-itself," Nishida's "absolute nothingness" wholly transcends the three beings. However, although Sartre's "for-itself" resembles a nothingness, in that it is a "lack of being" devoid of content, Sartre insists on regarding it as a distinct "being." It is that being which "brings a nothingness into the world," arising between intentional consciousness and its intended objects. The **ego-cogito-cogitatum** structure of intentionality which Husserl and Nishida both step back from in the last stage of their respective procedures, is never really adopted by Sartre since the basis of the **cogito** for him is not the ego, but the "pre-reflective **cogito.**" There is no way to step back from Sartrean intentionality in the manner of either Husserl or Nishida. For Sartre, the ubiquitous character of intentionality prevents any collapse into an "in-itself-for-itself," the impossible synthesis which would be God. For Nishida, however, the "impossible synthesis"

becomes possible within the envelopment of "absolute nothingness." We confront, then, a serious architectonic discrepancy between Nishidean and Sartrean ontology. Not only are there three realms of being, rather than two, but the "nihilation" and distantiation which Sartre adamantly maintains between the being of consciousness and the being of phenomenon is for Nishida ultimately eradicated in "absolute nothingness." Whereas Sartre makes only scant reference to the notion of "authenticity," it is in this nothingness that Nishida locates the "place" of the authentic self. Herein we discern the correlation between Nishida's "transcendental self" and the "no-self" or "no-mind" described in Zen Buddhism.

We turn, then, to consider the "place" of the authentic self (**mu no basho**) in terms of Nishida's final essay which we referred to in the previous chapter with respect to existential anguish.

CHAPTER XV

THE DE-ONTOLOGICAL SELF

In Part Three of this study we saw how Nishida attempted to repair an ambiguity associated with his earlier notion of "pure experience" by locating the conjunction of intuition and reflection in the self-awareness he calls "**jikaku.**" In developing his notion of **jikaku**, Nishida confronts a seemingly unbridgeable chasm between the "world of meaning" and the "world of reality." Finding the notion of an independent and passive realm of transcendent meaning incomprehensible, and yet somehow haunted by the apparent "internal necessity" of certain logical and mathematical ideas, Nishida hoped to bridge the gap between meaning and existence in terms of his notion of **jikaku** conceived as the "self-consciousness" of the internal necessity of certain "eternal ideas." According to this view, existence and meaning are inseparable aspects of one experience and their unity resides in self-consciousness. So-called "transcendent meaning," then, is said to reflect the internal development of consciousness. The rudimentary self-consciousness that "I exist" takes the form "I am I," which is an assertion of the rudimentary law of identity, "A is A."

Never wholly satisfied with such arguments, he concluded his work of 1917 by attempting to pinpoint the trans-cognitive, "absolute will" as the true locus of the unity of the ideal and the actual, meaning and existence,

value and being. The cause and origin of the will, however, remained a total mystery. Hence, Nishida felt that his voluntarism had led him to succumb to "mysticism." His subsequent works may be viewed as an attempt to overcome the mystic's "refusal to speak." It is in these works that a shift from a voluntaristic orientation to an "intuitionism" is discernible. The theory of "enveloping universals" (1930), which we examined in the previous chapter, exemplifies this intuitionism. In this theory, the "world of meaning" becomes the "intelligible world," a realm of being determined by the "intelligible universal." Although volition remains the fundamental form of self-consciousness and is at the apex of the "universal of self-consciousness," it has become a form of "weak intuition."

We have seen that, like Husserl, the Nishida of 1917 was haunted by the internal necessity of "pure ideas" or essences. We have also seen that the Nishida of 1930 presented his theory of "enveloping universals" in terms of a method of standpoints which bears some resemblance to Husserl's methodology of phenomenological reductions. We have also seen that, despite certain differences with regard to their respective characterizations of the transcendental "self," Husserl and Nishida both express a kind of phenomenological, constitutive idealism. In all these respects, Nishida appears to have more proximity to Husserl than to Sartre. Like Sartre, however, Nishida is content to

characterize his phenomenological investigations in explicitly ontological terms. The resultant ontology, of course, is one embracing three inextricably involved realms of being, all of which have their "place" in "absolute nothingness," wherein the contradictions of the self are resolved.

Sartre's ontology, on the other hand, is persistently dualistic. The being of consciousness is a nothingness which exists only as a nihilation of being. As we have seen, Sartre's ontological dualism derives largely from his view of intentionality. For Sartre, the postulation of the doctrine of intentionality allows only two interpretations:

> Either we understand by this that consciousness is constitutive of the being of its object, or else it signifies that consciousness in its most profound nature is in rapport with a transcendent being. (1956:21-2)

He rejects the first alternative, of course, and accepts the second. Although the Nishida of 1930 appears to embrace a version of the first alternative, we can not say that he accepts the premise of the two alternatives.

