An Inquiry into the Good

NISHIDA KITARŌ
1870–1945

An Inquiry into the Good

善の研究

Translated from the Japanese with AI (Claude) and edited



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INTRODUCTION

Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945) is generally regarded as the first major original philosopher of modern Japan and the founder of what came to be called the Kyoto School. He wrote most of *An Inquiry into the Good* while teaching at the Fourth Higher School in Kanazawa, during years of intense Zen practice, and published it in 1911, shortly after moving to Kyoto University. It made his name and has been read in Japan ever since.

The book starts from "pure experience": experience as it is before we divide it into a knowing subject and a known object—the musician lost in a piece, the climber on a rock face. Drawing on William James, Wundt, Fichte, Hegel and Buddhist thought, Nishida argues that this undivided experience is the only reality, that thinking and will are its developments, and that nature, spirit and finally God are its unifying power.

From there he turns to ethics and religion. After a critique of the main Western theories of the good, he defines the good as the realization of personality, in which the self becomes one with the reality of the universe; religion, in the last part, is the self's return to that unity, where knowing and loving are the same act.

Prefaces

序・再版の序・版を新にするに当って
How the book was written at Kanazawa, why it is called a study of the good, and Nishida's look back in 1936 at the standpoint of pure experience.

PREFACE (1911)

P1.1 I wrote this book during the many years I taught at the Fourth Higher School in Kanazawa. My first plan was to work out in detail the parts concerned with reality, and to publish the book soon. Illness and various circumstances prevented me from carrying out that intention. While several years passed in this way, my own thinking changed somewhat. I came to feel that what I was aiming at would not easily be completed, and so I decided that, for the time being, I would put this book before the public as it stands.[1]

P1.2 Parts II and III of this book were written first. Parts I and IV were added afterward, in that order. Part I clarifies the nature of pure experience, which is the foundation of my thought, but those reading the book for the first time would do better to skip it. Part II sets out my philosophical thought and may be called the backbone of the book. Part III was meant to discuss the good on the basis of the ideas of the preceding part, but I think it may also be read as a self-contained ethics. Part IV states my views on religion, which I have long regarded as the culmination of

1 The Fourth Higher School (Daishi Kōtō Gakkō) in Kanazawa was a government school preparing students for the imperial universities. Nishida taught there from 1899 to 1909.

philosophy. I wrote this part while ill, and it is incomplete in many places. In it, at any rate, I have reached the end of what I meant to say. I gave this book the particular title *An Inquiry into the Good* because, although philosophical inquiry takes up its first half, I considered the problem of human life to be its center and its conclusion.

P1.3 For quite some time I had wanted to try to explain everything by taking pure experience as the sole reality. At first I read Mach and others, but they did not satisfy me. Meanwhile I came to the idea that it is not that experience exists because there is an individual, but that an individual exists because there is experience: experience is more fundamental than the distinctions between individuals. This idea allowed me to escape solipsism. And by regarding experience as active, I thought it could also be reconciled with the transcendental philosophy that came after Fichte. So in the end I wrote Part II of this book, though it hardly needs saying that it is incomplete.[2]

P1.4 Mephistopheles may mock me, saying that a fellow who goes in for speculation is like an animal eating withered grass in the middle of a green meadow. Yet there is a philosopher (Hegel) who said that he was condemned to think philosophical truths. For human beings who have once eaten the forbidden fruit, such anguish is perhaps unavoidable.[3]

P1.5 Kyoto, January of the forty-fourth year of Meiji (1911). Nishida Kitarō

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION (1921)

Nishida explains why, after ten years, he lets the book appear again.

P2.1 More than ten years have already passed since this book was published, and I wrote it several years before that. After coming

2 Ernst Mach (1838–1916), Austrian physicist and philosopher, held that the world consists of sensations as neutral elements. The transcendental philosophy after Fichte is German idealism (Fichte, Schelling, Hegel).

3 Goethe, *Faust* I, the study scene: Mephistopheles says that a man who speculates is like a beast led in circles on a barren heath by an evil spirit, while fine green pasture lies all around.

to Kyoto I was able to devote myself to reading and reflection, and I have managed to refine and enrich my thought to some extent. As a result I came to feel dissatisfied with this book, and at last I thought of letting it go out of print. Since then, however, I have been asked from various quarters to publish it. I also considered how many more years it would be before I could set out the whole of my thought in a form like this one. So I decided to put this book before the public once again. For this edition two graduates in letters, Mr. Mutai and Mr. Sera, took on the labor of correcting the wording and reading the proofs for me, and I cannot thank them enough.[4]

P2.2 January of the tenth year of Taishō (1921). Nishida Kitarō

ON THE NEW EDITION (1936)

Looking back, Nishida says the book's standpoint of consciousness grew into his later ideas of place and acting intuition.

P3.1 This book has gone through many printings, and the type has often become indistinct, so the publisher has now decided to reset it. This book is the first work in which I brought my ideas together, to some degree, and put them before the world. It is nothing more than the thinking of my younger days. On this occasion I would like to add to it on various points. But thought is something alive at its own particular time, and decades later there is no way to add to it. There is nothing for it but to leave this book as it is, as this book.

P3.2 Seen from today, the standpoint of this book is the standpoint of consciousness, and it may well be thought psychologistic. If it is criticized in this way, there is nothing I can do about it. Yet I think that even when I wrote this book, what lay hidden in the depths of my thinking was not merely that. In *Intuition and Reflection in Self-Awareness*, the standpoint of pure experience advanced, by way of Fichte's standpoint of the *Tathandlung*, to the standpoint of absolute will. Then, in the second

4 Mutai Rigaku (1890–1974), later a philosopher in his own right, and Sera were students of Nishida at Kyoto Imperial University, where he taught from 1910.

half of *From That Which Acts to That Which Sees*, by way of Greek philosophy, it took a turn and arrived at the idea of "place."[5] There, I think, I found the starting point for giving my thinking a logical form. The idea of "place" was made concrete as "the dialectical universal," and the standpoint of "the dialectical universal" was made immediate as the standpoint of "acting intuition." What I called in this book the world of direct experience or the world of pure experience, I have now come to think of as the world of historical reality. The world of acting intuition, the world of poiesis: this is truly the world of pure experience.[6]

P3.3 Fechner says of himself that one morning, while resting on a bench in the Rosenthal in Leipzig, he gazed at a spring meadow where the sun shone bright, flowers were fragrant, birds sang and butterflies danced. Against the night view of natural science, without color or sound, he became absorbed in the day view, in which things just as they are are true. I do not know what influenced me, but from early on I held that reality must be actuality just as it is, and that something like the so-called material world is merely something thought up from it.[7] I still remember how, when I was a student at the higher school, I walked the streets of Kanazawa absorbed, as if dreaming, in such thoughts. I think the thoughts of that time became the basis of this book. When I wrote this book, it never occurred to me that it would be read for so long by so many people, or that I would live so long as to see it reprinted once again. I cannot help feeling about this book: "It is because I have lived—Sayo no Nakayama."[8]

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5 *Intuition and Reflection in Self-Awareness* (1917) and *From That Which Acts to That Which Sees* (1927) are later books by Nishida. *Tathandlung* ("fact-act") is Fichte's term for the self-positing act of the I; "place" translates *basho*.

6 "Acting intuition" (*kōiteki chokkan*) is the key concept of Nishida's work of the 1930s. *Poiesis* is Greek for "making" or "production."

7 Gustav Theodor Fechner (1801–1887), German physicist and philosopher, contrasted the "day view" with the "night view" in *Die Tagesansicht gegenüber der Nachtansicht* (1879). The Rosenthal is a park in Leipzig.

8 From a poem by the monk-poet Saigyō (1118–1190), written when he crossed the Sayo no Nakayama pass again in old age: "Did I ever think, grown old, I would cross it again? It is because I have lived—Sayo no Nakayama."

P3.4 October of the eleventh year of Shōwa (1936). The author

Part I: Pure Experience

第一編　純粋経験

Experience as it is before subject and object divide; thinking, will and intellectual intuition as forms of pure experience.

CHAPTER 1: PURE EXPERIENCE

1.1.1 To experience means to know facts just as they are. It is to know by following the facts, having completely discarded one's own contrivances. What we ordinarily call experience is in fact mixed with some kind of thought. By "pure," therefore, I mean the state of experience truly just as it is, without the least addition of deliberation or discrimination. I mean, for example, the instant of seeing a color or hearing a sound. At that instant there is not yet any thought that this is the action of an external thing, or that I am the one feeling it. Not even the judgment of what this color or this sound is has yet been added.[1]

PURE EXPERIENCE IS DIRECT EXPERIENCE

In direct experience there is not yet a subject or an object; knowing and its object are one.

Pure experience is therefore identical with direct experience. When we directly experience our own state of consciousness, there is not yet a subject or an object; knowing and its object are completely one. This is experience in its purest form. Of course, the meaning of the word "experience" is not ordinarily fixed

1 "Pure experience" (*junsui keiken*) takes up the term of William James (1842–1910), the American psychologist and philosopher whose *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) and essay "A World of Pure Experience" (1904) Nishida cites throughout.

with clarity. Wundt, for instance, calls even knowledge inferred on the basis of experience "indirect experience," and calls physics, chemistry and the like sciences of indirect experience (Wundt, Grundriss der Psychologie, Einl. §I).

ONLY PRESENT CONSCIOUSNESS IS PURE

Others' consciousness, memories and judged experience are not pure experience; only present consciousness of facts is.

But such knowledge cannot be called experience in the proper sense. Even among phenomena of consciousness, the consciousness of another person cannot be experienced by oneself. And even one's own consciousness is no longer pure experience if it is a recollection of the past, or, if it is present, once one has judged it. True pure experience has no meaning whatever; it is nothing but present consciousness of the facts just as they are.

1.1.2 In the sense just described, which mental phenomena are facts of pure experience? No one will dispute that sensation and perception belong here. But I believe that all mental phenomena appear in this form. In memory, too, past consciousness does not arise directly, and so we do not intuit the past. To feel something as past is itself a present feeling.[2] Abstract concepts, too, are by no means something beyond experience; they are still a kind of present consciousness. A geometer imagines a single triangle and takes it as the representative of all triangles. In the same way, the representative element of a concept is, in the present, no more than a kind of feeling (James, The Principles of Psychology, Vol. I, Chap. VII). Further, if we include among the facts of direct experience the so-called halo, or fringe, of consciousness, then even the consciousness of the various relations between facts of experience enters into it, just as sensation and perception do (James, A World of Pure Experience). What, then, of the phenomena of feeling and will? It goes without saying that feelings of pleasure and displeasure are present conscious-

2 "Intuit, intuition" renders both 直覚 (*chokkaku*) and 直観 (*chokkan*); the book uses both terms.

ness. And with the will too, even though its aim lies in the future, we always feel it as a present desire.

1.1.3 Now, what is this pure experience, which is thus immediate to us and is the cause of all mental phenomena? Let us consider its nature a little from here on. First the question arises whether pure experience is simple or complex. Even immediate pure experience may be called complex, in that it is constructed from past experience, or in that it can afterward be analyzed into simple elements. Yet however complex pure experience may be, at that instant it is always a single, simple fact. Even a reproduction of past consciousness, once it has been unified within present consciousness, has become one element of it and has acquired a new meaning, can no longer be called identical with the past consciousness (Stout, Analytic Psychology, Vol. II, p. 45). Likewise, when we analyze present consciousness, what has been analyzed is no longer identical with present consciousness. Seen from the side of pure experience, everything is specific, and in each case simple and original. Next: how far does the synthesis of such pure experience extend? The present of pure experience is not the present of thought, which, as soon as we think about the present, is already no longer present. The present as a fact of consciousness must have some temporal duration (James, The Principles of Psychology, Vol. I. Chap. XV). That is, the focus of consciousness is always the present. The scope of pure experience thus naturally coincides with the scope of attention. But I think this scope is not necessarily limited to a single act of attention. We can keep shifting our attention, without the least admixture of thought, in a state before subject and object are divided. When someone is climbing a sheer cliff for dear life, for example, or when a musician is playing a piece he has mastered, this may be called entirely a perceptual train (Stout, Manual of Psychology, p. 252). The instinctive actions of animals must also be accompanied by such a mental state. In these mental phenomena, perception keeps a strict unity and connection. Even as consciousness shifts from one thing to another, attention is directed throughout to the object.

Each earlier activity of itself calls forth the next, and there is not the slightest crack between them where thinking could enter. If we compare this with momentary perception, there are differences in the shifting of attention and in length of time. But in its immediacy, in the unity of subject and object, there is not the slightest difference. Moreover, so-called momentary perception is in fact itself composed of a combination of complex experiences. If so, the distinction between the two must be said to be not a difference in kind but merely a difference in degree. Pure experience is not necessarily a single sensation. A single sensation in the strict sense psychologists give it is something posited hypothetically as the result of scientific analysis. It is not an immediate, concrete experience in fact.

PURITY LIES IN UNITY

Pure experience is pure not because it is simple or momentary but because of the strict unity of consciousness.

1.1.4 The immediacy and purity of pure experience do not lie in its being single and unanalyzable, or in its being momentary. On the contrary, they lie in the strict unity of concrete consciousness. Consciousness is by no means made up of a combination of what psychologists call simple mental elements; it originally forms a single system. The consciousness of a newborn infant, for example, is probably a chaotic unity in which even the distinction between light and dark is not yet clear. Out of this, a multiplicity of states of consciousness differentiates and develops. Yet however finely they differentiate, they never lose the form of that fundamental system. The concrete consciousness immediate to us always appears in this form. Even something like momentary perception never departs from it. For example, even when we think we perceive the whole of a thing at a glance, close study shows that attention shifts of itself along with the movement of the eyes, and so comes to know the whole. Thus consciousness is by nature a systematic development. As long as this unity is strict and consciousness develops of itself, we do

not lose the standpoint of pure experience. On this point perceptual experience and representational experience are the same. When a system of representations develops of itself, the whole is at once pure experience. Goethe's composing a poem intuitively in a dream is an example of this. It may perhaps be thought that perceptual experience cannot be called a unity of consciousness, since in it attention is governed by external things. But behind perceptual activity too, some unconscious unifying power must be at work. It is by this that attention is guided. Conversely, representational experience, however unified, seems necessarily to belong to subjective doing, and so it might seem that it cannot be called pure experience. But even representational experience must be regarded as pure experience when its unity is necessary and it combines of itself. When, as in dreams, for example, nothing from outside breaks its unity, it is completely confused with perceptual experience. Originally, experience has no distinction of inner and outer. What makes it pure lies in its unity, not in its kind. Even a representation, when it is strictly joined with sensation, is at once an experience. Only when it leaves the present unity and relates to other consciousness does it cease to be present experience and become meaning. And when there are only representations, as in dreams, they are completely confused with perception. The reason sensation always seems to be experience is probably that it is always the focus of attention and the center of unity.

1.1.5 I now want to define a little more precisely what the unity of consciousness means, and so to clarify the nature of pure experience. A system of consciousness is one in which, as in every organism, a unifying something differentiates and develops in an orderly way and realizes its whole. In consciousness, as soon as one end of it appears, the unifying activity accompanies it as a feeling of tendency. It is this activity that guides our attention. When the unity is strict, or is not obstructed by anything else, this activity is unconscious. Otherwise it appears separately in consciousness as a representation, and at once the state of pure experience is left behind. That is, as long as the uni-

fying activity is at work, the whole is actual; it is pure experience. And all consciousness is impulsive. If we can say, as voluntarism does, that will is the fundamental form of consciousness, then the form of the development of consciousness is, in the broad sense, the form of the development of will, and its unifying tendency must be said to be the aim of the will. Pure experience is the state in which there is not the slightest gap between the demand of the will and its realization: the will's freest and most vigorous state. Of course, from the standpoint of selective will, to be governed in this way by impulsive will might, on the contrary, be a constraint on the will. But selective will is a state in which the will has already lost its freedom, and so, once it has been trained, it becomes impulsive again. The essence of will lies not in a state of desire toward the future but in present activity in the present. Strictly speaking, the bodily action that accompanies the will is not an element of the will. Seen purely psychologically, will is an inner apperceptive activity of consciousness. And there is no special phenomenon called will apart from this unifying activity: the culmination of this unifying activity is the will. Thinking, like will, is a kind of apperceptive activity, but its unity is merely subjective. Will, by contrast, is the unity of subject and object. This is also why the will is always present (Schopenhauer, Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung, §54). Pure experience is said to be intuition of the facts just as they are, without meaning. Put this way, pure experience may seem to be some chaotic, undifferentiated state. But the various meanings and judgments arise from differences within experience itself; the differences are not given by them. Experience must of itself possess differentiated aspects. For example, when I see a color and judge it to be blue, the original color sensation does not thereby become any clearer. I have merely related it to similar sensations from before. Again, suppose I now point to an experience that has appeared as something seen, call it a desk, and pass various judgments on it. This adds no richness at all to the content of the experience itself. In short, the meaning or judgment of an experience merely shows its relations to other

things; it does not enrich the content of the experience itself. What appears in meaning or judgment is a part abstracted from the original experience, and in content it is, on the contrary, poorer than the original. Of course, when we recall an original experience, something that was unconscious before may become conscious afterward. But this is merely attending to a part we did not attend to before. It is not that meaning or judgment has added something that was not there before.

MEANING AND JUDGMENT

Meaning and judgment arise when the unity of present experience breaks and relates to past consciousness.

1.1.6 If pure experience thus possesses differentiated aspects of itself, what are the meanings or judgments added to it? And how are they related to pure experience? It is ordinarily said that when pure experience is connected with objective reality, meaning arises and takes the form of judgment. But from the standpoint of the theory of pure experience, we cannot go outside the bounds of pure experience. Meanings and judgments too arise, in the end, from connecting present consciousness with past consciousness. That is, they rest on the unifying activity that unifies present consciousness within a larger system of consciousness. Meanings and judgments show the relations of present consciousness to other things; that is, they merely express the position of present consciousness within a system of consciousness. For example, when we judge a certain auditory sensation to be the sound of a bell, we have merely fixed its position within our past experience. So, whatever consciousness there may be, as long as it is in a state of strict unity, it is always pure experience; that is, it is simply fact. When, on the other hand, this unity breaks down, that is, when it enters into relations with other things, meaning arises and judgment arises. Toward the pure experience that appears immediately to us, past consciousness at once comes into play. It combines with one part of present consciousness and clashes with another, and

here the state of pure experience comes to be analyzed and broken up. Meanings and judgments are this state of disunity. But on reflection, this unity and disunity too are ultimately a difference of degree. There is probably no completely unified consciousness and no completely disunified consciousness. All consciousness is a systematic development. Even momentary knowledge implicitly contains various oppositions and changes. Likewise, behind the consciousness of relations, such as meanings and judgments, there must be a unifying consciousness that makes these relations possible. As Wundt said, all judgment arises through the analysis of a complex representation (Wundt, Logik, Bd. I, Abs. III, Kap. 1). And when judgment is gradually trained and its unity becomes strict, it takes on entirely the form of pure experience. In learning a skill, for example, what was conscious at first becomes unconscious as one grows practiced in it. If we think a step further, pure experience and its meaning or judgment express two sides of consciousness; that is, they are nothing but different ways of viewing the same thing. Consciousness has unity on the one side, but it must also have, on the other, a side of differentiation and development. Moreover, as James explained in "The Stream of Consciousness," consciousness is not confined to where it appears; it has implicit relations with other things. The present can always be seen as part of a larger system. What is called differentiation and development is the activity of a still larger unity.[3]

1.1.7 If meaning too is thus the activity of a larger unity, does pure experience in such cases transcend its own bounds? For example, when it relates to the past in memory and to the future in will, can we think that pure experience transcends the present? Psychologists say that consciousness is not a thing but an event; it is therefore new from moment to moment, and the same consciousness never recurs. But I think this view is not reached from the standpoint of the theory of pure experience. Rather, it is inferred from the nature of time: that the past does

3 A chapter of James's *Psychology: Briefer Course* (1892); in *The Principles of Psychology* the same chapter is called "The Stream of Thought."

not return and the future has not yet come. From the standpoint of pure experience, consciousness with the same content must be regarded through and through as the same consciousness. For example, when a single purposive representation works continuously in thinking or in willing, we must regard it as one thing. In the same way, I think, even if its unifying activity is interrupted in time, we must consider it one thing.

CHAPTER 2: THINKING

Judgment, the simplest form of thinking, analyzes a single whole representation.

1.2.1 Seen psychologically, thinking is the activity of determining the relations among representations and unifying them. Its simplest form is judgment, which determines the relation between two representations and joins them. But in judgment we do not join two independent representations; rather, we analyze a single whole representation. For example, the judgment "the horse runs" arises from analyzing the single representation "running horse."

JUDGMENT RESTS ON PURE EXPERIENCE

Subject and predicate are joined through a fact of pure experience behind every judgment.

So behind judgment there is always a fact of pure experience. It is in fact through this that the representations of subject and predicate are joined in judgment. Of course, it is not always the case that a whole representation appears first and analysis begins from it. There are also cases in which the subject representation comes first; from it various associations arise in a certain direction, and after a selection one of them is settled on.

PURELY RATIONAL JUDGMENTS TOO

A whole representation appears before any judgment is settled, in factual and rational judgments alike.

Even in this case, however, at the moment it is finally settled, a whole representation containing both subject and predicate must first appear. In short, this representation had been working implicitly from the start, and judgment is reached where it becomes actual. That pure experience must lie at the root of judgment in this way holds not only for judgments about facts but also for what are called purely rational judgments.

THE AXIOMS OF GEOMETRY

Axioms and the necessity of thought rest on the experience of a unifying something.

Even things like the axioms of geometry, for example, are all based on a kind of intuition. Even with abstract concepts, in order to compare two things and judge them there must be, at the root, the experience of a unifying something. What is called the necessity of thought comes from this. Therefore if, as I said before, we can call not only things like perception but also the consciousness of relations experience, then we can say that at the root of purely rational judgments too there is a fact of pure experience.

EACH LINK IN THE CHAIN

With Locke, each step of an inference rests on an intuitive proof.

Again, consider judgments that arise as the result of inference. Locke said that even in demonstrative knowledge there must be intuitive proof at each step (Locke, An Essay concerning Human Understanding, Bk. IV, Chap. II, 7). Just so, at the root of each judgment that forms a link in the chain there must always be a fact of pure experience.

LOGICAL INTUITION

Conclusions drawn from many judgments rest on a logical intuition that unifies their relations.

Even when we bring together judgments from various directions and reach a conclusion, there may be no factual intuition unifying the whole, yet a logical intuition that synthesizes and unifies all the relations is at work. (The so-called three laws of thought, too, are a kind of inner intuition.) For example, when we infer from various observations that the earth must be moving, we judge, in the end, by laws of logic based on a kind of intuition.[4]

1.2.2 Traditionally, thinking and pure experience have been regarded as mental activities of completely different kinds. But let us now discard all dogma and think directly. If, as James said in a short essay titled "A World of Pure Experience," we include the consciousness of relations within experience, then I think we can say that the activity of thinking too is a kind of pure experience. Perception and the mental images that are the elements of thinking can be distinguished, seen from outside: the one is based on stimulation of the peripheral nerves coming from external things, the other on stimulation of the cerebral cortex. Seen from inside, too, we do not ordinarily confuse perceptions with mental images. But can they be strictly distinguished at every point, considered purely psychologically? That is very difficult. In the end the distinction comes from differences of intensity and of various other relations, and there is no absolute distinction. (In dreams, hallucinations and the like, we often confuse mental images with perceptions.) Such a distinction did not exist in primitive consciousness; it probably came to be drawn only through various relations. Again, at first sight perception seems simple and thinking a complex process. But perception is not necessarily simple either; perception too is a

4 The three laws of thought of traditional logic: identity, non-contradiction and excluded middle.

constructive activity. And thinking, seen from the side of its unity, is a single activity. It can be seen as the development of a unifying something.

1.2.3 There may be various objections to regarding thinking and something like perceptual experience as of the same kind, so I will now discuss these points a little. It is ordinarily thought that something like perceptual experience is passive and its activity entirely unconscious, while thinking, on the contrary, is active and its activity entirely conscious. But where does so clear a distinction lie? Even thinking, when it works and develops freely, goes on almost entirely under unconscious attention. It becomes conscious, rather, when its progress is obstructed. What drives thinking forward is not our voluntary activity; thinking develops by itself. Only when we have completely cast off the self and become one with the object of thinking, that is, with the problem—or, to put it more aptly, when we have sunk the self in it—do we first see the activity of thinking. Thinking has its own laws of thinking, and it works by itself. It does not follow our will. Becoming one with the object, that is, directing attention, could be called voluntary, if one wishes. But on this point perception is, I think, the same: we can freely direct our attention to what we want to see and see it. Of course, in thinking the unity seems looser than in perception and its transitions seem conscious, and so I earlier set this down as its distinguishing feature. But considered strictly, this distinction too is relative. Even in thinking, the moment of passing from one representation to another is unconscious. While the unifying activity is actually at work, it must be unconscious. When we are conscious of it as an object, the activity already belongs to the past. Thus the unifying activity of thinking lies wholly outside the will. It is only that, when we think about a problem, there are various directions, and we seem to be free to choose among them. But such phenomena are not absent from perception either. In a somewhat complex perception, how we direct our attention is free. When looking at a painting, for example, we can attend to its forms or to its colors. Besides, it is said that in

perception we are moved from outside, while in thinking we move from within. But the distinction of inner and outer is, after all, merely relative. It only appears so because mental images, the material of thinking, are comparatively changeable and free.

1.2.4 Next, it is ordinarily thought that perception is the consciousness of concrete facts and thinking the consciousness of abstract relations, and that the two are of entirely different kinds. But we cannot be conscious of anything like a purely abstract relation. The course of thinking too proceeds by means of some concrete mental image; without mental images thinking does not come about. For example, even to prove that the sum of all the angles of a triangle equals two right angles, we must rely on the mental image of some particular triangle. Thinking is not a consciousness independent of mental images; it is a phenomenon accompanying them. Gore holds that the relation between a mental image and its meaning is the same as the relation between a stimulus and its response (Dewey, Studies in Logical Theory). Thinking is the response of consciousness to a mental image, and the mental image in turn is the starting point of thinking. Thinking and mental images are not separate things.[5] No mental image, of whatever kind, is ever independent. It always appears in some relation to the whole of consciousness, and this side of it is the consciousness of relations in thinking. What seems to be pure thinking is merely a case where this side is prominent. Now, having considered the relation of mental images and thinking in this way, does perception lack such a thinking side? By no means. Like all phenomena of consciousness, perception too is a systematic activity. In perception the response is, if anything, conspicuous, and appears as will and as action; in mental images it remains merely an inner relation, as thinking. So in actual consciousness there is a distinction between perception and mental image, but none between concrete and abstract. Thinking is the consciousness of facts among mental images. And, as I said before, from the strict

5 Willard Clark Gore contributed a chapter to *Studies in Logical Theory* (1903), the volume of the Chicago school edited by John Dewey.

standpoint of pure experience even perception and mental images cannot ultimately be told apart.

TRUTH AND FALSITY IN THINKING

Thinking is true when it accords with the largest and deepest system of consciousness.

1.2.5 So far I have argued, from the standpoint of psychology, that thinking too is a kind of pure experience. But thinking is not merely a fact in individual consciousness. It has an objective meaning, and its proper task is to express truth. In pure experience, where we directly intuit our own phenomena of consciousness, there is no question of true and false. In thinking, one may say, there is a distinction between true and false. To clarify these points we would need to discuss in detail what is meant by the objective, by reality, by truth and so on. Yet if we think about it in a thoroughly critical way, I believe there is no reality outside the facts of pure experience, and these properties too can be explained psychologically. As I said before, the meaning of a consciousness arises from its relations to others. In other words, it is determined by the system into which that consciousness enters. One and the same consciousness takes on various meanings according to the different systems it enters. Take a mental image, which is a consciousness of meaning. If it is regarded simply by itself, without relation to anything else, it has no meaning at all and is merely a fact of pure experience. Conversely, a perception, which is a consciousness of fact, has meaning when seen in terms of its relations to other things within a system of consciousness. It is only that in most cases this meaning is unconscious. If so, which thoughts are true and which are false? We always take the most powerful element in the system of consciousness, that is, the largest and deepest system, to be objective reality. We regard what accords with it as truth and what conflicts with it as falsehood. From this point of view, perception too can be correct or mistaken. Viewed from a certain system, a perception is correct when it fits that system's

purpose well, and mistaken when it goes against it. Of course these systems carry various meanings. One could distinguish them, for instance, by saying that the system behind perception is mostly practical while the system of thinking is purely intellectual. But just as the ultimate aim of knowledge is practical, I think it can be said that reason lies hidden at the root of will. I intend to discuss this later, in the chapter on will. In any case, such a distinction between systems cannot be called absolute. Again, among intellectual functions themselves, one may say that association and memory are merely relations and unities within individual consciousness, while thinking alone is supra-individual and universal. But this distinction too comes from forcibly confining the range of our experience to the individual. It fails to see that, before pure experience, there is in fact no such thing as the individual. (Will is the lesser demand of the unity of consciousness; reason is its profound demand.)

1.2.6 So far I have compared thinking with pure experience. People ordinarily think the two entirely different in kind, but I have shown that on deeper reflection we can find where they agree. Now I wish to discuss briefly the origin and the destination of thinking, and so make the relation between the two still clearer. Anyone will grant that the primitive state of our consciousness is always a state of pure experience. The same holds for the immediate state even of developed consciousness. The activity of reflective thinking arises from this secondarily. Why, then, does such an activity arise? As I said before, consciousness is originally a system, and its natural state is to develop and complete itself of its own accord. Yet in the course of that development contradictions and conflicts arise among various systems, and reflective thinking appears in such cases. But what contradicts and conflicts in this way when seen from one side is, seen from the other, at once the starting point of a still larger systematic development. In other words, it may be called an incomplete state of a greater unity. In action and in knowledge alike, our experience grows complex and various associations appear and obstruct its natural course, and then we become

reflective. This contradiction and conflict implicitly signify the possibility of unity. At the moment of decision or solution, the beginning of a greater unity is already established. Yet we by no means stop at a merely inner state of unity such as decision or solution. It goes without saying that decision is accompanied by execution, and thought too always has some practical meaning. Thought must always appear in action; that is, it must reach the unity of pure experience. So it is that the fact of pure experience is the alpha and the omega of our thought. In short, thinking is nothing but the process by which a larger system of consciousness develops and realizes itself. If we abide in a greater unity of consciousness and view it from there, thinking too is nothing but a ripple on one great intuition. For example, when we wrestle with some purpose, the purpose as a unifying consciousness is always at work behind our deliberation as an intuitive fact. Thinking, then, has no content or form different from pure experience. It is only pure experience in a state that is deep and large but incomplete. Seen from the other side, true pure experience is not merely passive. It is constructive and has a universal aspect; one may say that it contains thinking.

1.2.7 Pure experience and thinking are originally one and the same fact seen in different ways. Hegel once insisted with all his might that the essence of thinking lies not in its being abstract but in its being concrete. If that is so, thinking becomes almost identical with pure experience in the sense I have described above. One may even say that pure experience is immediately thinking. From the standpoint of concrete thinking, the universality of a concept is not, as is commonly said, something abstracted from similar properties. It is the unifying power of concrete facts. Hegel too says that the universal is the soul of the concrete (Hegel, Wissenschaft der Logik, III, S. 37). And since our pure experience is a systematic development, the unifying power at work at its base must be the very universality of the concept itself. The development of experience is immediately the progress of thinking. That is, a fact of pure experience is the so-called universal realizing itself. Even behind such things as

sensation or association, a latent unifying activity is at work. Conversely, even in thinking, at the moment the unity is at work, that unity itself is unconscious, as I said before. Only when the unity is abstracted and objectified does it appear as a separate consciousness. But by then it has already lost its unifying activity. If pure experience meant something simple or passive, it might be opposed to thinking. But if experience means knowing things just as they are, then simplicity and passivity cannot be called the state of pure experience. The truly immediate state is constructive and active.

