

---

# Alterity and Nothingness: An Exploration of Nishida's I and Thou\*

Gereon Kopf

Assistant Professor in Religion and Philosophy, Luther College, Iowa

---

In recent years the question has been raised whether the notions of *alterity* and *intersubjectivity* are of any relevance to the religio-philosophical tradition of Zen Buddhism. This question is of great importance because it not only bears significant ethical implications but also concerns the more far-reaching issue of whether, as Nishida Kitarō argues, a Zen philosophy can function as the conceptual basis for a political and social philosophy or whether Zen Buddhism remains predominantly concerned with spiritual enlightenment and thus, to a high degree, obsessed with the notion of the self. While it is without doubt that Zen Buddhism and Nishida's philosophical system centre on the notion and the pursuit of self-awareness, even if it appears in the form of selfless self-awareness, I do not think that a Zen Buddhist philosophy is necessarily self-absorbed or self-centered in the literal sense of these words. I would suggest, rather, along with Steve Odin (1996), that Zen places a strong emphasis on otherness and intersubjectivity. In short, while Zen Buddhism, for the most part, does not explicitly address the notion of otherness (neither do most philosophies prior to the twentieth century), it discloses an implicit concern with alterity and intersubjectivity.

---

\* This article is based on a paper delivered at the fourth annual conference of the International Association for Asian Philosophy and Religion (I.A.A.P.R.) at Hsi Lai University, Los Angeles, August 1997. A more detailed discussion is included in my forthcoming book *Beyond Personal Identity*, to be published by Curzon Press.

This implicit concern is evident in the inquiries of the Yogācārin Vasubandhu and Dharmakīrti into the problem of intersubjectivity and other minds respectively, in the strong emphasis Zen Buddhism imparts on the master-student relationship, and, as I have shown elsewhere (Kopf 1998), in Dōgen's implicit philosophy of alterity which is expressed in his notions of psychic interwovenness qua "weaving vines [Jp. *kattō*] of the Buddha-ancestors" and the casting off of self and other.<sup>1</sup> I further agree with Odin that the Zen depiction of the process towards enlightenment in the so-called Ten Ox-herding pictures portrays the intersubjective encounter of master and disciple as the final "stage" of *satori* (Odin 1996, 93–102). I believe that Nishida's concepts of the dialectical self (*benshōhōteki jiko*) and I-Thou (*watakushi to nanji*) give philosophical expression to Zen's implicit concern with alterity and intersubjectivity. In this paper I explore Nishida's notions of I-Thou and affirmation-qua-negation (*kotei soku hitei*) in order to lay the conceptual foundation for a Zen theory of alterity and intersubjectivity. In the process, I will attempt to explain Nishida's usage of seemingly paradoxical terms such as affirmation-qua-negation and non-relative other. What are the conceptual, psychological, and ethical implications of Nishida's dialectic? What are the conceptual implications of Odin's observation that in Nishida's thought "the individual and society are accorded equal status"? (334) It is my thesis that Nishida's I-Thou not only challenges the individual and egological paradigm of selfhood, but further presupposes an existential dimension of the self which simultaneously permeates and evades the self-conscious self.

### The Interaction of I-Thou

First of all and most obviously Nishida's I-Thou signifies the existentially interactive and relational character of the social self as a self-in-representation. As Nishida himself observes, "the 'I' exists as an 'I' in that it recognizes the Thou as Thou" and, more drastically, that "without a Thou there is no 'I'" (NKZ 7:85–86). These kinds of observations, however, do not identify the interactive and relational character of the self merely as the tendency of an isolated individual to enter into relationships, which, conversely, influence and possibly transform the individual; instead they imply an existential interrelatedness between two or more individual selves. The encounter of I-Thou transcends the individuality of the self in the sense that the individual and relational domains of human existence coexist and, in

fact, are inextricably intertwined. In short, Nishida suggests that individuality necessitates intersubjectivity and vice versa.