For Nishida, the structure of intentionality is something like a continuum involving ever-deepening levels of self-consciousness; it can be seen in terms of a "progressive enclosure of noema in the noesis." Nishidean intentionality culminates in the form of an actualized "appropriation." It is not, however, merely symbolic of the ideal, but impossible "in-itself-for-itself" synthesis. We

might say that it **is** such a synthesis in the form of a kind of subsumption. The being of the phenomenon ("in-itself") is determined by a universal which is subsumed by the universal which determines the being of consciousness. All being, in turn, is subsumed and determined by the wholly indeterminate "absolute nothingness." It is with this actualized synthesis, in the form of subsumption, that Nishida associates the authentic self. Certainly there is a noetic transcendence in this view. When the transcending self goes beyond even the "intelligible universal" and reaches the "absolute nothingness" beyond all being, however, it has fully appropriated its content, thereby fulfilling the noetic enclosure of noema.

The Theory of the De-Ontological Self

In 1945, Nishida moves away from his idealist predilections to express a standpoint of Buddhistic existentialism. Not only has his idealist terminology vanished, but even his preoccupation with the problem of meaning subsides to give way to an existentialist fixation on the problem of the self. We have already seen some evidence of the Buddhistic existentialism of 1945 in our chapter on the problem of the self (Chapter Thirteen). In his essay of 1945 Nishida develops a theory of self-negation which evolves out of the intuitionism of the 1930's. As we noted in Chapter Thirteen, Nishida's views on self-negation are radically dissimilar to those of Sartre. Whereas death,

for Sartre, is "that which on principle removes all meaning from life," it is, for Nishida, only by confronting the eternal death of the self, or its own "eternal nothingness," that one can become an authentically self-conscious individual.

For Nishida, there is "absolute nothingness" at the root of self-consciousness. If there were something, we would be merely things, rather than selves. By the self-consciousness of the "eternal death" and nothingness of the self, one truly realizes the singularity of one's existence. Death, then, has a profoundly ontological significance for Nishida, which it does not seem to have for Sartre. It is, furthermore, precisely this "self-consciousness of nothingness" which becomes Nishida's definition of the self in his last essay. Despite their differences on death, Nishida's definition is reminiscent of the Sartrean "self," which is a non-substantial nihilating consciousness. This consciousness, of course, is non-thetic with respect to itself. As the "self-consciousness of nothingness," the ontological foundation of the self is de-ontological, as it were, like Sartre's "being-for-itself."

This analogy has been noted by David Dilworth and Hugh Silverman in their article, "A Cross-Cultural Approach to the De-Ontological Self Paradigm." In this article they indicate that the notion of the self-consciousness of

nothingness can be translated as a non-thetic or non-positional self-consciousness. Dilworth and Silverman present a brief analysis of three "pro-ontological paradigms": (a) the "absolute-universal self," (b) the "transcendental-constituting self," and (c) the "natural-organic self."* After presenting this analysis, they proceed to explicate the "de-ontological" or "no-self" paradigm.

The theory of the de-ontological self is a rejection of various claims to substantial self-unity. It is indicative, they say, of the view that

> . . . every attempt at 'self-knowledge' fails to go beyond a finite, contingent, and provisional presentation of human existence, and results in a fragmentation of the alleged self into its experiential components. (1978:83)

Asserting that Sartre's nihilating consciousness, which remains non-thetic with respect to itself, typifies the

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* In the analysis of the authors the pro-ontological paradigms are as follows: (a) The "absolute-universal self paradigm": either the self is identified with the totality, or it participates in the plenitude of the being of the totality (e.g. Brahman, Tao, the "One"). (b) The "transcendental-constituting self paradigm": Although anticipated by Descartes and Kant, Husserl formulated a doctrine of transcendental constitution. The "transcendental self" is the metaphysical ground of the intentional act with its noetic and noematic components. (c) The "natural-organic self paradigm": The emphasis is on the interrelation of psychic and physical aspects. The self is understood as a microcosm of the whole (e.g. as in Aristotle, Leibniz, Dewey, Whitehead, and Confucius, and others).

de-ontological position, they propose that

> An analogous conception of non-thetic self-determination appears in Nishida Kitaro, whose central notion of **mu no basho**, 'the topos of nothingness,' is a modern Buddhist counterpart to Sartre's existential phenomenology. Like Sartre's pre-reflective **cogito**, Nishida demonstrates a conception of consciousness after the analogy of the 'eye that cannot see itself.' (1978:91)

Dilworth and Silverman rightly contend that Nishida's notion of self-consciousness in the "place" of nothingness is virtually identical to Sartre's notion of pre-reflective, non-thetic self-consciousness. The self in both cases establishes its identity only in situation.

