



## The Philosophical World of Meiji Japan The Philosophy of Organism and Its Genealogy

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German Idealism was introduced to Japanese intellectuals in the middle of Meiji era and was mainly received from a mystical or religious perspective, as we see in Inoue Tetsujirō’s “harmonious existence,” Inoue Enryō’s “unity of mind and body,” and Kiyozawa Manshi’s “existentialism.” Since these theories envisioned true reality as a unified and living whole, I group them under the label “philosophy of organism” and from there argue that their conviction that “all is truth and truth is all” was shaped in large part by the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*. The understanding of Buddhist concepts by Meiji philosophers was philosophical in its content, and those who devoted themselves to the study of Western philosophy were encouraged to describe Eastern thought in Western philosophical terms. As a result, the philosophical world of the Meiji era developed an original standpoint that unified Eastern and Western perspectives by means of a logic of “phenomena-in-reality.”

KEYWORDS: Inoue Tetsujirō—phenomenon-in-reality—organism—  
Inoue Enryō—Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana—Hara  
Tanzan—Miyake Setsurei—harmonious existence—  
*ālayavijñāna*—Tathāgata—*tathatā*—Tendai

After the Meiji Restoration, the modernization of the Japanese nation swung into high gear. The leaders of the new government hurriedly organized a governing structure for the country, driven above all by the need to maintain independence and security vis-à-vis Western colonial advances in Asia. Pressed by demand for a “rich country with a strong army” (富国強兵), they considered the assimilation of modern Western civilization a means to that end. Hence, they promptly set in place a series of government policies related to their new age of Enlightenment (文明開化). In the private sector those who resonated best with these government policies and contributed to their promotion were the scholars of Dutch learning, including Nishi Amane (1829–1897) and Tsuda Masamichi (1829–1902), who belonged to the famous society of Meiji intellectuals known as the *Meirokeisha* (明六社). Both Nishi and Tsuda studied under the economics professor, Simon Vissering (1818–1888), at the University of Leiden for two years in Netherlands. While seriously engaging with the so-called “five subjects” (Law, International Law, State Theory, Economics, and Statistics), they extended their interests not only to contemporary Dutch intellectuals, but also to the English utilitarianism of J. S. Mill (1773–1836), which was influential throughout Europe, and the French positivism of August Comte (1798–1857). They made great efforts to absorb Western philosophical ideas as best as they could and succeeded in introducing them to their fellow intellectuals after returning to the homeland.

These philosophical ideas fit in well with Japan’s ongoing modernization and its tendency towards practical studies. In search of a theoretical basis for the modernization of Japanese life and thought, Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834–1901) and Katō Hiroyuki (1836–1916)—along with other scholars, including Nishi and Tsuda at the *Meirokeisha*—focused on transplanting Western positivism and utilitarianism into the intellectual soil of Japan. To understand

modern views of humanity and society, they found Mill's works especially appealing and drew on them as the philosophical foundations for the Freedom and People's Rights Movement. Nakamura Masanao's 1871 translation of *On Liberty* was widely read among the general public and played a significant role in the proliferation of ideas about freedom and rights. From the late 1870s on, however, greater attention was given to introducing and adapting Herbert Spencer's *Social Darwinism* than to Mill's texts. The growing interest in Spencer produced a flurry of translations. Among them, Matushima Gō's translation of *Social Statistics* was singled out for praise by Itagaki Taisuke (1837–1919) as “a textbook for freedom and people's rights” and enjoyed a wide readership.

Meantime, as absolutism was taking hold in the Meiji government during the 1880s, attention was turned to advances being made in Germany, once underdeveloped but now emerging in the van of Europe's new capitalism. In November 1881, an officer of the lower house of parliament, Inoue Kowashi (1844–1895), proposed a series of policies aimed at suppressing the Freedom and People's Rights Movement based on English and French philosophy. Such a movement, it was felt, could easily stir up opposition to the government on any number of fronts. Inoue's plan was to reinforce the educational system by monitoring the newspapers, promoting the “way of loyalty and submission” through the encouragement of Chinese learning (漢学), and promoting German studies as a way to undercut the increasing influence of English and French studies, a supposed hotbed for revolutionary thought. Among the countries of Europe, Germany's government was aligned with a royal family. For Inoue, this meant that the promotion of German studies would help the government cultivate a conservative spirit among the public. In later years, the political administration of the Japanese government was carried out along the lines of this conservatism in opposition to the Freedom and People's Rights Movement. In this way, academic philosophy during the Meiji period took shape in accord with a politically induced transition from English and French studies to German studies.

