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Transcendence and Immanence, West and East A Case Study of Japanese Divinity

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Abstract: This essay discusses the psychosomatic aspect of Japanese religiosity by first providing an etymological analysis of *kami* (the Japanese notion of divinity) and then, by analyzing how *kami* is symbolized in a contemporary Japanese Shinto festival, The Great Pillar Festival of the Suwa Shrine. The study shows that the Japanese *kami* at no point refers to a transcendent, extra-cosmic, eternal God of Logos, but rather refers to an intra-cosmic divine essence that gives constant dynamism to all beings in the world, exerting itself only by way of residing in materiality. As such, the Japanese notion of divinity is inescapably a combination of the material and the spiritual, being surprisingly indifferent to the Western philosophical tradition of the mind-body dualism. By means of evaluating from a Jaspersian perspective this kind of Japanese divinity that is in no regard based on the concept of Transcendence, the essay explores the question whether this absence signifies an earlier stage of consciousness or whether there is a different way to interpret this disparity between Transcendence and Immanence, West and East.

Keywords: Japanese *kami*; Suwa Shrine; Great Pillar Festival; *Existenz*; Jaspers, Karl; transcendence; immanence; mind-body dualism; psychosomatic existence; the encompassing.

Introduction

Transcendence is, for Karl Jaspers, what underlies his entire philosophy.¹ In *Philosophical Faith and Revelation*, Jaspers defines transcendence and its relationship to ciphers as follows:

Transcendence is present when we experience and conceive the world as a transition rather than what exists on its own, what is in itself....This Transcendence is the point of reference for human freedom. Our freedom is our self-illumination at the source, a point beyond the world, beyond natural existence – the

source of what we can be independently of the world, through our ties to the reality of Transcendence.... But the rule of Transcendence is, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any image or likeness"....Despite that inexorable command, the finite, rational, sensory nature of man drives him to move in ciphers as he "transcends" toward the deity....Our only access to the incomprehensible, the inconceivable, the all-encompassing, is by the ever-inadequate, endlessly variable ciphers.²

Jaspers maintains that Transcendence is what is

¹ A version of this essay was presented at the Eighth International Jaspers Conference, Beijing, August 2018.

² Karl Jaspers, *Philosophical Faith and Revelation*, transl. E. B. Ashton, New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers 1967, p. 136. [Henceforth cited as PFR]

beyond this world, beyond natural existence; we human beings, who are finite and sensory, always try to transcend toward this deity, for what we ultimately seek for is human freedom that can be attained by being independent of this world, of our natural, sensory existence. Given this, how can we attain it? It is only by way of ciphers, which are "ever-inadequate and endlessly variable" (PFR 137), and yet, "our only access to the incomprehensible, the all-encompassing" (PFR 137) Transcendence.

Such a notion of transcendence, that is, the transcendent, extra-cosmic, eternal God of *Logos*, is very familiar to those who belong to the Western monotheistic tradition. When viewed, however, from a comparative perspective, especially by focusing on the Japanese experience of the divine, we will find that transcendence is one of the most difficult concepts for the Japanese to understand; or, to be more precise, since the ancient time the concept of transcendence has never existed for the Japanese in understanding the divine.

The Japanese concept of divinity is called *kami*. The word *kami* has often been translated as "god." But different from the monotheistic concept of God, *kami* never means the transcendent, extra-cosmic, eternal God of *Logos*, but rather, the intra-cosmic divine essence that gives constant dynamism to all beings in the world. Since for the Japanese the concept of transcendence has never existed, and the divine has always been what is felt, that is, what is experienced through one's body, transcendence is inescapably a combination of the material and the spiritual, body and mind, which we may call psychosomatic.

What follows is a discussion of such a psychosomatic aspect in Japanese religiosity conducted in two steps. First, an etymological analysis of *kami*, as well as of other concepts related to the Japanese sense of the sacred that explores how the ancient Japanese viewed the relationship between the divine, humans, and the world. Second, an examination how such concept of divinity is symbolically expressed in a contemporary Japanese Shinto festival, by the presentation of the Great Pillar Festival of the Suwa Shrine as an example for it. The absence of the concept of transcendence is then evaluated from a Jaspersian perspective to assess if the lack of this concept constitutes a developing stage of consciousness, or if there is any way to re-interpret this disparity between transcendence and immanence, West and East, especially in the case of Japanese divinity.