Identity in these terms is, of course, expressed in Sartre's notion of facticity. As we have seen, facticity is what links the "for-itself" to the "in-itself," a linkage without which we could not say that the "for-itself" exists. By virtue of facticity, the self can objectify itself, as well as be objectified by another. As pre-reflective **cogito**, the self cannot be defined as an "in-itself." Not only is its existence defined by its relation to the "in-itself," but it is by nature a relation to itself. Syntactically, the "self" is "reflexive." This reflexivity indicates a duality, a relation between the subject and himself. Sartre asserts, however, that the "self does not designate being either as subject or as predicate." (1956:123) It cannot designate being as subject, since apart from its relationality, the subject would be

"condensed into the identity of the in-itself." (1956:123) It cannot designate being as predicate since the subject always appears behind it. Sartre concludes that "the self cannot be apprehended as a real existent." (123)

Logics of the Self

Sartre's characterization of the self in these terms correlates with certain concerns which served as the impetus for Nishida to formulate the "logic of **basho** (place)," a notion which first appeared in 1927 and reached maturity in Nishida's final essay of 1945. Nishida's logic is intended as a logic of the "true self," the being of which is neither subject nor predicate and cannot be described in terms of either. In his concern to develop a "logic" of the "true self," he was drawn to survey the possibilities of different categories or types of logic and consider them in reference to the self. We have seen that in "The Intelligible World" (1930), he adopts the phenomenological terminology of "noesis" and "noema." In later writings, however, he chose to speak in terms of a "subject-oriented logic" and a "predicate-oriented logic." Although "subject-oriented logic" stresses the noematic aspect and "predicate-oriented logic" the noetic aspect, the presupposition of a kind of oppositional relation between noesis and noema became restrictive to him. As we have seen, his notion of **jikaku** in 1930 suggests the progressive enclosure of noema by noesis.

Surveying the possibilities, Nishida turned to consider the relation between the subject and predicate of judgment. He observes that in a "subject-oriented logic" the particular existent is put in the position of the subject of a judgment and taken as the unique and irreducible object of knowledge (i.e., S is P, as in "the fire is hot"). Aristotelian logic exemplifies this "subject-oriented logic," the metaphysical implications of which are suggested by Aristotle's notion of substance (**hypokeimenon**) as the final subject of predication, or the "subject that cannot be predicate." Nishida contends, however, that there are also "predicate-oriented" logics. A "predicate-oriented logic" views judgment in noetic terms, as referring to the activity of consciousness. "S is P" implies a relation of subsumption wherein the particular subject of judgment is subsumed by the predicate which, as content, belongs to the "field of self-consciousness." Nishida's own thinking in his theory of the "intelligible world" is "predicate-oriented" in this sense. We may recall that the "universal of self-consciousness" is subsumed in the noetic direction by the "intelligible universal." It should be no surprise, then, that Nishida takes Platonic realism, wherein particulars depend on universal ideas, as suggestive of "predicate-oriented logic." Hence he explains that, "Instead of being as subject, we can think of being as predicate. In my view, what Plato understood as being can be thus

classified." (1986:9) In speaking of "predicative being," Nishida also cites Kant. He asserts that, "What Kant meant by the 'I' of the 'I think' that accompanies every representation can be argued to be this predicative existence." (1986:10)

So, while "subject-oriented logic" highlights the objective singularity of the particular, "predicate-oriented logic" stresses its subjective universality. With his "logic of **basho** (place)," as it is formulated in 1945, Nishida articulates a position which departs from these orientations in a manner which is not intended to invalidate either emphasis. While this position is not intended as a refutation of these types of logic, it is his view that the reality of the true self-conscious, human self cannot be comprehended in terms of either one by itself. The "true self" can be grasped, rather, only through a logic of "place" involving the "contradictory self-identity" of subject and predicate. This means that while the reality of the true individual cannot be construed merely as subject or merely as predicate of a judgment, it can be seen as both the "self-predicating subject" of a judgment and the "self-objectifying predicate" of a judgment (wherein 'S is P' pertains to an individual self).

Nishida explains that we can think of that which exists in terms of the subject aspect (object of knowledge) or in terms of the predicate aspect (activity of consciousness),

but "that which exists of itself and moves of itself" (the self-conscious self), which is "real being" does not exist on either side:

> It exists in the contradictory self-identity of these two aspects. Thus, the self does not exist as merely predicative being according to the activity of judgment. Rather it exists contradictorily self-identically in such a way that 'that which is created creates'--it exists as a volitional being which in forming itself gives shape to the self-forming historical world. (1986:15)

In Nishida's estimation, when we insist on viewing the human self in terms of the subject aspect, we tend to think of it as merely impulsive and instinctive. If, on the other hand, we insist on viewing the self in terms of the predicate aspect, we tend to think of it as merely rational. The logic of **basho** takes a perspective which, refusing to emphasize either aspect over the other, defines the existence of the self in terms of a self-contradictory rapport between the two aspects.