1.2.8 We commonly think that we know the universal through thinking and the individual through experience. But there is no universal apart from individuals. The truly universal is the potential power behind individual realization. It is the power that resides within the individual and makes it develop, like the seed of a plant. If the universal were something abstracted from individuals and set against other particulars, it would not be a true universal but still a particular. In that case the universal does not stand above the particular but on the same level with it. Take a colored triangle: seen from the triangle, the color is a particular, but seen from the color, the triangle is a particular. A universal so abstract and powerless cannot be the basis of inference or synthesis. So the truly universal, which is the basis of unity in the activity of thinking, must be a potential power whose content is the same as that of individual actuality. The two differ only in that one is implicit and the other explicit. The individual is the universal determined. If we think of the relation between individual and universal in this way, the difference between thinking and experience disappears logically as well. What we call present individual experience can in fact also be seen as something midway in development. That is, it possesses a potential power that is still to be determined more finely. Even our sensations, for instance, presumably still have room for differentiation and development, and from this point of view they can also be regarded as universal. Conversely, even something universal could be called individual if we regard its develop-

ment as stopping at that point. Ordinarily only what is determined in space and time is called individual. But such determination is merely external. A true individual must be individual in its content; that is, it must possess a unique character. Where the universal reaches the extremity of its development, there is the individual. In this sense, what we commonly call sensation or perception is something universal and extremely poor in content. Something like a painter's intuition, full of deep meaning, could rather be called truly individual. To regard as individual everything that is merely material, determined in space and time, rests at bottom, I think, on a materialist dogma. From the standpoint of pure experience, experiences are to be compared by their content. Time and space are nothing but a form that unifies such contents on their basis. Perhaps one reason we think sensory impressions individual is that they are strong and clear and closely connected with feeling and will. But so-called thoughts too are by no means unconnected with feeling and will. What strongly moves feeling and will is thought especially individual, I believe, because feeling and will, compared with knowledge, are our very purposes and lie close to the culmination of development.

1.2.9 To sum up, thinking and experience are identical. We can see relative differences between them, but I believe there is no absolute distinction. Yet I do not mean by this that thinking is merely individual and subjective. As I said before, pure experience can transcend the individual. Put this way, it will sound very strange. But because experience knows time, space and the individual, it is beyond time, space and the individual. It is not that experience exists because there is an individual, but that an individual exists because there is experience. Individual experience is nothing but a small, particular range of experience, limited within experience.

CHAPTER 3: WILL

Will is a mental phenomenon distinct from the bodily action it usually aims at.

1.3.1 I now wish to discuss the nature of will from the standpoint of pure experience and to clarify the relation between knowledge and will. In most cases will aims at bodily action and is accompanied by it. But will is a mental phenomenon and is in itself distinct from external action. Action is not necessarily a requisite of will. Even if the action did not occur because of some external circumstance, the will was still will.

WE ALWAYS WILL OUR OWN STATES

To will a movement is to attend to a memory of it; will has no inner and outer.

As psychologists say, to will a movement we need only recall a past memory, that is, simply direct our attention to it. The movement follows of itself. And this movement itself, seen from pure experience, is nothing but a succession of kinesthetic sensations. Every aim of will too, seen directly, is likewise a fact within consciousness. We always will states of ourselves. In will there is no distinction between inner and outer.

1.3.2 Will is commonly thought to be some special power. In fact it is nothing but the experience of a transition from one mental image to another, and to will something is simply to direct attention to it. This can be seen most clearly in so-called involuntary actions. Even in a case like the continuous perception I spoke of earlier, the shift of attention and the progress of will coincide completely. Of course the state of attention is not limited to will; its range seems broader. But what we ordinarily call will is the state of attention directed to a system of motor representations. In other words, it is the case where this system occupies consciousness and we become purely one with it. One may think that simply attending to a representation differs from regarding it as the aim of will. But that difference is a difference

in the system to which the representation belongs. All consciousness is systematic. A representation never arises in isolation but always belongs to some system. One and the same representation becomes an object of knowledge or an aim of will depending on the system to which it belongs. When we recall a glass of water, for example, it is an object of knowledge if merely associated with external circumstances, but it becomes an aim of will when associated with our own movement. As Goethe said, "The stars we do not desire are beautiful." Nothing that does not enter the system of representations of our own movement becomes an aim of will.[6] It is an evident fact that all our desires are formed through recollecting past experience. Their characteristic features are strong feeling and a sensation of tension. The former derives from the fact that the system of motor representations rests on the instinct of life, the strongest in us. The latter is nothing other than the muscular sensation that accompanies movement. Merely recalling a movement does not yet seem to amount to willing it at once. But that is because the motor representation has not yet occupied the whole of consciousness. When we truly become purely one with it, it immediately becomes the execution of the will.

1.3.3 If so, what difference is there between the system of motor representations and the system of representations of knowledge? If we go back to the beginnings of the development of consciousness, there is no such distinction. Our organism is originally made to perform various movements for the preservation of life. Consciousness arises alongside such instinctive actions, and its primitive state is impulsive rather than perceptual. As experience accumulates, however, various associations form, and eventually two kinds of system come about: one based on the perceptual centers and one based on the motor centers. But however far the two systems have differentiated, they do not become entirely different in kind. Even pure know-

6 From Goethe's poem "Trost in Tränen" ("Consolation in Tears"): "Die Sterne, die begehrt man nicht, man freut sich ihrer Pracht" ("The stars one does not desire; one delights in their splendor").

ledge has a practical meaning somewhere, and even pure will rests on some knowledge. A concrete mental phenomenon always has both aspects. Knowledge and will are only the same phenomenon distinguished by its more prominent aspect. In short, perception is a kind of impulsive will, and will is a kind of recollection. Moreover, even memory representations of a purely intellectual kind never lack some practical meaning. Conversely, even a will that seems to arise by chance rests on some stimulus. It is also said that will mostly proceeds from within, with an aim. But in perception too we can fix an aim beforehand and direct our senses to it, and thinking in particular may be said to be entirely voluntary. Impulsive will, on the other hand, is entirely passive. Considered in this way, we must say that motor representations and representations of knowledge are not entirely different in kind, and that the distinction between will and knowledge is merely relative. The feelings of pleasure and pain and the sensation of tension that characterize will always accompany intellectual activity too, if in weaker degree. Knowledge too, viewed subjectively, can be seen as the development of an inner potential power. As I said earlier, both will and knowledge can be regarded as the systematic development of a latent something. Of course, if we think of subject and object as separate, there may be this distinction: in knowledge we make the subjective conform to the objective, whereas in will we make the objective conform to the subjective. To discuss this in detail we would need to clarify the nature and relation of subject and object. But I think that on this point too knowledge and will have something in common. In intellectual activity we first hold a hypothesis and test it against the facts. However empirical a study may be, it must always start from a hypothesis. When this hypothesis agrees with the so-called objective, we believe it true; that is, we have come to know the truth. In volitional action too, even when I have a desire, it does not at once become the execution of the will. Only when I have weighed it against objective facts and know it to be suitable and possible do I put it into practice. Can we say, then, that in the

former we wholly make the subjective conform to the objective, while in the latter we make the objective conform to the subjective? A desire can be realized only by agreeing well with the objective. The farther will moves from the objective, the less effective it becomes; the nearer it comes to it, the more effective. When we wish to carry out a lofty aim far removed from actuality, we must consider various means and advance by them step by step. To consider means in this way is precisely to seek harmony with the objective, to conform to it. If we could find no means at all, there would be nothing for it but to change the aim itself. Conversely, when the aim is very close to actuality, as in the habitual acts of eating and drinking, rising and lying down, desire immediately becomes action. In such cases it can be seen as working not from the subjective but rather from the objective.

1.3.4 Just as we cannot say that in will we wholly make the objective conform to the subjective, so we cannot say that in knowledge we make the subjective conform to the objective. When my thought has become objective truth, that is, when I know that it is a law of reality and that reality moves according to it, can I not say that I have realized my ideal? Thinking too is a kind of apperceptive activity, an inner will based on the demand for knowledge. Is not our attaining the aim of thinking a kind of realization of will? The two differ only in this: the one alters objective facts according to its own ideal, the other alters its own ideal according to objective facts. We might say that the one makes and the other discovers. Truth, it is said, is not something we are to make, but something according to which we are to think. But is what we call truth really something that exists wholly apart from the subjective? From the standpoint of pure experience, there is no objective apart from the subjective. Truth is what unifies the facts of our experience; the most powerful and comprehensive system of representations is objective truth. To know truth or to follow it means to unify our own experience, to advance from a smaller unity to a larger one. And if our true self is this unifying activity itself, then to know

truth is to follow a greater self. It is the realization of a greater self. (As Hegel said, the aim of all learning is for spirit to know itself in all things between heaven and earth.) As knowledge grows deeper, the activity of the self grows larger, and what was hitherto not-self comes to enter the system of the self. Because we always think with individual demands at the center, we feel ourselves passive in knowledge. But if we shift this conscious center and place it in the so-called demands of reason, we become active in knowledge too. As Spinoza said, knowledge is power. We always believe that we can move our body freely by calling up past motor representations. But our body too is a physical object, and in this respect it is no different from other physical objects.[7] Knowing changes in external things through sight and feeling the movements of our own body through muscular sensation are the same: if we speak of the external world, both are the external world. Why, then, can we think that our own body alone, unlike other things, is something we can freely control? We ordinarily think of a motor representation as being, on the one hand, our mental image and, on the other, a cause that produces movement in the external world. But from the standpoint of pure experience, to say that a motor representation produces a bodily movement is only to say that a certain anticipatory motor representation is immediately accompanied by kinesthetic sensations. In this respect it is the same as any anticipated change in the external world being realized. In fact, I think that in the primitive state of consciousness the movement of one's own body and the movement of external things were the same. Only as experience advanced did the two become differentiated. What occurs under various conditions came to be seen as change in the external world, and what immediately follows the anticipatory representation came to be thought of as one's own movement. But this distinction is of course not absolute. Even our own movements, if they are at all complex, cannot immediately follow the anticipatory represent-

7 The phrase "knowledge is power" is best known from Francis Bacon; Spinoza's Ethics identifies the mind's adequate knowledge with its power and freedom.

ation, and in such cases the activity of will comes markedly close to the activity of knowledge. In short, what we call change in the external world is in fact change within our world of consciousness, that is, within pure experience. And if the presence or absence of conditions is a difference of degree, then intellectual realization and volitional realization turn out, in the end, to be of the same nature. Someone may object that in voluntary movement the anticipatory representation does not merely precede the movement but is itself immediately its cause, whereas in changes in the external world the intellectual anticipatory representation is not itself the cause of the change. But causality is originally the invariable succession of phenomena of consciousness. Suppose there were an external world entirely independent of consciousness. Then in will too we could not say that the conscious anticipatory representation is immediately the cause of movement in the external world. We could say no more than that the two phenomena run parallel. Seen in this way, the relation of the volitional anticipatory representation to movement is the same as the relation of the intellectual anticipatory representation to the external world. In fact, the volitional anticipatory representation and the bodily movement do not always accompany each other; they too do so only under certain conditions.

FREEDOM OF THE WILL

Freedom means acting from one's deepest given motive, not choice by a self standing above desires.

1.3.5 Again, we commonly say that the will is free. But what does so-called freedom mean? Our desires are originally given to us; we cannot produce them freely. It is only that when we act in accordance with some given deepest motive, we feel that we were active and free. Conversely, when we act against such a motive, we feel compulsion. This is the true meaning of freedom. Freedom in this sense simply means the systematic development of consciousness, and in the same case knowledge too

can be called free. We think we can freely desire anything whatever, but that only means it is possible. Actual desire is given at the moment. When a single motive is developing, we may perhaps foresee the next desire. Otherwise we cannot even foresee what we will desire in the next moment. In short, rather than the self producing desires, the actual motive is itself the self. It is commonly said that there is a self standing aloof beyond desires, which freely determines the motives. It goes without saying that there is no such mysterious power. And if there were determination by such a transcendent self, it would be a chance determination; it could not be thought of as a free one.

1.3.6 As I have argued above, there is no absolute distinction between will and knowledge. The so-called distinction is for the most part only a dogma imposed from outside. As a fact of pure experience, there is no distinction between will and knowledge. Both are processes in which a universal something realizes itself systematically, and the culmination of its unity is at once truth and action. In a case like the continuous perception I spoke of earlier, knowledge and will are not yet divided; knowing truly is acting. Only as consciousness develops do the ideal and the factual come to be distinguished, and the subjective world and the objective world separate. Seen from one side, this is because of conflicts among various systems; seen from the other, it is in order to advance to a still greater unity. Then the idea arises that will goes from subject to object, and knowledge comes from object to subject. The distinction between knowledge and will arises when subject and object have separated and the unified state of pure experience has been lost. Desire in will and thought in knowledge are both states of disunity in which the ideal has separated from fact. A thought, too, is a kind of demand we make on objective fact. So-called truth is presumably a thought that accords with fact and can be realized. From this point of view it may be said to be the same as a desire that accords with fact and can be realized. The only difference is that the former is universal and the latter individual. Thus the realiz-

ation of will and the culmination of truth both mean reaching the unified state of pure experience from this state of disunity. That the realization of will is to be understood in this way is evident. To understand truth in the same way may need some explanation. There may be various views on what truth is, but I think that truth is what comes closest to the most concrete facts of experience. It is often said that truth is universal. If this means merely what is abstractly common, such a thing is on the contrary far from truth. The culmination of truth must be the most concrete immediate fact itself, which synthesizes its various aspects. This fact is the basis of all truth; so-called truths are abstracted and constructed from it. It is said that truth lies in unity. But that unity does not mean the unity of abstract concepts; true unity lies in this immediate fact. Complete truth is individual and actual. Therefore complete truth cannot be expressed in words, and such things as so-called scientific truth cannot be called complete truth.

1.3.7 The standard of all truth lies not outside but in our state of pure experience. To know truth is to accord with this state. Even in disciplines called abstract, such as mathematics, the principles on which they rest lie in our intuition, that is, in direct experience. Experience has various levels. As I said before, if we include the consciousness of relations in experience, even mathematical intuition is a kind of experience. If there are such various direct experiences, one may ask how we decide whether they are true or false. When two experiences are contained in a third, the question can be decided by that third experience. In any case, the conviction of truth lies in the state of direct experience, where subject and object have both vanished and there is only one actuality in heaven and earth, where we would doubt and cannot doubt. If, on the other hand, we consider the activity of will, it too means nothing but the presence of such direct experience, that is, the establishment of a unity of consciousness. The presence of a desire, like the presence of a representation, is simply a fact of direct experience. When a decision is reached after a struggle among various desires, an inner unity

has been established, just as when a judgment is reached after much deliberation. When we say that will has been realized in the external world, the most unified direct experience, which breaks through the distinction between subject and object, has become present. It is like the case in science where one's idea is proved by experiment. It may be said that unity within consciousness is free, while unity with the external world must follow nature. But even inner unity is not free; all unity is given to us. Seen from pure experience, the distinction between inner and outer is also relative. The activity of will is not simply a state of wishing. Wishing is a state of disunity of consciousness; it is rather a case where the realization of will is obstructed. Only the unity of consciousness is the state of the activity of will. Even if actuality goes against our true wishes, when we are content with it and purely one with it, actuality is the realization of will. Conversely, however perfect our circumstances, when we have various other wishes and actuality is in a state of disunity, the will is obstructed. Whether will is active or not depends on purity and impurity, that is, on unity and disunity.

1.3.8 Suppose, for example, there is a pen here. At the moment we see it there is neither knowledge nor will; there is simply one actuality. Various associations then arise concerning it, the center of consciousness shifts, and the previous consciousness is regarded as an object. At that point the previous consciousness becomes merely intellectual. Alternatively, an association may arise such as "this pen is for writing." While this association is still attached to the previous consciousness as its fringe, it is knowledge. But when this associative consciousness itself tends toward independence, that is, when the center of consciousness is about to shift to it, it becomes a state of desire. And when this associative consciousness has at last become an independent actuality, that is will; and it is at the same time what we call truly knowing the pen. Any state in which a system of consciousness is developing in actuality is what we call the activity of will. Even in thinking, where we concentrate our attention on a problem and seek its solution, there is will. Conversely, even

drinking tea or drinking sake is will, as long as it is just this actuality. But if a consciousness of tasting it emerges and becomes the center, it becomes knowledge; and this consciousness of tasting is itself, in this case, will. Will is a more fundamental system of consciousness than what is ordinarily called knowledge; it is what becomes the center of unity. The distinction between knowledge and will, I think, lies not in the content of consciousness but is determined by position within its system.

1.3.9 Reason and desire seem at first glance to conflict. In fact, I think, they have the same nature and differ only in scale and depth. What we call the demands of reason are demands for a still greater unity, that is, demands of a universal system of consciousness that transcends the individual. They can even be seen as the manifestation of a great supra-individual will. The range of consciousness is by no means confined within the so-called individual. The individual is nothing but one small system within consciousness. We ordinarily take as our center the small system whose core is bodily survival. But if we think with a still greater system of consciousness as our axis, then this greater system is the self, and its development is the realization of the self's will. Such are, for example, the ardent religious person, scholar or artist. The law of reason, "it must be thus," and the tendency of will, simply "I want it thus," look entirely different. But on deeper reflection, I think, they share the same foundation. At the root of everything we call reason or law, the unifying activity of will is at work. As Schiller and others have argued, even an axiom (axiom) originally developed out of practical use, and in the manner of its origin it does not differ from our mere wishes (Sturt, Personal Idealism, p. 92). Turning, conversely, to the tendencies of our will, they may seem lawless, yet they are of themselves governed by necessary laws (they are the unity of individual consciousness).[8] Both are laws of the development of systems of consciousness; they differ only in the

8 Schiller here is the pragmatist F. C. S. Schiller, whose essay "Axioms as Postulates" appeared in Personal Idealism (1902), edited by Henry Sturt.

range of their validity. Some distinguish will from reason on the grounds that will is blind. But whatever is an immediate fact for us cannot be explained. Even in reason, the intuitive principles at its foundation cannot be explained. To explain means to be able to include one system within another. What serves as the axis of unity cannot be explained; in that case, at any rate, it is blind.

CHAPTER 4: INTELLECTUAL INTUITION

Intellectual intuition is the intuition of the ideal, like the artist's or the religious person's.

1.4.1 What I here call intellectual intuition (intellektuelle Anschauung) is the intuition of what is called ideal, of what is ordinarily said to lie beyond experience. It is the intuiting of what would otherwise have to be known dialectically. I mean, for example, the intuition of artists and of religious people. As intuition it is the same as ordinary perception, but in its content it is far richer and more profound.

1.4.2 To some people intellectual intuition seems to be a special, mystical faculty. To others it seems a mere fancy lying entirely outside the facts of experience. I believe, however, that it and ordinary perception are of the same kind, and that no clear line can be drawn between them. Even ordinary perception, as I said before, is by no means simple. It is always constructive, and it contains ideal elements. What I am seeing now I do not see just as it is in the present. I see it explanatorily, through the power of past experience. These ideal elements are not mere associations added from outside. They are elements that constitute perception itself, and perception itself is transformed by them. The ideal elements latent at the basis of this intuition can become ever richer and more profound. They differ according to each person's natural endowment, and even in the same person according to how far experience has advanced. Things that at first could not be experienced, or that could be known only laboriously and dialectically, come to appear as

intuitive facts as experience advances. The range of this cannot be limited by taking one's own present experience as the standard. It does not follow that because I cannot do something, others cannot either. It is said that Mozart, when composing, could see even a long piece directly as a whole, like a painting or a statue. This is not merely a quantitative enlargement but a qualitative deepening. The intuition of religious people, for example, in which through our love we can attain an intuition of the oneness of self and other, has perhaps reached the summit of this. Whether someone's extraordinary intuition is mere fancy or a true intuition of reality is decided by its relation to other things, that is, by its effects. Seen from direct experience, fancy and true intuition have the same nature. They differ only in the greater or lesser range of their unity.

1.4.3 Some think that intellectual intuition differs in kind from ordinary perception because it transcends time, space and the individual and sees the true aspect of reality directly. But as I said before, from the standpoint of strict pure experience, experience is not bound by the forms of time, space, the individual and the like. On the contrary, these distinctions are themselves established by an intuition that transcends them. As for seeing reality directly: in every state of direct experience there is no distinction between subject and object, and we stand face to face with reality. This is not limited to intellectual intuition alone. Schelling's identity (Identität) is the state of direct experience. The distinction between subject and object is a relative form that arises when experience loses its unity. To regard subject and object as mutually independent realities is nothing but dogmatism. Schopenhauer's will-less pure intuition, too, is not a special faculty of genius. On the contrary, it is our most natural and unified state of consciousness, and the intuitions of an innocent, unaffected infant all belong to this kind. Intellectual intuition, then, is nothing but our state of pure experience made deeper and larger. That is, it means the manifestation of a great unity in the development of a system of consciousness. All of these are based on the manifestation of such a unity: the scholar

arriving at a new idea, the moralist at a new motive, the artist at a new ideal, and the religious person at a new awakening. (All of them, therefore, are based on mystical intuition.) If our consciousness were merely sensory in nature, it would presumably remain in the state of ordinary perceptual intuition. But the ideal spirit seeks infinite unity, and this unity is given in the form of so-called intellectual intuition. Intellectual intuition, like perception, is the most unified state of consciousness.

1.4.4 Ordinary perception is thought to be merely passive, and in the same way intellectual intuition is thought to be a state of merely passive contemplation. But true intellectual intuition is the unifying activity in pure experience itself. It is a grasp of life. It is something like the knack of a skill or, to put it more deeply, something like the spirit of art. When inspiration comes to a painter and the brush moves of itself, for example, a unifying something is at work behind a complex activity. Its changes are not unconscious changes. They are the development and completion of a single thing, and grasping this one thing is intellectual intuition. Such intuition is not found only in lofty art. It is an entirely ordinary phenomenon, seen in all our skilled actions. Ordinary psychology would probably call it mere habit or an organic function. But from the standpoint of the theory of pure experience it is in truth a state of the unity of subject and object, a fusion of knowing and willing. Thing and self forget each other. The thing does not move the self, nor does the self move the thing. There is only one world, one scene. "Intellectual intuition" sounds like a subjective activity, but in fact it is a state that transcends subject and object. One may even say that the opposition of subject and object is established through this unity. Things like the divine inspiration of art all reach this realm. Nor does intellectual intuition mean the intuition of an abstract universal detached from facts. The spirit of a painting differs from the individual things depicted, yet it does not exist apart from them. As I said earlier, the true universal and individuality are not opposed. Through individual determination the true universal can actually be expressed. Each fine cut of the

artist's knife and each stroke of the brush is there to express the true meaning of the whole.

1.4.5 If intellectual intuition is understood in this way, it is clear that it lies at the basis of thinking. Thinking is a kind of system, and at the basis of a system there must be an intuition of unity. Take a small case first. James discusses it in "The Stream of Consciousness": in the consciousness that "the pack of cards is on the table," the predicate is implicitly contained when the subject is in consciousness, and the subject is implicitly contained when the predicate is in consciousness. In short, a single intuition is at work at the basis. I think that this unifying intuition is of the same nature as the knack of a skill. To take a large case, a great intuition is at work behind all great thought, such as the philosophies of Plato and Spinoza. In thought, the intuition of genius and ordinary thinking differ only in quantity, not in quality. The former is nothing but the intuition of a new and profound unity. At the root of all relations there is intuition, and relations are established through it. However freely we let our thoughts range, we cannot go beyond the fundamental intuition, because thought is established upon it. Thought cannot be explained all the way down. At its basis there is an intuition that cannot be explained, and all proof is built upon it. At the basis of thought there always lies hidden a mystical something; even the axioms of geometry are of this kind. It is often said that thought can be explained but intuition cannot. Yet explanation means nothing more than being able to be brought back under a more fundamental intuition. This fundamental intuition of thought is, on the one hand, the basis of explanation. At the same time, it is not merely a static form of thought; on the other hand, it is the very power of thinking.

1.4.6 Just as intellectual intuition lies at the basis of thinking, it lies at the basis of the will as well. When we will something, we intuit a state of the unity of subject and object, and the will is established through this intuition. The progress of the will is the development and completion of this intuitive unity. This intuition is at work at its basis from beginning to end, and the point

at which it is completed is the realization of the will. We think that the self is active in willing because of this intuition. There is no self apart from it; the true self is this unifying intuition. The ancients said, "acting all day, yet not acting." Seen from this intuition, one can indeed say that there is stillness within movement, that one does and yet does not do. This intuition transcends knowing and willing and yet is the root of both, and in it one can also find the unity of knowing and willing.

1.4.7 True religious awakening is neither abstract knowledge based on thinking nor merely blind feeling. It is to grasp for oneself the profound unity that lies at the basis of knowledge and will. That is, it is a kind of intellectual intuition, a grasp of deep life. Therefore no blade of logic can be turned against it, and no desire can move it. It is the root of all truth and all satisfaction. Its forms may be various, but I think that at the root of every religion there must be this fundamental intuition. At the root of learning and morality there must be religion, and learning and morality are established through it.

Part II: Reality

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Doubting to the point of the indubitable: the phenomena of consciousness as the only reality, its unifying power, nature and spirit, and God as the ground of reality.

CHAPTER 1: THE STARTING POINT OF THE INQUIRY

2.1.1 There is a philosophical view of the world and of human life, which says that the world is like this and life is like this. There are also the practical demands of morality and religion, which say that human beings must act thus and must find peace of mind in such a place. The two are closely connected. People cannot be satisfied with intellectual convictions and practical demands that are incompatible. For example, someone with lofty spiritual demands cannot be satisfied with materialism. Someone who believes in materialism, before long, comes to harbor doubts about lofty spiritual demands.

TRUTH IS ONE

Before asking how to live, we must make clear what true reality is.

Truth is, in its very nature, one. Truth in knowledge must be at once truth in practice, and truth in practice must be at once truth in knowledge. Anyone who thinks deeply, anyone who is sincere, will inevitably come to seek agreement between knowledge on the one hand and feeling and will on the other. Before we discuss what we ought to do and where we ought to find peace of mind, we must first make clear what the true aspect of heaven and earth and of human life is, and what true reality is.

2.1.2 Philosophy and religion agreed most closely in the philosophy and religion of India. In Indian philosophy and religion, knowledge is the good and delusion is evil. The fundamental substance of the universe is Brahman, and Brahman is our mind, that is, Ātman. To know that Brahman is Ātman was the deepest secret of philosophy and religion.[1] Christianity was at first entirely practical. But the demand of the human mind for intellectual satisfaction was hard to suppress, and eventually what is called the Christian philosophy of the Middle Ages developed. In Chinese ethics the philosophical side was very poorly developed, but thought from the Song dynasty onward shows this tendency strongly. All these facts prove that at the root of the human mind there is a deep demand for agreement between knowledge and feeling and will.[2] The development of European thought shows the same. In ancient philosophy, beginning with Socrates and Plato, the aim of moral instruction was primary. In modern times knowledge made especially rapid progress, and as it did, the unity of knowledge with feeling and will became difficult and the two sides tended to separate. But this does not accord with the original demand of the human mind.

DOUBTING ALL THAT CAN BE DOUBTED

We must discard every assumption and start from direct knowledge that cannot be doubted.

2.1.3 Now if we wish to understand true reality and to know the true face of heaven and earth and of human life, we must doubt all that can be doubted and discard every artificial assumption. We must then set out from direct knowledge, knowledge that can no longer be doubted however we try to doubt it. Our common sense holds that things exist in an external world apart

1 In the Upaniṣads, Brahman is the absolute ground of the universe and Ātman the innermost self; their identity is the core teaching of the Vedānta.

2 The Song dynasty (960–1279) saw the rise of Neo-Confucian metaphysics (Zhu Xi and others).

from consciousness. It also holds that behind consciousness there is something called the mind, which performs various functions. This view also underlies everyone's conduct. But the independent existence of things and of mind is merely something we have assumed because of the demands of our thinking, and there is ample room to doubt it if one cares to. Besides this, the sciences and the like are built upon some hypothetical knowledge; they do not aim at the deepest explanation of reality. And even among philosophies that do aim at it, many are not sufficiently critical. They take the received assumptions as their foundation and do not doubt deeply.

2.1.4 The independent existence of things and mind is thought to be an intuitive fact, but a little reflection shows at once that it is not. What is this desk in front of me? Its color and shape are sensations of the eye, and the resistance I feel when I touch it is a sensation of the hand. Even with such things as a thing's shape, size, position and motion, what we intuit is never the objective state of the thing itself. To intuit the thing itself apart from our consciousness is utterly impossible. The same holds when we look at our own mind itself. What we know are the activities of knowing, feeling and willing, not the mind itself. We think there is an identical self that is constantly active. From the standpoint of psychology, however, this is nothing but a continuity of the same sensations and feelings. The things and the mind that we take to be intuitive facts are merely constant combinations of similar phenomena of consciousness. What makes us believe in the existence of things and mind themselves is only the demand of the law of causality. But whether the law of causality really allows us to infer an existence outside consciousness is the question that must first be investigated.

2.1.5 Then what is the direct knowledge that cannot be doubted, however we try to doubt it? It is only knowledge of the facts of our intuitive experience, that is, of phenomena of consciousness. A present phenomenon of consciousness and our being conscious of it are directly one and the same, and between them subject and object cannot be divided. There is not a hair's

breadth of gap between fact and cognition. Here it is truly impossible to doubt. Of course, even with phenomena of consciousness, we may fall into error when we judge them or recall them. But then it is no longer intuition; it is inference. The later consciousness and the earlier consciousness are different phenomena of consciousness. Intuition does not mean regarding the later consciousness as a judgment about the earlier. It simply knows the fact just as it is, and to speak of its being mistaken or not mistaken is meaningless. Such intuitive experience must be the foundation on which all our knowledge is built.

2.1.6 Whenever philosophy has shaken off inherited assumptions and sought a new and firm foundation, it has always returned to such direct knowledge. This is why, at the beginning of modern philosophy, Bacon took experience as the basis of all knowledge. It is also why Descartes took as his basis the proposition "I think, therefore I am" (cogito ergo sum) and held as true whatever was as clear as it. But what Bacon called experience was not pure experience. It was experience accompanied by the dogma that through it we can intuit facts outside consciousness. Descartes' "I think, therefore I am" is already not a fact of direct experience, since it already infers that "I am." And to hold that clear thinking can know the substance of things is dogmatism. In philosophy after Kant, these claims can no longer simply be accepted as indubitable truths. What I here call direct knowledge discards all such dogmas and merely acknowledges facts as intuitive facts. (Of course, Hegel and various historians of philosophy have said that Descartes' "I think, therefore I am" is not an inference but an expression of the intuitive certainty in which reality and thought are one. If it is taken that way, it is the same as my starting point.)

2.1.7 Some people do not take the intuition of facts in consciousness, that is, the facts of direct experience, as the starting point of all knowledge. Instead they take thinking as the most certain standard. They distinguish the true aspect of things from their apparent aspect. They say that the facts we experience intuitively are mere appearance, and that the true aspect can be

made clear only through the activity of thinking. Of course, among these, common sense and science do not reject intuitive experience entirely. But they take one kind of empirical fact as the truth of things and another kind as false. For example, they say that the sun, moon and stars look small but are in fact enormous, or that the heavenly bodies seem to move but in fact it is the earth that moves. Such views arise from measuring empirical facts that arise under one set of conditions against empirical facts that arise under another. Under its own conditions, each is an unshakable fact. They are equally intuitive facts, so why should one be true and the other false? Such views arise, in the end, because touch is more general than the other senses and the most important in practical life, so that what comes from this sense is taken as the true aspect of things. A little reflection makes it clear at once that this view is not consistent. A certain school of philosophers goes further than this. It regards empirical facts as entirely mere appearance and maintains that the substance of things can be known only through thinking. But even supposing there were a transempirical reality that we cannot experience, how could such a thing be known through thinking? No one can deny that our activity of thinking, too, is a kind of phenomenon of consciousness arising in consciousness. If our empirical facts cannot know the substance of things, then thinking, which is the same kind of phenomenon, should not be able to know it either. Some take the universality and necessity of thinking as the standard for knowing true reality. But these properties, too, are in the end a kind of feeling that we intuit in our own consciousness, and so they too are facts of consciousness.

2.1.8 The view that all our sensory knowledge is mistaken and that only thinking can know the true aspect of things began with the Eleatic school and reached its peak in Plato. In modern philosophy, the Cartesians all believed that the true aspect of reality could be known through clear and distinct thinking.[3]

3 The Eleatics (Parmenides, Zeno of Elea, fifth century BC) held that the senses deceive and only reason grasps what truly is.

2.1.9 Thinking and intuition are thought to be entirely different activities, but taken simply as facts of consciousness they are activities of the same kind. Intuition or experience is thought to be a purely passive activity that perceives individual things as they are, without relation to others. Thinking, by contrast, is thought to be an active operation that compares and judges things and determines their relations. But among actual activities of consciousness there is no such thing as a wholly passive activity. Intuition is itself a direct judgment. When I spoke earlier of intuition as the starting point of knowledge free of assumptions, I used the word in this sense.

2.1.10 What I have so far called intuition does not refer only to such activities as sensation. At the basis of thinking, too, there is always a unifying something. This is something to be intuited, and judgment arises from analyzing it.

CHAPTER 2: PHENOMENA OF CONSCIOUSNESS ARE THE ONLY REALITY

Reality is nothing but the facts of direct experience; everything else is an assumption of thinking.

2.2.1 If we rest on direct knowledge that posits not the slightest assumption, reality is nothing but our phenomena of consciousness, that is, the facts of direct experience. Any other reality is merely an assumption that has arisen from the demands of thinking. The activity of thinking never leaves the domain of phenomena of consciousness, so it goes without saying that it has no mystical faculty for intuiting a reality beyond experience. These assumptions are, in short, abstract concepts that arose as thinking organized the facts of direct experience into a system.

