MODERNOS & CONTEMPORÂNEOS

Revista de Filosofia do IFCH da Universidade Estadual de Campinas, v. 7, n. 17., jul./dez., 2023.

"Human Rights" as One Third of the "Rights"

"Direitos Humanos" como um terço dos "Direitos"

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Abstract: Human rights are basic and essential. Freedom, equality, justice, basic security (food, shelter, clothing), peace. But so are the earth rights (or the rights of the environment). And also the animal rights, or more broadly, "non-human" rights. These are rights that must be respected and protected by us, which in turn will protect and strengthen human rights. We need to move away from an anthropocentric formulation of the language of rights, and speak of "rights" more broadly, so that we do not lose sight of the fact that we are inhabitants on this planet and embraced in the bosom of magnificent nature. The more inclusive a "language we speak," the more diverse and subtle voices do we become attuned to hear. Nishida Kitarō spoke of "seeing the form of the formless; hearing the sound of the soundless." I apply this as a practical principle to deal with the larger environment-climate crises. Non-human beings including non-sentient things. This is an intellectual-spiritual perspective that runs deep in Nishida Kitarō's philosophy and other Kyoto School thinkers' thought. The more balanced a view of "rights" we cultivate—encompassing human, environmental, and all things on earth, the more flexible and robust a future path can we find for our planet. This will clarify the course of action we need to take. At least this is my hope.

Keywords: Human Rights, Earth Rights, Non-Human Rights, Kyoto School.

Resumo: Os direitos humanos são básicos e essenciais. Liberdade, igualdade, justiça, segurança básica (alimentação, abrigo, vestuário), paz. Mas o mesmo acontece com os direitos da terra (ou os direitos do meio ambiente). E também os direitos dos animais, ou mais amplamente, os direitos "não humanos". Estes são direitos que devem ser respeitados e protegidos por nós, o que por sua vez protegerá e fortalecerá os direitos humanos. Precisamos de nos afastar de uma formulação antropocêntrica da linguagem dos direitos e falar de "direitos" de forma mais ampla, para não perdermos de vista o facto de sermos habitantes deste planeta e abraçados no seio de uma natureza magnífica. Quanto mais inclusiva for a "língua que falamos", mais diversas e sutis vozes estaremos sintonizados para ouvir. Nishida Kitarō falou em "ver a forma do sem forma; ouvir o som do sem som". Aplico isto como um princípio prático para lidar com as crises ambientais e climáticas mais amplas. Seres não humanos, incluindo coisas não sencientes. Esta é uma perspectiva intelectual-espiritual que está profundamente enraizada na filosofia de Nishida Kitarō e

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no pensamento de outros pensadores da Escola de Kyoto. Quanto mais equilibrada for a visão dos "direitos" que cultivarmos – abrangendo os seres humanos, o ambiente e todas as coisas na Terra, mais flexível e robusto será o caminho futuro que poderemos encontrar para o nosso planeta. Isso esclarecerá o curso de ação que precisamos tomar. Pelo menos esta é a minha esperança.

Palavras-chave: Direitos Humanos, Direitos da Terra, Direitos Não Humanos, Escola de Kyoto

Introduction: Nishida Kitarō's Philosophy in the Age of Environmental Crisis

Human rights are critical and essential for the general well being of everyone. It is undeniably one of the major achievements of humanity, and it does show that we can learn lessons from the past unfortunate events.

Moreover, today, our concerns extend to climate change. I used to look forward to the summer months in this once beautiful "emerald" Pacific Northwest region with joy and excitement. But today, I await the arrival of summer with no small amount of anxiety. How will the wild fire situation be this year? We are located near enough to the Canadian and Washington Cascade Mountains, and the polluted air caused by wild fires can affect even the coastal urban areas, depending on the direction of the wind. I began to wonder some summers ago, how could I go on, ignoring all these signs of global warming, and pretend as if all is well?

In this present essay, I "invoke" Nishida Kitarō (1879-1945) to come back for an afternoon of conversation with me; he obliged my request by interrupting his daily walk on the peaceful and quiet "philosopher's path" near the Silver Pavilion in Kyoto.

The more I become aware of the position of humanity in this vast universe, the more I become appreciative of Nishida's philosophy, in which the human values are placed in their proper perspective in the constantly changing world, which Nishida called the "historical world" (or the world incessantly shaped by historical events, which are very often the created by human beings, although natural disasters, such as earthquakes and tsunami, figure here also prominently). I engage Nishida out of my wish to get away from the anthropocentric way of speaking about the world as an object, of which human beings are the dominant consumer of senseless pleasures and equally senseless economic gains.

Because I always relish expanding my intellectual horizon, I also "invited" Imanishi Kinji, a Japanese naturalist, an environmental researcher, and an explorer, to join. He was somewhat reticent at first to take part in this adventure, as he found out that I was a devoted student of Nishida's philosophy. Imanishi was careful to secure his own legacy as an independent thinker, especially in relation to Nishida, who had become a sort of "legend" and having any relationship with

Nishida was considered a kind of premium. Imanishi was far too independent of elevating his intellectual status through the venue of elevation by association. Nevertheless, he sometimes talked about Nishida. In what follows, I will give my findings regarding how much (or how little) Nishida and Imanishi interacted and in what way.