## I

The Japanese reception of Western philosophy in the Meiji period also sparked fundamental reflections on traditional ways of learning and

thinking. It is no exaggeration to say that Confucian models of thought and behavior cultivated since the time of the Tokugawa shogunate were *the* representative modes of life and thought peculiar to the Japanese people at the time. Children were still being raised by the remaining Confucian scholars. Since the elementary school education they were receiving was established with the promulgation of the new educational system in 1872, it was only natural that they would learn to read and interpret not only the *Four Books* and *Five Classics* but also other Confucian texts as well as historical Chinese works. Thus, as the generation of intellectuals born in the wake of the Meiji Restoration became literate, their burning desire for knowledge was stimulated by the classical Chinese texts accessible to them. The academic curiosity piqued by these texts was challenged by the reality of an entire nation trying to modernize itself. Still, the worldview and values that saturated their flesh and blood seemed to hold these new intellectuals back from direct intellectual expression. Although they might not explicitly criticize the premodern, feudalistic ways of Confucian ethics, neither were they able any longer to follow them blindly. That said, during this period their ways of thinking remained rather Confucian in a number of respects. We get a glimpse of the significance of traditional Confucian ethics for Meiji intellectuals from the words of Yamaji Aizan (1864–1917):

I have given up the teachings of Confucianism, but I cannot possibly forget the sweetness with which Confucianism unifies the Way of humanity with that of heaven, and grounds the feelings of the righteous in what is unchangeable.<sup>1</sup>

How, then, did the philosophers of modern Japan who had been brought up in such a tradition understand the modern academic philosophy peculiar to the West? How did they wrestle with it? Western philosophy, with its origins in ancient Greece, is distinguished by its systematic nature. In other words, it traces the source of all knowledge back to ultimate principles from which it can construct a comprehensive system that embraces all things. Accordingly, the fundamental problem of philosophy is the search for first principles. The task of the philosopher is to devise a method for organizing all knowledge through these principles.

1. YAMAJI and TOKUTOMI 1971, 392.

This “philosophy” defined classical studies in the West, but the rise of modern science marked a revolution against classical ideas of academic work. Modern science did not follow a deductive method whose conclusions relied on the assumption of ultimate principles, but an inductive method that takes its lead from empirical facts and relies mainly on experiment and verification for its conclusions. Dutch Studies in Japan also qualified as an “empirical science” in this sense. Moreover, the “philosophy” that was transplanted in the early Meiji period was an empirical philosophy from the modern West shaped by the ideas of the scientific revolution.

If we had to express the basic mark of modernity with a single phrase, we might say that it is “discriminating thought.” First, the distinction between humans and the natural world that was the hallmark of modernity is the very point at which modern science was established. To the modern way of thinking, the world is best understood in tandem with the culture of scientific technology. What is more, the unfolding of the cognitive subject—which came about at the same time of the discovery of objective, mechanistic nature—made us conscious not only of human values but also of a universal ego or spirit. It was this way of thinking that defined the methodology behind the strict separation of subject and object. It understood the laws of the outer world as constructions of the cognitive subject. This was the epoch-making mode of thought that confronted the Japanese for the first time as they encountered Western thought in the Meiji era.

From the other side, Song Studies (宋学) had sunk deep roots in the Japanese intellectual tradition during the Tokugawa-period. Based on the *I Ching* and a nature-based speculative thinking, it was further enhanced by the philosophy of “yin yang and the five elements” (陰陽五行説). Its distinctive focus on a practical ethic grounded in the *Four Books* (the *Analects*, *Mencius*, *Great Learning*, and *The Doctrine of the Mean*) took shape by merging Chan and Huayan Buddhist thought with that of the Laozi. The result was a highly speculative metaphysical system. Besides promoting the “five constancies and five moral principles” (五常五倫), it was distinguished by an extraordinary mode of thought that sought to unite human beings and the natural world by grounding both in one and the same principle and the idea that “we share roots with heaven and earth and are one with all things.”

Accordingly, the solution to moral problems besetting humans beings lay in restoring the unity of humans and nature by eliminating selfishness and

self-serving desires. The tradition of Confucianism that strove to include humans in the eternal universe stood diametrically opposed to the epistemology of modern Western philosophy with its separation of subject and object and, hence, its subjugation of the natural world to the knowing subject.

## II

In the midst of the conflict between the traditional Confucian and modern Western ways of thinking, Nakajima Rikizō (1858–1918) introduced Thomas Hill Green’s *Prolegomena to Ethics* in the course of essays devoted to explaining epistemological and ethical ideas. Under the title “English Neo-Kantianism,” Nakajima’s essays appear in the pages of Japan’s *Journal of Philosophy* between December 1892 and February 1893. The upshot was that Green’s theory of “self-development” became a kind of fashion in the Japanese philosophical academy. As Watanabe Kazuyasu, notes, these Green’s ideas were discussed and interpreted in line with the prevailing Confucian understanding of ethics.