Nishida argues that the individual self displays its individuality only paradoxically through affirmation-qua-negation insofar as it is existentially in-relationship-with an independent other. In contrast to twentieth-century European phenomenology, Nishida not only defines the self—which he alternately refers to as “working thing” (*hataraku mono*) and as “desiring thing” (*hossuru mono*)—as an intentional act, but further argues that the very intentionality of the self necessitates the existence of a desiring other, which autonomously and dynamically opposes, resists, and negates the self. If the self’s desire was not opposed by the intentionality of an other, the self would extend infinitely, engulf all of reality, and, ultimately, fall into an infinite solipsism. Without the negation by the other, the self would experience itself as an independent yet isolated individual, existing only *for-itself*, locked in its private world. From a psychological perspective, the individual, devoid of boundaries and the delineation by an independent intentionality, dissolves into the undifferentiated and boundless oneness of Sigmund Freud’s “oceanic feeling” and Carl Gustav Jung’s “participation mystique.”<sup>2</sup>

Real resistance to the “desiring self” can only be offered by an independent other, who can freely make me the object of her/his desire. Jean-Paul Sartre illustrates the autonomous intentionality, which is beyond my own will, objectifies me, and alienates me from myself with his famous example of the objectifying *gaze* of the other. Contrary to Sartre, however, Nishida believes that the concepts “limitation” and “negation” do not signify the complete destruction of the individual and independent self, in the sense of Sartre’s being-for-the-other, but rather its necessary condition. It is this negation by the other that rescues the self from its solipsism, disclosing a world transcendent to its own will. Freud refers to this autonomous will of the other, which breaks down the narcissistic feeling of omnipotence and prepares the individual to embrace the existence of the external world, as the “reality principle.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, in the sense of the dialectical principle that like must always be opposed by like, Nishida’s “desiring self” develops and displays its individuality only in-relation-to other individual “desiring selves.” In Nishida’s words, only “being opposed to a Thou the I exists as an I” (NKZ 7:92).

To describe this existential predicament of the self, which constitutes itself only in the face of an other, Nishida employs paradoxical expressions such as his infamous affirmation-qua-negation. Psychologically speaking, these dialectical formulas indicate that the indi-

vidual self-consciousness of the self originates and develops only in relationship with other self-consciousnesses. Influenced by Hegel's dialectic but seemingly independent from Nishida's, psychoanalyst Jessica Benjamin describes a similar human predicament as the "paradox of mutual recognition":

The need for recognition entails this fundamental paradox: At the very moment of realizing our own independence, we are dependent upon another to recognize it. At the very moment we come to understand the meaning of "I, myself," we are forced to see the limitations of that self. At the moment when we understand that separate minds can share the same state, we also realize that these minds can disagree (Benjamin 1988, 33).

The terminology of the I-Thou thus signifies the paradoxical predicament of human existence that the existence of the self's independent consciousness simultaneously necessitates its own negation. It is only in my dependence on an autonomous other, who conversely recognizes my autonomy, that I can assert my own individuality. It is only when such an autonomous other negates the innermost desire of the self that the desiring self "recognizes the Thou as Thou" (NKZ 7:86) and, subsequently, can be recognized as an "I." It is in this sense that "the 'I' exists as an 'I' in that it recognizes the Thou as Thou," that "without a Thou there is no 'I.'"

### The Non-Relative Other

Nishida goes on to argue that the I-Thou, which juxtaposes self and other in a paradox of mutual recognition, radically negates the standpoint of the self-conscious I. In *The Fundamental Problems of Philosophy* he states that "I and Thou must be absolutely independent and separated. But by recognizing the Thou the I recognizes itself. Recognizing the I the Thou becomes a Thou. We encounter each other in non-relative negation" (NKZ 7:266). Nishida likens this radical negation of the everyday self's very modality of self-consciousness to the *homo religiosus* who realizes her/his own volatility, transience, and absolute vulnerability and to Fyodor Dostoevsky's "vanishing point" (NKZ 9:55). Such a radical negation has to be understood not as relative negation in the sense of an external other, which opposes the self in a relationship of mutual determination (*sōgō gentei*). On the contrary, Nishida argues that the mutual interplay of I-Thou necessitates a transcendent region inside the self, which the self encounters as non-relative negation (*zettai hitei*).<sup>4</sup> While the negation by an external

other reaffirms the differentiated world of the self-conscious self and, at the same time, completely separates “the world of the I” and “the world of the Thou,” the dialectical encounter of I-Thou necessitates an internal negation, which collapses the dichotomization of the world of interaction into immanence and transcendence and, subsequently, transforms the fundamental structure of the self-conscious self.<sup>5</sup> Nishida identifies this transcendent region inside the self, which simultaneously affirms and negates the self, as non-relative other (*zettai no ta*). The non-relative other functions as affirmation-quanegation in that it simultaneously destroys and creates the self; to quote Nishida, “when the non-relative other kills the I, it gives birth to the I” (NKZ 6:401).