Imanishi Kinji and His Ecological Thought

(a) Who is Imanishi Kinji (1902-1992)?

Ever since a young boy, Imanishi was always drowned to nature; he chased after butterflies, bees, and insects and collected them for his summer project. He majored in biology at the Imperial University of Kyoto, 1925-28, and graduated with a B.S. in the Faculty of Agriculture (and in 1939, he earned his Doctorate in Science). His interest in the lives of insects gradually gave way to his study on the mutual interactions of organisms, their formation of sub-species, in relation to the environments as their habitats, and so on. From there, he developed his interested in the behavior of primates and large mammals that formed "herds," which eventually branched into the study of human and animal societies. His basic claim was that "animals, too, have their society." He was an avid alpinist, an angler, and an explorer. These serious hobbies were effectively combined in his field research. Besides, he was a born leader and organizer, and led a number of expeditions, including those to the Sakhalin peninsula, Inner Mongolia, and the Himalayas; he also led a group of researchers to Africa to conduct their field researches on primates. He became the founding director of the Center for the Study of Primates (Primatology) at the University of Kyoto.

Not only Imanishi a man of action was also a voracious reader. He was abreast of researches carried out by his western colleagues. In his early days, he read works by such scholars as Robert M. Yarkes (1876-1956), Hiram Bingham (who wrote on The Lost City of the Incas, 1948), H. W. Nissen (who published his work on the study of chimpanzees, 1930), and Clarence R. Carpenter (1905-1975). (Ueyama 198) Especially influential were the works by the bio-ecologists Frederic E. Clements (1874-1945) and Victor E. Shelford (1877-1968). When it came to organize his research findings, moreover, Imanishi always stuck to his own theoretical approach. (Ueyama 198, & 201) He preferred to be an independent thinker.

For Imanishi intuitions far surpassed consecutive reasoning in carrying out his fieldwork. In this regard, he considered himself to share Nishida Kitarō's direct approach, with the emphasis placed on the importance of "intuition." (Imanishi 1980, in Imanishi 2002 396) Imanishi considered that human beings possessed the innate ability to "grasp things in relational to other things in an intuitive manner" (chokkanteki ni mono o sono kankei ni oite haakusuru). (quoted by Ueyama 209).

(b) Imanishi on Nishida

When Imanishi was a undergraduate student at University of Kyoto, Nishida was reaching his retirement age. Imanishi declares he never read Nishida's An Inquiry into the Good (Zen no kenkyū) from cover to cover ("how am I expected to understand such a difficult philosophical text?" were his words), nor had he attended any of Nishida's lectures. (But he did attend special lectures by Tanabe Hajime, and observed his lecture style but not the philosophical contents). (Imanishi 1971, in Imanishi 2002 408-09)

The account I could rely upon with certainty is Imanishi's own admission, which he made to Shibatani Atsuhiro (1920-2011), when he was 82 years old. Therein, Imanishi talked about his indebtedness to Nishida's writing(s): "The second volume of Nishida Kitarō's philosophical essays contains his writings on organisms (seibutsu-ron). I read those essays over and again, and I eventually wrote my book, The Word of Organisms." (Quoted by Yamagiwa 1) Those essays that caught Imanishi's attention were most likely "Logic and Life" ("Ronri to seimei," 1936) and "The problem of generation and development of the species" ("Shu no seisei hatten no mondai," 1937). It is safe to assume, then, that some of the terminologies and concepts that Nishida was working on in these essays may have been adopted by Imanishi. (See the synoptic points of chapter 2 of Nishida's "Logic and Life," below.)

(c) Imanishi's study of mayflies (ephemerids), and the discovery of "habitat division"

In 1933, together with his junior colleague Kani Tōkichi, Imanishi conducted an extended research into the larvae of mayflies (ephemerids, kagerō 蜉蝣). This research eventually developed into his doctoral dissertation.

The larvae (the "baby stage") of mayflies live in the river. Imanishi and Kani made a detailed study of the larvae in Kamo River in Kyoto, and discovered that the larvae of the same species developed sub-species with different body shape, depending on their habitat.

> In the areas where the flow of the water is slow, they developed sharp heads that enabled them to dive into the sand to hide under it. Where the flow of water is steady and constant, they developed

> their streamline (ryūsenkei 流線型) body-shape. Where the flow of the water is rapid, they developed their flat body shape that has the least resistance to the water pressure. (Wikipedia-Japanese, s.v. "Imanishi Kinji").

This observation led them to theorize that one and the same species of mayflies develop different body-shapes that best suited their habitat, and in this way, new sub-species evolved. He formulate this idea of the development of different morphology in relation to the habitats (or environments) which formed for the larvae "separate living spaces," He called it "the theory of sumiwake 棲み分け," which may be translated as "the theory of habitat division." What is important here is that these sub-species are not in conflict with one another, and they co-exist. Their "habitats" differ even in the same river, and also dependent on the seasons of the year. The larvae of Mayflies adjust to their differing environments, and form their own habitat. (On this phenomenon of division of habitats, see Imanishi 2002, 98-108; in contrast to Darwin see Imanishi 1983, in his 2002, 374-75).

