The Centre for Advanced Research in European Philosophy (CAREP) is a unique intellectual centre in Canada. It promotes the advanced research of current developments in European philosophy with the intention of bringing them to bear on research carried out in the Canadian and North American contexts. The Centre offers facilities for scholars and researchers to engage in original philosophical work through lectures, study-days, conferences, seminars, research and publication. Established and set at King’s University College, the Centre seeks to enhance and extend the College’s commitment to the humanities.

We are very grateful to Dr. Sauro Camiletti (Academic Dean/Acting Principal) for his continued support, his unwavering commitment to the life of the mind and its embodiment in the humanistic project of philosophy, as well as the material assistance in making this annual conference possible. In a time when administrations are under great pressure to cut funding for the humanities, Dr. Camiletti is to be commended for recognizing the vital role of the humanities, not just within the Academy but also for the world beyond the walls of the ivory tower. Hearing of our budgetary challenges, Drs. Mark Yenson of the Department of Religious Studies, Cathy Chovaz of The Centre of Deaf Education & Accessibility Forum, Krista Lysak of the Department of English, French, and Writing, and Allan Pero of the Centre for Theory and Criticism, all generously offered financial support for this conference. Their collegiality is greatly appreciated. We should also like to recognize The Japan Foundation, Toronto for their grant, which allows us to bring Dr. Uehara (Kyoto University) from Japan to present one of the keynote talks. We would like to thank Marilyn Mason for her help with the promotion of the conference; Tim Bugler for all his help with the poster, program, and website; Corey Cooke for his assistance with all our media and IT needs.
Keynote Speakers:

Bret Davis (Loyola University Maryland)
Rolf Elberfeld (Universität Hildesheim)
John Krummel (Hobart and William Smith Colleges)
John Maraldo (University of North Florida)
Shūdō Brian Schroeder (Rochester Institute of Technology)
Mayuko Uehara (Kyoto University)
Tetsuzen Jason Wirth (Seattle University)
Michiko Yusa (Western Washington University)
**Thursday March 21, 2019**

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<td><em>Rooted and Radical Cosmopolitanism: Today, After Nishida</em></td>
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Friday, March 22, 2019

9:00-10:15

Keynote Address (Joanne and Peter Kenny Theatre)

John Krummel (Hobart and William Smith Colleges)

ラスク、ハイデガー、と西田--対象としての意味から地平と場所へ

Lask, Heidegger, and Nishida: From Meaning as Object to Horizon and Place

10:30-11:15

Opening Talk (Joanne and Peter Kenny Theatre)

Hans Peter Liederbach (Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan)

Speaking for What Cannot be Said: The Kyoto School and the Problem of Philosophical Modernism

11:20-12:00

Session 1: Daryyl J. King Student Life Centre 004

Felipe Ferrari (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies)

The Nothing that Sustains Everything

Session 1: Daryyl J. King Student Life Centre 004

Dennis Stromback (Temple University)

Nishitani Keiji’s Critique of Scientism and Economic Rationality

12:00-13:00:

Lunch

13:00-13:40

Session 1: Daryyl J. King Student Life Centre 004

Michael Murphy (Institute for Modern and Contemporary Culture, University of Westminster)

Watsuji Tetsuro, Modernity and the Existential Explanation of the Phenomenon of Life

Session 2: Daryyl J. King Student Life Centre 004

Sven Läwen (Kingston University, London)

サブトロピカルな哲学 標数1のホモロジー存在論

Subtropical Philosophy: Homological Ontology in Characteristic One
13:45-14:25
Session 1: Daryyl J. King Student Life Centre 004

Joseph Henares (Ohio State University)
西田幾多郎の「日本文化の問題」と日本の活字メディア
*Nishida Kitarō’s The Issue of Japanese Culture and the Japanese Press*

Session 2: Daryyl J. King Student Life Centre 004

Kyle Peters (University of Chicago)
京都学派と対抗的公共圏—「社会的・歴史的形成作用」における「集団」の役割
*The Kyoto School and Counter-publics: On the Role of “Collectives” within “Socio-Historical Formative Activity”*

14:35-16:35
Ethics and the Kyoto School (Joanne and Peter Kenny Theatre)

Russell Guilbault (University at Buffalo)
京都学派の倫理的構成主義
*Ethical Constitutivism in the Kyoto School*

Laura Sullivan (College of Charleston)
西田幾多郎と現代的なメタ倫理学: 道徳的な知識から道徳的な行為へ
*Nishida Kitarō and Contemporary Metaethics: From Moral Knowledge to Moral Practice*

Kyle Shuttleworth (Queen’s University Belfast)
Watsuji Tetsurō and the Kantian Paradox

16:45-18:00
Keynote (Joanne and Peter Kenny Theatre)

Mayuko Uehara (Kyoto University)
中井正一の哲学における芸術と技術の共演
*The Cooperation of Art and Technique in the Philosophy of Nakai Masakazu*
Saturday March 23, 2019

9:00-11:45

Keynotes Addresses (Joanne and Peter Kenny Theatre)

Tetsuzen Jason Wirth (Seattle University)
How Soon is Now? The Kyoto School and the Ecological Emergency

