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Globally Shared Common Sense from the Philosophy of Imagination

Bridging Eastern and Western Perspectives

Edited by
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Ritsumeikan University

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Editor's Preface

This compilation, entitled "Globally Shared Common Sense from the Philosophy of Imagination: Bridging Eastern and Western Perspectives," brings together an international spectrum of young researchers with a focus on Asian and Japanese philosophies as compared to Western philosophy, each of whom has already written stimulating works about Asian and Japanese philosophies from various aspects. I would like to offer all of them my gratitude and appreciation for their contributions.

Today, we in the global society are confronting extreme hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, retrospectively speaking, our global society has reached to a time in which the limitations of the present social economic system are appearing in serious problems such as economic disparity, climate change, violent confrontations, extremist politics, increasing mental disorders and so on and so forth.

There is an urgent need to confront these limitations. On the other hand, many people have started to elaborate a "new normal" in which the socio-economic ways of our lives can co-exist with the virus. However, many of the arguments over the "new normal" are quite impractical and short-sighted. They can be expressed as; "Oh, COVID-19 has come so let's change the way of social life. It's going to be OK!" In this rush to adapt and get on with our imagined normal lives there is a critical lack of curiosity about the profound questions which underlay the superficial everyday normalities; "Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?"

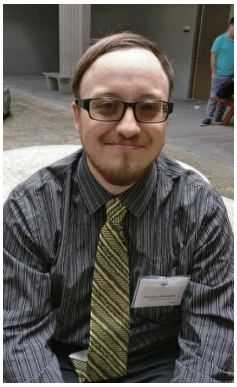
Modern life does not assign people a time for such thought and reflection, but as philosophers we carry the responsibility to answer these questions. We cannot leave our societies "lassez faire, laisser passer." Thus, in coining the title for this brief work, I have used

the terms “Globally Shared Common Sense” and “Imagination” and “Bridging Eastern and Western Perspectives” because I believe philosophy can recover our sense of time, and gather the temporal imagination of our pasts and futures to the present with its conceptual activities from transregional perspectives. Furthermore, it is my hope that the authors of these chapters will respond to our predicament, and provide us with meaningful suggestions, and that together we can show mankind a path to self-discovery and a meaningful social roadmap for a sustainable future.

MATSUI Nobuyuki

Contributors

Jonathan MCKINNEY



Chapter 1: The Philosopher's Path to San Jose: Nondualism, Distributed Cognition, and Imagination

Jonathan McKinney received his Ph.D. in Philosophy at the University of Cincinnati. He is also currently completing his MA in Experimental Psychology at the University of Cincinnati through the Center for Cognition, Action, and Perception (CAP). He completed his MA in Comparative Philosophy at the University of Hawaii with an emphasis on Buddhist and Japanese Philosophies. His research focuses primarily on Cross-Cultural Embodied Cognitive Science, Comparative Japanese philosophy, and community-based inquiry. His current projects include the development of tools for teaching engaging and community-based classes online, exploring agent-world, agent-tool, and agent-agent relationships, and establishing spaces for international and interdisciplinary research.

Dennis STROMBACK

Chapter 2: Reading Miki Kiyoshi's Anthropological Humanism in the Struggle against the Ecological Crisis

Dennis Stromback did his undergraduate and master's program in cultural anthropology at the University of Minnesota and received his Ph.D. from the Department of Religion in 2019 at Temple University in Philadelphia. His past and current research interests include the Kyoto School philosophy, Buddhist philosophy, and Critical Theory as well as a growing interest in bringing the first and second-generation Kyoto School thinkers into conversation with Latin American philosophy (in particular, with Enrique Dussel) in the service of diversifying the philosophical curriculum. His publications appear in academic journals such as *Buddhist-Christian Studies, European Journal of Japanese Philosophy*, and *Philosophy East and West* and *Comparative and Continental Philosophy*. He is one of the editors for the *Journal of Japanese Philosophy*.

MATSUI Nobuyuki

Chapter 3: What is the Globality of the "Common Sense"? Somatesthesia in the Age of Chaotic Capitalism

Nobuyuki Matsui is a visiting assistant professor at the Asia-Japan Research Institute, Ritsumeikan University, Japan. He received his Ph.D. in International Relations from Ritsumeikan University, and he is mainly involved in a research project on bridging contemporary Japanese and Western philosophy on global and social transformations through media technologies. Since his doctoral course, his research concern has been human pathos, the human body, and its historicity based on the philosophy of Charles Taylor. His current research interest extends to social transformation through ongoing relationships between digitizing capitalism and the bio-politics based on "common sense," rhythm, and ecology, especially through reinterpretations of Nakamura Yūjirō. His recent publication is "'Common Sense' and Encounters after the 'Capital-Nation-State' in the Digital Age: Nakamura Yūjirō vs. Karatani Kōjin in their Philosophies of Imagination" (2021, *Journal of the Asia-Japan Research Institute of Ritsumeikan University*, vol. 3).

Fernando WIRTZ

Chapter 4: Common Sense, Myth and Technology in Miki Kiyoshi

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Fernando Wirtz holds a Licentiate in Philosophy from the University of Buenos Aires and a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen. During his Ph.D. studies he spent one research semester at the University of Ritsumeikan and is a postdoc fellow at the University of Kyoto. His postdoc project, funded by the Thyssen Foundation, is about the concept of myth in the Japanese philosophy during the 1930s. Besides Japanese philosophy, he also specializes in German idealism, intercultural philosophy and philosophy of myth. He is also a board member of the *Gesellschaft für Interkulturelle Philosophie* (http://www.int-gip.de).

Tyler Tak-lap YEUNG

Chapter 5: Primacy of Imagination and *Sensus Communis*: In Considering a Transcultural Subjectivity

Tyler Tak-lap Yeung was born in Hong Kong. He received a Ph.D. from the Free University of Berlin in 2020 and is presently a postdoctoral fellow at Academia Sinica, Taiwan. He specializes in continental philosophy, focusing on the philosophy Kantian and Heidegger and comparative philosophy. His doctoral thesis seeks to explain Heidegger's interpretation of Kant's philosophy through an exploration of the "power of imagination," which serves as the basis for a theory of imagination with ontological-existential implications. His Master's thesis focuses on the theme of "hope" and attempts to formulate a "Kantian philosophy of hope" that emphasises the humanistic spirit in Kant's philosophy, countering the formalist or functionalist interpretations. In recent years, he has dedicated himself to cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural comparative philosophy. A selection of his works written in English, German and Chinese regarding Immanuel Kant, Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt, Mou Zongsan, Nishida Kitarō, etc., can be found on https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tak-Lap-Yeung/publications.

Chapter 1
The Philosopher's Path to San Jose: Nondualism, Distributed Cognition, and Imagination

Jonathan MCKINNEY

The title of this lecture, "The Philosopher's Path to San Jose, nondualism, distributed cognition, and imagination" is designed to invite readers to explore the fruitful fusion of embodied cognitive science, linguistics, and modern Japanese philosophy. The goal of this project is to tackle how we think about our world, both philosophically and in our everyday experiences. Importantly, I am not only talking about how human beings think about their world, but also what "world" in "world philosophy" refers to. A key problem of interest is how Western philosophy of mind and cognitive science focus almost exclusively on an abstract conceptualization of reason, which stands over and above our bodies and the natural world. This focus, as I will argue below, fundamentally distorts our understanding of both the mind-environment relationships in cognitive science and the history and philosophies of our shared world. Thus, in order to correct our misunderstandings of the world, we should view projects that challenge dogmatic views of the mind and the history of Western philosophy together.

The barriers we face are often referred to as dualisms, which construct and maintain boundaries between the mind and body, the mind/other minds, the human/nature, as well as between countries and philosophical traditions from different cultures. In cognitive science, the computational mind is taken as the control center of the body and the

primary means for our perception, knowledge, and capacity for action. In philosophy, this manifests in the borders between Western and non-Western traditions that we reify in the abstract. In order to imagine the East-West dualism differently, I will begin by developing ways that we think about ourselves and our world, and draw connections with how we think of the myriad philosophical traditions throughout history.

My project focuses on two paths that converge, or fuse, forming a strategy for engaging in productive cross-cultural research in cognitive science. I will begin with a jovial example from John Haugeland titled "The Road to San Jose," where he predicts and rejects the extended mind hypothesis made famous by Clark and Chalmers (Haugeland 1993/1998; Clark and Chalmers 1998). In doing so, I hope to recover Haugeland's worldview that has been often overlooked. The second is the approach to world philosophy developed by Nishida Kitarō, which I refer to as the "Philosopher's Path" in reference to the famous *Tetsugaku-no-michi* in Kyoto. It symbolizes his broad engagement with the world in cross-cultural philosophy and his non-dualistic approach that resonates with contemporary scientific worldviews. This lecture will focus primarily on ideas in embodied cognitive science and linguistics and will conclude with a reflection on Nishida's work.

What is Fusion Philosophy?

This work is only a part of a larger project that involves a method known as fusion philosophy, which is a form of cross-cultural philosophy that goes beyond mere comparison in order to meaningfully contribute to each side of the project. Fusion philosophy is widely debated and has been developed most recently in Chakrabarti and Weber's book *Comparative Philosophy Without Borders*. Unlike East-West comparative projects, fusion philosophy aims to create

something new that goes beyond dialogue or a bridge-building between traditions. This deals with both problems of symmetry where common generalizations of two traditions are taken equally, and asymmetry where one tradition is taken to be superior to the other. It is considered without borders, because it challenges the myths of supremacy and continuity of each cultural tradition without erasing them. Chakrabarti and Weber provide a quote from Jay Garfield (2002) to elucidate this.

> Philosophy is, however, a live enterprise, both in the West and in the East, and if cross-cultural philosophy is to mean anything and to contribute anything to philosophical progress, it must do so with a view towards ideas and their development…. The task is to provide a common horizon that can be a background for genuine collaboration and conversation in a joint philosophical venture. The possibilities for such a venture are enormous. The enlargement of the world's scholarly community and the range of texts and resources on which it can draw portends a greater philosophical depth and rate of progress (Garfield 2002; Chakrabarti and Weber 2015: 1–29).

Using this method, I explore how imagining the world differently impacts both our understanding of the mind-world relationship in cognitive science and our understanding of the history of world philosophies. In order to engage in philosophy and cognitive science responsibly, we must reimagine traditional notions of our world. Failing to do so risks creating and perpetuating misleading biases in philosophy, science, and society. The convergence of these two paths is motivated by the radical hypothesis that our mind is not contained "in the head," but is distributed throughout our world. Reimagining our mind and world in this way has major implications for our understanding of the

interconnectedness of human beings now and throughout history.

Path 1: The Extended Mind vs. The Embedded Mind

Let's begin with a pair of opposing ideas in contemporary Western philosophy of mind and cognitive science. To best understand the debate, we should view them side-by-side. The first comes from Haugeland (1993/1998) with his paper "Mind Embodied and Embedded" and the second comes from the famous Clark and Chalmers (1998) paper titled "The Extended Mind Hypothesis." I would like to demonstrate that Haugeland's argument predicts Clark and Chalmers' conclusions in a profound way and its importance extends beyond mere debates about the mind.

Haugeland writes,

> I have postponed till last the most obvious externalization of human intelligence — texts, images, maps, diagrams, programs, and the like — not because I underestimate their importance, but because they are so similar to what is traditionally supposed to be in the mind. That poses two dangers. First, it distracts attention from the radicalness of the claim that intelligence abides in the meaningful world: not just books and records, but roads and plows, offices, laboratories, and communities. Second, it makes it too easy for a traditionalist to think: "External representations are not really integral to intelligence, but are merely devices for conveying or restoring to intelligence proper — the inner mind — contents which it might otherwise lack" (Haugeland 1993/1998: 236).

So, to contrast that with Clark and Chalmers in the paper that follows Haugeland they say that it is possible to "extend" the mind on

rare occasions. They argue that;

> While some mental states, such as experiences, may be determined internally, there are other cases in which external factors make a significant contribution. In particular, we will argue that beliefs can be constituted partly by features of the environment, when those features play the right sort of role in driving cognitive processes. If so, the mind extends into the world (Clark and Chalmers 1998: 12).

Then, they move to introduce the famous Inga and Otto example, where Otto has Alzheimer's or has some sort of mental deficiency, but he can rely on his notebook that is ready to hand which helps him to store his memories externally. In direct contrast with the incidental extension proposed by Clark and Chalmers, Haugeland introduces his famous example of how he travels to San Jose, "[l]et me tell you how I get to San Jose, I pick the right road, Interstate 80 South, I stay on it, and I get off at the end." You can almost hear the jovial tone in his writing. He continues;

> Can we say that the road knows the way to San Jose, or perhaps that the road and I collaborate? I don't think this is as crazy as it may sound at first. The complexity of the road, its shape, is comparable to that of the task, and highly specific thereto; moreover, staying on the road requires constant high-bandwidth interaction with its very complexity. In other words, the internal guidance systems of the road itself must be closely coupled, in part because much of that information upon which the ability depends is encoded in the road (Haugeland 1993/1998: 237).

He argues, therefore, that the mind is not incidentally, but intimately

embodied and intimately embedded in its world. This is in contrast to the Clark and Chalmers case where they say that Otto can extend his mind to the notebook, because he is especially familiar with using it. In their view, it just so happens that the information lies beyond the skin. It's just incidental. Haugeland predicts the many shortcomings of the incidentally extended mind and presents a case that fits with our embodied experiences of the world. This has many far-reaching consequences, because it details a disagreement about the human's place in relation to the world. For Haugeland, even though he's just talking about thinking in particular situations like juggling or going to work, he is explaining that the world itself is filled to the brim with meaning. Importantly, our environment is something that our bodies and our brains are suited to interact with. Taking this a step further, because the coupling of the mind and environmental information is distributed, rather than centralized in the head, things like values and meaning can be seen as distributed.

Although Haugeland's critique has been overlooked by some, there is a parallel project in Ecolinguistics, which takes aim at the incidentally extended mind and its place within the broad 4E (embodied, embedded, extended, and enacted) Cognition movement.[1] Ecolinguists like Sune Vork Steffensen accept that the mind is not "in the head" but argue that there are problems with the idea that the mind is merely extended from the head to things like notebooks on occasion. Steffensen (2011) issues five challenges to the extended mind hypothesis and I will focus on two of them. He argues that language "... functions metaphorically as airborne synapses in distributed cognitive systems," and "... provides an extended ecology within which human cognizers engage in languaging."

1 However, Miki would criticize Bergson in the following moment for failing to dialectically unite intellect and instinct and instinct and collective habits. See MKZ 8, 109–110.

These moves are central to the idea that cognition and language are distributed through the environment and the world around us. Importantly, both human agents and the world are active parts of a mutual process of shaping and being shaped by each other. Steffensen articulates this with a profound series of comparisons (Steffensen 2011: 205).

> Language gives us some of the same advantages that spiders, beavers and monkeys get from their webs, dams and calls: it has ensured that each of us is equipped with an extended phenotype. However, as argued above, language is not organism-centered. Rather, the language-induced extension of the human mind and phenotype depends on a cultural meshwork that is constantly renewed by the interaction and co-action of human beings. Like the beavers' dam, languaging has a history that is influenced by situation-transcending third parties, just as what is left of our voices will silently contribute to the interactions of our descendants. Being the domain of third parties, our dam of language is heritable, variable and amenable to selection. The historically grounded, situation-transcending dimension of human cognition scatters its distribution in time.

