

The Idea of the Mirror in Nishida and Dōgen

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The image of the “mirror” (鏡 *kagami*) appears frequently in the philosophical texts of Nishida Kitarō (西田幾多郎, 1870–1945), where it assumes various functions. Mirror references first occur in reflections on the philosophies of Josiah Royce (1855–1916) and Henri Bergson (1859–1941). The most fascinating and suggestive of Nishida’s uses of the image have to do with idea of a “self-enlightening mirror” to probe the philosophical ground of self-illumination.

This idea seems to point back to Buddhist meanings running through Japanese intellectual history. This provides us with a starting point for trying to see how Nishida’s philosophical speculations can be critically related to the thought of Dōgen (道元 1200–1253); and from there, going on to ask how it has stimulated contemporary approaches in Japanese philosophy (as, for example, those of Nitta, Ōhashi, and Sakabe).

* This essay is a reworking of pages 284–98, 784–91, and 1127–33 of my doctoral thesis, *Nishida Kitarō, une philosophie de l’unification* (Paris: Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, November 2005), hereafter NKPU. The reader will find an abstract of this dissertation in my paper “La pensée de l’unification” (electronic version at www.reseau-asie.com, “Congrès”).

THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTION OF MIRROR.

In his second major work, *Intuition and Reflection in Self-Consciousness* (1917),¹ Nishida strives to grasp the meaning of the notion of “reflection” (*hansei* 反省) by distinguishing between two complementary, but never completely separable, aspects.² One can reflect *on* “something” (*wo hansei suru* を反省する), as when we are “reflecting on our own mental phenomenon”³ as historical individuals; here, one is aiming at a final “unity” (*tōitsu* 統一, *Einheit*).

But one can also reflect *for* or *about* something, in the sense of building a project in the process of reflection. This “reflection as development” (*hansei sunawachi batten* 反省即ち発展) he views as an original affirmation of “absolute will.” Here, one is operating in terms of an “infinite” (*mugen* 無限, *endlos*)⁴ process of “unification” (*tōitsusuru* 統一する, *Vereinigung*). For instance, the Fichtean Self or “I” (*ware* 我, *Ich*) is not simply reflecting *on* itself, or *on* the “not-I” as a pure self, but is also reflecting infinitely *about* itself, as a practical self. It is here that Nishida introduces the image of the mirror:

As Royce said, from a single project of transcribing the self in the self, we come necessarily to develop an infinite series. For example, let us try to think a project which would consist for us to be in Britain and transcribing a perfect map of Britain. Each given map transcribed would come to give birth to a new project, aiming to transcribe a more perfect map; moreover, this very fact that it must infinitely progress means in general the same thing as when an object put between two clear mirrors goes on infinitely reflecting itself.⁵

We may begin by considering why Nishida uses the verb *utsusu* 写す

1. NISHIDA Kitarō 西田幾多郎『自覚に於ける反省と直観』[Intuition and Reflection in Self-Consciousness, IRSC], in『西田幾多郎全集』[Complete Works of Nishida Kitarō, NKZ] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1987), vol. II. Translated by Valdo H. VIGLIELMO with TAKEUCHI Yoshinori and Joseph S. O’LEARY (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987).

2. IRSC, 54 (106–7).

3. 我々は自己の精神現象を反省する. IRSC, 155 (314).

4. IRSC, 136 (277).

5. IRSC, 3–4 (15–16).

here, which carries the sense of copying, duplicating, or reproducing something.⁶ Simple duplication does nothing but replace a given thing with something else. This is the case with reflection *on* something (let us call it *reflection*₁). However, he insists that “at the same time” (*totomoni* と共に) we must add “the meaning of an infinitely unifying development,” which can be expressed only if we understand real reflection as a “transcription,” a reflection *for* something (which we will call *reflection*₂). To transcribe something means, “to add” (*kuwaeru* 加える) a signification to it, while “maintaining” (*ijisuru* 維持する)⁷ something of it.

As the example from Josiah Royce shows, an infinite transcription implies a perpetually new actualization of signification, in an “effective” (*genjitsuteki* 現実的, *wirklich*) sense. *Reflection*₁ is wary of this infinity of signification, seeing in it an infinite regress.⁸ But this psychological

6. I have demonstrated in NKPU how Nishida takes advantage of the multiple significations of the verb *utsuru*, making it reflect itself into various forms, each made to correspond to one of the three ways of transcribing the word in Japanese: “transcription” (*utsuru* 写る), “transition” (*utsuru* 移る), and the fact of something “reflecting” or “projecting” itself (*utsuru* 映る).

For the contemporary philosopher ŌHASHI Ryōsuke (大橋良介, 1944–), these three terms complement each other to yield the composite idea of a “wrapping” or “folding” (*tsutsumu* 包む), in the context of a “transformation” (*benkan* 変換, *Transformation*) within an “infinite set” (*mugenshūgō* 無限集合) in mathematics, and essentially characterize the structure of self-consciousness. See 『西田哲学あるいは哲学の転回』[Nishida’s philosophy, or the turning point of philosophy (NPTP)] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1995), 63, 76–7, 91.

7. IRSC, 54 (106–7).

8. J. ROYCE, *The World and the Individual* (w1), (New York: Macmillan, 1920), 499). This book can be found in Nishida’s “private library” (*kojinbunko* 個人文庫) located in Kyoto University. It is listed as number 556, p. 68 in YAMASHITA Masao, ed. 山下正男『西田幾多郎全蔵書目録』[Catalog of Nishida Kitarō’s complete collection of books (Cat.)] (Kyoto: Institute of Cultural Studies of Kyoto University, 1982). The fact that this edition was published after IRSC indicates that Nishida possessed a second copy, since Royce is also quoted in his first works. We should also recall that he had already referred to this Roycean analysis in 「論理の理解と数理の理解」[Logical understanding and mathematical understanding, LUMU, 1915], NKZ 1: 250–67. See my introduction, translation (with Ibaragi Daisuké 伊原木大祐), and commentary on this essay in *Ebisu* (Tokyo, Maison Franco-Japonaise, 2003), 114–9.

John MARALDO has presented a detailed and critical exposition of the topic, showing how Nishida’s and Royce’s problems and projects differ from Dedekind’s theory. He also demonstrates the importance of the question for current German

limitation of epistemic thinking must not be allowed to conceal the metaphysical progress of effective reality, which is forever in the process of renewing meaning.⁹ A map of Britain¹⁰ will contain itself *ad infinitum* as it strives to represent its object always more perfectly, giving us a paradigm of the “universal constitution of things.”¹¹ This idea of a performative “infinitezation” comes from the mathematical analysis of Richard Dedekind:¹² a system *S* is infinite if it shows a synthetic capacity to find itself in itself as its own part, rather than analytically differentiating itself from its parts in the division. Nishida insisted that¹³ the “actual–effective–infinity”¹⁴ be understood as “infinity inside the finite” (*yūgen nonakani mugen* 有限の中に無限): each finite part, as in the case of the map, witnessing to its infinity through the very fact of returning to itself inside itself, each finite thing punctured to disclose an infinite activity that flows out from it.¹⁵

The Fichtean *Ich* does not transcribe itself, but refuses to forget itself, thus propagating the “series” (*Reihe*) of itself. The Nishidean “Self” (*jiko* 自己) transcribes itself infinitely in a creative way, “forgetting” (*wasureru* 忘れる) the *I*,¹⁶ in order to recover its true nature, continu-

philosophical thinking on self-consciousness (Hans Radermacher, Dieter Henrich, Ernst Tugendhat) by suggesting that a Nishidean approach could explain how the objectivity of the fact (*Ansichheit*) constitutes itself in the mirroring of self-consciousness. “Self-Mirroring and Self-Awareness: Dedekind, Royce, and Nishida,” in UEDA Shizuteru (ed.) 上田閑照編『西田哲学への問い』[Questions to Nishida’s philosophy] (Tokyo, Iwanami, 1999), 85–95, and in English in the present volume, pages 143–63.

9. WI, 500, 508, 537, 540.

10. WI, 502–507. An author who will have a strong influence on the operational epistemology of the late Nishida, Percy BRIDGMAN (1882–1961), also uses this example in “A Physicist’s Second Reaction to Mengenlehre,” *Scripta Mathematica* 11/3, (May 1934), 113.

11. WI, 553.

12. R. DEDEKIND, *Was sind und was sollen die Zahlen?* §5 (Vieweg: Brunswick, 1911), 17, quoted in WI, 510–11.

13. 体系の中に体系を写す IRES, 36 (72). In LUMU, he opposed this to the Hegelian conception of infinity, 154–5 (264–265). See also the lecture 「Coincidentia oppositorum と愛」[Love and the coincidence of opposites, 1919], NKZ XIV: 296.

14. *Genjitsutekimugen* 現実的無限, *das aktuelle Unendliche*.

15. I have treated the topological justification of this analysis in NKPU, 993–1000.

16. Cf. 『善の研究』[An inquiry into the good, 1911, 16], NKZ I: 151. Translated by

ously renewing itself in its own transcription, adding itself to itself as something new, “maintaining” (*ijisuru*) itself without respite in its perpetual re-edition.

What does this tell us about Nishida’s use of the image of the mirror? Such a transcription cannot be conceived as the property of the reflection of a *single* mirror, which faithfully reproduces the image of what reflects into it in a finite way. That would direct us to the finite identity of the *reflection*₁, a simple duplication, that would ground reality ontologically in the “differentiation” (*bunka* 分化) represented in the “face-to-face” of the reflected and the reflecting. Still, we cannot simply turn away from the image of the reflected object; the *I* cannot *forget* the image facing it in the looking glass. With reflection₂, on the contrary, the image evoked is of *two* facing “mirrors” (*ryōmeikyō* 両明鏡),¹⁷ each reflecting the image of the object placed between them and thus not imprisoning some *thing*, as in an optical device, but rather liberating the infinite diffraction of the images of *something*. In reflection₁, the model and its image are united through a finite distance; in reflection₂, the unification of the images of the object is displayed over an infinite distance. In this sense, the diffracted image of the self constitutes a complete oblivion of the notion of the self as a finite form, that is to say, as an *I*.

Among Zen Buddhist thinkers—one thinks here particularly of Dōgen, Suzuki Shōsan (鈴木正三, 1579–1655), and Shidō Bunan (至道無難, 1603–1676)—the idea of “forgetting the self” is alluded to frequently. Frédéric Girard has shown how Nishida reconsidered Dōgen’s idea of the “forgetting of the self” in order to avoid a lax or quietist

ABE Masao and Christopher IVES (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 130, and NKPU, 1–52.

17. The allusion to the “two mirrors” (*ryōmeikyō* 両明鏡) in reference to Royce was already present in LUMU, 155 (264). Why does Nishida use this term and not, as elsewhere, the simple term *kagami*? According to the fifth edition of the *Kōjien Dictionary*『広辞苑』(Tokyo: Iwanami, 2002) *meikyō* means, on the one hand, “an unclouded mirror” (*kumorinonai kagami* くもりのない鏡), and on the other, “a clear proof” (*akirakana shōko* 明らかかな証拠). Without rushing to conclude that Nishida was already thinking of the Buddhist meaning he would come to later, nonetheless, the term does evoke the two fundamental aspects needed to understand the metaphor of the mirror in this context: as an optical device that can be cleaned, and as a symbol of how reality should be conceived in order to achieve enlightenment.

understanding of it; that is, to think of “keeping the self” as belonging to the act of “taking advantage of the self” in which one studies the self, as something that “is not mine” but is the true self.¹⁸ In this connection, Nishida wrote in 1939:

The unity of body and mind must be a contradictory self-identity. Our self is never separated from it. The practice and evidence of this unity consists in religious practice. He [Dōgen] says that learning the self is forgetting the self and that forgetting the self occurs when the self is testified to in the thousand laws.¹⁹

This can help us to understand more clearly how the reflection between mirrors and the notion of the oblivion of the self can be related to each other. *I* am not the one *I* face in the looking glass, as if my “mind” (*kokoro* 心) were contemplating my “body” (*mi* 身), “separated” (*hanarete* 離れて) from it. *I* represent, so to speak, the infinite diffraction of myself (not *my* self) between two mirrors, the continuous perishing of every kind of substantiality²⁰ for a self simply considered to be “mine,” and the everlasting forfeit of oneself for the other.²¹ Not only in an aporetic and skeptical sense, but in a creative and ethical one as well, the “self” constitutes a “contradictory self-identity.”²² Herein lies the meaning of the real “unity of body and mind” (*shinshin’ichi* 心身一): not a single, punctual, or final “unity” (*tōitsu*), but a “unification,” that is an infinite “making” (*suru*) of the unity, or rather an “endless” (*dokomademo* 何処までも)²³ unity in the making.

