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[455]

Between Nationalism And Nomadism:
Wondering About The Languages Of Philosophy

Graham Parkes

I think nationalism is OK in practice but lethal in theory.

Werner J. Dannhauser

A salient feature of the context in which the following remarks about nationalism and philosophical language were first uttered was this: that most cross-cultural dialogue is conducted in a single language, English, while the majority of philosophers are accustomed to thinking and conversing and writing about philosophy in their different native tongues. Although English is a fine language distinguished by the vastness of its vocabulary, a tongue quickened by the most vital poets, it has never been seriously proposed as the optimal medium for philosophical thought. That is a distinction that has been claimed by several of the native tongues (or their ancestors) of our visitors from abroad—such as Sanskrit, Chinese, and Japanese, or else European languages with roots closer than English to Latin as well as to ancient Greek, womb of the very idea of *philosophia*. This is not to imply that the Anglophone bias necessarily vitiates the exchange of thoughts; but the torque it imparts to dialogues between traditions embodied in other (especially non-Indo-European) languages is easy to underestimate.

The initial impulse for the reflections that follow came from a difference of opinion among scholars in this country concerned with the study of Japanese philosophy, and of the philosophy of the so-called Kyoto School in particular. Some Japanologists here have followed the lead of certain Marxist thinkers in Japan by invoking a number of nationalistic and right-wing texts written during the 1930s and 1940s by the leading Japanese thinkers of the time (Nishida Kitarō, Tanabe Hajime, Watsuji Tetsurō, and Nishitani Keiji), in order to say that the connections between the thought of the Kyoto School and various patriotic political positions are so close as to negate its status *as philosophy*. If a school of philosophical thought generates claims concerning the unique superiority of a particular nation, so the argument goes, it forfeits its claim to be [456] philosophy, which is meant to address the human condition on a universal plane, and is reduced to the

status of mere nationalist ideology. Given that such chauvinist claims are frequently accompanied by the proposition of one's national language as being the best medium for philosophical thought, it might be worthwhile to reflect more generally on the nature of *language* as the medium of philosophical activity. (There may of course be practical situations in which nationalistic sentiment is a salutary thing; but in a century that has seen several upsurges lead to dire consequences, and at a time when nationalism again threatens to disturb the peace in a number of regions, it is well to cultivate a suspicious eye for the phenomenon in theory. And I suggest that as philosophers we would do well to think about its relationship to the language of philosophy in particular.)

In this spirit, I will focus on aspects of the work of two thinkers from Germany and two from Japan. After a brief consideration of some remarks of Nietzsche's about language's relation to philosophy, I shall pursue the theme through several texts penned by Heidegger in the twenties and thirties (whose prominence in the news this year does not, sadly, derive solely from its being the centenary of his birth). From the Japanese side, I shall introduce some aspects of the work of Professor Nishitani Keiji, who has been one of the philosophically most nomadic thinkers of the century, and of a far-ranging thinker from the University of Tokyo, Professor Sakabe Megumi.

I

Nationalism is a modern phenomenon which came to the fore toward the end of the eighteenth century, and a recent writer on the topic has seen it as a cultural system that emerged with the decline of two kinds of cultural systems which preceded it, "the religious community" and "the dynastic realm."¹ To the extent that a large part of the meaning of people's existence formerly came from their being adherents of a certain religion, or members or subjects of a certain dynastic family, one might well expect the decline of the power of these institutions to be accompanied by an increase in nihilism. The suspicion that nationalism is often largely a response to nihilism is one worth entertaining as we proceed.

In *Beyond Good and Evil* (his first published work to mention "nihilism"), Nietzsche warns, several decades before Wittgenstein, of the seductive effect of certain forms of "grammar" upon our way of thinking about the world—and even of experiencing it. In the book's first section, he adduces the sentence "I think" as a case in which the tendency to be seduced by language is especially strong.² Just because there is thinking going on, there is no reason to conclude, as Descartes did, that there exists an "I" that is doing it. Even to say "*Es* denkt," "it thinks," is to say too much, to infer according to the following "habit of [457] grammar": "thinking is an activity, to every activity there belongs one who acts, consequently..." (*BGE* 17). One might suppose that thinkers thinking in a language such as Japanese, which doesn't say "I think" or even "*it* thinks," but simply "thinks" or "thinking is going on," will be less inclined to posit an agent or subject as the pro-

ductive cause of every mental activity. Such a surmise is encouraged by Nietzsche's contention that the singular "family resemblance" (another of Wittgenstein's ideas anticipated) between "Indian, Greek, and German philosophizing" arises from "the common philosophy of grammar" that comes with affinities among languages (*BGE* 20). His conclusion is that