Shūdō Brian Schroeder (Rochester Institute of Technology)
Living the Great Death

11:45-13:00

Lunch

13:00-13:40

Session 1: Darryl J. King Student Life Centre 004

Antoine Cantin-Brault (Université de Saint-Boniface)
Thinking Environmental Issues: Nishida Kitarō and Metaphysics

Session 2: Darryl J. King Student Life Centre 006

Florencia Di Rocco (Keio University)
Zen no kenkyū: from “Encyclopedism” to “Postmodernism”

13:45-14:25

Session 1: Darryl J. King Student Life Centre 004

Fernando Wirtz (Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen)
Pathos in the Age of Populism: Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, Miki Kiyoshi, and the Quest of Mythology

Session 2: Darryl J. King Student Life Centre 006

Tyler Tak-lap Yeung (Free University of Berlin)
“Immanence” and “Transcendence” as the Key Concepts of the Philosophical Appropriation of the West: The Kyoto School and New-Confucianism
14:35-16:35

Neo-Kantianism and Nishida Kitarō (Joanne and Peter Kenny Theatre)

**Yujin Itabashi (Risshō University)**

哲学的思惟の妥当性: 西田とヘルマン・コーエン

*Nishida Kitarō and Hermann Cohen: The Transcendental Validity of the Expression of Nothing*

**Ralf Müller (Universität Hildesheim)**

*Nishida Kitarō – A philosopher of Culture? Proximity and Distance to Ernst Cassirer’s Concept of Philosophy.*

**Steve Lofts (King’s University College)**

*Ernst Cassirer and Nishida Kitarō: The Critique of Culture*

16:45-18:00

Keynote Address (Joanne and Peter Kenny Theatre)

**Rolf Elberfeld (Universität Hildesheim)**

*The Kyoto School and the History of Philosophy in a Global Perspective*

18:30

Pizza and Beer:

**London Brewing**

Located in the heart of Old East Village (521 Burbrook Place, London, ON), London Brewing focuses on quality over quantity and local sustainable ingredients in an effort to change the conversation surrounding beer. The brewery is a worker-owned co-operative and, as a co-operative, is dedicated to our community and its community partners.
### Sunday March 24, 2019

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| 9:00-9:40  | __Olivia Schuman (York University)__  
*From wabi-sabi to shinrin yoku: Vestiges of the Kyoto School in Popular Media?* | __Rossa Ó Muireartaigh (Aichi Prefectural University)__  
*Forgetting to Believe: The Kyoto School and Religious Consciousness in the Age of Science* |
| 9:45-10:25 | __Griffin Werner (Kent State University)__  
*The Structure of iki and our Active Role in Constituting Japanese Culture* | __Melanie Coughlin (McGill University)__  
*Cunning Snakes and Crazy Harpies: Nishitani Keiji’s Critical Confrontation with Unconscious Nihilism Today* |
| 10:30-11:10 | __Bradley Kaye (Niagara University)__  
*Anti-Fascist Ontology in Nishida Kitarō’s Standpoint of Active Intuition* | __Carlo Cogliati (King’s College London)__  
*The Metaphysics and the Logic of ex Nihilo and Absolute Nothingness: Aquinas and Nishida Kitarō on Creation* |
| 11:15-12:30 | __Michiko Yusa (Western Washington University)__  
*Oh, old pond where’s Bashō? a splash! The Dialectical World of Nishida Kitarō* |  |
| 15:30      | Informal Meeting at Toboggan Brewing Company (585 Richmond Street) |
**Abstracts of Keynotes and Talks**

**Thursday March 21, 2019**

15:30-16:45

**Bret Davis (Loyola University Maryland)**

根付いた根源的な世界市民主義ーー西田哲学の現代的な意義を求めて

*Rooted and Radical Cosmopolitanism: Today, After Nishida*

In an age of resurgent ethnocentric nationalism, many philosophers today are reconsidering the sense and significance of cosmopolitanism. After discussing the current situation and some recent literature on the topic, this presentation will look back to modern Japan’s preeminent philosopher, Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945), in order to see what a critical engagement with his thought can add to this conversation. Nishida was critical of both earlier versions of “cosmopolitanism,” which he viewed as based on an “abstract individualism” that fails to recognize the cultural embeddedness of individuals, and of a “totalism” or “communalism” that denies the freedom and creativity of individuals. By way of taking up some of Nishida’s core insights as well as critiquing certain problematic aspects of his philosophy, I will argue for a cosmopolitanism that is both rooted and radical, that is to say, one that acknowledges both the extent to which individuals are deeply rooted in their respective cultures and the manner in which they are, in a still more radical sense, citizens of the world.