18. Frédéric GIRARD: “Le moi dans le bouddhisme japonais,” *Ebisu* 6 (1994), 97, 101–4, 116–19. Girard shows *in fine* how this forgetting possesses not only a religious dimension, but also a social one, 111–15, 122–3.

19. *Zushikisetsumei* [図式説明] [Schematic explanations], NKZ IX: 334.

20. “If the subject disappears, something like substance, the archetypal subjective unity, vanishes, and everything become something without substance.” [場所] [Place] (P, 1926), NKZ IV: 281.

21. In NKPU, 793, I discuss hospitality in the place of absolute nothingness.

22. *Mujuntekij ikodōitsu* 矛盾の自己同一. Cf. Augustin BERQUE, ed., *Logique du lieu et dépassement de la modernité* (Bruxelles: Ousia, 2000), 247–8, 253, Robert SCHINZINGER, *Intelligibility and the Philosophy of Nothingness: Three Philosophical Essays* (Connecticut: Westport, 1958), 5, and NKPU, 1372–5.

23. Nishida’s frequent, if not somewhat obsessive, repetition of this term under-

Thus, the opposition between the two modes of reflection can be extended in analogy to the numerical opposition between one or two mirrors. Given the considerable overlap of Nishida's play on the image and the theory of image developed by Henri Bergson (1859–1941), might we not use Bergson to proceed further?²⁴ For Bergson, what is given to us is the totality of the images of the material world. This means that, at least theoretically, we should be able to perceive everything, to enter into any thing as if we existed in a space of total optical “refraction.” Still, the exigencies of actual action and the limitations of real world reduce the refraction and can even render it invisible in the case of total optical reflection. To this extent, a sort of general economy of action makes integral perception possible, so that images are reflected by my activity but cannot penetrate it.

From a Nishidean perspective, we may say that the total reflection of the single mirror corresponds to *reflection₁* on something, and the reflection on the surface, which the incidental ray cannot penetrate, is repulsed. For Nishida, this means that rational reflective thinking expresses the “return” (*fukki* 復歸, *regressus*) of “will” (*ishi* 意志), repulsed by the mirror which, in turn, is reduced to one of its “faces” (*kyōmen* 鏡面):

If will is the development *egressus*, and at the same time the return *regressus*, knowledge appears like the aspect of the return of the will, and the world of the objects of knowledge is the reflection of the form of the will in the face of a mirror.²⁵

In contrast, the activity of the optical ray in refraction is one of a *reflection₂* for in that it is able to go through the face of the mirror. This corresponds to the “aspect” or “direction” (*hōmen* 方面) of a “development” (*hatten* 發展, *egressus*) in which will is not hindered, or at least not completely reflected on any definite “side” or “face” (*men* 面). In comparison, raw reflection₁ seems abstract and dry, rebounding from the surface of the “object” (*taishō* 対象, *Gegenstand*) facing it, staying

scores that fact he considered the very idea of an “end” to be an impossibility.

24. Henri BERGSON, *Matière et mémoire* (MM) (Paris: P.U.F., 1941), 34–5. Having seen IRSC influenced by this theory, we can freely use this optical analysis here.

25. IRSC, I48 (300–1).

out of it, distinguishing it from others in reflective conceptual analysis, classifying it under a category of “knowledge” (*chishiki* 知識), limited to a process of “recognition” (*ninshiki* 認識). The more effective reflection₂, however, encompasses the other dimension of refraction, penetrating the object that is the target of knowing and rejoining the hidden will that animates it.

This being so, it seems that we end up speaking of the image of the *two mirrors* rather than simply of *the mirror*. Does not reflection also appear *in* the mirror before reflecting *on* or *for* something? In other words, is the true nature of *the mirror* revealed through this duplication and exteriorization of itself?

In the “logic of place” (*bashoteki ronri* 場所的論理) laid out in Nishida’s celebrated 1926 essay “Place,” we find the image of the mirror reintroduced. We need to remember that Nishida’s goal here is to construct a theory of nothingness, a sort of “néontologie.”²⁶ It is based on a fundamental distinction between “absolute nothingness” and two other forms of nothingness: “outright nothingness” (*tan ni mu* 単に無),²⁷ about which nothing can be said, and “oppositional nothingness” (*tairitsuteki mu* 対立的無), a kind of “nothingness in thought”²⁸ set in opposition to “being” (有 *u*) but in fact “no more than a species of being.”²⁹

“The place of oppositional nothingness” corresponds to that physical and intellectual space that can be described as a “mirror reflecting something,” or more precisely as “the mirror that reflects things as we ordinarily think of them.”³⁰ In other words, here is a “mirror that simply reflects.”³¹ The reflected “thing” (*mono* 物) is outside it, giving us the

26. The reader is referred to my essay: “De la néontologie chez Nishida Kitarō” in 『フランス哲学・思想研究』[Review of French Philosophy] (Tokyo: Société franco-japonaise de philosophie, 2006), 184–4.

27. IG, 82 (99–100). This outright nothingness is criticized under the form of an “empty word” (*kūmei* 空名), 162 (183), or an “empty thought,” a “fantasy” (*kūsō* 空想). See TAKEUCHI Seichi 竹内整一, ed., 『善の研究』用語索引[Index of the Terms in “An Inquiry into the Good” (Index IG)] (Tokyo: Pelican, 1996), 99.

28. *Kangaerareta mu* 考へられた無. P, 242.

29. *Nao issu no u* 尚一種の有. P, 220, 232.

30. 我々は鏡が物を映すと考へる. P, 226.

31. *Tan ni utsusu kagami* 単に映す鏡. P, 231, 259.

paradigmatic looking glass that “reflects the outside,”³² be it a particular object, a human face, or a patch of cloudy sky. This reflection entails at the same time a “distorting” (*yugameru* 歪める):

Of course, because the mirror is a kind [species] of being [as oppositional nothingness], it cannot truly reflect the thing itself; the mirror reflects the thing by distorting it; it remains something active in deforming it]. The more that which holds in itself the image of another thing *is* [constitutes a *being*], the less the reflected thing constitutes a [faithful] portrait of the other thing, and the more the reflected thing becomes simply a symbol, a sign of it.³³

Oppositional nothingness as a looking glass does not produce a pure, non-distorting, reflection, but a symbolization that fetters and hampers the thing as it comes into being, compelling it to be ontologically represented and “take form.”³⁴ This idea points to an important phenomenological theme that has been explored by recent contemporary philosophers such as Nitta Yoshihiro (新田義弘 1929–).³⁵

In fact, this “formation” process can be topologically³⁶ described as a *deformation*³⁷ that takes place in a gradual “ontologization.”³⁸ This is expressed by the sentence: “the more... *is*” (*u de areba aru hodo* 有であれ

32. *Soto wo utsusu kagami* 外を映す鏡, P, 231.

33. P, 226–7. Emphasis added.

34. *Seiritsusuru* 成立する, IRSC, 162(331–332), P, 212–18, NKPU, 1221–31, and NITTA Yoshihiro 新田義弘『現代の問いとしての西田哲学』[Nishida's philosophy as a modern question] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1998), 60, 71.

35. Concerning the phenomenological importance of this notion of “deformation,” see Y. NITTA, *Nishida's Philosophy as a Modern Question*, 222.

36. By this term, we understand a level of description belonging to the “logic of place” that Nishida worked out by way of a mathematical and psychological topology.

37. In a passage that will be quoted and commented on below, we find this very topic expressed in the idea of a transition from a higher topological layer of *form*₂ to a inferior layer of ontological *form*_r. Nishida argues that: “God is the *form*₂ that determines itself indefinitely. Moreover, it is impossible not to speak of such a *form*₂ as the *form*₂ without *form*_r, for it is reflecting itself. God is absolute nothingness. It is possible to speak of a *thing that possesses a form*_r as the shadow of what *does not have any form*_r.” The emphasis and subscripts are, of course, my own.

38. *Uka suru* 有化する. Cf. Jacynthe TREMBLAY, *Nishida Kitarō: Le jeu de l'individuel et de l'universel* (JIU) (Paris, C.N.R.S. Editions, 2000), 110.

ばある程). The reflected thing hardens and roots itself deeper and deeper in being,³⁹ breaking away from itself, from where it really takes place, and becomes a “symbol” (*shōchō* 象徴), “the shadow of another thing” (*ta no mono no kage* 他の物の影). This entails a “remainder” (*nokoru* 残る),⁴⁰ like an impurity within the reflective surface of the mirror, a default, an incrustation in the polishing of its surface: “a matter still remaining in the bottom of the reflecting mirror.”⁴¹ Considering oppositional nothingness as a looking glass places the model and its reflected copy in opposition, establishing a “differentiation.” Our former problem of identity becomes an ontological one. For through the looking glass, the one I see *is* not myself; there is, as Michel Henry (1922–2002) has said, a “phenomenological distance” between me and the one I see in such a reflecting “glass.”⁴² Claude Gergory remarks:

Nobody had in fact ever seen his image in a mirror. This image we trust is our *énantiomorphe*, different from what it reflects, like the right hand compared to the left hand.”⁴³

Still we house this image within our ontological scheme;⁴⁴ we honor

39. This view is the contrary of Plato’s, for whom the return to the vicinities of being, “of what is divine, immortal and always existent,” to contact with the Ideas, allows the soul to escape the *encrustation* that results from its “association with the body.” The term follows the logic of the image of the fisherman Glaucos, who had become a god stuck in the depths of the sea and whose body was covered with shells, stones, and seaweed. *Republic*, x: 611c–612a.

From the perspective of a “Platonism of nothingness” (if we be permitted such an expression) after TANABE Hajime’s (田辺元, 1885–1962) critiques of Nishida’s theories, we would have to think a kind of “scaling” of being, with a perpetual dissolution operating in the place of absolute nothingness. See NKPU, 973–6, 1114–18. On Tanabe’s criticisms, see James HEISIG, *Philosophers of Nothingness* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2001), 118–22; Matteo CESTARI “The Knowing Body. Nishida’s Philosophy of Active Intuition,” *The Eastern Buddhist* xxxi/2 (1998), 202–4, and ŌHASHI, NPTP, 171–4.

40. P, 239–41, 265. I have treated the meaning of this concept in NKPU, 771–80.

41. P, 239.

42. See: Michel HENRY, *Essence de la manifestation* (Paris: P.U.F., 1963), 74–5.

43. Claude GERGORY, “Chan,” *Encyclopedia Universalis*, 5. “Le regard et le miroir,” electronic version (Paris: France S. A. 1995).

44. Cf. my essay: “Unity and Vacuity in the Predicate: The Stoics, Frege, P. F.

it and take it for a faithful image of ourselves, because it *is* something in front of us. We can easily appreciate to what extent there is, at this “topological” level, a kind of loss inside being.

There is a special need to emphasize here the fact that the verb *yuga-meru* can also mean “falsify.” In IRSC, the “blending,” or “infection” (*konnyū* 混入) represents the opposite side of the “transcription” (*utsusu* 写す) of an effective and unifying reality inside itself, along the process of “reflecting for.” Nishida still conceived “reflection” (*hansei* 反省) in 1917 in non-topological terms as an operation, taking place inside the course of an infinite unification. Nishida later opted to change the signification of the mirror rather than duplicate it. As a result, the signification of reflection itself changed.⁴⁵ This more complicated sense leads in turn to his criticism of the idea of an infinite reflection, frequently in reference to Fichtean theory.⁴⁶ Reflection in the sense of *hansei*, whatever form it takes, *on* or *for* something, retains a certain form of exteriority. Within the perspective of generalized interiorization that accompanies the topological turn, both the concept and the word for “reflection” will change.⁴⁷ At this point, true reflection is baptized *utsusu* 映す and becomes “reflexive” in a further intimate, internal sense. It is not simply that the unity transcribes itself infinitely. Rather, to be more precise, it continuously reflects *inside* itself.⁴⁸

Strawson, Nishida. A History of Logic under a Topological Enlightenment,” *Philosophia Osaka* 2 (2007).

45. On the vicissitudes of the general evolution of the term of “reflection” (映る *utsuru*) from IRSC until the late thought of Nishida, the reader, see the analysis of Y. NITTA, *Nishida’s Philosophy as a Modern Question*, 18–21, 27, 45.

46. P., 240.

47. For example, in 1926 he states that the Laskian “reflexive category” (*hanseiteki hanchū* 反省の範疇, *reflexiv Kategorie*) must be founded on the “predicative category” (*jutsugoteki hanchū* 述語の範疇): the reflexion *on* or *for* the unification of reality becomes the predication within the place where reality operates, p. 278. See Emil LASK, *La logique de la philosophie et la doctrine des catégories* (Paris: Vrin, 2002).