In the preface to his 1901 book *The Philosophy of the Japanese Zhu Xi School*, Inoue Tetsujirō (1855–1944) argued that on many points “morality of the Zhu Xi school is in accord with what English neo-Kantians like Green and John Henry Muirhead have to say about ethics.” Similarly, the scholar of Chinese thought, Oyanagi Shigeta (1870–1940) observed in an essay on “The Theory of Self-Realization and Confucian Ethics” (*Journal of Philosophy*, 1905) that neo-Kantian

ideas of self-realization resemble Song Studies in the sense that the latter sets forth a theory of the supreme ultimate 太極 which argues that our minds are nothing other than its working.<sup>2</sup>

In fact, many of Green’s arguments resounded deeply with those who had grown up in the Confucian tradition. The basic theme that comes through his *Prolegomena* is a strong awareness of personhood and self-development. As a student of German idealism (especially Hegel), Green had become the representative of neo-Hegelian thought in England. Beginning from the

2. Cited in WATANABE 1985, 287.

assumption of a rational principle that transcends all phenomena and yet permeates the real world, he had proceeded to lay out his own theory of self-development. For him, the human mind is essentially nothing other than a manifestation of the transcendent principle of the cosmos, which becomes visible to the extent that individual consciousness achieves a unity of experience. Thus, when that unity is fully realized in a particular individual, it becomes a manifestation of absolute spirit; the self becomes, for the first time, the true self. Approximation of this unity constitutes personhood, and the realization of the true self represents not only the good of the self but also the common good. This line of thinking bears a striking resemblance to Song ethics and its notion of “nature-in-principle” (性即理) which champions “return to one’s original nature.” At the same time, Green’s ideal of self-development was fundamentally in line with the assertion in the *Great Learning* that individual attainment of piety leads to a sense of ethical responsibility toward the world. It comes as no surprise that by the late 1890s, the introduction and assimilation of personalism and idealist ethics stemming from German idealism (including Kant and Fichte) was gaining in popularity among Japanese intellectuals.

This served as an occasion for promoting individual self-consciousness as the hallmark of ethical personhood. When it came to grounding this idea metaphysically, however, a debate arose between those adhering to British “personal idealism” (such as Yoshida Seichi) and those who followed German “absolute idealism” (including Kitazawa Sadakichi and Kihira Tadayoshi). In 1909 Tomonaga Sanjūrō (1871–1951) penned an essay entitled “My Reflections on the Philosophy of Personalism” in which he took up the historical and philosophical significance of the debate as a platform from which to argue the direction he felt Meiji philosophy should take. Tomonaga divides philosophies into three types—philosophies based on personality, theories of the absolute opposed to personalism, and natural philosophies—and suggests the ethnolinguistic distribution of each.<sup>3</sup> In a word, Anglo-American philosophy with its emphasis on personalism “tries to give metaphysical value to the individual spirit”; German theories of the absolute (idealism and pantheism) display “transpersonal or antipersonal tendencies”; while French theories of nature lean toward sensationalism,

3. Cf. SHIMOMURA and FURUTA 1965, 24.

hedonism, determinism, and materialism. In this way, he suggested, particular philosophies take on particular ethnic, linguistic, and national inclinations as each of them makes its home in a particular country. For Japan, this resulted in a constitutional monarchy and the adoption of the system of self-government. Tomonaga notes in this connection that, “the importation of philosophies based on personalism is most significant,” but “both in a positive and in a negative sense, the traditional philosophy of our country is no doubt transpersonal and impersonal.” He goes on:

A philosophy centered on the Buddhist notion of no-self continues to exercise a broad and deep control over people’s minds, while customs focusing on the universal retains its strength among people as a vestigial influence carried over from the feudal era.

Here Tomonaga makes a prediction that the “personal idealism will be transpersonalized or non-personalized as it enters our country.”

As Tomonaga predicted, a lot of works that interpreted German philosophy through the medium of traditional Japanese Buddhism and Song Studies were published in Japan. They include Inoue Tetsujirō’s theory of phenomenon-in-reality (現象即實在論), Inoue Enryō’s theory of correspondence between mind and things as they are (真如物心の相即論), Kiyozawa Manshi’s *seishinshugi* (精神主義), which argues for the salvation of ego through its unity with the transpersonal absolute, and Tsunashima Ryōsen’s “My Experiments with Seeing God” that represents the philosophy of religious ecstasy (法悦). We may also mention Miyake Setsurei (1860–1945), who demonstrated a tendency toward romanticism in his work *The Cosmos*, where he laid out his grand metaphysical speculation. Hashimoto Mineo has aptly characterized this viewpoint of taking true existence as the comprehensive unity of a living totality in which the dichotomy between self and other is overcome (自他不二) as a “philosophy of organism.”<sup>4</sup>

### III

Just what does this “organism” or “the organic” mean? The fifth edition of the standard dictionary of the Japanese language (『広辞苑』)