Philosophers in the domain of the Ural-Altai languages (in which the concept of the subject is most poorly developed) will most probably look "into the world" differently and be found on different paths from Indo-Germans or Muslims.³

In remarking on "the spell of particular grammatical functions" in this way, Nietzsche is not engaging in any kind of competitive philology by suggesting that a strong sense of the subject makes for more powerful thinking. The epithet "most poorly developed" is rather to be taken in a neutrally descriptive sense; and since the context is the culmination of a series of devastating attacks on precisely "the concept of the subject," the implication is that a weak concept of the subject would likely conduce to some quite robust philosophizing. He can also be read as drawing attention to a source of potential misunderstanding between philosophers engaged in dialogue across traditions ensconced in widely disparate language families.

Nietzsche's thinking in general perpetrates a relentless attack on all the ideals that have supported the Western philosophical and religious traditions, such that even his detractors have to admire the resoluteness of his confrontation with the nihilism ushered in by their collapse. While he was for much of his actual life homeless and literally stateless, it is on the existential level that Nietzsche most commends the condition. In an aphorism of *The Gay Science* entitled "We Homeless Ones" he writes: "We children of the future, how *could* we be at home in this today! We feel disfavor for all ideals that might lead one to feel at home in this fragile, fragmented time of transition ..." (*GS* 377). Fifty years later, in Heidegger's *Being and Time* (*Sein und Zeit*), the impact of the death of God and the demise of all idols is registered in the experience of *Angst*, which shatters whatever meanings have been spun across the abyss of nonbeing, so that the world becomes brittle, *hinfällig*, liable to collapse at any moment, and so no longer providing a familiar environ in which one can feel at home (*SZ* §40).

Excoriating the dissimulations of *das Man* that would cover up the abyss with superficial platitudes and promote an understanding of our [458] being which is concerned to have us feel at home in a world of familiar things, Heidegger argues that the most primordial human condition is one of *Unheimlichkeit*, a strange and uncanny state of being not-at-home in the world, "*Nicht-zuhause-sein*." Just as Nietzsche as the herald of European nihilism had encouraged his readers to confront the abyss of meaninglessness with an unwavering gaze, so Heidegger advocated resoluteness in the face of the void and courage in the engagement with the *Angst* that discloses the nothingness of death.

This kind of existential stance is maintained in the works Heidegger published at the close of the twenties; but in the early thirties, around the time he began to take up the question of nihilism, a new element is introduced into his thinking having to do with "spirit" (*Geist*) and the nation (*das Volk*). In *Being and Time* the questioning of Being was undertaken at a level much deeper than that of peoples or nations, and the existential analytic treated simply of *Dasein*, "being-here," "being-there," understood as a more general term even than "human being." But in the infamous Rectoral Address of 1933, *Dasein* is qualified by the compound adjective *geistig-volklich*.⁴ Heidegger invokes the specter of nihilism by way of Nietzsche's saying "God is dead," but his response is articulated entirely within the context of "the forces of earth and blood" and "the spiritual mission of the German people."⁵ We appear to have slipped up an ontological level or two from the level of pure "being there."

It might be argued that the rhetoric of Heidegger's speech must be taken in its very peculiar context. Be that as it may, this kind of language persists for a couple of years and into a strictly scholarly context in which it is even more disconcerting. In 1935 Heidegger gave a course at Freiburg entitled "Introduction to Metaphysics," and the published version of these lectures contains some of his existentially most forceful writing.⁶ The first chapter, "The Basic Question of Metaphysics," poses that question at the very outset: "Why is there anything at all, and not rather nothing?" and Heidegger goes on to engage it in his finest existential style. As in the Rectoral Address two years earlier, Nietzsche is in the background, and is cited more frequently. The totality of what-is still "trembles" and "vibrates" as beings hover over the abyss of nonbeing, and again the specter of nihilism shimmers behind it all (pp. 23-31; 18-24).