Nishida’s terminology of the non-relative other and its equivalents *zettai issha* and *zettai yū*, which are frequently understood and translated as “Absolute One” and “Absolute Being” respectively (Nishida 1987, 108), quite often raises objections of being absolutistic and even monistic. However, despite frequent expressions which lend themselves to such an interpretation, Nishida’s concept of non-relative other qua contradictory self-identity does not constitute a cosmic identity-over-time such as Spinoza’s substance or the Upaniṣadic *brahman* but rather discloses a structure which is thoroughly non-dual. Contrary to conceptions of ultimate reality as permanent being, however, Nishida defines the non-relative other as non-dual and impermanent. First, following the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, Nishida argues that the non-relative other eludes the metaphysical categorization of “being” and “non-being” and reveals a radical dialectic insofar as it not only transcends the duality of being and non-being but, furthermore, the duality between a duality and an underlying oneness (qua being or non-being). He explains that “[w]hen the non-relative opposes nothing, it is truly non-relative. Opposing non-relative nothing, it is non-relative. There is nothing which opposes the self objectively from the outside. To say that the self opposes non-relative nothingness means that it opposes itself as self-contradiction. It is contradictory self-identity” (NKZ 11:397).

The non-relative other thus functions as the dialectical principle which paradoxically transcends and contains the dichotomies of being and non-being, duality and oneness, immanence and transcendence. Second, unlike, for example, the Hindu *brahman*, the non-relative other is not eternal in the sense of everlasting or unchanging but rather insofar as it defies the dual classification of temporal and atemporal. For this reason Nishida terms the atemporal present “eternal.” It is not self-identical in the sense of unchanging and per-

manent but rather self-evolving qua self-negating. Non-relative oneness is foremost non-relative in the sense of “the unity of opposites where one is many and many is one” (NKZ 7:45). For,

that which is identical in itself is not merely one but must be the many as one and the one as many. For this reason, self-identity has to be thought, in analogy to, for example, our self-awareness, to that which implies that what changes does not change, and to that which does not change while changing. Therefore when we think that the universal is identical in itself, this must imply that it is identical in itself. The universal must possess the meaning not to change while changing; it must possess the meaning of the many as one; in this sense the individual can be thought to be a universal, while the universal determines the individual and vice versa (NKZ 7:32–33).

Nishida employs his terminology of self-contradiction to indicate that the non-relative designates neither an unchanging substance nor an enduring container.<sup>6</sup> It dialectically unites change and changelessness. This world is “unchanging” in that it is not superseded by a diachronically diverse, external world; at the same time, it is “changing/different” in that it creatively transforms itself constantly. The aspects of changelessness and permanence indicate that there exists no separate, external world which is completely disconnected from the non-relative other, while the moments of change and difference signify the creative and self-transformative dimension of the non-relative other. Despite the religious symbolism he employs, Nishida identifies the non-relative other as that which is “always immanently transcendent and transcendently immanent” (NKZ 11:442).

Nishida’s enigmatic observations concerning the non-relative other do not merely postulate a transcendent region, but rather reject the dualism between a transcendent and an immanent realm in general. Following the Mahayana Buddhist insight that “samsāra is nirvāṇa,” or, in his terminology, “the *I-Thou* comprises the non-relative other” (NKZ 6:381), Nishida contends that even though the non-relative other displays transcendent qualities in that it is absolutely different from and inaccessible to the self-conscious self, the non-relative other does not comprise a merely transcendent reality. On the contrary, the seemingly transcendent non-relative other possesses an immanent quality insofar as it is included within and most intimate to the self itself. However, Nishida equally rejects a boundless and undifferentiated monism of the self; the non-relative other neither signifies a mystical unity, wherein everyday awareness and *numinosum* coincide, nor does it imply that the self solipsistically con-

tains the world inside and thus extends infinitely. Nishida argues that the very existence of the everyday self paradoxically necessitates the transcendence and negation of the self-conscious self and the world it engenders and, ultimately, a non-dualism of transcendence and immanence.