2.2.2 One view is thoroughly critical: it seeks to exclude all dogma and to set out from the most indubitable direct knowledge. Another view assumes a reality beyond the facts of direct experience. These two simply cannot coexist. Even great philosophers such as Locke and Kant did not escape the contradiction between these two principles. I now intend to discard all hypo-

thetical thought and adhere strictly to the former principle. In the history of philosophy, I take Berkeley and Fichte to be among those who adopted it.

2.2.3 Ordinarily our phenomena of consciousness are thought to be a kind of phenomenon in the physical world that accompanies, in particular, the nervous systems of animals. But a little reflection shows that the primary fact most immediate to us is phenomena of consciousness, not physical phenomena. Our body, too, is nothing but a part of our own phenomena of consciousness. It is not that consciousness is in the body. On the contrary, the body is in our own consciousness. To say that phenomena of consciousness accompany stimulation of the nerve centers is merely to say that one kind of phenomenon of consciousness always arises together with another kind. Suppose we could know the phenomena in our own brain directly. The relation between so-called phenomena of consciousness and stimulation in the brain would then be exactly like this: what the ear senses as sound, the eye or the hand senses as the vibration of a string.

2.2.4 We think there are two kinds of empirical fact, phenomena of consciousness and physical phenomena, but in truth there is only one kind: phenomena of consciousness alone. What we call physical phenomena are nothing but what has been abstracted from among these as common to everyone and as having constant relations.

2.2.5 Again, it is ordinarily thought that the substance of things, endowed with certain definite properties, exists independently outside consciousness, and that phenomena of consciousness are merely phenomena arising on that basis. But what is a thing that is independent and fixed outside consciousness? Strictly apart from phenomena of consciousness, we cannot imagine the properties of the thing itself. We can only call it an unknowable something that produces definite phenomena under certain definite conditions. That is, it is merely something imagined because of the demands of our thinking. Why, then, must thinking assume the existence of such a thing? Only because similar

phenomena of consciousness always arise in combination. This is the true meaning of what we call a thing. Seen from pure experience, the constant combination of phenomena of consciousness is the fundamental fact, and the existence of things is merely an assumption set up for the sake of explanation.

2.2.6 The so-called materialists regard the existence of things as an indubitable, directly self-evident fact, and try to explain even mental phenomena by it. But a little thought shows that this turns root and branch upside down.

2.2.7 So if we think strictly from pure experience, there are no independent, self-sufficient facts apart from our phenomena of consciousness. Truly, as Berkeley said, to be is to be perceived (esse = percipi). Our world is built up out of the facts of phenomena of consciousness, and the various philosophies and sciences are all nothing but explanations of these facts.

2.2.8 My use of the term "phenomena of consciousness" here may give rise to misunderstanding. It may be taken to mean that spirit alone exists, separated from matter. What I really mean is that true reality is something that can be called neither phenomena of consciousness nor physical phenomena. Nor does Berkeley's "to be is to be perceived" fit what I really mean. Direct reality is not something passive; it is independent, self-sufficient activity. It would be better to say: to be is to be active.

2.2.9 Deep reflection inevitably leads us to the view stated above. Yet at first sight it differs greatly from our common sense. Moreover, when we try to explain the phenomena of the universe by it, we meet with various difficult problems. I think, however, that these difficulties mostly arise not so much from strictly keeping to the standpoint of pure experience as from the dogmas added on top of pure experience.

2.2.10 One such difficulty is this. If we take phenomena of consciousness alone as reality, do we not fall into solipsism, the view that the whole world is my own idea? And even if we do not, if each person's consciousness is an independent reality, how can we explain the relations between them? But to say that consciousness must always be someone's consciousness means

merely that consciousness must always have unity. If one thinks, beyond this, that there must be an owner, that is clearly dogmatism. Now this unifying activity, that is, apperception, is nothing more than similar ideas and feelings becoming a center that unifies consciousness. Seen from the standpoint of pure experience, the range of this unity of consciousness cannot make an absolute division between self and other. In individual consciousness, yesterday's consciousness and today's are independent consciousnesses. Yet they can be thought of as one consciousness because they belong to the same system. If this is so, we should be able to find the same relation between one's own consciousness and the consciousness of others.

2.2.11 The contents of our thoughts and feelings are all universal. Even across thousands of years and thousands of miles, thoughts and feelings can pass from one person to another. Mathematical truths, for example, are the same whoever thinks them, whenever and wherever. So a great person influences many people, makes them into one body, and governs them with the same spirit. In such a case the spirits of these people can be regarded as one.

2.2.12 Next, taking phenomena of consciousness as the sole reality raises another puzzle of interpretation. Our phenomena of consciousness are not fixed things but a succession of constantly changing events. So where do these phenomena come from, and where do they go? But this question, too, arises in the end from the demand of the law of causality that things must have causes and effects. Before considering it, therefore, we must first examine what the demand of the law of causality is. Ordinarily the law of causality is thought to demand outright the existence of fixed things in themselves behind phenomena, but that is a mistake. The proper meaning of the law of causality is, as Hume said, only that whenever a phenomenon arises there must always be a certain phenomenon that precedes it. It does not demand the existence of things beyond phenomena. That one phenomenon gives rise to another does not mean that the one was contained within the other. Nor does it mean that it lay

hidden somewhere outside and is drawn out. It means only that when sufficient conditions, that is, a cause, are present, a certain phenomenon, that is, an effect, necessarily arises. While the conditions are not yet complete, the phenomenon that would accompany them, the effect, exists nowhere. For example, before one strikes a stone and makes fire, the fire is nowhere at all. Some may say that there is a power to produce it. But as I said before, power and things are assumptions set up for the sake of explanation. In what we know directly, there is only a certain phenomenon entirely different from fire. So the fundamental fact directly given to us is that one phenomenon is accompanied by another, and the demand of the law of causality itself arose on the basis of this fact. Yet some think that this fact and the law of causality contradict each other, and in the end this comes from misunderstanding the law of causality.

2.2.13 The law of causality is a habit of thinking that arose on the basis of the changes in our phenomena of consciousness. This can be seen from the fact that it falls at once into self-contradiction when we try to explain the whole universe by it. The law of causality demands that the world must have a beginning. But if we fix a beginning somewhere, the law of causality asks further what its cause is. That is, it makes its own incompleteness plain.

2.2.14 Finally, let me say a word about the causal notion that being does not arise from nothing. Even when we say, in the ordinary sense, that there is nothing, the consciousness of nothing is still real when seen from an intuition that has broken through the distinction between subject and object. Suppose we take "nothing" not merely as a word and give it some concrete meaning. On the one hand it means the lack of some quality. On the other hand, it has some positive quality. (In psychology, for example, black too is a kind of sensation.) So consider what in the physical world seems to be the arising of being from nothing. Seen as a fact of consciousness, the nothing in it is not true nothing; it can be regarded as a moment in the development of consciousness. What, then, of consciousness itself? Can being

arise from nothing in consciousness? Consciousness is not something that stands under the quantitative determinations of time, place and force, and so it is not subject to the mechanical law of causality. On the contrary, these forms are established on the basis of the unity of consciousness. In consciousness everything is qualitative, and a latent one develops itself. Consciousness is what Hegel calls the infinite (das Unendliche).

2.2.15 Even a single color sensation here can be said to contain infinite variation. As our consciousness becomes more refined, we come to sense infinite variation even within one color. The distinctions among our sensations today have presumably come about through such differentiation. Wundt arranges the qualities of sensation along dimensions (Wundt, Grundriss der Psychologie, §5). I think such a system exists because the qualities originally came about through the differentiation of a single universal.

CHAPTER 3: THE TRUE FEATURES OF REALITY

Direct reality is pure activity with no division of subject and object or of knowledge, feeling and will.

2.3.1 What is the direct reality to which we have not yet added the artifice of thinking? In other words, what is a fact of pure experience in the true sense? At this point there is not yet any opposition between subject and object, nor any separation of knowledge, feeling and will. There is only pure activity, independent and self-complete.

2.3.2 Intellectualist psychologists take sensations and ideas to be the elements of mental phenomena, and hold that all mental phenomena are made up of combinations of these. On that view, we would have to say that a fact of pure experience is the most passive state of consciousness, namely sensation. But such a view confuses what has been produced as the result of scholarly analysis with the facts of direct experience. Among the facts of

our direct experience there is no such thing as pure sensation.[4] What we call pure sensation is already a simple perception. And perception, however simple, is never entirely passive. It always contains active, that is, constructive elements (this is clear even from the example of spatial perception). This side becomes clearer still when we come to complex intellectual operations such as association and thinking. It is commonly said that association is passive. Yet even in association, what fixes the direction in which ideas combine is not external circumstances alone. It depends on the inner nature of consciousness. Between association and thinking there is only a difference of degree. Dividing our phenomena of consciousness into knowledge, feeling and will is, after all, a matter of scholarly convenience. In actuality there are not three kinds of phenomena. Every phenomenon of consciousness has all three aspects (even a purely intellectual operation such as scholarly research, for example, can never exist apart from feeling and will). Yet of these three aspects, will is the most fundamental form. As voluntarist psychologists say, our consciousness is active from beginning to end: it begins with impulse and ends with will. So even the most immediate phenomena of consciousness, however simple, take the form of will. We must say, then, that will is the fact of pure experience.

2.3.3 Psychology until now has been mainly intellectualist, but recently voluntarism has gradually come to prevail. Wundt is its leading figure. Consciousness, however simple, is always constructive. Contrast of contents is one of the conditions for consciousness to come into being. If there were a truly simple consciousness, it would at once become unconsciousness.

4 Intellectualism treats cognition (sensations and ideas) as the basis of mental life; voluntarism, represented by Wundt, treats the will as basic.

LOST IN MUSIC

Absorbed in music, we forget self and things; the hearer and the vibrating air come only with reflection.

2.3.4 In pure experience there is not yet any separation of knowledge, feeling and will; there is a single activity. In the same way, there is not yet any opposition of subjectivity and objectivity. The opposition of subject and object arises from the demands of our thinking. It is not a fact of direct experience. In direct experience there is only one independent, self-complete fact: there is neither a seeing subject nor a seen object. When our mind is captured by exquisite music, we forget both self and things, and heaven and earth are nothing but a single clear, ringing sound. Just so, in this instant, what is called true reality is present before us. The thought that this is a vibration of the air, or that I am the one hearing it, arises when we step back from this true scene of reality and reflect and think. At that moment we have already left true reality behind.

2.3.5 Ordinarily we think of subject and object as realities that can each exist independently, and suppose that phenomena of consciousness arise through the action of the two. Accordingly we think there are two realities, spirit and matter. But this is entirely mistaken. Subject and object are different ways of viewing a single fact. The distinction between spirit and matter also arises from such ways of viewing; it is not a distinction in the fact itself. The flower as a fact is never the purely material flower the physical scientist speaks of. It is a flower that is beautiful and lovable, with its color, shape and fragrance. Heine, gazing up at the stars on a still night, called them golden tacks in the azure sky. An astronomer would no doubt laugh this off as a poet's babble, yet the true aspect of the stars may be revealed precisely in this one phrase.[5]

2.3.6 True reality of this kind is independent and self-complete, and in it subject and object are not yet divided. It unites know-

ledge, feeling and will in one. True reality is not, as is commonly thought, an object of cool, detached knowledge. It is made up of our feeling and will. It is not mere existence but something that has meaning. So if we stripped our feeling and will away from this actual world, it would no longer be a concrete fact. It would be merely an abstract concept. The world as the physicist describes it does not actually exist, any more than a line without breadth or a plane without thickness. Seen from this point, the artist comes nearer to the true features of reality than the scholar. Everything we see and hear contains our individuality. Even what we call the same consciousness is never truly the same. Even when we see the same cow, for example, the mental image must differ for each viewer, whether a farmer, a zoologist or an artist. The same landscape may look vivid and beautiful, or gloomy and sad, according to one's mood. Buddhism and other teachings say that this world becomes heaven or hell depending on one's state of mind. In the same way, our world is, in the end, built on the basis of our feeling and will. However much we call it an objective world, an object of pure knowledge, it cannot escape this relation.

2.3.7 We think that the world seen scientifically is the most objective, and that it contains no element of our feeling and will. But scholarship, too, arose in the first place from the practical demands of our struggle for existence. It is by no means a way of seeing wholly detached from the demands of feeling and will. In particular, as Jerusalem and others say, the fundamental principle of the scientific view is the idea that there are forces in the external world acting in various ways. This idea must be regarded as an analogy drawn from our own will (Jerusalem, Einleitung in die Philosophie, 6. Aufl. §27). That is why, in remote antiquity, all explanations of the myriad phenomena

5 Heinrich Heine (1797–1856), German poet. The image of the stars as golden nails or tacks in the blue of the sky comes from his verse.

were anthropomorphic. Today's scientific explanation developed out of these.[6]

2.3.8 Because we take the distinction between subject and object to be fundamental, we think that only knowledge contains objective elements, while feeling and will are entirely individual, subjective occurrences of our own. This view is mistaken in its very basic assumption. But suppose that phenomena do arise from the interaction of subject and object. Even then, the contents of knowledge, such as color and shape, are subjective if regarded as subjective and individual if regarded as individual. Conversely, feeling and will also have an objective basis if the external world has properties that arouse such feeling and will. It is a mistake to say that feeling and will are entirely individual. Our feelings and wills can pass between us and be felt by one another. That is, they contain supra-individual elements.

2.3.9 We think there is an individual who gives rise to the feelings and desires of joy, anger, love and craving. That is why the idea also arises that feeling and will are purely individual. But it is not that a person has feeling and will. Rather, feeling and will make the individual. Feeling and will are facts of direct experience.

2.3.10 Anthropomorphic explanation of the myriad phenomena was the way people explained things in remote antiquity, and it is still the way pure, innocent children explain them today. So-called scientists will surely all laugh it off. Of course this way of explaining is childish, but seen from one side it is a true explanation of reality. The scientist's way of explaining leans one-sidedly toward knowledge alone. A complete explanation of reality must satisfy the demands of knowledge, but it must not leave the demands of feeling and will out of account.

2.3.11 For the Greeks, all nature was living nature. Thunder and lightning were the wrath of Zeus atop Mount Olympus, and the cuckoo's cry was Philomela's age-old lament (see Schiller, Die Götter Griechenlands). To the unaffected eyes of the Greeks, the

6 Wilhelm Jerusalem (1854–1923), Austrian philosopher and educationist. His *Einleitung in die Philosophie* (Introduction to Philosophy) was a widely used textbook.

true meaning of what was before them appeared just as it was. Today's art, religion and philosophy all strive to express this true meaning.[7]

CHAPTER 4: TRUE REALITY ALWAYS HAS THE SAME FORM

Every reality appears first as an implicit whole, then differentiates, develops and completes itself.

2.4.1 As I said above, the state of consciousness in which subject and object have vanished, and knowledge, feeling and will are one, is true reality. When we call to mind independent, self-complete true reality, it naturally appears in this form. We can only grasp this true scene of reality for ourselves. It is probably not something that can be reflected upon, analyzed or put into words. Yet our various kinds of differentiated knowledge arise from reflecting on this reality. So I now intend to consider the form in which this sole reality comes into being, and to make clear how the various distinctions arise from it.

2.4.2 Genuine reality, like the true meaning of art, cannot be passed from one person to another. All that can be passed on is an abstract, empty shell. We believe that the same words make us understand the same thing, but the content always differs more or less.

2.4.3 When we consider the way in which independent, self-complete true reality comes into being, we find that it always comes into being through the same form, namely the following. First the whole appears implicitly (implicit). From it its content differentiates and develops. And when this differentiation and development is finished, the whole of reality is actualized and completed. In a word, one thing develops and completes itself by itself. This way of coming into being can be seen most clearly in our active operations of consciousness. Take will. First there is an idea of a goal. From it, according to circumstances, ideas fit

7 Friedrich Schiller's poem "The Gods of Greece" (1788) laments a nature emptied of its gods. In the Greek myth Philomela became a nightingale. Nishida names the *hototogisu*, the lesser cuckoo, a bird of plaintive song in Japanese poetry.

for realizing the goal are systematically organized. When this organization is complete it becomes action. The goal is then realized, and the operation of the will comes to an end. This holds not only for the operation of the will but also for thinking, imagination and the like, the so-called operations of knowledge. Here too there is first an idea of a goal. From it various associations of ideas arise, and when the right combination of ideas has been reached, the operation is completed.

2.4.4 As James said in "The Stream of Consciousness," all consciousness takes the form described above. Suppose, for example, that we call a sentence to mind. When its subject appears in consciousness, it already implicitly contains the whole sentence. But only when the predicate appears is that content developed and realized.

2.4.5 In developed phenomena of consciousness such as will, thinking and imagination, the above form is clear. In perception, impulse and the like, however, the whole seems at first glance to be realized at once, without passing through this process. But as I said before, consciousness is never simple and passive, in any case. It is active and compound, and it always comes into being through the above form. As voluntarism says, will is the original form of all consciousness. So we must say that all consciousness, however simple, comes into being through the same form as will.

2.4.6 The distinction between impulse and perception on the one hand, and will and thinking on the other, is a difference of degree, not of kind. The process that is unconscious in the former shows itself in consciousness in the latter. So, reasoning from the latter, we know that the former must have the same structure. If we consider our perception in terms of how it develops, it too has arisen as the result of various experiences. When we listen to music, for example, at first it makes no impression on us at all, but as our ears gradually grow used to it, we come to have clear perceptions within it. We may well say that perception is a kind of thinking.

2.4.7 Next I must say a word about the misunderstandings that arise from the distinction between passive and active consciousness. In active consciousness the above form is clear. In passive consciousness, however, what combines the ideas seems to lie outside. The ideas seem to be combined merely by external circumstances, and it does not seem that some whole develops and completes itself from within. But our consciousness cannot be sharply divided into the passive and the active. This, too, is ultimately a difference of degree. Even operations of consciousness such as association or memory are not wholly governed by external circumstances, such as the so-called laws of association. Each person's inner nature is their main driving force. Here too we can see a unifying something developing from within. The only difference is this. In so-called active consciousness, this unifying something rises clearly into consciousness as an idea. In passive consciousness it works either unconsciously or as a kind of feeling.

2.4.8 The distinction between active and passive comes from thinking. We say that the spirit acts from within or is acted upon from without because thinking has assumed that spirit and matter exist independently, and holds that phenomena of consciousness arise from the action of spirit and external things on each other. It is not a distinction in the facts of pure experience. In the facts of pure experience it is merely a difference of degree. When we have a clear idea of a goal, we are thought to be active.

2.4.9 According to the empiricist school, all our consciousness develops through the action of external things. But however much external things may act, no phenomenon of consciousness could arise unless there were within a pre-existing nature that responds to them. In the same way, however much one cultivates from outside, no plant will sprout if the seed has no power to germinate. Of course one could say the reverse: a seed alone will not make a plant sprout either. In short, each side looks at one aspect and forgets the other. The activity of true reality is the self-unfolding of a single thing. The distinctions of

inner and outer, of active and passive, are constructed by thinking in order to explain it.

2.4.10 I believe it is not so difficult to think that all phenomena of consciousness come into being through the same form. But it may seem extremely difficult to go a step further and place under the same form even the events of the natural world, which we ordinarily call phenomena of the external world. Yet as I said before, something like a purely material world apart from consciousness is an abstract concept. True reality is nothing other than phenomena of consciousness. We can say that the true reality of direct experience always comes into being through the same form.

2.4.11 Ordinarily we think that fixed material objects exist as facts. But facts in actuality are always events. As the Greek philosopher Heraclitus said, "All things flow and nothing stands still" (Alles fliesst und nichts hat Bestand): reality is a succession of events that flow on and do not stay still for a moment.[8]

2.4.12 What we call the objective world in the external world, too, is nothing other than our phenomena of consciousness. It too is unified by a certain kind of unifying operation. Only when these phenomena are universal, that is, when they keep a unity beyond the small consciousness of the individual, do we regard them as an objective world independent of us. For example, I see a lamp here. If only I could see it, I might think it a subjective hallucination. It becomes an objective fact only because everyone alike recognizes it. The objective, independent world arises from this universal character.

CHAPTER 5: THE FUNDAMENTAL MODE OF TRUE REALITY

Behind all reality a unifying something works through opposition and contradiction.

2.5.1 The facts we experience seem to be of many kinds. But a little reflection shows that they are all the same reality, coming

8 Heraclitus of Ephesus (fl. c. 500 BC), Greek philosopher of flux and of the unity of opposites. Nishida quotes the saying in German.

into being in the same way. Let me now discuss this fundamental mode of all reality.

2.5.2 First, we must recognize that a unifying something is at work behind all reality. Some scholars think that truly simple, independent elements, such as the atoms of the atomists, are the fundamental reality. But such elements are abstract concepts set up for the sake of explanation; they cannot exist in fact. Consider: if there is an atom here, it must have some property or action. Something with no property or action at all is the same as nothing. Yet for one thing to act, it must always act upon another thing. And for this there must be a third that connects the two and lets them act on each other. For the motion of body A to be passed on to body B, for example, there must be something called force between the two bodies. It is the same with properties: for one property to come into being, it must always come into being in relation to another. If the only color were red, for example, the color red could not appear at all. For red to appear, there must be colors that are not red. And for one property to be compared with and distinguished from another, the two properties must be the same at their base. Things wholly different in kind, with no point in common, cannot be compared or distinguished. If, then, all things come into being through opposition, a unifying something must always lie hidden at their base.

2.5.3 In physical phenomena this unifying something is taken to be a material force existing in the external world. In mental phenomena it is ascribed to the unifying power of consciousness. But as I said before, physical and mental phenomena are the same in pure experience. So these two kinds of unifying operation must originally belong to the same kind. The unifying power at the base of our thinking and will and the unifying power at the base of the phenomena of the universe are directly the same. Our laws of logic and mathematics, for example, are directly the principles by which the phenomena of the universe can come into being.

2.5.4 For reality to come into being, as I have said, unity is needed at its base. At the same time, mutual opposition, or rather contradiction, is needed. Heraclitus said that strife is the father of all things. Just so, reality comes into being through contradiction. A red thing exists in opposition to colors that are not red, and what acts exists in opposition to what receives its action. When this contradiction vanishes, reality too disappears. In fact, contradiction and unity are merely the same matter seen from two sides. Because there is unity there is contradiction, and because there is contradiction there is unity. Take white and black, for example. Things that are alike in every respect and differ in only one are the most opposed to each other. By contrast, things such as virtue and a triangle, which have no clear opposition, have no clear unity either. The most powerful reality is the one that best harmonizes and unifies various contradictions.

2.5.5 Thinking of what unifies and what is unified as separate is due to abstract thinking. In concrete reality the two cannot be separated. A tree exists as the unity of its parts, branches, leaves, roots and trunk, which carry out various different functions. But a tree is not merely a collection of branches, leaves, roots and trunk. Without the unifying power of the tree as a whole, branches, leaves, roots and trunk would be meaningless. The tree exists on the basis of the opposition and the unity of its parts.

2.5.6 When the unifying power and what is unified are separated, there is no reality. When a person piles up stones, for example, the stones and the person are separate things. In such a case the pile of stones is artificial; it does not become a single independent reality.

2.5.7 So the fundamental mode of reality is one and at the same time many, many and at the same time one. It contains distinction within sameness and sameness within distinction. And since these two aspects cannot be separated, we can say that it is, in the end, the self-development of a single thing. Independ-

ent, self-complete true reality always has this mode. Whatever lacks it is merely an abstract concept of ours.

2.5.8 Reality forms a system by itself. It is through this character that it makes us believe in it as certain reality. By contrast, things that do not form a system, such as dreams, we do not believe to be real.

2.5.9 Reality that is truly one and many in this way must be self-moving and ceaseless. A state of rest is a state of solitary existence, not opposed to anything else. It is a state of oneness that excludes the many. But reality cannot come into being in such a state. If some one state has come into being through unity, another state opposed to it must at once have come into being as well. As soon as one unity is established, a disunity that breaks it comes into being. True reality comes into being through such infinite oppositions. Physicists speak of the conservation of energy and the like as though reality had a limit. But this is a hypothesis set up for convenience of explanation. Such a view is just like saying that space has a limit: it looks abstractly at one side only and forgets the other.

2.5.10 Every living thing contains infinite oppositions. That is, it has the ability to produce infinite change. Spirit is called a living thing because it always holds infinite oppositions within it and never comes to a halt. If it became fixed in one state and could no longer move on to another opposition, it would be a dead thing.

2.5.11 I have said that reality comes into being through what opposes it. But this opposition does not come from elsewhere; it arises from within itself. As I said before, there is unity at the base of opposition. The infinite oppositions all develop as necessary consequences of its own inner nature. True reality is a free development that arises from the inner necessity of a single thing. For example, various geometrical figures arise through the delimitation of space, and these figures stand opposed to one another and keep their own particular properties. Yet they are not opposed to one another each on its own. They are bound together by the necessary nature of the one thing called space.

They are the infinite development of the nature of space. It is the same if we look at what we call natural phenomena. As I said before, actual natural phenomena are not made up of separate, independent elements, nor do they exist apart from our phenomena of consciousness. They too come into being through a single unifying operation, and should be regarded as the development of a single nature.

2.5.12 Hegel said that whatever is rational is real, and that the real is always rational. This statement has met with various objections, but seen in a certain way it is an unshakable truth. No phenomenon of the universe, however trifling, arises by chance with no relation at all to what comes before and after. It always arises with a reason for its arising. That we see it as chance comes merely from a lack of knowledge.[9]

2.5.13 Ordinarily we think there is some agent of activity, and that activity arises from it. But seen from direct experience, activity itself is reality. The so-called agent is an abstract concept. Such a view arises because we think of the opposition between unity and its content as though the two were mutually independent realities.

CHAPTER 6: THE SOLE REALITY

The universe is the single activity of one reality, linking past and present and self and others.

2.6.1 Reality, as I said before, is the activity of consciousness. And according to the usual interpretation, the activity of consciousness appears from moment to moment and quickly passes away; the same activity cannot continue forever. If so, consider the experience of our own lives on a small scale, and on a large scale the development of the universe up to the present day. Are these facts in the end like illusions and dreams, fragmented and incoherent, with no unifying basis among them? In answer to such a question, I intend to explain that reality comes into being

9 From the preface to Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (1821): "What is rational is actual, and what is actual is rational."

through mutual relations, and that the universe is the single activity of the sole reality.

2.6.2 I think I have more or less explained that, within a certain range, the activity of consciousness comes into being through unity. Yet many people do not believe that such unity exists beyond that range. Some think, for example, that yesterday's consciousness and today's consciousness are wholly independent and can no longer be regarded as one consciousness. But if we consider the matter from the standpoint of direct experience, such a distinction is merely relative, not absolute. Look even at thinking or will, which everyone takes to be a single unified phenomenon of consciousness. Its process is no more than a succession of ideas, each different from the others. If we distinguish them minutely, these ideas could be thought of as separate consciousnesses. Yet if these successive ideas are not separate, independent realities, and can be seen as a single activity of consciousness, then yesterday's consciousness and today's can also be seen as a single activity of consciousness. When we think over a problem or plan an undertaking over many days, we can clearly see the same consciousness at work continuously. The only difference is the length of time.

2.6.3 Consciousness is combined simultaneously, as in perception; successively, as in association and thinking; and over a whole life, as in self-awareness. These differ only in degree; they are all made up of the same nature.

2.6.4 Phenomena of consciousness shift from moment to moment, and the same consciousness never occurs twice. On this view, yesterday's consciousness and today's, even if identical in content, are wholly different consciousnesses. But this view is not taken from the standpoint of direct experience. It is rather the result of assuming something called time and reasoning that phenomena of consciousness appear upon it. If phenomena of consciousness come into being through the form of time, then by the nature of time a phenomenon of consciousness, once past, can never return. Time has only one direction. Even a consciousness with exactly the same content could not,

by the form of time, be called the same. But if we now go back to the ground of direct experience, these relations must be completely reversed. Time is nothing more than a form that puts the contents of our experience in order. For the idea of time to arise, the contents of consciousness must first be able to be combined and unified into one. Otherwise we could not link and arrange before and after and think of them in terms of time. Thus the unifying operation of consciousness is not governed by time. Rather, time comes into being through this unifying operation. We must say, then, that at the base of consciousness there is an unchanging something that transcends time.

2.6.5 Seen from direct experience, consciousness with the same content is directly the same consciousness. A truth is the same no matter who thinks it or in what age. Just so, our consciousness of yesterday and of today belong to the same system and have the same content, and are therefore directly combined and become one consciousness. An individual's life is the development of a consciousness that forms one such system.

2.6.6 Seen from this point, there is always an unchanging something at the base of spirit. Day by day this something enlarges its development. The passage of time is the shifting of the unifying center that goes with this development. This center is always the "now."

2.6.7 If, as I said above, an unchanging unifying power is at work at the base of consciousness, a question will arise: in what form does this unifying power exist, and how does it maintain itself? Psychology ascribes the source of such unifying operation to the material thing called the brain. But as I said earlier, to assume independent material objects outside consciousness is to reason from the constant combinations of phenomena of consciousness. More fundamental than this is the unifying operation itself, the direct combination of the contents of consciousness. This unifying power does not come out of some other reality. Rather, reality comes into being through this operation. Everyone believes that there is a fixed, unchanging principle in

the universe, through which all things come into being.[10] This principle is the unifying power of all things, and at the same time the unifying power within consciousness. Principle is not possessed by things or minds; principle makes things and minds come into being. Principle is independent and self-existent. It does not differ according to time, place or person, and it does not change whether it appears or disappears, whether it is used or not.

2.6.8 Ordinarily, principle is thought of as the operation that governs the association of ideas in our subjective consciousness. But such an operation is a trace left by the activity of principle, not principle itself. Principle itself is creative. We can become it completely and work in accord with it, but we cannot see it as an object of consciousness.

2.6.9 In the ordinary sense, for a thing to exist means that it exists in a certain place, at a certain time, in a certain form. But the existence of principle spoken of here is of a different kind. If principle were bound to one place in this way, it could not do its unifying work. Such a thing is not living, true principle.

2.6.10 As I said above, an individual's consciousness of yesterday and of today are directly unified to form a single reality. In the same way, the consciousness of our whole life can be regarded as one. If we push this thought further, it is not only within the bounds of one individual: our consciousness and that of others can also, for the same reason, be connected and regarded as one. Just as principle is the same no matter who thinks it, there is something universal at the base of our consciousness. Through it we can understand and communicate with one another. It is not only that so-called universal reason runs through the base of all human minds. Anyone born into a particular society, however rich in originality, comes under the sway of the particular social spirit of that society. Each individual's spirit is no more than a cell of this social spirit.

2.6.11 As I said before, the connection between the consciousness of one individual and another is the same as the connec-

tion, within one individual, between yesterday's consciousness and today's. The former seems to be combined indirectly from outside, the latter to combine directly from within. But if we regard the connection as made from outside, the latter too is combined by signs, signs of a certain kind of inner sensation, just as consciousness between individuals is combined by signs such as language. If we regard it as made from within, then in the former case too, it is precisely because individuals share the same ground from the start that they are directly combined.

2.6.12 What we call the objective world, too, as I have said several times, does not come into being apart from our subjectivity. The unifying power of the objective world and the unifying power of subjective consciousness are the same. That is, the so-called objective world and consciousness come into being through the same principle. This is why one can understand the principle by which the universe comes into being through the principle within oneself. Even if there were a world different from the unity of our consciousness, such a world would have nothing whatever to do with us. Any world that we can know and understand must stand under the same unifying power as our consciousness.

CHAPTER 7: THE DIFFERENTIATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF REALITY

Subject and object, spirit and matter, active and passive arise as aspects of one reality.

2.7.1 If we take the view that the world exists apart from consciousness, we might say that all things exist each on its own, independently. But if we take the view that phenomena of consciousness are the sole reality, we must say that at the base of all the phenomena of the universe there is a single unifying power, and that all things are manifestations of one and the same reality. As our knowledge advances, we become ever more con-

10 "Principle" renders 理 (*ri*, Ch. *li*): principle, reason, the pattern of things, a key term in Neo-Confucian thought.

vinced that this one and the same principle is there. Let me now try to describe how the various differentiated oppositions arise from this sole reality.

2.7.2 Reality must be unified as one and at the same time contain opposition. Where there is one reality, there is necessarily another reality standing against it. And for these two things to stand in mutual opposition, they must not be independent realities. They must be something unified, that is, the differentiation and development of a single reality. And when these two have been unified and appear as a single reality, a further opposition must arise. At that point, however, another unity must again be at work behind the two. In this way we proceed toward infinite unity. If we think of this the other way round, from the opposite side, we can conceive of it as the infinite sole reality differentiating and developing itself from the small to the large, from the shallow to the deep. Such a process is the mode in which reality manifests itself, and through it the phenomena of the universe come about and proceed.