17:00–18:15

**John Maraldo (University of North Florida)**

京都学派の危険 (?) な思想

*The Dangerous (?) Thought of the Kyoto School*

In the past two decades, the amount and the depth of philosophical work devoted to Kyoto School thinkers is a strong measure of their lasting importance for contemporary philosophical practice. At the same time, the literature by critical historians that addresses their wartime politics has also grown by leaps and bounds, and evaluates their significance in a completely different context, almost as if there were two unrelated “Kyoto Schools,” one politically controversial, if not dangerous, and the other philosophically creative and still fruitful. Even more striking is the fact that critics diverge so widely in their evaluation of Kyoto School political thought. I will point out the assumptions underlying the controversy, and then suggest alternative ways to read the most controversial texts. Finally, without defending or condemning the politics of Kyoto School thinkers, I will unfold another dimension of the danger they pose: the potential they offer for exposing complacency and acceptance of the destructive tendencies of today’s imperialisms and politics of national identity.
Friday March 22, 2019

9:00-10:15

John Krummel (Hobart and William Smith Colleges)
ラスク、ハイデガー、と西田--対象としての意味から地平と場所へ
Lask, Heidegger, and Nishida: From Meaning as Object to Horizon and Place

Emil Lask provides the bridge from Kant to phenomenology but also from Kant to Kyoto School philosophy. Martin Heidegger and Nishida Kitarō, contemporaneously but independently, took Lask's collapsing of Neo-Kantian hylomorphism in distinct directions. They accepted Lask's anti-subjectivism while moving beyond his object-centrism. Heidegger broadened Lask's notion of lived experience in the direction of the “horizon” explicated in terms of temporality. Nishida Kitarō takes it in terms of a pre-objective “predicate,” indicative of the “place” wherein beings, objects, grammatical subjects are implanted. Both assume “world” as contextual (back)ground. The presentation thus examines Heidegger and Nishida under Lask’s light as a common source.

10:30-11:15

Hans Peter Liederbach (Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan)
Speaking for What Cannot be Said: The Kyoto School and the Problem of Philosophical Modernism

An influential strand in current research on Japanese philosophy rests on the assumption that Western philosophy has reached an impasse, which it can overcome only by a radical transformation, that is by opening up to insights generated by the tradition of Japanese thought, especially by the Kyoto school commencing with Nishida Kitarō. While I deeply sympathize with the purpose behind this assumption, that is the project of fostering cross-cultural philosophical dialogue, I disagree with its theoretical presuppositions, namely, Martin Heidegger’s and Nishitani Keiji’s critique of philosophical modernism. To corroborate my disagreement, I provide a critical examination of Heidegger’s concept of the “history of being” and its appropriation by Nishitani and his disciples, before I offer an alternative view on the possible significance of Kyoto school philosophy for the project of cross-cultural dialogue in the context of philosophical modernism.

11:20-12:00

Felipe Ferrari (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies)
「有」を支える「無」−西田幾多郎の日二次元論的−
The “Nothing” that Sustains “Everything” – Absolute Nothingness and Basho in Nishida Kitarō’s Non-dualistic Worldview

In the 1926 essay Basho, Nishida Kitarō proposes a true transcendent “nothingness” that is understood not as a phenomenon reflected in consciousness, but rather as the complete absence of everything, even of relative or “oppositional nothing,” – that is, “non-being” as an opposition to being – itself. According to him, everything that exists must do so in basho [place – 場所] (or, rather, must be placed – or located [於いてある] – in a “basho” while being projected inside of the limits imposed by the observer’s “field of consciousness”), but since “true nothingness” is not a thing, it presents itself not as a “no thing” in opposition to “some thing” nor as mere “nothingness” [無] as it is usually thought in opposition to “existence” [有]. “True nothingness” is purely mu [無] itself. This means that “true nothingness” is not born from the negation of a thing, but is rather the negation of every single thing, including of negation itself. The objective of this presentation is to propose an interpretation of Nishida’s idea of consciousness based on how he described basho in the eponymous essay, as well as to analyze what is the place that the self occupies in such a mu-centric worldview.
Dennis Stromback (Temple University)
*Nishitani Keiji’s Critique of Scientism and Economic Rationality*

In *Religion and Nothingness*, Nishitani Keiji launches a critique against scientism and its tendency to reduce all reality to a formula of mechanization. As Nishitani sees it, the problem with scientism is that this standpoint has become internalized within the secular world to the point where subjectivity eventually lives and acts in mechanistic ways: that is, humans become the machine itself. What Nishitani calls a “process of inversion” is this mimetic movement of the controller becoming the controlled: that is to say, the mechanization of human life has become so deeply embedded that the laws of nature themselves have reassumed control over humanity. Although Nishitani is speaking mostly about the fetishization of scientific rationality, what I will discuss in this presentation is how Nishitani’s critique of scientism can also be read as an implicit critique of economic rationality. I will argue that Nishitani offers us a critical reflection on the limits of economic liberalism.

Michael Murphy
*Watsuji Tetsurō, Modernity and the Existential Explanation of the Phenomenon of Life*

Far from being the archetype figure of anti-modern thought, this paper will argue, that the work of Watsuji Tetsurō represents an engagement with the global effects of modernity and that it is capable of providing a non-Eurocentric conceptual account of a social theory for the decolonial cosmopolitan project. To achieve this, the paper will present key concepts from Watsuji’s ethical vocabulary and highlight the cultural roots from which he draws. The modest proposition that this paper will offer is that the model of social analysis that he puts forward is one capable of exchanging ideas with other examples of relational social theory generated by global cultures. Watsuji’s work challenges hegemonic norms, modernity, and its accompanying institutions. The final part of the paper will draw on this analysis to argue that extending Watsuji’s work allows for the opening of a non-Eurocentric conceptual account of democratic epistemical values.