Psychologically, this dialectic of transcendence and immanence indicates an existential modality which transcends the intentionality of the self-conscious self without dissolving the individual consciousness into a transindividual unconscious. This transconscious dimension should not be confused with Jung's concepts of collective unconscious, *unus mundus*, or sense of *intersubjectivity* qua unconscious "going along."<sup>7</sup> Even though Nishida's conception of the non-relative other refutes, like Jung's collective unconscious, the individualistic and egological paradigm of the self, Nishida does not contend that the self is unaware of the non-relative other. Instead he contends that the everyday self "becomes aware of itself" precisely when it transcends its own self-conscious standpoint and realizes (in the cognitive and active sense of the term) its dialectical structure qua affirmation-and-negation. Therefore, it is my contention that Nishida's paradoxical language of the non-relative other denotes an epistemic and an existential attitude which simultaneously transcends and grounds the intentionality and the individuality of the desiring self.

### Non-thetic Awareness

In his essays, "The Dialectic of Self-Love and Other-Love," "I-Thou," and "The Logic of Basho and the Religious World View,"<sup>8</sup> Nishida underscores my interpretation of affirmation-qua-negation as non-thetic modality of existence when he introduces the concept of love (Jp. *ai*), to be exact, *agape*,<sup>9</sup> as the modality of affirmation-qua-negation which transcends desire. In these essays Nishida explains that "true love means that we affirm ourselves by negating ourselves and live in the other by dying to ourselves" (NKZ 6:288). As affirmation-qua-negation, love has to be distinguished from *thetic* desire, which affirms the self by negating the other. Nishida argues that desire, or intentionality for that matter, dispossesses the other of its subjective and autonomous agency by constructing it as an object which is posited for-the-self. Just as a character in a novel comprises a mere extension of the author's own imagination and fantasies, so is the other-for-the-self a puppet of the self's intentionality. However, by the same token, the self-conscious self constructs itself as an object of its own intentionality devoid of any subjectivity. As the object

of its distinctive and differentiating intentionality, the self-qua-noema comprises a representation and shadow of itself, which, as Kant observes in his "Paralogisms," is not necessarily identical to the epistemic subject. Love, on the contrary, signifies a modality which establishes the self in the face of the non-relative other. Even the faintest sense of self-awareness and other-awareness necessitates a dialectical affirmation-qua-negation, in which the desiring self perishes and the true self (*shin no jiko*) emerges. Nishida's notion of self-negation and his religious symbolism of god's *kenosis* and human self-sacrifice signify the radical transformation of the self-conscious modality of intentionality and the bifurcated world it engenders. In this sense, the terminology of "non-relative other" and self-negation points, ultimately, towards an epistemic modality which neither objectifies nor can be objectified.

While the I-Thou transcends the intentional structure of the desiring self—a self which divides the world into two disconnected hemispheres of self and other, inside and outside—it affirms the self as a non-thetic modality of awareness. Following Kasulis's "phenomenology of *zazen*," I understand Nishida's affirmation-qua-negation as a non-thetic awareness which "neither affirms nor negates" and has as its content the "pure presence of things as they are" (Kasulis 1981, 73). It describes a modality of engagement in which the self neither steps outside itself in an act of what I call "methodological retreat" to "objectively" construct reality, nor projects itself unconsciously onto the other in an act of psychic entanglement. Instead, I and Thou relate to each other, to use Kasulis's translation of Dōgen's phrase, "without thinking" (*hishiryō*) and through what Nishida calls "direct response" (*choku ni ōtō*). This modality can be exemplified by the spontaneous response of the Zen master to the disciple during *dokusan*. However, since the thetic attitude of self-consciousness dominates the everyday standpoint to such a degree that the non-thetic attitude scarcely surfaces, it is rather difficult to find other examples for this existential modality. It can be illustrated as the unself-conscious performance of an accomplished piano player, who, in contrast to the beginner, does not have to self-consciously master body and instrument but plays, quite literally, without thinking. Similarly, cultivated practitioners of ballroom dancing as well as martial arts such as T'ai Ch'i experience moments in which they do not perceive each other self-consciously as the object of each other's intentions and expectations but as separate yet interconnected expressions of the same movement (see Kopf 1998). In either case, the self is not self-consciously aware of the other as one