The Etymology of *Kami* and the Japanese Sense of the Sacred

In the manner of Martin Heidegger, who maintained that "language is the house of being" and who inquired into early Greek language to pursue the actual origins of Western thinking,³ I will first investigate the etymology of Japanese *kami*, and analyze how the ancient Japanese understood their being in the world.

According to recent Japanese linguistic studies, the most ancient Japanese language started with monosyllabic words, which included expressions of the primordial experience of the sacred, such as *i*, *chi*, and *hi*. These words preceded the emergence of the word *kami* and are regarded as the primal Japanese concept signifying the divine.⁴ The commonality that underlies these archaic words in common is the feeling of awe and reverence in confronting the supernatural power—a power that seems to be very similar to what Rudolf Otto called *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*—which is both creative and destructive by virtue of its overwhelming power, but eventually provides beings in this world with vigorous life force.⁵ The ancient Japanese thus held an animistic view of life, sensing a hidden spirituality, which they called *i*, *chi*, and *hi*, in all things and phenomena. I will now analyze these concepts respectively.

(1) The word *i* originally meant "life" (生), "breath" (息), "air" (氣), and was also used as a prefix to the things and phenomena that are full of life force and therefore awe-inspiring. For example, *i-tsuki* (イ楓) meaning "zelkova" and *i-zasa* (イ-笹) meaning "bamboo grass" are filled with life force. In Japan these are the trees that are traditionally being regarded as sacred. When used as an adjective, *i* was transformed into *iku*,

³ Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *Basic Writings*, transl. David Farrell Krell, New York, NY: HarperSanFrancisco 1977, pp. 213-66, here p. 217.

⁴ See Takeo Matsumura, *Nihon Shinwa no Kenkyū* (A Study of Japanese Myth), Vol. 4, Tokyo, JP: Baifukan 1959, pp. 241-314. [Henceforth cited as NSK] Matsumura discusses the genealogy of the ancient Japanese concepts *chi*, *tama*, and *kami*. Also, see Hiroshi Tsuchihashi, *Nihongo ni saguru Kodai Shinkō* (An Ancient Religious Belief Explored through the Japanese Language), Tokyo, JP: Chūkō Shinsho, 2000. [Henceforth cited as NKS] Tsuchihashi analyzes the ancient Japanese concepts of *i*, *hi*, and *chi*.

⁵ Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, transl. John W. Harvey, Oxford, GB: Oxford University Press, 1958.

and made such words as *iku-tachi* (生太刀, a sword full of life force) and *iku-yumiya* (生弓矢, a bow and arrow full of life force). When used as verb, *i* became *i-mu* (イム・斎ム・忌ム) and *i-wa-u* (イハフ・斎フ)—the two contrasting attitudes of facing the sacred: the former means "observing abstinence when confronting a supernatural force marked off as simultaneously sacred and forbidden, because of its destructive power" (that is, the attitude to be taken when facing a taboo), while the latter means "revering an awe-inspiring supernatural force that is now transformed into a life-giving, creative power." Thus the archaic Japanese word *i* represents the primordial experience of humanity in facing the sacred, which consists of two different and paradoxical aspects, namely of the wild and tranquil, the awful and merciful, and the destructive and life-giving.

(2) The word *chi* was used mainly as a suffix to signify nature deities. For example: *ika-tsuchi* (雷, thunder), *kagu-tsuchi* (火, fire), *yama-tsuchi* (薪, firewood), *no-tsuchi* (草, grass), and *oro-chi* (大蛇, snake). Also, *chi* by itself constitutes such nouns as "blood" (血), "breast milk" (乳), "wind" (風), and "ground" (地). *Chi* thus signifies a strong power in general, and is contained in the word *chi-kara* (力), which means "power" in Japanese.⁶

(3) The word *hi* represents an abstract notion of this mysterious power of the life force, and was applied to such words as "spirit" or "soul" (靈) or "the sun" (日) (NKS 135-42).

After a long, historical debate, recent Japanese etymological studies maintain that the word *kami* has its origin in the archaic verb *kumu* (籠む・隠む, to be hidden). The word *kumu* was also pronounced *kamu* when combined with other words, such as *kamu-nabi* (神奈備, the sacred forests and mountains where the divine descends), *kamu-sabi* (神さび, the divine remains in that sacred thick forest), and *kamu-na-gara* (神ながら, the condition in which the divine essence is fulfilled). The word *kamu*, now combined with the noun *i* made *kamui* = *kami*.⁷ *Kami* is, therefore, *i* that is hidden; the

mysterious power full of life force that cannot be seen or described.