Heidegger reminds us that in asking the question "Why is there anything at all?" we always "stand in a tradition," since "philosophy has always asked about the ground of the things that are" (pp. 24; 18). Among the things-that-are that he goes on to list in the course of trying to distinguish the Being of beings from the beings themselves, Heidegger mentions the Japanese (pp. 76; 58), along with a symphony concert in Tokyo (pp. 29; 38). The reader may thus be excused for supposing [459] that a thinker from that tradition—the medieval Zen master Dōgen, for example—might count among those who have posed the fundamental question of philosophy, or "asked about the ground of the things that are." One would be all the more inclined to suppose this since, for all his reclusiveness in the Black Forest, Heidegger was probably the least isolated of any of his colleagues from other philosophical traditions, thanks to a steady stream of philosophers from China and Japan who had been coming to Marburg and Freiburg to study with him since the early twenties.⁷ Nor would it be unreasonable to expect that a thinker or two from the Chinese Taoist tradition might be included in the fold of fundamental questioners, since at least five years before he gave these lectures

Heidegger appears to have been familiar with Martin Buber's edition of the *Zhuang Zi*.⁸

However, Being itself soon gets associated with "the spiritual fate of the West" (pp. 37; 28), and before we know it Europe has been placed in the center, "between Russia and America," and "the German people" granted the status of "the metaphysical people" and placed "in the middle" of this center (pp. 37-38; 28-29). The world is collapsing all around, the totality of beings is shaken to the core by shock-waves of nothingness, and Heidegger's hypercentrism has his audience take refuge in a particular region of the earth. He claims that the asking of the question "How does it stand with Being?" moves one "into a landscape" and prompts the realization that the task is to "regain *Bodenständigkeit*"—to find a footing with which to take a stand on a specific piece of soil. (A far cry, this, from Nietzsche's exhortations to the light-footedness of the wandering dance.)

Even the most ardent admirers of the tradition from Leibniz to Husserl and Heidegger himself deserve to be offered some *philosophical* (rather than socio-biological-political) ground for this privileging of the German *Volk*—something beyond a steady output and an outstanding track record. And indeed such a ground is indicated at the end of the book's first chapter, where the contemporary misrelation to language is said to arise from a faulty relationship with Being itself. Thus the question of Being turns out to be inextricably entwined with the question of language (pp. 51; 39). And while the succeeding three sections contain some of Heidegger's finest reflections on this question in the context of early Greek thought, they start off on the wrong foot, for some of us, with the pronouncement to the effect that ancient Greek "is, along with the German language, at once the most powerful and most spiritual language (with regard to the possibility of thinking)" (pp. 57; 43).

We can surely grant that all thinking moves within the flow of a tradition and in the medium of a particular language, and yet wonder what it is about Greek and German that makes them the "most spiritual" of languages, if spirit is (as Heidegger has said several times that it is) [460] "primordially attuned, knowing, and resolute openness to the presencing of Being." If language is (as he will say later) "the house of Being," how can Heidegger be so sure that it contains only two mansions?

II

If we look at the history of Japanese ideas about language over the past two centuries, we find at the outset a linguistic chauvinism that makes Heidegger's look rather modest. A number of forces and tensions developed in the course of the Edo period in Japan, which led to a cultural crisis, one manifestation of which was a violent reaction against the centuries-old influence of Chinese culture. A salient feature of Tokugawa "nativism" (*kokugaku*), an intellectual movement that began in the early eighteenth century, was a theory of language based on the

premise that the original Japanese language (*Yamato kotoba*) was superior to all others by virtue of its divine origin.⁹ Some formidable intellects thought this way, and some otherwise profound linguistic theories were developed by the *kokugaku* thinkers. But while elements of a similar linguistic chauvinism appear in the nationalistic writings of several major figures in early twentieth-century Japanese philosophy, they are conspicuously absent from the work of Nishitani Keiji—an absence whose ground is worth considering.