Sven Läwen (Kingston University, London)
サブトロピカルな哲学: 標数1のホモロジー存在論
*Subtropical Philosophy: Homological Ontology in Characteristic One*

Nishida Kitarō’s project of treating the continuous and the discrete in a unified manner (*hirenzoku no renzoku*) can be approached from two new angles: first, by drawing further conclusions from François Laruelle’s particle picture of philosophy with regard to coherence considerations and the emergence of time in a non-commutative “space of lived experience” (*taiken no basho*) and the “eternal present” (*eien no genzai*); second, with the concept of topos dating back to Alexander Grothendieck, conceived as a category-concept which embraces continuous and discontinuous structures by allowing us to have no longer only the true and the false, but also a much subtler idea of a path toward the truth closely related with Nishida’s “logic of place” (*basho no ronri*). Instead of being interested in only one particular and static ‘space of thought,’ subtropical philosophy explains Laruelle’s “non-philosophical *chōra*” as a topos or a parameter space that governs the variability (implied by the relative point of view on philosophy) in the worldly foreground, while establishing a homological bridge for an imaginary and indirect transfer between multiple philosophical worlds in the universal background understood as “the place of absolute nothingness” (*zettai-mu no basho*), along with a new commutative but variable ontology in characteristic one (*1+1=1*).
**Joseph Henares (Ohio State University)**

西田幾多郎の「日本文化の問題」と日本の活字メディア

*Nishida Kitarō’s The Issue of Japanese Culture and the Japanese Press*

This paper provides a new understanding of the complexities involved in what Ueda Shizuteru identifies as Nishida Kitarō’s “war over words” against Japanese ultranationalists. Nishida’s “tug of war” over the meanings of ultranationalist-tinged terms like *kōdō* (“the imperial way”) and *hakko ichiū* (“eight corners of the world under one roof”) was unsuccessful, and I intend to focus on one reason for its failure. Through analyzing books, periodicals, and newspaper articles that commented on Nishida’s *Nihon bunka no mondai* (*The Issue of Japanese Culture*), I argue that the right and the left interpreted Nishida’s thought in drastically different ways. As both sides tried to associate Nishida’s political thought with their own positions, Nishida’s actual ideas, already expressed in an abstruse style, were further obscured. In this paper, I aim to delineate Nishida’s actual stance on Japanese culture as expressed in the lectures that developed into *Nihon bunka no mondai*, to analyze how an ambiguity exacerbated by the Japanese press undercut the transmission of his ideas, and to offer several conclusions suggesting the relevance of Nishida’s ideas and experiences to today’s world.

**Kyle Peters (University of Chicago)**

京都学派と対抗的公共圏

*THe Kyoto School and Counter-Publics: On the Role of “Collectives” within “Socio-Historical Formative Activity”*

This presentation argues for the importance of Kyoto School contributions to contemporary discussions of social ontology and communal formation, especially with regard to counter-publics. Focusing on a group of lesser-studied Kyoto University philosophy students, including Nakai Masakazu, Kuno Osamu, and Mashita Shinichi, I call attention to their philosophical writings on team sports and art “collectives,” as well as their editorial work on coterie magazines like World Culture. Using techniques drawn from scholarship on counter-publics, I demonstrate the way in which these philosophical ideas and activities connect to traditionally recognized Kyoto School ideas about social formation, especially to the concept of large-scale “socio-historical formative activity” that is central to its mid-1930s discourse. I argue that, by foregrounding small-scale groups as central to the broader process of formative activity, these thinkers work to secure a role for counter-publics as a site of radically novel intervention, attributing to collectives the capacity to transform and restructure the horizons of socio-historical formation into the future.

**Russell Guilbault (University at Buffalo)**

京都学派の倫理的構成主義

*Ethical Constitutivism in the Kyoto School*

Kyoto School scholarship usually seeks to situate it within the history of European philosophy. Less work has been done on the potential contributions of Kyoto School thought to contemporary debates in the analytic tradition. I propose to interpret the Kyoto School philosophers Watsuji Tetsurō and Nishida Kitarō as espousing a kind of ethical constructivism. Constructivism, a recent trend in metaethics, locates moral facts or reasons in the constitution of the human agent. Kantianism, which holds various moral obligations to be entailed by universal features of human existence, is a prominent example. Thus far, however, ethical constructivism has considered only a standard, Western, individualistic construal of the human agent. I argue that this assumption is responsible for some of the most serious objections to constructivism. Turning to an expanded or non-differentiated notion of the self, as found in the work of Watsuji and Nishida, obviates these challenges and makes the view more plausible. The Kyoto School approach to ethics and its foundations will thus be defended as a neglected but promising source of ideas for contemporary ethics.
Laura Sullivan (College of Charleston)
西田幾多郎と現代的なメタ倫理学：道徳的な知識から道徳的な行為へ
Nishida Kitarō and Contemporary Metaethics: From Moral Knowledge to Moral Practice