A subject-oriented logic of the self, for Sartre, would tend to collapse the self into the self-identity of the "in-itself." It is in "bad faith," of course, to treat the transcendent "for-itself" as a mode of the "in-itself." A predicate-oriented logic, on the other hand, is suggestive of an idealism wherein consciousness is constitutive of the being of its object, a notion to which Sartre is adamantly opposed. So, although Nishida generally expresses more sympathy for predicate-oriented thinking, Sartre and Nishida

ultimately concur in refusing to associate the "real being" of the self with either direction. Neither do they elect to designate the "real being" of the self in terms of Hegelian dialectical synthesis. In emphasizing the rational "Absolute Spirit," Nishida views Hegel as continuing to assume the primacy of the universal over the individual. The individual appears determined and abstract in the face of the absolute. As is suggested by our discussion in Chapter Thirteen of this study, Nishida proposes that his own dialectic enhances the individuality of the individual.

We have seen that, like Husserl and Sartre, Nishida sought to extricate himself from psychologistic and subjectivistic biases. As early as 1917, he was critical of his own **ZnK** for the influences of such biases. We can say that Nishida's campaign against his own subjectivism extends beyond "pure experience," the early "**jikaku**" and even "absolute free will," to reach its fullest expression in his "logic of **basho**." Having described the "self" as "absolute free will," Nishida was at a loss to explain the origin of this "will." Subsequently, he came to think of it as coming from a subjectless "creative nothingness" and returning to it. However, he reasons that in order to establish this "will" as absolutely free, it must itself possess the character of nothingness.

It might be said that some aspects of Nishida's position at this juncture are in proximity to Sartre's

view of the character of consciousness as a subjectless revelation of being and to his belief in the absolute freedom of consciousness. It is interesting, in this connection, to recall Sartre's assertion that "Consciousness is afraid of its own spontaneity because it feels itself to be beyond freedom." (1956:120) It might be suggested that a certain notion of origination "beyond freedom" drove Nishida to attempt to utterly transcend subjectivity and envision a certain "place" wherein everything that is--subject or object--exists. Inspired in part by Plato's discussion of the "receptacle of ideas" (**Timaeus** 50c), he calls this the **topos** or "**basho**" of nothingness ("**mu no basho**"). As is the case with the "last enveloping universal" in the theory of "enveloping universals," the "**basho** of nothingness" is the place in which every being is determined and defined as a being, a place which remains itself indeterminate and ineffable.

The Self and the World

We can think of **basho** as the locus in which self-consciousness arises and as a locus which emerges only in relation to self-consciousness. **Basho** designates something like the "horizon of consciousness," but is ontologically prior to it. Through the determination of self-consciousness, self and the world come into being. Self and the world emerge together as self-consciousness and the world, giving rise to each other. In this connection we may

recall the Buddhist notion of "dependent co-origination" (**pratītya-samutpāda**). Nishida's notion of **basho** designates the formless seat of being wherein self and the world stand in "absolutely contradictory self-identity" (**zettai mujunteki jiko doitsu**). It is the concrete world of everyday existence in which we live and die. Each individual is a world in himself and these worlds interact in a mode of "mutual negation which is simultaneously affirmation." (1986:5)

We might think of the Sartrean notion of "situation" as something like "**basho**" in that it is the context in which both self and world appear. There is also a kind of interdependency. The self cannot exist, for Sartre, apart from its situatedness in the world. The world, on the other hand, is non-conscious being only **as** it appears to the self and is organized by it in "instrumental complexes." The two primary aspects of the Sartrean notion of situation are the facticity of things as evidenced by their "coefficient of adversity," and the meanings which the self designs for them. As regards the first aspect, the adversity offered by things, for Nishida, pertains not only to the relation between the self and things, but also to the interrelation between things themselves. According to Nishida, two things maintain their uniqueness by virtue of a mutual opposition taking the form of a mutual negation which is simultaneously an affirmation.

The self, however, is that which acts. As such, it belongs to a different "world" than the "world of matter." We can think of "world" as the concrete expression of basho. The active self-conscious self has to do with the purposive and creative "world of life." It has to do with the "historical world." The active and creative character of the self is such that,

> . . . each of us--an expressive point of the world--forms the world by expressing it in our self: the world is subjectively appropriated by our self. This means that the world which stands over against us as something thoroughly objective is transformed into a world of signs within us, is grasped as a significative world. That is, the world expresses itself within us; each of us is the locus of its self-formation. (1986:5)

Here we see an expression of something like the second primary aspect of Sartre's notion of "situation." We may recall from our discussion of Nishida's theory of "enveloping universals," however, that although Sartre allows for a certain kind of "appropriation" of the world by the self, this occurs "outside all subjectivity."

