Nishida Kitarō's Language and Structure of Thought in the "Logic of *Basho*"

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Numerous analyses have been made of Nishida's logic of *basho*. Some have compared it with Plato's notion of *khōra*. Others have emphasized its originality through a comparison to Aristotle and Kant. These attempts have helped to clarify this encompassing type of logic. Another approach, so far given little attention, focuses on a careful examination of his writing style. Following this approach, we are able to see how the logic of *basho* maintains very close ties with the syntactic structure of modern Japanese, which began to take shape around the turn of the twentieth century under the simultaneous influence of classical Chinese, colloquial Japanese, and the translation of Western philosophy and literature. It is also said that Nishida himself, through considerable trial and error, has made a great contribution to modern Japanese grammar and the establishment of an original philosophical style.

This gives rise to a question. Was it because the Japanese language itself is "encompassing" (*furoshikigata*, *kakarimusubi*) that Nishida ended up creating a logic of *basho*? If this is the case, his efforts to construct an original logic by way of the Japanese language would have necessarily entailed an encompassing logic. Or was it because Nishida was creating

a logic of *basho* that he wrote in an encompassing style which he himself helped to create?

Both hypotheses seem to be true. Since Nishida thought in Japanese, there is no doubt that the language influenced his ideas. But this did little to diminish the long and painful struggle of forcing his philosophical concept of *basho*. In addition, the result cannot be said to be specific to Japanese thought but has a universal appeal that Western philosophy cannot afford to overlook. It is therefore difficult to argue just how far the logic of *basho* is typically Japanese, despite its close ties to the Japanese language. Without the special genius that Nishida brought to bear on a language strongly influenced by the Chinese language for centuries and by European languages since the late nineteenth century, it is doubtful that anything approaching his logic of *basho* would have emerged.

In any event, this complex linguistic conditioning obliges us to pay attention to the following points: (1) the encompassing character of Nishida's syntax, (2) the case ending *ni* に (in / within) and the use of sentences in the passive the voice, (3) the postpositional locution *ni oite* に於て (in, within), and (4) expressions formed with *oite* 於て. In what follows I shall take up each of these in turn.

THE ENCOMPASSING CHARACTER OF NISHIDA'S SYNTAX

Several authors have commented on Nishida's writing style, but rarely has the connection between his logic and his very particular syntax been drawn. Nishida himself mentioned his writing style on two occasions: in a 1916 essay entitled "The Problem Lies in the Refinement of the Spoken Language" (NISHIDA 2009, 5–6), and again in a 1938 short text entitled "The First Time I Began to Write Essays in the Spoken Style" (NKZ 13, 153–4). The purpose of these two essays was to relate his writing style to the "unifying of spoken style and written style" (*genbun icchi* 言文 一致). "Spoken style" refers to the familiar idiom that Nishida had begun using in 1905. Even as early as 1938, the general public remained puzzled by the grammar of classical Japanese and the use of *kana*, because they were no longer taught it in school, even in high school. Almost

all the instruction had focused on classical Chinese. However, Nishida came to compose more philosophical essays in an amalgam of the spoken and written languages because he felt that this approach allowed him to express his thoughts more freely. It was through his struggle with language that he came up with his distinctive philosophical writing style.

Indeed, Nishida developed his own syntax by making use of all the linguistic resources at his disposal. He stressed the need to master both the classical Chinese and classical Japanese in order to compose in the spoken style. He also considered it necessary to draw inspiration from translations of Western philosophy and literature in order to enrich the Japanese language and his own mode of expression, given that modern thought in Japan was greatly indebted to European and American culture. These different linguistic elements gave Nishida the freedom to create his own philosophical style. But they also lent his syntax a style described by Kobayashi Hideo (1902–1983) as "a bizarre system that is neither in Japanese nor, of course, in a foreign language."[1]

In all of this, Nishida was a pioneer with no prior models to rely on. Trial and error was his only option. As Ueda Shizuteru (1926–) has remarked concerning the link between Nishida's writing and his philosophical activity, "it is as if he spoke a language without grammar and wanted to find out by talking" (Ueda 1995, 175–82). The only way for Nishida to acquire the philosophical language he needed was to create it by using it. At the same time, he always stressed the need to be accurate in expressing thoughts and feelings, sometimes to the detriment of the literary quality of his essays. He preferred original phrasing to literary elegance because this allowed him to clarify on the page what we saw clearly in his mind: "I think that I express without ostentation, and just as it is, the thinking that I developed. I think that pure and clear thought is goes along with its expression" (Nishida 2009, 6). From such a viewpoint, the idea of reworking the literary style of his sentences struck him as superfluous. The only flaw he himself recognized in his style was the certain stiffness that came under the influence of classical Chinese.