Nishida Kitarō never advanced a complete theory of ethics. However, he certainly valued ethics in practice. In this paper, I characterize Nishida's metaethical perspective throughout his body of work by focusing specifically on his later papers on kōiteki chokkan or active intuition. I use Elizabeth Tropman's recent work on intuitionism to explore the possibility that Nishida's approach to ethics may best be understood within contemporary metaethics as a form of response intuitionism. The import of this analysis of Nishida's metaethics is twofold. First, as Nishida was a cross-cultural philosopher solidly trained in the European ethical theories of his time as well as a practitioner of Zen Buddhism, the characterization of Nishida's metaethics has implications for the representation of Asian and Buddhist perspectives in philosophical metaethics. Second, I propose that including Nishida's metaethics in contemporary debates diversifies discussions already taking place, especially those around the role of intuition in moral knowledge and practice, and it raises topics not widely addressed, such as how to account for the possibility of spontaneous ethical action.

Kyle Shuttleworth (Queen's University Belfast)
Watsuji Tetsurō and the Kantian Paradox

European moral and political thought since Kant has been dominated by what has become known as the ‘Kantian paradox’: since there are no natural laws to adhere to, humans must create their laws for themselves. Thus, the moral laws which we observe are laws which we ourselves have determined to be moral. This is problematic because the concept of law implies an objectivity and universality that is incompatible with subjective determination or validity. Although this problem continues to concern Western philosophical thought, it will be argued that a response to this issue is prevalent within the thought of Watsuji Tetsurō. In his Ethics, Watsuji advocates the non-binary concept of aidagara, which entails that ethics is neither subjective nor objective, but exists in-between human relations. Since the Kantian paradox emerges from the attempt to seek an objective law from a subjective standpoint, it will subsequently be argued that aidagara provides the means to resolve this problem.

Mayuko Uehara (Kyoto University)
中井正一の哲学における芸術と技術の共演
The Cooperation of Art and Technique in the Philosophy of Nakai Masakazu

Studies in the philosophy of technique by Kyoto school philosophers such as Nishida Kitarō, Miki Kiyoshi, and Tosaka Jun are probably well known to scholars of Japanese philosophy. Their names appear to be recognized as representative philosophers who constructed their own original theories of technique. In this talk, we will take up a philosopher who is unknown in this field, yet who can be regarded as a Kyoto school scholar: Nakai Masakazu, a specialist of aesthetics and art. Theories of technique can be considered one of the main subjects of his thought. My aim will be to clarify how his idea of technique was formed with reference to aesthetics and art. He pays attention to aspects of civilization that may appear negative at first glance, such as “group,” “mass” and “mechanization.” His intention, however, is to reinterpret these concepts positively in order to tackle problems within his own theory of technique, as well as the theory of aesthetic-art. In doing so, he conceived a theory of film and built up a philosophical “logic” named “The Logic of Committee.” I would like to refer to the background of 1930’s thought that surrounds Nakai in order to understand the features of this philosophy.
Saturday March 23, 2019

9:00-10:15

Tetsuzen Jason Wirth (Seattle University)

How Soon is Now? The Kyoto School and the Ecological Emergency

Why the Kyoto School Today? There are many reasons, of course, but I will emphasize what I regard as the most urgent: the prevailing ecological crisis. Although all of its stalwarts have much to contribute to what I will dub an ecological awakening, I will concentrate on Nishitani Keiji, especially his magnum opus, Religion and Nothingness, and its call for the Great Death in which heaven and earth are born anew. Behind my turn to Nishitani (and, to some extent, Nishida Kitarō), is the sense that the ecological crisis is also an ontological event, one in which we can see who we are and one in which we are called beyond ourselves.

10:15-11:45

Shūdō Brian Schroeder (Rochester Institute of Technology)

Living the Great Death

The relation between the self and death is fundamental to human existence and connects perhaps more than any other topic the views of past and present thinking. Branching off Martin Heidegger’s phenomenology of death, Zen master Dōgen’s views on birth-and-death (生死 shōji) and being-time (有時 uji) and their relation to the Buddhist notion of the great death (大死 daishi) are examined. The Kyoto School thinkers Tanabe Hajime’s and Nishitani Keiji’s positions regarding these concepts are then considered with respect to Nietzsche’s and Gilles Deleuze’s interpretations of time and the eternal recurrence. The aim is not only to examine the similarities and differences between two significantly different cultural perspectives but also to advance those viewpoints in order to put forward a new hermeneutic of what it means to live fully in the moment.