4. HASHIMOTO 1969.



defines it as “that which possesses the necessary relation of its parts and whole through a single organization of many parts where each part is unified with other through certain purposes.” In general terms, this means that the living totality is established through a single principle that unifies the various parts with their various functions. An organism is not a contingent aggregate of parts brought together through external relationships to each other. Each of the parts contains a certain necessary and internal relationship to the whole and to the other parts. The single principle that unifies the whole is not something added from without but exists within the whole. The best example of such an organism is a living creature, but it also applies to the organic body of a state, a society, a history, the universe, and so forth.<sup>5</sup>

In his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel describes the gist of his notion of an organism as an entity that maintains itself by relating to the other. In other words, it refers to an existing thing that, while relating to the other, returns to itself and thus holds itself in existence. In this sense, it is its own purpose. Purpose is internal to the organism, and all of its activities constitute the process of realizing that purpose. Since it realizes its purpose by relating to the other and returning to itself, it cannot possibly exist without the other. Its relationship to the other is itself something internal and essential. The relation of cause and effect is also subsumed into the process of the self’s realization of its purpose through its relatedness to the other, and in this sense is a constituent element of this process. In contrast, from a mechanistic standpoint, the individual first exists in itself, and its relation to the other consists of an external, causal relationship. There is no internal purpose here, only purpose given to it from without. In other words, as Goethe believes, when we taken leave of the external, contingent unity that non-organic or mechanical views of nature represent and come to an organic view of nature, nature is seen to be that in which

All lives and moves and weaves  
 Into a whole! Each part gives and receives  
 Angelic powers ascend and redescend  
 And each to each their golden vessels lend;  
 Fragrant with blessing, as on wings

5. Cf. MIYAMOTO et al. 1935.

From heaven through the earth and through all things  
Their movement thrusts, and all in harmony it sings!<sup>6</sup>

Morphologically speaking, each living thing constitutes itself through its original form and its metamorphoses, thereby maintaining its self-identity even as it differentiates itself. To wit, it is in its purposive characteristics that internal and necessary unity can be seen in nature.

What we mean by the term “organism,” then, is nothing other than “life” itself, for it is only in life that the universal and the particular, the infinite and the finite are unified by being mutually subsumed into each other, and this in turn gives meaning to each part of life and each of its processes. Mechanistic views that understand nature only through causal relationships among individual objects cannot give us an accurate picture of nature as such. They rather ignore the organic interrelations that are inherent in nature.

Such organic and living nature, saturated with “life” as it is, is a far cry from “objective nature” as understood by a knowing subject. It must rather be seen as the “place” (*basho* 場所) in which each individual is placed, into which it is “thrown,” and by which it is subsumed. The mechanical view of nature we find in Western modernity regards nature as something set up in opposition to the knowing subject, that is, as dead and inorganic matter. As a result, nature is treated as an assortment of materials for science and technology to work on. It leads us, as it were, to forgetfulness of fundamental, living nature.

#### IV

Let us now return to Meiji philosophy. German idealism was introduced to Japan after 1887, but it had a peculiar reception in the sense that Japanese intellectuals tried to locate the foundations of idealism in European scientific theories by approaching it from a mystical and religious angle. Inoue Tetsujirō and Inoue Enryō (1858–1919) stand out here. Their philosophies were marked by the acknowledgement of a fixed metaphysical absolute (実在 or 真如) behind phenomena and by their attempts to argue that position making use of the scientific theory of “energetics.”

6. GOETHE 1987, 17.

Regardless of the science they appealed to, their philosophical standpoints lie in the theory of phenomena-in-reality (現象即實在論). In short, their idea was that existence does not lie *behind* phenomena but resides *within* them. Their framework did not presuppose an external transcendent other but amounted to a noumenal monism, an idea that lays at the foundations of Mahayana Buddhist philosophy. Their philosophies reiterated the core argument of one of the most important texts of Buddhism, the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*<sup>7</sup> (to which we will return later), namely, that all is truth and truth is all (万法是真如、真如是万法).

Tetsujirō's philosophical standpoint is also referred to as the theory of harmonious existence (円融實在論). This idea was put forth in volume 12 of the *Journal of Philosophy*, but his theoretical standpoint had already taken shape in his *New Theory of Ethics*, published in 1883 when the Freedom and People's Rights Movement was at its height. There he argued that "existence" and "force" (勢力) lay behind the phenomena of the world. Being in accord with the "tendencies of the force" was, for him, the "main point of ethics." However, this force and existence do not lie behind phenomena but exist within them. In a word, what we have here is a *philosophical transformation* of "Eastern pantheism" or Buddhism. It is none other than a recasting of the foundational Buddhist notion of the truth (*tathatā* 真如) as that which unifies the world of discriminate things and is realized in all phenomena. But Tetsujirō goes further. In the effort to demonstrate this viewpoint scientifically, he refers to existence as something electronic. In one sense, his idea is rather farfetched and given to sophistry. Yet, if we look at his arguments in relation to his further claim that existence is not the object of knowledge but something directly intuited, their strong Buddhist coloring stands out in relief.