is in the presence of a stranger, to use Sartre's example of the *gaze*. On the contrary, selfless other-awareness is rather pre-reflective and unself-conscious (Shigenori 1992, 234). Ultimately, it is these instances, in which I-Thou unself-consciously encounter each other, which are signified by Nishida's paradoxical language of affirmation-quanegation. It is only when I and Thou do not mutually objectify each other but relate to each other non-thetically without-thinking that "the I recognizes the Thou as Thou" and "the Thou recognizes the I as I."

### The Modality of Expression

Nishida refers to this non-thetic interaction of I-Thou, in which I and Thou encounter each other unself-consciously, as "expression" (*hyōgen*). Reminiscent of Kasulis's description of non-thetic awareness, Nishida characterizes expression as the modality which neither affirms nor negates its content but manifests the I, the Thou, and the world as-it-is. Nishida explains that,

The world of expression is neither the world of objectivity, the world of objects, nor the world of subjectivity, consciousness. Again, the world of expression is neither the world of the I nor the world of the Thou, but the world of the I-Thou. The world of expression is the world of objects of understanding. Understanding necessitates the I-Thou. The content of expression is the object of understanding (NKZ 7:267).

Nishida seems to argue that while the thetic self *posits* the other, the world, and even itself as an "objective," external reality and thus dichotomizes reality into a set of binaries characteristic of everyday awareness such as inside/outside and subjectivity/objectivity, expression transcends these dichotomies. It neither externalizes its content as a transcendent other in order to empty itself towards this transcendence in desire nor posits the other for-itself. This means that the expressive relationship of I-Thou is devoid of objectifying agency and objectified content; it neither externalizes nor objectifies but rather actualizes otherwise abstract content. Nishida's concept of expression can be illustrated with Dōgen's allegory of the wind:

As Zen master Pao-ch'e of Maku shan was fanning himself, a monk came up and said: "The nature of the wind is constancy. There is no place it does not reach. Why do you still use a fan?" Pao-ch'e answered: "You only know the nature of the wind is constancy. You do

not know yet the meaning of it reaching every place." The monk said: "What is the meaning of 'there is no place to reach'?" The master only fanned himself (Dōgen 1972, 39–40).

Nishida's language of expression clearly differentiates between the noematic and abstract content of intentionality such as ideas and representation and the concrete historical world characteristic of expression. At the same time, however, Nishida contends that the I-Thou itself cannot be objectified; that is, it cannot become the object of intellectual speculation or of desire. However, Nishida not only identifies the historical world as expression, that is, as the realm beyond the dichotomy between subjectivity and objectivity, but further proposes that while the world, in which the I-Thou expresses itself, does not display the bifurcated structure of self-consciousness it nevertheless functions as its basis.

Nishida thus conceives of *expression* as the most fundamental modality of the self in that every activity and experience has to be conceived of as an expression of some kind. It is the manner in which the self manifests its content which distinguishes different existential modalities as particular instances of expression. Already in his first work, *An Inquiry into the Good*, Nishida argues that thinking (*shii*), willing (*ishi*), and intellectual intuition (*chiteki chokkan*) are three different modalities of the non-thetic awareness, which he then refers to as "pure experience" (*junsui keiken*). Analogically, he later portrays "thought," "desire," and "love" as different modalities of "self-identity" (*jiko dōitsu*; Nishida 1990; NKZ 1:3–202). In both cases, however, he identifies a paradoxical and non-thetic modality of existence as the foundation of the everyday self.<sup>10</sup> For example, the intentional modality of the desiring self expresses a "lack" or "nothingness" and hence a dualism in that it empties itself into a transcendent realm;<sup>11</sup> it expresses a dualism and alienation by "otherizing" and, subsequently, dichotomizing itself. Since intentionality externalizes its content in the act of *projection*, it expresses only a shadow thereof. In this sense, the individual self expresses the other as it is posited for-the-self. Again, everyday awareness posits the world of objects but expresses the world of abstract ideas, the noematic world. *Non-thetic* awareness, on the contrary, expresses the I, the Thou, and the historical world.