The "historical world" of the self, then, is for Nishida that which "exists and moves of itself." Containing self-negation within itself, it "moves from the created to the creating by reflecting itself within itself." (1986:4) This concept of "reflection" or "mirroring" is fundamental to Nishida. The self is seen as a "focal point of the world" wherein "the world reflects itself." The notion of "reflection" is also pivotal to Sartre. He speaks of

consciousness as exhibiting a "pattern of duality" in a "game of reflections." He observes that,

> . . . consciousness is a reflection (reflet), but qua reflection it is exactly the one reflecting (**réfléchissant**), and if we attempt to grasp it as reflecting, it vanishes and we fall back on the reflection. (1956:122)

Although Sartre's observation correlates with Nishida's notion of consciousness as an "eye which cannot see itself," the implications of his use of the metaphor are somewhat dissimilar from the intentions of Nishida. For Sartre, it is precisely this structure of "reflection-reflecting" (**reflet-reflétant**), which indicates that the being of the self remains distinct from non-conscious being.

"Reflection" for Nishida, indicates the self's reflection of the world "within itself." In other words, the self reflects itself in reflecting the world. This might seem to suggest that the self sees its own consciousness (noema) in everything, and therefore that what really exists, so far as humanity is concerned, is consciousness. This interpretation, however, is somewhat misleading since the "world" of the self, as we have seen, is an "historical world." Reflection, then, is the self reflecting the "historical world" within itself. Consciousness and the "natural world" are abstract aspects of this "historical world." The reflection is not so much a reflection of the noema in the noesis, as it is a reflection within the endless movement "from the created to the creating."

Sartre's reinterpretation of Husserl's "noema" is such that the noema is abolished only insofar as it is regarded as a subjective entity. In saying this we do not mean to suggest that Husserl's "noema" is intended to be a "subjective entity." For Husserl, its function pertains to a transcendental theory of meaning. In any case, Sartrean phenomenology does not distinguish between noema and object. The import of Sartre's concept of "reflection" is that the mode of the being of the self differs from that of the "in-itself." It is

> . . . not a unity which contains a duality, not a synthesis which surpasses and lifts the abstract moments of the thesis and of the antithesis, but a duality which is unity, a reflection (**reflet**) which **is** its own reflecting (**reflection**). (1956:123)

Although Sartre's utilization of the metaphor of "reflection" appears to lead us away from the implications of Nishidean reflection, his notion of the self as a "duality which **is** unity" is not at all alien to Nishida's thinking. According to Nishida, we can think of an activity as the "unity of mutually negating things." Such a unity, however, suggests a "contradictorily self-identical medium [field]." In reference to such a field or **basho**, "the self stands in opposition to itself; it is one with itself through its self-negation." (1986:8) We are to grasp the self as a "contradictory self-identity, as a negation which is also an affirmation." (1986:7) The self, for Nishida,

pertains not only to a purposive, dynamic and historical world, but it is fundamentally self-conscious. Hence, he asserts that, "That which becomes self-conscious faces the absolute other." (1986:7)

Whether we are speaking of the self's relation to itself or its relation to the "world," Nishida has in mind a kind of "mutual determination" in the mode of an internal negation which is also an affirmation. For Sartre, "otherness" pertains to the obligation of consciousness to **be** nothing but "a revealing intuition of something." (1956:786) Sartre recognizes the proximity of this view to Plato's category of the "Other" as described in the "Sophist." For Sartre and Plato alike, this "otherness" has no being except in its being other; it disappears in self-reflection, and although it is severed from being, it cannot exist independently. For Sartre, however, Plato failed to see the logical consequence of his position. Sartre insists that "the only way in which the other can exist as other is to be consciousness [of] being other. Otherness is, in fact, an internal negation." (1956:787)

The Problem of the Totality

If consciousness is bound to the "in-itself" by an "internal negation," doesn't this mean that the two constitute a totality, and is this totality not real? Such a question would seem to be suggested by Nishida's logic of **basho** which emphasizes the reality of the totality. At the

conclusion of EN, Sartre inquires as much of himself. In fact, he admits of an "a priori unity," but is non-committal with respect to the reality or being of this unity. Viewing the "for-itself" as "nothing except a reflection of this nothing which is itself polarized and defined by the in-itself," the relevant question for Sartre is "which shall we call real?" (1956:791) The question of the reality or being of the totality is dispersed by the hiatus which haunts him. Sartre illustrates his sense of the ambiguity which characterizes the supposed reality or being of the totality with his inquiry: "What definition are we to give to an existent which as in-itself would be what it is and as for-itself would be what it is not?" (791)

If a totality is to be considered an existent, it is necessary that each distinct structure "considered apart is only an abstraction." (791) Certainly Sartre admits that the "for-itself" considered apart is only an abstraction. Without "being-in-itself" the "for-itself" would be a mere abstraction, for it is nothing save the emptiness of this being. The "in-itself," on the other hand, "has no need of the for-itself in order to be." (791) Sartre qualifies this assertion by adding that "The phenomenon of in-itself is an abstraction without consciousness but its being is not an abstraction." (791) For Nishida, there is no such autonomous "being-in-itself." Neither is there an autonomous being of consciousness. For Nishida, what Sartre calls

"being-in-itself" is an abstraction when regarded apart from the "historical world." Even the non-conscious "material world," for example, exists **within** the "historical world."