2.7.3 We can see this process of the development of reality clearly in our own phenomena of consciousness. Take the will, for example. Will is the attempt to make some ideal actual, and so it is an opposition between the present and the ideal. But when this will has been carried out and has come into accord with the ideal, this present stands opposed to yet another ideal, and a new will emerges. So, for as long as we live, we go on developing and realizing ourselves without end. Next, if we look at the life and growth of living things, we can recognize this same mode of reality there too. The life of living things is truly such ceaseless activity. Only the existence of inanimate things seems somewhat hard to fit into this mode of thought, but let us take that up later, when we discuss nature.

2.7.4 Now, from the fundamental mode of reality described above, how do the various distinctions within reality arise? First, where does the so-called distinction between subject and object come from? Subject and object do not exist apart from each other. They are two opposed aspects of one reality. That is,

what we call our subjectivity is the unifying aspect, and what we call objectivity is the aspect that is unified. The self is always the unifier of reality, and things are what is unified. (By "the objective" here I do not mean a reality independent of our consciousness, but simply the object of consciousness.) When we perceive or think about something, for example, the self is the activity of comparing and unifying this and that, and the thing is the object that stands over against it, that is, the material of this comparing and unifying. When we look at an earlier consciousness from a later one, it seems that we can see the self as an object. In fact, however, this self is not the true self. The true self is the present observer, that is, the unifier. At that point we must think that the earlier unity has already been completed once and has been included in the next unity as its material. The self is in this way an infinite unifier. It is something that can never be made into an object, into material for comparing and unifying.

2.7.5 From the standpoint of psychology too, our self is the unifier of consciousness. And if we now take the standpoint that consciousness is the sole true reality, this self must be the unifier of reality. Psychology speaks as though this self, the unifier, existed separately, apart from what is unified, but such a self is merely an abstract concept. In fact there is no self apart from things. Our self is directly the very unifying power of the reality of the universe.

2.7.6 Nor does the distinction between mental phenomena and physical phenomena mean that there are two kinds of reality. Mental phenomena are reality seen from the unifying aspect, that is, from the side of the subject. Physical phenomena are reality seen from what is unified, that is, from the side of the object. They are nothing but one and the same reality seen from two opposed aspects. So, seen from the side of unity, everything belongs to the subject and becomes mental phenomena; thought of with the unity removed, everything becomes objective physical phenomena. (The opposition between idealism and materialism arises from clinging to one or the other of these two aspects.)

2.7.7 Next, where does the distinction between active and passive come from? Activity and passivity, too, do not mean that there are two kinds of reality. They are likewise two aspects of the same reality: the unifier is always active, and what is unified is always passive. Take phenomena of consciousness, for example. To say that our will has acted means that the unifying idea of the will, that is, its purpose, has been realized; in other words, that a unity has been established. Beyond this, whenever we say that the spirit has acted, we mean that it has attained its aim of unity; when it cannot do so and is unified by something else, we call it passive. In physical phenomena too, to say that A acts on B refers to the case where the properties of A have been able to include and comprehend the properties of B. Unity, then, is the true meaning of activity. When we stand in the position of unity, we are active and free. When, on the contrary, we are unified by something else, we are passive and governed by the law of necessity.

2.7.8 Ordinarily, what comes first in a temporal sequence is thought of as the active agent, but what comes first in time is not necessarily the active agent. The active agent must be what possesses force, and force means the unifying activity of reality. We say, for example, that the motion of a body arises from a moving force. Yet this force refers, in the end, to an invariable relation among certain phenomena; that is, it means the unifier that connects and synthesizes these phenomena. And in the strict sense, only spirit is active.

2.7.9 Next, a word on the distinction between the unconscious and the conscious. The subjective unifying activity is always unconscious; what becomes the object of the unity is what appears as the content of consciousness. Whether we look at thinking or at will, the true unifying activity itself is always unconscious. Only when we reflect on it does this unifying activity appear in consciousness as an idea. But at that point it is no longer the unifying activity; it has become the object of a unity. As I said before, the unifying activity is always the subject, and so it must always be unconscious. Just as Hartmann says that

the unconscious is activity, whenever we stand in the position of the subject and are in a state of activity, we are unconscious.[11] On the contrary, when we become conscious of some consciousness as an objective object, that consciousness has already lost its activity. In training in some art, for example, as long as one is conscious of each single movement, it is not yet truly living art. Only on reaching the unconscious state does it become living art.

2.7.10 There is an objection that, from the standpoint of psychology, all mental phenomena are phenomena of consciousness, and so unconscious mental phenomena do not exist. But our mental phenomena are not merely a succession of ideas. Mental phenomena come about only because there is always an unconscious activity that connects and unifies those ideas.

2.7.11 Finally, the relation between phenomenon and substance can likewise be explained by viewing it as the relation between two aspects of reality. What we call the substance of a thing is the unifying power of reality, and phenomena are the state of opposition into which it has differentiated and developed. To say, for example, that the substance of a desk exists here means that our consciousness always arises through a certain fixed combination; the invariable substance here refers to this unifying power.

2.7.12 Put this way, we would have to say that the true subject is the substance of reality. Yet ordinarily we think, on the contrary, that physical things belong to the object. But this is because we think not of the true subject but of an abstract subject. Such a subject is a powerless concept, and in contrast to it, it is more fitting to say that the substance of things belongs to the object. Strictly speaking, however, an object apart from the subject is in turn an abstract concept, and powerless. The substance of things that is truly active is the unifying power, the fundamental activity by which reality comes about; that is, it must be the true subject.

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11 Eduard von Hartmann (1842–1906), German philosopher, author of *Philosophy of the Unconscious* (1869).

CHAPTER 8: NATURE

Nature apart from the subject is an abstraction; nature itself is a fact of direct experience.

2.8.1 There is only one reality, and it takes on various forms according to the different ways of seeing it. Nature is thought of as an objective reality wholly independent of our subjectivity. Strictly speaking, however, such a nature is an abstract concept and by no means true reality. The substance of nature is, here too, the fact of direct experience before subject and object are divided.

THE SCIENTIST'S NATURE

Removing the subjective side from living plants and trees yields the most abstract idea of nature.

What we truly think of as plants and trees, for example, are plants and trees endowed with living color and form: they are facts of our intuition. Only when we provisionally remove the aspect of subjective activity from this concrete reality does it seem to be a purely objective nature. And what scientists call nature in the strictest sense is this way of thinking pushed to the extreme; it is the most abstract thing, that is, the thing furthest from the true aspect of reality.

2.8.2 Nature is what remains when the subjective aspect, that is, the unifying activity, has been removed from concrete reality. Therefore nature has no self. Nature is simply moved from outside according to necessary laws; it cannot act spontaneously from itself. So the connection and unity of natural phenomena is not an inner unity, as in mental phenomena, but merely a contingent connection in time and space. The so-called laws of nature obtained by induction amount only to the supposition that, since two kinds of phenomena occur in invariable succession, the one is the cause of the other. However far natural science advances, we can obtain no explanation beyond this; the explanation merely becomes more detailed and more general.

2.8.3 The tendency of present-day science is to strive to be as objective as possible. So psychological phenomena must be explained physiologically, physiological phenomena chemically, chemical phenomena physically, and physical phenomena mechanically. What, then, is this purely mechanical explanation that underlies all such explanations? Pure matter is a reality we cannot experience at all. If it is anything we can experience in any way, it must appear in our consciousness as a phenomenon of consciousness. Yet whatever appears as a fact of consciousness is entirely subjective and cannot be called purely objective matter. Pure matter has no positive quality that we could grasp. It has only purely quantitative properties such as space, time and motion, and, like the concepts of mathematics, it is nothing but a wholly abstract concept.

2.8.4 We think of matter as what fills space, as though we could intuit it. But the extension of things that we can think of concretely is nothing but phenomena of consciousness of touch and sight. Even if something looks large to our senses, we cannot say that there is necessarily more matter. In physics the quantity of matter is in the end determined by the magnitude of its force; that is, it is inferred from the relations of action between one thing and another. It is by no means a fact of intuition.

2.8.5 Again, if we think of nature in purely material terms in this way, there is no distinction between animals, plants and living things. Everything is simply the action of one and the same mechanical force, and natural phenomena come to have no particular character or meaning at all. A human being and a clod of earth differ in nothing. Yet the true nature that we actually experience is by no means the abstract concept just described, and therefore not merely the action of one and the same mechanical force. Animals are animals, plants are plants, metals and stones are metals and stones: each is a concrete fact with its own characteristics and meaning. What we call mountains and rivers, grasses and trees, insects and fish, birds and beasts all possess their own individuality in this way. They can be explained in various ways from various standpoints, but nature

as this directly given fact of intuition is something that cannot be shaken.

2.8.6 That we ordinarily take a purely mechanical nature to be truly objective reality, and concrete nature in direct experience to be a subjective phenomenon, is a view inferred entirely from the assumption that all phenomena of consciousness are subjective phenomena of the self. But as I have said many times, we cannot conceive of a reality wholly apart from phenomena of consciousness. If something is subjective because it is related to phenomena of consciousness, then purely mechanical nature too is subjective: space, time, motion and the like cannot be conceived apart from our phenomena of consciousness. They are objective only relatively, not absolutely.

2.8.7 Nature as truly concrete reality cannot come about entirely without unifying activity. Nature too possesses a kind of self. The various changes of form and the movements manifested by a single plant or a single animal are not merely combinations of meaningless matter and mechanical motions. Each of them has a relation inseparable from the whole, and must in the end be regarded as the manifestation of a unifying self. The hands, feet, nose, mouth and other parts of an animal, for example, all stand in close relation to the purpose of the animal's survival, and apart from this their meaning cannot be understood. At the very least, to explain the phenomena of animals and plants, we must assume such a unifying power of nature. Biologists all explain the phenomena of living things by the instinct of life. Such unifying activity is not found in living things alone; it already appears to some degree in the crystallization of inorganic matter. That is, every mineral has its own characteristic crystal form. The self of nature, that is, its unifying activity, thus becomes ever clearer as we go from the crystals of inorganic matter to the organisms of animals and plants. (The true self appears for the first time only with spirit.)

2.8.8 From the standpoint of the strict mechanical explanation of present-day science, even the purposive development of organisms must ultimately be explained by the laws of physics

and chemistry; that is, it becomes nothing but the result of chance. But since such a view ignores the facts too much, scientists try to explain it by the hypothesis of a potential power. That is, they say that the egg or seed of each living thing has a potential power to produce that living thing. This potential power corresponds to what I am here calling the unifying power of nature.

2.8.9 Even if, in explaining nature, we admit the working of such a unifying power besides mechanical force, the two explanations need not conflict. On the contrary, only with both together is a complete explanation of nature possible. Suppose, for example, that there is a bronze statue here. As bronze, its material, it may well obey the laws of physics and chemistry. But it is not something to be seen merely as a lump of bronze; it is a work of art expressing our ideal, that is, something that has appeared through the unifying power of our ideal. Yet this unifying activity of the ideal and the laws of physics and chemistry that govern the material itself naturally belong to separate domains and should never encroach on each other.

2.8.10 Only when there is a unifying self of the kind I have described does nature have purpose and meaning, and become for the first time living nature. This unifying power, the life of nature, is not merely an abstract concept fabricated by our thinking; on the contrary, it is a fact that appears in our intuition. When we see a flower we love, or an animal we are fond of, we immediately grasp a unifying something in the whole. This is the self of that thing, its substance. Artists are the people most gifted with such intuition. At a glance they see through to the truth of things and grasp a unifying something. What they express is not surface fact but the invariable substance hidden deep at the root of things.

2.8.11 Goethe immersed himself in the study of living things and was a forerunner of today's theory of evolution. According to his theory, behind natural phenomena there is an original phenomenon (Urphänomen), which the poet intuits. The various animals and plants, he says, are transformations of this original phenomenon, the original animal and the original plant.

Indeed, among present-day animals and plants there are fixed, invariable types. On the basis of this theory he argued that all living things have come about through evolution.[12]

2.8.12 What, then, is the unifying self hidden behind nature? Because we think of natural phenomena as purely objective phenomena unrelated to our subjectivity, this unifying power of nature too is thought to be an unknowable something that we cannot know. But as I have already argued, true reality is that in which subject and object are not separated. Actual nature is not an abstract concept of the objective side alone but a concrete fact of consciousness that includes both subject and object. Accordingly, its unifying self is not an unknowable something unrelated to our consciousness; it is in fact the very unifying activity of our consciousness. This is why we understand the meaning and purpose of nature through the subjective unity of our own ideals and our feeling and will. When we are able to understand the fundamental meaning that lies at the root of an animal's various organs and movements, for example, we intuit it directly with our own feeling and will. If we had no feeling and will of our own, we could never understand the fundamental meaning of animals. The deeper and broader our ideals and our feeling and will become, the more we are able to understand the true meaning of nature. In short, our subjective unity and the objective unifying power of nature are originally one and the same. Seen objectively, it is the unifying power of nature; seen subjectively, it is the unity of the self's knowing, feeling and willing.

2.8.13 Something like physical force is believed to have no relation at all to our subjective unity. Of course, this may be the most meaningless of unities; but even it is not wholly apart from subjective unity. When we say that there is force in material bodies and that they perform various actions, we are in the end viewing the activity of our own will objectively.

2.8.14 It is ordinarily thought that inferring the meaning of nature from our own ideals or our feeling and will is mere ana-

logy and not firm truth. But this arises from thinking of subject and object as independent, and making spirit and nature into two kinds of reality. From the standpoint of pure experience, it is proper to see them directly as one and the same.

CHAPTER 9: SPIRIT

Natural phenomena seen from their unifying side become phenomena of consciousness.

2.9.1 At first sight nature seems to be a purely objective reality independent of our spirit, but in fact it is not a reality apart from the subject. If we look at so-called natural phenomena from their subjective aspect, that is, from the side of unifying activity, they all become phenomena of consciousness. Suppose, for example, that there is a stone here. If we take this stone to be something that has appeared through the power of some unknowable reality independent of our subjectivity, it becomes nature.

THE STONE AS EXPERIENCED

A stone experienced directly is a combination of sight and touch unified in consciousness.

But if we look at this stone directly, as a fact of direct experience, it is not merely an objectively independent reality but a combination of our sight, touch and so on; that is, it is a phenomenon of consciousness that comes about through the unity of our consciousness. So when we return so-called natural phenomena to the ground of direct experience and look at them, they all become phenomena of our own consciousness that come about through subjective unity. When idealists say that "the world is my idea," they are looking from this standpoint.

2.9.2 When we say that we see the same stone, we believe that each person has the same idea. In fact, however, it differs

12 Goethe developed these ideas in his botanical and morphological writings, notably *The Metamorphosis of Plants* (1790), with its "original plant" (Urpflanze).

according to each person's character and experience. Therefore all concrete reality is subjective and individual, and there ceases to be any such thing as objective reality. Objective reality is nothing but an abstract concept common to everyone.

2.9.3 What, then, is what we ordinarily call spirit, as opposed to nature? That is, what are subjective phenomena of consciousness? So-called mental phenomena are merely the unifying aspect of reality, that is, its active aspect, conceived abstractly. As I said before, in the true aspect of reality there is no distinction of subject and object, spirit and matter. Yet for reality to come about, unifying activity is always necessary. This unifying activity does not, of course, exist specially, apart from reality. But when we abstract this unifying activity and think of it as set over against the object that is unified, it becomes what are called mental phenomena. Suppose, for example, that there is a single sensation here. This single sensation does not exist independently; it necessarily comes about in opposition to others, that is, by being compared with and distinguished from others. This activity of comparing and distinguishing, that is, this unifying activity, is what we call spirit. So as this activity advances, the distinction between spirit and material things becomes more and more marked. In childhood our spirit is natural, and so the activity of the subject is weak. But as we grow up, the unifying activity becomes vigorous, and we come to be aware of our own mind as something distinguished from objective nature.

2.9.4 Ordinarily we think of our spirit as an independent reality distinguished from objective nature. But just as a purely objective nature apart from the subjective unity of spirit is an abstract concept, so a purely subjective spirit apart from objective nature is an abstract concept. There is unifying activity because there is something that is unified. Even supposing there were a substance of spirit that receives the actions of things in the external world, there is a mind that feels because there are things that act. A spirit itself that does not act is as unknowable as a thing itself that does not act.

2.9.5 Why, then, is the unifying activity of reality distinguished in particular from its content, that is, from what is to be unified, and why does it appear as though it were an independent reality? This undoubtedly arises from the contradictions and conflicts among the various unities in reality. In reality there are various systems, that is, various unities. When these systematic unities conflict with and contradict one another, the unity appears clearly in consciousness. Where there is conflict and contradiction there is spirit; where there is spirit there is contradiction and conflict. Take the activity of our will, for example. When there is no conflict of motives, it is unconscious; that is, it is close to so-called objective nature. But as the conflict of motives becomes marked, the will is clearly brought to consciousness, and we can become aware of our own mind. Where, then, does this contradiction and conflict of systems come from? It arises from the nature of reality itself. As I once said, reality is on the one hand infinite conflict and at the same time, on the other, infinite unity. Conflict is the indispensable other half of unity. Through conflict we advance to a still greater unity. Our spirit, the unifying activity of reality, becomes conscious of itself not when the unity is active but at the moment of this conflict.

2.9.6 When we have become skilled in some art, that is, when we have attained the unity of reality, we are, on the contrary, unconscious; we do not know this unity of our own. But when we try to go further still, a conflict arises with what we have already attained, and here we become conscious once more. Consciousness always arises from such conflict. That there is always conflict wherever there is spirit can be seen if we consider that spirit is accompanied by ideals. An ideal implies contradiction and conflict with actuality. (Because our spirit thus appears through conflict, there is always anguish in spirit. When pessimists say that the world is a world of suffering, this contains a truth in one respect.)

2.9.7 If our spirit is the unifying activity of reality, then, since all reality has unity, we must say that all reality has spirit. Why,

then, do we divide inanimate things from living things and distinguish what has spirit from what has none? Strictly speaking, we may say that all reality has spirit. As I said before, nature too has a unifying self, and this is the same unifying power as our spirit. Suppose, for example, that the phenomenon of consciousness of a tree appears here. Ordinarily we regard it as an objective reality that has come about through natural forces. But if we see it as something forming a system of phenomena of consciousness, it comes about through the unifying activity of consciousness. In so-called mindless things, however, this unifying self has not yet actually appeared as a fact of direct experience. The tree itself is not aware of its own unifying activity. Its unifying self is in another's consciousness, not in the tree itself; that is, it is merely something unified from outside, not yet something unified from within. Therefore it cannot yet be called an independent, self-complete reality. In animals, on the contrary, an inner unity, that is, a self, has actually appeared. The various phenomena of an animal (its form and movements, for example) can all be seen as expressions of this inner unity. All reality comes about through unity, but in spirit that unity appears as a clear fact. Only in spirit does reality become complete reality, that is, an independent, self-complete reality.

2.9.8 In so-called things without spirit, the unity is given from outside; it is not their own inner unity. Therefore the unity can change according to the person looking. Ordinarily, for example, we think that there is a unified reality called a tree; but in the eyes of a chemist it is an organic compound, nothing but a collection of elements, and one could even say that there is no separate reality called a tree. The spirit of an animal, however, cannot be seen in this way. The body of an animal may, like a plant, be seen as a compound; but the spirit itself cannot be changed at the observer's pleasure. However we interpret it, it in fact presents a single unity that cannot be shaken.

2.9.9 When today's theory of evolution says that things evolve from inorganic matter to plants, to animals, to human beings, we can say that reality is gradually bringing its hidden essence

forth into actuality. Only in the development of spirit does the fundamental nature by which reality comes about appear. As Leibniz said, development (evolution) is unfolding from within (involution).[13]

2.9.10 Our self, the unifier of spirit, is originally the unifying activity of reality. One school of psychology says that our self is nothing but a combination of ideas and feelings, and that there is no self besides these. But this looks only at the side of analysis and forgets the side of unity. If we analyze anything at all, we cannot find unifying activity in it; but we cannot for that reason ignore unifying activity. Things come about through unity; it is by the power of the unifying self that ideas and feelings too become concrete realities. If we ask where this unifying power, the self, comes from, it is in the end a manifestation of the unifying power of reality; that is, it is an eternal, unchanging power. That is why our self is always felt to be creative, free and infinite activity. As I said before, what we feel when we look within, as if there were some kind of feeling called the self, is not the true self. Such a self can do nothing at all. Only when the unity of reality works within us do we feel that we govern reality according to our own ideals and that the self is engaged in free activity. And since this unifying activity of reality is infinite, our self is felt to be infinite, as though it embraced the universe.

2.9.11 From the standpoint of pure experience from which I set out earlier, it may seem that such a unifying activity of reality as I am speaking of here is merely an abstract idea and not a fact of direct experience. But the facts of our direct experience are not ideas or feelings but the activity of will, and this unifying activity is an indispensable element of direct experience.

2.9.12 So far I have considered spirit in opposition to nature; let me now consider a little the relation between spirit and nature. Our spirit, as the unifying activity of reality, is thought to be a special reality over against nature. In fact, however, there is no unifying activity apart from what is unified, and no subjective

13 Leibniz held that a living thing's development only unfolds what was already enfolded in it.

spirit apart from objective nature. For us to know a thing is nothing other than for the self to become one with the thing. When we see a flower, the self has become the flower. To study a flower and clarify its nature means to discard one's subjective conjectures and become one with the nature of the flower itself. Even when we think about principles, a principle is by no means our subjective fancy. A principle is not only common to all people; it is truly the principle by which objective reality comes about. Unshakable truth is always attained by effacing our subjective self and becoming objective. In short, for our knowledge to deepen means for it to accord with objective nature. This is so not only in knowledge but in will as well. Purely subjectively, nothing can be accomplished. Will can be realized only by following objective nature. To move water is to follow the nature of water; to govern people is to follow the nature of people; to govern oneself is to follow one's own nature. Our will becomes powerful precisely to the degree that it becomes objective. That Śākyamuni and Christ have the power to move all people even a thousand years later is truly because their spirit was thoroughly objective. Those without a self, that is, those who have extinguished the self, are the greatest of all.

2.9.13 Ordinarily we distinguish mental phenomena and physical phenomena as inner and outer, thinking that the former are within and the latter without. But this view arises from the dogma that the spirit is inside the body. Seen from direct experience, all are the same phenomena of consciousness, and there is no distinction of inner and outer. What we call a merely inner, subjective spirit is an extremely superficial and feeble spirit, that is, individual fancy. A great and deep spirit, by contrast, is the very activity of the universe in accord with the truth of the universe. So such a spirit is naturally accompanied by activity in the external world; even if it tried not to act, it could not. The inspiration of artists is one example of this.

2.9.14 Finally, a word on pleasure and pain in the human mind. In a word, when our spirit is in a state of completeness, that is, a state of unity, there is pleasure; when it is in a state of incom-

pleteness, that is, a state of division, there is pain. As I have said, spirit is the unifying activity of reality, but the reverse side of unity is always accompanied by contradiction and conflict. In this contradiction and conflict there is always pain. The infinite unifying activity at once seeks to escape this contradiction and conflict and to reach a still greater unity. At such a time various desires and ideals arise in our minds. And when we have been able to reach this greater unity, that is, when we have been able to satisfy our desires or ideals, there is pleasure. Therefore on one side of pleasure there is always pain, and on one side of pain pleasure always accompanies it. Thus the human mind may never be able to reach pleasure absolutely; but when we strive to become objective and are one with nature, we can maintain an infinite happiness.

2.9.15 Psychologists say that what furthers our life is pleasure and what hinders it is pain. Life is the development of the nature of a living thing, that is, the maintenance of its own unity. So this is the same as saying that what furthers unity is pleasure and what harms it is pain.

2.9.16 As I said before, spirit is the unifying activity of reality, and a great spirit is one with nature. Therefore, when we take the small self to be the self, there is much pain; and the larger the self grows and the more it becomes one with objective nature, the happier we become.

CHAPTER 10: GOD AS REALITY

Nature and spirit are not two realities but two views of one reality.

2.10.1 On the basis of what has been argued so far, what we call nature and what we call spirit are not two kinds of reality of entirely different sorts. They are distinctions that arise from different ways of looking at one and the same reality. If we understand nature deeply, we must recognize a spiritual unity at its foundation. A complete and true spirit must be a spirit united with nature. That is, only one reality exists in the universe.

GOD AS THE ROOT OF REALITY

God is the root of the one infinite activity, uniting subject and object, spirit and nature.

As I said before, this sole reality is on the one hand an infinite opposition and conflict, and on the other an infinite unity. In a word, it is an infinite activity, independent and complete in itself. The root of this infinite activity is what we call God. God is by no means something that transcends this reality from outside. The foundation of reality is itself directly God. God is that which erases the distinction between subjectivity and objectivity and unites spirit and nature.

2.10.2 There is no age and no people without the word "God." But the word has been understood in various senses, according to differences in the level of knowledge and in needs. Most people who profess religion think of God as something like a great human being who stands outside the universe and yet governs it. But such a conception of God is extremely childish. Not only does it conflict with today's learning and knowledge; I think that even in religion we cannot attain an intimate inner union with such a God. Yet neither can we think, as extreme scientists do today, that material bodies are the sole reality and physical force is the root of the universe. As I said above, at the foundation of reality there is a spiritual principle, and this principle is God. As in the fundamental teaching of Indian religion, Ātman and Brahman are identical. God is the great spirit of the universe.

2.10.3 Since ancient times there have been various arguments to prove the existence of God. Some say that this world cannot have begun from nothing, so something must have made it, and the creator of such a world is God. That is, on the basis of the law of causality, they take God to be the cause of this world. Others start from the fact that this world does not exist by chance but has meaning in each of its parts, that it is organized toward some definite purpose. From this they infer that something

must have given it such an organization, and that this director of the universe is God. That is, they think of the relation between the world and God as like the relation between a work of art and the artist. All of these try to prove the existence of God, and to define God's nature, from the side of knowledge. Besides these, there are some who leave knowledge aside entirely and try to prove the existence of God from moral demands. According to these thinkers, we human beings have a moral demand, that is, a conscience. Yet if there were no great ruler of the universe who rewards good and punishes evil, our morality would become meaningless. So we must by all means acknowledge the existence of God as the upholder of morality. Kant is a thinker of this kind. But can these arguments really prove the existence of the true God? It is said that because the world must have a cause, we must acknowledge the existence of God. But if one argues this way on the ground of the law of causality, why can we not go one step further and ask for the cause of God? If it is said that God is without beginning or end and exists without a cause, why can we not say that this world too exists in that way? Again, to infer from the fact that the world is conveniently organized according to some purpose that there must be an all-wise ruler, one would have to prove that, in fact, all things in the universe without exception are made purposively. And this is very difficult. If it is said that the existence of God cannot be proved unless this is proved, then God's existence becomes highly uncertain. Some will believe it and some will not. Moreover, even if this were proved, we could still think that this world came to be so purposive by chance. The attempt to prove God's existence from moral demands is weaker still. If there were an omniscient and omnipotent God who upheld our morality, this would no doubt give our morality great power. But the fact that it is more useful in practice to think so does not prove that such a being must exist. Such a conception can also be seen as a mere expedient. All these theories try to prove God indirectly, from outside. They do not prove God as such directly, in one's own direct experience.

SEEING GOD WITHIN

The infinite unifying power in our own minds directly proves God.

2.10.4 How, then, can we seek the existence of God in the facts of our direct experience? Even within our small hearts, bound by time and space, an infinite power lies hidden: the unifying power of infinite reality. Because we possess this power, we can search out the truth of the universe in learning and express the true meaning of reality in art. In the depths of our own minds we can know the root of the reality that constitutes the universe; that is, we can grasp the very face of God. The infinitely free activity of the human mind directly proves God as such. As Jacob Böhme said, we see God with the inverted eye (umgewandtes Auge).[14]

2.10.5 If we seek God in the facts of the external world, God cannot escape being a hypothetical God. Nor can a God who stands outside the universe as its creator or director truly be called an absolutely infinite God. The religion of ancient India, and the mystical schools that flourished in Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, sought God in inner intuition. I think this is the deepest knowledge of God.

2.10.6 In what form does God exist? Seen from one side, God is, as Nicholas of Cusa and others said, the negation of everything. Whatever we can affirm as "this," that is, whatever we can grasp, is not God. If it were something we could grasp as "this," it would already be finite and could not perform the infinite function of unifying the universe (De docta ignorantia, Cap. 24). Seen from this point, God is entirely nothing.[15] Is God, then, simply nothing? By no means. At the foundation on which reality is formed, an unshakable function of unity is plainly at work. Reality is in fact formed through it. For example, where is the prin-

14 Jacob Böhme (1575–1624), German Protestant mystic. The German phrase means "the eye turned around."

15 Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464), German cardinal and philosopher; *De docta ignorantia* (On Learned Ignorance, 1440) is his chief work.

ciple that the sum of all the angles of a triangle is two right angles? We can neither see nor hear the principle itself. And yet does not a principle exist here, firm and unshakable? Or suppose we stand before a great painting. As a whole, it has a spiritual resonance, subtle and boundless, and a numinous air that seizes us. Yet if we try to find what makes it so in any single object or scene within it, we cannot find it at all. God is the unifier of the universe in these senses; God is the root of reality. Precisely because God can be nothing, there is nowhere God is not and nowhere God does not work.

2.10.7 The most profound mathematical truth gives no knowledge to someone who cannot understand mathematics, and the most skillful painting stirs no feeling in someone who does not understand beauty. In the same way, to ordinary, shallow people the existence of God seems like a fantasy and is felt to have no meaning, and so they regard religion as useless. Whoever wishes to know the true God must by all means train themselves accordingly and acquire the eye that can know God. To such people, the power of God is active throughout the whole universe, like the painter's spirit in a great painting, and is felt as a fact of direct experience. This is what is called the fact of seeing God.

2.10.8 From what has been said so far, God may seem to be a cool philosophical entity, such as the root of the unity of reality, with no relation to the warm activity of our feeling and will. But in truth this is by no means so. As I said earlier, our desires arise from seeking a greater unity, and the attainment of this unity is joy. What is called the self-love of the individual is, in the end, nothing but such a demand for unity. Yet our spirit, infinite from the start, is never satisfied with the unity of the individual self. It must go further and seek a still greater unity. Since our greater self includes both others and ourselves, we come to show sympathy for others and to seek the oneness and unity of others and ourselves. Our love of others is the demand for a supra-individual unity that arises in this way. Therefore we feel greater peace and joy in loving others than in loving ourselves.

And God, the unity of the universe, is indeed the root of such unifying activity: the root of our love and the root of our joy. God is infinite love, infinite joy and peace.

Part III: The Good

第三編　善

Conduct and the freedom of the will, a critique of the main theories of ethics, and the good as the realization of personality.

CHAPTER 1: CONDUCT (I)

3.1.1 Since I think I have roughly explained what reality is, let us now discuss practical questions: what we human beings ought to do, what the good is, and where human action should finally come to rest. And since I think the various phenomena of the practical side of human life can all be summed up under conduct, before discussing these questions I will first consider what conduct is.

3.1.2 Seen from outside, conduct is a movement of the body. But it differs from merely physical movements, such as water flowing or a stone falling. It is a purposive movement accompanied by a kind of consciousness. Yet it must also be distinguished from two other kinds of movement. One is the various reflex movements that appear in organisms, which have a purpose but are wholly unconscious. The other is the instinctive actions we see in somewhat higher animals, which have a purpose and are accompanied by some degree of consciousness, but whose purpose is not yet clearly conscious. Conduct means action whose purpose is clearly conscious. Since we human beings have bodies, we too have various physical movements and also perform reflex movements and instinctive actions. But what can properly be called our own acts is limited to conduct.

3.1.3 In most cases conduct is accompanied by movement in the external world, that is, by action. But its essential part of course lies in phenomena of consciousness in the inner world, so let us consider psychologically what kind of phenomenon of consciousness conduct is. As I said just now, conduct is action that arises from a consciously held purpose; that is, it means what is called voluntary action. When we say "conduct," however, we include external action, whereas "will" refers mainly to inner phenomena of consciousness. So to discuss the phenomena of consciousness in conduct is to discuss the will. How, then, does the will arise? In general our bodies are so made as to perform, of themselves, movements suited to preserving and developing their own life. Consciousness arises along with these movements, and at first it is simply feelings of pain and pleasure. But as our ideas of the external world gradually become clearer and association becomes more active, these movements no longer issue unconsciously in response to external stimuli. Instead, we first call up the idea of the result; this brings with it the idea of the movement that would serve as its means; and only then do we pass to the movement. That is, the will comes into being. For the will to arise, then, there must first be a physical or mental predisposition that determines the direction of movement, or, in terms of consciousness, the direction of association. This appears in consciousness as a kind of impulsive feeling. Whether innate or acquired, this may be called the force of the will, and here I shall call it the motive. Next, this motive must be accompanied by the idea of a result, obtained through experience and called up by association: a purpose, or more precisely, the idea of a purpose. Only then does the will take shape. I call this desire, the first stage of the will. When there is only one desire, it is accompanied by the idea of the movement and issues in action. But when there are two or more desires, what is called a conflict of desires arises, and the strongest of them takes the chief place in consciousness and issues in action. This is called decision. Our "will" refers to this whole set of phenomena of consciousness, though in a narrow sense it sometimes

means the act at the moment of finally passing into action, or decision in particular. The essential part of conduct lies in the will, which is an inner phenomenon of consciousness. External action is not its essential part. Even if no action takes place because of some obstacle, it can be called conduct if there was a genuine will. Conversely, even if action takes place, it cannot be called conduct if there was not sufficient will. When the inner activity of consciousness becomes vigorous, a will arises that from the start takes events within consciousness as its purpose. In such cases too we can of course speak of conduct. Psychologists distinguish inner and outer, but as phenomena of consciousness they have exactly the same nature.