For Nishida the Japanese spoken language was at the time characterized by the formula *nani nani de aru* 何々である. By his own admission,

1. See Heisig 2001, 35.

"It was quite difficult for me to pass from classical Chinese writing style to the form *de aru*" (NISHIDA 1965, 153). Nevertheless, the shift brought him to a style of writing that led him directly to the development of his logic of *basho*. Indeed, the complete formula *nani nani ga nani nani de aru* 何々が何々である ("something is such-and-such a thing") represented the Japanese translation of the traditional form of judgment in Western philosophy. As a fundamental form of knowledge, the judgment includes a subject (*shugo* 主語), a copula (*keiji* 繋辞), and a predicate (*jutsugo* 述語). Its standard form is the subsumptive judgment, in which the subject is subsumed within the predicate:

特殊的なる主語が一般なる述語の中に包摂せられるのが判断の本質である。(NKZ 4: 177)

The fact that the particular subject is subsumed in the universal predicate is the essence of judgment.

Tokieda Motoki (1900–1967), who built a Japanese grammar under the inspiration of Nishida's written style, argued that in the European sentences the verb "to be" is equivalent to the base of a scales supporting the subject on one side and the predicate on the other.

Once the verb "is" has been translated into Japanese as *de aru* である, the emphasis changes. Then the judgment acquires the meaning of a "cloth-bundle form" sentence (*furoshikigata*). Nishida's originality lay in adding a *basho*-character to Aristotle's universal predicate. In other words, he conceived the universal predicate as encompassing since, according to a statement frequently appearing in his texts, "that which is" is located in a universal:

赤は色であるという判断に於て、繋辞は客観的には一般的なるものに於て特殊なるものがあり、一般なるものが特殊なるものの場所となると云うことを意味する。(NKZ 4: 226)

In the judgment "red is a color," the copula (である) means at the objective level that the particular is located in the universal and that the latter becomes the *basho* of the former.

Given this emphasis on the encompassing or *basho* character of the predicate of judgment, Nishida went on to propose a predicative logic, his so-called "logic of *basho*." The judicative sentence, *nani nani ga nani*

nani de aru 何々が何々である ("something is such-and-such a thing")—as well as the stress put on the copula *de aru* である—which Nishida analyzed variously to stress the encompassing character of the universal as *basho*, was seen as one of the many instances in which locutions of place could be put to the service of an encompassing logic, as we will see in the following sections.

THE CASE ENDING *NI* に (IN/WITHIN) AND SENTENCES IN THE PASSIVE VOICE

Tokieda, to whom we alluded earlier, was the first to examine the structure of the Japanese language from a comparison of Saussure's theories with traditional Japanese. His originality lay in questioning the mechanical imposition of the grammatical categories of European languages onto Japanese. For Tokieda, some Japanese case endings include a kind of spatiality and "figurability": *ga* が, *wo* を, *ni* に, and *de* で. French and English had prepositions equivalent to these case endings, but both languages are inflected, whereas Japanese is an agglutinative language. In the latter, the case-endings play the role of the endings in Latin. Such analogy only goes so far, however, in that Japanese case endings have a much wider function than do prepositions in French or in English.

Nishida divided the four case endings mentioned above into two distinct groups: *ga* が and *wo* を, on one side; *ni* に and *de* で, on the other. Unlike nouns, qualifiers, and verbs (grouped together under the generic term *shi* 詞), these case endings, known as *ji* 辞, have no semantic meaning or conceptual content. In fact, *ji* 辞 gathers together "all invariable and variable endings, that is to say, in today's terminology, all endings and functional suffixes" (ASARI 1999, 213). In short, *shi* 詞 is that which possess a designatable *signifié* while *ji* 辞 covers endings and suffixes.

In order to express the encompassing character of his logic, Nishida made extensive use of the case ending *ni* に and of several locutions of place constructed with *ni* に (on the latter, see the following section). In French and English, these are all uniformly translated as *dans* or *in* respectively. These words are all but transparent to those fluent in those languages. But in Nishida's essays in Japanese, the reader is struck by

their ubiquitousness as well as by the subtle differences that distinguish one use from another.

Let us first examine the role of the case ending *ni* に. At the grammatical level, *ni* に indicates the location of something. In some cases, it shows the movement and the end point. In Nishida's language the word has a very general meaning and is normally used with the verbs of existence *iru* いる and *aru* ある to draw attention to a fixed point, a place or *basho* occupied by an object or entity. From the early years of the Japanese language, the word indicates an essential and indispensable spatial precision, as in the following quotation:

> [ものは] 永遠にある。(NKZ 6: 182)
>
> Things are located in eternity.