48. UEHARA Mayuko notes that in Nishida’s use of the intransitive verb *utsuru* 映る instead of the transitive *utsusu* 映す, there is a linguistic transition to a more fundamental level of explanation, the first being more “reflexive” than the second.

We have to understand not only the growing importance of reflection in the sense

The universal effective unity of reality does not represent just one “part” (*bubun* 部分) of itself, but becomes also the “image” (*eizō* 影像) of itself.⁴⁹ To a certain extent, an image can be said to hold more “unifying power” than a simple “part.” And a “simple part” can be said to be more differentiated from the “whole” than the “reflected” is from the “reflecting.” To reflect in this sense thus means that the “universal” (*ippan naru mono* 一般なるもの) finds itself *inside* itself, in a new image of itself that represents more than a simple detached part of itself. The topology of reflection is not to be understood in terms of “part” and “whole.” It is not a mereology. This is to be understood in a twofold manner. In the first place, there is no finite partitioning of the universal, as though it retained within itself a certain number of “particulars” (*tokushunarumono* 特殊なる物) to be used up in a process of finite self-determination in one-to-one correspondence with a finite number of parts.⁵⁰ In the second place, however, neither is the self-determination of the universal defined by an infinite partitioning, as this is precisely the point of abandoning the view of transcription implied in the paradigm from Dedekind.

Finally, the very idea of a “position” or “point of view” (*tachiba* 立場) itself is what Nishida seems to regard as having been only superficially understood in his earlier position. In 1917 he had considered reflection from the “point of view” of “action.” He tried to show how the “intu-

of *utsuru* on reflection in the sense of *hansei*, but also a rather subtle evolution going on within the very term *utsuru* うつる that was not present in 1G. While in IRSC, this term expresses three notions—the “transcription” (写る), the “transition” (移る), and the “reflection” (映る)—in P the latter becomes dominant and gives rise to a whole theory of “wrapping” or “enfolding” (*tsutsumu*) in speculative reflection (see my treatment in NKPU, 884–996). On the one hand, the notion of “transcription” seems to give voice to the Dedekindian mathematical paradigm that Nishida tends to play down, if not entirely remove, from P, although it can be restored topologically in a more embracing meaning. On the other hand, absolute nothingness cannot be assimilated to the pure change represented by “transition” insofar as it is also described as “eternally unchanging” (*eien ni utsurazaru mono* 永遠に移らざるもの).

49. 特殊なるものは一般なるものの部分であり且つその影像である。P, 227.

50. *Sōsetsu*「総説」[General Summary], (GS, 1929) NKZ V: 429–30, translated by R. J. J. WARGO, *The Logic Nothingness: A Study of Nishida Kitarō* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 186–216.

ition” (*chokkan* 直観) of a greater point of view⁵¹ proceeds from “action” (*kōi* 行為),⁵² and to demonstrate the sense in which reflection emerges from behind the face of this “act” (*sayō* 作用) and opens up into a new point of view.⁵³ In time it became clear to him that this meant taking reflection to be an act of exteriorization from a lower point of view. That is surely no longer the case in “Place”:

When we speak of “reflecting,” we easily think as if it were an action; but the very fact of reflecting does not issue from the fact of acting; on the contrary, it’s only from the fact of reflecting inside ourselves that we can be led to action.⁵⁴

In the logic of topological enlightenment developed in 1926, the position of the “act” rests solely in the “place of oppositional nothingness,” which in turn must be set within the “place of absolute nothingness.” It is interesting to note how Nishida’s topologizing of reality compels him in return to topologize his own thought, or to find a place for the manifestation of his former thematic inside the structure of his new speculation. In an earlier, but still usable terminology, the “self” expresses no more than the “system” (*taikei* 体系)⁵⁵ of “reality” (*jitsuzai* 実在) itself, the “Atman” (アトマン *atoman*) [of] the “Brahman” (*burahaman* ブラハマン),⁵⁶ and this system “maintains” (*ijisuru*)⁵⁷ itself constantly. Rather than reject his earlier thought (as, for example, Schelling had⁵⁸) Nishida finds a way to find it a proper place in his new thought, and thus to reflect himself in a new kind of mirror, to “return to,” to “reflect upon”⁵⁹ himself. Only within the “space of true nothingness”⁶⁰ can there

51. IRES, 33 (63)

52. IRES, 143(287-288).

53. NKPU, 265-305.

54. P, 228.

55. IG, 9(16).

56. IG, 38, 80(46-7, 97).

57. IRSC, 54(106-107).

58. Jean-François MARQUET, *Restitutions. Etudes d’histoire de la philosophie allemande* (Paris: Vrin, 2001), 59, 139-1.

59. *Onore jishin wo kaerimiru* 己自身を省みる. See the text cited below.

60. 真無の空間. P, 250.

be room for such an increase of thinking space, such an expenditure of philosophical speculative power.

This brings us to a new problem: In what sense can absolute nothingness be represented as a mirror, and to what extent does it undercut the image of that distorting and falsifying mirror? Nishida states that it is “that which reflects in itself its own image, the self-illuminating mirror.”⁶¹ Clearly this no longer entails a “differentiation” with itself, as in the case of a distorting mirror, but synthesizes a topological unification by the very fact that it “enlightens itself” *inside* itself.⁶² But how is this self-determinating, self-containing enlightenment possible?

A looking glass does not shine by itself. It requires a *thing* to be reflected within it as well as a *source of light* to illuminate the scene. As long as there is *nothing* to begin with, no thing and no source of light, there seems no way for an image to appear on the surface of the mirror. On the one hand, we stand within *a place of absolute nothingness*; on the other, the mirror must *radiate by itself*. *Nothingness makes the self; nothingness [gives] birth to the (it) self, as an internal reflection*. Since there is still nothing, this nothingness must enlighten a scene within itself—and not without, as with the classical mirror. Therefore, nothingness is always a *place* of nothingness; and a mirror can only shine by itself *in* itself. The very *nothingness* and *self* are topological realities here.

How did Nishida manage to retain the analogy despite the difficulties of the analogy here? In IG, he explains self-enlightenment by referring to Jacob Boehme’s (1575–1624) mirror:

For him, it is only when the will without object, as God must be prior to manifestation, reflects on Himself, makes Himself a mirror [mirrors Himself], that the distinction between subject and object arises; God and the world develop from this point”⁶³

61. P, 213, 226, 260.

62. *Jiko jishin wo terasu* 自己自身を照らす. As John MARALDO points out, this expression could also be read “the mirror that enlightens *the self*.” We will see how the revelation of the *self-illuminative* character helps to understand *the illumination of the self*, that is what the self *is*, or more precisely, what the self *was* in its fallacious understanding, and what it becomes when his true nature *as such* is revealed.

63. 氏は対象なき意志ともいふべき発現以前の神が己自身を省みること即ち己自身を鏡

The mirror is neither being nor nothingness, but a *medium* through which God manifests (*hatsugen suru* 発現する) himself, so that nothingness becomes being. As *absolute* nothingness, God can only “mirror Himself,” “make Himself into a mirror” (*onore jishin wo kagami to nasu* 己自身を鏡となす) in order for anything to “be.”

In his 1930 essay “The Intelligible World”⁶⁴ Nishida argues that the “noemic determination”⁶⁵ of absolute nothingness constitutes the operation through which the mirror produces images in its surface:⁶⁶

Our spirit ultimately is only a reflecting mirror. Boehme wanted to convey this idea to us when he wrote: “*So denn der erste Wille ein Ungrund ist, zu achten als ein ewig Nichts, so erkennen wir ihn gleich einem Spiegel, darin einer sein eigen Bildnis sieht, gleich einem Leben (sex puncta theosophica).*”⁶⁷

The reflecting mirror makes appear on its surface an image, a color, just as “being” appears in the surface of “nothingness” like an objet of the “Will.” This is how nothingness expresses its *thirst* for being. In this sense, we can say that nothingness ontologizes itself (*uka suru*), or colorizes itself: the “world” (*sekai* 世界) is fitted and filled with “colors” (*iro* 色)⁶⁸ and forms. It corresponds to the “kenotic” God, who empties⁶⁹ Himself in order to give place to creation, who lets go of his power

となすことに由って主観と客観とが分れ、これより神および世界が発展するといっている。IG, 169(191).

64. 「観知の世界」*eichiteki sekai* (NKZ 5, 182). Translation in JIU, 227.

65. *Noemateki gentei* ノエマの限定, GS, 455–6

66. See my treatment in NKPU, 800–8, where I try to show how Nishida gives a topological interpretation of the theory of nothingness developed by Boehme.

67. Nishida modified the punctuation of the original slightly, giving: “As the original Will is without ground, it can be considered as an eternal nothingness: we recognize it as a mirror inside which a being sees its image, like a life.” *Sämtliche Werke* (Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1846), 331, *Cat.* nr. 251, p. 33. Nishida had in his possession a translation in which he had underlined the terms “mirror,” “ungroundedness,” and “eternal nothing”: *Six Theosophic Points and Other Writings*, trans. by John Rolleston EARLE (London: Constable and Co., 1919), 6, *Cat.* nr. 252 p. 33. I have analyzed the importance of these “annotations” for contemporary research on Japanese philosophy in NKPU, 229–61.

68. We cannot analyze in detail this process of coloration. Cf. NKPU, 1102–7.

69. The act of “emptying” oneself is opposed to “closing” oneself in on oneself,

in order to save humanity in Christ who humbles himself to passion and death.⁷⁰ Still, this creation of being is not simply a *creatio ex nihilo* as understood in dualistic or gnostic interpretations.⁷¹ It is mediated by the mirror, *inside which* nothingness creates being.

As Nicolas Bernadieff remarks, “For Boehme the original mystery of being lies in the fact that nothingness has a passion for something.” Nothingness is a lack, an “immotivate hunger for something.”⁷² This “hunger” (*Hunger*)⁷³ illustrates a “desire” (*Begehren*),⁷⁴ an “attraction” (*Unziehen*) towards the “sustenance” (*Speise*) that is “essence,” “being,” or “color.” This hunger excites the liberty it needs to satisfy itself in the creation of being and at the very moment that the enlightenment of the world takes place. In contrast, the “demons” are like always “starving, thirsty, and failing” (*ewig Berhungerte, Berschmachtete und Berdurstete*), without sustenance and overwhelmed by the darkness.⁷⁵

Nothingness, in its hunger, cannot be satisfied with mere nothingness. It must be a mirror that enlightens itself. The plenitude of being is “black” or “white,” opaque and without reflection; it represents the foundation in a *Grund*, the solid enclosure within the locus of “determined being” (*gentei serareta u 限定せられた有*).⁷⁶ Following Boehme, Nishida understands the dissatisfaction of nothingness as “the unreach-

which would amount to an enclosure, namely, the closing into determined being. The sense here is that nothingness effectively digs itself out from within itself in a never ending “retreat” (*shirizoku* 退く) into itself (p, 234). Nishida conceived himself as a “miner” (*kōfu* 坑夫) of meaning (cf. “De la néontologie chez Nishida Kitarō,” 184). Absolute nothingness empties itself but is never completely “empty” in the negative sense of a pure “vacuity” or “hollowness.” We cannot analyze in detail this process of coloration. Cf. NKPU, 1102–7.

70. J. TREMBLAY, JIU, 140, note.

71. I insist on this point before taking up the controversial interpretation of Nicolas Bernadieff, which I draw on only in order better to understand Nishida’s relation to Boehme. Regarding this controversy, see J.-F. Marquet “Désir et imagination chez Jacob Boehme,” in *Jacob Boehme* (Paris: Vrin, 1979), 83–4, and also 61–2, 115–31.

72. “L’Ungrund et la liberté chez J.Boehme,” *Mysterium Magnum* (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1945), I: 16, 19.

73. *Sex Puncta*, 12, 14, 18, 42, 63, 68 (335, 337, 339, 353, 366, 368).

74. J.-F. MARQUET “Désir et imagination chez Jacob Boehme,” 79–83.

75. *Sex Puncta*, 73, 99 (372, 388).