It's difficult to grasp the implications of the distributed approach to language and cognition. For our purposes, this move helps explain how the peculiarity of language impacts how we think and imagine. If we think of the development of ideas over time, given the idea that some ideas linger and reshape our environment like a spider's web, the history of ideas and perspectives begins to take shape. While we are capable of engaging in conversations, human linguistic activities that change history go far beyond the abstract concepts in a song or lecture because

they are materialized or preserved in our world. In a sense, the world acts as Otto's notebook for all of us. What's especially interesting is that we can then begin to discuss how misunderstandings can be understood as forms of misinterpretations or mistranslations.

One result of this view is that the history of world philosophy has been a collaborative world-involving project, where our view of history has been painted by the narratives we spin over time. This is in contrast with the views of science and philosophy in many history books, which tell a monolithic story of Western ideas that begin in Greece, travel through Europe, and end in America without any mention of the myriad points of contact and influences from so-called non-Western traditions. It makes sense why contemporary science and philosophy discard non-Western ideas as non-scientific and non-philosophical because we have deliberately spun narrative webs about the greatness of Western civilization. One consequence of accepting the interconnected nature of the mind and world is accepting the interconnected nature of cultures and histories.

In their most recent work, Steffensen and Cowley (2021) develop an approach called Radical Embodied Ecolinguistics which aims to refocus language and human living in terms of interconnectedness and our world. They argue that "radical embodied ecolinguistics connects small-scale actions, the extended ecology and bio-ecological transformations based on social activity." This demonstrates how one can construct complex and highly abstract ideas through our connection to our shared world. This includes the fact that human civilizations are defined by their interactions and connections with each other.

> Instead of centering on individual persons, *languaging* is seen as sustaining human living. For ecolinguists, special weight falls on how its scientific extensions extend understanding beyond the

human domain (Steffensen and Cowley 2021: 732).

I interpret this as a shift from individual language use to language as a world-involving activity. This is deeply important because they are developing a scientific research program that does not place the rational human being above nature, which has been the standard of Western science for generations. Instead, they view the human being as a relational process of human becoming that involves interaction with each other and nature. Thus, I argue that in order to understand the lifecycle of ideas throughout human history, we have to think about the world in these terms.

This kind of radical non-dualistic approach to languaging and our world is easier to grasp with a concrete example. Consider the contemporary debate in America regarding the removal of monuments to Confederate generals from the American Civil War. This is an important example for this framework because it helps illustrate how bias and political ideologies emerge over time and how our environments shape them.

The United States has a long and complicated history with racism, racist laws, and white supremacist ideology. There is a kind of misremembering of history that results from a reimagining of US history which glorifies the Confederacy by covering up historical injustices and atrocities. At this moment, there are hundreds of statues built of Confederate generals and soldiers. In the abstract, it is possible to think of these as historical monuments designed to remind us of the divisiveness of our history. In reality, the majority of these monuments were commissioned decades after the Civil War in the 1920s in direct response to political movements fighting for equal rights for non-White Americans. They were political tools designed to glorify powerful symbols of cultural segregation and assert the power of white American culture. These monuments are materialized narratives of white

supremacy which persists today.

This has created problems today because as we start having real conversations about taking these monuments down, there are people who claim that this is an erasure of history. When you understand the mind as something that is distributed throughout the environment, you can start thinking about how brands, or statues, or signs are actually external memories. If you create something like a statue and you leave it there long enough, it will outlast your life and outlast the conversations you have about it. Even if you know the history of a particular monument, the next person who comes up is going to have to discover that for themselves.

Consider again how Steffensen likens the power of languaging to a beaver's dam. Each monument persists and shapes how others think about, interact with, and view the area. Language empowers us to change our environment in ways that will outlast any individual conversation. Thinking about ideas this way necessarily involves wrestling with how ideas, monuments, and works of art create cultural histories and national identities. This is deeply significant. When you think of things this way, there is a clear continuity between the problems in both the philosophy of mind and world philosophy. It is my hope that this shift in perspectives makes it more difficult to accept that Western philosophy and culture emerged in isolation. Instead, our view of a monolithic Western civilization is better understood as a series of misunderstood monuments to a false narrative of the past.

Path 2: A Reflection on Nishida's Worldview

Having explored ways to reimagine problems in Western cognitive science and linguistics, I would now like to conclude with a path forward toward cross-cultural cognitive science without borders. I

have written extensively about the fruitfulness of fusion philosophy as a method and the mutual benefits of exploring Nishida's nondualistic philosophy in dialogue with the enactive and ecological approaches in cognitive science (See McKinney 2020; McKinney et al. 2020). Now, I would like to turn to a brief reflection on Nishida's worldview and approach to world philosophy. Yusa (2002) captures key insights into Nishida's life as he reflects upon his work.

> Logic is not something separate from the historical world; rather, it is the formula of the expressive self-formation of historical life (*rekishiteki-seimei*). Even Aristotle's logic was not a simple formal logic; it was a historical and social logic of Greece that had Plato's philosophy in the background. As such, it was connected with the metaphysical world of the Greeks. But this does not mean that logic is a product of each historical epoch, nor does it mean that there is no objective universality. Rather, each historical epoch is a unique product of concrete historical life, and as such, it has its own way of looking at things and thinking about things. Each epoch may be considered a particularized formulation of concrete logic. The formulation of concrete logic has to be sought in the establishment of historical life (Yusa 2002: 304).

He ends by reflecting on his own path to get to this realization. He says that;

> I'm not suggesting that people take up the philosophical problems that I took up. But I'd like to say this much: to simply switch the topic of one's philosophical inquiry is not synonymous with making one's thought anew. Also, that a philosophical problem touches on concrete reality does not necessarily mean that the thinker's thought

> is "concrete". In this present historical period, which requires us to look back on the cultural heritage nurtured by our ancestors in a global perspective, I think it's necessary we return to the most fundamental mode of viewing and thinking of our philosophical engagements (1939) (Yusa 2002: 304).

Nishida's reflection encourages us to reimagine the world and our foundational and seemingly universal beliefs about it. Even views that are said to encompass all of reality, like Aristotelian logic, are situated perspectives on the world. This directly relates to Nishida's rejection of God's eye views of objective reality and resonates with the embodied perspectivism in ecological, enactive, and ecolinguistic approaches. Importantly, Nishida motivates his approach to world philosophy by rejecting the narrative that all ideas are derivative of Western philosophy and science. Instead, our worlds are social, cultural, and developed over time. Nishida has been criticized for the conclusions he draws about Japanese culture, which are worth exploring, but the key takeaway for this project is the shared ground of each system. Regardless of what perspective we take, when switching from one worldview to another we are still thinking about the same world. This creates pathways for comparing ideologies, even if they are supposed to be exclusive or universal, because they arise in the same place and through the same world.

Instead of arguing for one worldview over all others, I hope to adopt Nishida's motivation for engaging in world philosophy and the exchange of ideas. Every human being, and each culture and tradition, arise as parts of the same world. This creates a unique path forward when trying to overcome ideological differences. I want to encourage us to consider the history of the world without borders. To do so, we should think about the world differently, both as embodied agents and in

terms of how language can shape the possible narratives and imaginings in the future.

Cross-cultural philosophy should not be seen as a subfield of philosophy. Philosophical traditions do not arise in isolation and exclusive narratives obscure the interconnectedness of human history. The importance of this kind of argument can be found in debates about the relationship between the mind and the world and in the rise in nationalist narratives around the globe. Resolving the extended mind debate will likely not impact ongoing debates about the importance of cross-cultural philosophy, but it does provide us with a place to start. Much like the road to San Jose, the path to overcoming the borders between countries and traditions is before us. It's up to us to follow it.

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Chapter 2
Reading Miki Kiyoshi's Anthropological Humanism in the Struggle against the Ecological Crisis

Dennis STROMBACK

Cross-cultural philosophy should not be seen as a subfield of philosophy. Philosophical traditions do not arise in isolation and exclusive narratives obscure the interconnectedness of human history. The importance of this kind of argument can be found in debates about the relationship between the mind and the world and in the rise in nationalist narratives around the globe. Resolving the extended mind debate will likely not impact ongoing debates about the importance of cross-cultural philosophy, but it does provide us with a place to start. Much like the road to San Jose, the path to overcoming the borders between countries and traditions is before us. It's up to us to follow it.

What is most important in terms of addressing the current ecological crisis is the role of our own behaviors. The implication of this view is that any approach we introduce philosophically must be one that directly confronts our problem of anthropocentrism: the view that the natural environment was made for our own consumption. But there is another task that must be pursued if we want to guarantee a world of ecological sustainability: namely, this task of moving us from anthropocentrism towards ecocentrism, where nature, including all of its "non-sentient" objects, things, and forms are intrinsically honored, cherished, and respected independent of human existence. One way to approach this has been through returning to those thinkers who seek to

redefine the subject-object relationship on epistemological grounds. In fact, it has been quite common for scholars to draw on the Kyoto School thinkers, such as Nishida, Nishitani, or Watsuji, in the race to develop an ecological discourse in the light of our ecological emergency (see Shinohara 2020; Johnson 2019; Wirth 2019).

What many of these pursuits have in common is their shared claim that the Kyoto School offers a path out of anthropocentrism by virtue of their non-dualistic account of the self, nature, and the world. The basic argument goes as follows: if the anthropocentric self can be eliminated within the subject's dialectical relationship with the world, then subjectivity will spontaneously unite with the objects of nature and thereby build a relationship based on playful reverence and harmony. One common example of this approach is to investigate the work of Nishitani Keiji, who claims that the mechanization of "man" and "nature" derived from the reification of scientific rationality instantiates how subjectivity has been stripped from the objects of the world, thus clearing the way for the paradigm of infinite growth to reign dominance on a planet with finite resources. If all objects and things are perceived as dead matter, ready to be conquered, dominated, and controlled at any whim or desire, then no guilt can ever arise in our never-ending thirst for consumption and production. Without a curbing of human desires, the insatiable impulse or drive to produce scientific technology in the service of plundering the earth will inevitably lead humanity to a dystopian future.

Such an approach to the looming ecological collapse certainly has its critics. Historian Richard Reitan (2017), for example, calls these types of approaches a "reactionary ecology," because they reflect a "fascist desire to create or rely upon a nationalistic narrative of Japanese cultural uniqueness that conceals the excesses of capitalism and operates to sustain the socio-economic order that is today generating ecological catastrophe" (p. 1). Underpinning these discourses, Reitan maintains,

is the romanticized desire for an ethnic community that claims to stand in contrast to some Western conceptions of nature. Similar to the views of Deep Ecology, such an imagined ethnic community promotes an aesthetic of harmonious "oneness," which seeks to challenge the Western viewpoint that nature is an object detached and separate from humanity, existing as an object of domination and exploitation (p. 3). Reitan claims that such reactionary views nonetheless embody oppressive power because of their narrative potential to be coopted by the state toward fascist ends — even if their intent were not aimed at being tyrannical (p. 8). As a response to Reitan, however, I want to suggest that there is room for theoretical negotiation around deploying one strain of the Kyoto School philosophy for the mining of an ecological discourse. With the hope of having a productive conversation with the critics of the Kyoto School, the aim of this paper is not to defend scholars who rehabilitate Nishida's or Watsuji's philosophy towards an environmental ethics as such, but to look at how Miki Kiyoshi's philosophy in particular can provide us with a "half-way meeting point" or "middle way" between the idyllic, "idealized" motif of Watsuji's and Nishida's socio-historical vision on the one hand and the "utopian" mythos of the Marxist narrative structure (like Reitan for instance) on the other. In this presentation, I will argue that Miki's philosophy, although limited as to how far we can extend it, offers a dialectic that sublates the Marxist and the Kyoto School position in a way that presents a new way of thinking about our relationship to the environment.[1]

1. Miki and the Subject-Environment Relationship

Miki Kiyoshi, like many of the early Kyoto School thinkers,

1 The longer version of this presentation was made into an article and accepted for publication in *Environmental Philosophy.*

redefines the subject-object relationships in a way that disrupts many of the bifurcations formulated within Western intellectual traditions. In response to one of these bifurcations, Miki claims that the epistemological subject cannot be thought of as a mere being who theorizes outside of historical occurrences but must always be viewed as the dialectical maker of the facts, objects, and forms of history in pursuit of self-knowledge. The general principle of this viewpoint was borrowed from his teacher, Nishida Kitarō, who maintained that Western modernity itself was problematically founded on an epistemological dichotomy between subject and object, and that the only way to overcome this gap is by collapsing the distinction between them. Nishida's first attempt at this was through his notion of "pure experience" (*junsui keiken* 純粋経験), which was later deemed a failure on the grounds that it was a psychological reduction. But during his middle years, Nishida would then logicize the problem by developing a concept called *basho* (場所) that sought to capture a non-reifiable place in which all categories of thought, including forms and non-forms, emerge and die. Eventually, Nishida's logic of *basho* would metamorphosize into what he called "absolute contradictory self-identity" (*zettai mujun-teki jiko dōitsu no ronri* 絶対矛盾的自己同一の論理) to describe the creative formation of historical reality as one where opposites always exist in dynamic tension, never to resolve in a kind of Hegelian synthesis. According to Nishida's dialectics at this point, the formation of subjectivity corresponds to the formation of the world historical identity along the lines of affirmation *qua* negation as a bilateral movement. That is to say, the more self-aware subjectivity becomes, via self-negation, the more historically creative subjectivity will be - and vice versa (NKZ 11: 447–448).

The dialectics Nishida developed to resolve the subject-object duality set the stage for Miki's approach to historical creativity as well.

Like Nishida and Hegel, Miki develops a dialectic that unifies the subjective and the objective, that points towards a new chapter of social history; but unlike Nishida and Hegel, such a chapter of social history would include a new material formation where feudalism and capitalism are superseded by a system of cooperatives (*kyōdō shugi* 共同主義) that will define the divisions of labor and thereby replace the duties ascribed within the capitalist class structure. This particular distinction between Nishida (and Hegel) on one side and Miki on the other is quite important here, in that due to Miki's early interest in hermeneutical Marxism, formulating the subject and the material world into a dialectical unity was central to overcoming the many bifurcations left unresolved by Hegel, Marx, and Nishida (and many others in the Western canon). While Nishida himself would embark in this direction of unifying subjectivity and material objects as well, instantiated by his logic of *poiesis*, Miki's engagement with materiality was more in the spirit of developing a praxis that avoided any reduction of historical change to the singular intuitive agent à la Nishida (Stromback 2020: 114–116). The logic of *poiesis* is not just a creative circle moving back and forth from subject and object, but also a creative engagement with historical forms (*rekishi-teki na katachi* 歴史的な形), in particular with institutions (*seido* 制度), that mediate, transform, and galvanize subjectivity in the direction of what we may dub as a "self-realization *qua* social realization." But note that Miki was not fully Marxist either, because of his commitment to securing a view of the historical actor, an actor that refuses to be buried within the relations of production. There is a true subjectivity in Miki's worldview, one that is driven by *pathos*, which refers to the unconscious affective dimension of the subjective interior, to unite with *logos* — reason and language — to create ideal material formations appropriate for the historical era. In this regard, subjectivity cannot be reduced to an epiphenomenon of material production. In the

end, Miki believes in a dialectics that joins together the Nishidian, the Hegelian, and the Marxist view of the world.