Even more interesting is the fact that when it is used by Nishida in connection with some specific action verbs (to be discussed later), *ni* に marks the place in which something undergoes the action of the verb:

> すべてが認識対象界に映されたる映像に過ぎない。(NKZ 4: 233)
>
> Everything is only an image reflected in the world of cognitive objects.

This quotation shows that it is *in* the world of cognitive objects, understood as *basho*, that things are reflected. In other words, consciousness is the place in which real things are transformed into objects of knowledge. The quotation also shows that the case ending *ni* に—as well as the postpositional locution *ni oite* に於て and the locution of place *no naka ni* の中に (to be taken up later)—is often accompanied by an encompassing verb in the passive voice, as in the following example:

> 特殊的なる主語が一般なる述語の中に包摂せられるのが判断の本質である。(NKZ 4: 177)
>
> The fact that the particular subject is subsumed in the universal predicate is the essence of judgment.

In this type of passive-voice construction, we find four necessary elements at work. First, there is the content (see also the following section), indicated by the *kakari* or topical element *ha* は, which is often

replaced by *ga* が, depending on strength of the insistence Nishida wants to put on the "content" of the *basho*. Following the theory proposed by Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801), the function of *ha* は is that of *kakari-musubi*. The *kakari* provides the subject or topic of the sentence and the *musubi* covers the final part of the sentence. Broadly speaking, the *kakari* element represented by *ha* は is always subsumed or encompassed by the *musubi* element. For in Nishida's mind, *ha* は is above all the mark of the subject or Aristotle's "individual" subsumed in a predicate:

> [超越的述語面は] "は" 主語とならないものである。(NKZ 5: 61)

> [The plane of the transcendent predicate] does not become a subject "*ha*."

The second element found in Nishida's passive-voice sentences is the *basho*. It appears from the collection of essays Nishida published in 1926 under the title *From the Acting to the Seeing* that the logic of *basho* did not begin with the essay entitled "*Basho*," which comes seventh in the book and was only composed in June 1926.

In fact, the word *basho* had appeared for the first time two years previously, near the beginning of an essay entitled "What Lies behind Physical Phenomena?" which was included in the same collection. There *basho* is treated as equivalent to physical space.[2]

In December 1925, he wrote an essay entitled "That which Acts," in which the word *basho* appears several times in contexts very similar to those found in the "*Basho*" essay. This still primitive notion of *basho* evolved considerably until the establishment in 1926 of the logic of *basho* itself, but the point to be made here is that the few occurrences of the word *basho* before the essay "*Basho*" suggest that Nishida's main intuitions about the logic he was creating, especially its encompassing char-

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2. Nishida states that the physics of close acts (*kinsetsu sayō* 近接作用) explains the physical phenomena by understanding space as a "field of force" (*chikara no ba* 力の場). This type of thinking focuses on the space in which the action appears. Here is clearly an outline of the concept of *basho*. Indeed, Nishida uses the term a few lines later: 物が働くとは如何なることを意味するか。或者がその位置を変ずるというも、我々は場所其物を見るのではない (NKZ 4: 49). (What does it mean that things move? We do not see the *basho* itself even if a thing changes its position.)

acter, were already at work in 1924, and even before, especially when he dealt with the problem of time in 1918.

In other words, in addition to the word *basho*, Nishida employed a number of other encompassing words and expressions. In short, the logic of *basho* is not limited to the word *basho*. Even after "*Basho*," this word remained one way Nishida characterized "the place in which" (於てある場所) some content is located. Precisely because the meaning of the term *basho* is so broad, everything with an encompassing character is considered by Nishida as a *basho*, even at the epistemological level.

The key terms used for express the encompassing character of the *basho* are these: *ba* 場 / *bamen* 場面 (place, field)[3]; *ya* 野 (field)[4]; *tokoro* 所 (place)[5]; *ishiki* 意識 (consciousness)[6]; *ishiki ippan* 意識一般 (consciousness in general)[7]; *men* 面 (plane)[8]; *tachiba* 立場 (position, level, standpoint)[9];

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3. 真に力の関係を内に包むものは力の場という如きものでなければならぬ。(NKZ 4: 217) (That which truly encompasses in itself the relationship between forces must be the field of forces.)

4. 意識の野も作用を超越して之を内に包むものと考えられねばならぬ。(NKZ 4: 214) (The field of consciousness also must transcend and encompass [the acts of consciousness]; 実在としての力の於てある場所ともいうべきものは、超越的意識の野ともいう如きものでなければならぬ。(NKZ 4: 241) (I might also speak of the field of the transcendent conscience as the *basho* in which the force is located as reality.)