3.1.4 What I have said so far merely describes the process of the will, the essential part of conduct. So let me go a step further and explain what kind of phenomenon of consciousness the will is and what place it occupies in consciousness. From the standpoint of psychology, the will is a function of unifying ideas; that is, it belongs to a kind of apperception.[1] There are two kinds of function by which ideas are combined in consciousness. In one, the cause of the combination lies mainly in external circumstances; the direction of the combination is not clear to consciousness, and it is felt as passive. This is called association. In the other, the cause of the combination lies within consciousness; the direction of the combination is clearly conscious, and consciousness is felt to combine actively. This is called apperception. Now, as I said above, the will first has the idea of a purpose that determines the direction in which ideas are combined. From this, among the various ideas of movement acquired in past experience, it constructs a combination of ideas suited to realizing itself. So it is wholly a function of apperception. That the will is in this way a function of unifying ideas becomes all the clearer in a conflict of desires. What is called decision is nothing but the conclusion of this unifying.

3.1.5 In what relation, then, does this apperceptive function of the will stand to other apperceptive functions? Besides the will,

the functions of thinking and imagination also belong to apperception. In these functions too, some unifying idea is the basis, and from it ideas are unified so as to fit its purpose. So in the form of their activity with ideas they are entirely the same as the will. It is only because the purposes of unification differ, and accordingly the laws of unification differ, that they are regarded as different functions of consciousness. Let us, however, examine more closely in what respects they differ and in what respects they are the same. First, let us compare imagination and will. The purpose of imagination is to imitate nature; the purpose of the will is one's own movement. Accordingly, in imagination ideas are unified so as to fit the true state of nature, and in the will they are unified so as to fit one's own desires. But on closer consideration, before a voluntary movement we must always first imagine that movement once. And to imagine nature, we must first become the thing ourselves and think from there. Only, imagination always imagines an external thing, so the self cannot become wholly one with it, and we feel that it is not our own actuality. That is, to imagine something and to carry it out seem to be quite different. Yet if we go a step further, this is a difference of degree, not of nature. When imagination reaches the point of inspiration, as we see in the imagination of the artist, the self is wholly immersed in the thing, self and thing become entirely one, and the activity of the thing comes to be felt directly as the activity of one's own will. Next, let us compare thinking and will. The purpose of thinking lies in truth, and the laws that govern its combination of ideas are the laws of logic. We do not necessarily will what we take to be true, nor do we think that what we will is necessarily true. Moreover, the unity of thinking is merely a unity of abstract concepts, whereas will and imagination are unities of concrete ideas. In these respects thinking and will are clearly distinct at first sight, and no one confuses them. Yet on careful consideration this distinction too is not so clear and fixed. Behind the will some reason

1 Apperception, in the psychology of Wundt and others, is the active unifying of ideas by consciousness, as opposed to passive association.

always lies hidden. Even if that reason is incomplete, the will still works on the basis of some truth; that is, it is constituted through thinking. Conversely, as Wang Yangming held when he asserted the identity of knowledge and action, true knowledge must always be accompanied by the carrying out of the will. To say "I think it is so, but I do not want it so" is not yet truly to know.[2] Considered thus, the three apperceptions of thinking, imagination and will are at root the same unifying function. Of these, thinking and imagination unify ideas concerning all things and the self, whereas the will unifies ideas concerning only the self's own activity. On the other hand, the former are merely ideal, that is, possible unities, while the latter is an actual unity. That is, the will can be called the culmination of unity.

3.1.6 Having outlined the place of the will among the apperceptive functions, I will now discuss its relation to the other combinations of ideas, namely association and fusion. Of association I said earlier that what determines the direction in which ideas are combined lies in the external world and not in the inner world. But this was said only in terms of degree; one cannot say that in association the unifying function is entirely absent from within. It simply does not appear clearly in consciousness. In fusion the combination of ideas is still more unconscious; we are not even conscious of the act of combining. Even so, there is by no means no inner unity. In sum, all phenomena of consciousness have the same form as the will, and all can be called will in a certain sense. And if we call the unifying power at the root of these unifying functions the self, then the will is that in which the self is most clearly expressed. So it is in the activity of the will that we are most clearly conscious of ourselves.[3]

2 Wang Yangming (1472–1529), Ming-dynasty Confucian philosopher, known for the doctrine of the unity of knowledge and action.

3 Fusion (Wundt's *Verschmelzung*): the merging of elementary sensations or ideas into a single whole without awareness of the combining.

CHAPTER 2: CONDUCT (II)

Seen philosophically, the will is the deepest unifying power of reality, not a product of matter.

3.2.1 So far I have discussed psychologically what kind of phenomenon of consciousness conduct is. Now I want to discuss where the unifying power of the will, the basis of conduct, comes from, and what significance this power has in terms of reality. In this way I will make clear philosophically the nature of the will and of conduct.

3.2.2 The unity of the will unifies ideas from within according to some definite purpose. Where does it come from? From the standpoint of scientists, for whom there is no reality besides matter, we could only say that this power comes from our bodies. Our bodies, like those of animals, are organisms forming a single system. An animal organism, whether or not it has a mind, can perform various orderly movements mechanically in the centers of its nervous system. That is, it can perform reflex movements, automatic movements and still more complex instinctive actions. Our will too developed from these unconscious movements, and even now, when the will has been trained, it returns to the state of these unconscious movements. So we can only think that they are movements of the same kind, arising from the same power. And since the various purposes of an organism all come down to maintaining and developing the life of the organism and its species, the purpose of our will too would be nothing other than the preservation of life. It is only because the purpose is conscious in the will that it seems different from the others. So scientists try to explain even the various lofty spiritual demands of us human beings from this purpose of life.

3.2.3 But to seek the origin of the will in material force in this way, and to try to explain the subtle and profound demands of human life simply from the desire to live, is very difficult. Even if the development of a lofty will is accompanied by a flourish-

ing of the functions of life, the highest purpose would lie in the former and not in the latter. The latter, rather, would have to be considered a means to the former. But let us leave these arguments aside for now. If, as scientists say, our will arises from the material functions of the organism, what powers must we suppose matter to have? There are two ways of thinking that the purposive movements of organisms arise from matter. One regards nature as purposive and holds that matter too, as in the seed of a living thing, must contain purposive power potentially. The other regards matter as having only mechanical force and holds that all purposive natural phenomena arise by chance. The view of strict scientists lies rather with the latter. But I think these two views are the same way of thinking and by no means differ down to their foundations. Even on the latter view, one must suppose that somewhere there is a power that produces certain fixed and unchanging phenomena. To produce mechanical motion, we must suppose that a power to produce it is latent in material bodies. If we can say this, why can we not, for the same reason, think that the purposive power of organisms is latent in material bodies? Some may say that the purposive movements of organisms can be explained by simpler laws of physics and chemistry, without supposing any such power. But if we say this, today's laws of physics and chemistry may in turn be explicable by still simpler laws. Indeed, since the progress of knowledge is infinite, I think they must be so explained. Thought of in this way, truth is merely relative. I think it more proper to reverse this way of thinking: to put weight on synthesis rather than analysis, and to see purposive nature as advancing from separate individual parts toward synthesis, unfolding its own true meaning step by step.

3.2.4 Moreover, according to the view of reality I set out earlier, a material body is merely a name given to invariant relations among phenomena of consciousness. It is not that bodies produce consciousness, but that consciousness makes bodies. Even something as objective as mechanical motion is constituted through our logical unity and is by no means apart from the

unity of consciousness. As we advance from this to the life phenomena of living things, and further to the phenomena of consciousness in animals, that unity becomes ever more active, more many-sided and more profound. The will is the deepest unifying power of our consciousness, and also the most profound manifestation of the unifying power of reality. What is, seen from outside, merely mechanical motion or the process of life phenomena is will in its inner, true meaning. What we had thought was merely wood or stone is, in its true meaning, a buddha image perfect in compassion, or a Niō guardian brimming with courage. In just the same way, what is called nature is the manifestation of will, and through our own will we can grasp the profound true meaning of nature. Of course, if we divide phenomena into inner and outer and regard mental phenomena and physical phenomena as entirely different, such a view may seem to remain a mere fantasy. But in the concrete facts of direct experience there is no distinction of inner and outer, and it is rather this way of thinking that is the direct fact.[4]

3.2.5 What I have said above agrees with what scientists say, in that it regards the mechanical motion of bodies and the purposiveness of organisms as one at root with the will and alike in function. But what each side takes as the root is exactly opposite. They take material force as the basis; I take the will as the basis.

3.2.6 On this view, although I earlier analyzed conduct into two parts, will and action, the relation between them is not that of cause and effect. Rather, they are two sides of one and the same thing. Action is the expression of the will. What is seen from outside as action is, seen from inside, will.

4 Niō: the pair of fierce, muscular guardian figures that stand at the gates of Japanese Buddhist temples.

CHAPTER 3: FREEDOM OF THE WILL

Nishida weighs free will against necessity and asks in what sense the will is free.

3.3.1 I have argued that, psychologically speaking, the will is merely one phenomenon of consciousness, but that in its true substance it is the root of reality. Let us now discuss in what sense this will is a free activity. Whether the will is free or necessitated is a question that has long troubled scholars. This debate is not only important for ethics; through it we can also make clear the philosophical nature of the will.

3.3.2 First, if we go by what we ordinarily believe, everyone takes their own will to be free. In what we experience of our own consciousness, within a certain range we can either do something or not do it. That is, we believe we are free within a certain range. From this arise the ideas of responsibility and non-responsibility, pride, regret, praise, blame and so on. But let us consider this "within a certain range" a little more closely. We cannot freely control anything that belongs to external things. We cannot even say that we can handle our own bodies freely in every respect. The movement of the voluntary muscles seems free, but once we fall ill we cannot move them freely. What we can do freely is limited to our own phenomena of consciousness. But even with phenomena within our own consciousness, we have no freedom to produce new ideas, nor even the freedom to call up at any time something we have once experienced. What seems truly free is only the function of combining ideas. That is, how we analyze ideas and how we synthesize them is up to our own freedom. Of course, even here there are unshakable pre-existing laws governing the analysis and synthesis of ideas, so we cannot do as we please. And when only one combination between ideas is possible, or when a certain combination is especially strong, we cannot help following it. Only within the range of the pre-existing laws by which ideas are formed, and only where there are two or more ways of combining ideas and

the strength of these combinations is not compelling, do we have complete freedom of choice.

3.3.3 Those who maintain free will mostly build their arguments on these facts of inner experience. Within the range just described, they hold, selecting and deciding among motives is entirely a matter of our freedom, and there is no reason for it beyond ourselves. They think this decision is due to a mysterious power called the will, independent of external circumstances and of inner temperament, habit and character. That is, they think there is a power, besides the combination of ideas, that governs it. Those who maintain the necessity of the will, by contrast, generally take as their basis the observation of facts in the external world and reason from there. Not a single phenomenon in the universe occurs by chance; even the most trivial matter, if studied closely, always has an adequate cause. This idea is the fundamental idea of everything called learning, and it becomes ever more certain as science develops. Among natural phenomena, things hitherto thought mysterious have one by one had their causes and effects made clear, and science has advanced to the point that they can be calculated mathematically. At present, about the only thing still thought to have no cause is our will. But even the will surely cannot escape this unshakable great law of nature. That the will is now thought to be free is, in the end, simply because science is still undeveloped and cannot yet explain each of its causes. Moreover, voluntary actions in individual cases are indeed irregular and at first sight seem to have no fixed causes. But when we consider the actions of many people statistically, they are surprisingly orderly; we can by no means regard them as lacking definite causes and effects. Such considerations further strengthen the conviction that our will has causes, and lead to the conclusion that our will, like all natural phenomena, is governed by the necessary law of mechanical causality, and that there is no special mysterious power called the will.

NEITHER CHANCE NOR MECHANISM

A will without causes would feel like compulsion, yet spiritual meaning escapes mechanical necessity.

3.3.4 Which of these two opposing views is correct? Extreme advocates of free will say, as mentioned above, that there is a mysterious faculty that freely determines motives without any cause or reason at all. But if freedom of the will is asserted in this sense, it is entirely mistaken. When we decide on a motive, there must be some adequate reason. Even if it does not appear clearly in consciousness, there must be some cause below consciousness. Further, if, as these advocates say, we decided something wholly by chance without any reason at all, we would not feel the freedom of the will at that moment. We would rather regard it as a chance occurrence, something that acted on us from outside, and accordingly we would feel little responsibility for it. Advocates of free will are said to build their arguments on inner experience, but inner experience in fact proves the opposite.

3.3.5 Next, let us offer a little criticism of the necessitarians' arguments. Thinkers of this kind say that because natural phenomena are governed by laws of mechanical necessity, phenomena of consciousness must be so too. But this argument rests at bottom on the assumption that phenomena of consciousness and natural phenomena (in other words, physical phenomena) are the same and must be governed by the same laws. But is this assumption really correct? Whether phenomena of consciousness are to be governed by the same laws as physical phenomena is an unsettled question. An argument that stands on such an assumption must be called very weak. Suppose that today's physiological psychology made great progress, and that every function of the brain underlying phenomena of consciousness could be explained physically and chemically. Could we on that basis maintain that phenomena of consciousness are governed by mechanical necessity? For example, the bronze that is the

material of a bronze statue may not escape the rule of mechanical necessity; but does not the meaning that the statue expresses lie outside it? What is called spiritual meaning cannot be seen, cannot be heard, cannot be counted. We must say that it stands aloof, beyond mechanical necessity.

3.3.6 In sum, a will with no cause or reason at all, such as the advocates of free will speak of, exists nowhere. Such a chance will is never felt as free; it is felt, on the contrary, as compulsion. It is when we act from some reason, that is, from our own inner nature, that we feel free. In short, we feel most free when the cause of a motive comes from our deepest inner nature. But this so-called reason of the will is not a mechanical cause of the kind the necessitarians speak of. Our spirit has laws of spiritual activity. Spirit is truly free when it acts according to these laws of its own. Freedom has two senses. One is freedom in the sense of having no cause at all, which means the same as chance. The other is freedom in the sense of not being bound by anything outside, of acting of oneself. That is, it is freedom in the sense of a necessary freedom. The freedom of the will is freedom in the latter sense. But here the following question may arise. If acting according to one's own nature is freedom, then there is nothing that does not act according to its own nature: water flowing and fire burning are all following their own nature. Why, then, do we call everything else necessary and the will alone free?

FREE BECAUSE CONSCIOUS

Consciousness knows other possibilities, so we are free when we act from our own nature and know why.

3.3.7 In the so-called natural world, the occurrence of a given phenomenon is strictly determined by its circumstances. From given definite circumstances only one definite phenomenon arises, and not the slightest other possibility is allowed. Natural phenomena all arise according to such a law of blind necessity. But phenomena of consciousness do not merely arise; they are phenomena that are conscious. That is, they not only arise but

know of themselves that they have arisen. And this knowing, this being conscious, means containing other possibilities. To be conscious of taking something means that behind it lies the possibility of not taking it. To put it more fully, consciousness always has something of a universal character; that is, consciousness has an ideal element. Without this it would not be consciousness. And to have such characteristics means to have, besides the actual occurrence, other possibilities as well. Being actual and yet containing the ideal, being ideal and yet not separate from the actual: this is the distinctive feature of consciousness. Strictly speaking, consciousness is never governed by something else; it is always governing what is other. Therefore, even if our conduct arises through necessary laws, because we know it, we are not confined within this conduct. Seen from the side of the ideal, which is the foundation of consciousness, this actuality is merely a particular instance of the ideal, merely one process by which the ideal realizes itself. That conduct does not come from outside; it comes forth from within. And because the actual is seen in this way as merely one instance of the ideal, it comes to contain any number of other possibilities.

3.3.8 So the freedom of consciousness is not freedom because it breaks the laws of nature and acts by chance. On the contrary, it is free because it follows its own nature. It is not free because it acts without reason, but because it knows its reasons well. As our knowledge advances, we can become ever freer. Even when people are controlled and oppressed by others, because they know it, they have already escaped beyond this oppression. And if one goes further and truly grasps for oneself why it is unavoidable, the oppression becomes, on the contrary, one's own freedom. Socrates was a freer man than the Athenians who poisoned him. Pascal too says: "Man is a weak thing, like a reed; but man is a thinking reed. Even if the whole world sets out to destroy him, he is nobler than what kills him, because he knows that he is dying."[5]

5 Pascal, *Pensées*, the "thinking reed" fragment (no. 347 in Brunschvicg's numbering), paraphrased by Nishida.

3.3.9 As I argued earlier in the part on reality, the ideal element at the foundation of consciousness, in other words the unifying function, is not a product of nature. On the contrary, nature is constituted through this unity. It is indeed the infinite power that is the root of reality, and it cannot be limited quantitatively. It exists entirely outside the necessary laws of nature. Our will is free because it is a manifestation of this power. It is not governed by natural laws.

CHAPTER 4: A STUDY OF VALUE

Phenomena can be studied by cause or by purpose; laws of value cannot be derived from laws of existence.

3.4.1 Any phenomenon or event can be considered from two points of view. One is the inquiry into causes or reasons: how it came about, and why it must be so and not otherwise. The other is the inquiry into purpose: what it came about for. Suppose, for example, that there is a flower here. If we ask how it came to be, we must say that it arose from the plant and its surroundings, according to the laws of physics and chemistry. If we ask what it is for, the answer is that it exists in order to bear fruit. The first is a theoretical inquiry, which studies only the laws by which things come into being. The second is a practical inquiry, which studies the laws of the activity of things.

3.4.2 In the phenomena of the so-called inorganic world we can ask why something happened, but not what it happened for. That is, we must say they have no purpose. Yet even here one can say that purpose and cause have become identical. If, for example, one strikes a ball on a billiard table with a certain force in a certain direction, it will always roll in a definite direction, but the ball has no purpose of any kind in doing so. The person who struck it may perhaps have had some purpose, but this is not an inner purpose of the ball itself. The ball is moved necessarily by causes in the external world. Yet looked at from another side, it is precisely because the ball itself has such a power of motion that it moves in a definite direction. Seen from

the inner power of the ball itself, the motion can also be regarded as a purposive activity that realizes itself. When we go further and come to animals and plants, their own inner purpose becomes clear, and at the same time cause and purpose come to be distinguished. The phenomena that occur in animals and plants follow the necessary laws of physics and chemistry, yet they are not entirely meaningless. They are phenomena directed toward the survival and development of the organism as a whole. In such phenomena, what occurs as the effect of some cause cannot always be called purposive, and the purpose of the whole may come into conflict with a particular phenomenon. So we come to need an inquiry into the value of phenomena, asking which phenomena best accord with the purpose.

3.4.3 With the phenomena of living things it is still possible to set aside their unifying purpose as nothing more than a fancy that we humans have added from outside. That is, the phenomena of living things can also be regarded as a meaningless combination formed merely by the aggregation of a number of forces. Only with our phenomena of consciousness is it impossible to see things this way. Phenomena of consciousness are not, to begin with, a combination of meaningless elements. They are a single unified activity. If the unifying activity were removed from thinking, imagination and will, these phenomena would vanish. For these operations, the first question is not how they arise but how we ought to think, how we ought to imagine and how we ought to act. Here arise the studies of logic, aesthetics and ethics.

3.4.4 Some scholars try to derive the laws of value from the laws of existence. But I believe we cannot derive judgments about the value of things merely from the fact that this arises from that. The law of cause and effect tells us that a red flower produces such an effect, or a blue flower such an effect. From it we cannot explain why this flower is beautiful and that one ugly, or why one has great value and the other none. For these judgments of value there must be a separate principle to serve as their standard. Once our thinking, imagining and willing have actually

occurred as facts, each of them arises from its own sufficient causes, however mistaken the thinking, however bad the will, however clumsy the imagining. The will to kill a person and the will to help a person both arise from certain necessary causes and produce necessary effects. In this respect neither is in the least better than the other. Only when there is some standard, such as the demands of conscience or the desire to live, does a great difference in worth arise between these two actions. Some theorists explain that whatever gives great pleasure has great value, and think they have thereby derived the laws of value from the law of cause and effect. But why some effects give us pleasure and others do not can hardly be explained by the law of causality alone. What we like and what we dislike is a fact of direct experience whose grounds lie elsewhere. Psychologists say that what increases our vital power is pleasure. But why should an increase in vital power be pleasure? Do not pessimists, on the contrary, regard life itself as the source of suffering? Other theorists, again, think that what is powerful is what has value. But what is most powerful with respect to the human mind? What is materially powerful can hardly be said to be necessarily powerful with respect to the human mind. What is powerful with respect to the human mind is what moves our desires most, that is, what has value for us. It is not that value is determined by power. On the contrary, whether something is powerful or not is determined by value. All our desires and demands are given facts that cannot be explained. We say that we eat in order to live, but this "in order to live" is an explanation added afterward. Our appetite did not arise from such a reason. Nor does an infant drink milk for the first time for such a reason. It simply drinks for the sake of drinking. Our desires and demands are not only facts of direct experience that cannot be explained in this way. They are, on the contrary, the secret key by which we understand the true meaning of reality. A complete explanation of reality must explain not only how it exists but what it exists for.

CHAPTER 5: THEORIES OF ETHICS (1)

Having discussed value, Nishida turns to the question of what the good is.

3.5.1 Having discussed what an inquiry into value is, let us now turn to the question of what the good is. As I said above, we pass judgments of value on our actions. Where does the standard of these judgments lie? What actions are good, and what actions are bad? It is these ethical questions that I intend to discuss.

SURVEYING THE THEORIES

Because ethics matters to everyone, Nishida first reviews the main schools to clarify his own standpoint.

Ethical questions of this kind are the most important questions for us. No one can set them aside. In the East as in the West, ethics is one of the oldest fields of learning, and so there have been many ethical theories since ancient times. I will therefore first outline the main schools in this field and criticize them, and so make clear the standpoint of the ethical theory I intend to adopt.

3.5.2 Broadly speaking, past ethical theories fall into two groups. One is called heteronomous ethics, which seeks to place the standard of good and evil in a power outside human nature. The other is called autonomous ethics, which seeks this standard within human nature. In addition there is what is called intuitionism. It comes in various forms: some can be counted among the heteronomous theories, while others must be counted among the autonomous. I will begin with intuitionism and then take up the others in turn.

INTUITIONISM

The view that moral laws are intuitively self-evident fails, since no such principle is agreed on.

3.5.3 This theory has various versions, but its central claim is as follows. The moral laws that should govern our actions are intu-

itively evident and rest on no further reason. Which actions are good and which are bad can be known intuitively, just as we know that fire is hot and water cold. The goodness or badness of an action is a property of the action itself, not something to be explained. Indeed, when we reflect on our everyday experience, we judge the goodness or badness of actions not by weighing this reason and that, but for the most part intuitively. There is what we call conscience, and just as the eye judges the beauty or ugliness of things, conscience can judge directly whether actions are good or bad. Intuitionism is founded on this fact and is the theory closest to the facts. Moreover, the claim that the goodness or badness of actions admits of no explanation by reasons is very effective in preserving the dignity of morality.

3.5.4 Intuitionism is simple and effective in practice, but how much value does it have as an ethical theory? What intuitionism holds to be intuitively evident is not something like the ultimate purpose of human nature, but laws of action. There are, of course, two positions within intuitionism. One holds that the goodness or badness of every action is intuitively evident in each particular case. The other holds that the fundamental moral law that sums up particular moral judgments is intuitively clear. Either way, the life of intuitionism lies in the claim that there are certain laws of action that are immediately self-evident. But in the moral judgments we pass on everyday actions, that is, in what are called the commands of conscience and the like, can we really find moral laws that are, as the intuitionists say, immediately self-evident, and therefore exact and free of contradiction? To begin with particular cases, it is clear that there are no such definite judgments at all. In particular cases we are sometimes at a loss to judge between good and evil. What we now think right we may later think wrong. Even in the same case, people's judgments of good and evil may differ greatly. No one with even a little capacity for reflection could possibly believe that there is a definite moral judgment in each particular case. If so, what about the general case? Are there really self-evident principles of the kind these theorists claim?

First of all, what the so-called intuitionists put forward as self-evident principles differs from one person to another and never consistently agrees. This proves that there are no self-evident principles of the kind that everyone should acknowledge. Moreover, not one such principle can be found among the things people generally accept as self-evident duties. Loyalty and filial piety are of course natural duties, but there are various conflicts between them and changes in them, and what true loyalty and filial piety consist in is by no means clear. Consider, again, the meaning of wisdom, courage, benevolence and righteousness. What kind of wisdom and what kind of courage are true wisdom and courage? Not all wisdom and courage can be called good. Wisdom and courage may even be put to the service of evil. Benevolence and righteousness come closest among these to being self-evident principles, but benevolence cannot be said to be absolutely good at all times and in all circumstances. Misplaced benevolence may even produce bad results. As for justice, what true justice is can by no means be called self-evident. Take, for example, the way we treat people: what treatment is just? Justice is not simply the equality of all individuals. Rather, justice lies in going by the worth of each individual. But if we go by each individual's worth, what is it that determines that worth? In short, in our moral judgments we possess not a single self-evident principle of the kind the intuitionists speak of. What sometimes seem to be self-evident principles are nothing but propositions without content that merely repeat words of the same meaning.

3.5.5 If, as argued above, intuitionism cannot demonstrate the intuition of good and evil it claims, then as a theory it has very little value. But let us suppose for the moment that such an intuition exists, and that following the laws it gives is the good. Let us consider what kind of ethical theory intuitionism would then become. Intuition, taken purely, must be, as these theorists say, something that cannot be explained by reason. It must also be a consciousness wholly immediate and without meaning, unrelated to feelings of pleasure and pain or to desires of liking and

disliking. If following such an intuition were the good, the good would be something without meaning for us, and our following it would be mere blind obedience. That is, moral laws would become a constraint imposed on human nature from outside, and intuitionism would have to become identical with heteronomous ethics. Yet most intuitionists do not hold intuition in this sense. Some identify intuition with reason; that is, they think the fundamental laws of morality are self-evident to reason. But in that case the good means following reason, and the distinction between good and evil becomes something that is clear not through intuition but explicable through reason. Other intuitionists identify intuition with immediate pleasure and displeasure, or with liking and disliking. But on this view the good is good because it gives a kind of pleasure or satisfaction, and so the standard of good and evil shifts to the amount of pleasure or satisfaction. Thus, depending on what the word "intuition" means, intuitionism draws close to various other ethical theories. Of course, pure intuitionism must mean an intuition entirely without meaning. But such an ethical theory, like heteronomous ethics, cannot explain why we must follow the good. The basis of morality becomes something wholly accidental and meaningless. In fact, what we actually call moral intuition contains various principles. Some are heteronomous, coming entirely from another authority; others come from reason, and others again from feeling and desire. This is why the so-called self-evident principles fall into various contradictions and conflicts. Clearly no theory can be built on such a confused mixture of principles.

CHAPTER 6: THEORIES OF ETHICS (2)

Nishida turns from intuitionism to pure heteronomous ethics, the theory of authority.

3.6.1 I have argued above that intuitionism is inadequate, and shown that, depending on what intuition means, it can turn into

various different theories. I will now discuss pure heteronomous ethics, that is, the theory of authority.

THE THEORY OF AUTHORITY

Morality is held to arise from the commands of a being with tremendous dignity and power.

Theorists of this school focus on the fact that what we call moral good differs in one respect from such demands of human nature as our own pleasure or satisfaction, and carries the sense of a solemn command. They hold that morality arises from the commands of one who has tremendous dignity or power over us. When we follow moral laws, we do so not for our own advantage or loss but simply in obedience to the commands of this tremendous power. Good and evil are determined wholly by the commands of such a holder of power.

AUTHORITY IN PLACE OF CONSCIENCE

Since moral judgment is shaped by teachers, laws and custom, the theory replaces conscience with external authority.

Since the basis of all our moral judgments is formed by the teaching of our teachers and fathers, by laws, institutions, customs and the like, it is not surprising that such an ethical theory should arise. This theory simply puts external authority in place of the command of conscience in the intuitionism discussed above.

3.6.2 In theories of this kind, what is taken to be the external holder of power must of course be something that itself possesses tremendous dignity and power over us. Among the theories of authority in the history of ethics there are two kinds: a monarchical theory, based on the sovereign, and a theocratic theory, based on God. Theocratic ethics prevailed in the Middle Ages, when Christianity held supreme power, and Duns Scotus

was among its advocates.[6] According to him, God has infinite power over us, and the divine will is entirely free. God does not command something because it is good, nor does he act for the sake of reason; God wholly transcends such constraints. It is not that God commands something because it is good; it is good because God commands it. He pushed this view to its extreme, going so far as to say that if God commanded us to kill, killing too would become good. The monarchical theory of authority was advocated by the Englishman Hobbes at the beginning of the modern period. According to him, human nature is wholly evil, and the natural state is one in which the strong prey on the weak. The only way to escape the misery of human life that results from this is for each person to entrust all power to a single sovereign and to obey his commands absolutely. So he says that to follow the sovereign's command in everything is good, and to go against it is evil. In China, too, Xunzi's claim that to follow the way of the former kings in all things is good is a kind of theory of authority.[7]

BLIND OBEDIENCE

Fear or respect without reasons makes morality meaningless and leaves good and evil without a standard.

3.6.3 If we reasoned strictly from the standpoint of the theory of authority, what conclusion would we reach? The theory of authority cannot explain why we must do good; indeed, that it cannot be explained is the very point of the theory. We obey simply because it is authority. If we obeyed it for some reason, we would no longer be obeying for the sake of authority itself but for the sake of that reason. Some say that fear is the most suitable motive for obeying authority. But behind fear lies a concern for one's own advantage and loss. And if one obeys for the

6 John Duns Scotus (c. 1266–1308), Scottish Franciscan theologian, known for emphasizing the primacy of God's will.

7 Xunzi (c. 310–c. 235 BC), Confucian thinker who held human nature to be evil and taught that it must be shaped by the rites and teachings of the ancient sage-kings.

sake of one's own interest, one is no longer obeying for the sake of authority. Hobbes, for one, departs for this reason from the standpoint of a pure theory of authority. Kirchmann, who has recently given the most interesting account of the theory of authority, holds the following. Whenever we encounter something of tremendous power, such as a high mountain or a great ocean, we are struck by its tremendous force and a feeling of awe arises in us. This feeling is neither fear nor pain. It is a state in which the self is captured by the grandeur of external things, bows down before them and is absorbed into them. If this being of tremendous power is one that has a will, a feeling of respect must naturally arise here; that is, we come to obey its commands with a feeling of respect. So he says that the feeling of respect is the motive for obeying authority.[8] But if we consider it carefully, we do not respect others without any reason at all. We respect a person because that person has realized an ideal that we ourselves cannot attain. What we respect is not simply the person but the ideal. To birds and beasts, the Buddha and Confucius are not worth half a copper coin. So in a strict theory of authority, morality must be wholly blind obedience. Fear and respect alike must be blind feelings wholly without meaning. Among Aesop's fables there is a story in which a fawn, seeing its mother take fright at the barking of dogs and run away, asked, "Mother, you are so big—why do you take fright at the voice of a little dog and run away?" The mother deer replied that she did not know why, but that the barking of dogs simply frightened her terribly, and so she ran. In the theory of authority, it is meaningless fear of this kind that would count as the most suitable moral motive. If that is truly so, then morality and knowledge are complete opposites, and the ignorant are the best people. It would follow that, for human beings to progress and develop, they must throw off the fetters of morality as soon as possible. It would also follow that a good action, however good, is not a morally good action if it is done not with the thought of

8 Julius Hermann von Kirchmann (1802–1884), German jurist and philosopher.

obeying the command of authority, but because one has understood for oneself why it must be done.

3.6.4 Not only, then, is the theory of authority unable to explain moral motives; the so-called moral law also becomes almost meaningless, and so the distinction between good and evil loses any standard at all. If we say that we simply obey authority blindly because it is authority, there are many kinds of authority. There is the authority of violence, and there is lofty spiritual authority. But since following either one is following authority, we would have to say that they are equally one and the same. That is, no standard of good and evil can be established at all. Of course, the strength or weakness, greatness or smallness of power may seem to serve as a standard. But we can discuss the strength or greatness of power only once something we hold as an ideal has been settled. Which is stronger, Jesus or Napoleon? That depends on how we settle our ideal. If we said simply that whatever has power existing in the world is powerful, it would follow that whoever has the greatest brute strength is the most powerful.