(d) An anecdote: Imanishi's The World of Organisms, Shimomura Toratarō, and Nishida

Imanishi decided to wrote a book manuscript, which was later published as The World of Organisms (Seibutsu no sekai, 1941). He wrote it as a "portrayal" of who he was, in case he was drafted and killed in the Sino-Japanese War that broke out in 1937 and was then escalating. (See Imanishi 1941, in his 2002, 5-165; for its "Introduction," see Imanishi 2002, 416-17; for English translation see Asquith, et al. 2002)

One spring day in 1941, Imanishi called on his friend Shimomura Toratarō, from his higher school days, and handed him the finished manuscript, saying "I wrote it as my 'testimony,' since I expect to be drafted sooner or later. Please read it, and if you think it is worthy of publication, would you mind please finding a publisher for it?" Shimomura was a close disciple of Nishida, and he relayed the manuscript to Nishida after he went over it. Meanwhile, he recommended its publication to the publisher, Kōbundō. (Shimomura 200-201)

By the way, Shimomura recalls in this essay that Imanishi "heard Nishida's public lectures," but I cannot find any other source to corroborated this statement. It remains a moot point, given the fact that Imanishi said he never attended any lecture by Nishida.

I found a letter by Nishida, however, sent to Shimomura, dated May 19, 1941, which mentions this particular MS: "I have not yet read Imanishi-kun's manuscript carefully, but I will get to it soon." (Letter no. 1575, NKZ 19.162) Thus it is clear that Imanishi's manuscript reached Nishida.

Let me digress here. Shimomura and Imanishi in postwar period were separated between Tokyo and Kyoto, and did not see each other for the next twenty

some years. When they finally met for a "dialogue," an occasion arranged by a journal sometime after 1962, Shimomura could not help but feel that Imanishi had grown into a man of real consequence with so many impressive accomplishments under his belt. He felt as if he were sitting in front of "a Lawrence of Arabia." When Shimomura told Imanishi this, Imanishi responded in jest: "You mean, I look like that leading actor of the film [Peter O'Toole]?" Thereupon, the two broke into laughter. Shimomura said: "No, no, the real Lawrence [Thomas Edward Lawrence]. You know, he was a classicist as well as a British officer and an explorer. He even translated Homer's Odyssey into English!" (Shimomura 204).

(e) Yamagiwa Juichi: the proponent of Imanishi's legacy

The influence of Imanishi's prolific field-research and original theories were far-reaching. Presently, the most outspoken researcher, who has energetically rekindled the constructive assessment of Imanishi's achievements is Yamagiwa Juichi (b. 1952), the former President of the University of Kyoto (2014-2020), and the past president of the International Primatological Society (2008-2012). In his keynote presentation of 2022 at the annual meeting of the Association for Nishida Philosophy (July 23, 2022), Yamagiwa talked about Imanishi and some influences of Nishida's philosophical view on Imanishi. This essay is published in the Annual Papers of the Association for Nishida Philosophy, with the title, "Nishida's Philosophy in the Thought of Imanishi Kinji" (Yamagiwa 2023).

Yamagiwa is one of the first scholars to break away from the postwar hangover of interpreting the achievements of the Kyoto School philosophers by injecting ideological overtone. In his refreshing simplicity, Yamagiwa singles out two themes commonly shared by Nishida and Imanishi: (a) the view that morphology and functions are united into one in the living organisms, and (b) the view that the living organisms determine the environment, and the environment the living organisms. (Yamagiwa 3-4).

Regarding Imanishi's contribution to the field, Yamagiwa explains the contrasting views of "evolution" espoused by Darwin and Imanishi, and investigates into the two epistemological paradigms that formed the framework for these thinkers.

In his World of Organisms, Imanishi defined the environment as "being recognized and assimilated by the organisms as necessary for their survival" (seibutsu ni totte seikatsu ni hitsuyō na han'i no gekai wa tsuneni ninshiki sare dōka sarete or[u]) and called it "the life-field" (seikatsu no ba) (Imanishi 1941, in his 2002, 57-58). This life-field is the place of mutual determination of organisms and environment. In contrast to Charles Darwin, who placed emphasis on the role of the environment as the major determining factor on the evolution of biological species, Imanishi recognized the active role of the living organisms, which exercise

their "autonomy" (shutaisei)—that is, living beings possess their ability to choose and determine their environment; each species knows what is the best environment for them, and they relocate to it, or develop their new form to fit the environment they are in (cf. Imanishi 2002, 67; 69-70).

This subtle but fundamental difference between Darwin and Imanishi—one deterministic, and the other an affirmation of life's freedom to choose and mutate—reveals a deeper difference of their theoretically presuppositions. Here, the western tendency is to see things in a non-ambiguous manner, while the eastern tendency is to see all things to possess a "life force," and only separate their habitats in the process of adaptation.

This basic difference of paradigms is further reflected on the theories developed by Imanishi and his western colleagues. Yamagiwa describes these differences in terms of the contrasting pairs of notions: "[M]utual recognition, habitat division, and co-existence proposed by Imanishi versus the Darwinian notion of competition, adaptation, and the natural selection of the fittest" (Yamagiwa 3; cf. Imanishi 1941, in his 2002, 374).