5. 我々がそこに於てあり、そこに於て働く所が、現実なのである。(NKZ 9: 153) (Reality is the place in which we are located and in which we act.)

6. 厳密なる意味に於て場所が場所に於てあるということは、単に意識ということを意味するであらう。(NKZ 5: 64) (The fact that in the strict sense, the *basho* is located in a *basho* means simply the consciousness.)

7. 意識一般は [...] 所謂意識作用も之に於てある場所でなければならぬ。(NKZ 4: 231) (The consciousness in general... must be the *basho* in which the "acts of consciousness" also are located.)

8. 判断的一般者の超越的述語面というのは主語となって述語とならない個物の於てある場所であって、(NKZ 5: 6) (The plane of the transcendent predicate of the universal of judgment is the *basho* in which the individual—the subject that does not become predicate—is located); [主語] を包む一般者は超越的述語面或は超越的場所という如きものでなければならぬ。(NKZ 5: 61) (The universal that encompasses the subject must be the plane of the transcendent predicate or the transcendent *basho*.) The plane does not indicate only a specific *basho* but also a level of encompassing.

9. 対立的有の立場に於て不可知的なる力の作用であったものは、対立的無の立場に於て意識作用となり [...]。(NKZ 4: 234) (That which was the act of an unknowable force at the level of the oppositional being becomes an act of consciousness at the level of the oppositional nothingness.)

ippansha/ippanteki naru mono 一般者／一般的なるもの (the universal)[10]; *rui gainen* 類概念 (generic concept)[11]; *keisō/keisei/keishiki/katachi* 形相／形成／形式／形 (form)[12]; *kūkan* 空間 (space)[13]; *enkan* 円環 (circle)[14]; *toki/jikan* 時／時間 (time)[15]; *genzai* 現在 (present)[16]; *eien no ima* 永遠の今 (eternal now)[17]; *watashi* 私 ("I")[18]; *jiko* 自己 (self)[19]; *genjitsu* 現実 (real-

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10. Nishida means by "universal" any reality that encompasses another reality. For example, society is, contrasted to the individuals who compose it, a universal. Broadly speaking, Nishida describes the universal this way: 一般者が自己に於て自己に於てあるものを限定する。(NKZ 6: 223) (The universal determines in itself what is located in itself.) This citation is remarkable because the expression "in itself" appears twice and consequentially. This double insistence on "being-in" highlights the encompassing structure of Nishida's philosophy. It also demonstrates that a universal can never be separated from its content. In fact, the encompassing character of Nishida's philosophy indicates the relationship of all elements of reality.

11. 一つの類概念の中に於てのみ相反するものが見られるのである。(NKZ 4: 219) (Contraries are seen only within a generic concept.)

12. In Nishida's philosophy, each *basho* or each "place in which" is a form compared with its content. But this is not Plato's pre-existing form. Rather, form and content are given simultaneously: 「於てあるもの」に対して「於てある場所」が形式と考へられるのである。(NKZ 6: 223) (Compared with "that which is located in," the "place in which" is considered as a form.)

13. 私は知るということを意識の空間に属せしめて考へてみたいと思う。(NKZ 4: 215) (My intention is to try to think the knowing by making it belong to the space of consciousness.)

14. 絶対無の場所というものを周辺なくして到る所が中心となる円の如きものと考えれば […]。(NKZ 6: 235) (If one thinks the *basho* of the absolute nothingness as a circle without circumference and whose center is everywhere….)

15. すべて実在的なるものは時に於てあると考えられ、時は実在の根本的形式と考えられる。(NKZ 6: 341) (All that which is real is located in time. Time is the fundamental form of reality.)

16. アウグスチヌスの如く時は現在に於てあると考えねばならぬ。(NKZ 6: 183) (One must admit, as did Augustine, that time is located in the present); 具体的現在というのは […] 時の空間でなければならない。(NKZ 9: 149) (The concrete present… must be the space of time.)

17. 時は永遠の今の中に回転するのである。(NKZ 6: 377) (Time turns in the eternal now.)

18. 私は、私の意識現象を内に包むものでなければならぬ。(NKZ 4: 210) (The "I" must contain in itself its own phenomena of consciousness.)