Critics maintain that Nishida was never really able to get out of the problem of anthropocentrism (e.g., see Heisig 2001: 263–269). In Nishida's discussion of the (self-forming) historical world *qua* dialectical world (*benshōhō-teki sekai* 弁証法的世界), which set up a co-determining relationship between the embodied actor and the environment, there is a sustained distinction between the biological sphere of life and the historical body (*rekishi-teki shintai* 歴史的身体). For Nishida, the historical body referred to the creative intentionality of the lived body to move beyond ideality and into the domain of making the surrounding environment *qua* creators of the historical world (Krummel 2015: 88–89). The implication is that the historical body has a degree of independence from the environment and therefore represents an articulated domain of reality that is truly creative, because it is not dependent on the environment like the biological body. Miki inherits this general framework from Nishida, but then modifies it. In the essay "The Human Being and the Environment" (*Ningen to Kankyō*「人間と環境」), Miki discusses the Kyoto School truism of how subjectivity creates the environment and inversely how the environment creates subjectivity, but then warns us against thinking about these relationships as an abstract correlation, because such would downplay how the various structures and activities of social history are built into these dialectical relationships. Miki writes:

> …both relationships as just correlative are insufficient. For me, I myself cannot be conceived of as things of the environment, and conversely, for me, what is the environment cannot be conceived as something for me. The subject does not come out of the object and the object does not come out of the subject, [and yet] both thoroughly oppose each other. (MKZ 7: 12)

Miki would then develop this thesis even further in the second and third chapters of the *Logic of Imagination* (*Kōsōryoku no Ronri*『構想力の論理』), where the subject and the environment are formulated as a dialectical unity that becomes expressed as the technical production of historical forms. For Miki here, the environment is not merely made up of material or physical objects, but also social institutions (such as language, morality, law, art, politics, customs, habits, and so forth) that co-mingle with the creative imagination lying within the subjective interior. Miki suggests as such, when he says:

> The logic of imagination is not a logic of mere images but instead would have to be a logic of forms. And what are initially conceivable as objective historical forms in this way are institutions. Therein we must advance to investigate the relationship between institutions and the imagination. (MKZ 8: 98; Miki 2016: 65)

The distinction between Miki and Nishida within the subject-environment relationships become more glaringly visible in the "dual transcendence" (*nijū no chōetsu*; 二重の超越) that emerges as one of the defining characteristics of Miki's stance on self-awareness. While both thinkers are concerned with uniting the subject and the environment into a "dialectical unity," Miki's "dual transcendence" includes an interior transcendence within subjectivity that moves beyond its ego consciousness, deeper into its interior as well as an exterior transcendence that moves towards the world of matter, by going beyond the interior and out towards the exterior (MKZ 19: 582). Keep in mind that Miki's notion of self-awareness is mediated in both the subjective and objective sense, with all actions externalizing the historical forms that have been internalized. While this particular view

of the subject-object relationships can be found in Nishida's dialectics as well, Miki's position here is a little more nuanced: Miki's internal-external stance imbricating a "dual transcendence" is one where the interiority of subjectivity seeps into the everyday consciousness and thereby dialectically threads the subjective interior into the material forms unfolding as historical time. Here, we can see that Miki's interweaving of the material dimension within a self-awareness that is socially mediated begins to collide with Nishida's grounding of history from within a standpoint of action-intuition, where it becomes difficult to conceptualize how distinct historical forms (e.g., political, social, and economic institutions or class-based systems) emerge from the collective actions of the subjective interior and in turn are shaped by it. Further formulated within Miki's critique of Nishida's dialectics, which he elaborates on in "On the Character of Nishida's Philosophy" (*Nishida Tetsugaku no Seikaku ni tsuite*「西田哲学の性格について」), is the failure to develop an account of sociohistorical forms that bears practical significance and relevance to the present and everydayness of human life (MKZ 10: 433–444). Placed in contrast with Miki's dialectics then, Nishida's view of social history appears rather reductionistic or "empty" and therefore devoid of any meaningful emancipatory praxis.

Within Miki's account of the subject-environment relationship, the place where activity occurs in the environment is subjectivity itself. In other words, subjectivity shapes itself as a result of its own actions and tinkering with the environment (and vice versa). Miki writes:

> That is to say, speaking of the human being and the environment, the human is made from the environment, and contrastively, it is a relationship where humans create the environment. This relationship is not only between the human being and the environment, but also similarly exists between the human being and society. Society exerts

> itself on us and transforms us along with it while we exert ourselves on society and transform it. (MKZ 7: 10)

While the human being must be thought of as a somatic form that always works on the environment and creates meaning therein, at the same time, however, is that within the subject's relationship with the environment is the active determination of subjectivity from the side of the environment. This is all to say that there is a bilateral movement in the activities between subject and object leading to both a subjectification of the object as well as an objectivization of the subject (MKZ 18: 164). Or to put it another way, there is an exchange of creative engagements between subject and object *qua* human being vis-a-vis environment, with each particular form existing as both subject and object that are both simultaneously passive and active. Therefore, the human being is not just an objectified expression of the world, but also its own unique subjective particular existing within and against society. But within this particular frame, Miki also appears to be distancing himself from the cruder forms of Marxism, because if we are to think of subjectivity as mere subjectivized objects placed in an environment, then the tendency is to reduce the interiority of subjectivity to that of mere conscious objects that are products of their own effects on the material environment.

1.1. Materiality and Subjective Awareness

Miki's take on materiality is quite different from both Nishida and Marx. According to Miki, material substances have a particular reality within subjectivity, which generates the "dual transcendence" structuring the development of self-awareness. This is because the formless "inner substance" (or what he occasionally calls "inner body") that lies deep within the subjective interiority is the fuel for artistic and

literary expression (Fujita 2011). But, as Miki explains, such "inner substances," which he likens to Descartes's notion of animal spirits (*dōbutsu seiki* 動物精気), cannot be thought of as part of the external body, because they are part of the *pathos* that drives subjectivity to praxis (MKZ 11: 208). Miki explains:

> The subjective interior cannot be viewed externally, but [from] the so-called *absconditus cordis homo* (an invisible human being hidden in the heart). As a human being, this inner body is also not something like a pure spirit, but [rather] must be physical. In this manner, due to subjectivity transcending consciousness heading towards the interior, consciousness, insofar as it is determined, is *pathos*. *Pathos* is not said to be a copy of the subjective interior, but to express it. The problem of creativity is like this problem of *pathos* placed at the foundation. (MKZ 11: 208).

This relationship between the subjective interior and the material world in the production of social history develops even further in Miki's dialectics of *logos* and *pathos* in the *Logic of Imagination* where he discusses how historical forms are produced through the creative power of the imagination. According to Miki, the historical world is created out of nothing, out of the formless, by virtue of the creative force of *pathos* within subjectivity, but then given form and meaning through its unity with *logos*. Miki writes: "Historical forms are not simply of *logos*, but rather the unity of things in terms of *logos* and *pathos*. The logic of imagination thus stands upon the unity of *logos* and *pathos*" (MKZ 8: 19; Miki 2016: 28).

1.2. From Anthropocentrism to Ecocentrism?

But what can we make of Miki's discussion of the subject-

environment relationship? In other words, does Miki's thought expunge the traces of anthropocentrism inherited from Nishida? Miki's longing for a new human being that is indeed the centerpiece of much of his philosophy does not initially look like a clear path out of anthropocentrism in the way the critics thought of it. This is due in part to the fact that the human being itself is still celebrated as a unique, creative being that can move beyond the biological sphere of life. After all, Miki does argue that the human being, from a state of estrangement, reconstructs the environment through technics in a way that suits its existence. Therefore, at this juncture, it seems as if the critics of humanism, who have been quite vocal about this very problematic tendency to build an entire philosophy around the creative essence of subjectivity, may have the last word. But in defense of Miki's anthropological humanism, I want to suggest that the charge of anthropocentrism is not so simple. As we can see from the discussion thus far, which also will be elaborated in the next section when we discuss his theory of technical production, Miki tends to avoid the naïve trap of assuming the material environment is bereft of any creative agency. Miki claims that since all the various activities of life can be thought of as "technical," then the natural environment — the biological sphere of existence — must be deemed as part of the process of technical production as well. Later in the *Logic of Imagination*, Miki would argue that the logic of the creative imagination is also operative within nature itself, and that human history and natural history unite on the grounds that both are expressions of trans-*formation*. As Miki argues, humans act as nature does by inheriting, modeling, and imitating what already occurs in nature (MKZ 8; 424). Therefore, human technics are an extension or continuation of the technics of nature and not a unique feature of what it means to be human as such. More importantly, by designating the natural environment as technical

and form-creating, materiality gets brought into the discussion in a way that Nishida even failed to develop theoretically. In Nishida's dialectics, all historical reality becomes merely reduced to the creative movement among empty vessels within a present temporality, with a culminating point of subjectivity realizing its own historical self-awareness via self-negation, but in Miki's dialectics, the technical production of material forms (e.g., the system of cooperatives or social institutions) that furthers the creative development of self-awareness becomes the very unity needed for that historical moment. In Miki's worldview, to become truly self-aware means to be socially and historically aware, as well as environmentally aware. In other words, materiality is only part of the creative exchange within Nishida's dialectics, whereas for Miki, materiality is baked within the culminating points of the dialectic itself when subjectivity realizes its own face as not only a creative being in the physical world but as a manual laborer (*nikutai rōdōsha* 肉体労働者) confronting the problem of capitalism as a system of class domination — a point that will be further discussed in Section Three.

2. Miki's Theory of Technics and the Production of (Ideal) Historical Forms

Miki's theory of "technics" or "technology" (*gijutsu* 技術) refers to the logic elucidating the trans-*formation* of social history. What can be read as a critical response to Nishida, who leaves us with an underdeveloped account of how history moves from one period to the next, the *Logic of Imagination* seeks to illuminate how the creation and formation of institutions are linked to the interiority of subjectivity by means of the imagination, whereby the elements of *logos* and *pathos* are one. Throughout this discussion, Miki draws on Immanuel Kant's account of the synthetic function of the imagination and Henri

Bergson's discussion of the creative intuition in order to make sense of how the power of the imagination can produce both physical and socio-cultural forms through technical actions. For Miki, since historical forms are produced by the creative imagination, social, cultural, and political institutions can be thought of as inventions or fictions that provide meaning to human life, but since institutions have a structure that possesses materiality, they have a particular social body that is both spiritual and somatic, or subjective and objective, thus functioning as if they have their own independent or autonomous life form. In this regard, Miki's view is such that "institutions are not just the actions of the human, but on the contrary, as one of its meanings the environment opposes the actions of humans" (MKZ 8: 160).

This tells us quite a bit about the dynamic relationship between humans and the environment, which we can interpret as Miki's attempt to move from anthropocentrism towards ecocentrism. According to Miki, institutions are adapted to and shaped in accordance with the ever-changing environment and can therefore never be viewed as fixed, and whenever humans create new environments, institutions will emerge or die as a result of human actions and responses to the environment. What Miki is pointing out here is the unpredictability of the environment and the human openness to the influxes of change. But there is also a rationality to the structure of institutions that "is also essentially required because of the relationships of human actions towards the environment" (MKZ 8: 164). This rationality is indicative of the cooperation between organisms and the environment, exemplified in the form of habits, which speaks to how "technics signifies the unity of subject and object, the human being and the environment," and thus how "habit requires the support of the environment, and therefore, also of society" (MKZ 8: 165). But what Miki is theorizing here more broadly is the creative intertwinement humans have with the institutions

of social history, where there is a dialectical relationship between subjectivity and institutions (in the form of myth or traditions) calling to produce institutions appropriate for the historical present, a sort that will move subjectivity towards a more creative society (*sōzō-teki shakai* 創造的社会). Miki suggests as such in the following passage:

> The creative society in particular is the true transcendental subject. Due to becoming one with that creative society, the inventive individual can thereby be truly inventive. …In such cases at the root of institutional society, we must think of the creative society. The relationship between creative society and institutional society is something like the so-called relation between nature *qua* producing (*natura naturans*) and nature *qua* product (*natura naturata*). Similar to how the subject and object cannot be separated abstractly, institutional society and creative society cannot be separated abstractly. (MKZ 8: 184).

But what is the driving force of technical production? While the driving force for material production within the Marxist tradition are the relations of productions that make up the economic activity of society, Miki, on the other hand, traces the driving force behind the process of production even further back by examining the deeper, unconscious forces of human nature and history. Miki claims that the root source for technical production (which includes the relations of production) begins with the desire to gain mastery and ownership over oneself in the world, which he seeks to capture in the category of *pathos*. As previously mentioned, Miki posits that the interiority of subjectivity is inextricably linked to the production of historical forms through a unity of *logos* and *pathos* at the base of imagination, and so "the logic of imagination… does not belong to the mere activities of consciousness, but rather is

rooted in our psychophysical existence" (MKZ 8: 35; Miki 2016: 36). Materiality, therefore, exists prior to the forms or ideals that become expressed in the world, but even prior to materiality, on the other hand, is the place of nothing, where the production of forms from the formless involves a movement from darkness to light, nothing to being (MKZ 11: 473). All reality, in this sense, is fundamentally a creation *ex nihilo* (MKZ 8: 245). Drawing from Plessner and Jasper, Miki further explains this point by telling us that when the subject faces the nothing deep within itself, it is driven by a "demonic" urge to create a new historical world by giving order, form, and determination to the formlessness of reality. Deep within our existence is alienation and loneliness, where we are forever faced with the danger of falling into anxiety, generating the "hope or fear, love or hatred, desire, passion, impulse and so forth" (MKZ 8: 49) that make up the source for creating the cosmos out of the chaos.

Inferred from all of this is that human action or praxis can be defined as an activity that builds images from the unformed material existing as the "inner substance" of subjectivity prior to any social conditions. While the trans-*formation* of *pathos* into something objective is due to the power of the imagination, we have to resist thinking that *pathos* is a distinct or special faculty of the mind, because the concretization of nothing into something also involves the physical body as the site where *pathos* intermingles with reason. At the same time, however, Miki tells us that even *pathos* is inherently connected to the body, so we also have to resist thinking that the body is a mere material object within the dialectical play of *logos* and *pathos*. This is because the body is more of an object endowed with "heart and mind" or encased with "spirit" or a "soul" as it interacts with the objective world by means of imitation. Nevertheless, Miki holds that history begins with human desire, and the material world becomes the articulation of historical forms derived from human actions involving a unity between *logos* and *pathos*, because

while *pathos*, which is both a passive and active state of existence, initially urges us to create the historical world with our bodies, *logos*, which is the intellectual consciousness that comes into being by transcending *pathos*, brings the human being into a more universal place where the limits of the established reality can be examined by a meta-*logos* that envelops both *logos* and *pathos* — meaning, a secondary *logos* conditioned by society and history (MKZ 18: 157–160). The creation of a new type or new form will be born out of the self-reflection constitutive of the secondary *logos*.