76. P, 217–32.

able bottom of the sea,”⁷⁷ an “infinite” (*mugen*) gradation of tones, the impossibility of attaining any foundation (*mutei* 無底, *Ungrund*), the endless pursuit of a “content” (*naiyō* 内容) that slips away.⁷⁸ In his 1943 essay “Space,” this *Abgrund* is defined as an “eternal nothingness” (*eien no mu* 永遠の無) that functions as the “production of an eternal beginning like a need” (*yokkyū* 欲求, *Sucht*).⁷⁹

In sum, the mirror enlightens itself because of the structural characteristics of this hunger (this lack, the *Sucht* of this generating void called “absolute nothingness”) and imposes an “eternal beginning,” an endless “quest” (*suchen*) of being and the unity to come. What we find here is no longer, then, a “mirror that simply reflects,” but rather “a mirror of *consciousness* that simply reflects”;⁸⁰ not a “mirror that reflects the outside,” but “a mirror that reflects the inside.”⁸¹ What becomes of reflection under these conditions?

To reflect means to restore something as such without distorting its form, to receive it as such. What reflects constitutes within itself the restitution of the thing without itself being any “thing” that acts.⁸²

This new concept of *reflection*, no longer expresses a “formation” leading to an ontological deformation, but rather a *re*-formation. It is *reflexive* in a more original sense. The expression Nishida uses here, *naritachi shimeru koto* 成り立ちしめること, is difficult to translate. It means the “fact” (*koto* こと) of making something “stand up” or “take form” (*naritatsu* 成り立つ), of letting it “become” (*naru* 成る) present, and “stand” (*tatsu* 立つ) as a presence. However, this very “thing,” that has lost its real “form” (*katachi* 形) within “the place of being,” recovers it inside the “place of absolute nothingness,”⁸³ which effects a restitution

77. *Tassuru koto no dekinai umi no soko* 達することのできない海の底.

78. IRSC, 135 (274–5). See 143 (287).

79. 欲求 *Sucht* として永遠の始をなすと云ふのも。「空間」[Space], 『哲学論文集第六』 [Philosophical essays VI], NKZ XI: 197. See also「生命」[Life], NKZ, XI: 323.

80. 単に映す意識の鏡 *tan ni utsusu ishiki no kagami*, p. 231, 259.

81. 内を映す鏡 *uchi wo utsusu kagami*, p. 231.

82. p. 226.

83. On this distinction of places, see my essay “De la néontologie chez Nishida Kitarō” and NKPU, 703–56.

of this original “undistorted form” (*katachi wo yugamenai de* 形を歪めないで) of the thing “as such” (*sono mama ni* その儘に).

The mirror eliminates the crust of being, lets the thing reflect itself not as it *is*, not even *such* as it *is*, but simply *as such*, without distortion.⁸⁴ Nothingness is thus neither an ineffable nothing, nor non-being, but an elision that marks the disappearance of being, just as the verb *is* disappears in the expression *such as it is*. In absolute nothingness, being vanishes, but the thing *in itself*, liberated from being, is restored—not in a Kantian, but in a topological meaning. This is the reason we should use the expression “make restitution” here, namely, to take into account the causative form expressed by the verbal ending *shimeru* しめる.

To reflect in the place of absolute nothingness, therefore, does not mean to represent some “*thing* which acts” (*hatarakumono* 働くもの), because *such a thing*—and not the *thing as such*—exists only within the place of being. To reflect is not an “action” (*hataraku* 働く). On the contrary (*kore ni taishite* 之に対して), it expresses the activity of making something become, the labor of the activity captured here in the *causative* form of the verb rather than by a *substantive*. Nevertheless, this activity that can be recognized as a “cause” is characterized, surprisingly, as a “reception” (*ukeireru* 受け入れる). In this sense, causality is not just mere production but engages solely with the re-production of what the thing *is* improperly (because ontologically). That is to say, it is a re-ception and a re-integration of the thing as such in a place that renders such “suchness” possible.

To make restitution means to cause and receive, to re-situate, to give to the thing the only place that allows it to “be” what in fact it *is* not, precisely because “being” refers to a place in which the thing is hidden. This enfolding “place of nothingness” represents the only place

84. See the quotation below in which Nishida silently erases the Chinese character for being (有), which appears twice in the first part of the sentence, and once in the second: being is *being as being* only if it is *nothingness as such*, that is, not *as non-being* (oppositional nothingness), but *as no-being*. Being reveals by itself its true nature as no being at all, as absolute nothingness. In more technical terms, “something which is” (有るものが) can “be such as it is” (そのまに有である) only if “being” (有る) itself is “as such nothingness” (そのまに無である). Therefore, “something which is” neither is such as it is, nor as non being, but only such as it is not.

that enables the thing to find itself as such, to receive itself as such, by destroying, discarding, and “purifying” (*junka suru* 純化する)⁸⁵ the false forms with which it is covered in order to reveal its “pure quality” (*junsui seishitsu* 純粹性質).⁸⁶ For the mirror to “enlighten itself” would be to produce in itself an image, instituting and orchestrating the revelation of what it contains inside itself. This means that it brings about the reception of what takes place in it, and then shines through its own reflection.

This raises the question of how to understand the poles of such a receptive and causative operation. Might we not be facing, here, an irresolvable contradiction? One might assume that the restitution of the thing as such indicates no more than the sterility of nothingness. Or, to give it the sense of the Heideggerian *seinlassen*, that it is a kind of “letting something be.” But this seems to confuse the level of the place here, since the reflection taking place in a creative nothingness must be creative as well:

To produce being from nothingness is nothing other than making the reflecting mirror reflect. Matter is not determinate inversely to the direction of an act, but rather matter itself becomes a kind of form. Because of the fact that the reflecting mirror, which reflects what stands behind the act, is itself reflected, potency itself becomes act, matter becomes a thing that acts; it is a production of matter from nothingness. This is not production in the order of time but as a seeing, a reflecting on the surface or the mirror of true nothingness.⁸⁷

Thus, “matter” is not what is encountered at the end of the “act” (*sayō*). It is not something that resists in a material or physical sense, nor is it a mere “latency” or “potentiality” in opposition to an “effective reality” in Aristotelian terms,⁸⁸ nor again is it the *hylè* that is phenom-

85. IRSC, 62(122-123). For an exposition of this rich Nishidean “philosophème,” see NKPU, 278–9.

86. P, 246–54.

87. P, 248.

88. In the sense that “effective reality” (*genjitsu* 現実) can be brought closer to the “actuality” (*genjitsutai* 現実態, ἐνέργεια, *actus*) and “latency” (*senzai* 潜在) to “power” (*kanōtai* 可能態, δύναμις, *potentia*). Cf. 『哲学思想事典』[Dictionary of philo-

enologically given in an act of consciousness. Within the opacity and “density” (*mitsu* 密, *dicht*)⁸⁹ of the place of being, there is no “matter” (*shitsuryō* 質料, ὕλη, *materia*) as opposed to “form” (*keisō* 形相, εἶδος, *species*); this appears in the first layer of the place of oppositional nothingness. At a second layer, we find “infinitesimal matter,”⁹⁰ that is, matter that has the capacity to take an infinite number of new forms in small increments, so that matter seems to participate in the “production” (*tsukuru* 作る) of its own form.

However, we still have not given the grounds for what makes possible such an animation, or enlightenment, this “self-consciousness” (*jikaku* 自覚)⁹¹ of matter. The answer dwells in the place of absolute nothingness, where matter itself “becomes” the “pure form” (*jun naru keisō* 純なる形相) animating matter, for it depends upon an operation of “production” (*tsukuru*) issued from a “creative nothingness” (*sōzōteki mu* 創造的無).⁹² Nothingness operates an “eternal beginning” (*eien no hajime* 永遠の始) that gives birth to the very fact of creating. When matter *annuls* itself

sophical thought] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1998).

Here, Nishida asks a very important question: We cannot simply oppose “matter” and “form,” “potency” and “act,” and then postulate that the first “becomes” (*naru* なる) the second. *How* does δύναμις *become* ἐνέργεια? What “force,” what “striving,” what *Sucht* can explain this passage in energetic terms and gives us a “because” (*niyotte* によって)? Must we not try to inquire “what *stands* behind the act” (*sayō no haigō ni arumono* 作用にあるもの) rather than what *is* opposed to it? Might not the infinite depth of the place of absolute nothingness explain the “snapping” (*yakunyū* 躍入, *Einschnappen*) that casts potential into act? Concerning this latter key notion that Nishida followed Theodor LIPPS (1851–1914) in rethinking, see NKPU, 340–50.

This is the same question he will put to Hegel in his 1935 essay 「私の立場から見たヘーゲルの弁証法」[Hegel’s dialectics seen from my standpoint], NKZ XII: 64–84: How can the dialectical movement operate? What kind of deep effectivity can explain the dialectical “process”? How is the very fact of an *Aufhebung* possible? For more on this topic, see my essay (and the accompanying translation with Ibaragi Daisuké) in the forthcoming *Philosophes du Japon moderne*, ed. by Jacynthe Tremblay (2007).

89. I have formulated a hypothesis about the relation between Cantor’s notion of density and the Nishidean analysis of being, in NKPU, 415, 749.

90. *Kyokubiteki shitsuryō* 極微的質料, p. 265. Nishida relies here on an analysis by Hermann COHEN (1842–1918).

91. On this notion, see, NPTP, 55–9, NKPU, 179–83, 857

92. P, 238–40.

as substantive and opposed to the “form” or the “act,” it simply *begins* to form itself and act by itself, that is, to be creative. The ripples in the “surface of the mirror of true nothingness,”⁹³ like the waves produced by a stone falling in water, create matter. “To reflect the reflecting mirror” is like making a bell ring, a liquid surface undulate.

The creation that “takes place” here consists of a reflection on the surface of nothingness, rather than in a creation *ex nihilo* that begins in nothingness and creates being “inside time” or “in a certain time” (*jikan ni oite* 時間に於て) through the fundamental action, for example, of a divinity. “The fact of seeing” (*miru koto* 見ること) the reflections in the surface of nothingness is what is meant by creating being. This clear and cleansed *vision* explains why we do not find here the kind of distorted being the “symbol” or the “sign” has, but rather the faithful *image* of the thing as such, which is no longer the “image of another thing.” Nishida concludes: “To say that something must remain as such means that its being is, as such, nothingness, in other words, that everything is image.”⁹⁴

Matter is “the reflected image”⁹⁵ of true nothingness. All reality is image. What is more, and this is what is distinctive about Nishida’s view, none of this is to be understood in ontological terms. This theme brings up two questions that we will take up later:

1. How are we to understand such industry in the production of images?
2. Is not this position the opposite extreme of a philosophy of the image?

Before tackling these questions, let us ask ourselves if the “philosophical speculative power” we referred to earlier and which corresponds to this infinite reflection, cannot be more closely related to the image of the mirror. The *specular* aspect of the mirror refers to the two sides of

93. 真の無の上に映すこと *shin no mu no ueni utsusukoto*.

94. 有るものがそのまゝに有であるといふことは、有るがそのまゝに無であると云ふことである、即ちすべて影像であるといふことである。A more general translation will not consider only the being of a thing here, but being in general: “To say that something must stay *as such* means that being as such is nothingness, in other words, that everything is image.” P, 247-248.

95. 映されたる影像 P, 240).

Nishidean “speculation” (*shisaku* 思索)⁹⁶: as the production of the image in the reflection of absolute nothingness, and as the fact of becoming this self-enlightening mirror, that is, “becoming nothingness” (*mu to naru* 無となる).⁹⁷ To speculate, then, is to think in closer and closer “contact” (*sesshoku* 接触)⁹⁸ with absolute nothingness, to “touch” (*sawaru* 触る) it in our meditations. This phenomenon, far from rendering thinking in this way sterile, makes it excessively speculative, losing meaning in vain (“for nothing”) in order to locate a “surplus”⁹⁹ of meaning for the very sake of the construction of meaning. This is how the “profusion” (*hōfu* 豊富)¹⁰⁰ of reality manifests itself in thinking.

Let us return, with this in mind, to the question of how Nishida’s speculation impinges on topics in contemporary Japanese philosophy. To begin with, this industry of image can appear as the metaphorical process of “narration” (*katari* かたり), which consists in the specular transition from one image to another in accord with the functions of “similitude” (*sōjisei* 相似性) and “ambiguity” (*aimaisei* 曖昧性). As Sakabe Megumi (坂部 恵, 1936–) has shown,¹⁰¹ this is not to be understood in the “horizontal direction” (*suiheihōkō* 水平方向) of the stream of ordinary speech, in which the sentence develops according to the linguistic functions of “contiguity” (*rinsetsusei* 隣接生) and “union” (*ketsugō* 結合) into the “syntagem” (*renji* 連辞). To explain narrative we need to probe the “deep depth” (*fukai okuyuki* 深い奥行き) of a “transversal” (*suichoku* 垂直) dimension of discourse, a new conception of the links between absolute nothingness and narrative aspect.