Out of the concept of *i* was created another important Japanese word relating to *kami*. In the word "life" (*i-no-chi*), the ancient Japanese have combined the concepts of *i* and *chi*: *chi* (力 the power) of *i* (息 breath, 氣 air, 生 life) = life force. Such an archaic notion of *i*—the polysemous word representing life, breath, and spirit—is not foreign to the Western tradition, as we find examples for it in Greek words such as *psyche* (breath of life, soul) and *pneuma* (air, breath, spirit), and also in the Latin *anima* (breath, soul, spirit) and *spiritus* (breath, spirit). Here, too, the concepts of life—breath—spirit are inseparably connected to one another.

Kami as Musuhi

When *kami* in the notion of the power of *i* that is hidden was developed in Japanese myth in the eighth century, and its creative aspect was especially emphasized, it was given the name of *musuhi*, referring to the first *kami* that appears at the very beginning of Japanese cosmogony. The *Kojiki* introduces *musuhi* as follows:

At the time of the beginning of heaven and earth, there came into existence in TAKAMA-NO-HARA a deity named AME-NO-MI-NAKA-NUSHI-NO-KAMI; next, TAKA-MI-MUSUHI-NO-KAMI, next, KAMI-MUSUHI-NO-KAMI. These three deities all came into existence as single deities, and their forms were not visible.⁸

In Japanese cosmogony, what existed in the beginning was not God, nor even nothingness, but *Taka-ma-no-hara* (the Plain of High Heaven), which was already there without being created. Upon this plain appeared the triad of *kami*: *Ame-no-mi-naka-nushi-no-kami* (The Deity Who Is Lord of the Sacred Center of Heaven), *Taka-mi-musuhi-no-kami* (High Deity of *Musuhi*), and *Kami-musuhi-no-kami* (Divine Deity of *Musuhi*). Interestingly, these deities took no positive action. Unlike the concept of God in the Abrahamic traditions, these *kami* created nothing, but concealed

⁶ See NSK 248-62, NKS 142-5, and Sadasumi Motegi, *Nihongo to Shinto (The Japanese Language and Shinto)*, Tokyo, JP: Kōdansha 2007, pp. 48-54.

⁷ Atsuyoshi Sakakura, "Gogen—Kami no Gogen wo Chūshin ni" (Etymology—Focusing on the Etymology of Kami) in *Kōza: Nihongo no Goi*, Vol. 1: *Goi Genron*, ed., Kiyoji Satō, Tokyo, JP: Meiji Shoin 1982, pp. 89-107. This thesis of Sakakura has become an established theory on the etymology of *kami*. For example, Minoru Sonoda

develops his discussion on the meaning of *kami*, based on Sakakura's thesis, in *Daredemo no Shinto (Shinto for Everyone)*, Tokyo, JP: Kōbundō 1998, pp. 24-7, and in "Nihon ni okeru Reiteki Seimeikan to Gendai" (The Japanese Concept of Life and Soul, and its Implication to the Present Day), *Journal for the Comparative Study of Civilizations* 11 (2006), pp. 185-95, here pp. 186-7.

⁸ *Kojiki*, transl. Donald L. Phillipi, Tokyo, JP: University of Tokyo Press 1968, p. 47.

themselves after emergence. As its name indicates, the first deity is supposed to be the lord of heaven, and therefore, of the entire cosmos that will come into being. Despite this seemingly central role, this deity appears only in this opening remark, and in the rest of the text it is never mentioned again. In contrast with the mysterious character of this deity, the following two deities embody *musuhi*, the core principle underlying the Japanese concept of *kami* and of the sacred.

The word *musuhi* consists of two parts: *musu* and *hi*. *Musu* is a verb primarily meaning "to come into being" (生す) as well as "to give birth" (産す). The word is also used in the sense of "steaming" (蒸す), "breathing" (息), and further, is associated with the concept of tying or bearing fruit (結ぶ, *musubu*). Uniting these multiple meanings, the word *musu* suggests the primordial, biological image of the dynamic cycle of life. When combined with *hi*, the plural meanings of *musuhi* include "awe-inspiring mysterious divine power."⁹ In sum, *musuhi* can be understood as "the vital force that brings about the dynamic cycle of life, the ever-proliferating process of being." By introducing these *musuhi* deities at the very beginning of its cosmology, the Japanese myth provides a contrasting worldview to the Judeo-Christian one.