On this topic, Yamagiwa mentions Augustin Berque, who suggests (à la Yamanouchi Tokuryū) Nāgārjuna's "catuṣkoṭi" (or catushkoti, "tetralemma") as a viable paradigm that can break down the logical eurocentrism (Yamagiwa 9-10). The Aristotelian logic stands on the principle of identity (A is A) and the principle of the excluded middle (A cannot be non-A) ("haichūritsu" 排中律). To talk about a thing A is to recognize it as A; it has to be either A or non-A and cannot be both A and non-A at the same time, resulting in the mental framework of dualism ("nigensei" 二元性). But this is not the only logical option, suggests Berque. The environment and organisms mutually co-determine, and as such they form one seamless whole—this way of thinking is based on the principle of "inclusive middle" ("yōchūritsu" 容中律), which is the basis of the pluralistic worldview ("tagensei" W) (Yamagiwa 9-12).

Yamagiwa gives a few concrete examples of the way of thinking that allows the "inclusive middle." One is the example of "veranda" or "corridor" (engawa 縁

側), the feature of the traditional Japanese house. The floored "veranda" adjacent to the tatami rooms is neither "inside" nor "outside" the house, but functions as the space of transition from inside to outside and outside to inside, where nature from the garden and culture from the room fuse into one.[2] Or, one could say, the veranda is "both inside and outside" as well as "neither inside nor outside." I may add, moreover, that this kind of architectural sensitivity is also found in many parts of the world, such as the "orangeries" or the inner courtyards (the "patios"). I wonder what this fact signifies.

Whenever I think of "engawa," I recall the photograph of Nishida Kitarō (left) and Miki Kiyoshi (right), his former student and a junior colleague, sitting side by side and relaxing at Nishida's house in Kita-kamakura (taken ca. 1932). Nishida is wearing a Japanese style footwear, while Miki western style shoes. They are either about to go out into the garden facing them, or just returned from the stroll in the garden and retiring into the room, possibly for another cup of tea and sweets, and more conversation.

(f) My view on the "purported affinity" between Nishida and Imanishi

I make three observations. First, I would ascribe the affinity between Nishida and Imanishi's thinking, not so much as in terms of "Nishida's influenced" on Imanishi, but in terms of the broader Japanese cultural-spiritual sensitivity to "nature" that was shared in common among the majority of Japanese people. Nature is felt to be "living and breathing," and this sensitivity is something that has been nurtured since the times immemorial. Nishida and Imanishi imbibed the same water and breathed the same air of the cultural environment that renders the Japanese Japanese. Nature is an organic fabric, and all beings, embraced by nature, share the principle of life.

As I see it, between the two, Nishida's philosophical approach maintains the distinction between human beings and non-human animals. For Nishida, humanity, born of nature, produces cultural construct. He termed this activity "action-intuition," which is distinguishes human beings from other living beings. In contrast, Imanishi's approach is characterized by the framework of continuum of life, as he tended to find more commonality than differences between humans and other large mammals.

Ueyama Shunpei is among the postwar scholars who promoted the view that Imanishi was theoretically indebted to Nishida to a certain degree. I do have a copy of book Prof. Ueyama gifted me, so I naturally consulted his writing first, when I

2 D. T. Suzuki attended the World Congress of Faiths (July 3-17, 1936), organized by Francis Younghusband. He charmed the London audience with his mention of the traditional architectural style of the ordinary Japanese house in his public talk (July 9, 1936). Suzuki's point was that nature and culture do not necessarily present hindrance to each other. See "The ultimate spiritual ideal"「最高の精神的理想」(SDZ 15.26-34; esp. 26-28).

began my essay. But as I went on doing more reading, I became aware of the curious "gap" between Ueyama's presentation and Imanishi's own scholarly experience. I was shocked to read that Imanishi considered Ueyama's remark sanguine and said: "chotto komaru" (I'm inconvenienced to no small degree), as such a view propagates misconceptions of his own scholarly standpoint. (Imanishi 1971, in his 2002, 408). Asquith's "Introduction" to the English translation of Imanishi's 1941 book, A Japanese View of Nature: The World of Living Things, is also founded on Ueyama's sweeping generalization. (cf. Asquith 2002, xxxiv-xxxvi) I came to realize that we scholars need to be mindful that we might be tempted to subconsciously embrace a wish list of what we want to "find" in what we read and study. So, vigilance would make a good companion to keep temptations at bay.

My second observation concerns the traditional (Japanese) view of nature. Generally, Japanese people still tend to see feel that all things are permeated with some spirit and are "animated." This sensitivity does away with a sharp demarcating line between human beings and "nature." Such was certainly the predominant experience of ancient and medieval times for the Japanese people, when they were in tune with the cosmic vibrations, and held in awe the unusual behavior of stars and planets. They inhabited the world in which human affairs, even politics, were directly tied to the natural phenomena. The vestige of this view toward nature is still alive and well in the Japanese native religious tradition of Shinto.

When I turn my gaze to ancient China and India, the Dao in the ancient Daoist tradition, or "Ṛta" (or "Rita") in the ancient Vedic tradition, stood for the cosmic order, which was understood to govern all things in the universe. Human beings were considered a "microcosms" reflecting the larger whole.