19. 自ら空うして自己の中に質料を包み、自己の中に自己を形成し行くことが知るということである […]。(NKZ 4: 239) (Knowing consists in encompassing within oneself the matter by emptying oneself and in constructing oneself within oneself…); 知るということは自己の中に自己を映すということでなければならぬ。(NKZ 4: 223) (The knowing must consist in reflecting oneself within oneself.)

ity)²⁰; *rekishi no sekai / rekishiteki sekai* 歴史の世界／歴史的世界 (historical world)²¹; *kankyō* 環境 (environment).²²

The third essential element in Nishida's sentences constructed in the passive voice is the aforementioned case ending *ni* に and the postpositional locution *ni oite* に於て (on which, see the following section). Nishida also uses a number of locutions of place, namely: *no naka ni* の中に,²³ *no naka ni oite* の中に於て ²⁴ and *no uchi ni* の内に.²⁵ These last three locutions mean, as *ni* に, "in" or "within." Some other locutions of place are used to express not the encompassing character of a *basho*, but the precise level of the argumentation: *no ue ni / jō ni* の上に／上に and の立場に於て *no tachiba ni oite*. At the grammatical level, these two locutions mean mainly "at the level of." ²⁶

20. 現実は我々を包み、我々を圧し来るものでなければならない。(NKZ 9: 181) (Reality must encompass and dominate us.)

21. 歴史の世界に於てはゴーガテンの云う如く、いつも私と汝と相遇うのである。(NKZ 6: 417) (As said Gogarten, it is in the world of history that the "I" and the "thou" always join together); 歴史的世界に於て主観と環境とが何処までも相互否定的に相対立する。(NKZ 9: 160) (The subject and the environment oppose absolutely each other within the historical world, through a reciprocal negation.)

22. 有るものは何かに於てあると考えられる如く、物は環境を有つと考えられねばならない。(NKZ 6: 344) (In the same way that "that which is" is located in something, things must have their own environment); 私の所謂「於てあるもの」と環境との間には特殊と一般との関係がなければならぬ。(NKZ 6: 348) (There must be, between "that which is located in" and the environment, a relationship between the particular and the universal.)

23. The meaning of the locution *no naka ni* の中に is very close to *ni oite* に於て. It expresses a spatial area. For Nishida, it shows not only a physical space but also, by extension, all kind of *basho*: その一般的なるものは個物的なるものを自己の中に映すものでなければならぬ。(NKZ 4: 227) (This universal must reflect within itself the individual.) The context shows that the universal is here understood logically as a predicate encompassing a grammatical subject. The *within* is not static but indicates that the encompassing of the subject is done by the predicate from its own encompassing position.

24. Note that when Nishida wants to put even greater stress on the aspect of encompassing, he combines *no naka ni* の中に and *ni oite* に於て to form the locution *no naka ni oite* の中に於て. That way, he insists strongly on the encompassing character of "the place in which" a content is located: 一つの類概念の中に於てのみ相反するものが見られるのである。(NKZ 4: 219) (Contraries are seen only in a generic concept.)

25. Less common than *no naka ni* の中に, *no uchi ni* の内に has the same meaning: 私はかかる［意識の］場所は直覚の内に包み込まれるのではなく却って直覚其物をも包むものであると思う。(NKZ 4: 224) (I think that this *basho* [of consciousness] is not encompassed in the intuition; on the contrary, it encompasses the very intuition.)

Finally, passive-voice sentences necessarily require encompassing verbs in the passive voice, as we have seen. We may offer a virtually complete list of the encompassing verbs used by Nishida, whether in passive voice, active voice, or causative form: *fukumu* 含む (to contain, to include),[27] *hōsetsu suru* 包摂する (to subsume),[28] *tsutsumu* 包む (to encompass),[29] *tsutsumi komu* 包み込む (to encompass),[30] *hōgan suru* 包含する (to encompass), *hōkatsu suru* 包括する (to encompass),[31] *bossuru/botsunyū suru* 没する／没入する (to be absorbed),[32] *utsusu* 映す (to reflect).[33] With the same

26. Nishida uses these expressions in a slightly different way that indicates at which level of *basho* a content is located. Therefore they can be translated as "at the level of." This obviously implies that in contexts where these locutions occur, Nishida seeks to move from an encompassing level to a more encompassing level: 対立的無は尚真の無の上に映されたる有なるが故に […]。(NKZ 4: 230) (Since the oppositional nothingness is still a being reflected at the level of the true nothingness…); 対立的無の立場に於て、意識作用としての判断即ち判断作用というものが考えられるのである。(NKZ 4: 230) (Judgment as act of consciousness, namely the act of judgment, is thought at the level of the oppositional nothingness.)

27. 然るに、働くものはその中に反対を含むものでなければならぬ。(NKZ 4: 218) (Nevertheless, that which acts must contain in itself its contrary); 他を映すということは、何処までも自己に対立するものを自己の中に含むということでなければならない。(NKZ 9: 75) (To reflect the other means necessarily to include in oneself that which is opposed to oneself.)