3.6.5 As the monk Saigyō sang, "What it is that dwells here I do not know, yet in awe at its grace my tears overflow": the dignity of morality lies precisely in what is unfathomable about it. In focusing on this point the theory of authority contains one side of the truth. But its great defect is that, in doing so, it entirely forgot the natural demands of human nature. Morality is grounded in human nature, and why we must do good has to be explained from within human nature.[9]

CHAPTER 7: THEORIES OF ETHICS (3)

Autonomous ethics seeks the good in human nature; Nishida begins with rationalism.

3.7.1 Heteronomous ethics, as I said above, simply cannot explain why we must do good. The good becomes something wholly meaningless. So we find that we must seek the basis of morality

9 The poem is traditionally said to have been composed on a visit to the Ise Shrine.

within human nature. We must explain from human nature what the good is and why we must do good. Ethics of this kind is called autonomous ethics. It has three forms. One is based on reason and is called rationalism or intellectualism. One is based on feelings of pleasure and pain and is called hedonism. And one is based on the activity of the will and is called the theory of activity. Let me begin with rationalism.[10]

3.7.2 Rational or intellectualist ethics (dianoetic ethics) identifies moral good and evil, right and wrong, with truth and falsity in knowledge. It holds that the true nature of things is itself the good; that once we know the true nature of things, what we must do becomes clear of itself; and that our duties can be deduced like the truths of geometry. So if we ask why we must do good, the answer is: because it is true. We human beings are endowed with reason, and just as we must follow reason in knowledge, so we must follow reason in conduct. (I should note in passing that the word "reason" has various meanings in philosophy; by reason here I mean, in the ordinary sense, the relations among abstract concepts.) On the one hand, this theory opposed the view of Hobbes and others that the moral law is something arbitrary that can be swayed by the will of a sovereign, and maintained that the moral law lies in the nature of things and is eternal and unchanging. On the other hand, it feared that if the basis of good and evil were sought in a receptive faculty such as perception or feeling, the universality of the moral law could not be explained, the dignity of duty would be destroyed, and each person's tastes would have to be taken as the sole standard. It therefore sought to explain the universality of the moral law, and to establish the dignity of duty, on the basis of the universality of reason. This theory is often confused with the intuitionism discussed earlier, but intuition need not be limited to the intuition of reason. I think it better to consider the two separately.

3.7.3 I consider Clarke's theory the purest form of rationalism. In his view, all relations among things in human affairs are as

definite as mathematical truths, and through them we can know of ourselves what is fitting and what is unfitting. For example, since God is infinitely superior to us, we must obey him; or, what is unjust when another does it to me is also unjust when I do it to another.[11] Discussing why human beings must do good, he also says that a rational animal must follow reason. At times he even goes so far as to say that one who would act against justice is like one who wishes to change the nature of things. Here he wholly confuses "is" and "ought."

3.7.4 Rationalism is right to make clear the universality of the moral law and to seek to make duty solemn, but we cannot regard it as having thereby explained morality as a whole. Is the moral law that guides our actions, as these theorists say, something that can be known a priori by the formal understanding? Pure formal understanding can give only laws of formal understanding, such as the so-called three laws of thought in logic. It cannot give any content. These theorists like to take their examples from geometry. But even in geometry, the axioms do not become clear through the formal understanding alone; they come from the nature of space. The deductive reasoning of geometry is the application of logic to fundamental intuitions about the nature of space. In ethics too, once the fundamental principles have become clear, applying them may require following the laws of logic. But the principles themselves did not become clear through the laws of logic. Is the moral law "Love your neighbor," for example, evident through the understanding alone? We have a disposition to love others, and also a disposition to love ourselves. Why, then, is one superior and the other inferior? What decides this is not the understanding but our feeling or desire. Even if we came to know the true nature of things as a matter of knowledge, we could not learn from it what is good. From the fact that something is so, we cannot know that

10 "The theory of activity" (katsudōsetsu) renders energetism: the ethics of self-realization that Nishida will go on to develop as his own view.

11 Samuel Clarke (1675–1729), English philosopher and theologian, who held that moral duties follow from the eternal "fitness" of things.

it ought to be so. Clarke says that we can know fitness and unfitness from the true nature of things, but fitness and unfitness are already not purely cognitive judgments; they are judgments of value. Only when there is something we seek does a judgment of fitness or unfitness arise.

3.7.5 Next, in explaining why we must do good, these theorists say that because we are rational animals we must follow reason. That one who understands reason must follow reason in matters of knowledge goes without saying. But logical judgment as such and the choice of the will are different things. A logical judgment does not necessarily become a cause of the will. The will arises from feelings or impulses, not from abstract logic alone. Even the maxim "Do not do to others what you would not want for yourself" would be almost meaningless for us if there were no motive of sympathy. If abstract logic could directly become a motive of the will, the person most skilled in reasoning would have to be the best person. Yet in fact the opposite is sometimes true, and no one can deny that an ignorant person may be a better person than a knowledgeable one.[12]

CYNICS AND STOICS

In practice, rationalism became the struggle to overcome all passions, a reason without content.

3.7.6 Earlier I cited Clarke as the representative of rationalism. Clarke represents its theoretical side; its practical side is represented, I think, by the so-called Cynic school. Building on Socrates' identification of the good with knowledge, this school regarded all passions and pleasures as evil and held that overcoming them and following pure reason was the sole good. Yet what it called reason was merely the opposite of the passions: a negative reason without any content. The aim of morality was solely to overcome the passions and pleasures and to preserve the freedom of the spirit. The famous Diogenes is a good example. After this school came the Stoic school, which advoc-

12 A saying of Confucius (Analects 12.2 and 15.24).

ated the same principle. According to the Stoics, the universe is governed by a single reason, and the essence of human beings too lies in nothing other than this reason. To follow reason is to follow the law of nature, and this is the sole good for human beings. Life, health and wealth are not goods, nor are poverty, sickness and death evils; only inner freedom and tranquility are the highest good. As a result, like the Cynics, they rejected all passions and strove simply to be free of desire (Apathie). Epictetus is a good example.

3.7.7 When, as in these schools, pure reason wholly opposed to the passions is made the purpose of human nature, it cannot provide any moral motive in theory, and in the same way it cannot provide any positive content for the good in practice. We can only think, as the Cynics and Stoics said, that simply overcoming the passions is the sole good. But we must overcome the passions because there is some greater purpose to be sought. To say that it is good to control the passions merely for the sake of controlling them—nothing could be more irrational than that.

CHAPTER 8: THEORIES OF ETHICS (4)

Rationalism cannot say why we must do good, so Nishida turns to feelings of pleasure and pain.

3.8.1 Compared with heteronomous ethics, the rationalist theory goes a step further: it tries to explain the good from within human nature itself. Yet, as I said before, if it takes merely formal reason as its basis, it can never answer the fundamental question of why we must do the good.

PLEASURE AS THE AIM OF THE WILL

Even self-sacrifice seems, on probing, to seek a kind of pleasure.

So when we reflect deeply within ourselves, we find that all will arises from feelings of pleasure and pain. That we seek pleasure and avoid displeasure is natural to human feeling and an unshakable fact. Even in actions that on the surface are not done for pleasure at all, as when one gives up one's life to fulfill

humaneness, we find on probing beneath that one is still seeking a kind of pleasure.[13]

EGOISTIC AND UNIVERSALISTIC HEDONISM

Ethical theories that make pleasure the sole aim of life take two forms.

The aim of the will is, in the end, nothing but pleasure. That we make pleasure the aim of human life is a self-evident truth that needs no further explanation. It is therefore natural that ethical theories should arise that make pleasure the sole aim of human nature and try to explain the distinction between moral good and evil by this principle. This is called hedonism. There are two kinds of hedonism: one is called egoistic hedonism, the other universalistic hedonism.

3.8.2 Egoistic hedonism makes one's own pleasure the sole aim of life. It holds that even when we act for others we are in fact seeking our own pleasure, and that the greatest pleasure of the self is the greatest good. Its complete representatives are the Cyrenaic school in Greece and Epicurus. Aristippus allowed that there are mental pleasures besides bodily ones, but he held that every pleasure, of whatever sort, is one and the same pleasure, and that only the greater pleasure is good. Moreover, he prized every positive pleasure and valued the pleasure of the moment above the pleasure of a whole life, so he must be called the representative of the purest hedonism. Epicurus likewise held all pleasures to be the same and pleasure to be the sole good, and thought that no pleasure should be rejected so long as it did not result in pain. But he valued the pleasure of a whole life above that of the moment, and esteemed negative pleasure, that is, a state free of suffering, above positive pleasure. What he calls the greatest good is peace of mind (tranquility of mind). Yet his fundamental principle remains egoistic hedonism through and through. Even what the Greeks called the four cardinal virtues, wisdom, temperance, courage and justice, are necessary as means to one's own pleasure. Justice, too, has no value in itself.

13 "To give up one's life to fulfill humaneness" echoes Confucius, *Analects* 15.9.

It is necessary as a means by which each person may enjoy happiness without encroaching on others. This principle is clearest in his views on social life. Society is necessary in order to gain one's own advantage. The state exists merely to secure the safety of individuals. If one could avoid the burdens of society and still obtain sufficient safety, that would be greatly to be desired. His principle is, rather, one of withdrawal from the world (λάθε βιώσας). On this basis he tried to avoid even family life as far as possible.[14]

BENTHAM AND UTILITARIANISM

Bentham makes the greatest happiness of the greatest number the highest good and proposes a calculus of pleasures.

3.8.3 Next let me discuss universalistic hedonism, that is, so-called utilitarianism. In its fundamental principle this theory is wholly the same as the former. It differs only in taking as the highest good not the pleasure of the individual but the pleasure of society, of the public at large. Its complete representative is Bentham. According to him, the aim of human life is pleasure, and the good is nothing other than pleasure. Moreover, all pleasures are the same. There is no difference of kind among them (the pleasure of the game of push-pin and the pleasure of lofty poetry are the same); there are only quantitative differences of greater and lesser. The value of our actions does not lie in the actions themselves, as the intuitionists say, but is determined entirely by the consequences that arise from them. That is, an action that produces great pleasure is a good action.[15] And as to which action is the greatest good, he says that by the principle of hedonism the greatest happiness of many people must reasonably be considered a still greater pleasure than the greatest happiness of one individual, and so the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the highest good. Bentham also used this

14 Greek, "live unnoticed," the Epicurean maxim.
15 Alluding to Bentham's remark that "push-pin is as good as poetry"; push-pin was a simple children's game played with pins.

hedonism to set out a scientific method for determining the value of actions. According to him, the value of a pleasure can for the most part be determined quantitatively: he thought that pleasures could be calculated by such standards as intensity, duration, certainty and uncertainty. As hedonism, his theory is indeed very consistent. Only one thing is not clearly explained: why must the highest good be, not the greatest pleasure of the individual, but the greatest happiness of the greatest number? Pleasure must have a subject that feels it. It is only because there is something that feels it that there is pleasure at all. And this feeling subject must always be an individual. If so, why, on the principle of hedonism, must the pleasure of many be placed above the pleasure of the individual? Because human beings have sympathy, enjoying something with others may be a greater pleasure than enjoying it alone; Mill and others draw attention to this point. But even in this case, the pleasure that comes from sympathy is not another's pleasure but one's own. One's own pleasure is still the sole standard. What, then, if one's own pleasure and the pleasure of others conflict? From the standpoint of hedonism, can we still say that one must give up one's own pleasure and seek the pleasure of others? To become an egoist, like Epicurus, would rather be the necessary consequence of hedonism. Bentham and Mill argue with all their might that one's own pleasure and the pleasure of others coincide, but I think this can never be proved on the basis of empirical fact.

CRITICISM OF HEDONISM

Pleasures cannot be measured, and human desires do not in fact aim at pleasure.

3.8.4 Having now outlined the main points of hedonism, let me turn to criticizing it. First, even granting hedonism's fundamental assumption that pleasure is the sole aim of life, can hedonism really provide an adequate norm for conduct? From the standpoint of strict hedonism, all pleasures, of whatever

sort, must be of the same kind, differing only in quantity, as greater and lesser. If pleasures had various qualitative differences, and their value differed accordingly, we would have to admit some other principle besides pleasure that determines value. That is, this would conflict with the principle that pleasure is the sole principle determining the value of action. Mill, who followed Bentham, admits various qualitative differences among pleasures, and holds that which of two kinds of pleasure is superior can easily be decided by anyone able to experience both alike. For example, everyone would rather be Socrates dissatisfied than a pig satisfied. And he holds that these differences come from the sense of human dignity (sense of dignity). But a view like Mill's clearly departs from the standpoint of hedonism. From the hedonist point of view, it cannot be allowed that one pleasure is nobler than another even though it is smaller. Then if, like Epicurus, Bentham and the others, we take pleasures purely as the same, differing only in quantity, how can we determine the quantitative relations among pleasures and thereby determine the value of actions? Aristippus and Epicurus merely say that we can discriminate by means of knowledge; they give no clear standard. Bentham alone, as I said above, discusses this standard in detail. But the feeling of pleasure is extremely changeable even within one person, according to time and circumstance, and whether one pleasure exceeds another in intensity is far from clear. Further, it is extremely difficult to determine how much intensity corresponds to how much duration. If it is so difficult to fix a measure of pleasure even within a single person, it is all the more difficult to determine the magnitude of pleasures by calculating the pleasures of others as well, as universalistic hedonism does. Commonly, mental pleasures are thought to rank above bodily ones, honor to matter more than wealth, and the pleasure of many to be nobler than one's own pleasure alone; the value of pleasures seems to be fixed by tradition in this way. But such standards have been formed from observations made from various direc-

tions, and can hardly have been determined simply by the magnitude of pleasure.

3.8.5 So far I have argued on the assumption that the fundamental principle of hedonism is correct; yet even so, it is very difficult to obtain from hedonism an exact norm by which to determine the value of our actions. Let us now go a step further and examine its fundamental principle itself. That all people desire pleasure and that pleasure is the sole aim of life is the basic assumption of this theory, and also what everyone says. But a little reflection makes it clear that this is by no means true. We must admit that human beings have, besides egoistic pleasures, lofty altruistic or ideal desires. For instance, the wish to give to those we love even at the cost of suppressing our own desires, or the conviction that we must carry out an ideal even if it costs us our life, lies hidden to some degree in everyone's heart. At times these motives display extraordinary power, and not infrequently they drive people, before they know it, to dare tragic acts of self-sacrifice. The hedonists' claim that human beings seek nothing but their own pleasure looks like a very penetrating truth, but it is in fact far from the facts. Of course the hedonists do not deny these facts. But they hold that when people have such desires and dare acts of self-sacrifice for them, they are after all trying to satisfy their own desires, and that, seen from beneath, they are still only seeking their own pleasure. It is a fact that everyone, in every case, seeks the satisfaction of desire. But it cannot be said that what seeks the satisfaction of desire is thereby seeking pleasure. However painful an ideal may be, when we have managed to carry it out, a feeling of satisfaction always accompanies it. This feeling is no doubt a kind of pleasure, but that does not mean this pleasant feeling was the aim of the action from the start. For such a pleasant feeling of satisfaction to arise, there must first be in us a natural desire. It is only because this desire exists that carrying it out produces the pleasure of satisfaction. Yet to say that, because of this pleasant feeling, all desire aims at pleasure is to confuse cause and effect. We human beings have an innate instinct of

love for others. Because we have it, loving others gives us boundless satisfaction. But that does not mean we loved others for the sake of our own pleasure. If there were even the slightest thought of doing it for one's own pleasure, one could never obtain the feeling of satisfaction that comes from love for others. And not only altruistic desires: even among the desires said to be wholly self-regarding, none aims simply at pleasure. The desires for food and sex, for example, arise driven by the necessity of a kind of innate instinct rather than aiming at pleasure. The starving may rather lament that they have an appetite, and those disappointed in love may resent that they feel love at all. If pleasure were the sole aim of human beings, nothing would be more full of contradiction than human life. It would rather be the way to pleasure to cut off all human desires. This is why Epicurus took the state free of all desire, that is, tranquility of mind, as the highest pleasure, and so came to agree with the ideal of the Stoics, who set out from the opposite principle.

3.8.6 Some hedonists, however, argue that even the desires we now regard as natural desires not aimed at pleasure have become second nature through habit, in the course of an individual's life or of biological evolution: what originally sought pleasure consciously has become unconscious. That is, a natural desire not aimed at pleasure was originally a means of obtaining pleasure and has become an end in itself through habit (Mill often cites the example of money on this point). Certainly some of our desires may have become second nature through such a psychological process. But it cannot be said that every desire not aimed at pleasure arose by such a process. Our mind, like our body, is active from birth. It has various instincts. It is by the same principle that a chick pecks at grain and a duckling takes to the water from the moment they are born. Did these things, which we should call instincts, really come about through heredity, by what was originally conscious becoming unconscious habit? According to the present theory of biological evolution, the instincts of living things by no means came about through such a process. They are capacities originally contained

in the egg of the organism; those suited to their circumstances survived and finally came to display a distinctive instinct.

3.8.7 As I have argued so far, hedonism comes closer to what is natural in human nature than the rationalist theory does. But by this theory the judgment of good and evil is determined merely by feelings of pleasure and pain, so that it can provide no exact objective standard, and it cannot explain the imperative element in moral good. Not only that: to make pleasure the sole aim of life cannot truly be said to accord with the facts of human nature. We can never be satisfied by pleasure. If there were someone who aimed at pleasure alone, that person would on the contrary be going against human nature.

CHAPTER 9: THE GOOD (THE THEORY OF ACTIVITY)

The standard of the good must be sought in the direct experience of consciousness.

3.9.1 Having discussed various views of the good and pointed out where they fall short, I think it has become clear of itself what the true view of the good is. The good that our will must take as its aim, that is, the norm that is to determine the value of our actions: where must we seek it? As I said earlier when discussing the basis of judgments of value, the basis of such judgments must at all costs be sought in the direct experience of consciousness.

THE GOOD IS EXPLAINED FROM WITHIN

Like truth, the good must be explained from the inner necessity of consciousness, not from outside.

The good must be explained from the inner demands of consciousness, not from outside. From the mere fact that things are thus, or came about thus, one cannot explain that they ought to be thus. The standard of truth, too, lies in the end in the inner necessity of consciousness; those who thought by returning to the most fundamental point, like Augustine and Descartes, all

set out from here. In the same way, the fundamental standard of the good must also be sought here.

WILL IS MORE BASIC THAN REASON

Against rationalism, Nishida follows Höffding: will is more fundamental than abstract understanding.

Heteronomous ethics, however, tries to find the standard of good and evil outside. In that way it can never explain why the good must be done. The rationalist theory tries to determine the value of good and evil by reason, which is one of the inner functions of consciousness; it can be said to have gone a step beyond heteronomous ethics. But reason is not what determines the value of the will. As Höffding said, "Consciousness begins with the activity of the will and ends with it": the will is a more fundamental fact than the function of abstract understanding.

WILL IS MORE BASIC THAN FEELING

Against hedonism, pleasure comes from satisfying innate demands, which are more fundamental than feeling.

It is not that the latter gives rise to the former; rather, the former governs the latter. What, then, of hedonism? Feeling and will may almost be said to be one and the same phenomenon differing only in intensity. But, as I said before, pleasure arises rather from the satisfaction of the innate demands of consciousness, and we must say that innate demands, such as so-called impulses and instincts, are more fundamental than feelings of pleasure and displeasure.

3.9.2 So it is clear that the explanation of what the good is must be sought in the nature of the will itself. The will is the fundamental unifying function of consciousness, and at the same time it is directly the manifestation of the unifying power that is the foundation of reality. The will is an activity not for the sake of something else but for its own sake. The basis for determining the value of the will can only be sought within the will itself. The nature of the activity of the will, as I said earlier when dis-

cussing the nature of action, is this: at its root lies an innate demand (a predisposition of consciousness), which appears in consciousness as the idea of a goal, and by this consciousness is unified. When this unity is completed, that is, when the ideal is realized, a feeling of satisfaction arises in us; when the contrary happens, a feeling of dissatisfaction arises. What determines the value of an action lies solely in this innate demand, which is the root of the will. When we have been able to realize this demand, that is, our ideal, the action is praised as good; when the contrary happens, it is condemned as evil. So the good is the realization of our inner demands, that is, of our ideals; in other words, it is the development and completion of the will. An ethical theory based on such a fundamental ideal is called the theory of activity (energetism).

3.9.3 This theory begins with Plato and Aristotle. Aristotle in particular built an ethics upon it. According to him, the aim of human life is happiness (eudaimonia). But this is reached not by seeking pleasure but through perfect activity.

3.9.4 Most of the world's so-called moralists overlook this active side. Speaking of duty or of law, they take the essence of the good to be the needless suppression of one's own demands and the fettering of activity. Of course, since we imperfect beings are apt to miss the true meaning of activity and often stray onto side roads, it is not surprising that such a tendency arose. But the need to restrain lesser demands arises only because there is a greater demand to be reached for. Needlessly suppressing demands goes against the very essence of the good. The good must also possess the character of imperative authority, but a still more necessary character is that we naturally delight in it. So-called moral duties and laws have no value in themselves, as duty or as law; rather, they arise on the basis of a greater demand. Seen from this point, the good and happiness not only do not conflict; rather, as Aristotle said, we can say that the good is happiness. To satisfy our own demands or to realize our ideals is always happiness. The good must always be accompanied, on its other side, by a feeling of happiness. Only, we cannot say, as

hedonism does, that the will aims at the feeling of pleasure and that pleasure is the good. Pleasure and happiness look alike but are different. Happiness can be obtained through satisfaction, and satisfaction arises from the realization of ideal demands. As Confucius said, "Eating coarse rice and drinking water, bending my arm for a pillow: joy is to be found in this too." In some cases we can keep our happiness even in the midst of suffering.[16] True happiness is, rather, to be gained through the realization of a stern ideal. People often equate the realization of one's ideals or the satisfaction of one's demands with egoism or self-indulgence. But the voice of the deepest inner demand of the self has great authority over us; there is nothing in life sterner than this.

THE GOOD AS SELF-REALIZATION

The good is the development and completion of the self, as each thing fulfills its own nature.

3.9.5 Now if the good is the realization of ideals and the satisfaction of demands, where do these demands and ideals come from, and what is the nature of the good? The will is the deepest unifying function of consciousness, that is, the activity of the self itself. So the original demands or ideals that give rise to the will arise, in short, from the nature of the self itself; we may even say they are the power of the self. In our consciousness, whether in thinking and imagination, in will, or in so-called perception, feeling and impulse, an inner unity is at work at the root of everything, and all phenomena of consciousness are the development and completion of this one thing. The deepest unifying power that unifies this whole is what we call the self, and the will is what expresses this power most fully. Seen in this way, the development and completion of the will is directly the development and completion of the self, and we can say that the good is the development and completion of the self (self-realization). That is, the highest good is for our spirit to develop its various capacities and attain a full and harmonious develop-

16 Confucius, *Analects* 7.16.

ment (what Aristotle calls entelechie is the good). Just as bamboo is bamboo and pine is pine, each fully displaying its natural endowment, so for human beings to display their human nature is the human good. Spinoza too said, "Virtue is nothing other than acting according to one's own proper nature."[17]

THE GOOD, THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE REAL

The good coincides with beauty and with reality, since all three are a thing realizing its own nature.

3.9.6 Here the concept of the good draws close to the concept of beauty. Beauty is felt when a thing is realized as its ideal. To be realized as its ideal means that a thing displays its natural essence. So, just as a flower is most beautiful when it shows the true nature of a flower, a human being reaches the summit of beauty when showing the true nature of a human being. The good is beauty. Even when an action in itself has no value from the standpoint of the greater demands of human nature, if it is truly a natural action springing from the person's innate nature, it evokes a kind of aesthetic feeling; in the same way, in morality it gives rise to a kind of tolerance. The Greeks identified the good and the beautiful. This view appears most fully in Plato.

3.9.7 Seen from another side, the concept of the good also coincides with the concept of reality. As I argued earlier, the development and completion of a single something is the fundamental form in which all reality is constituted; spirit, nature and the universe are all constituted in this form. If so, the good, which I have just called the development and completion of the self, means following the laws of one's own reality. That is, to accord with one's own true reality is the highest good. So the laws of morality come to be included in the laws of reality, and the good can be explained from the true nature of the reality of the self. The inner demand that is the basis of judgments of value and the unifying power of reality are one, not two. To consider existence and value separately comes from the abstracting

17 Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part IV.

operation that separates the objects of knowledge from the objects of feeling and will; in concrete true reality the two are originally one. Thus to seek the good and turn toward the good is, in the end, to know the truth of the self. That the rationalists identified the true and the good contains one side of the truth. But abstract knowledge and the good do not necessarily coincide. Knowing in this case must mean grasping something with one's whole being. These ideas are the fundamental thought of Plato in Greece and of the Upanishads in India, and I think they are the deepest thought about the good (in Plato the Idea of the Good is the foundation of reality; and medieval philosophy too has the phrase "all being is good" (omne ens est bonum)).

CHAPTER 10: THE GOOD AS PERSONALITY

Among our many demands, which is it the highest good to satisfy?

3.10.1 Above, I first discussed what the good must be and gave a general concept of the good. Now I wish to examine what the good of us human beings is, and to clarify its features. It is plain to everyone that our consciousness is by no means a single simple activity but a synthesis of various activities. If so, our demands too are by no means simple; naturally there are various demands. Then, among these various demands, which is it the highest good to satisfy? The question arises: what is the good of our self as a whole?

3.10.2 None of our phenomena of consciousness stands alone; each is always constituted in relation to others. Even a single moment of consciousness is already not simple; it contains complex elements. And these elements are not independent of one another; they have a kind of meaning in their relations to each other. Not only is the consciousness of a single moment organized in this way: the consciousness of a whole life is likewise such a system. The self is the name we give to the unity of this whole.

3.10.3 If so, our demands too never arise in isolation. They always arise in relation to others. Our good does not mean satis-

fying only some one kind of demand, or a demand of a single moment; clearly a given demand becomes good only in relation to the whole. It is just as the good of the body lies not in the health of one part but in the healthy relations of the whole body. So, from the standpoint of the theory of activity, the good must first of all be the agreement and harmony, or the mean, of various activities. Our conscience, then, is the operation of consciousness that harmonizes and unifies.

3.10.4 That harmony is the good was Plato's view. He likened the good to harmony in music. In England, Shaftesbury and others also took this view. That the mean is the good was Aristotle's doctrine, and in the East it appears in the book *The Doctrine of the Mean*. Aristotle held that all virtue lies in the mean: courage, for example, is the mean between rashness and cowardice, and thrift the mean between stinginess and extravagance. This closely resembles the thought of Zisi. And when the evolutionist ethicist Spencer says that the good is the balance of various capacities, this too amounts to the same thing.[18]

3.10.5 But merely saying harmony or the mean does not yet make the meaning clear. Harmony in what sense? The mean in what sense? Consciousness is not an aggregate of activities of equal rank but a unified system. Its harmony, or its mean, must mean not something quantitative but a systematic order. Then what is the proper order among the various activities of our mind? At its lower levels our mind, like the mind of animals, is merely instinctive activity. That is, it works impulsively toward the object in front of it and is moved entirely by carnal desire. But however simple a phenomenon of consciousness may be, it always carries within it a demand of ideas. So however instinctive an activity of consciousness may be, an activity of ideas must lie hidden behind it (I think this must be so even in the higher animals). No human being, unless it be a person with a severe intellectual disability, is ever satisfied purely by bodily desires; at the bottom of the heart, desires for ideas are always

18 *The Doctrine of the Mean* (Ch. *Zhongyong*), one of the Confucian Four Books, is traditionally attributed to Zisi, Confucius's grandson.

at work. That is, everyone holds some ideal or other. Even the miser's greed for gain comes from a kind of ideal. In short, human beings do not exist on the level of the body; they have their life on the level of ideas. In Goethe's poem "The Violet," a violet in the field, trampled by a young shepherdess, nonetheless finds the satisfaction of love. I think this is the true feeling of all human beings. So the activity of ideas is the fundamental function of the mind, and our consciousness should be governed by it. That is, we must say that satisfying the demands that arise from it is our true good.[19] If we go a step further and ask what the fundamental law of the activity of ideas is, the answer is the law of reason. The laws of reason express the most general and most fundamental relations between ideas, and are the highest law governing the activity of ideas. So reason, in turn, is the fundamental capacity that should govern our mind, and the satisfaction of reason is our highest good. It follows that to follow reason in everything is the human good. The Cynics and the Stoics pressed this view to the extreme; on this account they rejected all the other demands of the human heart as evil, and went so far as to say that following reason alone is the one good. But for the later Plato and for Aristotle, what arises from the activity of reason is the highest good, and yet governing and controlling the other activities by it is also good.

3.10.6 Plato, in his famous *Republic*, identifies the organization of the human mind with the organization of the state, and says that the condition of being governed by reason is the highest good, in the state as in the individual.

PERSONALITY AS UNIFYING POWER

The good lies in maintaining and developing personality, the unifying power of consciousness and of the universe.

3.10.7 If our consciousness consisted of a synthesis of various capacities and were so constituted that one of them should gov-

19 Goethe's "Das Veilchen" (1773–1774), in which the violet rejoices to die beneath the girl's foot; set to music by Mozart.

ern the others, then the good in the theory of activity would have to lie, as just described, in following reason and controlling the rest. But our consciousness is originally a single activity. At its root a single power is always at work. This power already appears in momentary activities of consciousness such as perception and impulse. Going further, in conscious activities such as thinking, imagination and will, it appears in a still more profound form. When we say we follow reason, this means nothing other than following this profound unifying power. Otherwise, reason considered abstractly, as mere reason, provides only formal relations without any content, as I said earlier in criticizing the rationalist theory. This unifying power of consciousness never exists apart from the content of consciousness; rather, the content of consciousness is constituted by this power. Of course, when we analyze the content of consciousness piece by piece, we cannot find this unifying power. Yet in the synthesis of that content it appears as a single fact, unmistakable and unshakable. It is like the ideal that appears in a painting or the feeling that appears in music: not something to be analyzed and understood, but something to be intuited and grasped for oneself. And if we here call such a unifying power each person's personality, then the good lies in the maintenance and development of such personality, that is, of this unifying power.

3.10.8 The power of personality meant here does not refer simply to a natural, physical force such as the vital force of animals and plants. Nor does it refer to an unconscious capacity such as instinct. The operation of instinct is a kind of physical force arising from organic functions. Personality, by contrast, is the unifying power of consciousness. But this is not to say that personality means the various highly subjective wishes that form the center of each person's surface consciousness. These wishes may express a person's personality to some extent, but true personality appears rather where these wishes are extinguished and the self is forgotten. Nor, on the other hand, is it something like the operation of pure reason, wholly separate from empirical content and common to everyone, as Kant held.

Personality must be something that has a particular meaning in each individual. True unity of consciousness is a pure, unmixed activity that appears of itself without our knowing it. It is the original state of consciousness, independent and self-complete, in which there is no distinction of knowing, feeling and willing and no separation of subject and object. It is at such times that our true personality shows itself in its entirety. Therefore personality is not simply reason, nor desire, still less unconscious impulse. Like the inspiration of a genius, it is an infinite unifying power that acts directly and spontaneously from within each person (as one of the ancients said, the Way belongs neither to knowing nor to not knowing). And if, as I said earlier in discussing reality, phenomena of consciousness are the sole reality, then our personality is directly the working of the unifying power of the universe. That is, it is the sole reality, which has broken through the distinction between matter and mind, appearing in a particular form according to circumstances.[20]

3.10.9 Since our good is the realization of so great a power, its demand is exceedingly stern. Kant too said: "There are two things we always regard with boundless admiration and awe: the starry heavens above, and the moral law within."[21]

CHAPTER 11: THE MOTIVE OF GOOD CONDUCT (THE FORM OF THE GOOD)

Since personality alone has absolute value, good conduct takes the realization of personality as its end.

3.11.1 To sum up what has been argued so far: the good is that which satisfies the inner demands of the self. Since the greatest demand of the self is the demand of the fundamental unifying power of consciousness, that is, of personality, satisfying this demand is for us the absolute good. This means the realization of personality. This demand of personality is the unifying power

20 The words of the Chan master Nanquan to Zhaozhou, recorded in the *Wumenguan* (*Gateless Barrier*), case 19.

21 From the conclusion of Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788).

of consciousness and, at the same time, the manifestation of the infinite unifying power at the foundation of reality. To realize our personality means to become one with this power. If the good is something of this kind, I think we can now determine what kind of conduct good conduct is.