My third observation concerns the paradigm of interpenetration of parts and whole. The origin of this interpenetration of parts and whole, that defined Nishida's metaphysical framework, may have different source from Imanishi's. I am not clear on Imanishi's case, so let me talk only about Nishida. He seems to have been influenced by the Indian Buddhist philosophy here. Besides Nāgārjuna, the Yogācāra theory of consciousness that sees consciousness in different kinds and to form a "strata," (which epistemology was eventually incorporated into Zen Buddhism), influenced Nishida's thinking. According to this understanding, the most surface-level (not to be confused with "superficiality") of consciousness are the six consciousnesses that are tied to six senses (seeing, smelling, hearing, tasting, touching, and mental rational faculties); next, the 7th consciousness (manas) functions as the "receptacle" of ego-consciousness; and the 8th consciousness (ālāya-vijñāna), likened to a deep flow of unobjectifiable subconscious, explains the workings of memory, dreams, and imaginations and fantasies. Nishida incorporated these "psychological" observations into his philosophical (logical) system. Imanishi was unsympathetic to this kind of incorporation of Buddhist elements, and suspected

that such an attempt would most likely end up in failure. (Imanishi 1971, in his 2002 409) This is where Imanishi and Nishida stood wide apart. Nishida had the anchor of his thinking in the "metaphysical ocean," while Imanishi in his "intuitive grasp of the workings of nature."

III. Nishida's Philosophy of Action-Intuition and History

(a) Action-intuition

Nishida's later philosophy is marked by his interest in the concrete history-bound world, and its "dialectical," i.e., dynamic, character. Certainly, this interest was incited, in response, to "dialectical materialism" or Marxism, which was immensely popular among his younger colleagues, from mid 1920s onward. His letter to his former student, Tosaka Jun, dated October 4, 1932, discloses his thinking on this point:

> I believe it is necessary to clarify fundamental concepts, such as matter, sensation, the self, consciousness, society, history, and even the very notion of action, before going into the general discussion concerning "action."(Letter no. 749, NKZ 18.460, quoted in Yusa 2002, 250).

Nishida was gradually shifting his philosophical standpoint from the one "focused on the individual self that looks at the world" to the one "focused on the world that looks at the individual from the standpoint of the world." ("Preface to The Fundamental Problems of Philosophy, Part II," 1934, NKZ 7.210). He describes this shift a move away "from the standpoint of the individual self" and to "view the world in terms of its own self-determination," because "what we consider our individual 'self' is thinkable only in terms of the self-determining world determining itself into individuals." (NKZ 7.203) This shift was decisive, and it marks the philosophy of later Nishida. It was in this context that Nishida developed his key notion of "action-intuition" ("kōiteki-chokkan" 行為的直観).

A word on the translation of this key term. If I translate it as "active-intuition," it implies that there is a "non-active intuition," and we are essentially talking about "intuition." However, in Nishida "action" and "intuition" are two key notions that are juxtaposed as one term, denoting the two aspects that together "create" this historical world: our seeing (i.e., intuition) an object (a thing) incites our "action." Even an intellectual activity is "incited" by the object, and hence, it is an "action." For instance, we may be inspired by a musical concert. Our hearing (intuition) the music, it incites our various reactions. Some may be inspired to sing, others may put that emotion into a painting or a poem, still others may break into a dance, while others may open a good bottle of champagne!

This interconnection of the thing and the self (and the self is here both as the one sees and also does), is the very driving force that continues to form this "world

of history," in the spatiotemporal continuum. And all events take place only "once," and no same thing repeats twice in real life. Nishida considers this "one-time-ness" (ichido-teki, Einmalichkeit in German) in terms of the self-determination of the Absolute Present (zettai genzai). The Absolute Present is the cradle of our experience in that whenever we become self-aware, it is always the "present moment."

This, briefly presented, is Nishida's notion of "action-intuition," which became the major feature of his later philosophy. The formulation of this notion took some time. In 1934, Nishida worked out the problem of intersubjectivity (in his "I and Thou"), and from 1936 onward, he developed his view of the "human body as the maker of history" (rekishi-teki shintai), and how it relates to "the environment," the "technical skill" (gijutsu, techne), and "language" (logos; kotoba, genpyō), and "expression" (hyōgen). Our physical activity of thing-making gives shape to the course of history, and as such, "that I even raise a finger is a historical event," Nishida once said (cf. NKZ 11.333, "Life").

Action-intuition describes how human beings exist in the world as the body-mind and participates in the making of historical reality. Every action is incited by intuition (e.g., seeing, hearing, touching, etc.), and a thing, once produced by us, in turn gives rise to another action. Production of things perpetuates the historical movement. But also things create can degenerate, and disappear. (cf. p. 284) Nishida expressed this action-intuition as the movement "from that which is created to that which creates" (tsukurareta mono kara tsukuru mono e 作られたものから作るものへ), or "the created things create" ("creata et creans" [sic]). (p. 306).