13:00-13:40

Antoine Cantin-Brault (Université de Saint-Boniface)

Thinking Environmental Issues: Nishida Kitarō and Metaphysics

In the West, today’s environmental issues are mostly thought out of an unquestioned Judeo-Christian metaphysics: mankind must fix (because mankind has reason) its errors (because mankind is sinful towards “naive” nature) before it is too late (because teleology commands reconciliation). It is doubtful that an anthropocentric metaphysics can fix the problems it created. Nishida Kitarō’s worldview has successfully avoided these problems. First, active intuition shows that we are made by making; thus, the dichotomy mankind v. nature is irrelevant. Second, Nishida’s historical world exists in the Eternal Present; thus, it avoids the irreversible teleological timeframe. And third, the absolute nothingness as the basho of the historical world suggests that God exists in every monadic and eschatological event. Mankind must realize that its actions are the necessary contradictions of nothingness, and not the “nihilization” of being. A burden to self, Western humankind has resorted to nihilism; it can freely decide now to be the expression of nothingness. The environment does not need saving, it needs to express itself in its relation to humankind.
Florencia Di Rocco (Keio University)
「善の研究」: 百科事典、ポストモダニスム
*Zen no kenkyû: From “Encyclopedism” to “Postmodernism”*

Nishida Kitarō’s *Zen no kenkyû* is not only the founding text of the Kyoto School but also a sample of “encyclopedism”: an outlook that aims to include a wide range of knowledge in a single work. In fact, Nishida refers to Ernst Mach, German idealism, German romanticism, Buddhist monks, Spinoza, Newton, the Cynic, the Stoics, the Eleatics, Nicholas of Cusa. But whereas “encyclopedism” consists of a “concentration, clarification and synthesis” of a set of references, Nishida’s text sometimes leaves the impression of a “miscellany.” The aim of this presentation is thus to clarify Nishida’s technics of appropriation of philosophical and literary texts – his particular use of allusion, insertion of words, quotation, personal notes, paraphrase, translation, parody – in order to show how, despite the modernism of the concepts, he deals with, Nishida’s “intertextuality” pioneers a postmodernist type of writing (as defined by Roland Barthes, and found in Borges, Foucault, Derrida, among others).

13:45-14:25

Fernando Wirtz (Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen)
ポピュリズム時代におけるパトス: シェリング、三木と神話の探求
*Pathos in the Age of Populism: Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, Miki Kiyoshi and the Quest of Mythology*

In this presentation, the philosophical mythology of F.W.J. Schelling is interpreted in the light of Miki Kiyoshi’s concept of pathos. In this sense, although he does not refer directly to Schelling’s *Lectures on Philosophy of Mythology*, in his *Logic of Imagination* Miki interprets Schelling’s concept of magic – as exposed in his treatise *On the Deities of Samothrace* – in the sense of pathos. Departing from this insight, our aim is to investigate Miki’s more political essays on myth, those included in *Notes on Philosophy*, particularly in *Philosophical Clarifications of the Awareness of Crisis* and *Historical Consciousness and Mythological Consciousness*. Here, Miki does not only deal with the concept of myth from a Sorelian point of view, but also tries to reconcile this political perspective with the more ontological dimension of the pathos. He thus, articulates the role of myth inside history and its link to temporality itself. The subsistence of past in the present was not just a concern for Miki, but also for Schelling, who recognizes mythology as the best example of how memory can be brought back to consciousness in a creative way.

Tyler Tak-lap Yeung (Free University of Berlin)
“Immanence” and “Transcendence” as the Key Concepts of the Philosophical Appropriation of the West: The Kyoto School and New-Confucianism as Examples

In this paper, I will discuss two kinds of contemporary reception and appropriation of Western thought, especially phenomenology, by two influential schools in Asia, namely, the Kyoto School and New-Confucianism. I will take two figures, Nishida Kitarō and Mou, both of whom are the founders and representatives of their respective schools. Through them, we can see how the Asian philosophers modernize and regulate their understanding of their own philosophical traditions by their modification of concepts. These modifications are strongly affected by phenomenologists, including Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. I will argue this point by focusing on their reflection of the concepts of “immanence” and “transcendence.” I will also discuss the pros and cons of the different approaches, ultimately showing differences or the superiority of the conceptual appropriation.
Yujin Itabashi (Risshō University, Tokyo)
無の表現の真理: 西田とヘルマン・コーエン
Nishida Kitarō and Hermann Cohen: The Transcendental Validity of the Expression of Nothing

In Jikaku ni okeru chokkan to hansei (自覚に於ける直観と反省, 1917), Nishida Kitarō raises the question of how reflection can be united with immediate experience, which, by definition, transcends it; or, in other terms, he inquires into the transcendental conditions of the validity of our reflective knowledge of immediate experience. Nishida’s project attempts to synthesize two antithetical philosophical theories: the transcendental theory of the self-determination of knowledge developed by Neo-Kantianism, in particular by Hermann Cohen of the Marburg School, on the one hand, and the position of Lebensphilosophie and its focus on authentic “life” (生) espoused by Arthur Schopenhauer, on the other. Jikaku ni okeru chokkan to hansei, concludes that reflection and immediate experience are two different aspects of “absolute free will” (絶对自由の意志), which is the self-determination (自己限定) of “nothing” (無). We find in Nishida’s thought that each self-determination articulates the transcendental validity of reflective expression of nothing, even though nothing itself remains beyond all determination or expression. This paper traces Nishida’s thought as influenced by Cohen and the significance of the transcendental validity or truth of the expression of nothing.

Ralf Müller (Hildesheim University)
Nishida Kitarō – A Philosopher of Culture? Proximity to and Distance from Ernst Cassirer’s Concept of Philosophy.