This infinite metaphoric “abyss” (*fuchi* 淵) explains in return the

96. The “research” (*kenkyū* 研究) undertaken in *A Study of the Good* may appear bookish, but in later works like 『思索と体験』[Thinking and experience, 1915] (NKZ I, 203–423) and IRSC, xxiii–xxiv (11), the term *shisaku* 思索 will carry the sense of speculation about nothingness that Nishida was always in pursuit of. Once again, this not to be mistaken for “empty thought” (*kūsō* 空想), IG, 155, 162 (176, 183), *Index* IG, 99, and “fiction” or “illusory phenomenon” (*kagen* 仮現), NKZ X: 480.

97. “It is only when the universal becomes a perfect nothingness that the mirror of consciousness that simply reflects is seen,” p. 270.

98. IRES, 124(245). See NKPU 338–340, 397–399, 977–979.

99. *Shōyo* 尚余, *jōyo* 剰余, *yochi* 余地. I analyze this notion in NKPU, 926–34.

100. IRSC, 163 (335).

101. 『かたり』[Narration] (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1990, 115–29, 140.

“prodigality” or “profusion” (*bōjō* 豊穰) of poetic narration in the use of images to illustrate statements and sentences. In this abyssal place we find a multiplicity inherent in the “metaphoric way” (*inyutekikatei* 隠喩的過程) of the “image” overflowing the simple reference that belongs to the “sign,” as well as the “metonymic way” (*kanyutekikatei* 換喩的過程) that belongs to the “symbol,” that Nishida localized in oppositional nothingness. In this sense, the profusion of images haunts linguistic reality, and manifests itself in narrative.

This brings us to a second concern. Commenting on the same passage from Nishida, Ōhashi takes up the suggestive example of “virtual reality.”¹⁰² “Is it not possible,” he asks, “that the world of actuality that I think of as immediate finally shows itself as something mediated through a technical media?” “Virtual reality” offers us the image of a “world mediated by *poiesis*,”¹⁰³ or as Nishida says, “a world of images” (*zō no sekai* 像の世界), wholly created (as pure nothingness) and wholly real (as pure being). More precisely, in virtual reality, “being is, as such, nothingness.”

The interesting thing about the analysis of Ōhashi for the interpreter of Nishida lies in the way it illustrates, in contemporary terms, the underlying industry of the notion of an “historical world”¹⁰⁴ in Nishida’s latter work. Taking its philosophical meaning a step further, we may say that the world finds itself in the place of absolute nothingness, and corresponds to no reality in itself; it is a pure technique, an infinite tool, a rough and continuous creation; in this sense, it is false, virtual. There is no question here of rehearsing some sort of negative Cartesian analysis. That the “world of actuality” shows itself as a shimmer of images does not point to deception in the pursuit of the truth, but rather the core “actuality” (*genjitsu*) of imagination. The image appears to me, and before knowing if it is *true* or *false*, if it *is* or not, it represents an effective technique, an apparatus of appearing. In addition, the place of this industry is the seat

102. ヴァイチャル・リアリテイNPTP, 135–41.

103. *Poieshisuteki ni baikai serareta sekai* ポイエシス的に媒介せられた世界.

104. *Rekishiteki sekai* 歴史の世界. See「歴史の世界に於ての個物の立場」[The position of the individual in the historical world (1938)], NKZ IX; translation: “La position de l’individuel dans le monde historique” in *JUL*.

of an unceasing creation, which enables an endless “de-substantialization.”¹⁰⁵ It is because the world is false that it constantly creates and unifies itself; herein, in a topological perspective, dwells its distinctive and unique truth.

Our previous reference to “another philosophy of the image” was to Bergson. The answer to our second question is concerned with the breaking point between Nishida and the French philosopher regarding imagery. For Bergson, too, everything is “image”;¹⁰⁶ even nothingness is presented as “an image full of things”¹⁰⁷ or as a particularly elaborated idea.¹⁰⁸ Nothingness for Bergson *is* something, an image created by reflection.¹⁰⁹ For Nishida, in contrast, these images correspond to a *reflection*₃ in the mirror of absolute nothingness, the producer of images. That *is* certainly not an elaborated idea, but rather the total destitution and poverty within which alone ontological and intellectual elaboration can be built. Reflection is not conceived as an “external projection”¹¹⁰ of ideas but as an internal reflection₃ of the mirror.

Once again, an apparently cognate Western analogue to Nishida’s notion of the mirror turns out to run contrary to Nishida’s assumptions. Does that mean that this strange conception of a “self-enlightening mirror” is original to Nishida? Is it even possible to understand it merely with the intellectual apparatus, concepts, and texts of occidental philosophy? The very idea of “self-enlightening” seems to indicate a Buddhist provenance for the term. Perhaps, then, we would do better to look to the religious and philosophical horizon defined by Buddhism for the conception of a “self-enlightening mirror”? And is there any proof that this is in fact what Nishida himself thought?

105. P, 281.

106. MM, II.

107. *L'Évolution créatrice* (EC) (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1914), 303. Nishida follows this famous Bergsonian analysis in his French edition of 1910, p. 303. *Cat. nr. 70* p. 138.

108. EC, 320. Nishida underlines in pencil the phrase “the idea of the whole.”

109. EC, 298. The reader may consult another critique of the Bergsonian approach, in a phenomenological and Heideggerian vein, in Jean-Luc Marion, *Réduction et donation* (Paris: P.U.F., 1989), 255–6.

110. MM, II2, II4–15.

THE BUDDHIST GENEALOGY
OF THE SELF-ENLIGHTENED MIRROR.

It is Nishida himself who explicitly discloses the Buddhist connotations of the term “self-enlightening mirror.” In an essay written one year before his death, “Towards a Philosophy of Religion with the Concept of Pre-established Harmony as a Guide,” the image of the mirror surfaces again in a discussion of Leibniz.

The reappearance of the mirror image, which we have explored in earlier texts, seems to affirm the global significance of the image in Nishida’s speculations and to confirm our argument that it represents a key notion and not just an idea specific to one period of his thought.¹¹¹

God is the form that determines itself indefinitely. Moreover, it is impossible not to speak of such a form as the form without form, for it is reflecting itself. God is absolute nothingness. It is possible to speak of a thing that possesses a form as the shadow of what does not have any form. God is the mirror of eternity, the Great circular mirror of knowledge.¹¹²

The evocation of the mirror is introduced here to express its radically religious signification. God is an infinite operation of “unification,”¹¹³

III. Of course, this has to be more carefully argued through an analysis of the actual texts composed during Nishida’s final period. At least in 1930, 1938–1939, and 1944 Nishida will make new references to this notion. John MARALDO (“Self-Mirroring and Self-Awareness”) has shown how, “the model of self-mirroring is still at work” in Nishida’s “later works.” As Bret W. DAVIS has pointed out, we need to question the significance of the image of the mirror in such late topics as “intuition in action” (*kōiteki chokkan* 行為の直観), where the visual paradigm seems to be replaced by the tactual paradigm of creation. We have shown how the theory of an “industry of images” can give some interesting insights to develop this topic. In this sense, Nishida will criticize the “simple theory of reflection” (*moshasetsu* 模写説, *Abbildtheorie*), because of its default to take into account the dimension of the “constitutive” (*kōseiteki* 構成的) dimension of the “act of expression.” See “The Position of the Individual in the Historical World,” 268 (136).

112. 「予定調和を手引として宗教哲学へ」*Philosophical Essays* 6, NKZ XI: 116. I have kept only the title from the translation of D. A. DILWORTH, *The Eastern Buddhist* III/1 (1970). The translations are my own.

113. IG, 82 (101).

“the form that determines itself indefinitely” (*mugen*), that is to say, the form that cannot become a “definitive,” “finite,” or in any sense “limited” (*yūgen* 有限)¹¹⁴ form or indeed any “thing that possesses form” (*katachi aru mono* 形あるもの). Because the form is always “reflecting” (*utsusu* 映す) itself, it cannot become a determined form,¹¹⁵ as it would if it were instantiated in the “place of determinate being.” Therefore, God stands in the place of absolute nothingness.

Here we find the profound “topological” and “optical” significance of the self-illumination of the mirror, which represents an illumination of the self *as such*: the mirror is not enlightening itself to make a definitive image appear at its surface; all “image” (*eizō*) is truly a “shadow” (*kage*), all *form*₂ refers to the absence of *form*₁. But the virtual reality of the “shadow” assumes a radically effective meaning here. The mirror illuminates itself infinitely precisely because it cannot cast an externally fixed and decisive light on itself, but instead can only infinitely cast a shadow on itself *as such*. The shadow mirrors the eternal operation of reality, that has to be forever “effective” (*genjitsu*) and in this sense can be said to be the “mirror of eternity” (*eien no kagami* 永遠の鏡).

Furthermore, it is at this juncture that the “Buddhist” and “epistemic” significance of the self-illumination of the mirror arises. God is the “great round mirror of knowledge” (*daienkyōchi* 大円鏡智), an expression that refers to “one of the four kinds of knowledge of Amida Buddha (*nyorai* 如来, *tathāgata*). An intelligence that knows everything would be like a great round mirror reflecting all the colors and forms, and necessarily knowing and enlightening all things.¹¹⁶ This “intelligence” (*chie* 智慧, *prajñā*) refers to “the action that opens enlightenment and enlightens the truth” instead of referring to philosophical “wisdom” (*sophia*). To self-enlighten is to know the vacuity of all forms in the sense of “emptying oneself.”¹¹⁷

But if Nishida is engaged in rethinking philosophically the Buddhist

114. I have analyzed this term in NKPU, 78.

115. The finite determined *form*₁ of a thing that *is* opposes the infinite self-determining *form*₂ of nothingness.

116. See the entry in the *Kōjien Dictionary*.

117. 空うすること *kūusurukoto*, p. 221.

significance of the notion of mirror, to follow him we must have an idea of where this very significance comes from. We may begin with a very general distinction that has been made within Buddhism. Then, we will try to clarify this first distinction by way of a second one, which will bring us closer to the idea we seek. Finally, we will have to make a geographical transition to arrive at the answer to our problem.

Consider, first, the question, Is the mirror an illusion or is it only the image of an illusion? In Chan Buddhism (*zenshū* 禪宗, *chánzōng*), we must distinguish between a fallacious and a beneficial sense of the image of the “mirror” (*kagami* 鏡, *ādarśa*, *jìng*).

Fallacious acceptance denotes the denunciation of the infinite “objectivizing projection” that people impose on themselves and the things of the world. Out of this projection, which represents to a certain extent the role of “birth and death” (*shōji* 生死, *samsāra*, *shēngsǐ*), emerges belief in the “individual soul” (*jīga* 自我, *ātman*, *zìwǒ*), because the analogy to the looking glass requires someone reflecting in it and constituting an identity by means of that reflection.¹¹⁸

Our investigation of the first aspect of this fallacious acceptance begins by seeing how the reflection of the looking glass ultimately entails, in Nishida’s terms, an endless representation of the same reality. This is the case with the reciprocal opposition of the reflected and the reflecting, where reflection turns out to be an infinite opposition of a movement of *coming and going*. We should recall here that Nishida always criticizes “reciprocal relation” (*sogō kankei* 相互關係)¹¹⁹ as a false unification, for example in the Fichtean *Schweben* of imagination, and the Lotzean theory of *Wechselwirkung*.¹²⁰ A new allusion to the mirror in 1944 makes this point clearer:

The endlessly reciprocal relation of independent things is neither mechanical nor teleological. Endlessly, individuals are [express themselves as] individuals and the whole is [expresses itself as] the whole; the world of contradictory self-identity must be a world that expresses itself. We can, of course, say that God expresses himself endlessly as

118. C. GREGORY, “Chan,” 6. “Le pointillé épistémologique.”

119. IG, 63–4 (77), P, 215–16, 254. Cf. NKPU, 626–31, 1372–5.

120. See NKPU, 626–31, 774–7.

the absolute present; Leibniz had already pointed this out (*Discours IX*). He states that substance is the mirror of God, or a mirror that expresses the entire universe in his own way.¹²¹ The idea that the monad constitutes one point of view with regard to the world already makes a momentary appearance here. To express oneself requires that the expressing is the expressed, all the while containing infinite expression within itself.