One reason is that Nishitani is probably the most cosmopolitan thinker of his generation, but it also has to do with the thinking he has devoted to the problem of nihilism. In 1949 he delivered a series of talks on the topic, which were subsequently published as a book.¹⁰ After a discussion of the history of European nihilism focusing primarily on Nietzsche and Heidegger, Nishitani goes on to inquire into the significance of nihilism in the Japanese context, in a chapter entitled "The Meaning of Nihilism for Japan." He points out that in the case of Japan the crisis of nihilism was in an important sense "compounded" in comparison with the situation in Europe. The indiscriminate importation of Western culture and technology dictated by the Meiji Restoration served to cut succeeding generations off from their own cultural heritage. The resultant nihilism was aggravated by the fact that these imports already harbored the "virus" of European nihilism, which was then able to proliferate in the void left by the loss of traditional values. As a good Nietzschean, Nishitani realizes that an abyss of such immense dimensions affords the possibility of renewal, and that if one stays with the current of nihilism long enough a situation will emerge conducive to a *recreation* of value.

Nishitani also follows Nietzsche's suggestion that after such a break a new kind of responsibility to the ancestors arises, and that a creation of new values necessitates a reappropriation of certain elements from the tradition. In this context he speaks of the loss of "spiritual foundation" [461] on the part of the Japanese, and of the necessity to regain a connection with the Japanese "spirit." But this is to be done from the position of having already assimilated the European intellectual and cultural tradition—and is not, as some purists of the time would have had it, a matter of purging the culture of all foreign elements. While Nishitani recommends a reappropriation of the Buddhist idea of the field of emptiness (*ku*), for example, he stresses that this idea, too, must be rethought into a modern context. There is no talk of the superiority of the Japanese language, but rather a branding as superficial of nationalistic reactions to the loss of a sense of self brought about by the nihilistic crisis. Indeed, there is a strong implication that an outbreak of nationalism is precisely a symptom of an inadequate response to a nihilistic condition, a sign that one has not let oneself down far enough into the depths of the self that are opened up by the experience of nihilism. From this perspective, the nationalistic response of Heidegger's Rectoral Address would be a slip into superficiality in comparison with the story in *Being and Time* in which,

when *Dasein* returned from the chastening experience of *Angst*, "naked" in its being thrown into *Unheimlichkeit*, no national costume was worn (SZ §68b).

Before returning to this issue in conclusion, let us turn to Professor Sakabe, who is distinguished among his contemporaries in Japan by the fact that he combines a comprehensive understanding of the Western philosophical tradition with a strong interest in the major Japanese thinkers of the past two hundred years. A book published in 1976, *Kamen no kaishakugaku (Hermeneutics of the Mask)*, contains an essay titled "Toward the Future of Thinking in Japanese: Logic and Thought in Japanese and Western Languages," which is eminently pertinent to reflections on the enterprise of comparative philosophy in general. As mentioned earlier, several of the "nativist" thinkers in Japan held that the "spirit of the Japanese language" (*kotodama*) was superior to all others. But with the influx of Western ideas after the Meiji Restoration, the prevailing opinion changed from one for which Japanese has a quite unique *logos* to one portraying it as a hopelessly *illogical* language, characterized by such vagueness and ambiguity as to render it a virtually impossible medium in which to engage in rational thought.¹¹ Drawing on the work of the preeminent linguists of this century in Japan (Tokieda Motoki and Mikami Akira), Sakabe demonstrates that while Japanese is less suited than Indo-European languages to certain types of logical thinking, there are some areas of inquiry in which it appears to facilitate philosophical thought better than its Western counterparts.

One of the grounds for this assertion is the emphasis Japanese places on predication, and the corresponding omission of the subject or its inclusion in the predicate (which brings us back to the Nietzschean theme with which we started). Lacking any equivalent to the Greek notion of *hypokeimenon* or the Latin *subiectum*, Japanese is—as Nietzsche [462] intuited—less likely than Indo-European languages to lead its speakers to posit a substance underlying the properties of a thing or a subject holding together the mental states of a person. (This is a major reason why Buddhist ideas lent themselves so easily to expression and adaptation in Japanese.) When this lack is conjoined with the lack of an "existence-verb" functioning as a copula, the presence of which in Indo-European languages tends to lead to metaphysical hypostatization and abstract ontologizings, the result is a language designed to keep its speakers on the edge (as the very word for "language"—*kotoba* or *koto no ha*—suggests).¹²

In contrast to the case of "subject-oriented" and predominantly conceptual languages, meaning in Japanese is far more situation- and dis- course-dependent, and thus more informed by *différance* (in the sense of Saussure as reinscribed by Derrida) than Indo-European languages. Sakabe argues that one effect of this "differential" structure is that someone thinking in Japanese is less likely to drift away from the ever- changing flux of finite existence; or, once drifted away, is more likely in thinking to be brought back by the language itself to "the realities

of time and death." A full appreciation of the poetic qualities of Japanese may, he suggests (in terms reminiscent of Nietzsche and Heidegger at their best), "release our thinking into the infinite multiplicity of metaphors that sink away into silence, or the space of the infinitely overlapping masks of the world behind which one can never reach the real face."