V

Hara Tanzan (1819–1892), to whom Tetsujirō looked up as a mentor, influenced his Buddhist "ontology of harmonious existence." His philosophical work on the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana* was selected as the textbook for a course on Buddhist texts at Tokyo Imperial University.

7. Hereafter, AFM.

Subsequently, the “theory of phenomena-in-reality” came to designate the metaphysics or transcendental realism subscribed to by students of Hara’s such as Inoue Tetsujirō, Inoue Enryō, Kiyozawa Manshi, Miyake Setsurei, and others.

Hara elaborated a method of investigating Buddhism not only as a brand of Indian philosophy but also as a general philosophy of mind by highlighting comparisons between the philosophical content of fundamental Buddhist teachings and Western philosophy. Young intellectuals obsessed with the new philosophy from the West were led to recognize the fact that a unique philosophical system, one that was by no means inferior to Western philosophy, had existed since ancient times in the far eastern corners of Asia. They were encouraged to enhance Eastern thought by incorporating conceptual structures from Western philosophy. As a result, they came to generate a philosophical standpoint that was later dubbed the theory of phenomena-in-reality.

When Tokyo Imperial University opened in 1877, the dean of the Department of Arts and Letters, and devotee of philosophy Katō Hiroyuki (1836–1916), visited Hara and requested that he inaugurate a proposed new course of “Lectures on Buddhist Texts” course.<sup>8</sup> Hara accepted and began teaching the elective course in November of 1879. In the annual report to the university he remarked:

At the Prime Minister’s request, I began by lecturing on three Buddhist texts at the university from November 1879 to June 1881: the *Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment*, the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*, and the *Treatise on One Hundred Dharmas*. We were all delighted with the right to include Buddhism as part of Indian philosophy in the curriculum of the Department of Arts and Letters and to find it approved in September of this year (1882) as an official university program. Accordingly, I decided on two textbooks for my course, the *Fú jiāo biān*<sup>9</sup> and the *Vimalakīrti Sutra*.<sup>10</sup>

Philosophically speaking, Hara’s lectures on the AFM were considered

8. For the connection between Hara and Inoue Tetsujirō’s theory of phenomena-in-reality, see WATABE 1998 and 1999.

9. [『輔教編』 is an eleventh-century critique of Buddhism by a Confucian scholar. –Trans.]

10. Cf. “A Report on Hara Tanzan and his Course on Indian Philosophy,” published in September 1881 and December 1882. The passage cited here is from MITSUHASHI 1976, 600.

highly progressive by Buddhist scholars at the time in that he was teaching students to think of truth and reality (真如実相) in conjunction with the metaphysics of German idealism. The course title “Lectures on Buddhist Texts” was renamed “Indian Philosophy,” and to this day it is still offered at Tokyo University. Hara did not, however, think of Buddhism as a “religion” in the Western sense of the term, that is, as unity of the human with a personal and transcendent absolute. Rather, he understood it as a comprehension and interpretation of the ways in which existence can be understood in reference to the various changes occurring in the minds and hearts of individual sentient beings, which he took to be the central concern of Buddhism. His choice of the AFM was a natural one. Needless to say, advocates of the theory of “phenomena-in-reality” all took Hara’s courses on Buddhist texts and Indian philosophy.

Tetsujirō was among the first generation of students at the Faculty of Arts and Letters at Tokyo Imperial University, graduating in 1880. He described his teacher in memoirs written in his late years:

Interestingly, a Zen monk named Hara Tanzan came to the university as a lecturer and taught us how to read Buddhist texts. As I listened to his lectures, I came to feel for the first time the charm of Mahayana Buddhist philosophy. For me it provided an occasion to cultivate an inseparable relationship with Buddhism. Even today, I still study the philosophy of Mahayana Buddhism with great interest.<sup>11</sup>

## VI

Inoue Enryō, who graduated from the Tokyo Imperial University four years after Inoue Tetsujirō, entered university in 1881 and graduated four years later. A novice in the Ōtani branch of Shin Buddhism, Enryō was particularly attracted to the works of Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) during his university years. His own arguments for phenomena-in-reality were based on the AFM and incorporated in his first text, *A Short Discussion of Philosophy*, published in 1886 and widely read among the general public. Nishida Kitarō also counted it among his favorite texts. Following its publication, Enryō published a number of texts pertaining to the theory. Through these

11. INOUE Tetsujirō 2003, 293–4.

endeavors, he sought to construct a way of understanding Buddhism in relation to Western philosophy. Along with a philosophical reconstruction of Buddhism, he argued enthusiastically for Buddhism's Buddhism to Western philosophy and Christianity. Allow me briefly to introduce the content of his *Prolegomena to a Living Discourse on Buddhism* (1887).