3.11.2 From this view it is clear, first of all, that good conduct is in every case conduct that takes personality as its end. Personality is the root of all value, and in the universe personality alone has absolute value. We have, of course, various demands. There are bodily desires and there are spiritual desires. Accordingly there are no doubt various things worth esteeming: wealth, power, knowledge, art and so on. But however strong or however lofty a demand may be, apart from the demand of personality it has no value whatever. It has value only as a part of the demand of personality or as a means to it. Wealth and rank, power, health, skill and learning are not good in themselves. When they run counter to the demand of personality, they become, on the contrary, evil. So absolutely good conduct must be conduct that takes the realization of personality itself as its end, that is, conduct that works for the sake of the unity of consciousness itself.

3.11.3 According to Kant, things have their value determined from outside, so their value is relative. Only our will determines value by itself; that is, personality has absolute value. His teaching, as everyone knows, was this: respect the personality of yourself and of others, treat it as an end in itself (end in itself), and never use it as a means.

3.11.4 If so, what must good conduct be if it truly takes personality itself as its end? To answer this question we would have to discuss the objective content of the activity of personality and make clear the aim of conduct. Let us first, however, discuss the subjective character of good conduct, namely its motive. Good conduct must in every case be conduct that arises from the inner necessity of the self. As I said earlier, we can become aware of the demand of our whole personality only in the state of direct experience, before we have yet deliberated and dis-

criminated. Personality is, in such moments, a kind of voice of inner demand that emerges from the depths of the mind and gradually embraces the whole mind. Good conduct that takes personality itself as its end must be conduct that follows such a demand. To go against it is to negate one's own personality.

UTMOST SINCERITY

Good conduct springs from utmost sincerity, a demand found only when knowledge and feeling are exhausted.

Utmost sincerity is an indispensable condition of good conduct. Christ, too, said that only those who are innocent and unaffected like little children can enter the kingdom of heaven. Utmost sincerity is good not because of the results that come from it. It is good in itself. That deceiving others is evil is due less to the results that follow from it than to the fact that one deceives oneself and negates one's own personality.[22]

3.11.5 Talk of the inner necessity of the self, or of the demands of one's unaffected nature, is apt to be misunderstood. Some think that being natural means being dissolute and lawless, disregarding the rules of society and not restraining one's passions. But the inner necessity of personality, that is, utmost sincerity, is a demand that rests on the union of intellect, feeling and will. It does not mean merely following blind impulse against the judgment of knowledge and the claims of human feeling. Only when we have exhausted our knowledge and exhausted our feeling does the true demand of personality, utmost sincerity, appear. We first see the true activity of personality only where we have spent our whole strength to the very end, where our consciousness of self has all but vanished and the self is no longer conscious of itself. Look, for example, at works of art. When does a painter's true personality, that is, originality, appear? As long as the painter is consciously forming various plans, we cannot yet truly see the painter's personality. We can see it only after many years of toil, when the skill has ripened

22 "Utmost sincerity" (至誠, *shisei*) is a key term of the *Doctrine of the Mean*.

within, the idea arrives and the brush follows of itself. The manifestation of personality in morality is no different. To manifest personality is not to follow a passing passion but to follow the most solemn inner demand. It is the very opposite of licentiousness and weakness. It is, on the contrary, a work of hardship and toil.

3.11.6 To follow one's earnest inner demand, that is, to realize one's true personality, does not mean setting up the subjective against the objective and making external things obey the self. It is precisely where we have wholly worn away our subjective fancies and become entirely one with things that we can satisfy the true demand of the self and see the true self. Seen from one side, each person's objective world can be said to be a reflection of that person's personality. Indeed, each person's true self is nothing other than the independent, self-complete system of reality itself that appears before that person. So the most earnest demand of any person must always accord with the ideal of the objective world that person sees. For example, however selfish a person may be, if there is any sympathy in them at all, their greatest demand will surely be to give satisfaction to others once their own satisfaction has been secured. If by the demands of the self we mean not merely bodily desires but include ideal demands as well, we cannot but say this. The more selfish one is, the more inner anguish one feels at harming the selfish desires of others. On the contrary, I think it is only a person without selfish desires who could thwart the selfish desires of others with an easy mind.

GOOD CONDUCT IS LOVE

Realizing the self means becoming one with the objective, so good conduct is always love.

So to fulfill the greatest demand of the self and to realize the self comes to mean realizing the objective ideal of the self, that is, becoming one with the objective. Seen from this point, we can say that good conduct is necessarily love. Love is in every case

the feeling of the unity of self and other. It is the feeling of the unity of subject and object. This holds not only when one person faces another. When a painter faces nature, that too is love.

3.11.7 In his famous *Symposium*, Plato says that "love is the feeling by which what is lacking seeks to return to its original, whole state."

3.11.8 But if we take our thinking one step further, true good conduct is neither making the objective obey the subjective nor the subjective obeying the objective. We reach the summit of good conduct only when subject and object have both vanished, when things and self are both forgotten, and there is nothing but the activity of the sole reality of heaven and earth. We may say that things moved me, or that I moved things. We may say that Sesshū painted nature, or that nature painted itself through Sesshū.[23] Originally there is no distinction between things and self. Just as the objective world can be called a reflection of the self, so the self is a reflection of the objective world. There is no self apart from the world I see (see Part II, Chapter 9, "Spirit"). Heaven and earth share one root; the ten thousand things are one body. The ancient sages of India expressed this as "You are that" (Tat twam asi). Paul said, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). And Confucius said, "I followed what my heart desired without overstepping the bounds."[24]

CHAPTER 12: THE AIM OF GOOD CONDUCT (THE CONTENT OF THE GOOD)

Having treated the motive of good conduct, Nishida now asks what aims it must pursue.

3.12.1 In explaining good conduct that takes personality itself as its end, I have first shown from what motive good conduct must arise. Let me now discuss what aim it must have. Good conduct

23 Sesshū Tōyō (1420–1506), the great Japanese master of ink painting.
24 Tat tvam asi, as it is usually transliterated, comes from the Chāndogya Upanishad. Confucius describes himself at seventy (*Analects* 2.4).

is not merely a matter internal to consciousness. It is action that aims to produce some objective result in this world of fact, so we must now make clear the concrete content of this aim. What I discussed before was, so to speak, the form of the good. What I am about to discuss is the content of the good.

3.12.2 Personality, which is the unifying power of consciousness and at the same time the unifying power of reality, is realized first in us as individuals. At the root of our consciousness there is something that cannot be analyzed: individuality. All activities of consciousness are expressions of individuality. Each person's knowledge, feeling and will all bear a character peculiar to that person. This individuality appears not only in phenomena of consciousness but also in each person's features, speech and bearing. It is precisely this individuality that a portrait seeks to express. Individuality begins its activity as soon as a person is born into this world, and it develops in various ways according to various experiences and circumstances until death. Scientists would probably attribute it to the constitution of the brain. As I have often said, however, I think it is a manifestation of the infinite unifying power of reality. So we must first of all take the realization of this individuality as our aim. This is the most immediate good. Health and knowledge are of course things to be valued. But health and knowledge in themselves are not the good. We cannot be satisfied merely with them. What gives the individual absolute satisfaction is the realization of one's own individuality, that is, bringing out in one's actions one's own distinctive character, which others cannot imitate. Expressing one's individuality is something anyone can do, whatever their natural gifts or circumstances. Every human being, just as each has a different face, has a distinctive character that others cannot imitate, one of a kind and without a second. Its realization gives each person supreme satisfaction and makes each an indispensable member in the evolution of the universe. Until now people have not placed much weight on individual good. But I think that individual good is the most important thing, and that it will be the foundation of all other goods. Truly great people are great

not because their deeds are great but because they have expressed a powerful individuality. If one climbs to a high place and calls out, the voice will reach far. But this is not because the voice is loud; it is because the place where one stands is high. I think that someone who has fully brought out their own true colors is greater than someone who has forgotten their proper part and rushed about in vain for others.

3.12.3 But what I here call individual good is different from private interest and selfish desire. Individualism and egoism must be strictly distinguished. Egoism takes one's own pleasure as its aim. In short, it is selfishness. Individualism is its exact opposite. For each person to indulge their material desires without restraint would, on the contrary, mean losing individuality. However many pigs there are, there is no individuality among them. People also speak as if individualism and collectivism were opposed, but I consider the two to be at one. Society progresses only when the individuals within it each act to the full and bring out their natural endowments. A society that ignores the individual can never be called a healthy society.

3.12.4 The virtue most needed for individual good is a strong will. Someone like Ibsen's Brand is the ideal of individual morality. Weakness of will and vanity, by contrast, are the most detestable vices (both arise from losing one's self-respect). And the one who commits the greatest crime against the individual is the person who, in the extremity of despair, takes their own life.[25]

THE SOCIAL SELF

Individual consciousness is one cell of a social consciousness, so most of our demands are social.

3.12.5 As I said above, true individualism is by no means something to be censured, nor is it bound to clash with society. But are the so-called individualities of each person realities that are

25 Brand (1866), Ibsen's verse drama, whose priest-hero demands "all or nothing" of himself and others.

each independent and unrelated to one another? Or is there, at the basis of us as individuals, something like a social self, of which our individual selves are manifestations? If the former, individual good must be our highest good. If the latter, we must say that there is for us a still greater good, that of society. I think that what Aristotle said at the beginning of his *Politics*, that human beings are social animals, is an unshakable truth. Considered in the light of present-day physiology, even our bodies are not individual things. The origin of our bodies lies in the cells of our ancestors. We and our descendants alike have arisen through the division of the same cells. The whole of a living species can be seen as a single living being. Biologists today say that living things do not die. The same holds for our conscious life. Wherever human beings lead a communal life, there is always a social consciousness that unifies the consciousness of each. Language, manners, customs, institutions, laws, religion, literature and the like are all phenomena of this social consciousness. Our individual consciousness arose within it and was nurtured within it. It is no more than one cell making up this great consciousness. Knowledge, morality and taste all have social significance. Even the most universal learning does not escape social convention (this is why each country today has its own scholarly style). What are called individual characteristics are no more than the manifold variations that appear on the foundation of this social consciousness. However extraordinary a genius may be, a genius cannot escape the bounds of this social consciousness. Such a person is, rather, one who has brought out the profound significance of social consciousness (Christ's relation to Judaism is an example). Something truly without any relation to social consciousness would be no more than the consciousness of someone who has lost their reason.

3.12.6 No one can deny facts such as these. But there are various objections when it comes to whether this communal consciousness exists in the same sense as individual consciousness, and whether it can be regarded as a personality. Höffding, for one, denies the reality of a unifying consciousness. He says, "A forest

is a collection of trees; divide it, and there is no such thing as the forest. Society too is a collection of individuals, and apart from the individuals there is no independent existence called society" (Höffding, Ethik, S. 157). But we cannot say that there is no unity just because no unity exists once things have been analyzed. Even in individual consciousness, analysis finds no separate unifying self. Yet the unity has a distinctive character of its own, and the various phenomena must be regarded as constituted through this unity. That is why we regard it as a single living reality. For the same reason, social consciousness too can be seen as a single living reality. Social consciousness, like individual consciousness, has a center and has connections. It is fully a system. Individual consciousness does have one basis of its own, the body. This is where it differs from social consciousness. But the brain, too, is by no means a simple physical object; it is a collection of cells. This is no different from society being made up of individuals as its cells.

3.12.7 There is thus a social consciousness, and our individual consciousness is a part of it. Therefore most of our demands are social. If we removed the altruistic elements from our desires, almost nothing would remain. This is clear from the fact that even our desire to live has altruism as its chief cause. We are satisfied less by our own satisfaction than by the satisfaction of those we love or of the society to which we belong. Originally the center of our self is not confined within the individual body. A mother's self is in her child; a loyal subject's self is in the sovereign. As one's personality grows greater, one's demands become social.

FAMILY, STATE AND HUMANKIND

Personality develops through the family and the state toward a union of all humankind.

3.12.8 Let me now briefly describe the stages of social good. Social consciousness has various stages. The smallest and most immediate of them is the family. The family must be called the first

stage at which our personality develops into society. When a man and a woman unite to form a family, their purpose is a deeper spiritual (moral) aim than simply leaving descendants. In Plato's *Symposium* there is a story that man and woman were originally one body but were divided by the god, and that this is why men and women long for each other to this day. This is a very interesting idea. Seen from the type of humanity, an individual man or woman is not a complete human being. Man and woman together make one complete human being. Otto Weininger says, "Human beings, in body and in spirit alike, are composed of a union of male and female elements; the two sexes love each other so that these two elements may combine to form a complete human being." Just as the male character is not the complete type of humanity, the female character is surely not the complete type either. Only when the two sexes complement each other can personality develop completely.[26]

3.12.9 But the development of our social consciousness is not confined to a small group such as the family. All of our spiritual and material life is able to develop within its respective social groups. After the family, what unifies the whole of our conscious activity, and may be regarded as the manifestation of a personality, is the state. There are various views on the aim of the state. Some place the essence of the state in the might of sovereignty. They think its aim is simply to ward off enemies abroad and to protect the lives and property of citizens from one another at home (Schopenhauer, Taine, Hobbes and others belong to this group). Others place the essence of the state in the individual. They think its aim is simply the harmonious development of individual personalities (this is the view of Rousseau and others). But the true aim of the state is neither material and negative, as the first group holds, nor is individual personality the foundation of the state, as the second group holds. Our individual selves have, on the contrary, developed as cells of a society. The essence of the state is the manifestation of the communal consciousness that is the foundation of our spirit. In the

26 Otto Weininger (1880–1903), Austrian author of *Sex and Character* (1903).

state we can achieve a great development of personality. The state is a unified personality, and its institutions and laws are manifestations of the will of this communal consciousness (this view was held in antiquity by Plato and Aristotle and in modern times by Hegel). When we devote ourselves to the state, it is for the development and completion of a great personality. And when the state punishes someone, it is neither for revenge nor for the peace of society, but because personality has an inviolable dignity.

3.12.10 At present the state is the greatest manifestation of a unified communal consciousness. But our manifestation of personality cannot stop there; it demands something still greater. This is the union of a human society that gathers all humankind into one body. Such an ideal already appears in Paul's Christianity and in the Stoic school. But this ideal cannot easily be realized. Ours is still an age of armed peace.

3.12.11 If we trace the course of human development from the distant beginnings of history, the state is not the final aim of humankind. Human development has a consistent meaning and aim, and states, it seems, rise and fall, flourish and decline, each in order to fulfill a part of this mission (world history is the development of what Hegel calls the world spirit). But true cosmopolitanism does not mean that states disappear. It means that each state becomes ever stronger, brings out its own distinctive character, and contributes to the history of the world.

CHAPTER 13: PERFECT GOOD CONDUCT

Do the inner satisfaction of personality and the good as outward fact always agree?

3.13.1 In a word, the good is the realization of personality. Seen from within, it is the satisfaction of earnest demands, that is, the unity of consciousness, and at its culmination it must reach the point where self and other are both forgotten and subject and object both vanish. Seen as a fact manifested outwardly, it begins small, with the development of individuality, and

reaches its peak in the unified development of humankind as a whole. These two views raise the need to explain one more important problem. Is what gives great satisfaction within necessarily also something that should be called a great good in fact? That is, do the two interpretations of the good always agree?

3.13.2 Reasoning first from the theory of reality I set out earlier, I assert that these two views never contradict or conflict with each other. Originally phenomena have no distinction of inner and outer. Subjective consciousness and the objective world of reality are the same phenomenon seen from different sides; concretely there is only one fact. As I have often said, we may say that the world is constituted through the unity of consciousness of the self, or we may equally say that the self is a particular small system of reality. As in the fundamental idea of Buddhism, the self and the universe have the same foundation; indeed, they are directly one and the same thing. Therefore we can feel within our own minds the infinite meaning of reality: in knowledge as infinite truth, in feeling as infinite beauty, in will as infinite good. When we know reality, we are not knowing things outside the self; we are knowing ourselves. The truth, goodness and beauty of reality must be directly the truth, goodness and beauty of the self. Then the doubt will arise: why is there falsehood, ugliness and evil in this world? If we think deeply, there is in this world neither absolute truth, goodness and beauty nor absolute falsehood, ugliness and evil. Falsehood, ugliness and evil always appear where one looks abstractly at one side of a thing without knowing the whole, where one leans to one side and runs counter to the unity of the whole (as I said in Part II, Chapter 5, seen from one side, falsehood, ugliness and evil are necessary for reality to be constituted; they arise from what is called the principle of opposition).

3.13.3 According to Augustine, there is originally no such thing as evil in the world. Nature, created by God, is wholly good; only the privation of essence is evil. Moreover, God has adorned the world with oppositions, like a beautiful poem. Just as shadow

enhances the beauty of a painting, the world, when viewed from a lofty standpoint, is beautiful even as it bears sin.

3.13.4 Let us consider the cases in which the fact of the good and the demand for the good conflict. There are two. In one, an act is good as a fact but its motive is not good. In the other, the motive is good but the act is not good as a fact. Consider first the former case. If the inner motive is private interest and selfish desire, and the act merely accords with a good aim in its outward fact, it surely cannot be called good conduct that aims at the realization of personality. We may sometimes praise such acts. But then we are by no means looking at them from the standpoint of morality; we are looking at them merely from the standpoint of profit. From the standpoint of morality, such acts are inferior to those of someone who has given their utmost sincerity, however foolish that person may be. Or it may be said that an act that benefits many people, even if it does not spring from a purely good motive, is superior to the good conduct of one person who keeps only themselves pure. But benefiting people has various meanings. If it means merely giving material benefit, then the benefit becomes good if it is used for good ends; if it is used for bad ends, it may on the contrary help evil. And if it is meant in the truly moral sense of benefiting the ways of the world and the hearts of people, then, unless the act was inwardly true good conduct, it is merely a means of helping good conduct, not good conduct itself. It cannot be compared with true good conduct itself, however small that may be. Let us next consider the second case. Even when the motive is good, an act cannot always be called good in fact. People often say that an individual's utmost sincerity and the highest good of humankind as a whole can conflict. But I think those who say this do not understand the words "utmost sincerity" correctly. If they are used truly in the sense of the deepest demand of the whole spirit, I consider that what such people say is hardly ever the case. Our earnest demands are not something we have made up; they are facts of nature. Just as there are universal elements at the root of the human mind with regard to truth and beauty, so

there are universal elements with regard to the good. This feeling arises of itself when the night is still and the mind is calm, as when Faust, after great anguish over human life, returned late at night from a walk in the fields to his lonely study (Goethe, Faust, Erster Teil, Studierzimmer). Leaving aside beings whose consciousness rests on a foundation entirely different from ours, any human being endowed with the reason common to all must, I think, think alike and seek alike. Of course, humankind's greatest demand may in some cases remain mere potentiality and not become actual and operative. But even then the demand is not absent. It is obscured; the self does not know its true self.

3.13.5 For the reasons stated above, I consider that our deepest demand and the greatest aim are naturally at one. As we discipline ourselves within and reach the true substance of the self, a love for humankind as one arises of itself without, and we come to accord with the highest good aim. This is what is called perfect, true good conduct. Seen from one side, such perfect good conduct seems an extremely difficult thing. Seen from another side, it must be something anyone can do. Morality is not a matter of seeking something outside the self. It is simply finding what is in the self. People often confuse the essence of the good with its outer shell, and so they think that it is not the greatest good unless one undertakes some work on behalf of the world or of humankind. But the kind of work one does is determined by one's abilities and circumstances; not everyone can do the same work. Yet however different our work may be, we can work in the same spirit. However small the work, someone who always works out of love for humankind as one must be called a person who is realizing a great personality of humankind. Raphael's noble and graceful character may have found in the Madonna its most fitting material for realization. But Raphael's character appears not only in the Madonna but in all the paintings he made. Even if Raphael and Michelangelo chose the same subject, Raphael would express Raphael's character and Michelangelo would express Michelangelo's. The essence of art

and of morality lies in the spirit, not in the things of the external world.

KNOWING THE TRUE SELF

In practice the one true good is to know the true self, which unites us with God.

3.13.6 In closing, let me add a word. If one explains the good theoretically, many explanations can be given. In practice, however, there is only one true good: it comes down entirely to knowing the true self. Our true self is the fundamental substance of the universe. If we know the true self, we not only accord with the good of humankind in general but merge with the fundamental substance of the universe and are united in hidden accord with the will of God. Religion and morality truly come down to this. And the way to know the true self and to be united with God lies only in attaining for oneself the power of the unity of subject and object. To gain this power, we must kill off this false self of ours entirely, die once to the desires of this world, and then come back to life (as Muhammad said, heaven lies in the shadow of swords). Only thus can we truly reach the realm of the unity of subject and object.[27] This is the deepest secret of religion, morality and art. Christianity calls it rebirth; Buddhism calls it seeing one's nature. There is a story that once, when Pope Benedict XI sent word to Giotto asking to see a work that would show his skill as a painter, Giotto simply drew a single circle and sent it. In morality we must attain this circle of Giotto's.[28]

27 A hadith of the Prophet: "Paradise is under the shade of swords."
28 "Seeing one's nature" (*kenshō*) is the Zen term for awakening. The story of Giotto's freehand circle comes from Vasari's *Lives of the Artists*.

Part IV: Religion

第四編　宗教

The religious need, the essence of religion, God and the world, and knowledge and love as one.

CHAPTER 1: THE RELIGIOUS NEED

4.1.1 The religious need is a need concerning the self, a need concerning the life of the self. It is the need by which our self, as soon as it becomes aware of its own relativity and finitude, desires to unite with an absolute and infinite power and thereby to gain eternal, true life. As Paul said, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me." It is the feeling of having nailed the whole of one's carnal life to the cross and seeking to live by God alone. True religion seeks the transformation of the self, the renewal of life. As Christ said, "Whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me." So long as even a trace of belief in oneself remains, it cannot yet be called a true religious mind.

4.1.2 Praying to God for worldly benefit is not a true religious mind; that goes without saying. But neither is reciting the nenbutsu solely with rebirth in the Pure Land as one's aim. So the *Tannishō*, too, says: "Even the nenbutsu one recites while striving in one's own mind for the act that brings rebirth is turned into one's own practice." Likewise in Christianity, merely relying on God's help and fearing God's punishment is not true Chris-

tianity.[1] All these are merely disguised forms of self-interest. Moreover, I wonder whether the claim many people make today, that religion is for one's own peace of mind, is not itself mistaken. Because people hold such a view, they come to suppose that the true meaning of religion lies in extinguishing the spirit of enterprise and activity and leading a negative life of few desires and no cares. We do not seek religion for our own peace of mind. Peace of mind is merely a result that comes from religion. The religious need is the need of a great life, which we cannot stop even if we wish to stop it. It is the need of a solemn will. Religion is the very aim of human beings, and it must never be made a means to something else.

4.1.3 Suppose that, as voluntarist psychologists say, will is the fundamental activity of the mind and all mental phenomena take the form of will. Then our mind is a system of desires, and the most powerful desire, the one that becomes the center of this system, is our self. And to unify everything from this center, that is, to maintain and develop the self, is our spiritual life. As long as this unifying proceeds, we are alive. But if this unity breaks down, then even though we may be alive in body, we are as good as dead in spirit. Yet can we unify everything with individual desire as the center? That is, can individual life be maintained and developed without limit? The world was not made for the individual, nor are individual desires the greatest desires of human life. Individual life must inevitably clash with the world outside and fall into contradiction within. At this point we find we must seek a still greater life. That is, through a shift in the center of consciousness, we find we must seek a still greater unity. Such a need can be seen wherever our communal spirit arises, but the religious need is the extreme point of such needs. As long as we set up a subjective self against the objective world and seek to unify that world by means of it, the unity cannot escape being relative, however great that subjective self may be.

1 The *Tannishō* records sayings of Shinran (1173–1263). The nenbutsu is the recitation of Amida Buddha's name; to make it "one's own practice" is to rely on one's own effort rather than on Amida.

Absolute unity is gained only by entirely abandoning subjective unity and becoming one with objective unity.

4.1.4 Originally, the unity of consciousness is the condition for consciousness to be constituted; it is its fundamental need. Consciousness without unity is as good as nothing. Consciousness can be constituted through the opposition of its contents, and the more manifold the contents, the greater the unity it requires on the other side. The point where this unity reaches its limit is what we call objective reality, and this unity reaches its peak in the unity of subject and object. Objective reality, too, does not exist separately, apart from subjective consciousness. It is that which, as a result of the unity of consciousness, we cannot doubt even if we wish to doubt it, and beyond which there is no way to seek further even if we wish to seek. And the peak of this unity of consciousness, the state of the unity of subject and object, is not only the fundamental need of consciousness but also, in truth, the original state of consciousness. As Condillac said, when we first see light, rather than seeing it, we are the light itself. Every first sensation must be, for a small child, directly the universe itself. In this state there is not yet any separation of subject and object. Things and self are one body; there is only a single fact. Since self and things are one, there is no further truth to seek and no desire to satisfy. Human beings are with God. This is perhaps what is meant by the Garden of Eden.[2] But as consciousness differentiates and develops, subject and object stand opposed and things and self turn against each other. Human life now has needs and has suffering; human beings are separated from God, and paradise is closed forever to the descendants of Adam. Yet however far consciousness may differentiate and develop, it can never leave the unity of subject and object. In knowledge and in will we are constantly seeking this unity. The differentiation and development of consciousness is the other side of unity and is likewise a condition for consciousness to be constituted. When consciousness differenti-

2 Étienne Bonnot de Condillac (1714–1780), whose *Treatise on Sensations* (1754) imagines a statue that becomes each sensation it receives.

ates and develops, it is in fact seeking a still greater unity. Unity, we must say, is truly the alpha and the omega of consciousness. The religious need is the need for the unity of consciousness in this sense, and at the same time the need for union with the universe.

4.1.5 Thus the religious need is the deepest and greatest need of the human mind. We have various bodily needs and spiritual needs as well. But these are all needs of only a part of the self; religion alone is the resolution of the self itself. In knowledge and in will we seek the unity of consciousness and the unity of subject and object. But this is still only a one-sided unity. Religion seeks the deepest unity behind these unities, the unity before knowledge and will are divided. All our needs have differentiated from the religious need, and one may say that, as they develop, they return to it in the end. When human knowledge is not yet developed, people are, on the contrary, religious, and the culmination of learning and morality must in turn enter into religion. There are people in the world who often ask why religion is necessary. But such a question is the same as asking why it is necessary to live. Religion does not exist apart from one's own life; its need is the need of life itself. To raise such a question shows that one is not living earnestly. Anyone who wishes to think earnestly and to live earnestly cannot help feeling an ardent religious need.

CHAPTER 2: THE ESSENCE OF RELIGION

Religion is the relation between God and human beings, who must share one nature.

4.2.1 Religion is the relation between God and human beings. There may be various ways of conceiving God, but I think it most appropriate to regard God as the foundation of the universe; and by human beings I mean our individual consciousness. The various religions are determined by how the relation between these two is conceived. What kind of relation, then, is the truly religious relation? If God and the self differ in essence

at their foundation, and God is merely something like a great power surpassing human beings, then we cannot find in ourselves the slightest religious motive toward God.

FEAR AND FLATTERY ARE NOT RELIGION

Fearing a power or seeking its favor springs only from self-interest.

We may fear such a power and obey its commands, or we may curry favor with it and seek blessings and benefits. But all this arises merely from self-interest. Between things that differ in essence, no mutual relation can be established apart from self-interest.

GOD AS OUR ROOT

Religion rests on a kinship between God and humans: God is the root of the universe and of ourselves.

Robertson Smith, too, says: "Religion did not arise from the fear of unknowable powers, but from the reverent love of a god related to oneself by kinship. Nor is religion a voluntary relation of an individual to a supernatural power; it is a communal relation of every member of a society to the power that maintains that society's welfare and order." At the root of every religion there must be a relation in which God and humans share the same nature, that is, the relation of father and child. But merely to say that God and humans share the same interests, that God helps us and protects us, is not yet true religion. God must be the foundation of the universe and at the same time our own foundation. When we return to God, we return to our root.[3]

3 William Robertson Smith (1846–1894), Scottish biblical scholar; Nishida is paraphrasing his *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* (1889).

LOSING THE SELF TO GAIN IT

God is the end of all things; returning to God seems a loss of self but is its gain.

God must also be the end of all things, and therefore the end of human beings as well; each of us finds our own true end in God. Just as hands and feet belong to a person, a person belongs to God. Seen from one side, our returning to God may seem a loss of self; seen from the other, it is the very way we gain ourselves.

RETURNING HOME TO GOD

Prayer and thanks mean seeking to return to God, the home where we properly belong.

Christ's words, "Whoever gains his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will gain it," are religion in its purest form. The relation between God and human beings in true religion must always be of this kind. When we pray to God or give thanks to God, we do not do so for the sake of our own existence. We pray that we may return to God, the home where we properly belong, and we give thanks that we have returned. And when it is said that God loves human beings, this does not mean that God gives them happiness in this world; it means that God brings them back to God.[4]

I LIVE IN GOD

Mere resignation still smells of the self; true piety finds the true self in God.

God is the source of life; I live only in God. Only when this is so is religion filled with life, and only then does true piety arise. Mere resignation, or mere entrusting of oneself, has still not shed the odor of the self; it cannot yet be called true piety. Words such as "finding the true self in God" may perhaps seem

4 Matthew 10:39.

to put weight on the self, but they are, on the contrary, the very way one truly casts off the self and reveres God.

THEISM AND PANTHEISM

Nishida rejects a God who rules from outside and locates God in the inner unity of reality.

4.2.2 That God and human beings share the same nature, and that in God human beings return to their root, is the fundamental idea of every religion; only what is based on this idea can, I think, be called true religion. Yet even on the basis of this one idea, the relation between God and human beings can be conceived in various ways. One can think of God as transcending the universe, ruling the world from outside and acting on human beings from outside as well. Or one can think of God as immanent, of human beings as a part of God, and of God as acting on them from within. The former is the view of what is called theism, the latter the view of what is called pantheism. The latter way of thinking may be rational, but many religious people oppose it. For to identify God with nature is to do away with God's personality. To regard all things as transformations of God not only loses God's transcendence and impairs God's dignity. It also leads to the awkward consequence that the source of evil, too, must be ascribed to God. Yet on careful reflection, one cannot say that pantheistic thought necessarily has these defects, nor that theism is necessarily free of them. Even if God is identified with the substance of reality, God's personality need not be lost, provided that the foundation of reality is spiritual. Moreover, no pantheism, of whatever kind, says that individual things just as they are are immediately God; even in Spinoza's philosophy, all things are the differentiated aspects (modes) of God. And in theism, too, God's omniscience and omnipotence cannot easily be reconciled with the existence of evil in this world. This was indeed a problem that troubled many minds in medieval philosophy.

4.2.3 The view that there is a transcendent God who rules the world from outside not only conflicts with our reason; such a religion, it seems to me, cannot be called the deepest form of religion. What we can know as the will of God is only the laws of nature; apart from these there is nothing that may be called revelation. Of course, since God is unfathomable, what we know may be only a part. But even if there were some revelation besides this, we would surely be unable to know it. And if there were a revelation contrary to these laws, it would on the contrary show a contradiction in God. We believe in the divinity of Christ because his life contains the deepest truth of human life. Our God must be the inner unifying power of the universe, through which heaven and earth take their places and all things are nourished; there is nothing else that may be called God. If it is said that God is personal, this must mean that we recognize a personal significance directly in this foundation of reality.[5] Those who speak of something supernatural apart from this are relying either on historical tradition or on their own subjective fancy. And it is precisely because we see God directly at the foundation of nature and at the foundation of the self that we can feel an infinite warmth in God and reach the very heart of religion: "I live in God." True reverence and love for God can come only from here. Love means that two personalities unite and become one; reverence is the feeling that a partial personality has toward the whole personality. At the root of reverence and love there must always be a unity of personality. Therefore reverence and love arise not only between one person and another but also within one's own consciousness. Our consciousness of yesterday and our consciousness of today differ from each other, yet because they have the same center of consciousness, we are filled with self-reverence and self-love. In the same way, our revering and loving God must be because we have the same foundation as God, because our spirit is a partial consciousness of God. Of course, one could also think that God

5 "Heaven and earth take their places and all things are nourished" echoes chapter 1 of the *Doctrine of the Mean*.

and human beings, though they have the same spiritual foundation, are independent of each other, just as the minds of two people who hold the same thoughts are independent of each other. But this is to distinguish spirits temporally and spatially, as seen from the body. In spirit, what has the same foundation is the same spirit. Just as our consciousness, which changes from day to day, is regarded as the same spirit because it has the same unity, so our spirit must be one and the same with God. So it is that "I live in God" can be not merely a metaphor but a fact. (The bishop Westcott, too, commenting on John 17:21, says: "The unity of believers is not merely a moral unity, a union in purpose, feeling and the like, but a vital unity.")[6]

4.2.4 Thus the deepest religion can be founded on the oneness of God and human beings, and the true meaning of religion lies in grasping the significance of this union of God and humans. That is, it lies in experiencing, at the foundation of consciousness, the majestic cosmic spirit that works by breaking through our own consciousness. Faith is not something to be given from outside through tradition or theory; it must be polished out from within. As Jacob Böhme said, we reach God through the innermost birth (die innerste Geburt). In this inner rebirth we see God directly and believe in God, and at the same time we find our true life there and feel an infinite power. Faith is not mere knowledge; it is an intuition in this sense, and at the same time a living force. At the foundation of all our mental activity a single unifying power is at work; we call it our self, and also personality. Desire goes without saying, but even knowledge, the most objective of things, is always colored by this unifying power, that is, by the personality of each individual. Knowledge and desire alike are established through this power. Faith is a unifying power of this kind, one that transcends knowledge. It is not so much that faith is supported by knowledge and will; rather, knowledge and will are supported by faith. In this sense faith is mystical. To say that faith is mystical does not mean that

6 Brooke Foss Westcott (1825–1901), Anglican bishop of Durham and author of a commentary on the Gospel of John.

it is opposed to knowledge; a faith that conflicted with knowledge could not be made the root of life. Only after we have exhausted our knowledge and exhausted our will do we obtain from within a faith that we cannot help believing, even when we wish not to believe.