In this paper, I argue that Ernst Cassirer and Nishida Kitarō, despite having seemingly opposing views on philosophy, share a common philosophical aim at least for a certain period of time: from the 1920s onwards, they try to strike a balance between academic theory and the imminence of life and move on to discuss the place where life and academic theory meet, i.e. culture. The paper begins with a historical account of Cassirer’s and Nishida’s (non-)meeting and the influence of German philosophy in Japan. The main task is to delineate their respective concepts of culture based on their critiques of the philosophy of life, on the one hand, and of academic mainstream, i.e. Neo-Kantian philosophy, on the other hand. It will become visible from an account and comparison of their late 1920s and early 1930s writings that the concept of culture becomes an important point of their intellectual orientation, both in Germany and Japan. I will conclude with a brief summary of the shared aspects of their views, which open a horizon for further investigation into the identity and difference between these two philosophers.

Steve Lofts (King’s University College)
Ernst Cassirer and Nishida Kitarō: The Critique of Culture

While we must be cognizant of the danger of cultural hegemony, the concept of cultural hegemony assumes a plurality of cultures and modes of being human and thus something like “the” human as a cultural being. What it maintains is that no one historical culture can function as the paradigm for culture as such, that one historical mode of being human cannot be the model for all modes of being human. However, if we are to recognize in the culturally other the humanity we share with them, two interconnected questions must be addressed: 1) What, to speak with Ernst Cassirer, is the transcendental logic of culture that forms the conditions of possibility of culture as the universal expression of humanity?; 2) What, to speak with Nishida Kitarō, is the transcendental logic of culture that forms the conditions of possibility of culture as the idiosyncratic individual expression of humanity? This paper brings Cassirer’s and Nishida’s respective critiques of culture into dialogue. It argues for an open concept of culture capable of accounting for the plurality of cultures and modes of being human, while accounting for the particularity that makes culture a culture. Only once we resolved these questions in a concrete open concept of culture, can we speak of the possibility of a world culture of cultures based on it.
Rolf Elberfeld (Universität Hildesheim)

**The Kyoto School and the History of Philosophy in a Global Perspective**

At the beginning of the 21st century, it is time to rewrite the history of philosophy in a global perspective. For a fundamental reorganization of the history of philosophy, Japanese philosophy in general and the Kyoto school in particular play an important role. Within the Kyoto school, the historical innovations and new global perspectives were philosophically reflected in the context of a philosophy of history that tries to overcome the Eurocentrism of historiography. In the paper, these approaches to a new history of philosophy in a global perspective are to be considered.
**Sunday March 24, 2019**

9:00-9:40

**Olivia Schuman (York University)**

*From wabi-sabi to shinrin-yoku: Vestiges of the Kyoto School in Popular Media?*

Two elements seem central to the Kyoto School: an adherence to nothingness and a grappling with the modern world. Today's popular reception of mindfulness, simplicity, and self-care are practices that implicitly embrace nothingness as an antidote to an ever-modern world. In particular, the following 4 popular Japanese concepts seem to be a response to the challenges of modernity: *wabi-sabi* (the beauty of impermanence/imperfection), *shinrin yoku* (forest bathing), *ikigai* (life’s purpose), and *kami* (the spirit of objects and events). Arguably, these concepts enjoy the receptivity that they do in part because Nishida Kitarō laid the groundwork for the introduction of Zen Buddhism and Japanese thought in the West, which enabled its dissemination through popular philosophers such as D.T. Suzuki. In this paper, I explore these four concepts and their relationship to these two core elements of the Kyoto school. I discuss them both as markers of superficial novelty, as well as genuine truth-seeking beyond Western frameworks. As such, I argue that markers of the ongoing influence of the Kyoto School can be found outside academia.

**Rossa Ó Muireartaigh (Aichi Prefectural University)**

*Forgetting to Believe: The Kyoto School and Religious Consciousness in the Age of Science*

The triumph of science since the Enlightenment has swept aside former mythopoetic and anthropomorphic cosmologies and has dealt a serious blow to religious consciousness. Religion has often tried to react with fundamentalist entrenchment, or with occult-like religious scientification, or, more promisingly, with arguments for religious truths in terms of rationalism and positivism. However, the Kyoto School’s approach (as seen in D.T. Suzuki, Nishida Kitarō, Nishitani Keiji, and Tanabe Hajime) has been to center religious truths upon the experience itself of consciousness and the concept of emptiness that arises from this cosmological relocation. The truths of science and its methods are not challenged, but simply seen as lacking an explanation. Science is not all, but this makes it not not all but a not-all (to borrow from neo-Lacanian terminology). Science works because it excludes the consciousness that produces it, the very consciousness the Kyoto School uncovers. In my presentation, I wish to outline the Kyoto School’s approach to science and its relationship to religious consciousness.