Enryō argued against the feasibility of publicly acknowledging Christianity as providing support for the expansion of Japanese rights and revision of treaties. The strength of his conviction appears in passages like the following:

Thus, for these reasons, I would propose a resolute revision of Buddhism and its designation as the religion of the Enlightenment. I believe this to comply with the purpose of a single scholar's search for the truth and with the aim of an individual to become a member of society and serve the state.<sup>12</sup>

To do this, Enryō tried to find ways in which Buddhism and philosophy (German idealism) can be said to complement one another. According to him, matter and mind (物心) are not originally separate but are derived from a single "ontological substance" (原躰). He asserts that only Buddhism can elucidate the nature of this separation and the relationship of ontological substance with matter-mind. In this way, the Buddhist view of truth unfolds along the lines of the logic of German idealism. In other words, Enryō located truth and matter-mind in the relationship between reality and phenomena. He began his Buddhist metaphysics by asserting that "matter-mind is an image, truth is the substance, and power is what develops from the truth of matter-mind."<sup>13</sup>

He employs expressions that sound similar to the AFM, such as the famous analogy of the wave from the text:

The phrases water-in-wave and wave-in-water indicate the reason why truth and all things are inseparable from each other, just as there are no waves without water and no water without waves. We call this truth-correspondence.<sup>14</sup>

Enryō devoted a number of pages to developing a theory of "harmonious

12. INOUE Enryō 1987, 354.

13. Ibid., 368.

14. Ibid., 370.

interrelation” wherein the “relationship between truth and matter-mind is an identity-in-difference and a difference-in-identity, a unity-in-duality and a duality-in-unity.”<sup>15</sup> In doing so, he basically inherited the framework of the AFM, which he had learned in great part from Hara. Illustration of these various points clearly demonstrate a theoretical attitude common among advocates of the theory of phenomena-in-reality. In this sense, the Buddhist philosopher Hara Tanzan had already proposed the basic structure of the theory of phenomena-in-reality.

Like Inoue Enryō before him, Kiyozawa Manshi was trained by the Ōtani branch of the Shinshū sect. In his case, however, we see only a weak connection to Hara. After graduating from the Department of Philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University, Kiyozawa majored in philosophy of religion during his graduate studies. He also took a profound interest in Fenollosa’s lectures on the history of philosophy, which seem to have drawn him particularly to the study Hegelian philosophy. During the time Kiyozawa was his student, Fenollosa converted to Buddhism. Fenollosa’s lectures on Herbert Spencer’s theory of the unknown and German idealism in particular help account for Kiyozawa’s comprehensive investigation of similarities between Buddhism and Western philosophy.

Kiyozawa also studied the works of R. Hermann Lotze (1817–1881), and from there went on to establish his own position on the theory of phenomena-in-reality. Since he was a scholar-monk in the Shin Buddhist tradition, we may assume that he inherited the basic form of this onto-phenomenological theory from his predecessor Inoue Enryō. Among Kiyozawa’s texts we may single out *Pure Philosophy* (1889), which shows Lotze’s influence, and *Outline of the Philosophy of Religion* (1892), which developed a first-rate theory of religion in general.

Miyake Setsurei was a writer possessed of great journalistic talents but also demonstrating considerable intellectual gifts through works on the history of philosophy and intellectual history in general. His ability to understand the nature of dialectic is particularly worthy of note. After he graduated from the Department of Philosophy at the Tokyo Imperial University, he worked for an editorial office before securing a position with the Ministry of Education under the title of associate professor at the Imperial

15. Ibid., 371.

University of Tokyo. There he researched the history of Buddhism, resulting in *A History of Japanese Buddhism* and *A Concise History of Christianity* in 1886. Among his numerous publications, the text that best resonates with the theory of phenomena-in-reality is a 1892 essay entitled “A Brief Introduction to My Point of View.”

## VII

To return to Inoue Tetsujirō, we cannot overlook the fact that he was influenced not only by Hara but also by the American Ernest Fenollosa, who taught him Western philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University. Fenollosa was especially fond of German philosophy, Darwinism, and Spencer, the latter of whom had attracted a great deal of attention as the greatest philosopher at the age. His lectures, which made use of both philosophical and sociological frameworks, were based on Spencer’s *First Principles* (1862).

Through Fenollosa’s guidance, Tetsujirō was led to develop his own philosophy in the *New Theory of Ethics*, where he focused on Spencer’s notion of the “unknowable.” The term was introduced as a philosophical expression for the metaphysical concept of divine transcendence, which also went by other names such as the “indefinable infinite,” the “first cause of the universe,” and the “infinite absolute.”