For Sartre, the "in-itself" must be considered logically prior to the "for-itself." The latter is dependent on "being-in-itself," both in its origin and in its continued history. Its being is defined wholly in negative terms. Sartrean ontology proceeds "via negativa" as regards the "for-itself." Since it is essentially a refusal to be substance, Sartre speaks of it as a non-substantial "absolute."* Rather than proceeding via negativa as regards the being of consciousness, Nishida opts to describe material being and the being of consciousness as aspects of historical life which stand in opposition to each other. In terms of the structure of judgment, the material aspect pertains to the subject-term and the noetic aspect pertains to the predicate-term. In terms of "objective logic," Nishida explains, the material aspect is the "world of objects" and the noetic aspect is the "world of activity."

We may recall that by abandoning the "primacy of knowledge," Sartre claims to have "discovered the **being** of the **knower** and encountered the absolute." (1956:17) This absolute, he says, is the same absolute which the

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* For examples of references made by Sartre to the "for-itself" as the "absolute," the reader is referred to: 1987:96 and 1956:17,757

seventeenth-century rationalists mistakenly defined and logically explicated as an "object of knowledge." In Nishidean terms, these rationalists mistakenly treated the "world of activity" as a "world of objects." Apart from his critique of seventeenth-century rationalism, however, there is little reason to regard Sartre's "for-itself" as the "absolute." It would be difficult to construe the dependency of this "absolute" on the "in-itself" as characteristic of an absolute. Indeed, Sartre speaks of another "absolute" in this connection. We may recall that the Sartrean notion of "appropriation" is symbolic of an ideal but impossible "absolute," the "in-itself-for-itself" or "God." Yearning to be its own foundation, the "for-itself" seeks the status of this "absolute." It exists as a nothingness which is in flight toward an "in-itself" which it can never attain. If an "in-itself-for-itself" were possible for Sartre, it would mean that the dependency of the "for-itself" on the "in-itself" would be dissipated.

The Absolute and the Relative

For Sartre, we are in "bad faith" when we regard "being-for-itself," which is the being of the knowing self, as an object of knowledge. Like Sartre, Nishida insists that "the self cannot become an object of the self itself." (1986:7) Unlike Sartre, however, Nishida asserts that "we cannot clarify what the self is merely by defining it negatively." (7) In Chapter Thirteen of this study, we saw

that Nishida is not content to view the self in purely negative terms. The existence of the self must be seen in terms of the "self-identity of absolute contradictions." He observes that some may say that the self is "beyond thought," but remarks that in asserting this they have already thought of the self. He also observes that some may suppose that the self exists in a "higher dimension." In a Sartrean manner, Nishida asserts that such views compel us to confront the absurdity of an infinite series of selves in reference to progressively "higher" dimensions. Nishida's conclusion is that "logically speaking, the self must be grasped as a contradictory self-identity, as a negation which is also an affirmation." (1986:7)

To think of the self as a "contradictory self-identity" is to think of it as something like what Sartre calls a "duality which is unity." In Chapter Thirteen, we have already seen how Nishida treats the contradictions of the self in terms of his logic of "the self-identity of absolute contradictions." We have seen this, for example, in reference to his discussion of the self's existence as an existence toward death. **Basho** is the mirror of the self-identity of these existential contradictions of the individual self. When the self confronts its own "eternal death," its absolute nothingness, it "faces itself self-contradictorily." That which negates the self, Nishida explains, must share the same origin with the self. He

asserts that "what is utterly unrelated to the self cannot negate it" (1986:19) All negation, then, can be seen as an internal negation with respect to the basho of the existence of the self.

Nishida contends that insofar as something external appears to negate the self, the self is not "absolute." The absolute must contain self-negation internally. He explains that when individuals face the absolute, or God, "they die." This is because the relative cannot stand over against the absolute. A "true absolute" does not negate the relative. An absolute which stands opposed to the relative would itself be relative. We recall from above that Sartre asks if we can consider the totality, "in-itself-for-itself," to be a real being. Similarly, Nishida asks what it is that constitutes a real absolute. He responds that "The absolute is truly absolute in facing nothing. By facing absolute nothing it is absolute being." (1986:19) This means that "the self becomes absolutely nothing." (19) There is no longer anything to stand over against it and negate it.