28. 特殊的なる主語が一般なる述語の中に包摂せられるのが判断の本質である。(NKZ 4: 177) (The fact that the particular subject is subsumed in the universal predicate is the essence of judgment.)

29. 意識一般の立場はすべての有を包む無の立場なるが故に […]。(NKZ 4: 233) (Since the position of the consciousness in general is the position of the nothingness that encompasses all the beings….)

30. 自己同一なるものの述語面が主語的なるものを自己の中に包み込んだと考えられる時、即ち主語が述語の中に没入したと考えられる時、私があると考えられるのである。(NKZ 5: 17) (The "I am" is thought when the plane of the predicate of identical things encompasses in itself the subject, that is to say when the subject is absorbed in the predicate.)

31. 外に基体として考えられた一般者は個物的なるもののすべてを包含する場所という如きものとなり、(NKZ 4: 194) (The universal thought from outside as a *substratum* becomes a *basho* that encompasses all the individuals.)

32. ノエマ面の中に没したと考えられる時、内的生命の世界というものが考えられる。(NKZ 6: 244) (The world of the internal life is thought when the plane of the noema is absorbed in the plane of the noesis); 主語が述語の中に没入するのである。(NKZ 5: 69) (The subject is absorbed in the predicate.)

33. しかしかかる対象の背後にも、之を映す鏡がなければならない、対象の存在する場所というものがなければならぬ。(NKZ 4: 214) (However, there must be behind these objects a mirror that reflects them, a *basho* in which they exist); 私は自己の中に自己を映すという自覚の考えか

meaning of encompassing, Nishida uses a different set of words, less common than the previous ones: *kakomu* 囲む (to enclose, to circle, to surround),[34] *moru* 盛る (to include),[35] *zōsuru* 蔵する (to possess, to contain, to harbor),[36] *haramu* 孕む (be filled with),[37] *suikomu* 吸い込む (to absorb).[38]

Incidentally, there are also in Nishida two other kinds of sentences marking the encompassing character of the *basho*. First we have sentences in the active voice, just as common as those in the passive voice:

> 判断が成立するには、主語的なるものを包む述語的一般者がなければならない。(NKZ 5: 98)

> For a judgment to be established, there must be a predicative universal that encompass the subject.

Second, there are sentences in causative form:

> 我と非我との対立を内に包み、所謂意識現象を内に成立せしめるものがなければならぬ。(NKZ 4: 208–9)

ら出立して見たいと思う。自己の中に自己を映すことが知るということの根本的意義であると思う。[…] 知るということは先づ内に包むということでなければならぬ。(NKZ 4: 215) (I am trying to begin with the idea of self-awareness, which consists, for the self, in reflecting itself in itself. I think that "to reflect in itself" is the fundamental meaning of knowledge…. To know consists above all in encompassing in oneself.) In this quotation, the close link between "to reflect" and "to encompass" is obvious. To reflect consists in receiving, in harbouring (*yadosu* 宿す) things in oneself, in making them established in oneself.)

34. 又我々を囲み我々を限定すると考えられる、我々の於てある環境と考えられるものも、単なる物質界という如きものではなくして、表現の世界という如きものでなければならぬ。(NKZ 6: 367) (Moreover, that which surrounds and determines us—the environment in which we are located—is not the mere "material world" but the "world of expression").

35. 即ち右に云った如く内在的なる場所の内に超越的なるものを盛ることができる。(NKZ 4: 242) (As I said before, the sensation can therefore include what is transcendent in the immanent *basho*.)

36. 芸術的理念が働きを蔵し、時を含む […]。(NKZ 4: 72) (The artistic idea harbors the acting and contains the time…); 行為的自己のノエマ面的意義を蔵する表象面からは […]。(NKZ 5: 457) (…from the representative plane that harbors the dimension of the noematic plane of the acting self.)

37. 現在が過去を負い未来を孕む一つの時間的連続である。(NKZ 9: 169) (The present is a temporal continuity which assumes the past and is filled with the future.)

38. 云はば [直観的な世界は] 我々が何処までもその中に吸い込まれ行く世界である。(NKZ 9: 200–1) (So to speak, [the intuitive world] is the world in which we are absolutely absorbed.)

There must be a thing which, at the same time, contains in itself the opposition between the self and the non-self, and makes the "phenomena of consciousness" establish themselves in it.

The postpositional locution *ni oite* に於て(in, within)

When Nishida wants to emphasize the encompassing character, he attaches it to the postpositional locution *ni oite* に於て.[39] This is a fixed expression formed with *ni* に and *oite* 於て, which is the suspensive form of the verb *okiru* 起きる, the latter having lost its original meaning. According to Japanese grammar, *ni oite* に於て is attached to a name that designates a place, time, or situation. It is possible to replace this locution with the case ending *de* で, but unlike *de* で, it provides a hint of change.