(b) A synoptic outline of Nishida's "Logic and Life," Chapter 2 (1936)

Here below, I give a synoptic presentation of Chapter 2 of his "Ronri to seimei" ("Logic and life," 1936, NKZ 8.273-394). (NB: Here below, I only give the page number, taken out of volume 8 of NKZ).

1. Human beings are tool-making animals (as Benjamin Franklin said). (p. 276) The world of homo sapiens stands on the shoulders of homo faber (p. 330).

2. Aristotle said, contrary to Anaxagoras, that human beings possess "hands" because of their intelligence. (Aristotle, Parts of Animals 687 a 8-12) The function of the organ gives shape to the organ—take, for instance, the eagles' keen eyes, the shape of shape (katatchi形) of which evolved out of its function (kinō 機能) required by the eagles flying high to look for preys (p. 278).

3. Accordingly, "things" (mono 物) that stand as the object of our senses are "formed" (or given shape) by the function of our sense organs. The most intimate sense may be that of "touch." When seeing and touching are united, moreover, the world of perception is established (p. 279).

4. How are we to consider the human body in the biological realm? It, too, is a thing that is the object of perception, and in this sense the body is an "instrument"

("organon" ὀργανον) (pp. 279-80). The body is not only that which moves and sees (i.e., as the agent of action, the subject), but also that which is perceived (i.e., an object) (p. 280).

Comments: Here, we already anticipate the phenomenological study of the body by Merleau-Ponty. Nishida unfolds his reflection on the body in this manner, predating Merleau-Ponty by a couple of decades.

5. What is the origin of the world of organisms (yūkitai-teki sekai)? It is impossible for biological life to emerge out of strictly material movements. For the establishment of organisms, the first requirement is that each individual entity (e.g., a cell) that constitutes one organism has to be self-subsisting (dokuritsu-teki) and self-determining, but at the same time, each of them must also share in the totality (zentaisei). Without the integrating whole, the independence of individual parts cannot be, and vice versa (pp. 280-81).

Comments: Nishida used to explain this organic relationship to his students by taking the human body—each of our inner organs must maintain its independent function, and yet all these organs work together as a whole body.

6. Now, Nishida introduces the aspect of "mutual negation" (tagai ni hitei shiau) into his discussion of biological life. By referring to Aristotle, Nishida notes that "disease, too, exists in life" (Aristotle, Metaphysics 1032 a 5-7, quoted on p. 284). What is alive always exists in the state in which disease is a possibility. "Life is a contradictory self-identity (seimei wa mujun no jiko dōitsu) [of health and disease] in this sense," observes Nishida (p. 281).

Comments: This "contradictory self-identity" (mujun-teki jiko dōitsu 矛盾的自己同一) is a terminology that defines Nishida's "dialectical" thinking. This expression appears already in his writing of 1934, if not earlier. R. Schinzinger translated this term as the "coincidence of opposites" (after the fashion of Nicholas of Cusa's "coincidentia oppositorum") but "opposites" may not be quite applicable at times, as for Nishida, one of the most fundamental "contradictory self-identity" is that of time and space. When Nishida employs "absolute" (zettai 絶対) and talks about the "absolutely contradictory self-identity" (zettai mujun-teki jiko dōitsu) he refers to the events happening in the historical world, which touches on the most existential reality of "life and death" that concerns every human being.

7. Life and the environment stand in mutual relationship: Without life, there is no environment; and without environment, there is no life. Living organisms (seimei) change the environment, as well as the environment changes the living organisms in it. (p. 283)

Comments: Emphasis added here. Recall that this view of mutual relationality of organisms and their environment is a common theme between Imanishi and Nishida (See Yamagiwa 3, above).

8. Now, the world of organisms (seibutsu-teki sekai) is not yet the world of the real self-determination of the dialectical universal. It is only in the "world of historical being" (rekishi-teki jitsuzai no sekai) that an individual is considered to determine itself. Human beings in the historical world exercise free will. The "present moment" in this world of history has the aspect of the "present," which has its significance of "eternal now" (i.e., it is always "now" when we become self-conscious) (p. 282).

Comments: This is where Nishida draws a demarcation line between the world of living beings and that of the human beings, even if in real life such a distinction may be impossible to draw, it must be possible "conceptually" (pp. 292 ff.). In the sections that follow, Nishida observes that it is in this concrete historical world that the human mind recognizes the world of organisms first, then subsequently the world of matter. This is the direction of the mind, and it cannot be the other way around. This is the reason why Nishida rejects materialism.

9. Human beings related to the body, as one's embodied subjectivity (shintaiteki sonzai), as well as the instrument to be utilized (jiko no dōgu) (p. 283).

Comments: Put it differently, we look at our self both as subjectivity and as an agent of action. This is the unique (and contradictory) mode of human existence. This is the reason why "only human beings know their own death; only human beings commit suicide," says Nishida. Not only life consists in the parts that contain the whole and the whole that contains the parts (e.g., DNA), but also it has to be possible that a part negates the whole (e.g., succumbing to disease). Aristotle said: "Health is the ousia (substance) of disease" (Metaphysics 1032 b 5) (p. 283).