Spencer’s philosophy also appears in Inoue’s speculations on the comparison between phenomena, which are the objects of sensible experience, and reality, which Tetsujirō characterized as a mystery lying behind phenomena and beyond the grasp of the senses.<sup>16</sup> Tetsujirō himself associated the English term *reality* with the Japanese term for substance, *jittai* (実体). (Nowadays it is more common to render reality as 実在.) According to Watabe, Tetsujirō’s usage reflected the translation adapted in the first Japanese dictionary of philosophy, of which he himself was one of the editors.<sup>17</sup> The entry for the English term “reality” gives an insight into Tetsujirō’s own thinking:

Reality is *jittai* 実体, *shinnyo* 真如. See also the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*.

16. INOUE Tetsujirō 1967, 419.

17. 『哲學字彙』, 1881.



There is no mistaking the apposition of reality to the notion of truth in the AFM, namely, the profound, transcendent, and true reality that exceeds all explanation. It is no less obvious that truth is seen to fall in line with Spencer's notion of the "indefinable infinite" and the "unknowable." It seems only logical that we now take a closer look at the AFM.

### VIII

The text of the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana* dates from the sixth century and was authored by Aśvaghōṣa. Only two Chinese translations of the work have survived. Paramārtha (499–569) published the first translation as a single volume in 550. Śikṣānanda (652–710) issued a second translation in two volumes between 695 and 700. No Sanskrit or Tibetan translation is extant, nor can we find it cited anywhere in Indian Buddhism. On those grounds, some have argued that it was compiled originally in China, but the matter is still open to debate. At any rate, the text encapsulates the core of the Mahayana Buddhist teachings spread via central Asia to China, Korea, Vietnam, and Japan. The extent of its influence on Chinese and Japanese Buddhism is beyond measure. The *Tendai* philosophy of original awakening (本覺) can be traced to the AFM where, in contrast with incipient awakening (始覺) and non-awakening (不覺), it is present as final awakening (究竟覺).

The key term around which the text pivots is the "mind of sentient beings" that epistemologically constitutes the "single mind" or "store consciousness" (*ālaya-vijñāna* 阿黎耶識) that constitute the "mind of potential buddhahood" (*tathāgata-garbha* 如来藏), which ontologically is truth itself (*tathatā* 真如). What we are translating as "truth itself" literally means "as it is naturally." The Chinese translation is composed of two glyphs, the first of which indicates the negation of falsity or delusion, and the second, equal and non-discriminating self-identity. The original Sanskrit term from which the Chinese is derived signifies the true way of being or the true reality to which nothing has been added and from which nothing has been taken away.

Now, the mind of sentient beings is composed of two inseparable aspects: the mind in its true suchness (心真如) and the mind that comes to be and passes way (心生滅). The originally quiescent mind is pure in itself and tran-

scends the vicissitudes of time to which the arising and ceasing mind is susceptible. It neither arises into being nor does it cease to be. Yet even as it is immutable, immortal, and nontemporal, in reality it belongs to ordinary and ignorant persons. As such is beset by afflictions (*kleśa*) and will one day arrive at extinction. The truth beset by affliction is what is called the “mind of potential buddhahood.” For even though that potential itself is pure truth, at the same time, it is a defiled truth (在纏位の真如) hidden from view by the darkness of ignorance (無明). Hence its whereabouts are said to be “a harmony of birth-and-extinction with the neither-born-nor-extinct, such that it is neither one now two.” This does not mean that the truth and affliction are harmonized into one. Rather, the potential for the true suchness of buddhahood retains the essential purity of the mind in such a way that even as the mind is beset by affliction it is not infected by it. That which neither comes into being nor passes away, just as it is, comes to be and passes away.

To return to the metaphor of water and waves that we saw Enryō refer to earlier, the water becomes waves through the external causality of the wind (afflictions), but water continues to be the same water it always is. Its surface is whipped up into waves as the wind arises and returns to a glassy mirror as the wind subsides. Whatever waves the *activity* of the wind may produce, the *wetness* that makes it water remains unchanged. However giant the wave, the depth of the water is unchanged. In this sense, whatever shape water takes, it maintains its identity as water and *transcends* the shape of the waves. Water itself, in its transcendent unity, is aroused to take shape in various forms of waves.

In a word, true suchness is absolute tranquility beyond both motion and tranquility (water as such in its wetness), while the potential for true suchness is always a tranquility in relation to motion (water as waves). It is precisely because tranquility presupposes motion that the mind of potential buddhahood is able to harmonize birth and extinction in a way that they are distinct but not separate. Hence its names “store consciousness” and “harmonic consciousness of truth and delusion” (真妄和合識). Store consciousness is the ground of being for ordinary and ignorant persons. As that which makes all experience possible, it is defiled with the afflictions of greed, anger, jealousy, pride, and so forth. This enabling power is expressed in the word “store” (藏).