Since expression can merely be considered as the union of opposing things, in the reciprocal relation between two substances; it can be likened to the relation between one person and another. [...] Yet even at this point, Leibniz is not aiming at a contradictory self-identical principle of logic.¹²²

Leibniz had “caught sight of” (*chakugan shita* 着眼した) the idea of “self-expression” (*jikojishin wo hyōgensuru* 自己自身を表現する) in the idea that a “substance” (*kotai* 个体) expresses itself while expressing the universe “in its own way” (*sorezore no shikata ni yotte* それぞれの仕方によつて), like a reflecting “mirror” (*kagami*). This looking glass requires a substance constituting its identity in the moment of reflection. This mirror could be said to enlighten itself according to this idiosyncratic inscription in reflection. Leibniz had further recognized that this self-expression reflects in fact a divine operation, and is thus mostly perceptive in a God who “expresses himself endlessly, as the absolute present,”¹²³ that is, constitutes “the mirror of eternity” (*eien no kagami*).

Nevertheless, this specular vision is insufficient, and has to be cor-

121. “Toute substance est comme un monde entier est comme un miroir de Dieu ou bien de tout l’univers, qu’elle exprime chacune à sa façon, à peu près comme une ville est diversement représentée selon les différentes situation de celui qui la regarde. Ainsi l’univers est en quelque façon multiplié autant de fois qu’il y a de substances, et la gloire de Dieu est redoublée de même par autant de représentations toutes différentes de son ouvrage.” *Discours de Métaphysique et correspondance avec Arnauld* (Paris: Vrin, 1993), 45. Nishida makes marginal annotations on this passage in his *Discourse on Metaphysics, Correspondence with Arnauld, and Monadology*, translated by George R. MONTGOMERY (Chicago: Open Court, 1916), 15. *Cat.* nr. 286, p. 37. He underlines the expressions “eine und dieselbe Stadt,” “perspektivisch” in the corresponding §57 of the *Monadologie* in his German edition, 448. *Cat.* nr. 28, p. 133.

122. “Towards a Philosophy of Religion,” 116–17. Paragraphing added.

123. 絶対現在としての神は、何処までも自己自身を表現する

rected, a critical point Nishida had already made years earlier in 1938.¹²⁴ For him the Cartesian philosopher only considers the “expression” (表現 *hyōgen*) according to a simple “reciprocal relation.” However, the essential dimension is one of “self-expression”: the “individual” (*ko* 個) *is* and remains an individual while *expressing* itself, just as the “whole” (*zen'ichi* 全一) remains a whole, “God”; all of reality is caught up in this never-ending self-expression. Yet such self-expression is prior to the reciprocal relation of expression between substantial or human individuals. The “reciprocal relation” is a principle belonging to a logic of “expression” and “union of opposite things” (*sōhan suru mono no ketsugō* 相反するものの結合). These appear as the “expressing” (*hyōgen suru mono* 表現するもの) and the “expressed” (*hyōgen serareru mono* 表現せられるもの).

Nevertheless, the definition of expression according to this opposition is topologically insufficient, in that we remain stuck on the level of oppositional nothingness. This is why Nishida completes the definition by adding a topological element: “To express oneself requires that the expressing is the expressed *while containing an infinite expression with itself*.” We now find ourselves confronting a logic of contradictory self-identity and “unification.” The contradictory self-identical unity of reality endlessly expresses itself in a topological turn.¹²⁵ It “superimposes” (*kasaneru* 重ねる)¹²⁶ itself infinitely, suspended within the place of absolute nothingness. In this sense, the mirror does not represent the place of the constitution of the identity of someone or something, but is rather the place of the endless diffraction and levelling of identity within the horizon of self-enlightenment.

This brings us to the second aspect of the fallacious acceptance. Because the looking glass requires that someone be reflected in it and

124. In this connection see “The Position of the Individual in the Historical World,” 269 (138).

125. We cannot pursue, within the limits of the present essay, the question of how Nishida eventually conceived the “contradictory self-identity” as a topological unification. In P he develops this theory of the “contradictory unity” (*mujunteki tōitsu* 矛盾的统一), 274–5. In SE he distinguishes “simple reciprocal opposition” (単に相対する *tanni sōtaisuru*) from “reciprocally contradictory unity” (相互矛盾的一 *sōgomujunteki ichi*), 321.

126. I have analyzed this idea of Nishida’s in some detail in NKPU, 934–966.

that one's identity be contained in the reflection that is thrown back, the mirror becomes the cause of a specular mystification that generates a false belief in "being."¹²⁷ This situation can be conceived emblematically as the "narcissistic fascination" by which persons see themselves in everything.¹²⁸ This aspect is present in Nishida's argumentation when he follows Bergson's critique of the narcissistic operation of intelligence that looks into itself as though it were looking into a mirror.¹²⁹ We can understand this movement as an infinite monologue,¹³⁰ a simple tautology that explains everything by itself. That is why the problem of the number of mirrors is not sufficiently radical from Nishida's perspective, given the invariable and superficial exteriority of reflection, and why we have to imagine a mirror that "reflects *in itself* its own image."

Despite all these shortcomings, this image of the mirror can recover

127. C. GREGORY, "Chan," 5 "Le regard et le miroir."

128. In the essay 「図式説明」[Schematic explanations (1939)], NKZ IX: 332, following the essay ES, Nishida criticizes "moral action" that is "nothing more than "searching one's head with one's head." He uses here the expression *shōtō bekitō* 將頭覓頭, which appears in the *Discussions of Lin-Chi* († 867). See for example: *Entretiens de Lin-Tsi*, traduits du chinois et commentés par Paul DÉMIÉVILLE (Paris: Fayard, 1972), 148–9. P. Démiéville, *Le Concile de Lhasa* (CL) (Paris: Institut des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1987), 65–7, refers in the *Discussions* to the story of Yajñadatta, a man who liked to see his face in a mirror. One day this image disappears and he starts to run about in search of his head. This image was the product of his imagination that he was chained to. The real head corresponds to enlightenment, our genuine but invisible face that Yajñadatta has overlooked.

Without entering into further detail here, suffice it to note that Nishida will refuse the simplistic idea of a mirror as a simple medium for moral elevation, preferring to quote Dōgen rather than Lin-chi to evoke the essential nature of a "self-enlightening mirror." This refusal corresponds to the transition from a Roycian infinite reflection, that is to "search one's head with one's head" to a topological reflection of nothingness itself. See NKPU, 1334–43.

We should recall that Yajñadatta can be the *philosopher* himself, in contrast to a Nishidean philosophy that strives to "hollow out" itself, to open itself so as to include in itself its former expressions, as well as other philosophies. As J. MARALDO points out: "Nishida's thought may not perfectly "mirror" that of other philosophers, but unless it reflects concerns in common with them, it may end up a hall of mirrors mirroring only themselves with no one to see the show." "Self-Mirroring and Self-Awareness," below, pages 143–4.

129. EC, 170, 223, 228. Cf. NKPU, 531–40.

130. C. GREGORY, "Chan," 4: "Bodhi."

a *beneficial meaning* in Chan Buddhism by emphasizing its capacity to demonstrate the ordinary illusions that accompany us throughout life. These are not illusions that will simply leave us at some particular time, but illusions that we need to convert, as circumstances arise, into a “non-deceptive” everyday life, a life in which we live and die at each moment.¹³¹ In other words, the mirror offers only the image of an illusion that we must look at in a new way.¹³² It points to the possibility of escaping from the alternative between “being” and “non-being”: it is more a “sense of being” that is in question.¹³³ In fact, it is here, in the beneficial sense of the image, that we can stand firm and recognize the fallacious meaning. The mirror itself reminds us not to live in the illusion symbolized in the comings and goings of reflections in the mirror.¹³⁴

Yet the twofold meaning of the image of the mirror prompts us to reconsider from different perspectives the process of *coming and going* that it sets up. The philosopher does not remain on this level but invites us to conceptualize a higher form of unification, one focused on the “universe” (*uchū* 宇宙)¹³⁵ itself. In the perspective of Chan Buddhism, we are asked to consider this process through mental and physical exercises,¹³⁶ with the aim of forgetting it rather than, as is the case with Nishida, seeking “the formula of the manifestation of reality.”¹³⁷ How, then, are we to come to a philosophically clear notion of the “self-enlightening mirror”? If our intuition is correct about looking for an answer in Chan Buddhism and its reading of the mirror as an image of the fallacy of everyday illusion, and from there seeking connections to Nishida’s speculations, how can we bring greater precision to this exercise?

At this point we need to pose a second guiding question. Do we need to polish the mirror and wash it so that it can shine by itself? According to Paul Démiéville, the image of the mirror can be understood in

131. *Ibid.* 2: “Le terme proche.”

132. *Ibid.* 1: “Dhyāna.”

133. *Ibid.* 8: “Une “pensée” translogique.”

134. *Ibid.* 6: “Le pointillé épistémologique.”

135. IG, 82 (101).

136. Our next quotation will show that this is the context of the “gradual doctrine” about the vision of the absolute.

137. IG, 63-64(77).

terms of a fundamental distinction within Chan between the “gradual” doctrine (漸, *jiàn*, *yugapat*) of Shén Xiù (Jishū, 神秀, 606–706) and the “sudden doctrine” (頓, *dùn*, *karma*) of the sixth patriarch of Zen Buddhism, Dàjiàn Huìnéng (大鑑慧能 Daikan Enō, 638–713).¹³⁸ He suggests reconstructing the distinction from the verses of the Platform Sutra.¹³⁹

For the supporters of the “sudden” doctrine, the vision (*kien*) of the absolute inside us occurs in a “sudden” manner, outside of all temporal, causal, or other *conditions*, without need for a previous imperfect look (*k’an*). By sudden (*touen*, *yugapat* in Sanskrit, “in one glance,” the Platonic *éxaiφnès*) we must understand a total aspect of salvation, linked to a synthetic conception of reality, to a philosophy of the immediate, the instantaneous, the non-temporal, which is simultaneously the eternal. Things are considered “in one glance,” intuitively, unconditionally, in a revolutionary perspective, while “gradualism,” an analytical doctrine, claims to lead to the absolute by *gradual* processes (*tsien*, *kramavrittīyā* in Sanskrit, the Platonic *éphèxès*), through a progressive succession of various activities, moral and cultural practices, mystical exercises, intellectual studies—a full range of activities that condition salvation. The “suddenists” denied this possibility, claiming to devote themselves merely to the passive experience of the absolute.¹⁴⁰

The mirror appears then to be inseparable from its complement, *dust*, as an image of the gradual doctrine:

[...] the bronze mirror that shines by itself in all its purity, *as soon as someone rubs away the dust covering its surface* [...]. Gradualism insists on the necessary effort to get it rid of these alien impurities, to “wipe and rub the mirror.” Suddenism wants to take into account only its essential purity, until it comes to refuse itself recognition of the existence of impurity: the distinction of purity and impurity already implies a dualism, a relativism contrary to the unpredictable character of the absolute, which is “empty” of all determination.¹⁴¹

138. CL, 10–18 and notes.

139. *Liuzudashi fabaotanjing; sokei daishi betsuden* [六祖大師法寶壇經]

140. Paul Démiéville, “Le miroir spirituel” in *Sinologica, Zeitschrift für chinesische Kultur und Wissenschaft* 1 (1948): 114–15.

141. *Ibid.*, 114, 115. Emphasis added.

The problem here is not so much with the reflection but with the “purification,”¹⁴² with how to eliminate the impurities on the surface. Matters are further complicated when we consider it in the broader context of the problem of self-enlightenment. How is one to let the mirror shine by itself? Or to formulate it in more precisely: How is one to clean the mirror so as to make its “inherent clarity” visible?¹⁴³

The radical novelty of this problem of self-enlightenment is reinforced when we recall that Taoist China knew the image of the mirror only as a way to illustrate “the impassibility, the passivity, the apathy of the Taoist saint”¹⁴⁴ or “enlightened sovereign.”¹⁴⁵ True, the distinction between the reflection and the reflected was dominant. Moreover, the metaphor of the mirror was easily conflated with the symbolism of “water” as a kind of looking glass that reflects “the external world” as long as its “surface” was not clouded or agitated,¹⁴⁶ that is, as long as the water was still, “stopped,” not flowing. Nishida, however, insists that the mirror cannot be reduced to a simple and quiet “face” (*kyōmen*). The mirror is essentially living; it is the source of the process of “speculation” itself that animates the mirror. Its surface *ripples*, “undulates”¹⁴⁷ in reflection,¹⁴⁸ in the stream and “fluidity” (*ryūdō* 流動)¹⁴⁹ of unification.

To be “quiet” is to do nothing, like a mirror reflecting *something* or *nothing* —passively.¹⁵⁰ Here the “inherent clarity” of the looking glass is

142. *Ibid.*, 116.

143. *Ibid.*, 116.

144. *Ibid.*, 117.

145. *Ibid.*, 121.

146. *Ibid.*, 118–22.