Nishida uses *ni oite* に於て extensively to emphasize the encompassing character of that in which something is located.[40] What is at stake is the relation between the *basho* and its content (*naiyō* 内容). The content is expressed by Nishida in terms of *aru mono* 有るもの, namely "that which is." It refers to any realities encompassed in a larger reality. Nishida never deals with the *basho* without specifically mentioning its content. Each content is the self-determination of the *basho* in which it is located. In return, each *basho* is determined in relation to its content. The postpositional locution *ni oite* に於て is the key to understanding this close

39. The following expression is also found in Nishida's essays: に於てから, as well as its variants: に於てからは, に於てからして, に於てからしては. All imply, to one degree or another, "from the interior of." They indicate that something is located in a *basho*, but furthermore that it occurs from, or is the self-determination of, this *basho*. It is the same for the expression *ni okeru* に於ける.

40. Nevertheless, Nishida did not always signify the encompassing of something in its *basho* by using *ni* に or *ni oite* に於て. In the following citation, the encompassing character is implied in context and in the formulation 情意の映される場所: 情意の映される場所は、尚一層深く広い場所でなければならぬ。(NKZ 4: 224) (The *basho* in which sentiments are reflected must be a deeper and larger *basho*.) In this context, it is clear that the *basho* has, compared with what is reflected (the sentiments), the status of a "place in which." That is why the relationship between the *basho* and the sentiments must be expressed using the expression "in which."

link between "that which is" and its *basho*, as we can see in the two following sentences, where the "*basho*" is indicated with the number (1), the "content" with the number (2), and *ni oite* に於て with the number (3):

唯 (2) 有るものは (1) 何か (3) に於てあるという (1) 場所の意義が変じて来るのである。(NKZ 4: 243)

> (1) 何か, 場所
> (2) 有るもの
> (3) に於て

That which changes is only the meaning of the (1) *basho* which consists, for (2) "that which is," in being located (3) in (1) something.

すべて (2) 有るものは (1) 何か (3) に於てある。(NKZ 4: 223)

> (1) 何か
> (2) 有るもの
> (3) に於て

All (2) "that which is" is located (3) in (1) something.

When we read Nishida's essays in the original and note the importance of the postpositional locution *ni oite* に於て, the working of the logic of *basho* becomes very clear, not only at the ontological level as in the above quotations but also at all levels of his argumentation, as in the following passage that indicates the psychological level:

アウグスチヌスも過現未は心に於てあると云って居る。(NKZ 6: 185)

Augustine also says that the past, the present, and the future are located in the spirit.

We know that Augustine tried to resolve the paradox of the being and the non-being of time by locating the narration (recounting things of the past) and prevision (anticipating the future) *in* the spirit or *in* the soul. It is not clear whether Nishida noticed the importance Augustine attached to his choice of Latin prepositions of place. But it seems clear that he reinterpreted Augustine's "spirit" as the "self" and understood the latter as the *basho* of temporality.

Another striking example of Nishida's use of *ni oite* に於て and of its capacity to express the encompassing character of the *basho* has to do

directly with the "self." In an essay dating from 1929, Nishida defines self-awareness as follows:

> 自覚ということは自己が自己に於て自己を見るということである。見るものなくして見るということは「自己が」が「自己に於て」となることである、即ち場所其物となることである。(NKZ 5: 427)

> Self-awareness means that the self sees itself in itself. Seeing without a seer means that the "self as *noesis*" becomes the "self as *basho*," that is to say, the *basho* itself.

Here Nishida's perspective is clear and embodied in his syntax, especially in his insistence on case endings set in brackets. The *jiko ga*「自己が」is the self as noesis, namely as self-awareness that sees itself. The case ending *ga*「が」shows the noetic part of the sentence. The *jiko wo*「自己を」designates the self again, but as noema or as an object seen by the self as noesis. The function of the case ending *wo*「を」is to mark the noematic plane of the self. As for the *jiko ni oite*「自己に於て」, it is precisely the self as *basho* in which the self as noesis and the self as noema come into contact. The *ni oite*「に於て」of the expression *jiko ni oite*「自己に於て」means that the self-awareness occurs "within" a *basho*, that is to say the self itself. Furthermore, this expression implies that the previous element, the self as noesis, and the following element, the self as noema, have to be examined from their relationship within their *basho*, that is to say within the self as *basho*. In the self as *basho*, the noetic-noematic relationship is not simply oppositional but truly dialectic. It becomes a reciprocal relationship between two facts that occur simultaneously in their *basho*.