While it seems at this point that Miki might be smuggling in the "man-nature" bifurcation by virtue of locating the dialectics leading to a creative transcendence mostly within the powers of the human being, such is not entirely the case. In his standpoint of action, for instance, Miki emphasizes how the body is the basis of all human existence, and that without a body, there can be no human activity. And the body itself, as Miki asserts, is closely related to lived nature, not as an objectified nature, but rather as an incarnate-subjective nature. The human body is, as Miki writes, "…a parted-body of the Great Mother, and its expression" (MKZ 18: 153),[2] and as such, can be thought of as an instantiation of the creative expression of nature, and not as a pure subjectivity transcending natural history. Furthermore, if the impulse for our creative actions is issued forth from unformed material *qua* nothing, then humans themselves are always, already intimately connected to the fount of creativity that is the evolution of nature itself. In fact, in chapter two of *The Logic of Imagination*, Miki discusses Bergson in the service of this view of creative evolution — that is, how mind and matter are bridged through the image, thus demonstrating how material forms continuously develop through the creative impulses of technical

2 The translation here was borrowed from Nagatomo Shigenori's monograph on Miki Kiyoshi. See (Shigenori 1995: 62).

activities.[3] By grounding the human within the same logic of technics found in the natural environment, Miki is able to elevate all life forms and physical objects to the logic of creativity that is often taken to be the hallmark feature of what it means to be human.

But does Miki's theory of technics fully move us into the terrain of ecocentrism? In the crudest version of anthropocentrism, non-human life forms have only instrumental value, serving only as a means to an end instead of ends in themselves. There is no intrinsic value assigned to the non-human because the needs and rights of humans are prioritized above all. In Miki's theory of technics, however, we can see the inherent subjectivity bestowed to nature, which the human being is merely an instantiation of; therefore, Miki's lens here provides us with some insight into theorizing personhood status to the natural environment. Furthermore, if we read deeper into Miki's theory of technics, we can see that by granting "the human being," "nature," "institutions," and other historical forms an inherent subjectivity, the human being, in order to realize itself as a historically self-aware individual, has to come to value the non-human on these same grounds as well. Miki's dialectics is a uniting of the subject and object in the production of historical forms, which means that both other human and non-human subjects must be valued within the self-determination of historical forms *qua* self-awareness, because insofar as human life is said to be technical, the objective elements of the world must be incorporated within subjectivity and expressed into concrete forms reflective of the Huayan logic of "one is many and many is one." The shared basis for developing this relationship, as Miki maintains, is located in *pathos*, prior to its unity with *logos*. Miki writes:

3 However, Miki would criticize Bergson in the following moment for failing to dialectically unite intellect and instinct and instinct and collective habits. See (MKZ 8, 109–110).

> But how does a single unified form thread together from such an intersection? …The condition for imitation is sympathy — namely, to share *pathos*. In order for such sympathy to be possible, there must exist a certain *pathos* that is universal at the root of the individual person. Something like the ethnos [ethnicity] would be such a thing. But the individual person's independence would be inconceivable if we merely foundationalized the Dionysian as [that element of] *pathos*. We probably would have to conceive the combination of the countless independent individuals and that which is universal like the ethnos on the basis of the logic of imagination that is intellectual and at the same time emotive. … If nature follows the logic of imitation as Pascal also thought, that logic would have to be a logic where one is many and many is one. In developing this logic, we would also have to conceive the ethnos as well as the world. (MKZ 8: 127–128).

But how does the transition from a state of extrinsic valuation to a state of intrinsic valuation occur through the forms of technical production? Miki mentions the limits of adaptation: "As the critical spirit increases, it eventually destroys that institution, but people immediately sense the misfortune and come to build a new institution once again" (MKZ 8: 182). But now the question is: what sort of institutions will human subjectivity need to destroy and rebuild in the contemporary era of the impending ecological collapse?

3. The Dialectics of Social Responsibility

In his unfinished manuscript of *Philosophical Anthropology*, Miki would capture the essence of his dialectics in the words "physical

existence and spiritual existence is societal along with being individual" (MKZ 18: 160). For an individual, as a corporeal and spiritual being, to be truly self-aware, it must realize itself as a socially aware agent of history. Having taken cues from Wilhelm Dilthey, Miki would begin his anthropological humanism from the study of history, because such an approach can be a guide or teacher on what life is and what life can be (Townsend 2009: 155–157). After all, possibilities, for Miki, are the fundamental basis of real existence. But since humans live in the present, and history can only be written from the perspective of the present, all critical thought must be focused on the present and the everyday experience in a way that can be directed towards the future. In search of this historicity, Miki believed that while Marxism was one of many ideologies produced at that time, it was also the most relevant and practical in terms of responding to the particular demands of the era. In what Miki calls "the proletarian basic experience" (*musansha-teki kiso keiken* 無産者的基礎経験) is his attempt to define the raw, pre-reflective consciousness comprising the everyday experience of the proletariat that emerged during the Meiji period. Miki writes "One completely new basic experience was developed. This was the proletarian basic experience" (MKZ 3: 29), but then adds:

> When I say proletarian basic experience, I'm not saying in particular the experiences of the proletariat or the consciousness that can be experientially acquired by the proletariat; on the contrary, I am pointing out the existence of reality itself that is the structure of that which becomes the particularities due to it. (MKZ 3: 44)

But given Miki's anti-dogmatic approach to historical knowledge, the relationship Marxism should have to the historical age should not be that of a fixed doctrine where its narrative structure is accepted as an

unquestioned theory of the stages of historical development but rather treated as an ideological tool that can be used to transform the everyday experience. In other words, Marxism is interpreted only for the purpose of social reform instead of being deployed as a bible for revolutionary political action.

In fact, in all of Miki's earlier work on Marxism, the historical present and everyday experience were joined together in the theorization of the proto logic expressing the trans-*formation* of subjectivity. Miki's notion of "basic experience" (*kiso keiken* 基礎経験), in particular, would play a significant role in the self-determination of the self-aware agent of history by virtue of its negotiations with *logos*: anthropology (*qua* self-understanding) and ideology (MKZ 3: 5–19). For Miki then, the historicity of the human being can be characterized as the moment when anthropological self-understanding and ideology come together to move subjectivity beyond the arena of the everyday — in other words, the historical point of reality where the ideology of the public sphere becomes the present everyday consciousness. Such a progression, however, depends on the basic experience of the proletariat to naturally discover its own true nature within the historical present, not by authoritarian means, but by developing a *logos* that reflects and reveals the basic experience back to itself. The purpose of *logos* then is to incrementally guide the basic experience in its process of self-reflection in order to change the existing material conditions; therefore, *logos* must emerge from a socio-economic experience because basic experience and ideology must be dialectically united in a manner where each mutually shapes the other (MKZ 3: 39–41). While this general task of social reform has to be undertaken by the intellectual class from Miki's perspective, as one can see here, this process of knowledge transmission must be done without imposing an abstract or ahistorical ideal. Only at that juncture is it possible for the proletariat to assume the role of a

critic in society.

As a hermeneuticist, Miki would borrow from Marxist terminology, but never sublate his own language into the orthodox narrative. The concepts of "labor," "sensuousness," and "proletariat" were often employed, but re-interpreted in a way that positioned the individual and the social dialectically. For instance, Miki defines labor as the experiential structure of the proletariat while characterizing the proletariat as existing in relation to its sensuous praxis through negotiation (MKZ 3: 25–26), both of which set the stage for Miki's reading and engagement with Marx. On the whole, Miki was determined to resolve the dilemmas put forth by the early Marx, agreeing that the human being was alienated from its own essence and labor by virtue of being another impersonal commodity sold in the marketplace. Of course, the human being can influence its own nature through its own labor practices, but it relies on the role of intellectuals nonetheless to demystify the social relations and reveal to them for what they are at that historical moment and thereby move the proletariat to an emancipatory praxis. This is because, while the proletariat subject can negotiate its own existence by sensing it directly, it does not necessarily understand its real existence abstractly. It is at this point where we see the role of ideology and its relationship to Marx's theory of commodities in Miki's writings.

According to Miki, the problem of commodities represents the entire problem of capitalistic society because it is the mode of objectification of social existence, that which conceals the structures of relations within capitalism (MKZ 3: 61). As taken from Marx, Miki holds that we assume there is a natural social relationship to one another, but the objectification of *logos* creates a gap between ideology and the real experience of the worker, because the specter of commodification masks the real socio-economic relationship between people in the assumption

of what is thought to be the natural social conditions of life. This is because the very belief that commodities have a value of their own means to have belief in their phantasmagorical structure itself. Miki then adds:

> In the process of capitalism, the structure of commodification constantly enters into the consciousness of humans in all the more depth, all the more fatefully, and all the more structurally. All *logos*, which is under the universal and decisive control of the category of commodification, is transformed into an ideology in the bad sense, where it becomes abstracted from human beings and thereby separated from the existence of reality. (MKZ 3: 65–66)

Here, the Marxist theory of commodities moves from being inherent to the economic relations of capitalism towards the domain of subjectivized consciousness, because commodification functions as the mystification of the social nature of life that informs basic experience (see Wirtz 2020: 121). For Miki, while all members of society suffer from this fetishization, it is only the experience of the proletariat that is negated in this process. Since ideology has the potential to become a useful framework by which to analyze and criticize the commodification of social-economic knowledge, Marxist ideology can therefore be used in defense of the proletarian experience in the unification of theory and praxis.

While the more explicit Marxist terminology would eventually fade in Miki's later writings, the dialectical unity of subject and object oriented towards the development of ideal historical forms would remain a priority. In what we may call his "post-Marxist years," Miki would argue that if humans transform the world through a unity of *logos* and *pathos*, then subjectivity will realize its specie-being in a

system of "egalitarian" cooperatives (*kyōdō shugi* 共同主義), where the one is many and the many are one while each particular preserves its own subjectivity. The system of cooperatives Miki promotes cannot be thought of in the likes of a state-run communist order, because like totalitarianism, such would reduce the particularities of existence. Conversely, the system of cooperatives should be thought of as a kind of liberal-communitarianism derived from both Eastern and Western intellectual traditions. In fact, Miki was concerned that without a strict unity of *logos* and *pathos*, an overflow of either one would eventually direct history to a violent end. When *pathos* exceeds *logos*, for instance, the irrational dimension of human existence will thereby be activated, thus propelling the nationalist and totalitarian fervor of society towards fascism. For Miki, fascism, which has its origins in romantic thought, is nothing other than irrationalism in the most concentrated form (MKZ 10: 377–380).[4] On the other end, when *logos* exceeds *pathos*, universal reason will become objectified in history, leading to the (re)formations of capitalism, individualism, or classical liberalism.[5] Nonetheless, these rational orders all embody the same fundamental logic for Miki, because they all place individual interests above the interests of the collectivity which in the end reproduces the class structure of capitalism. Rather, the principle of *kyōdō shugi* is somewhere in between all of them, because it simultaneously resolves the problem of human existence, class struggle, and the growing "bureaucratization" around the world.

Theorized in a manner similar to Watsuji's view of ethics, Miki argues that the system of cooperation is an ethical relationship based on meeting the needs of the individual and the social at the same time,

4 In fact, Miki criticized his German tutor, Marin Heidegger, in 1933 for succumbing to the emotional forces of fascist nationalism.

5 Miki called classical liberalism "bourgeois liberalism." See "After Liberalism" (*jiyū shugi igo* 自由主義以後) (MKZ 13: 168–175).

because individual cooperation towards the public interests of society allows for each person's individuality and freedom to be realized within and through the social relationships themselves. If one's own personal interests are prioritized over social interests, for instance, then each individual ego will conflict with the other and thus impede any further development of individual creativity. Miki writes:

> Individualism in the form of egotism must be negated as far as co-operatives are concerned. It goes without saying that individualism, which always places one's [self-interest] above society and ignores the whole [society] while attaching itself to the self, is an incorrect [form of] individualism. (MKZ 17: 524)

The central point behind the cooperative is that it is for the mutual benefit of all its members because it produces a system that is stronger than its individual parts by virtue of everyone working together to solve problems. Although there is a need to preserve the autonomy and creative power of the individual, when contrasted with individualism however, Miki's principle of cooperativism takes social interests first and the individual interests second, but not at the expense of reducing the individual to the social. "Freedom is responsibility, and responsibility is twofold," Miki writes, because "responsibility towards oneself and responsibility toward society is bound into one" (MKZ 17: 574). Miki describes the logical basis for this ethical relationship as follows:

> The human being is made from society, and oppositely, it is said that the human being creates society, and like how there is a dialectical relationship between the individual and society, there stands a relationship where there is a dialectical unity and opposition

between social ethics and individual ethics. (MKZ 18: 453)

The culminating point that is reached in Miki's thought here is that individual creativity is not only protected but empowered through its service to the cooperative body because in the end "there is a dialectical unity and opposition between social ethics and individual ethics."

In order to make the co-operative system a successful alternative to the "abstract cosmopolitanism" found in the West however, Miki believes there must be an intellectual class that can mobilize and guide the actions of the individuals. Of course, such a leader cannot act like a dictator, which will force the particularities of the individual into the social, but rather like an educational leader that respects the spontaneity of the individual. Championing progressive thought and criticism is fundamental to the system of co-operatives because, "if criticism is prohibited, then it is impossible for the intelligentsia to cooperate from its own standpoint" (MKZ 15: 262) in order to convey the truth of the time. Embedded within the structure of cooperativism is the principle of democratic participation, not necessarily in the form of Western parliamentary systems, but in the form of intellectual pluralism, where criticism of the status quo is prized for the sake of continuous and immediate social reform. Otherwise, as Miki says, "it is not possible to truly mobilize intellectuals if they are deterred from forming groups" (MKZ 15: 262–263). The system of cooperatives is set to replace the class structures of capitalism.

But is Miki's critique of capitalism and vision of cooperatives sufficient in terms of providing the infrastructure for maintaining an ecocentrism? At this point, it is hard to give an affirmative answer, but I want to suggest that there are kernels of wisdom within Miki's work that will provide us with some hope for the future, nonetheless. Although Miki has a lot in common with Watsuji, Nishida, and Nishitani in terms

of the subject-environment relationship. Unlike these thinkers, however, Miki engages the Marxist critique to a much deeper extent, making Reitan's criticism of the Kyoto School for failing to address the limits of capitalism moot. What can we extract from Miki's hermeneutical Marxism and theory of cooperatives that can ease the anxiety of the critics like Reitan then? For one, Miki's triadic account of basic experience-anthropology-ideology provides us with the much-needed flexibility in handling our interventions with the natural environment. The impact of our well-intended meddling is often unpredictable simply because animals, plants, and other non-sentient objects are all agents as well, all of which are active in responding to our own interference. Miki avoids any robust set of guidelines for the management of crises, and so the negotiation we conduct with ourselves and the world forces us away from always trying to control the natural environment.