Modern Japanese philosophy has traditionally meant "Western philosophy," having originated around the turn of the century with the translation into Sino-Japanese compounds of the major philosophical vocabularies of Greek, Latin, German, French, and English. In the introductory section of his most recent book, *Kagami no naka no Nihongo* (*Japanese Language [Reflected] in Mirrors*), Sakabe talks about his program for exploring the possibilities of thinking and writing philosophically in the medium of indigenous Japanese terms.¹³ Following the lead of such thinkers as Watsuji Tetsurō and Kuki Shūzō, he is concerned to reappropriate some of the vocabulary of *Yamato kotoba* for contemporary philosophical reflection—yet while avoiding his predecessors' divagations into linguistic chauvinism. Sakabe's earlier essays display an erudite command of poststructuralist and deconstructionist strategies in their explication of the complexities of such terms as *omote* ("mask"), *kage* ("shadow"), *shirushi* ("trace"), and *utsushi* ("image"), and of the implications for contemporary philosophical discourse of their multiple and shifting meanings, especially in the realms of aesthetics and poetics.

All these terms exhibit a basic duality in their meanings, and their inherent ambiguities lend themselves to some illuminating philosophical elaboration, only a rough sketch of which can be offered here. *Omote* means "face," or "front"—but also the "mask" which conceals the face, and a "surface" which covers a depth beneath it. Any attempts to [463] determine a univocal meaning of this word (or any of the others) in terms of a structure of appearance versus an underlying reality are frustrated by an interchangeability that is "built into" to the language. *Kage* means "shadow"—but also "light" and "reflection" in the sense of the image produced by reflected light. Sakabe remarks on the similarity with Plato's idea of "images" as opposed to "real things," but shows that the way the Japanese term works makes the "other" of the self turn out to be the "same." From a consideration of the ways in which such words as *tsukikage*, meaning "moonbeam," *hokage*, meaning "firelight," and *hitokage* (literally, "person-shadow"), meaning "[human] figure" denote actual presences, Sakabe concludes that in a sense, "Nothing exists except *kage*." The philosophical grammar of *utsushi* is related, insofar as its meanings range from a complex involving "reflection," "appearance," and "copy" to connotations of transference, change, and flux. The related verb and noun have to do with the idea of "projection" as it concerns the day-world of consciousness as opposed to the dream-world and the realm of madness—the priorities between which nevertheless remain inherently undecidable. *Shirushi* exhibits a peculiar

temporal ambiguity between its referring to future and past events. On the one hand it means "sign," "omen," or "symptom," and on the other "effect" or "trace." Its complex functioning within all three temporal horizons is reinforced by its connections with the verb *shiru*, "to know" (which has the interesting Nietzschean connotations of "to master," "to dominate").

What is distinctive about Sakabe's treatment is that insofar as he explicitly warns against the dangers of extolling the uniqueness of Japanese culture when dealing with such issues, he is able to emphasize the distinctive nature of these ancient words without lapsing into ethnocentric ideology. A strong advocate of cultural pluralism, he shuns linguistic purism and argues that Japanese thinking can retain and enhance its vitality only if the language continues to absorb and incorporate foreign elements. But the primary thesis is that Japanese philosophy will wane if it thinks only in terms translated from European languages and ignores the roots of its own medium.