In sum, the sentence *jiko ga jiko ni oite jiko wo miru*「自己が自己に於て自己を見る」means that once located in the self as *basho*, the self as noesis forgets its subjective character in order to see itself not as an objet but, for the first time, as a relational fact that is self-aware and located in the historical world.

We may note that this definition of self-awareness as "self that sees itself in itself" did not take long to evolve. By 1932, it had been expanded to include what Nishida called in his essay "I and Thou" the "absolute other":

そして自己が自己を知るということは自己に於て絶対の他を認めることであると云った。(NKZ 6: 391)

Then, I said that the fact that the self knows itself consists in recognizing in oneself the absolute other.

Obviously, the self is a *basho* not only for itself at the epistemological level but also for the "other" at the relational and existential level. As long as the "absolute other" or the "thou" is located in the self as *basho*, it constitutes the self as a true "I" located in a society and in historical world.

Expressions formed with *oite* 於て

We know that Nishida did not hesitate to coin new philosophical terms drawing on the resources of the Japanese language. As such, expressions formed with *oite* 於て are extremely important since they indicate, at the syntactic level, the working of the logic of *basho*.

The *oite* 於て of the expression *ni oite* に於て is so important that Nishida combined it with the word *basho* 場所 to form the expression *oite aru basho* 於てある場所, which means precisely "the *basho* in which" or "the place in which." This expression underscores the *basho* as that which "encompasses" a particular content:

而して物の存在を認めるため、於てある場所という如きものが考へられねばならぬのである。(NKZ 4: 241)

Therefore, one must suppose a "place in which" in order to recognize the existence of things.

The second expression formed with *oite* 於て is *oite aru mono* 於てあるもの. The most accurate translation might be "that which is located in," that is to say, the content of the *basho* or of "the place in which":

「於てあるもの」は自己のある場所の性質を分有するものでなければならぬ。(NKZ 4: 227)

"That which is located in" must be a thing that possesses in part the qualities of the *basho* in which it is located.

This relationship between "the place in which" (the *basho*) and "that which is located in" (the content) can be found at every level of Nishida's philosophy: logical, epistemological, ontological, meontological, and existential. At the epistemological level, for example, "the place in which" is presented as the universal and "that which is located in" as the particular:

> それで我々の概念的知識は必ず三つの部分から成り立って居る。「於てあるもの」「於てある場所」と両者の媒介者とが区別せられねばならぬ。「於てあるもの」と云うのが主語と考えられ、特殊と考えられるものであり、場所と云うのが一般と考えられ、述語と考えられるものであり、というのは媒介者の一つの形である。(NKZ 5: 59)

> Then, our conceptual knowledge is invariably composed of three elements. "That which is located in" and "the place in which" must be distinguished from their intermediary. "That which is located in" is the subject or the particular; the *basho* is the universal or the predicate; in other words, the judgment is a form of intermediary.

In sum, Nishida's logic of *basho* consists in the *oite aru* 於てある, the "being-in," which is another expression formed with the locution *oite* 於て. It stresses the fact that each *basho* has a content of its own. This "being-in" is the fundamental meaning of this affirmation of Nishida's: "Everything that is" is located in something. There is an example of this about the subsumptive relations:

> 併し苟も [具体的概念] が概念と考えられる以上、「於てある」という如き包摂的関係が根底とならねばならぬと思う。(NKZ 5: 62)

> However I think that insofar as the [concrete concept] is a concept, its foundation must reside in subsumptive relations that which consist in "being in."

A close analysis of these expressions formed with *oite* 於て, namely *oite aru basho* 於てある場所, *oite aru mono* 於てあるもの, and *oite aru* 於てある, shows very clearly in what way the logic of *basho* is encompassing and goes a long way in dispersing the habitual mystique of incomprehensibility surrounding this kind of logic.

Conclusion

The above analysis has attempted to lay out a number of crucial factors for understanding the logic of *basho*. I should also make it clear that Nishida's logic is not a metaphysical logic aimed at organizing the various levels of reality into some sort of hierarchy, but a relational logic aimed at bringing together all the elements of reality. With the notion of *basho*, it was possible for Nishida to leave the domain of the modern "psychological self" to take into account all the aspects of the human being (intellectual, emotional, intelligible, artistic, moral, and religious) and to locate the human individual in a society and in the historical world, in relation with a "thou" and with the multiplicity of beings. This shift in perspective required Nishida to search "where" the self comes from and "where" it is located. In conclusion, his approach to answer the question of the "where" by employing case endings and postpositional locutions finally led him to a new syntax and a new philosophical grammar.

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Abbreviation

NKZ 『西田幾多郎全集』[Complete works of Nishida Kitarō] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965), 19 volumes.

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