Secondly, we see a rise of climate deniers, not just within the ranks of the property class, but among the proletariat as well. Such cannot be thought of as a mere product of well-funded bourgeois propaganda: denying the science on climate change for instance has taken on its own internal momentum among the working class, where radical skepticism directed towards the authoritarian tendencies of the scientific enterprise is perceived as "edgy" and liberatory. Trending on social media are memes and fake news articles that unabashedly conflate the intellectual elite and its supporters with techniques of fascist and communist control. Anti-intellectualism is the critical spirit among many within the proletariat today, which represents a *patho*-logical take-over of the *logos* of neo-liberalism;[6] and without restoring a proletarian confidence in the intellectual class, then I argue that it is impossible to empower the proletariat to become active in addressing their own as well as others'

6 The assumption within this *pathos* is that everyone is rational and already has full access to perfect information.

participation in the production of those institutions responsible for the crisis faced today. The fetish of capital motorizing the despoliation of the earth is one of these fundamental institutions that need to be uprooted. The task of the times then should not be one of a direct imposition of ecological discourses directed by the intellectual classes, which will only fuel further intellectual resistance among climate deniers, but to exploit the fundamental creativity lying at the base of the imagination (e.g., *pathos*) by encouraging the proletariat to become active in producing knowledge that is local and relevant to their own ecological situation — to transform the basic experience of the proletariat, as it were, by means of realizing the *logos* of our historical age.

4. Conclusion: Responding to Miki's Critics

What I showed in this brief chapter is how to read Miki's anthropological humanism as a theoretical resource for understanding ourselves and the world in the age of ecological crisis. In conclusion, however, I want to suggest that there are indeed limits to reading Miki towards this end. For example, Marxist philosopher Hiromatsu Wataru was quite critical of Miki's hermeneutical Marxism, which he deemed a failure in terms of addressing the problem of reification (Nakajima 2011: 119). That is, in Lukác's theory of reification (*Verdinglichung*),[7] which is an evolution of both Marx's theory of commodity fetishism and theory of alienation, subjectivity is turned into a passive object that does not behave in any sort of human way but rather in ways that reproduce the market system itself. In other words, subjectivity is transformed into the objects and things that represent the relations of production within a capitalist society. To break through the reification of consciousness then

7 Even though Miki went to study with Lukács, it seems apparent that he did not adopt his account of reification.

is not a matter of recognizing one's own misrecognition (via intellectual guidance and persuasion), as implied in Miki's subjectivization of economic relations, but through constantly renewed efforts at becoming conscious of the immanent contradictions within the actions of subjectivity marked for the total development of society. Thus, the breakdown of the market occurring from a shift in social praxis itself is what generates the breakthrough in the reification of consciousness. If we take Hiromatsu's deployment of Lukács's point seriously, then reification represents the very ensemble of social relations that go beyond the individual subject, therefore demanding a far deeper praxis than what Miki can offer.

Another criticism Hiromatsu raises is Miki's over-emphasis on the individual, where it becomes difficult to see how the individual and the social are inherently connected, thus posing a challenge for us on how to conceptualize the move from the individual toward a proper social practice (Nakajima 2011: 119). This is not a particularly fair reading of Miki's philosophy, however. In fact, it is rather clear that individuals are inherently connected socially by means of *pathos* lying at the base of the subjective interior. As Miki writes: "Society holds the sense of a substratic nature towards humans, and humans within the logical self are denied this, [and so] humans are unified pathologically. Society as a whole is a pathological unity" (MKZ 18: 159). Of course, this is not where it ends for Miki. On the next page, he would then write, "Along with being a unity of pathos, society is a unity of logos" (MKZ 18: 160). Therefore, the question of how to move from the individual towards a social practice fundamentally mistakes Miki's account of sociality for a new brand of social liberalism,[8] but again, from Miki's standpoint, there is no atomized individual prior to the development of the social. "Man

8 I have opted to think of Miki's brand of "new liberalism" as a kind of "liberal-communitarianism."

is not an isolated existence," Miki writes, "but shares his existence together with human beings" (MKZ 1: 26). The individual and the social exist coterminously and hence dialectically. What is prior to the social is what lies at the base of the social: *pathos*.

Finally, Hiromatsu contends that Miki's ontological foundation is not a truly relational system of thought, but rather a "substance-based doctrine" that allows for the reification of the nation-state and thereby centers the East Asian co-operative arrangement within wartime Japan. Even though Miki's philosophical account seeks to transcend the East and West binary by liberating subjectivity and the rest of East Asia from capitalistic and colonial domination, the political implications of his wartime writings show tacit support for the colonial invasion enacted by the Japanese state. The theoretical reasons for this blunder, as suggested in a previous article I wrote on Miki, were perhaps due to Miki's quasi-idealist account of social history, stemming from a substantification of the imagination that would set in motion the recuperation of Japanese nationalism under the guise of economic, political, and colonial liberation. To correct the problems associated with Miki's quasi-idealism, I recommended a return to Nishida's concept of "absolute contradictory of self-identity" (*zettai mujun-teki jiko dōitsu no ronri* 絶対矛盾的自己同一の論理), Tosaka Jun's concept of the "people" (*minshū* 民衆), and Takeuchi Yoshimi's concept of resistance as articulated in his essay "Asia as a method" (see Stromback 2020: 136–137). The colonial implications of Miki's wartime writings should not be treated lightly and ultimately reflects a failure on three accounts: to incorporate a stronger account of reification, to develop a robust view of (subaltern) resistance, and to resolve the aporia of resisting colonialism without secretly asserting a new one.

Criticisms aside, it should be re-iterated that there is real value to reading Miki's anthropological humanism as a way to reflect on our

relationship with the current ecological crisis. The threat of extinction of many life forms, including our civilization as we know it today, speaks to the urgency of investigating viewpoints that are neither beholden to the romanticized ethos of Deep Ecology nor to the totalizing narrative of scientific Marxism. Miki's "middle way" approach not only serves as this practical alternative, but it also introduces a new pathway towards overcoming the dichotomy between the Kyoto School and Marxism. By sublating Nishida's philosophy and Marxism into a "third" position, Miki's dialectics not only present us with a narrative that is counterposed to the anthropocentrism quilted to the capitalist project, but also with an opportunity to improve or re-interpret Miki's philosophy by correcting what he failed to see or develop. Therefore, it is in the spirit of Miki's philosophy, as I tried to argue in this presentation, that we will find a critical trajectory that has the raw materials for furthering our understanding of our relationship to the ecological crisis today.

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Chapter 3
What is the Globality of the "Common Sense"? Somatesthesia in the Age of Chaotic Capitalism

MATSUI Nobuyuki

Introduction

We live in the age of "common sense" in the way that digital devices live our lives based on "common sense" instead of ourselves. This paper attempts to understand successive relationships between Nishida Kitarō's philosophy of the "place of nothingness" and Nakamura Yūjirō's philosophy of "common sense" in terms of digitalization through the concept of the predicate. In doing so, I would like to show what fundamental "common sense" is for human physical life and the significance of thinking of physical "common sense" to holistically capture our way of life in contemporary capitalism based on digitalization. In the first part of my paper, I examine how Nakamura's philosophy of "common sense" reformulated Nishida's philosophy of the "place of nothingness." In the second part, I introduce the philosophy of digitalization in terms of Nishida's philosophy and try to connect this argument with Nakamura's argument. Through these discussions, I will make a concluding remark about an implication of the philosophy of "common sense" for contemporary capitalism that has an invisible but destructive effect on human lives based on "common sense."

1. Nishida Kitarō and Nakamura Yūjirō

Figure 1. Nakamura Yūjirō
Source: https://www.asahi.com/articles/DA3S13171093.html

If I try to sum up what Nakamura's philosophy is, it is that the human being and its conscious acts, as only a partial effect of the "general system" of the cosmos, has the ability to embody operations of the "general system" inside his or her body. Extended from Nishida Kitarō's philosophy, he reformulated the "place of nothingness" as a consciousness in Nishida's argument into "common sense." It means that Nakamura embodies the core of Nishida's philosophy. In my study, I aim to reveal the exact meaning of this transformation, I mean, the significance of embodying the "place of nothingness" in terms of "common sense."

The "general system" here means what Nishida said in his philosophy of self-awareness based on Hegel. That is, "[j]udgments mean that the universal [*das Allgemeine*] differentiates and develops itself as Hegel said […]" (Nishida 1950: 48). Nishida reformulates Hegelian dialectics between the particular and the general into the scheme that *the universal* limits itself in the form of the particular,

which is conceptualized as the "self-limitation of *the universal*." Moreover, in Nishida's philosophy, this process of the "self-limitation of *the universal*" is the never-ending process against Hegel's idea.

As for the "place of nothingness," this view was developed from the above view. In other words, the "self-limitation of *the universal*" evolves in the way that the generality of predicates limits the substance (subject) that is the consciousness as the "place." As Nishida says, "[i]n general, the 'I' is thought as the subjective integration (…), and yet, 'I' ought to be the predicative integration. It's not a dot, but a circle. It's not a thing, but a place." (Nishida 1960: 496).

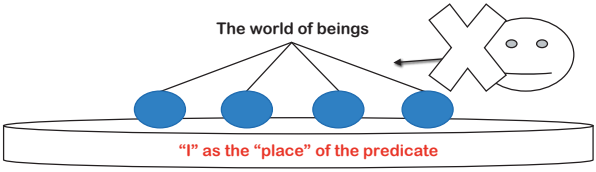

Figure 2. The Image of the Predicative Integration
(Made by the author based on Nishida's argument in "Basho")

In western metaphysics, it has been thought that logic can capture the order of being in propositions such as A is B. Here, this logic has its priority to ground what the subject (substance) actually is. On the contrary, Nishida's philosophy tried to overturn the Aristotelian formal logics that is based on "what becomes a subject, not a predicate." In his philosophy of the "place of nothingness," the subject is recaptured from the predicative logic which means that the subject cannot be grounded because the consciousness as the basis of logical acts is the "place" constituted by only predicates. He called this the "**predicative transcendence**" compared with "transcendental subject" in Kant's philosophy (Nishida 1960: 327).

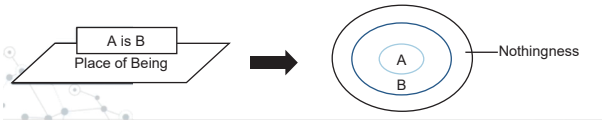

Figure 3. The Order of Being (left) and the Circular Structure of the "Place of Nothingness" (right) (Made by author)

The reason for the nothingness of the "place of nothingness" can be put in the following way: When we judge that "A is B," this A needs to be placed in an exact place. Thus, we can stipulate the qualities or meanings (predicates) in this "place of being." However, the placeness of this "place" is "nothing" in itself. Therefore, the "place of nothingness" is composed only of predicates and "mirrors" them on itself, and in this sense, the subject ("I" or this "conscious" being is typical here) is signified by predicates, if I use a Saussurian term, and is the "place of nothingness" in itself. If we see this logic of the "predicative transcendence" from the viewpoint of the "transcendental subject," the philosophical issue of the "proper name" and the "definite description" are spawned. Socrates is human, a philosopher in ancient Greece, thin (actually fat), an animal and so on. While we can increase general predicates to define Socrates, we cannot reach to the ultimate definition of Socrates himself.

Now, how did Nakamura critically reformulate Nishida's philosophy? Among works in English, we can find John Krummel's finely concise introduction to Nakamura's philosophy. He sums up Nakamura's philosophy over the view of Nishida's philosophy and "common sense" in the following way: Firstly, "common sense" is "the horizon of self-evidence that shapes a certain layer of thought and behavior within a given time, society, culture, etc.," but secondly, it is a sense that would be strongly affected by the destabilization of a social order and its self-evidence caused by social transformations,

hence "common sense" is potentially *exposed to the "extraordinary"* (Krummel 2015: 78–79; Nakamura 1979=2000: 280–282; italic added).

In this sense, focusing on "common sense" is suggested as the appropriate argument for the postmodern era in which social integration was dismantled. Consequently, human beings need to rethink their own framework of existence in order to understand and experience our collective social life in terms of a "common sense" (Nakamura 1979=2000: 280). What is more, this "common sense" is mediated by various communicational devices and the context constituted by them, because "common sense" is not only concerned with living in socially common contexts, but also living with each concrete body. In a word, Nakamura shows us the view that our bodily lives and social imaginations are surrounded by collective frameworks and technological conditions. In other words, his philosophy based on a "common sense" captures human communality under the dyadic view between physical and sensual levels, and the shared significances behind our social lives.

"Common sense" in Nakamura's philosophy means sensible actions that differentiate and integrate each perceptive action, traditionally among five senses. For example, when we look at sugar, while we can respectively discern the white color, sweet taste and sand-like touch, we can comprehensively perceive them as sugar as it is. This ability to discern and connect sensual actions is called "common sense." This definition has been philosophically employed since Aristoteles, and in the early modern period, Descartes gave a specific place in the brain, the pineal organ, to the action of the common sense and defined it as a "seat of imagination." However, through western history, the concept of common sense based on the physical terms became peripheral to the dominant understanding of common sense as contextually healthy and prudent judgments that were opposed to scientific and rational ways.

Among various sensual actions, Nakamura's unique contribution

to the issue of "common sense" is that he hypothesized that "common sense" can be found in the *coenesthesia*. As for the term *coenesthesia*, it is composed of "*coen* (*communis*)" and "*esthesia* (*sensus*). Therefore, coenesthesia literally means "common sense", and it includes the sense of touch, pressure sensation, warm sensation, cold sensation, pain sensation, and *kinesthesia* (Nakamura 1979=2000: 114–115). Moreover, *coenesthesia* includes the sense of skin in the superficial level of our body and the sense of muscles and organs in the deeper level. Thus, *coenesthesia* has both external accesses and internally deep accesses (Nakamura 1979=2000: 118–119).

Depending on the arguments of Husserl, Bergson, and Merleau-Ponty about the human body and its motion, Nakamura argues that *coenesthesia* mediates the touching and the touched and it makes senses of our world. Hence, *coenesthesia* works as a ground for making our "world horizon." In this sense, the "world horizon" is constituted by physically predicative integration (Nakamura 1979=2000: 122–123). According to Nakamura, it should be assumed that the *coenesthesia* always works even when humans recognize objects based on the "visual-centric" perception, because the essence of the *coenesthesia* is the sense that human beings direct to move and touch objects. The visual understanding has to premise these invisible, but constantly-working physical integrations of the world. If someone loses this *coenesthesia* and succumbs to a psychopathology such as depersonalization, he or she loses the sense of physical integration and senses that his or her body falls apart (Nakamura 1979=2000: 114).

From the above discussion, we can say that Nakamura's philosophy of "common sense" embodied the "place of nothingness." However, it does not mean that human body is literally the "place of nothingness." Rather, interactions between the world and the mediated roles of *coenesthesia* are captured as the "place of nothingness." In other words,

both the world and the body are implicated with each other. Through this insight, Nakamura tried to embody the "place of nothingness" as a "place where a fundamental event arises" and a "dynamic and complicated system" that "appears to be nothingness because of its transparency made by its abundancy of possibilities" (Nakamura 1998: 29). From this view, it can be said that "common sense" enables us to live limited lives with an incessant openness to the chaotic complexity and limitations of it, which are backed by the human body and its internal sensual order.

2. Materialization of "Common Sense" through Chaotic Capitalism and Digitalization and Beyond it

In this section, I would like to apply Nakamura's idea of "common sense" in the actual context of the contemporary society. I used the term "chaotic capitalism" in the subtitle of this paper. I chose this term, because I want to highlight the opposite features between "common sense" and contemporary capitalism. On the one hand, as I argued, "common sense" works as the mediating body and ecology and forms the "world horizon" for each of us. There, a huge variety of perceptions is interrelated and mediated, from which our semiotic activities become possible. This process is to give an order to the originally ecological chaos, as I argued in the last part.