Naru: The Mode of Being of Kami

Judeo-Christian cosmogony is characterized by the concept of creation, which is based on the duality of the creator and the created. By contrast, being indifferent to this kind of duality, Japanese cosmogony describes the image of an organism's dynamic process of emerging, growing, and proliferating, revealing how the ancient Japanese have understood the fundamental principle of being. The concept of being has never meant for the Japanese "to exist absolutely or eternally" as it has in the case of Judeo-Christian tradition; rather, the Japanese have understood both, Being and beings, inseparably through such process phenomena as "coming into being (生り出る, *nari-ideru*), "becoming" (変化, *naru*), and "being matured" (成り終わる, *nari-owaru*), and called this comprehensive process to be *naru* – a verb in the active,¹⁰ not in the passive like the Judeo-Christian

notion of being created (by God).

In this context, *kami*'s mode of being, *naru*, signifies the whole process of generation and re-generation, the dynamic cycle of birth, growth, death, and re-birth, and *musuhi* symbolizes the divine essence that brings about this dynamism. It is this bio-centric notion of *musuhi* (noun) and *naru* (verb) that the Japanese concept of *kami* originated from. *Kami* never means the transcendent, extra-cosmic, eternal God of *Logos*, but rather, the intra-cosmic divine essence that gives constant dynamism to all beings in the world. Indeed, for the Japanese, the concept of transcendence has never existed, but the divine has always been what is felt, that is, what is experienced through one's body; in contrast, "transcendence" is a concept, a logical presupposition, and not a bodily experience. The Japanese experiences of *kami*, *musuhi*, and *naru* *kami* thus reveal how strongly the Japanese religiosity focuses on life and its dynamism.

The ancient Japanese believed that we cannot see the force of *kami* as *musuhi* but that we can experience it through our bodies. In other words, the divine essence can exert itself only by residing in the material, and so, it is inescapably a combination of the material and the spiritual, the visible and the invisible.¹¹ In this way, the notion of Japanese divinity is surprisingly indifferent to the Western philosophical tradition of mind-body dualism.

According to Heidegger, the mind-body dualism has its origin, not in the modern West, but in Ancient Greece where the concept of philosophy was born. Heidegger showed that when the Greek philosophers asked a question: "*ti estin* (What is it?)," the very form of its questioning already presupposed a dichotomy between the sensible (matter) and the intelligible (form), the intelligible being the cause of the sensible, and therefore superior to it. Philosophy consists in this project of questioning *ti estin*; yearning for the intelligible, it pursues the what-ness or Being-ness of being.¹² Heidegger, and, also Maurice Merleau-Ponty, opposed this long philosophical tradition of placing

Old Stratum of Historical Consciousness)," in *Chūsei to Hangyaku (Faith and Rebellion)*, Tokyo, JP: Chikuma Gakugei Bunko 2006, pp. 359-75.

¹¹ A discussion of the ancient Japanese concepts of *tama* and *karada* (body) is in Ikuo Nakamura, *Nihon no Kami to Ōken (The Japanese Kami and the Royal Authority)*, Kyoto, JP: Hōzōkan 1994, pp. 5-34

¹² Martin Heidegger, *What is Philosophy?*, transl. Jean T. Wilde and William Kluback, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003.

⁹ A detailed discussion concerning the meaning of *musuhi* is given in Yoko Mori, *Kodai Nihonjin no Kami-ishiki (The Concept of Kami for the Ancient Japanese)*, Tokyo, JP: Kasama-shoin 2016, pp. 19-67.

¹⁰ See Masao Maruyama, "Rekishi-ishiki no Kosō (The

the intelligible as the source of knowing Being-as-such, and maintained that we should look for what Merleau-Ponty called the "wild Being," in which the sensible and the intelligible, the visible and the invisible, were not yet separated.¹³ Indeed, an inquiry into the psychosomatic aspect of Japanese *kami* may provide an interesting example of this Heideggerian and Merleau-Pontian project of searching for this wild Being.