If we expand the meaning of these Buddhist notions to include metaphys-

ics, *tathatā*, the true suchness of reality as it originally is, represents the indivisible totality that enables an inexhaustible variety of individual beings to appear throughout the universe. As such, it must originally be itself a “nothingness” or “emptiness,” that is to say, an absolute but hidden potential. This means that truth as *tathatā* lies at the foundation of each phenomenal being as a metaphysical noumenon: as it subsumes all things in its foundational potential for existence, it releases all things to manifest themselves just as they are. In other words, all individual beings in the phenomenal world exist in the truth that makes their appearance possible; at the same time, as the condition for the possibility of individual entities, truth resides in everything it makes manifest, transcending them as the noumenal potential of their phenomenal manifestation.

Since truth as *tathatā* is marked by these two ontologically opposing aspects, the darkness of ignorance, which at first seems to stand in direct opposition to truth, turns out, ontologically, to be none other than truth itself. This is expressed in phrases such as “affliction-in-enlightenment,” “life-and-death-in-nirvana,” and “form is emptiness, emptiness is form.” The latent potency and manifest actuality of truth as suchness (真如) come about in sharp opposition and mutual contradiction. Accordingly, the phenomenal world governed by delusion is, on one hand, a deviation from the original state of things in their true suchness, but on the other hand and viewed from a different angle, that same world is seen to be the self-unfolding of truth itself. Obviously, ideas of “original enlightenment,” which uphold the position that “all sentient beings have the potential to become buddhas” and that “mountains and rivers, grasses and trees all have the potential to become buddhas,” derive their inspiration from this idea of truth as original suchness. In a word, phenomena, just as they are, are a picture of true reality. This is the theory of phenomena-in-reality.

As we have seen from the metaphor of water and wave, the standpoint of the AFM adopts a logic of “essence-function” (体用) or, if you will, of immanent transcendence. Essence-function is a term used in connection with causality. Whereas the relation between wind and wave is set up as causal, that between water and wave is one of essence-function. *Essence* refers to what is fundamental and natural; *function*, to what is derivative and functional. To paraphrase, the term expresses the relationship between noumenal essence and phenomenal function. A causal relationship is one that relates

one entity to another as cause to effect. The essence-function relationship, in contrast, is described as mutual entailment or relational correspondence, such that we may say “essence-in-function, function-in-essence.”

In short, there is a certain unifying principle that autonomously unfolds itself so as to reside in all things while maintaining its own transcendent structure. This idea of the systematic development of a One is connected with the idea of “divine principle” (天理) in Song Studies, in particular, to the “rational monism” of Cheng Yi (程頤 1033–1107) of the Zhu Xi school of neo-Confucianism. The claim is that a single transcendent rationality is portioned out to every thing and event, each of which manifests the one rational principle in its own particular way of being. The logic of essence-function also shows up among others of the school, beginning with Zhu Xi himself who argues in the first chapter of his *Passages on the Mean* (『中庸章句』) that “the great original is the body (体) of the Way and those who master the way become its working (用).” The first volume of his collected works (『朱子語類』) opens with the assertion:

If we are to speak of the way of being of yin and yang, the working (用) resides in the light of yang and the body (体) in the darkness of yin, but motion-and-tranquility is without bounds and yin-and-yang is without beginning: it is not possible to separate one from the other.

At other times, “body” is associated with “essence” (性) and “working” with “circumstances” (情). Furthermore, in Song China we see the idea of the “unimpeded relationship of principle and things” (理事無碍) or the “unimpeded relationship among all things” (事事無碍). The idea was adopted from Huayan Buddhism, which exerted a dominating influence on Kanna Zen and Chinese society in general at the time, to some extent including the Zhu Xi school thinkers who shared the same insight. Put in other words, the common thread by which these thinkers weave their accounts is the image of a teleological harmony and mutuality between the whole and the parts—in effect, a “philosophy of organism.” Here we see the foundation of an Eastern way of thinking that differs from the Western dualistic thinking with its assumption of an absolute transcendence subsisting outside the immanence of phenomenal reality.

It seems impossible to determine definitively whether the *idea* of essence-function originated in Buddhism or Confucianism. According to Shimada

Kenji (1917–2000), the idea is extremely familiar to traditional forms of Chinese philosophy that do not posit a transcendent creator outside of reality, making it likely that the idea originated there, at least in latent form.<sup>18</sup>

Be that as it may, it is no exaggeration to say that through their struggles with Western philosophy, Meiji philosophers sought to shed light on a distinctively Eastern way of thinking in the logic of an immanent transcendence based on the notion of essence and function, that is to say, in a “philosophy of organism.”

[Translated by Morisato Takeshi]

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