On the other hand, we can find that a main feature of contemporary capitalism is that it does not need, or worse, it excludes actions of "common sense" and keeps reproducing chaotic decontextualization day by day, in which people are forced without any option to adapt to the chaos. As Mark Fisher argues in his *Capitalism Realism*, "capitalism realism requires us to subordinate the reality that is infinitely ever-changing in its forms in every moment" (Fisher 2009=2018:136). In this situation, "to forget becomes an adaptive strategy" for everyday

life (Fisher 2009=2018: 142). He also argues that this situation generates a kind of a memory disorder where "creating new memories is impossible" (Fisher 2009=2018: 150). Therefore, the main issue of contemporary capitalism here is concerned with creating memories, rather than retaining past memories.

About the issue of memory, Nakamura argues that "common sense" is deeply tied to the history of the argument over "*topos*" (place). Henri Bergson shows that human beings have two kinds of memories; one is the habitual memory that is attained through physical repetitions, and the other is the "pure memory" or "recalled memory" that is concerned with retaining the past memory in represented forms (Bergson 1896=2012: 227–228). Here, "*topos*" means the "place" where past memories are retained in certain orders so that one can appropriately recall each of them in an exact moment. According to Nakamura, recalling some memories becomes possible through the actions of the imagination that makes a sensual impression sustainable, and consequently, through the imagination, we can make a certain context based on pasts (Nakamura 1979=2000: 244–245). As already pointed out, "common sense" is the "seat of imagination", and hence, inscribing sensual impressions at a certain moment into "*topos*" transforms "common *sense*" into "*common* sense" in the sense of shared understanding among certain members. In other words, retaining and creating a common ground requires incessant inscribing and recollection of sensual impressions through expressions. In this sense, the "*topos*" is the "depository for various meanings (ideas)" (Nakamura 1979=2000: 296) and close to the "place of nothingness" from which the "predicative" activities evolve.

From the view of the "*topos*," we can regard what Fisher said about the demise of conditions to create new memories as the demise of "common sense" or "*topos*." Otherwise put, the problem of "chaotic capitalism" is not merely the demise of a shared culture based on traditions, trusts,

reasons or whatever, but, more importantly, the disorder of roles of physical "common *sense*." This is the problem of the chaotic capitalism that requires us to adapt to the chaos without recollective ability.

However, the above discussion is not enough to figure out the predicament of "common sense" today, because a more serious issue can be found in the fact that the "common sense" as the "place of nothingness" is being replaced by digital technologies. What is meant by this is that this replacement will totally change the way of living in the "predicative" world, as Nishida and Nakamura assumed. I would like to point out this issue subsequently in two processes. The first is that digitalization means that the "predicative" activities for each of us are computed through digital devices that replicate exactly the materialization of the "place of nothingness." The second is that the replacement of the "predicative" activities can mean that living energies can be lost from our lives.

Firstly, physical or affective issues caused by digitalization have been much debated. Roughly speaking, three forms of issues over the digitalized society can be categorized here; (1) its destructive effects on the human brain, which trigger distractions, and its impact on literacy cultures based on written things (Wolf 2000; Hansen 2020), (2) its political results of acute oppositions caused by affective ways of forming political opinions through social media (Ahmed 2004; Stiegler 2004; Gibbs 2008; Haidt 2012; Kahneman 2012; Feinberg et al. 2014; Anderson 2016; Richardson 2017; Till 2021), and (3) transformations of modes of "bio-power" through digitalization (Deleuze 1990=2008; Dean 2002; 2009; Stiegler 2004; Rouvroy et Burns 2013; Ito 2019). Let me skip detailed discussions about each issue here, because of the limited length of this article.

Despite these varieties of arguments over digitalization, what I would like to emphasize here is the connection between digitalization

and "common sense." It means that we can find the issue of the predicate in the sense of Nishida and Nakamura in digitalization. For this, it is quite meaningful to refer to Ishida Hidetaka, who is a Japanese philosopher centered on Michel Foucault, semiology, media theory and so on. He wrote, "Where is the 'Place of Sign': Reading Nishida Kitarō from the Neo-semiotic" in 2020, and he argues in it that Steve Jobs also invented Mac devices after his enlightened experience of the "place of nothingness" through Zen meditation.

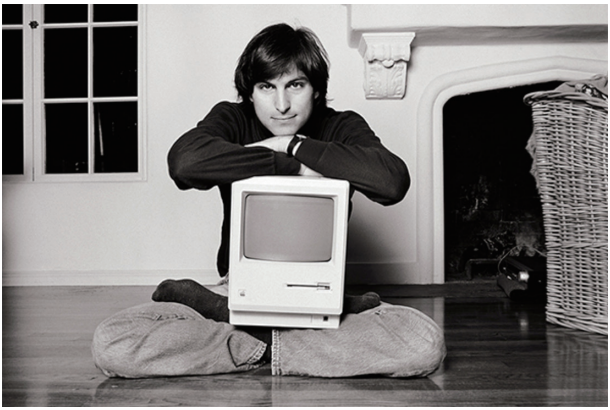

Figure 4. Steve Jobs, "Mac on Lap Classic," 1984
Source: https://www.artsy.net/artwork/norman-seeff-steve-jobs-mac-on-lap-classic (Access: 2020/11/08)

According to Ishida's insight, Figure 4. named "Mac on Lap Classic" symbolizes this connection in the Mac on his meditation posture. In fact, the connection between Macintosh or iPhone and his experience of Zen is pointed out in some studies (Isaacson 2011; Ishida 2020: 204–207; Yanagita 2020). Jobs had been influenced by Hippie culture and Hindu culture since the 1950s, and after that, he started to commit to the Zen practice taught by Otokawa Kōbun in San Francisco.

It is pointed out that his Zen meditation facilitated his creativity, which resulted in the simple design of Apple products (Kumagai 2015: 169). Ishida concluded in his article that:

> More than 60 chips were neatly set out on the motherboard of the Apple I, which were standing by to deploy the "system of the universal" through the universal network to come (…). Besides, (…) the young Jobs "bloomed his intuition", sitting in padmasana (meditation posture), or meditating on the "place of nothingness" in terms of Nishida Kitarō. (Ishida 2020: 208)

Subsequently, in what sense can we find a philosophical relationship between Jobs and Nishida? In his article, Ishida redefines Nishida's philosophy based on the predicates from the semiological perspective based on Charles Sanders Peirce. Peirce stipulates human semiological processes as being constituted by processes of index, icon, and symbol (Peirce 1867=1960; Ishida 2020:185–186). Actually, while in Peircean semiology, the order of semiosis is in the order of (1) icon, (2) index, and (3) symbol, Daniel Bougnoux who is one of the media theorists in France recalibrated it into (1) index, (2) icon, and (3) symbol (Bougnoux 2001; Ishida and Azuma 2019: 257–261). Through modeling this semiological process that leads to logical judgments, he aimed to incorporate the logics into the embodied semiology (Ishida 2020:186–187).

Now, according to Ishida, this Peirce's semiological scheme can be correlated with Nishida's philosophy centered on the logic of predicates. As I argued before, the "logic of the predicates" depicts the relationships between the subject and the predicates in that the latter, "*the general*," envelops the former, the particular. From Peirce's semiology, these relationships are equivalent to the infinite semiosis (semiological processes) over a "dynamic object," although Peirce did not assume

the intuition of the "place of nothingness" as Nishida did, because this semiosis is entirely mediated by signs and one cannot intuitively grasp the "place" itself in this semiosis (Ishida 2020: 189). However, according to Ishida, if we focus on the fundamental moment in which an object is indexed, imagined, and symbolized, a work of the "place" on which the object appears in the way of the "*being-in-place*" is uncovered (Ishida 2020: 189–192). This fundamental feature of objects on the "*being-in-place*" is implicitly expressed in Japanese predication, *-de-aru* (~である). Terminologically speaking, *de* (で) has the original meaning of *-ni-oite* (~において),and *aru* (ある) literally means the status of being (*aru*, 有る) (Ishida 2020: 194). Therefore, in Japanese expression, the predicates cannot be regarded as being equivalent with *be* or *is* as the copula, rather it has a close structure to the French expression; il *y* a (*y* depicts the meaning of the place "there"). In this sense, Ishida calls this "*being-in-place*" feature of the predicate the "supplement of copula" (Ishida 2020: 192–194, 197).

In short, the semiosis in the Peircean sense can be reformulated into processes that are evolved *in* the "place" of the predicates, and given that his semiological idea of the human mind that always forms judgments and propositions of objects influenced the contemporary Artificial Intelligence (AI), the cyber space and its materialization into digital devices can be regarded as the materialization of the "place of nothingness." At least, we can interpret Jobs' "intuition" in this way. It means that not only the Macintosh but also contemporary digital devices like iPhone or iPad are material appearances of the "place of nothingness." This view enables us to think about the contemporary digitalization and globalization closely connected with the process in terms of the expansion of the predicative logic as the "place of nothingness."

Nonetheless, the problem here is that this materialization of the

"place of nothingness" did not accomplish the "place of nothingness" in our lives, and rather it is tantamount to the dis-embedding materialization of "common sense" through digitalization. This means that the logic of the "place of nothingness" that is embedded in Japanese language and cultural context, at least as Nishida envisaged it, drives quite the opposite process now. While digital devices form global communicative connections, they compute and provide each user with subtly customized information, service, and products as the predicative signs that constantly describe our personal features as data. In a word, digital devices live our predicative lives instead of us in the chaotic situation of capitalism in the way that they provide us with customized information, as if this information represents the "*being-in-place*." What you know through your digital device appears from the Big Data field and hence it defines the place of *de-aru* ahead of your expression. We can say that this situation is a *supplement of the predicative* by digitalization. Furthermore, under the chaotic capitalism, we are required to adjust to the "ever-changing" situation in every moment, which undermines our basis of memorization, as I argued with Nakamura and Fisher. In this sense, while the chaotic capitalism undermines the human ability of "common *sense*" based on the "*being-in-place*," digital devices substitute the predicative logic. We now live in this alienated dialogue between capitalism and digital devices, which is a novel situation in the history of philosophy, if the dialectic process means the process of self-realization.

3. Conclusion

I would like to wrap up my argument by pointing out a direction that we can explore in the future. In the global expansion of dependence on digital devices, human society has to think of ways to coexist with them.

However, given that digitalization is a material replacement of the "place of nothingness" or "common sense," we need to consider the possible ways of re-embodying them for ourselves. One thing I can point out here is that while "common sense" is based on the *coenesthesia*, the materialization of it dispenses with this and mainly provides us with sensual stimuli to the senses of vision and hearing. Even if these devices can provide users with images of bodily movements, it is meaningless if these images are limited to physical images provided by advertisements like the healthy body, "instagrammability" and disciplined behaviors driven by digitalized scores. According to Nakamura, "common sense" implies a fundamental potentiality of the human body that is porous to the natural world and cultural world. Nakamura says:

> The fact of the distinction between morning and afternoon and the units of days presupposes natural circulations. Moreover, it is not only that these kinds of natural time do not exist outside us humans, but also that we as a part of nature, especially as a living organism, also have intrinsic circulations and rhythms inside the self, that is, the natural time. However, the time lived by us is not limited to this kind of the natural time, but social and cultural time beyond it. *The natural time becomes the social and cultural time with mediations of conscious and unconscious institutions*. (Nakamura 1979=2000: 270; italic added)

Digitalization depicts the movement of this world based on "common sense." However, it occupies and replaces it. For re-living and reformulating "common sense," we also need to think of the nature of "common sense" that provides us with the possibility of newly forming the entire "rhythm" of our natural and cultural lives, which can be assumed more freely, slowly, and energetically driven by the vitalization

of "common sense." If we can elaborate on the study of the globally shared "common sense" today, it will be a philosophically critical investigation of the global capitalization of human predicative life accompanied by digitalization from the perspective of the universally physical level complicated by the natural and socio-cultural becoming of humans.

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Chapter 4
Common Sense, Myth and Technology in Miki Kiyoshi

Fernando WIRTZ

1. Introduction

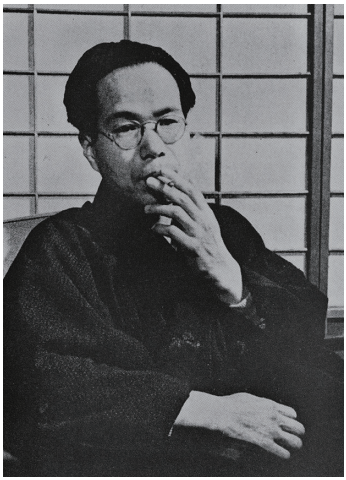

Figure 1. Miki Kiyoshi
Source: (MKZ 1)

In this chapter, I want to look at what Miki concretely says about common sense. I start by talking about the concept of common sense in 1932 in a text from Miki, then I move to the latest Miki in 1941. I will compare Miki's concept with Tosaka's in *Analysis of Common Sense*, and then I will give a little reflection on a possible relation between common sense and technology.

2. *Doxa* as a Form of Social Knowledge

Miki's concept of common sense is not centered on the systematicity of self-evident propositions, but rather on its essential sociality and pragmatism. The work *Shakaikagaku Gairon* (『社会科学概論』[*Introduction to Social Science*]) (1932) was published in the series *Philosophy* by Iwanami Shoten.

This book is strongly influenced by the sociological work of Max Weber and Karl Manheim, the latter of whom was Miki's tutor during his time at Heidelberg University. The term "social knowledge" that Miki employs throughout the book does not refer simply to knowledge about how our society works, but also to the forms of knowledge that circulate in a society.

This is also the object of what Mannheim calls "a sociology of thought." The thesis of Mannheim's most famous book, *Ideology and Utopia* (1929) which certainly served as an inspiration for Miki, is that some modes of thought can only be understood by analyzing their social origins. This accounts, for example, for what he terms "prescientific knowledge":

> Hence, it is not to be regarded as one of the anomalies of our time, that those methods of thought by means of which we arrive at our most crucial decisions, and through which we seek to diagnose and guide our political and social destiny, have remained unrecognized and therefore inaccessible to intellectual control and self-criticism. The significance of social knowledge grows proportionately with the increasing necessity of regulatory intervention in the social process. This so called pre-scientific inexact mode of thought

> however, (which, paradoxically the logicians and philosophers also use when they have to make practical decisions), is not to be understood solely by the use of logical analysis. (Mannheim 1979: 1–2)

Ironically then, even sociology, by trying to provide a rational explanation of society, has to admit that some social processes do not rely on a pure "rational" understanding of facts or decision-making. This point seems especially important for Miki. He is interested in the more fundamental forms of thought that are disseminated in a social context. In this direction. He writes:

> For example, common sense is often seen as just pre-scientific knowledge, and is not always the subject of special interest of philosophers, but common sense is a special existence that can never be seen merely as a prescientific stage. The form of knowledge of common sense will be of almost incomparable importance to the case of knowledge about nature, especially in relation to social knowledge. (MKZ 6: 292)

In the course of his description, Miki points to two basic forms of social knowledge: *doxa* and *mythos*. Far from dismissing these forms as pre-scientific (in the sense of "a-scientific"), Miki insists that they should be regarded as proper scientific objects of study and sources of cognition. While the latter refers to the form of knowledge that proliferates in a period of political anxiety, the *doxa* refers to the "normal" state of a society, and Miki explicitly includes common sense as a component of *doxa*.