10. Human beings, in their biological nature, have two "natural" environments: one is the environment that provides food (shokumotsu-teki), and the other is the sexual environment (seiyoku-teki), which insures the self-preservation of the species. (pp. 284-85) But these immediate concerns do not exhaust the significance of other meanings of "environment" for human beings marked by their self-consciousness.

11. For Nishida the ultimate and real environment for human beings is the world of historical reality. (p. 285) For humanity, "the environment" is the existential world of "topos" (basho)—it is "from where we are born and into which we die" (p. 287).

Comments: Nishida finds J. S. Haldane's discussion of life and the environment (see The Philosophical Basis of Biology, 1931) to resonate his own position. He refers to such passages in Haldane's work:

> When we consider the structure of an organism and of its environment in so far as the environment is concerned in its life, we find that the structural elements in organism and environment are coordinated with one another in a specific manner. The organism

> is adapted to its environment, or the environment, including the internal environment, to the organism, in such a manner that life is maintained. The environment is thus expressed in the structure of each part of the organism, and conversely. When, moreover, we examine what appears to us as organic structure and the structure of organic environment closely, we find that it is the expression of continuous activity, so coordinated that the structure is maintained. Thus we cannot separate organic from environmental structure, any more than we can separate the action of the environment from the reaction of the organism (Haldane, op. cit., pp. 13-14, emphasis added).

12. To reiterate, Nishida distinguishes the historical world as the "real environment for human beings, from what the biological environment. Instead of the word, "environment," Nishida applies the word "sekai" (world) to refer to this world of history, which is marked by the self-determination of the "topos" (basho)—i.e., conscious beings, who moves from "that which is created to that which creates" by mediating itself as the contradictory temporal-spatial entity (e.g., p. 286, p. 287, p. 291).

Comments: Nishida leaves the problem of "society" and "the public" in relation to action-intuition to be worked on in his subsequent essays (cf. p. 291).

13. In Chapters 4 and 5, Nishida extensively unfolds his reflection on "language" as the expressive means par excellence. He chooses the word "logos" (rogosuロゴス) in his discussion of language, by taking advantage of its rich and multivalent associations. It retains its classical Greek root of "story-telling" (legein), and the Christian notion of the incarnation of the Word (Logos) in Christ. It also stands for "rationality" and "intelligibility"—the "logical" aspect.

Comments: It is by no accident that Nishida began Chapter 1 of this essay with his reference to Plato's notions of "dianoia" (monologue as the silent dialogue) and "dialectic" (as a logical method to arrive at the truth), as well as to Heraclitus's "logos," which stood for the "constant" in the forever changing dynamic reality—this last point especially suggested to Nishida the profound foundation of logic (pp. 273-76). Nishida devoted the whole of Chapters 4 and 5 to the discussion of "logos" and the bodymind, in relation to the notion of the instrument. He considers the significance of linguistic operation of "naming things"—not an outdated approach in the philosophy of language to this day, if I'm not mistaken.

Another comments: Nishida assigns the act of speaking to the human animal. (p. 309) Prima facie, the exclusion of non-human animals may raise some eyebrows. Certainly, the larger question is how to define "speech" or "act of speaking."

Nishida also mentions that the human beings are born out of the self-forming world, which implies that "nature contains something of logos" (shizen ga logos-teki de aru). (p. 317) In this context, Aristotle's position over against Anaxagoras

concerning human intelligence and the human possession of the hands comes close to the relationship of nature (physis) and logos:

> Anaxagoras indeed asserts that it is his possession of hands that makes man the most intelligent of the animals; but surely the reasonable point of view is that it is because he is the most intelligent animal that he has got hands. Hands are the instrument; and nature, like a sensible human being, always assigns an organ to the animal that can use it (. . .); thus Nature has provided that which is less as an addition to that which is greater and superior; not vice versa (Parts of Animals 687 a 8-15; see Nishida, p. 278).

Nishida would put it that it is because of the "logos-nature" of the human body that human beings developed the hands. Moreover, hands are the instruments that create "crafts" of all kinds that require skill to produce (p. 293).

I admit that the above "sketch" is far from complete, but at least one can gain a good view of how Nishida went about developing his philosophy of action-intuition, in which seeing and action are coordinated as two intertwined activities of human beings as the bodymind giving shape to the world of history.

IV. "Frogs in Montserrat" — My Experience of Epistemological Awakening

I had an epistemological awakening, some years ago, that involved cicadas (semi 蝉, Portuguese "cigarras") and frogs (kaeru蛙, Portuguese "sapos"). Here is the gist of it:

It was in the beginning of hot muggy summer months in Nagoya, Japan, I heard "kumazemi," a species of cicada, making loud noise all night long, right next to my room—"Si, si, si, si." Next morning, I went downstairs, where I saw my fellow housemates and said, "Could you sleep last night with that loud noise?"

"What noise?" They looked at me with a puzzled look. I said: "Couldn't you hear the cicadas making noise all night long?" "Cicadas? What is that?" was their answer.

I was taken aback. My housemates, from Africa and North America, have lived in Japan, from anywhere between 5 to 50 years. So, I naively assumed that they all knew what "cicadas" were, and that they were familiar with their cries.