147. In the philosophy of “the true living will” (*shin ni ikita ishi* 真に生きた意志), “completely free” (*zenzen jiyū* 全然自由, IRSC, 133, 138, 269–70, 300–1), Nishida had already characterized the “development” (*hatten* 発展, *egressus*) of the will as an “undulatory progression” (*hadōteki shinkō* 波動的進行). The most fundamental concept, dating back to 1917, was spoken of as a self-expressing reality, which is only secondarily “fossilized” (*kasekiserareta* 化石せられた), recovered, and distorted in the “footprints” (*sokuseki* 足跡) it leaves behind, much like the mirror is, prior to its reflections and free of any dust that can accumulate on its surface. See NKPU, 475–83.

148. Both in the sense of *reflection*₂ and *reflection*₃. Reflection is both transition in oneself and the production of reflections.

149. IRSC, 97(192). See NKPU, 405–407.

150. The image of the mirror can be said to illustrate a sort of passive nothingness

never self-generated; it is a property of what it reflects and of the purity of its surface. The face of water reflects the entire universe, just as the Leibnizian monad constitutes a “living mirror” of the universe,¹⁵¹ as Nishida recalls in his 1938 essay.¹⁵² The difference is that for Nishida the mirror of the “universe” is dynamic and hence must be conceived as an increasingly cosmological “unifying force,”¹⁵³ in contrast to views of the cosmos as a finite unity totalized in reflection.¹⁵⁴ Thus, the absolute is understood as “the universality in which the diversity of the *world* unifies itself, somewhat like stoicism.”¹⁵⁵

The model of unification considered as a finite and static unity, “calm” and “plain,” corresponds to that which enables the reflection:

One does not look at oneself in the churning stream; *one looks at oneself in still water*, since it is calm. One will not see one’s face in rough iron; *one sees it in a clear mirror*, because it is plain.¹⁵⁶

It is because there is passivity and unity that there is reflection. The

indifferent to its being reflected:

Should there be a sound or not, the Bodhisattvas hear. For them the hearing is permanent (*tch’ang* 常), because they had realized that the *essence* of the sound is permanent (*cheng t’i tch’ang kou* 聲體常故) and that hearing had as its *essence* inactivity (*pou tong che wen t’i* 不動是聞體). Hearing is like a mirror that mirrors (this is what maintains its essence as a mirror), whether or not there happen to be visible objects (*rūpa*) to mirror. (CL, 358)

Such an “essence” of the mirror is not an ontological one: the mirror mirrors (that is, we are talking here of the mirror *as such*) whether there *is* something to mirror or not. Nevertheless, such a mirror surely opposes the dynamic and unfolding nothingness Nishida had in mind by refusing the idea of a “stoppage” (*teishi* 停止, *tomaru* 止まる). See NKPU, 66, 73, 103, 130–2.

151. *Monadologie*, §56. Nishida marks the whole passage in his edition *Hauptschriften zur Grundlegung der Philosophie*, 448, *Cat.* nr. 28, p. 133, underling: “lebender, immerwährender Spiegel des Universums,” and inscribing “Spiegel” in the margin.

152. See “The Position of the Individual in the Historical World,” 230 (71).

153. *Tōitsuryōku* 統一力, 1G, 155 (175–6)

154. “All the multiple diversity of the *world* returns for him [Tchouang-tseu] to *unity*” P. Démiéville, “Le miroir spirituel,” 118. Emphasis added.

155. *Ibid.*, 120. Emphasis added

156. *Ibid.*, 120. “The Buddhas, from innumerable ages, are detached from any kind of thoughts as ‘graspable’ or ‘ungraspable.’ They are without thought or reflection, just as a clear mirror (*meikyō* 明鏡, *mingjing*.)” CL, 83. See also, 95–6, 108.

desiring, intellectual activity, the division, clouds the reflection.¹⁵⁷ How can the active sense of self-illumination be conceived through such a quietist approach? A calm and plain unity is something *finished*, and this is what allows one to look at oneself. This is the ontological domain of *reflection_t*—a reflection that can never enlighten itself. Are we not compelled to conclude that only the topological conception of unification can allow us to understand the self-illuminating power of the mirror? It is because this unity is plunged into the infinite depth of absolute nothingness that it superposes itself in an endless activity of unification. And what ignites such a “self-consciousness” of unity in itself is the eternal flame of absolute nothingness.

That said, the gradualist does approach the metaphorical import of Nishida’s problem of purification in the sense that the reflections at the surface of the mirror are like impurities, and the metaphor of the stream water like that of the troubled waters of a pond.¹⁵⁸ Plato, Plotinus, and Philo of Alexandria (13 BCE–54 CE),¹⁵⁹ for all their differences, always understand the mirror in one of two ways, either as an epistemic object of speculation in an etymological sense¹⁶⁰ or as a symbol of the soul and its component part. This latter presents us with the mirror as something that reflects something else and can itself be veiled and distorted by impurities that need to undergo a “purification,”¹⁶¹ a kind of “baptism”¹⁶² in the Christian sense. Since Plato impurities are seen as a kind of “rust”¹⁶³ (an image picked up by Gregory of Nyssa, 335–395) that are assimilated to the other, non-reflective face of the mirror.¹⁶⁴

Whence this notion of self-illumination? Démiéville clearly marks the turn: “It is never a question of a person relocating purely spiritual purity

157. “Le miroir spirituel,” 121.

158. *Ibid.*, 122, 127. As it is expressed in Arabic philosophy, always associated with the idea of reflecting something else. In al-Ghazzālī (1059–1111) the mirror, that is, the soul, is rusty and needs to be scrubbed and polished.

159. *Ibid.*, 128–30.

160. See also the Gospels and especially Paul’s allusion to seeing “in a mirror” as opposed to seeing “face to face” (1 Cor. 13:12).

161. “Le miroir spirituel,” 130, 132, 134.

162. *Ibid.*, 132.

163. *Ibid.*, 128, 134.

164. *Ibid.*, 133.

within, an absolute interior. The Chinese were lacking in such notions.” The conceptually driven metaphor comes rather from India and Buddhism.¹⁶⁵ Mahāyāna Buddhism, especially in its theories of “emptiness” (*śūnya-vāda*), employs images of reflection, but these have more to do with illusion than with self-illumination. Reflections represent the totality of illusory things floating on the surface of a purely empty reality, and the exteriority of what does the reflecting itself is seen as illusory. Pure emptiness expresses itself rather in the “interpenetration” of all things, symbolized by Indra’s net of jewels that reflect off each other, and even more so by “the figure of an individual situated between two mirrors facing each other within which he reflects himself infinitely.”¹⁶⁶ This is the same idea Nishida used to characterize the Roycian system of self-representation, and is not unlike images found in Kegon Buddhism.¹⁶⁷

165. *Ibid.*, 123.

166. *Ibid.*, 123–4.

167. Nishida refers to the Kegon (*Kegonshū* 華嚴宗, *Avatamsaka*, *Bhūyānzōng*) School of Buddhism in 「日本文化の問題」[The problem of Japanese culture (1940)], NKZ XII: 283, 346–7. The “free interpretation of facts” is the “absence of obstacle between the facts” or the “free interaction of events with events” (*jiji muge* 事事無礙) according to the English translation: “The Problem of Japanese Culture (excerpts),” translated by M. ABE and R. DEMARTINO in *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), 860. It refers to the Great Master of Xiānshǒu (大師賢首) or Fǎzàng (Hōzō 法藏 643–712), the third Patriarch of the Kegon School, who expressed the absolute non-substantiality of reality, symbolized by the sun Buddha (*birushana* 毘盧遮那, *vairocana*), as that which “penetrates all things with its infinite light, to which all things return as to their source.” Cf. F. Girard, *Un moine de la secte Kegon à l’époque de Kamakura, Myōe (1173–1232) et le “Journal de ses rêves”* (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1990), 7, 42–3, 226.

This optical introduction leads us to the image of the mirror as used in Kegon, to illustrate, both esthetically and rationally, the *jijimuge*—even if Nishida does not seem to refer to the image of the mirror in this context (see *Cat.* nr. 745, 750, 1060, 1070, pp. 322–3, 340–1). To begin with, *mirror symmetry* has an esthetical function, for which use, see HAYATA Kazuya: “Generation of Mandala Patterns from Texts that Include Sutras, Poems, and Strings of Words: Methods and Examples,” *Forma* 19 (2004): 233–64. In addition, Fǎzàng demonstrated the *jijimuge* to his Imperial patron, the Empress Wū Zé Tiān (武则天, 625–705), as expressed in Indra’s net of jewels by means of mirrors. Setting up a series of ten mirrors (not just two) in a square room, facing each other—one above, one below, one on each of the walls, and one in each corner—and surrounding a statue of Buddha that was illumined by a single candle in a darkened room. In the third Patriarch’s words:

Is this pure coincidence, no more than a chance drawing on a common stock of perceptive experiences? Or does Nishida mean to refer implicitly to Buddhist images? Take the metaphor of the endless reflection between two facing mirrors to represent any oppositional nothingness to be distinguished from absolute nothingness. The latter indicates the locus of a transitive and effective unification; the former, a locus of mutual penetration. The problem of self-illumination is not pursued here in that the idea of “conditioned co-arising” contravenes both the idea of a reflection created by the external world and the idea of a reflection produced by the mirror itself.¹⁶⁸ In other words, *the mirror shines by itself, only to the extent that it is cleaned, that someone else had made visible its “inherent clarity.”*¹⁶⁹ The “clear mirror” is a result. Can the fact that the mirror “becomes clear and clean”¹⁷⁰ really be understood as a self-illumination? Despite the problems, we see a fundamental characteristic of absolute nothingness here in the sense that the exteriority of the world is reduced to something like an illusion referring to an “absolute” of which we can say that it is the container inside of which everything operates.

In each and every reflection of any mirror you will find all the reflections of all the other mirrors, together with a specific Buddha image in each, without omission or misplacement. The principle of interpenetration and containment is clearly shown by this demonstration. Right here, we see an example of one in all and all in one—the mystery of *realm embracing realm ad infinitum* is thus revealed. The principle of the *simultaneous arising of different realms* is so obvious here that no explanation is necessary. These infinite reflections of different realms now simultaneously arise without the slightest effort; they just naturally do so in a perfectly harmonious way.

Zhenji ZHANG, *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality: Philosophy of Hua Yen Buddhism* (Pennsylvania: Penn State University Press, 1971), 24. See also: Thomas S. CLEARY, *Entry Into the Inconceivable: An Introduction to Hua-yen Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1983), Francis H. COOK, *Hua-yen Buddhism: The Jewel Net of Indra* (Pennsylvania: Penn State University Press, 1977). SATŌ Atsushi 佐藤 厚「如来蔵の鏡と華嚴の鏡」[The mirror of Ju-lai-shen and the mirror of Hua-yen], 『印度学仏教学研究』[Journal of Indian and Buddhist studies] 98 (2001). However, should there be two or ten mirrors opposed, from a Nishidean perspective, the “infinite inter-reflections” (Zhang) belong to the image of the mirror that illustrates oppositional nothingness and not absolute nothingness.

168. *Ibid.*, 125.

169. *Ibid.*, 116.

170. CL, 108.

Historical research, though hinting at the genealogy of this radical conception of self-illumination, only takes us so far. Whereas this image, at least so far as the theme of this essay is concerned, seems to be traceable historically to the debate over suddenist and gradualist doctrines in Chan Buddhism, what are we to make of Démiéville's insistence that China lacks a radical understanding of the self-illuminating mirror? Indeed, a further remark seems to put Nishida's theory at stake: "I will not trace this metaphor [of the mirror] in medieval and modern literature. Most of those authors are only making *variations* to topics coming from biblical and patristic sources."¹⁷¹ This seems to recommend that we follow the trajectory of this image in Japanese intellectual history. But how are we to navigate our way across such a vast sea of thinkers, sects, and concepts?

At the end of his essay "Schematic Explanations,"¹⁷² Nishida gives us a clue by quoting a phrase from Dōgen: "If the stranger comes, he appears there; if the Chinese comes, he appears there." Since the original context for this sentence has to do with the image of the mirror,¹⁷³ we could hardly find a better place to begin than with the founder of the Sōtō (曹洞宗 Cáodòngzōng) sect of Zen Buddhism in Japan.

Place is nothing but the extension of the phenomenon. Besides, Dōgen expresses this place of apparition, this field of presentation, through the metaphor of the mirror. We always carry along with us a mirror the size of our world, either one foot long or reaching to infinity. Just as space, without being directly visible, is a condition of

171. "Le miroir spirituel," 135. Emphasis added.