Doxa expresses a givenness, what is "already" (*sude ni* 既に) given in a society as knowledge. It is a mere immediate assertion. For this

reason, argues Miki, the *doxa* provides no value of truth or falsehood. It does not provide truth (*shin* 真); it establishes correctness (*tadashisa* 正しさ). Of course, this does not hinder a "correct" *doxa* from being true, but truth and *doxa* belong fundamentally to different "modes" of being. This is because a *doxa* could be different; it is not eternal in the sense of ideal truth. The contingency of *doxa* is historical and contextual. Nevertheless, the *doxa* is not to be understood as an individual opinion but, rather, as something social, which is where Miki finds its political relevance.

The condition for *doxa* to exist as social knowledge is what Miki calls a society in a "normal state" (*jōtai* 常態), in which there is a tendency toward an equilibrium that is able to maintain a certain social stability. This is what distinguishes an organic historical period from a critical one. Common knowledge is necessary for the reproduction of society, and it operates through the repetition of customs and practices. However, this is not its only function. It is also the field for the social communication of science. In this sense, Miki's *doxa* is not opposed to science. "What is necessary for the social *praxis* is not the knowledge that is formative, but rather the knowledge that is a conclusion" [MKZ 6: 302]. This is what Miki calls the "making of common sense" (*jōshikika* 常識化), which speaks to knowledge that can be appropriated through the form of a "slogan" (*surōgan* スローガン) (MKZ 6: 302).

Now, as science can become *doxa*, there is also the possibility for *doxa* to become science. Nevertheless, in this case, the *doxa* becomes a dogma; it ceases to naturally incorporate new elements and begins to operate teleologically *in order* to maintain social cohesiveness. In science, there is an element of pursuit that keeps a field perennially open to new theories. When common sense becomes fixated, it becomes a dogma because the limit that it sets "is not inherent in the essence of science." As such, dogma is not real science, because it is sealed from

new discoveries and paradigm shifts.

As mentioned earlier, *doxa* is only to be thought of with its counterpart: myth. Later in his text, Miki says that since human consciousness mediates between the subject and the object, the fact (*jijitsu* 事実) and the being (*sonzai* 存在), *doxa* and myth offer two ways in which to relate to this dialectic: while myth is the consciousness of the transcendental discontinuity between fact and being, *doxa* posits within the awareness of its internal continuity (for the role of myth and ideology in Miki see also Stromback 2020; Wirtz 2020).

3. Common Sense and Philosophy

In 1940, Miki published his *Tetsugaku Nyūmon* (『哲学入門』[*Introduction to Philosophy*]), a product of a series of lectures that he gave in 1938. As the title indicates, this book is not directed at specialists, but at a general audience. There, he assigns an entire section to the notion of common sense, where he shares the following definition:

> Common sense is the accumulation of social experience, and many of our actions are carried out according to common sense.
>
> Common sense is, first of all, active (*kōi-teki* 行為的) knowledge. Common sense is said to be practical, but practical means empirical and active. Actions, as actions in the environment, are technical (*gijutsu-teki* 技術的), and common sense is always technical knowledge. Practical means also everyday-like (*nichijō-teki* 日常的), and common sense is related to daily life, and its characteristic is that it is everyday-like. (MKZ 7: 33)

It should be stressed that, for Miki, as Nishida's student, experience

is never merely passive. Therefore, this "accumulation of social experience" does not refer to an imposed sedimentation of habits, but instead, to an active self-construction of traditions. In this light, common sense is "active." This is also observed in the "negative resistance" in which common sense sometimes manifests. The pragmaticism of common sense reminds us of Miki's concept of *doxa*. Here, he also defines common sense in nature as simply assertive and organic. This is the condition for maintaining social spatial cohesion, although it may vary from place to place. What is clear is that while the common sense of one society can be in contradiction with the common sense of another society, within one society, common sense functions harmonically. "In a certain society, one common sense does not collide with another common sense, and if it collides, it is not called common sense" (MKZ 7: 36).

While there are many similarities, it can also be observed that Miki seems to exclude the disruptive element of myth from this new formulation. In this sense, he seems to emphasize social homogeneity at the cost of diminishing the revolutionary potential. However, this is only partially accurate. Even if it is true that Miki seems to relegate his notion of myth, he also employs the term "critical spirit" (*hihan-teki seishin* 批判的精神) to refer to the internal tendency toward change that arises in a society and pushes common sense to its limits, destroying it. Nevertheless, common sense always reinvents itself, as old conventions are replaced by new ones.

Now, science, under the impulse of the critical spirit, transcends common sense as it elevates to a logical, theoretical, and abstract point of view. However, as mentioned before, common sense cannot be eliminated. Here, Miki explains that cultural progress is the result of the scientification of common sense. It is here that technology comes into play:

> As science becomes technology and enters into the everyday life, it enters into the common sense. Electricity becomes common sense when electric lights and trains are made, and it becomes a lack of common sense not to know about electricity. This is because common sense is originally knowledge from the position of action, and science is also actually transferred to the position of action in [the case of] technology. The fact that common sense and science are different does not mean that it is impossible or meaningless to make science common sense. It is important for the progress of common sense and the development of science to make science common sense, but it requires a special method. It is a lack of common sense to not respect science just because it is different, and it is also unscientific to think that common sense can be completely replaced by science. (MKZ 7: 42)

4. Tosaka's Analysis and Everydayness

Another author who was actively engaged during this time with the concept of common sense was Tosaka Jun, Miki's younger colleague [see Goto 2008]. In 1935, Tosaka published what is now his best-known work, *Nihon Ideorogī Ron* (『日本イデオロギー論』[*Japanese Ideology*]). Included was the text *"Jōshiki" no Bunseki* (「〈常識〉の分析」[*Analysis of "Common Sense"*]), an essential text to understand Tosaka's articulation of his theory of ideology.

> Common sense has two contradictory aspects when contemplated commonsensically (*jōshiki-teki* 常識的). On the one hand, it means non- (or anti-) scientific, non- (or anti-) philosophical, non- (or anti-) literary, etc., negative or anti- knowledge. On the other hand,

> it means, on the contrary, established, normal, socially applicable, practical, sound and common knowledge. (TJZ 2: 251)

So, what Tosaka finds irritating in the traditional concept of common sense is that it implies the idea of an average kind of knowledge.

To put it in very simple terms, if such a thing were possible, it would not be the same to sum up all the knowledge that each individual has as to calculate the average amount of knowledge of the totality. In a similar sense, if, in a given group of people, a minority acquires a higher level of knowledge (for example, by studying), this does not mean *per se* that the common sense of the whole group improves. Moreover, even if common sense is understood as "average common sense," this does not explain how real common sense works. As a consequence, Tosaka draws attention to the ideal aspect of common sense, that is, to its function as an ideal or goal. Similar to bourgeois electoral systems, argues Tosaka, public opinion (*seron* 世論) does not reflect the real interests of the majority but, instead, works as a norm that pushes opinion in a certain direction. As a result, we can affirm that the two confronting sides of the concept of common sense reveal their source in the social tension between aristocratic and bourgeois understandings of the term.

To surpass the limitations of this commodified concept of common sense, Tosaka's proposal is to rethink it from the perspective of what he calls "everydayness" (*nichijōsei* 日常性), a central notion of his philosophy. "When it comes to where the regulations of common sense go beyond the regulations of quantitative averageness and majority, it comes down to what can be called the principle of everydayness that I first mentioned before." In his text from 1930, *The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time*, he points out that history should be thought of from the concrete actuality of daily activities and practices.

This perspective is exemplified through the worker's temporality. For workers, work has to be finished "today," and they are not allowed to think in a wide and ideal historical time. Their locus of praxis is the everyday.

Nonetheless, how does everydayness translate itself into the debate surrounding common sense? For Tosaka, it is clear that journalism should play a central role in this regard. He writes: "This journalistic function of the newspaper, which opposes the academic function, is the most accessible proof of the principle of everydayness." Thus, it is possible to assert that, for Tosaka, the true manifestation of common sense is to be found in the activity of critical journalism. This is not the journalism that reproduces the views of the dominant class; it is the critical journalism that evaluates reality from the quotidian perspective of the working class. Journalism is, therefore, not something imposed to be consumed; it is a necessity of the masses themselves who are embedded in the temporarily of the daily occurrence of facts.

5. Technology and Everydayness

It is not my goal here to evaluate Miki's political collaborationism or to defend it. It is quite clear that some aspects of his later thought, especially after 1935, can be read as a justification of Japanese imperialism (see Kim 2007; Harrington 2009). His concept of common sense somehow echoes this political development. While in 1932, in *Introduction to Social Science*, the concept of *doxa* was still in a dialectical relation with the transformative concept of myth, in his *Introduction to Philosophy*, a much more homogeneous notion seems to take hold. Unlike Tosaka, Miki is not interested in the internal tensions of common sense, because he grasps the concept as a holistic social phenomenon. Nevertheless, I would like to focus instead on Miki's

constant emphasis on reappraising common sense as an element within culture, technology, and even philosophy. For him, philosophy itself should be grounded in common sense's pragmatic modality.

Miki opposes a narrow understanding of technology that separates culture (*bunka* 文化) from civilization (*bunmei* 文明), where the former is "spiritual" and the latter "material" (MKZ 13: 464–474). Such an understanding of technology as opposed to culture privileges the view of Western supremacy. For Miki, no technical innovation should be made without consulting common sense. It is true that many elements of his reflections on common sense can be described as populist: his rejection of "politics," his indistinct notion of people (or masses), and the idea that a good leader is one who carefully listens to and interprets people's demands. However, there are some aspects that go beyond populism, such as his highlighting of the inevitability of common sense as a function in every society, its pragmaticism, activeness, and technicity. These elements are compatible with an understanding of everydayness as a field of active innovation.

However, can we think of global common sense in relation to technology? When Miki writes that electricity becomes common sense, he probably does not mean that people necessarily have the same specialized knowledge of electricity as that of a physicist or an engineer. In a similar way, our practical contact with computers, cellphones, vehicles, or medical implements is not based on a direct understanding of scientific knowledge, which does not prevent us from using them. This "parallel" lower system of knowledge that treats high-tech from a low-tech pragmatic perspective, precisely because it does not belong to academic institutional networks and their restrained norms, is able to introduce technical innovations for itself. Thus, even if common sense cannot structurally change a certain technology, it can modify its use or create small-scale variations. Arguably, this implies, rather,

a broad notion of technology, but this would be precisely one of the achievements of grassroots innovation to re-signify and expand our understanding of technology. These innovations can adopt different forms, from using an online platform in a totally unforeseen way to local sustainable gardening. Improvements in farming and its tools and new ways of cooking or drying food should also be included here. Empirical evidence largely supports the fact that technological innovation does not require direct contact with academic institutions (For more detailed information about "grassroots innovations," (see, for example, Seyfang and Smith 2007; Ross et al. 2012; Singh et al. 2020; Khalil et al. 2020).

For this reason, disregarding the *doxa* of a society from the point of view of philosophical narratives would insinuate an unnecessary epistemological reduction. In this respect, as the Argentinean philosopher Rodolfo Kusch (1976) once wrote, "In Europe, '*doxa*' and '*noesis*' are closer. They have a cultural continuity. And our problem is that we live far from Western *noesis* and we do not know anything about our *doxa*, because we segregate it. But it turns out that living is *doxa*, that is, opinion, and culture." In a global geopolitical scenario, many *doxas* are replaced by the logic of capitalist realism in view of the fact that they are unable to generate large-scale technological profit. However, the same way that Miki does not understand ideology as false consciousness, *doxa* is also an active process rather than a passive one. Thus, intertwined cognitive, social, economic, institutional, and technological processes emerge in the middle of common sense and enable us to understand the circulation of social knowledge in a dynamic way.

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Chapter 5
Primacy of Imagination and *Sensus Communis*: In Considering a Transcultural Subjectivity

Tyler Tak-lap YEUNG

The question of how human beings create the environment in which they dwell is a common philosophical concern for many philosophers from the Kyoto school. For example, both Miki Kiyoshi and Nishida Kitarō have thought about how the embodied subjects or agents (*shutai* 主体) make history (Curley, 2020: 448). In Miki's eyes, Marx offered a theory of history in which the development of history was identical to the development of the human being towards a total forcing of the human capacity for creation. Thus, for Miki, Marxism *was* humanism (Curley, 2020: 448). According to such views on human history and development, it is not hard to understand why Miki had shifted his concern to the logic of imagination (*kōsōryoku* 構想力) which is understood as the foundation of "the creation of the new culture" (Cf. Curley, 2020: 449). With these insights in mind, I want to renew the discussion about the significance of imagination and *sensus communis* in considering the constitution of a transcultural subjectivity concerning our digitalized global situation.

In this philosophical workshop, let's consider *which cognitive power has the primacy in the construction of transcultural subjectivity*. In order to respond to this question and the title I made for this presentation, some concepts have to be clarified at the outset: What is meant by "transcultural subjectivity," "[power of] imagination" and

"*sensus communis*"? What is the meaning of having primacy in the construction of a transcultural subjectivity?

1. What I Consider When I Talk about the Construction of a "Transcultural Subjectivity"?

When I talk about the construction of transcultural subjectivity, I do not mean the constructions of transcultural identity, which is somehow empirical, social, and historical. To define subject or subjectivity in the traditional way, thinkers tend to outline the differences among identities, the particular out of the universal, and the essential character of something is the result. The classical definition of human beings made by Aristotle, "*zoon logon echon* (Men are rational animals)," is the typical example of an essentialism. On the other hand, relationism focuses on the relationship among things in defining a particular. It's emphasized that we can only know something among certain relations in a contextual whole. Things are neither self-standing nor infinitely differentiable entities. Both views are wrong, because they presuppose what they are looking for. In other words, to avoid infinite regress, they presuppose an absolute proposition as the goal of the thought for which they are searching. In combining the above ways of thinking, when I consider the constructions of transcultural subjectivity, I do not aim at an argument for an essential character or entity, but the faculty that enables us to construct the social-historical relations. Through these relations, the subject reveals what it needs in considering its *empirical* identity. However, what enables this possibility lies essentially in the *transcendental* condition, namely the transcultural subjectivity.

2. What Does It Mean When I Employ the Term "Transcultural Subjectivity"?

After the age of imperialism and colonialism, together with the unbound and cross-border experience in the digital age, a globalized world forces us to accept the fact that there is no pure and unbounded Western or Eastern culture in the strict sense. You may object to the invasion of global capital led by the so-called "multinational" enterprise and practice a kind of rebellion on a personal basis, but you cannot single-handedly change this reality. We are living in the age of hybrid identities. Cultural difference is only a matter of degrees rather than substance. In other words, we all possess a transcultural identity, no matter whether we are conscious or unconscious of this fact. I'm using the term "transcultural" subjectivity instead of, for example, "multicultural," "intercultural," or "cross-cultural," because:

1.) "Multicultural" refers to a state that a subject contains multiple cultural or ethical origins. A multicultural person possesses different cultural resources. However, it does not mean that the different cultural characters necessarily have engaging interactions with each other.