In order to express this in logical terms, we cannot rely on "objective logic." We require a kind of dialectical logic. Nishida utilizes what he calls the "logic of soku hi ('is' and 'is not')" of the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra to express the relationship between the individual self and the absolute. Nishida's dialectic is intended to suggest that the items which are in this relation are absolutely

contradictory directions of an identical being. The absolute, then, contains absolute self-negation within itself. It opposes itself in a "correspondence relation of inverse polarity." Consequently, "because it is absolute nothingness, it is absolute being." (1986:20) Absolute and relative stand opposed in the paradoxical relation of the dialectical identity of absolute contradiction. The paradox consists in that, although the absolute is non-relative, it does not merely transcend the relative. Containing self-negation of itself within itself, the "true absolute freely returns to itself in the form of the relative." (1986:20)

Sartre, of course, is unable to discuss the absolute in these terms. As the totality, "in-itself-for-itself," the Sartrean "absolute" remains an "impossible ideal." If the totality is a real being, then the very existence of the "in-itself" should require the "for-itself," just as the existence of the "for-itself" requires the "in-itself." The "in-itself," however, has no need of the "for-itself" in order to be. In any case, Sartre argues that there is no vantage point outside of the totality with which to adopt a view of the totality. Still, he says, since we are engaged in this totality, it is not inappropriate to ponder it. He contends however, that the question of the totality "does not belong to the province of ontology." (1956:794)

For Sartre, it is up to metaphysics to determine

whether to preserve the ancient duality between consciousness and being or to employ a notion of a single being which is a "disintegrated totality."* From a Sartrean perspective, Nishida's discussion of the absolute as containing self-negation within itself is metaphysical in character. Nevertheless, it is of interest to consider the implications of Nishida's "metaphysical" logic vis-à-vis Sartrean ontology. From Nishida's standpoint, the nihilating character of consciousness might be explicated in terms of the self-nihilation of the absolute. This form of nihilation indicates that the absolute's "absence" to itself is the "presence" of the relative and vice versa. Here there is no longer an "in-itself" whose being is independent of consciousness. The existence of non-conscious phenomena is relative to the absolute's self-negation. Even individual consciousness is relative to the self-negation of the absolute. On the other hand, the absolute requires the relative as the dénouement of its own internal self-negation.

The Problem of Immanence-Transcendence

According to Nishida, his approach is thoroughly dialectical, whereas Hegel's dialectic never departs from

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* For Sartre, ontology describes the conditions under which there is a world, human reality, et cetera. Metaphysics is concerned with origins and seeks to explain why there is such a world. Sartre does not disapprove of metaphysics per se, but regards it as purely speculative and hypothetical.

the standpoint of "objective logic." Nishida also insists that this view is not pantheistic, although it may be "panentheistic." Pantheism, he says, is also based on "objective logic." He also disallows the notion of an absolutely transcendent God. "A God who is merely transcendent and self-sufficient is not a real God." (1986:20) Thoroughly characterized by self-negation or **kenosis** (self-emptying), "The truly dialectical God is totally transcendent and immanent, immanent and transcendent." (20)

Like Nishida, Sartre identifies the totality with the absolute, or with God. From the perspective of Sartre's ontology, however, the being of this totality is ideal, rather than real. It is interesting in this connection to consider Sartre's assertion that there is only one observation which ontology can hazard with respect to the metaphysical question of the totality. He observes that if we are to employ the notion of a "disintegrated totality," "it will be necessary to speak of it **both** in terms of immanence and in terms of transcendence." (1956:795) As noted above, this is just what Nishida does. For Sartre, however, although he admonishes metaphysicians to speak of the absolute in terms of both immanence and transcendence, he is not suggesting that we speak of both **total** transcendence and **total** immanence. Sartre makes no endeavor to conceive of a "logic" with which to render such an

absolute contradiction intelligible. It is, however, vital to his thinking that the absolute be regarded as in some sense both transcendent and immanent.

For Sartre, any doctrine of total immanence is indicative of something like Husserlian idealism and a doctrine of total transcendence induces a false view of the absolute "as a new kind of **object.**" In his view, transcendence is always restricted by the "dimension" of the "for-itself" and immanence by the "dimension" of the "in-itself." Sartre concedes that as metaphysicians we may choose to treat the "in-itself" and the "for-itself" as dimensions or realms of a single being. From this standpoint there is only one **phenomenon:** the "world." It seems, however, that he is still haunted by the apparent lack of reciprocity between the two dimensions. The immanence of the absolute appears to be mitigated by the indifferent self-sufficiency and self-identity of the dimension of the "in-itself." The transcendence of the absolute, on the other hand, seems inhibited by the "for-itself's" incessant desire for self-identity and it's "project of being it's own self-cause."

Despite his earlier idealistic proclivities, Nishida's "logic of **basho**" suggests a different orientation. Each individual consciousness is a "focal point of the world." Any constitutive activity on the part of consciousness is merely an aspect of the historical world's self-formation.

Mediated by **basho**, the self and the world stand in "absolutely contradictory self-identity" (**zettai mujunteki jiko doitsu**). This relation means that Nishida's notion of the "total immanence" of the absolute cannot be suggestive of the subjectivism or constitutive idealism which Sartre is wary of. It also means that Nishida's notion of the "total transcendence" of the absolute does not imply that we can view the absolute as a "new kind of object," which would be a standpoint of "objective logic."

