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A Living Philosophy: An Analysis of Nishida and Husserl

In this presentation, I will outline Nishida's philosophy within An Inquiry into the Good with a focus on realism and examine how Nishida's focus on non-dualistic realism allowed him to overcome many of Husserl's phenomenological obstacles pertaining to the relationship and mediation of counteracting poles. The aspect I would like to consider in this presentation is the character of livingness (Lebendigkeit). Namely, although both philosophies claim to grasp the livingness by accessing reality through direct access to things themselves, they pursue largely different methodologies. How do these methodologies differ and how is livingness best expressed? I will first outline the contrast that can be observed between Nishida's realism and Husserlian Phenomenology. The two main differences I will outline are the concept of the phenomenon of consciousness(意識現象), as the "in between" of the dualistic structure, and the emphasis on sensation over thought. Then, I will compare the livingness displayed by each philosopher and outline how and to what extent livingness can be explored in Philosophy.

For Nishida, on the one hand, reality is the phenomenon of consciousness, nonetheless, phenomenon of consciousness is not something residing in individuals, rather phenomenon of consciousness takes place "in between" individuals and can be shared. Just like there is a continuity between my past self and my present self, the self and Other live within a continuity, which is precisely the phenomenon of consciousness. Reality is precisely absolute nothingness in the sense that it is the place which is neither being nor nothingness, but rather the "in between" or the self identity of absolute contradiction. On the other hand, one of the most essential components of Husserlian Phenomenology is intentionality. Intentionality is the directionality of my consciousness. The directionality is neither the subjective consciousness nor the objective world. In this sense, one could argue that intentionality is the "in between". However, this "in between" is still very much embedded within the Western tradition and not to be mistaken with Nishida's "in between", since Husserl is in complete acceptance of the objective and subjective realms, as two distinct realms, as opposed to Nishida, who sees them as one and the same. The characteristic of always being correctable and striving for evidence as an infinite task provides the livingness of Husserlian Phenomenology.

Another difference between the philosophies is that Nishida states that thought can be false but our sensations cannot. This is contrary to what is believed about perception and sensation in Western philosophy. Namely, in Western philosophy, when

the straw appears bent in the water, the conclusion is that our perception is false, since the straw is, in fact, straight but just appears to be bent through our visual sensation of sight. Husserl also follows this claim and believes that our sensations are self-given and evident. Therefore, relying on our sensations gives us the most direct access to things themselves, albeit correctable through further sensations. However, Nishida believes the falsity does not come from appearance itself but rather from the thought that the appearance of the straw and the straw itself is one and the same. In this sense, it is not the sensations that are false, but rather the thought is precisely what incites the falsity. From this conclusion, it can be seen that the two philosophers reach a different conclusion, even when both gain access to reality through the things themselves.

Nishida believes that many of the dualistic tensions that are present within phenomenology can be reduced to realism. In reality, these dualistic tensions, such as subject/object, time/space, mind/body, self/other, or man/nature are one and the same. This dualistic perspective is merely a construction of manufactured theory. For Nishida reality is in itself living and only through theory can it be stripped of life and become lifeless. Husserl constructs a living philosophy by establishing an ego pole and an object pole and by there being continuous movement between the two pole. Maintaining the livingness of philosophy is essential for both thinkers, nonetheless, the manner in which this is achieved differs greatly.

This presentation will examine the two methods to convey a living philosophy and analyze which phenomenological realism was able to maintain the livingness, while still reflecting and analyzing our conscious experiences of things themselves.

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西田とフッサールにおける「生きた哲学」

本発表では「生きた哲学」を遂行していた西田とフッサールを比較研究する。両哲学者は事象そのものを直接扱い、それゆえに経験の如く生き生きした純粋な経験を哲学の対象にしている。ここでは、以下の二点を扱いながら両者の比較を進める、すなわち、「意識現象」と感覚の重視である。

第一に、フッサール現象学では志向性が重視される。志向性とは意識の方向性であり、すなわち、感覚する側から感覚される側への意識の方向性である。この方向性は感覚する側でも、感覚される側でもなく、ある種の「あいだ」の役割を果たす。しかし、これを京都学派における「あいだ」と混乱してはならない。なぜなら、西田における「意識現象」は感覚する側と感覚される側の区別以前における相互同つ的な「生きた哲学」の領野であるからである。フッサールはこの人工的な区別を取り入れている以上、事象そのものを扱っていないと西田は批判するだろう。

第二の観点としては思惟よりも感覚のへの重視である。コップに刺されたストローが曲がってい見えれば、フッサールはさしあたり対象が曲がっていることを示す事象そのものからの明証性があるがゆえに、さしあたりストローが曲がっていると考えるだろう。新しい情報によってこの明証性を訂正する可能性がまだ開かれているとしても。それに対して、西田の場合はストローが曲がっている感覚とストロー自体を区別し、感覚に関して曲がっているといえども、事象そのものに対しても同様に結論付けるのは思惟の働きであって、事象そのものによる「生きた哲学」ではないと批判するだろう。

本発表ではこの二点、および西田の行為への着目に焦点を当てる。フッサール現象学では態度変更による意味連関の妥当性を問題にしている。それに対して、西田による「生きた哲学」は行為的直観を利用し、フッサール現象学の問題意識を備えつつも徹底した「生きた哲学」を実行している。比較研究によって、いかに西田はフッサール現象学の徹底を試みたかを示す。

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