2.) "Cross-cultural" emphasizes the action of comparison between two or more different cultures or cultural areas. The key point of such comparison lies simply in creating the action across different cultural entities. The starting point and subjective orientation of the comparison are not important as such.

3.) The word "intercultural" denotes a status of "in-betweenness." An intercultural person could live in a so-called "international" environment very well, because such an environment must be a decentralized cultural environment, which can be copied and rebuilt everywhere on this planet. However, such

> intercultural characteristics are in another perspective a kind of monopolization of the definitions of "international" and "intercultural." Eventually, the "international" means, basically, for example, the employment of English, a capitalist lifestyle or the adoption of American standards, etc. So, to me, the concept "transcultural" presupposes a "rooted cosmopolitanism" representing a cultural tendency that appreciates cosmopolitan values without losing one's cultural originality and gratitude.

Persons, who possess transcultural experience, construct their identities by cultural shock and consecutive comparisons with their cultural origins. It is a dynamic and hermeneutical process that presupposes the horizons of subjective time, which ontologically presuppose "the zero point of perspective (der Nullpunkt einer Perspektive)" as the starting point. Since we are in advance being thrown into a particular culture and historical background, it is inevitable that we must start to gain cross-cultural, intercultural and transcultural experience from a solid cultural origin, which is mainly and closely related to the native language. Thus except for those who grow up in a multilingual and multicultural environment, most of us construct our subjectivity in a transcultural way. First, we own first "our" culture, and then we start integrating other cultures into cultures with our cultural origins, dynamically, and hermeneutically.

3. Which Cognitive Faculties Have Primacy in the Construction of a Transcultural Subjectivity?

3.1. Imagined Communities and Imaginary Elements of Transcultural Subjectivity

I have mentioned that I am concerned mainly about the *transcendental*

conditions of the construction of a transcultural subjectivity. First, I am going to enquire about the essential conditions of having a transcultural subjectivity, then I will argue for the primacy of these conditions. The essential conditions of a transcultural subjectivity are our imagination and common sense (*sensus communis*). On the necessity of imagination, we may take Benedict Anderson's ideas as a reference. He says in *Imagined Communities* (1976/2006): "In an anthropological spirit, then, I propose the following definitions of the nation; it is an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (Anderson 2006: 5–6).

Although Anderson's research lies mainly in the definition of the national identity and nationalism, instead of subjectivity, his consideration is still inspiring and suitable for our topic. He points out that understanding of one's political and national identity is by nature imagination, "because the members of even a small nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 2006: 6).

The sense of unity is basically built on an imagined unity that is invented and created within a community that shares similar concept constituting factors. Imagination is not a "fabrication," but a necessary cognitive process for the formation of any community. Thus, the term "imagined community" does not refer to false consciousness, but to a social psychological fact of society. In other words, imagination is the epistemological precondition of the constitution of identity and communal sense.

A transcultural subjectivity shares similar constituting factors, because the field and the boundary of a cultural entity are also imaginary. To me, the core of a cultural entity is built on some basic beliefs and normative concepts which are rooted in its language.

However, the boundary of a cultural entity is open, flexible, and extendable in the dimension of time. It is an organic whole that can adapt to the changes caused by the surroundings and transform itself by balancing the basic beliefs and the challenges.

Since we are living in the digital age, our subjectivity is inevitably a transcultural one and it must be developed through the collisions among different cultural entities. The difference between the so-called Eastern and Western cultures remains a reality, but the transcultural formation of one's identity and subjectivity becomes more and more common and essential.

We can expect that this formation relies a lot on the imaginary understanding of the cultural Self and cultural Others, through which we can engage in the dynamics of transcultural conditions of a developing Self. In other words, a transcultural subjectivity is unmistakably involves transcultural imaginary elements in its constructing process.

3.2. The Primacy of Imagination and *Sensus Communis* in Construction of a Transcultural Subjectivity

With the above ideas in mind, I propose that (the power of) imagination (*Einbildungskraft*) and *sensus communis* have the necessary cognitive precondition in the construction of a transcultural subjectivity.

In the *Lectures of Kant's Political Philosophy*, Hannah Arendt points out that *sensus communis* and (power of) imagination are two main mental operations in judgment. In my paper, I have reconstructed Arendt's arguments on Kant's political philosophy and shed light on the implication of the priority of imagination in respect of (power of) judgement in general (*Urteilskraft überhaupt*) (see Yeung 2017). I argue that imagination and *sensus communis* are the preconditions of judgment, because imagination can provide a representation of an object which is absent. According to Arendt's interpretation, imagination plays

an additional role in turning the objects from our outward sense into our inner sense, namely, the time (*die Zeit*).

On the one hand, the implication of this interpretation lies in the indoctrination of temporal character in the functions of imagination, by which the objects-to-be-judged in the present will be *transcendentally* connected with the objects recollected from the past or the projected in the future. On the other hand, *sensus communis* is responsible for providing the a priori standard for judgment, through which we are able to judge something *as if* we have the consensus from everyone in the community. Arendt traced the meanings of *sensus communis* from chapters 39–40 of Kant's *Critique of Judgment* and determined two major topics: first, the criterion of the approbation or disapprobation is communicability. Second, *sensus communis* provides the standard of the judgment (Cf. Arendt 1992: 69–72, 131–132).

Another prominent interpretation by Hannah Arendt is the image-forming functions of imagination. The image-forming function is the key to understanding the significance of imagination in her theory of judgment. Without the image forming function, we cannot even present the object which is absent for the judging subject, and it entails the inability to judge no matter whether it is about the past, the present, or the future (Cf. Yeung 2017: 356). Moreover, the image-forming process is not a value-free process. It involves the pre-given taste and understanding of something which is encoded in the cultural historical backgrounds of the subject. Through the pre-selection by imagination, the judging subjects direct themselves to the thought-objects that are suitable for the activity of deliberation. Indeed, imagination is "discriminatory," which pre-embeds the taste and choice in the "*re*-presentation." Thus, imagination gains not only cognitive but also normative necessity and priority in the case of judgment (Cf. Yeung 2017: 354–355).

We may further ask: what and where is the source of the pre-given taste for imagination? The answer is *sensus communis*. As I mentioned, *sensus communis* is the standard for judgment. It is actually the ground for a hermeneutic process of understanding. Arendt translates the term as "community sense," instead of adopting the generally accepted translation as "common sense," because she wants to elaborate the preconditions of having a ground for a particular judgment. A community sense exists before an individual receives it as the foundation of his own judging. Thus, it is the transcendental condition of one's own judgment.

The ancient wise man teaches us that "the whole is greater than the sum of the individual parts[1]." Also, the community is not the sum of individuals. On the contrary, an individual becomes an individual due to the nurturing of the community. Hence, the community is *ontologically* preceding the individual. *Sensus communis*, both for Kant and Hannah Arendt is a transcendental ground for reflective judgment, and more importantly, it cooperates with imaginations as two main mental operations in supporting the power of judgment. Through judgment, a subject is able to express and understand reflectively their own identity. Therefore, judgment is the representation of one's subjectivity. Thus, as the transcendental condition of judgment, imagination and *consensus communis* have their primacy when we consider the problems of the constitution of a transcultural subjectivity.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, the construction of a transcultural identity relies on the reflective understanding of oneself. In other words, the reflective judgment about the relations of the self and a socio-historical surrounding world plays a crucial role in constructing a transcultural identity. Thus, if

1 This phrase often attributed to Aristotle, see *Metaphysics*, book VIII, 1045a.

Hannah Arendt's interpretation that imaginations and *sensus communis* really play a key role in considering the construction of transcultural subjectivity is right, we may further ask upon this basis: how important is it to cultivate people's imagination and *sensus communis*, given that we want to encourage the communities who possess and will further develop a transcultural identity and subjectivity?

The concern about the "dehumanization brought by digital globalized sensations" (see Chapter 3 in this booklet) directs us to the contemplation of the dark side of digital globalization. However, I am pretty optimistic about the phenomenon of digital globalization. As I have mentioned, we are already in the age of transcultural subjectivity due to the omnipresence of digital usage. We are already connected!

Furthermore, we keep defining ourselves for each given situation. In a word, we are continuously redefining our humanity under the digital globalized situation. The understanding and *shared imagination* between so-called Eastern and Western people will come closer and closer in the world of the digital nomad. This phenomenon is based on the plurality that arises from a kind of "rooted cosmopolitanism." Every digital nomad shares their understanding and shares their imagination, according to their cultural origin for different digital media. So long as the digital world is open (although we know that there are still a lot of places that do not share this premise), the construction of transcultural subjectivity will continue.

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Editor's Postscript

MATSUI Nobuyuki

This booklet is a record of the International Workshop held on February 6, 2021, which took place online in the midst of the pandemic. Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, I had been concerned about how to reconsider the "common sense" of human beings in the era of the global spread of digital capitalism. In this age of "hyper-industrialization" (Bernard Stiegler), "we" had nothing to "share" and we felt that we were entering a phase where we had to revisit what "share" means in its own right in the highly connected environment brought by digitalization. Also, in the enforced situation of tele-working during the pandemic, while "we" experienced this common plight, outcomes were seemingly differentiated, depending on each one's economic condition. It was under these circumstances that this workshop was realized by inviting young researchers from several countries to develop our philosophical viewpoints on "common sense."

The theme of "common sense" was chosen with reference mainly to "On Common Sense" (*Kyōtsū Kankaku Ron*『共通感覚論』) written by Nakamura Yūjirō (see Chap. 3 in this booklet), which was my main research theme. However, this theme has enjoyed a long history in philosophy since Aristotle. Furthermore, speaking from a much wider perspective, "collective learning" (David Christian) enabled the socialization of Homo Sapiens in its course of evolution through the sharing of social imaginations through the expansion of the brain and the use of language, and we can see "common sense" as the core factor for the evolutionary process of Homo Sapiens beyond the East/West dichotomy. The purpose of this workshop was to show that this concept, "common sense," should be rediscovered at a global level beyond

the age of a nation-state and in terms of a deeper sense of history and society. The participants, Jonathan McKinney, Dennis Stromback, Fernand Wirtz, and Tyler Tak-Lap Yeung readily agreed to my proposal.

First of all, as for the themes presented by each of them, it was surprising to see through this workshop that considerations of the philosophies of the Kyoto School have abundantly expanded to a much broader extent. In addition, various philosophical views on Japanese philosophy encouraged me as an editor, because I could share an awareness of the common issue such as: the attempt to reread Japanese philosophy under the development of ecology and cognitive science (McKinney, Chap. 1), the philosophical viewpoint of post-capitalism based on post-anthropocentrism drawn from the philosophy of Nishida Kitarō and Miki Kiyoshi (Stromback, Chap. 2), the reinterpretation of the philosophy of Nakamura Yūjirō, who succeeded Nishida and Miki, in this digitalizing era (Matsui, Chap. 3), the critical and positive significances in the technical environment of "common sense," revisiting "common sense" and the concept of "myth" in Miki Kiyoshi (Wirtz, Chap. 4), and the subjective ability and intercultural condition which is ontologically incorporated in "common sense" (Yeung, Chap. 5). All of them have the potential insight to transcend the boundaries between East and West through reading Japanese philosophy and in the light of Western philosophy and vice-versa.

Secondly, it was a unique fulfilling opportunity to discuss "common sense" from various perspectives, linking it with ecology, language, and the self, as well as overcoming contemporary issues such as climate change, anthropocentrism, and ethnocentrism. However, in the Q&A session of this workshop, the fundamental question was posed to me, "What does the *global* common sense mean?". At that moment I could not clearly answer this question at the time, even though it was one of the main themes of this workshop. Needless to say, I have given it some

thought, and responding to it here and now, I would say that "common sense" is related with the sensibility that opens ourselves to the above-mentioned concepts and contemporary issues. The issues such as climate change, anthropocentrism, and ethnocentrism while problematic in themselves, appear random and unrelated from the outside. However, if human beings were not open to their own surroundings, these phenomena would not be recognized as risks.

Since "common sense" is the concept that points out the physical condition of human ability to be connected with the surrounding environment, others, and social contexts, we can regard it as the *sense of connection itself*. Otherwise put, the *sense of connection itself* is equivalent to the human status of being thrown into contact with the whole. The concrete ways of connecting things are derived from this *sense of connection itself*. It is similar with the "Angst" (anxiety) as the "*Stimmung*" (mood) in the Heideggerian sense in the *Being and Time* (§29). The "Angst" is the fundamental mood or sensibility; *Befindlichkeit* (hard to translate, but "the sense of being disposed to things through our own minds"). Human beings are always and already "*being-in-the-world*" and thrown into the world of connections consisting of things. However, Heidegger argues this "Angst" is closely connected with fear, but while fear needs a certain object to be scared of, "angst" does not have this object. Moreover, if human beings cannot make or fail to make a connection with things, they compensate for this failed connection with things that human beings fear — the earth, others, systems, etc.

The "Angst," in this sense, is the condition of ontological openness to the world. However, when it comes to "common sense," we can recognize our connections with things beyond the Heidegger's insight of "Angst" and fear. That is to say, "common sense" as the *sense of connectivity itself* enables us to stretch our fear back to the

encountering point where human openness and ecological openness to connectivity are overlapped *in potentia*. While Heidegger described it as the fundamental "angst," we might also be able to describe it as the source of conviviality, festivity, or pleasure. With the term "global," philosophical thinking can revisit the sense of "angst" and connectivity itself, which re-opens the "world" to us beyond fear. Therefore, I would like to imply that the term "global common sense" is not merely the shared sense of the universe, but rather, the suggestion of how we can use the "common sense" to open the world to this connectivity in the age of *global fear*. At least, if we show conviviality to others, it is to calm the fear.

In retrospect, this workshop was planned after the sudden cancelation of my visits to Germany and France in March 2019 due to a COVID-19 outbreak. I have to express my deepest gratitude and apologies to the host researchers and colleagues of the Institute who helped me with the preparations and introduced the host researchers.

Professor Yasushi Kosugi, the director of the Asia-Japan Research Institute, encouraged me to use the budget that I inherited from 2019 for this project of an international philosophical workshop after the above cancelation. Thanks to his encouragement and support, I could realize this philosophical collaboration beyond my anxiety caused by the global pandemic. Also, this project would not have been possible without the assistance of Professor Anthony Brewer of the same Asia-Japan Institute, who gave his full support to this project, which was started from scratch, in the selection of participants, communicating with them, and checking the English drafts included this booklet. In addition, this workshop would not have been possible without the support of the officers and my colleagues of the Institute. Moreover, I must express my deep appreciation for the generosity of the presenters Dave McKinney and Dennis Stromback from the United States, and Tyler in Germany,

who participated in this workshop at the most inconvenient times due to the considerable time differences. It was also quite fortunate that I could meet Fernando Wirtz personally in Kyoto. In the beginning, while I had thought that he was in Germany, he was actually living in Kyoto city, as I was. As a result, we could meet several times and continue our discussion (at the prescribed social distance, of course).

The publication of this booklet marks the successful culmination of a workshop conducted under the restraints of a COVID-19 lockdown. Hopefully, we can continue our talks and make new connections to think of the meaning of "being-in-the-world-together." The meanings of "being," "in-the-world," and "together" sound quite self-evident. However, how fully do we really understand their respective meanings? It is my hope that we will continue our collaboration and transcend the boundaries of East and West through a fusion of ideas based on this first international workshop.

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