Cicada's cries are typically associated with summer in the minds of the Japanese. In fact, "cicada's crying sound" ("semi naku," or "semi no nakigoe") is a beloved "season word" (kigo 季語, "palavra da estação") in the haiku composition. Here is a well-known haiku by Bashō, which he composed when he visited Yamadera, a cluster of Buddhist temples on top of the rocky hills in northern Japan.

閑かさや	*Shizkasa ya*	Ah, so quiet—	Ah, tão quieto
岩にしみいる	*iwa ni shimiiru*	seeping into the rocks	infiltrando se nas rochas
蝉の声	*semi no koe.*	are the cries of cicadas.	são os gritos das cigarras.

Be that as it may, I realized then and there, that my fellow boarders did not hear anything all night long, because they did not know that there were insects called "semi" (the male species of which make noise by rustling their thin wings to attract female cicadas).

And this lack of knowledge of the particular insects precluded their "existence" for my colleagues. The cicadas did not enter their senses and, hence, into their consciousness.

Soon, an analogous experience happened to me. I was staying at the hotel adjacent to the Benedictine Monastery at Montserrat in Catalonia, Spain, attending the conference of the European Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies.

One morning, my next-door roommate at Hotel Cisneros asked me during breakfast: "Did you hear the frogs last night?"

I said, "Frogs in these rocky mountains? Impossible."

Peter, my neighbor, said, "Yes, yes, the Montserrat frogs are famous for their unique metal-like crocking sound. Listen this evening, carefully."

Thus, I opened my hotel windows wide open, went to bed, turned off the lights, and cleared my head to pay attention to the sound coming from outside the windows. Soon . . . I heard some funny gentle noise arising all over, apparently coming from down the valley—"tsing, tsing, tsing"—as if someone was lightly beating on an empty pan or scratching a metal surface.

"Ah, that's the frogs' noise." Next morning, I described what I heard to Peter, and he said, "Yes, exactly. Now you know that frogs exist in Montserrat!"

I reflected on this experience and realized two things.

First, if I don't know that a thing exists, it does not enter my senses and thus does not exist in my consciousness.

Second, if I know (by way of information) that such a thing exists, I have a better chance of finding out what the thing is, and if it reaches my senses, I indeed realize that such a thing exists, and thus it enters into my consciousness. From there, I can establish the knowledge of its existence, and develop my understanding of what it is, and so on.

To put it simply, what I don't know does not exist in my consciousness.

The significance of the reverse side of this experience is tremendous. My knowledge of a thing helps me gain access to that thing that I didn't know before,

and now I am in a way transformed (even a little), and have access to the existence of something new thanks to my "knowledge." Here, knowledge is essential and powerful in discovering "a being." Contrary to some thinkers, my finding out about the "existence of a thing" does not have to come with a prepackaged bag of "what the thing is" or "how I should evaluate it." It is pure and simple knowledge that something is, free of my activity of intellectual valuation.

From here, it is only one more step to make my point. Killing our environment is for us the best way to kill a piece of knowledge of our environment, and the impact is ultimately tantamount to annihilating our ability as sentient beings "to know" the fullness of our environment. Each time a species goes extinct, the realm of our experience shrinks that much. Each time a species of bird or plant or an animal goes extinct, we are that much poorer in our knowledge and experience. This is the epistemological foundation for why we cannot destroy our environment.

Moreover, I am painfully aware that we are losing the knowledge of survival in the wild. How many of us know, if left alone in an unknown jungle or desert, what plants are edible and what are poisonous, what animals are harmless and what are dangerous, how to get water . . . These are all accumulated knowledge handed down from our ancestors. But today, if I'm left alone in a jungle, for instance, I would have no clue as to how to survive. We academics are "clever" and can talk our way, but is that the right path?

If we dissolved vital real concerns into moneymaking economic propositions, what would happen to the long-term wellbeing of our planet? Do we need to stop and smell the flowers along the way?

V. Conclusion

Human rights are basic and essential. Freedom, equality, justice, basic security (food, shelter, clothing), peace, care-giving and care receiving . . . especially these days, when too many parts of the world are facing nightmare situations and people are suffering.

Intertwined with human rights are the earth rights (or the rights of the environment)—clean air, rivers, lands, ocean. And animal rights, or more broadly, "non-human" rights. When we are unable to manage even human rights, other rights fall wayside, and that would exacerbate the misery for all.

My graduate advisor Raimon Panikkar concluded his Gifford Lectures (1989) with these words of Abhinavagupta, the medieval Indian Tantric master and a mystic: "All things are inherent in all." (Panikkar 2010, 404) Earth's rights and animal rights are "inherent" in human rights, and human rights in them. This is one way of getting away from the anthropocentric manner of thinking, speaking, and behaving.

When we can succeed to put these “rights” together—1/3 (environment), 1/3 (all living beings) and 1/3 (human animals), we may find ourselves being embraced in the bosom of magnificently rich and fertile nature.

It is time we start to think sensibly—so that we can employ our “hands” properly once again, as Aristotle defended our “prudent” nature.

Nishida Kitarō spoke of “seeing the form of the formless; hearing the sound of the soundless.” I think these words can guide us to a better and more informed practical principles for us to deal with the current environmental-climate crises, as we listen to those who have otherwise no “voice” and see those who have otherwise no “form.”

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