172. "Schematic Explanations," 333. See translation and commentary in NKPU, 1339–41, where we show how Nishida is also alluding to a theory of unification in Dōgen's thought.

173. 胡来胡现、汉来汉现. The sentence appears in the chapter 19 "The Ancient Mirror" (*Kokyō* 古鏡), of the *Treasure of the Eye of the Authentic way* (*Shōbōgenzō* 正法眼藏). I refer here to Pierre NAKIMOVITCH, *Dōgen et les paradoxes de la bouddhité* (DPB) (Genève: Droz S.A., 1999), 133–7, 214, 294, 353; and the Japanese edition published by Iwanami Bunko (Tokyo, 2004), 11–45. It is obviously impossible here to analyze in details the whole chapter as well as the notion of "mirror" according to Dōgen. We will limit ourselves to the relation to Nishida's philosophy in the scope of the topics treated in this paper.

the possibility of seeing: “Everything that is clear is a clear mirror.” As a necessary representation, it is not an independent object: “Xuěfēng speaks of a mirror such that if a Barbarian comes, a Barbarian appears in it, and if a Chinese comes, a Chinese appears in it. [These words] do not mean that they come and appear in the mirror, neither within it nor without it nor simply with it. We need to pay attention to these words. At the very moment the Barbarian and the Chinese *come* and *appear*, the ancient mirror makes them *appear* and *come*. If we were to say that the mirror exists even when they are hiding, the apparition would darken and the vision lose all meaning.” On the one hand, this explanation shows us through its transformation of the verbs *to come* and *to appear* that the apparition is prior, that it makes possible all comings and happenings, and that *coming* does not mean arriving from a world outside of the mirror. On the other hand, since the condition is contemporaneous with the conditioned and coextensive with it, there is neither being nor appearance of any place apart from what appears in this place. This condition of receptivity had to be understood without opposing the sensible to the intelligible, the spirit to the eye: “In the great round mirror of the Buddhas, ...the spirit and the eye look like each other.”¹⁷⁴

We may distinguish three aspects here. First, the “ancient mirror” (*kokyō* 古鏡) represents the sum of apparitions, the appearance itself, in its “priority” to the coming of events, according to a *phenomenological*¹⁷⁵ turn: everything appears in it. Second, the “clear mirror” (*meikyō*) is the apparition of the ancient mirror, the appearing of appearance itself, and the image of *awakening*.¹⁷⁶ In a novel sense, *self*-illumination gives birth to an illumination of the *self*. Thus, finally, this *epistemic* conception reveals a new kind of “knowledge of mirrors,” one detached from objective ties, catching “apparitions” and the “self” not *as* “objects” that *are*, but *as such*.¹⁷⁷ To conform itself to its “essence,” the mirror itself does

174. P. Nakimovitch, quoting Dōgen (the passages set in quotation marks, 『正法眼藏』二, 18, 28, 16) and commenting on Xuěfēng, DPB, 136–7.

175. It is interesting to refer here to the analysis of the phenomenon of appearance by M. Henry, *L'essence de la manifestation*, 63–6.

176. DPB, 214, 353.

177. “Mirroring knowledge” is opposed to the “reliance” (*shoe* 所依, *āśraya*) on

not “exist” (*sonshu suru* 存取する)—except insofar as we take “existence” as meaning ontological acceptance—prior to appearances, as if they were “hiding” themselves (*kuin* 俱隱). Conversely, the appearances does not “exist” prior to the mirror, as “objects,” “things,” “beings,” “persons,” “dust or speck.”¹⁷⁸ That is why “spirit” (*shin* 心) and “eye” (*gen* 眼) “look like each other” (*sōji* 相似),¹⁷⁹ and why “intelligible” and “sensible,” subject and object, are no longer distinguishable in knowing. Dōgen here refers to the very same notion Nishida refers to in his gloss on Leibniz, the “great round mirror” (*daienkyō*) which had been precisely related to “knowledge” (*chi* 智).

At this level, we find indeed the conception of a mirror that does not reflect an external thing approaching it and appearing on its surface. Dōgen,¹⁸⁰ in his gloss of the words of Xuěfēng Yícún (Seppō Gison 雪峯義存, 822–908) insists on the inversion of the verbs: the “ancient mirror” makes “appear” (現) that which occasions the “coming” (来). Without apparition, there is no coming. We find here the idea of a mirror *making* the images *appear*. As Dōgen states, “While it is neither clarity nor image in itself, it immediately *forges* the images.”¹⁸¹ The Japanese verb *iru* 鑄る is used to “forge” a weapon, “cast” a metal, and “mould” or “shape” a “statue” or “image” (*zō* 像). Accordingly, we may see the “self-enlightening mirror” here. Insofar as the transition from the “ancient mirror” to the “clear mirror” corresponds to an appearing of appearance itself, we can say that the mirror illuminates itself. The mirror also possesses a veridical dimension, which brings it closer to Nishida’s allusion to “true

being: “Subjective views rely on [*āśraya*] objects. The one who seeks support and a place to stand is dependent and alienated. We must then abandon all points of anchoring, concrete or abstract, and reverse the mistakes by a “conversion of support” [*āśraya-parāvṛtti*] that results in “mirror knowledge” [*adarśajñāna*]. The mirror does not grasp anything, reject anything; it receives [welcomes] the reflections passing by” (DPB, 276).

178. See the next quotation: “Will dust that will not be on the mirror stay in the whole world with ten points East?”

179. 『正法眼藏』二, 16.

180. 『正法眼藏』二, 28.

181. 鏡は金にあらず玉にあらず明にあらず像にあらずといへどもたちまちに鑄像なる 『正法眼藏』二, 19, quoted in DPB, 214; emphasis added.

nothingness,” that which produces the thing *as such*. In contrast, false, oppositional nothingness receives it such as it *is*, like a being.

Still, our parallel between the two Japanese thinkers does not stand up to scrutiny. In the first place, the terminology may seem “phenomenological,” but even if Nishida endeavored at first to build a theory resembling phenomenology (particularly after his readings of the *Logical Researches* of Husserl from 1915 to 1919), he just as quickly began to criticize it and finally to see it as topologically enclosed in the place of oppositional nothingness.¹⁸² But the self-enlightening mirror represents absolute nothingness. Therefore, if Dōgen’s theory were truly phenomenological, explaining Nishida’s conception by reference to Dōgen’s would entail a kind of topological incoherence. But is this really the case? Do we not find rather in Dōgen a kind of “phenomenalism,” understood as a theory of appearing? The kind of “knowledge” involved here implies a complete dissolution of the distinction between “subject” and “object,” that runs counter to key phenomenological ideas such as “retention,” “constitutive ego,” “intentionality,” “noesis” and “noema.”¹⁸³

Moreover, the real difference between the two thinkers has to do with the aspect of the “wrapping” or “folding.” P. Nakimovitch, in his commentary on Dōgen’s words cited above, notes the aspect of “place”: the mirror is the “place” of apparition that enables the vision of any thing. What role does “place” really play here? Is it a philosophical or a physical idea?¹⁸⁴ For Dōgen, the statement: “If the stranger comes, he appears

182. GS, 463. NPTP, 179–85.

183. Concerning how Nishida uses these notions in a non-phenomenological sense, see NKPU, 912–15.

184. I would endorse here the remark of Ralf MÜLLER: “But whether, and if so, how to relate Dōgen’s writings to modern Western philosophy is a controversial matter. Although it stands in a horizon quite different from ours as regards time, *place*, genre, practical context, and so forth, people do not hesitate to introduce his *Shōbōgenzō* into the dialogue. But the fact is, it was not written in a tradition even remotely resembling Roman or Greek philosophy.” “Sources of Philosophy in Pre-modern Japan?,” included in the present volume; emphasis added. We can say at least that Dōgen, like Nishida, seems to reject spatial determinations. The mirror is “neutral” to spatiality, and so must the real place of absolute nothingness be. Moreover, as I am arguing here, it is not only the spatiality but also the topological notion of “wrapping” that helps to distinguish the perspectives of the two thinkers.

there; if the Chinese comes, he appears there” does not mean that these persons “come and appear” (*raigen* 来現) on the surface of (*ueni* 上に) the ancient mirror, *within* (*uchini* 裡に), *without* (外に *sotoni*), or simply *with* (*todōsan* と同參) the ancient mirror. Nakimovitch comments: “The mirror stands between the outside and the inside; it is neither external nor internal; it is neutral.”¹⁸⁵ With Dōgen, the refusal of all determinations such as “external,” “internal,” “in,” and so forth, is to be understood within the context of “non-dual” thinking (*funi* 不二, *advaita*) and the denial of any archetype emerging to appear in the mirror.

For Nishida, however, the place of absolute nothingness “enfolds” all other localizations and all of reality, with the result that he continually stresses a fundamental interiority, frequently repeating the expressions “located in” (*oite aru* 於いてある) and “within” (*uchi ni* 内に). If absolute nothingness had an exterior, it would cease to be absolute and its exteriority would have to be conceived solely from within interiority.¹⁸⁶ Nakimovich, quoting first Dàijàn Huìnéng and then Dōgen, clarifies a notion of place that is in no sense a wrapping place:

It is the mirror knowledge that Huìnéng describe in the stanza:

At awakening, originally, no trees,
The clear mirror is without setting
From the origin, no things,
Where would the dust be?

We must understand that “all that would be clear is the clear mirror [...] Aside from the [question], “Where would [the dust, speck] be?” there would be no “where” for it to be. A fortiori, will dust that cannot be on the mirror stay in the whole world with ten points East?” The face of the mirror neither receives nor reflects any image coming from elsewhere. It merges with the play of appearances. The mirror is neither container, nor screen, nor ground.¹⁸⁷

185. 『正法眼藏』二, 28, quoted in DPB, 214. Emphasis added.

186. P, 215–16. See also the text 『哲学論文集』第四補遺 [Supplement to Philosophical Essays IV, (1944)], NKZ XII: 434. See also Nitta, *Nishida's Philosophy as a Modern Question*, 73, and NKPU, 808–16.

187. DPB, 294. 『正法眼藏』二, 18.

One should not stay *attached to* or “rely on” (*shoe* 所依, *āsraya*,) the notion of “place,” not even as a philosophical category. For Huinéng the mirror is without a “setting.” For Dōgen, apart from the rhetorical question about place, all talk of place is through and through illusory, “*there is no place where.*”¹⁸⁸ For Nishida, in contrast, the mirror represents a certain actuality of a place, an infinite “wrapping” of itself, “containing” (*fukumu* 含む) being inside itself, “inverting” (*honmatsu tentō* 本末転倒) itself to become a flat “screen” and a final “ground.”¹⁸⁹

Clearly the two thinkers diverge on the notion of “place.” For Dōgen, there is no place other than the spatial place that is to be questioned as illusory. But the spatial localization for “things” is precisely the flat ground the real place had become by way of ontological enlightenment. For Nishida, there is “no place” because the real place is not the spatiality of oppositional nothingness, but the place of absolute *nothingness*. This is where topological questioning itself first becomes possible, a place ceaselessly emptying itself and swallowing (包み込む *tsutsumikomu*) the questions that thinking poses of it. At this level, we find the abyssal place that enables thinking to make a “leap” (*hiyaku* 飛躍) or “fall” into speculation.

The radical novelty of Nishida’s philosophical reflections on the mirror, compared to the variety of approaches East and West considered above, lies in his topology. The originality of his idea of a “self-enlightening mirror” lies in the idea of a radical *self*-illumination of reality itself that precedes any concern with the awakening of the individual or of the individual’s efforts to make the mirror shine by itself. Such autonomy can only be understood in a place of “emptying” (*kū suru koto*),¹⁹⁰ that is to say, in the place of absolute nothingness.

This dynamic emptiness brings about the “emptying” that refuses and destroys any “finite” (*yūgen* 有限)¹⁹¹ and fixed determination or “deter-

188. 「いづれのところ」にあらざれば「いづれのところ」なし。

189. It is not possible to reproduce Nishida’s theory here. The reader is referred to ISCS, 141, 159 (282–3, 326), and my paper: “De la néontologie chez Nishida Kitarō” as well as the explanations given in NKPU, 513–52, 756–71.

190. P, 221.

191. P, 70.

mined being,”¹⁹² and that entails the infinite unification of everything in reality. Continuously enlightening itself through the disclosure of the emptiness in its abyssal depth, bringing light to darkness and being to non-being, absolute nothingness disappears only in the outer crust of its own reflection. The mirror that enlightens itself disappears when enlightened reflection recovers its original and profuse activity—when, so to speak, the light hides the source of light, when all light comes to be.

192. P, 217–32.