CHAPTER 3: GOD

God is not a creator outside the universe but its foundation; the universe is God's manifestation.

4.3.1 God means the foundation of this universe. As I said above, I do not regard God as a creator transcending the universe from outside; I think of God directly as the foundation of this reality. The relation between God and the universe is not like the relation between an artist and the artist's work; it is the relation between substance and phenomenon. The universe is not something God has made; it is God's manifestation. From the movements of the sun, moon and stars without to the subtlest stirrings of the human heart within, there is nothing that is not a manifestation of God. At the foundation of each of these things, one by one, we can worship the spiritual light of God.

4.3.2 Newton and Kepler are said to have been struck with piety on seeing the regularity of the movements of the heavenly bodies. In the same way, the more we study the phenomena of nature, the more we come to know that a single unifying power rules behind them. The progress of learning is nothing but such a unification of knowledge. And just as outwardly we recognize the rule of a single unifying power at the foundation of nature, so inwardly we must recognize the rule of a single unifying power at the foundation of the human mind. The human mind takes a thousand shapes and ten thousand forms and seems to follow almost no fixed law, but when we survey it from a height, a great unifying power seems to rule it, running through past and present and extending across East and West. When we think further, nature and spirit are not entirely without connection; they are closely related to each other. We cannot help thinking

of the unity of the two: at the foundation of both there must be a still greater, single unifying power. There is no philosophy and no science that does not recognize this unity. And this unity is God. Of course, if, as materialists and scientists in general say, matter is the sole reality and all things merely follow the laws of physical force, then we cannot conceive of anything like God. But is the true nature of reality really like this?

4.3.3 As I argued earlier concerning reality, even matter is not something we can know as an independent reality apart from our phenomena of consciousness. The facts of direct experience given to us are only these phenomena of consciousness. Space, time, physical force: all these are merely concepts set up in order to unify and explain these facts. Something like pure matter, of the kind physicists speak of, from which everything of our individual nature has been removed, is an abstract concept furthest removed from concrete fact. The closer we come to concrete fact, the more individual it becomes. The most concrete fact is the most individual. This is why the earliest explanations, as in myth, were all anthropomorphic; but as pure knowledge advanced, explanation became more and more general and abstract, until at last it produced such a concept as pure matter. Yet such explanations are extremely external and shallow, and we must not forget that even behind them our subjective unity lies hidden. The most fundamental explanation always comes back to the self. The secret key to explaining the universe lies in this self. To try to explain spirit by matter must be called turning root and branch upside down.

4.3.4 What Newton and Kepler saw and took to be the regularity of natural phenomena is in fact nothing but the regularity of our phenomena of consciousness. All consciousness is established through unity. And this unity ranges from the small, the unity among each individual's states of consciousness from day to day, to the great, the cosmic unity of consciousness that binds together the consciousness of all people. (To confine the unity of consciousness within individual consciousness is merely a dogma added to pure experience.) The world of nature is one

system of consciousness formed through such a trans-individual unity. We unify our own experience by means of an individual subject, and we go on to unify the experiences of all people by means of a trans-individual subject; the world of nature arises as the object of this trans-individual subject. Royce, too, says, "The existence of nature is bound up with the belief in the existence of our fellow human beings" (Royce, The World and the Individual, Second Series, Lect. IV).[7] So the unity of the world of nature, too, turns out in the end to be merely one kind of unity of consciousness. Originally there are not two kinds of reality, spirit and nature; the distinction between them arises from different ways of viewing one and the same reality. In the facts of direct experience there is no opposition of subject and object and no distinction between spirit and matter: thing is mind, mind is thing, and there is only a single actuality. It is only from the conflict of such systems of reality, or, seen from another side, from their development, that the opposition of subject and object emerges. In other words, in the continuity of perception there is no distinction between subject and object; this opposition arises only through reflection. When systems of reality conflict, the side of their unifying activity is thought of as spirit, and the side that stands over against it as its object is thought of as nature. But so-called objective nature in fact cannot exist apart from subjective unity; and as for subjective unity, there cannot be a unity without an object of unity, that is, without content. Both are the same kind of reality and differ only in the form of their unity. Moreover, whatever leans to one side alone is an abstract and incomplete reality. Such reality becomes complete, concrete reality only in the union of the two. The unity of spirit and nature is not the unifying of two kinds of system; from the outset they stand under one and the same unity.

4.3.5 If, then, there is in reality no distinction between spirit and nature, and accordingly there are not two kinds of unity, but only one and the same fact of direct experience, which gives rise to various distinctions according to how it is viewed, then God,

7 Josiah Royce (1855–1916), American idealist philosopher.

whom I spoke of earlier as the foundation of reality, must be the foundation of this fact of direct experience, that is, of our phenomena of consciousness. Now all our phenomena of consciousness form systems. Even so-called natural phenomena, formed through a trans-individual unity, cannot depart from this form. The self-development of a unifying something is the form of all reality, and God is the unifier of reality so understood. The relation between the universe and God is the relation between our phenomena of consciousness and their unity. In thinking and in willing alike, mental images are unified by a single purposive idea, and everything is regarded as the manifestation of this unifying idea; in the same way, God is the unifier of the universe and the universe is the manifestation of God. This comparison is not merely a metaphor but a fact. God is the greatest and final unifier of our consciousness; no, rather, our consciousness is a part of God's consciousness, and its unity comes from God's unity. From the small, each of our joys and sorrows, to the great, the movements of the sun, moon and stars, there is nothing that does not depend on this unity. Newton and Kepler, too, were struck by the unity of this great cosmic consciousness.

GOD AS A GREAT PERSONALITY

God is the unifying personality of the universe, whose knowing and acting are one.

4.3.6 What, then, is God, who in this sense is the unifier of the universe and the foundation of reality? What governs spirit must be the laws of spirit. Something like matter is, as I said above, merely the shallowest of abstract concepts, set up for the sake of explanation. Mental phenomena are the so-called activities of knowing, feeling and willing, and what governs them must likewise be the laws of knowing, feeling and willing. And spirit is not merely a collection of these activities; behind them there is a unifying power, and these phenomena are its manifestations. If we now call this unifying power personality, we must say that God is a great personality, the foundation of the universe. From

the phenomena of nature to the historical development of humankind, there is nothing that does not take the form of a great thought, a great will. The universe turns out to be the personal manifestation of God. Yet even in saying this, I cannot think, as a certain school does, that God transcends the universe from outside and, like our subjective minds, has particular thoughts and a particular will apart from the course of the universe. In God, knowing is acting and acting is knowing; reality must be directly God's thought and God's will (see Spinoza, Ethica, I Pr. 17 Schol.). Things like our subjective thinking and will are incomplete, abstract realities that arise from the conflict of various systems. Such things cannot be directly ascribed to God. A man named Illingworth, in a book entitled *Personality, Human and Divine*, lists three elements of personality: self-awareness, freedom of the will, and love. But before taking these three as the elements of personality, we must make clear what facts these activities actually signify.[8] Self-awareness is a phenomenon that accompanies the case in which a partial system of consciousness is unified at the center of the whole of consciousness. Self-awareness arises through reflection, and reflection on the self is precisely such an activity of seeking the center of consciousness. The self is nothing other than the unifying activity of consciousness. If this unity changes, the self changes too; beyond this, anything like a substance of the self is an empty name. When we look inward, we seem to obtain a special kind of consciousness of the self, but this, as psychologists say, is merely a feeling that accompanies this unity. It is not that this unity takes place because there is such a consciousness, but that such a consciousness arises because there is this unity. This unity itself cannot become an object of knowledge. We can become it and act, but we cannot know it. True self-awareness lies in the activity of the will rather than in intellectual reflection. If we speak of self-awareness in God's personality, then each unity of the phenomena of this universe must be God's self-

8 J. R. Illingworth (1848–1915), English Anglican theologian; the book is his Bampton Lectures of 1894.

awareness. For example, that the sum of all the angles of a triangle equals two right angles is something anyone, in any age, must think. This too is one instance of God's self-awareness. We may say that every idea of cosmic unity that governs our spirit is God's consciousness of self-identity. All things are established through God's unity; in God everything is actual; God is always active. God has no past and no future; time and space arise through the cosmic unity of consciousness; in God everything is present. As Augustine said, time was created by God, and because God transcends time, God is in the eternal now. Therefore God has no reflection, no memory, no hope, and accordingly no special consciousness of self. Because everything is the self and there is nothing outside the self, there is no consciousness of the self.

GOD'S FREEDOM AND LOVE

God is free because all comes from God's own nature, and God's love is equal and universal.

4.3.7 Next, freedom of the will has various meanings, but true freedom must mean what is called necessary freedom: acting from one's own inner nature. A will with no cause whatsoever is not only irrational; such a thing would be a wholly chance occurrence even for oneself, and would not be felt as one's own free act. God is the foundation of all things, there is nothing outside God, and all things come forth from God's inner nature; therefore God is free, and in this sense God is indeed absolutely free. Put this way, it may seem that God is bound by God's own nature and loses omnipotence. But to act contrary to one's own nature shows that this nature is incomplete, or that it contains a contradiction. I think that God's being perfect and omniscient cannot be compatible with that indeterminate free will. Augustine, too, says: "God's will is unchanging; it does not will at one time and not will at another, still less does it later reverse an earlier decision" (Conf. XII. 15). Something like an elective will belongs rather to our incomplete states of consciousness; it

should not be ascribed to God. For example, in matters we have thoroughly mastered there is no room at all for an elective will; an elective will becomes necessary in cases of doubt, contradiction and conflict. Of course, as everyone says, knowing already contains freedom; to know means possibility. But that possibility need not mean indeterminate possibility. Knowing is not something to be spoken of only in cases of reflection; intuition, too, is knowing. Indeed, intuition is the truer knowing. The more complete knowing becomes, the more indeterminate possibility disappears. Since God thus has no indeterminate will, that is, no arbitrariness, God's love is not a narrow love by which God loves some people and hates others, makes some prosper and destroys others. As the foundation of all reality, God must have a love that is equal and universal, and God's self-development itself must be, for us, directly an infinite love. There is no special love of God apart from the natural development of all things. Love is originally the feeling that seeks unity: the demand for the unity of the self is self-love, and the demand for the unity of self and other is love of others. Since God's unifying activity is directly the unifying activity of all things, God's love of others must, as Eckhart said, be God's self-love. God loves all things as we love our own hands and feet. Eckhart also says that God's loving human beings is not an arbitrary act; God must do so.

4.3.8 As I have argued above, even if we say that God is personal, we cannot directly regard God as the same as our subjective minds. God should rather be compared to the state of pure experience, in which there is no separation of subject and object and no distinction between things and the self. This state is indeed the beginning and the end of our spirit, and at the same time the true nature of reality. Christ said that the pure in heart shall see God, and that one enters the kingdom of heaven by becoming like a little child; at such times our minds are closest to God.[9] Pure experience does not refer only to perceptual consciousness. Behind reflective consciousness, too, there is a

9 Matthew 5:8 and 18:3.

unity, and reflective consciousness is established through it; this too, then, is a kind of pure experience. At the foundation of our consciousness there is in every case the unity of pure experience, and we cannot leap outside it (see Part I). In this sense God can be seen as a great intellectual intuition at the foundation of the universe, and as the unifier of pure experience that embraces the universe. In this way we can understand Augustine's saying that God intuits all things with an unchanging intuition, and that God is at rest yet moving, moving yet at rest (Storz, Die Philosophie des hl. Augustinus, §20). We can also glimpse the meaning of Eckhart's word "Godhead" (Gottheit) and of Böhme's "stillness without things" (Stille ohne Wesen). Every unity of consciousness must transcend change and be still and unmoving; and yet change arises from it. That is, it is what moves without moving. Moreover, the unity of consciousness cannot become an object of knowledge; it transcends all categories, and we can give it no fixed form whatever; and yet all things are established through it. So something like God's spirit is, seen from one side, utterly unknowable; yet seen from another side, it is on the contrary intimately close to our own spirit. At the foundation of this unity of consciousness we can directly encounter the face of God. Therefore Böhme, too, says, "Heaven is everywhere; wherever you stand and wherever you go, there is heaven," and also, "We come to God through the innermost birth" (Morgenröte).

DOES GOD LOSE PERSONALITY?

Nishida answers that true individuality is universality made determinate, as mystical experience attests.

4.3.9 Someone will object: if one argues as above, does not God become identical with the essence of things, and, even if God is spiritual, indistinguishable from reason or conscience, so that God loses a living, individual personality? Individuality can arise only from an indeterminate free will (this was once the point on which Scotus opposed Thomas in medieval philo-

sophy). Toward such a God, the objection runs, we can never feel religious emotion.[10] In religion, sin is not merely the breaking of a law; it is turning against a personality. Remorse is not merely moral remorse; it is the keen remorse of one who has harmed a parent or betrayed a benefactor. Erskine of Linlathen says: "Religion and morality part ways according to whether or not one recognizes a personality behind conscience."[11] But as Hegel and others said, true individuality does not exist apart from universality; it is universality made determinate (bestimmte Allgemeinheit) that becomes individuality. The universal is the spirit of the concrete. Individuality is not universality with some other thing added to it from outside; universality, developed, becomes individuality. Something that is merely a chance combination of various qualities, without any inner unity, has nothing that may be called individuality. Freedom of the will, an element of individual personality, means that something universal determines itself (self-determination). Just as the concept of a triangle can differentiate into various triangles, the feeling of freedom is a universal's becoming aware of the various possibilities of determination it contains within itself. From an absolutely free will with no ground at all, individual self-awareness would, on the contrary, not arise. There is indeed the saying "Individuality has no reason" (ratio singularitatis frustra quaeritur); but an individuality truly of this kind would have to be the same as a nothing without any content. It is only that concrete individuality cannot be known through abstract concepts. Even an individuality that cannot be expressed in abstract concepts can be vividly expressed by the brush of a painter or the pen of a novelist.

4.3.10 To say that God is the unity of the universe is not to speak of the unity of a mere abstract concept. God is a concrete unity, like our individual selves; that is, God is a living spirit. Just as our spirit can be called individual in the sense explained above,

10 Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), the scholastic theologian; he and Duns Scotus differed on the primacy of will and intellect and on the principle of individuation.
11 Thomas Erskine of Linlathen (1788–1870), Scottish lay theologian.

so God too can be called individual. Reason and conscience may be part of God's unifying activity, but they are not that living spirit itself. The existence of such a divine spirit is not merely a matter of philosophical argument; it is a fact of spiritual experience in actual life. At the bottom of consciousness, in every one of us, such a spirit is at work (reason and conscience are its voice). It is only that we are hindered by our small selves and cannot know it. The poet Tennyson, for example, had the following experience. When he quietly repeated his own name to himself, out of the depths of his individual consciousness his individuality would dissolve and become boundless reality; and yet his consciousness was by no means dim, but utterly clear and certain. At such times, he says, death seemed a laughable impossibility, and the death of the individual was felt to be true life. He says that from childhood he often had such experiences in moments of lonely solitude.[12] The man of letters J. A. Symonds likewise says that as our ordinary consciousness gradually fades, the original consciousness at its foundation grows stronger, until at last only a pure, absolute, abstract self remains. If one were to list other such experiences of religious mystics, there would be no end to it (James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, Lect. XVI, XVII). Some may regard all such phenomena as pathological; but whether they are really pathological is decided by whether or not they are rational.[13] If, as I have said before, reality is spiritual and our spirit is only a small part of it, then there is no reason whatever to find it strange that we break through our small consciousness and come to feel a great spirit. It may be, rather, our clinging to the bounds of our small consciousness that is delusion. Great people, I think, must surely have spiritual experiences like those described above, deeper and more profound than those of ordinary people.

12 Tennyson described this in a letter to Benjamin Paul Blood, quoted in William James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (Lecture XVI).

13 John Addington Symonds (1840–1893), English critic and historian of the Renaissance.

CHAPTER 4: GOD AND THE WORLD

God's nature and relation to the world are known from the unity of pure experience.

4.4.1 If the facts of pure experience are the sole reality and God is their unity, then the nature of God, and God's relation to the world, can all be known from the nature of the unity of our pure experience, that is, the unity of consciousness, and from the relation between this unity and its content. First, our unity of consciousness can be neither seen nor heard; it cannot become an object of knowledge at all. Because everything is established through it, it transcends everything.

NEGATIVE THEOLOGY

Like the mind, which is neither black nor white, God transcends every determination, being and nothing alike.

Though it shows black when it meets black, the mind is not black; though it shows white when it meets white, the mind is not white. Buddhism goes without saying, but in medieval philosophy too, the so-called negative theology of the school of Dionysius, which spoke of God through negation, was reflecting this aspect. Nicholas of Cusa, for instance, says that God transcends even being and nothing, and that God is being and is also nothing.[14]

BÖHME'S WILL WITHOUT AN OBJECT

Reflecting on the depths of consciousness gives meaning to Böhme's sayings about the groundless God.

When we reflect deeply on the innermost depths of our own consciousness, we can find a profound meaning in Jacob Böhme's words that God is "the stillness without things," the

14 Dionysius: the anonymous Christian Neoplatonist writing as Dionysius the Areopagite (c. 500), whose works founded the tradition of describing God by negation.

"groundless" (Ungrund), or "the will without an object" (Wille ohne Gegenstand), and we are struck by a sense of something sublime and mysterious.

ETERNITY AND OMNIPRESENCE

God's eternity, omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence follow from the nature of the unity of consciousness.

God's other attributes too, such as eternity, omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence, must all be interpreted from the nature of this unity of consciousness. Since time and space are established through the unity of consciousness, God transcends time and space, is eternal and imperishable, and there is nowhere God is not. Since everything arises through the unity of consciousness, God is omniscient and omnipotent: there is nothing God does not know and nothing God cannot do. In God, knowing and being able are the same.

NO GOD WITHOUT THE WORLD

God relates to the world as the unity of consciousness relates to its content.

4.4.2 What, then, is the relation between such an absolute and infinite God and this world? Nothing apart from being is not true nothing; the one apart from all things is not the true one; equality apart from distinction is not true equality. Just as there is no world without God, so there is no God without the world. Of course, by "world" here I do not mean only this world of ours. As Spinoza said, God's attributes are infinite, and so God must contain infinite worlds. Only, expression as a world must belong to God's essence; it is by no means an accidental activity of God. God did not create the world once, at some time in the past, but is its eternal creator (Hegel). In short, the relation between God and the world is the relation between the unity of consciousness and its content. The content of consciousness is established through unity, yet there is no unity apart from the content of consciousness. The content of consciousness and its unity are

not two things, that which is unified and that which unifies; they are merely two aspects of one and the same reality. Every phenomenon of consciousness, in its state of direct experience, is simply a single activity; it is by reflecting on it as an object of knowledge that its content comes to be analyzed and distinguished in various ways. If we speak in terms of the process of its development, what first appeared impulsively as a whole, as a single activity, then had its content reflected upon and discriminated through contradiction and conflict. Here too I cannot help recalling Böhme's words. He says that God before manifestation, which might be called a will without an object, reflects upon itself, that is, makes itself a mirror; through this, subject and object divide, and from this God and the world develop.

4.4.3 Originally, the differentiation of reality and its unity are one, and should not be two. Unity in one respect means differentiation in another. In a tree, for example, it is the flowers being fully flowers and the leaves being fully leaves that expresses the essence of the tree. A distinction such as the one above is merely a matter of our thought, not a matter of direct fact. As Goethe said, "Nature has neither kernel nor shell; everything is at once kernel and shell" (Natur hat weder Kern noch Schale, alles ist sie mit einem Male). In concrete true reality, that is, in the facts of direct experience, differentiation and unity are a single activity. In a painting or a piece of music, for example, there is not one stroke or one note that does not directly express the spirit of the whole; and for the painter or the musician, what is a single inspiration overflows directly into mountains and waters of endless variety, or into music that winds and turns. In such a state, God is the world and the world is God. As Goethe put it in his poem "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," the silversmith who devoted himself to making silver shrines for Diana and paid no heed to Paul's teaching was, in a sense, closer to the true God than those who make a stir over an abstract God in the human brain. As Eckhart said, it is where we have lost even God that we

see the true God.[15] In such a state, heaven and earth are a single finger, and the ten thousand things are one body with me. But, as I said before, seen from one side through conflict within the system of reality, and seen from another as a necessary process of its development, the system of reality comes to split; that is, what is called reflection must arise. Through this, what was actual becomes ideal, what was concrete becomes abstract, and what was one becomes many.[16] Here, if there is God on one side, there is the world on the other; if there is the self on one side, there are things on the other; this and that stand opposed, and thing turns against thing. The story that our ancestors ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge and were driven out of God's paradise perhaps means this truth. The fall of humankind did not happen only long ago, with Adam and Eve; it takes place in our hearts at every moment. Yet if we turn and think again, splitting and reflection are not separate activities of their own; they are all simply the development of the activity of differentiation, which is one side of unity. Behind splitting and reflection lies the possibility of a still deeper unity; reflection is the path by which we reach a deeper unity (there is the saying, "Even a good person attains birth in the Pure Land; how much more so an evil person"). To express its deepest unity, God must first split greatly. Seen from one side, the human being is directly God's self-awareness. To borrow the Christian story, it is precisely because there was Adam's fall that there is Christ's salvation, and so the infinite love of God has become clear.[17]

15 Goethe's poem "Groß ist die Diana der Epheser" (1812) draws on Acts 19, where the silversmiths of Ephesus riot against Paul's preaching.

16 "Heaven and earth are a single finger" is from the Zhuangzi; "the ten thousand things are one body with me" echoes the Chinese Buddhist Sengzhao, a line often cited in Zen.

17 The saying is from the *Tannishō*, chapter 3.

INDIVIDUALITY WITHIN GOD

Individual persons are differentiations of God, independent yet united through love.

4.4.4 Now, if we think of the relation between the world and God in this way, how must we explain our individuality? If all things are expressions of God and God alone is true reality, must we regard something like our individuality as a false appearance, wholly without meaning, like foam on water? I do not think we need necessarily think so. Of course, there could be no individuality independent of and apart from God. But this does not mean that our individuality is to be regarded as wholly illusory; rather, it can be seen as part of God's development, that is, as one of God's activities of differentiation. Just as it is said that every person is born with a mission given by God, our individuality is a differentiation of the divine nature, and the development of each of us completes the development of God. In this sense we can say that our individuality has eternal life and accomplishes an eternal development (see Royce's theory of the immortality of the soul).[18] The relation between God and our individual consciousness is the relation between the whole of consciousness and its parts. In every mental phenomenon, each part stands under the unity of the whole and at the same time must be an independent consciousness in its own right (in mental phenomena each part is an end in itself). That all things are expressions of the one God need not deny the self-aware independence of each person. It is just as our consciousness from moment to moment stands under the unity of the individual, and yet each moment can also be seen as an independent consciousness. Illingworth says: "One personality necessarily seeks another personality; in another personality the self attains the satisfaction of its whole personality; that is, love is an indispensable characteristic of personality" (Illingworth, Personality human and divine). To recognize another personality is to recog-

18 Royce's *The Conception of Immortality* (1900).

nize one's own personality; and the relation in which each thus recognizes the other's personality is love, which, seen from one side, is the union of the two personalities. In love, two personalities respect each other and remain independent of each other, and yet unite to form a single personality. Thought of in this way, since God is infinite love, we can say that God includes all personalities and at the same time recognizes the independence of every personality.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

Nothing is absolutely evil; sin and suffering make the world richer and deeper.

4.4.5 Next, the objection raised against pantheistic thought, such as the view that all things are expressions of God, is this: how can it explain the root of evil? As I see it, there is originally nothing that should be called absolutely evil; all things are good in their original nature. We must say that reality is itself the good. Religious teachers preach the evil of the flesh in the strongest terms, but even carnal desire is not absolutely evil; it becomes evil only insofar as it hinders our spiritual ascent. Again, as evolutionist ethicists say, what we today call sin was morality in some earlier age. That is, it can be called a relic of past morality, which becomes evil only because it does not suit the present age. So there is nothing originally evil in things themselves; evil arises from contradiction and conflict within the system of reality. And if we ask where this conflict arises from, it is grounded in the activity of differentiation of reality and is one requirement of reality's development: reality develops through contradiction and conflict. Just as Mephistopheles called himself part of that power which always seeks evil and always creates good, we may say that evil is one of the elements that make up the universe.[19] Of course, since evil is not the activity of the unity and progress of the universe, it goes without saying that it should

19 Goethe, *Faust*, Part One: "Ein Teil von jener Kraft, / Die stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft."

not be made an end in itself. Yet a peaceful, uneventful world without any sin and without any discontent would have to be called an utterly commonplace and shallow world. One who does not know sin cannot truly know the love of God. One without discontent or suffering cannot understand the deeper tastes of the spirit. Sin, discontent and suffering are requirements for our spiritual ascent as human beings; so it is that the true person of religion sees in them no contradiction in God, but on the contrary feels God's deep grace. Because these things exist, the world does not become that much more imperfect; on the contrary, it becomes richer and deeper. If all of them were removed from this world, not only would the path of spiritual ascent be lost, but how many beautiful works of the spirit would also vanish from the world along with them! If we think from the standpoint of the universe as a whole, and if we take the universe to be built on spiritual meaning, then we can find no imperfection in the existence of these things; on the contrary, we can see why they are necessary and indispensable. Sin is to be hated; but there is nothing in the world so beautiful as sin repented of. Here I cannot help recalling a passage from Oscar Wilde's *De Profundis*.[20] Christ loved the sinner as the one nearest to the perfection of humanity. To turn an interesting thief into a tedious honest man was not his aim. In a manner never before known to the world, he made sin and suffering into beautiful and holy things. Of course the sinner must repent. But this is what completes what he has done. The Greeks thought that one cannot change one's own past; there was even a saying that not even the gods can change the past. But Christ showed that even the most ordinary sinner can do it. Christ would say, Wilde writes, that when the prodigal son knelt and wept, he made his past sins and sufferings the most beautiful and holy moments of his life. Wilde was a man of sin; therefore he knew well the essence of sin.

20 *De Profundis*: Wilde's long letter written in Reading Gaol in 1897, published in part in 1905.

CHAPTER 5: KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE

An appended essay arguing that knowing and loving are one mental activity.

4.5.1 This piece was not written as a continuation of this book. But because I think it is connected with the book's thought, I have decided to append it here.

4.5.2 Knowledge and love are usually thought to be entirely different activities of the mind. But I think that these two mental activities are by no means different in kind; originally they are one and the same mental activity. What kind of mental activity, then? In a word, it is the activity of the unity of subject and object. It is the activity by which the self accords with things. Why is knowledge a unity of subject and object? We are able to know the true nature of things only when we have entirely worn away our own fancies and preconceptions, that is, what is called the subjective, and have come to accord with the true nature of things, that is, with pure objectivity. For example, to say that the dark patches on the bright moon are a rabbit pounding rice cakes, or that earthquakes are a giant catfish moving under the ground, is subjective fancy. In astronomy and geology, however, we discard such subjective fancies entirely and inquire in accordance with purely objective laws of nature, and only then can we reach the true nature of these phenomena. The more objective we become, the better we can know the true nature of things. The history of the progress of learning over thousands of years shows the path by which we human beings have discarded the subjective and followed the objective. Next, let me speak of why love is a unity of subject and object. To love a thing means to cast away the self and become one with the other. Only when self and other are united, with not the slightest gap between them, does true love arise. When we love a flower, we become one with the flower. To love the moon is to become one with the moon. Only when the parent becomes the child and the child becomes the parent does the love between parent and child

arise. Because the parent becomes the child, every gain and loss of the child is felt as the parent's own; because the child becomes the parent, every joy and sorrow of the parent is felt as the child's own. The more we cast away our private selves and become purely objective, that is, selfless, the greater and deeper love becomes. From the love of parent and child, of husband and wife, we advance to the love of friends, and from the love of friends to the love of humankind. The Buddha's love extended even to birds and beasts, grasses and trees.

4.5.3 Thus knowledge and love are the same mental activity. So to know a thing we must love it, and to love a thing we must know it. Because mathematicians cast away the self, love mathematical truth and become one with mathematical truth itself, they are able to make it clear. Only by loving nature, becoming one with nature and immersing the self in nature can artists see through to the truth of nature. Looked at from another side, I love my friends because I know them. The more we share circumstances, thoughts and tastes, and the deeper our mutual understanding, the warmer our sympathy naturally becomes. But as long as we think of these two activities separately, saying that love is the result of knowledge, or knowledge the result of love, we have not yet grasped the true nature of love and knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE IS LOVE

In absorption there is neither subject nor object, and knowing and loving are the same.

Knowledge is love, and love is knowledge. When we are absorbed in what we love, for example, we are almost unconscious. We forget the self, and only a mysterious power beyond the self is at work, alone and majestic. At this moment there is neither subject nor object; this is the true unity of subject and object. At this moment knowledge is love and love is knowledge. When we are captivated by the wonders of mathematics and lose ourselves in it, forgetting sleep and food, we are knowing

mathematical truth and at the same time loving it. Again, when, faced with another's joys and sorrows, there is no distinction at all between self and other, when we feel directly in ourselves what the other feels and laugh together and weep together, at that moment I am loving the other and also knowing the other. Love is the intuition of another's feelings. When we save a small child about to fall into a pond, there is no room even for the thought "how dear" to arise.

4.5.4 It is usually said that love is a feeling and must be distinguished from pure knowledge. But in actual mental phenomena there is no such thing as pure knowledge, nor any such thing as pure feeling. Such distinctions are merely abstract concepts that psychologists have made for the convenience of their science. Just as theoretical research must be sustained by a kind of feeling, so loving another must rest on a kind of intuition. In my view, ordinary knowledge is knowledge of an impersonal object; even if the object is personal, it is knowledge of it seen as impersonal. Love, by contrast, is knowledge of a personal object; even if the object is impersonal, it is knowledge of it seen as personal. We may say that the difference between the two lies not in the mental activity itself but rather in the kind of object. And if, as many scholars and philosophers have said since ancient times, the fundamental substance of the reality of the universe is something personal, then love is the power that grasps the fundamental substance of reality. It is the deepest knowledge of things. The knowledge of analysis and inference is a superficial knowledge of things and cannot grasp reality itself. We can reach it only through love. Love is the culmination of knowledge.

OTHER-POWER

Knowing and loving mean abandoning self-power for other-power, and religion is the culmination of both.

4.5.5 Having said a little about the relation between knowledge and love, let us now apply it to matters of religion. The subject-

ive is self-power; the objective is other-power. To know things and to love things means to cast away self-power and enter into the faith of other-power. If the work of a human life consists in nothing but knowledge and love, then day after day we are working on the ground of faith in other-power. Learning and morality alike are the light of the Buddha, and what we call religion is the culmination of this activity.[21] Learning and morality bathe in this light of other-power in individual, differentiated phenomena, whereas religion meets the absolute and infinite Buddha itself in the universe as a whole. Words such as "Father, if it be your will, take this cup from me; yet let not my will be done, but only yours," or "Whether the nenbutsu is truly the seed of birth in the Pure Land or the act that will send me to hell, I simply do not know," are the very heart of religion.[22] And this absolute and infinite Buddha, or God, can be known only by loving it; to love it is to know it. The Vedic religion of India, the Neoplatonists and the Path of the Sages in Buddhism speak of knowing it; Christianity and the Pure Land school speak of loving it, or of relying on it.[23] Each has its own distinctive features, but in essence they are the same. God is not something that can be known through analysis or inference. If the essence of reality is something personal, God is what is most personal. We can know God only through the intuition of love or of faith. Therefore whoever says, "I do not know God; I only love God," or "I only believe in God," is the one who knows God best.

21 Self-power and other-power are Pure Land terms: reliance on one's own practice versus reliance on the saving vow of the Buddha Amida.

22 The first is Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane (Luke 22:42; Matthew 26:39); the second is Shinran in the *Tannishō*, chapter 2.

23 The Path of the Sages (*shōdōmon*): the Pure Land name for Buddhist schools that seek awakening through one's own practice, as opposed to the Pure Land path.