9:45-10:25

**Griffin Werner (Kent State University)**

*The Structure of iki and Our Active Role in Constituting Japanese Culture*

In *The Structure of iki*, Kuki Shūzō discusses the titular concept, which refers to a specifically Japanese aesthetic sensibility. Kuki performs an interpretive study of the concept, arguing that one can completely understand its core meaning. I argue that Kuki’s analysis is incomplete because he fails to consider his own work as participating in modifying the core meaning of *iki*. The meaning of *iki* only exists insofar as there are people who experience *iki* as meaningful. This entails that a complete account of the structure of *iki* would need to take into consideration every experience of *iki* by all those who have an experience of the concept as meaningful, including *The Structure of iki* itself. In this respect, I argue that the core meaning of a concept can never be fully comprehended, for the act of comprehension, and its subsequent articulations, modify the overall meaning of the concept insofar as it is experienced as meaningful. Accordingly, my primary argument will be that we who bring Japanese philosophy and culture outside Japan participate in changing the way Japanese culture is understood. Thus, we serve an active role in changing what constitutes Japanese culture.
Melanie Coughlin (McGill University)
狡猾な蛇と狂暴なハルピュイア: 現在に於ける無意識的ニヒリズムに対する西谷の批判
*Cunning Snakes and Crazy Harpies: Nishitani Keiji’s Critical Confrontation with Unconscious Nihilism Today*

Nishitani Keiji’s post-war critique of the instrumentalization of myths in ideology is crucial for bridging his political engagements and his philosophy of religion. This critique of ideology takes place through Nishitani’s critical confrontation with unconscious nihilism’s abstract notions of embodiment in political strategies left and right. This paper explains the contemporary relevance of this confrontation by: i) presenting Nishitani’s analysis of how fascistic political strategies use myths to harden affects, based on his untranslated 1949 essay, “批判の任務とファシズムの問題” (*The Duty of Critique and the Problem of Fascism*); ii) arguing this analysis motivates Nishitani’s own approach to myths in terms of the emptiness in affect (情意に於ける空無), based on his untranslated 1956 essay, “マルクシズムと宗教” (*Marxism and Religion*); iii) applying this analysis to foreground the instrumentalization of myths in MAGA and MRA movements, based on their use of mythical images such as cunning snakes and crazy harpies to diminish empathy for, respectively, immigrants and feminists. Nishitani’s critique thus elucidates the affective difference between suffering that results in compassion and that which results in hatred.

10:30-11:10

Bradley Kaye (Niagara University)
*Anti-Fascist Ontology in Nishida Kitarō’s Standpoint of Active Intuition*

This paper begins by turning to the work of Nishida Kitarō, specifically his work written amid the rise of fascism in Japan between 1935 and 1937, and inquires as to whether or not there is evidence of Nishida’s resistance to this historical situation; and if so, it asks what in Nishida’s philosophy would allow for such a resistance. This paper argues that Nishida’s philosophy of time provides the reflective capability to resist the fascist ontology of expansionism and militarism. Anti-fascist ontology is a differential reflective capability, a process of reflection that does not identify with the mirror identity that fascism beckons the subject to be, it is an ontology contrariwise to a repressed, mimetic subject position. Finally, given the prima-facie evidence of the rise of contemporary fascism in the United States, our reflections here on Nishida’s thought are timely.

Carlo Cogliati (King’s College London)
*The Metaphysics and the Logic of ex nihilo and Absolute Nothingness: Aquinas and Nishida Kitarō on Creation*

This paper has a three-fold purpose. First, I will critically assess Aquinas’ understanding of creation out of nothing as implying the ontological dependence of the created beings upon God as the ultimate cause of their existence. I will then explain Nishida Kitarō’s notion of absolute nothingness as the groundless ground grounding all reality, the place that makes all beings something and not nothing. Second, I will argue that the logic of the strict converse implication offers the best framework of analysis to understand the asymmetric causal dependence present in the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*. I will then suggest that the logic of absolutely contradictory self-identity allows Nishida to embrace the co-dependence and unity of all beings in the place of absolute nothingness. Finally, I will set out to show that the system KD45, (secondary S5) is the proper modal logic of the metaphysics of transcendence underlying *creatio ex nihilo*, whereas the system KT5 (S5), is the correct modal logic of the metaphysics of immanence characterizing Nishida’s view on creation.
Oh, old pond
where’s Bashō?
a splash!

The Dialectical World of Nishida

Nishida’s “dialectical world” can be approached in terms of four “fields,” “aspects,” or “areas” by taking “the one and the many” as one axial line and “the self and the world” as the other perpendicularly crossing axial line. The four fields obtained in this manner are: (1) the single unique self-aware “I”; (2) the “I” functioning in various situations in relation to other “I”s, i.e., the “relational I”; (3) the “I” as a projection point of the world, that is, the “I” as a constitutive element of the world; and (4) the historical world in which innumerable free “I”s incessantly give shape to it, as much as individuals are determined by it. Where does the poet Bashō (i.e., the creative self) belong in this “dialectical world”? It has to be to the first “field,” which is the field of the self as the maker, and yet it is never separate from the self-forming world. The world is not some static “given” out there in which we find ourselves as “being-in-the-world.” Rather, the world and the I mutually give rise and give shape, as well as are given rise and given shape. This creative dynamism cuts through the dimensions of morality, spiritual awareness, and materiality.