III

At the end of a series of three lectures delivered in 1940, later published under the title "Patriotism and Nationalism," the Dutch intellectual historian Johan Huizinga characterizes nationalism as "a mental and historical phenomenon" in terms that are also relevant to its manifestations in philosophy:

Every cultured and right-minded person has a particular affection of a few nations other than his own, nations whose land he knows and whose spirit he loves. Summon up an image of such a nation, and enjoy it ... in a [464] composite view. You perceive the beauty of its art, the vigorous forms of its life, you experience the perturbations of its history, you see the enchanting panorama of its landscapes, taste the wisdom of its words, hear the sound of its immortal music, you experience the clarity of its language, the depth of its thought, you smell the scent of its wines ... you feel that altogether, stamped with the ineradicable mark of that one specific nationality that is not yours. All of this is alien to you—and tremendously precious as a wealth and luxury in your life.¹⁴

This is where the nomadism, finally, comes in. If, in the face of an attack of nihilism one declines to take a stand on the literal ground of one's home—"The meaning of my life is to be a Scot, or a Japanese, or a German, or whatever"—as a metaphorical ground for thought and culture, and can find instead a footing in some other languages and cultures as well, the nihilism may overcome itself without a back-lapse into nationalistic posturing.

Huizinga's recommendation is a vivid exemplification of the nomadism Nietzsche prescribed as an antidote to nationalism as "the sickness of the century."¹⁵ The contrasts with Heidegger on this issue are striking, on both the literal and metaphorical planes. While Nietzsche was for the greater part of his career actually nomadic, Heidegger spent most of his life solidly *bodenständig* in the Black Forest. And while, intellectually, Heidegger would leave the German tradition

only to go back to ancient Greece, Nietzsche constantly engaged in and recommended to others the practice of intellectual nomadism.¹⁶ An aphorism from 1879 entitled "Where one must travel to" begins as follows:

Direct self-observation is not nearly sufficient for us to know ourselves: we require history, for the past continues to flow within us in a hundred waves; we ourselves are, indeed, nothing but that which at every moment we experience of this continued flowing.... To understand history ... we have to *travel* ... to other nations ... and especially to where human beings have taken off the garb of Europe or have not yet put it on.

The prescription is explicitly deliteralized as the passage continues:

But there exists a *subtler* art and object of travel, which does not always require us to move from place to place.... He who, after long practice in this art of travel, has become a hundred-eyed Argos ... will rediscover the adventurous travels of his ego ... in Egypt and Greece, Byzantium and Rome, France and Germany ... in the Renaissance and the Reformation, at home and abroad, indeed in the sea, the forests, in the plants and in the mountains. Thus self-knowledge will become knowledge of everything [*All-Erkenntniss*] with regard to all that is past¹⁷

While Nietzsche generally thinks of the flow of the past as happening "in the blood" in the narrower sense, the global scope of the last sentence cited surely militates against excluding India, China, and Japan from the grand tour.

When it comes to talking on the other side of the abyss of nihilism, [465] each language that has sustained philosophical reflection holds its own joys for the thinker who thinks in its medium. One might consider the way the middle voice of the verb in ancient Greek can work to give the sense of an occurrence "between active and passive"; the play of images in classical Chinese which produces models rather than concepts;¹⁸ the features of Japanese discussed by Sakabe and others that let one think things extraordinarily; the myriad homophonous words and phrases in French that have allowed someone like Derrida to elaborate something like deconstruction; and the way so many words in German, at the hands of thinkers such as Hegel and Heidegger, can be broken up into their basic components and then reassembled into productive compounds. (It is tempting with respect to this last to warn against the dangers of "Lego"-centrism).

There is no need, then, to posit any one of these major languages as the best, the most thought-promoting, or whatever. More enlightening is to try to appreciate the different idioms of alien tongues for what they allow one to do philosophically, what they enable the thinker to say and what not. Benefits accrue from this attempt even short of a comprehensive acquaintance with the language; the ability to use a dictionary together with some basic knowledge of how the language works will do much to enhance an appreciation for alien textualities. The practice of linguistic nomadism may thus impart to the course of our thinking a broader range and a more comprehensive subtlety.