Absolute Nothingness and Absolute Being

In Nishida's logic, **basho** is the locus of the self-identity between absolute and relative. From such a standpoint, the apparent indifference and self-identity of the material world is merely an aspect of a deeper ground of the "self-identity of absolute contradiction." The apparent lack of self-identity characterizing the world of consciousness, on the other hand, indicates the failure to penetrate to this deeper ground and acquire the standpoint of total freedom and authenticity, a standpoint which--oddly enough--is the "ordinary way of looking at things." Such a standpoint does not imply the eradication of the contradictory structure of the self. As we have seen, Nishida insists that our existence is contradictory by nature. Although we "reflect the world within ourselves," we have our true selfhood in the "absolute other." In self-negation the self transcends the ego-self and returns

to the "absolute other," the origin of the self.

According to Nishida, in facing absolute nothingness we become truly self-aware. According to Sartre, "a consciousness which would be a consciousness of nothing would be an absolute nothing." (1956:790) He also observes that the "for-itself" is "a nothing" and declares that "there is 'outside of the in-itself' **nothing** except a reflection of this nothing which is itself polarized and defined by the in-itself." (1956:791) "Being-in-itself," for its part, has no need of nothingness since it is absolute plenitude. For Sartre, being takes precedence over nothingness. Although he criticizes Hegel for never going beyond a logical formulation of non-being so as to relate it to human reality, he also objects to Hegel's treatment of being and non-being as contemporaneous, instead of characterizing non-being as logically dependent on being. For Sartre, nothingness must be founded on being, logically and ontologically.

For Nishida, being is founded on nothingness. **Basho** is the "place" wherein all existence, subjective or objective, is located, the "place" wherein all being is determined. All being is the "self-determination of **basho.**" As such, **basho** itself is indeterminate. It is not, however, a relative nothingness in opposition to being. Sartrean nothingness is a nothingness which is polarized and defined by being. It is a "worm in the heart of being." Such a nothingness must

be a relative nothingness in Nishidean terms. If, for Sartre, nothingness is logically dependent on being, and for Hegel the two are logically contemporaneous, for Nishida it is being which is logically dependent on nothingness. Similarly, it is in facing absolute nothingness that the "true absolute" is absolute being, absolute plenitude. The true absolute, then, is **both** absolute nothingness and absolute being, both absolute being and relative being. It is the **coincidentia oppositorum**, the self-caused totality which Sartre viewed "as always indicated and always impossible." (1956:792)

We have seen that Nishida and Sartre both endeavored arduously to free themselves from all vestiges of subjectivism. Both labored against the inclination to mistake the objectified self for the true self. Like Plato, both associate this self with the "absolute other." Despite his "religious atheism," there is an uncanny proximity between Sartre's efforts to expose "bad faith" and Nishida's Buddhistic unveiling of "delusion." In his final essay, Nishida asserts that delusion "arises from taking the objectified self for our self. The source of delusion lies in the mode of seeing characteristic of objective logic." (1986:29) Buddhist **satori** is indicative of a radical departure from "objective logic." It means that "one clearly sees the ground of one's nothingness." (29)

At times Sartre's cryptic expressions are suggestive of

the logic of **soku hi**, as in the phrase: "The For-itself is what it is not." In **TE**, Sartre comes close to Nishida's logic of **basho** in the following assertion:

> The Transcendental Field, purified of all egological structure, recovers its primary transparency. In a sense, it is **nothing**, since all physical, psycho-physical, and psychic objects, all truths, all values are outside it; since my me has itself ceased to be any part of it. But this nothing is **all** since it is **consciousness of** all these objects. (1987:93)

Toward the end of **EN**, Sartre describes the "transcendental field" as the "shell of nothingness" which surrounds the "in-itself." This "shell of nothingness" is something like Nishida's "**basho** of absolute nothingness." Nishida's **basho**, however, is not the being of consciousness surrounding the "in-itself" from a distance. All objects, truths and values are somehow within it and determined by it. In other words, it is transcendent, yet all-inclusive, absolute nothingness **and** absolute being. In a sense, Nishida's "logic" of the paradoxical oneness of being and nothingness is precisely what Sartre would require if he were to allow an expression of what remains for him "always indicated and always impossible."

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Brian Douglas Elwood was born in Maryville, Tennessee on October 29, 1954. He attended the Silliman University Elementary School and High School in Dumaguete City, Philippines. He graduated from Ithaca High School in Ithaca, New York in 1972. An american citizen and the son of Presbyterian missionary parents, he has lived in Southeast Asia for seventeen years--in both the Philippines and Taiwan (where he studied Chinese language at the Oberlin Language Center in Taichung).

Following two years of college in the U.S., he graduated from Ateneo University in Manila, in 1978, with a B.A. in philosophy. This early background accounts, in part, for his strong interest in East-West comparative philosophy and religion. In 1983, he earned the M.A. degree in philosophy from the University of Tennessee, with a concentration in religious studies. He re-entered the University of Tennessee in September, 1988 and expects to graduate in May, 1992 with a Ph.D. in philosophy.

He is married to Maria-Gloria Arnaiz whom he met in the Philippines. They are presently residing in Etowah, Tennessee.