



Basho no ronri, 場所の論理 (The Logic of Place)

The Logic of Place is a fundamental theme in the philosophy of Nishida Kitaro. It shows that worldhood (sekaisei) functions as a predicate (jutsugo). This can be understood more simply as follows: worldhood is instituted by the way in which we grasp (feel, understand, say, handle) the things which make our world. This conception was opposed to the modern Western way of conceiving of reality, which relies on a logic of the subject (shugo), or in other words on the principle of identity (A is A, A is not non-A). Nishida's thought was deemed an "overcoming of modernity" (kindai no choukoku), but in fact it was only an overturning of the principle of identity, replacing it by a principle of identification or of metaphor (A becomes non-A). Nishida's error was to absolutize worldhood, as an absolute "basho" (place) based on a logic of the predicate; whereas reality in fact combines the two logics. What remains of Nishida's attempt was that he has clearly shown the nature of worldhood. His philosophy puts into light the fundamental logic which is at work in what has been called later, in Western thought, "the social construction of reality", a conception which gave rise to constructivism then to deconstructivism as in Derrida's philosophy. This trend of thought amounts to what I call "metabasis", inasmuch as, like Nishida's logic of place, it tends to absolutize human worldhood, thus disconnecting it from any base in the objective nature of things as it can be shown by modern science. Modern science indeed functions upon the reverse principle, that of identity (an object is what it is, independently from human existence).

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