Notes

- ¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Editions, 1983), pp. 19-20.
- ² Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, aphorism 16 (henceforth "BGE" followed by the aphorism number). Nietzsche is not proposing something as strong as the Sapir/Whorf thesis of linguistic determinism but the more defensible proposition that one's language conditions in some important ways experience of and reflections about the world.
- ³ Japanese belongs to the Ural-Altaic family, though Nietzsche does not say this.
- ⁴ Martin Heidegger, "The Self-Assertion of the German University," trans. by Karsten Harries, *Review of Metaphysics* 38 (March 1985): 474. Jacques Derrida offers an illuminating reading of Heidegger's use of the term Geist and its cognates in the Rectoral Address, and elsewhere, in *Of Spirit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), especially chap. 5. An intelligent setting in the context of the Address is to be found in Hans Sluga, "Metadiscourse: German Philosophy and National Socialism," *Social Research* 56, no. 4 (Winter 1989).
- ⁵ "The Self-Assertion of the German University," pp. 475-476.
- ⁶ Martin Heidegger, *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1953), pp. 37-38; *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. by Ralph Manheim (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1959), pp. 49-50. For the next few paragraphs these editions will be cited in the body of the text, in this order, simply by the page numbers.
- ⁷ Among the Japanese were four of the greatest thinkers of the first half of the century: Tanabe Hajime, who came in 1922, Miki Kiyoshi (1923), Kuki Shūzō (1925), and Watsuji Tetsurō (1927). For the fuller story, see Yuasa Yasuo, "The Encounter of Modern Japanese Philosophy with Heidegger," *Heidegger and Asian Thought*, ed. by Graham Parkes (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987). Nishitani Keiji was to arrive in Freiburg the year after Heidegger had given the "Introduction to Metaphysics" lectures. I examine the issue of Heidegger's acquaintance with Asian thought through contact with philosophical visitors from China and Japan, as well as through extant German translations of Asian texts, in "Heidegger and Asian Thought: How Much Did He Know, and When Did He Know It?" in *Heidegger: Critical Assessments*, ed. by Christopher Macann (London: Routledge, 1992) vol. 4: 377-406. For an account of Nietzsche's impact in Japan, see my essay "The Early Reception of Nietzsche's Philosophy in Japan," in Graham Parkes, ed., *Nietzsche and Asian Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
- ⁸ See Otto Pöggeler, "West-East Dialogue: Heidegger and Lao-tzu," and also the editor's contribution, "Thoughts on the Way: Being and Time via Lao- Chuang," in *Heidegger and Asian Thought*.

- ⁹ See H. D. Harootunian, *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), especially chaps. 1 and 2. Other languages—Arabic, Hebrew, Sanskrit, and Latin—have of course imagined themselves as divine scripts or sounds emanating from a higher order of reality. (See also the contribution of Thomas Kasulis to the present volume.)
- ¹⁰ Keiji Nishitani, *Nihirizumu* (Tokyo: 1949); *The Self-Overcoming of Nihilism*, trans. by Graham Parkes with Setsuko Aihara (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990).
- ¹¹ Nishitani writes tellingly about the "inferiority complexes" of many Japanese intellectuals during this period (*The Self-Overcoming of Nihilism*, chap. 9, sec. 2).
- ¹² Of relevance to this issue is the impressive comparative study of Jean- Paul Reding, *Les fondements philosophiques de la rhétorique chez les sophistes grecs et chez les sophistes chinois* (New York: Peter Lang, 1985), some of which has been excerpted and translated in "Greek and Chinese Categories: A Reexamination of the Problem of Linguistic Relativism," *Philosophy East and West* 36, no. 4 (October 1986). For a contrasting—and equally impressive—view, see Appendix 2 of A. C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao* (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1989).
- ¹³ "Conversation with the Editor," in *Kagami no naka no Nihongo* (Tokyo: Chikuma, 1989).
- ¹⁴ One is reminded of Jacques Derrida's discussion of the systematic ambiguity of the term *pharmakon* in Plato's texts ("Plato's Pharmacy," in *Dissemination* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981]), as well as of Freud's essay "On the Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words."
- ¹⁵ Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human* 11.2, 87; see also *HA* 1.475 and 11.2, 215 and 292. Other spectacular attacks on nationalism can be found in *The Gay Science* 377, *BGE* 242, 256, 268, and *Ecce Homo*, "The Case of Wagner," par. 2.
- ¹⁶ For an exposition of Nietzsche's nomadism as a hermeneutical strategy, see Eberhard Scheffele, "Questioning One's 'Own' from the Perspective of the Foreign," in *Nietzsche and Asian Thought*, ed. by Graham Parkes (1990).
- ¹⁷ Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human* II.1, 223 (translation slightly modified).
- ¹⁸ See the essay by Roger T. Ames in this volume.