It is important, here, to remember that Nishida's self does not signify an enduring person-over-time, but a momentary awareness event. It is the self qua individual awareness which expresses itself, the Thou, the non-relative other, and the historical world. Odin's obser-

vation that "I' and 'Thou' are co-relative aspects of the social self in such a way that the individual and society are accorded equal status" implies that the creative self is radically individual insofar it comprises a unique awareness event, which finds itself in relationship with other awareness events. At the same time, however, the expressive self is radically social insofar as it expresses communal content. By the same token, Nishida's observations that "the I understands the Thou by expressing the Thou" and that "I and Thou associate with each other through expression" imply that I am paradoxically self yet other (NKZ 7:127, 7:112). Nishida's non-dualism of self and other thus suggests a psychic interwovenness between self and other. That means that the individual self freely expresses psychic material of the other without, however, getting unconsciously entangled in the psychic complexes of the other through a relationship of transference. Ultimately, Nishida redefines the individual self as an expressive awareness event which is paradoxically individual-yet-social and identical-yet-different when he contends that "the I has to be thought as an individual which determines itself and, simultaneously, expresses itself at the bottom of the world it shares with the Thou" (NKZ 7:127).

## Conclusion

Nishida's brilliant exposition of the I-Thou has interesting methodological, phenomenological, psychological, ethical, and conceptual implications. First, his formulation of the I-Thou as affirmation-quanegation discloses a methodological tool to interpret Vasubandhu's notion of intersubjectivity and to apply the Zen logic of what Dōgen calls the "casting off of body and mind of self and other" to the philosophical problem of alterity. Second, Nishida successfully argues that the fact of the interactivity and intersubjectivity between individuals, which is described by the paradoxical language of affirmation-quanegation, necessitates an awareness of a dimension of human existence, albeit one which is beyond the grasp of self-conscious knowledge. I have described this existential modality as non-thetical awareness. Third, Nishida's logic of mutual determination implies that, in the sense of psychic interwovenness, who-I-am is dependent on and changes with who-I-relate-to. Thus defined, the individual sense of selfhood is always expressive of and correlative to the social situation and interhuman relationships in the sense that, as Thich Nhat Hanh (1987, 47) observes, "[t]he individual is made of non-individual elements." Fourth, such a conception of psychic interconnectedness implies an ethical co-responsibility of human individuals for each other

and their ambiance. Finally, the many conceptual paradoxes within Nishida's philosophy—affirmation-and-negation, subjectivity-and-objectivity, immanence-and-transcendence, identity-and-difference, and individual-and-social—seem to culminate in Nishida's conception of expression as non-thetic awareness. Nishida employs this conception, simultaneously, to lay the foundations for a theory of selfhood which does not yield to either side of these extremes but encompasses the existential ambiguity of human existence and to construct a philosophy of the Middle Path, which avoids the extremes of individualism and communalism, subjectivism and objectivism, dualism and monism.

## Endnotes

1. See Vasubandhu 1990, 97–102; Dharmakīrti 1990, 207–18. In the fascicle “Bendōwa,” Dōgen suggests that studying under a master is one of the three key ingredients to practicing the Buddha-way. He maintains that “after you have met (the master) and understood (the teaching)...practice the correct *taza* and cast off body and mind” (SBZ 1:32). Also see SBZ 4:16, 1:95. Kasulis (1985, 92) translates the term *kattō*, literally “complications” or “vines,” as “intertwinings” and “(verbal) entanglements.”
2. See Freud 1972, 65. I do not claim that these two concepts designate identical subject matter; however, they both signify a pre-individual and pre-conscious mode of existence.
3. Freud uses his reality principle concept to signify the limitation of the child's will by external restrictions such as the unavailability of the desired object.
4. I render the Japanese term *zettai*, which is usually translated as “absolute” or “non-relative,” in order to highlight its function as the dialectical principle which mediates between the opposite polarities of I and Thou.
5. Following the tradition of Mahayana Buddhism, Nishida correlates, even if only implicitly, various philosophical *Weltanschauungen* with certain stages of self-awareness.
6. In his essay “Basho,” Nishida clearly distinguishes his notion of *basho* from physical space (*butsuriteki kūkan*) when he argues that “the connection between physical space and physical space cannot be physical space but must be the basho in which physical space is located” (NKZ 4:209).
7. Jung contends that an “ideal understanding [of the other] would result in each party's unthinkingly going along with the other” (Jung 1969, 10:273).

8. "Jiai to taai oyobi beshōhō" (NKZ 6:260–99); "Watakushi to nanji" (NKZ 6:341–428); "Bashoteki ronri to shūkyōteki sekaikan" (NKZ 11:371–464).

9. One of the difficulties in deciphering Nishida's philosophy is his free use and appropriation of examples and symbolism from the Christian tradition. For example, in his writings on religion Nishida has no problems defining religion as "the relationship between god and human beings," to proclaim that "god and human being share the same essence" and to suggest that "god is inside the self." Even though he seems to be aware of the fundamental differences between mainstream Christian and mainstream Buddhist metaphysics, he does not hesitate to use their symbolism often interchangeably.

10. In his essay "I and Thou," Nishida contends similarly that "agape cannot be grounded in eros, but eros is grounded in agape" (NKZ 6:426).

11. This interpretation is supported by both Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre: Heidegger's analysis of *Dasein* (*Daseinsanalyse*) discloses that "In *Dasein* there is undeniably a constant 'lack of totality' which finds an end with death" (Heidegger 1962, 242) and, subsequently, cannot but exist *qua being-towards-death*. Sartre's account of the self's temporality echoes Heidegger's "lack," but even the general tone of his *Being and Nothingness* (1957) reflects the motif of an existential deficiency.

## Works Cited

- Benjamin, Jessica. 1988. *The bonds of love: Psychoanalysis, feminism, and the problem of domination*. New York: Random House.
- Dharmakīrti. 1990. *Samānātara-siddhi*. In *Mind only: A philosophical and doctrinal analysis of the Vijñānavāda*, edited by Thomas E. Wood, 207–18. Monographs of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy, No. 9. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Dōgen. 1972. *Shōbōgenzō Genjōkōan*. Translated by Masao Abe and Norman A. Waddell. *Eastern Buddhist* 5:2.
- . 1993–94. *Shōbōgenzō*. 6 vols. Edited by K. Tamaki. Tokyo: Daizō Shuppan Kabushiki Kaisha. Cited as *SBZ*.
- Freud, Sigmund. 1972. *Abriss der Psychoanalyse. Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*. Frankfurt-am-Main: Fischer Verlag GMBH.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1962. *Being and time*. Translated by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson. San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Jung, Carl Gustav. 1969. *Collected works*. 2nd. edition. Translated by R. F. C. Hull. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Kasulis, Thomas P. 1981. *Zen action—Zen person*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- . 1985. The incomparable philosopher: Dōgen on how to read the *Shōbōgenzō*. In *Dōgen studies*, edited by William LaFleur, 83–98. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Kopf, Gereon. 1998. In the face of the other: Psychic interwovenness in Dōgen and Jung. In *The couch and the tree*, edited by Anthony Molino. New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux.
- Nhat Hanh, Thich. 1987. *Being peace*. Edited by Arnold Kotler. Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.
- Nishida Kitarō. 1987. The logic of topos and the religious worldview: Part II. Translated by Michiko Yusa. *The Eastern Buddhist* 20:1.
- . 1988. *Nishida Kitarō zenshū*. 20 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten. Cited as NKZ.
- . 1990. *An inquiry into the good*. Translated by Masao Abe. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Odin, Steve. 1996. *The social self in Zen and American pragmatism*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. 1957. *Being and nothingness: An essay in phenomenological ontology*. London: Methuen.
- Shigenori Nagatomo. 1992. *Attunement through the body*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Vasubandhu. 1990. Viṃśatika. In *Mind only: A philosophical and doctrinal analysis of the Vijñānavāda*, edited by Thomas E. Wood, 97–102. Monographs of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy, No. 9. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.