The Suwa Pillar Festival

An interesting Shinto festival that symbolizes this Japanese psychosomatic experience of the divine is the Great Pillar Festival of the Suwa Shrine. It is called *Onbashira-sai* (御柱祭), it is held every six years since the fourteenth century if not earlier, and has continued to be held until today with only a few changes to its style. In this festival, sixteen fir trees that are specially selected for it are cut down in the mountains and their trunks are dragged over miles of rough terrain to the villages around Lake Suwa, where they are erected in the courtyards of the four shrines that constitute the Suwa Shrine. In the most recent festival of 2016, about twenty thousand active participants were joined by more than one million viewer-participants for celebrating the festival. What is being symbolized in this festival that attracts so many people?

There is an old *Onbashira-sai* saying that Suwa people are always mentioning: "The Great Pillars in the mountains descend to villages and become *kami*." This is the festival that connects the mountain and the village physically as well as symbolically. The *Onbashira* pillars are obtained and dragged down from the sacred shrine woods called Okoya Mountain, a part of the lofty Yatsugatake Range. It may be said that these selected fir trees symbolize the wild mountain *kami* for the Suwa people. While the Suwa Shrine consists of four shrines, I will focus here exclusively on one of these shrines, called the Mae-miya.

In early April, when it is still cold with occasional snowfall occurring, the gigantic pillars that were recently prepared are moved solemnly down the mountain. With a *kiyari* chant that helps pulling a heavy load, people take up the ropes, and the pulling of the *Onbashira* begins. The *kiyari* chant sets the pace for the pulling, which is then answered by a chorus of chanting

by the shrine parishioners. From this starting point, the pillars are pulled for three days, along a twelve-kilometer route to the shrines in the Suwa Basin. This sacred route, Onbashira Road (御柱街道), leads straight from the mountain to the village.

The pulling is never easy. Under the unsettled spring weather in the Yatsugatake area, people sometimes suffer from the effects of snow, rain, or a sandstorm. The shrine parishioners who withstand such difficulties in order to complete this pulling seem to experience—to use Émile Durkheim's terminology—a form of collective effervescence, an ecstatic, extraordinary moment that excites the participants and serves to make them united with one another. They pull the sacred pillars single-mindedly as if they were bringing the wild mountain *kami* into the village, while spreading its exuberant life force here and there.

This ecstatic experience comes to a climax with the *ki-otoshi* (木落とし) ritual where the shrine parishioners drop the pillars on the steep slope of approximately nineteen meters high. This act may be interpreted as symbolizing the ultimate moment when the wild *kami* violently explodes its savage nature. The parishioners, however, are never aware of such an interpretation. What moves them is not that abstract notion, but their own bodily excitement, their own wildness, which was stirred up by becoming one with the *Onbashira*, the primordial life force.

Symbolically stated, the *Onbashira* festival is full of sexual elements, most of which in this case are masculine. In the first place, the very shape of pillars reminds us of a phallus worship that was widely observed in ancient societies. In ancient religions, phallic symbols represented enhancing one's life force and bringing about fertility. We may say that the moment of *ki-otoshi* symbolizes the fullness of life force, or, more metaphorically, the climax in the sexual sense. The male shrine parishioners devote themselves in this *ki-otoshi* ritual at the risk of their lives. Their motivation comes from the belief that the more they are exposed to the risk of death, the more strongly they feel their life force welling up.

After the pillars were pulled down the slope, they are drawn into the frigid Miyagawa River fed by snowmelt from the Yatsugatake Range. The ritual is called *kawa-goshi* (川越し, crossing the river) and its symbolic meaning is that the pillars take a purifying bath before being put into the shrine. With the *kawa-goshi*, the three-day Yamadashi event ends, and the pillars take a rest until another celebration rite called

¹³ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, transl. Alphonso Lingis, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press 1968, p. 121.

Satobiki will be performed in a month's time.

The final climax of the *Onbashira* festival is reached in early May when the *Satobiki* (里曳き) is held. During this event, the now purified, sacred pillars are pulled through the villages, as if to spread their life force around, and they head toward their ultimate destination, the Mae-miya shrine. There, the moment of erecting the pillars on the ground can finally be attended. The sacred pillars are now standing at the four corners of the shrine courtyard, symbolizing that *kami* has descended and been pacified. Thus, the *Onbashira* festival that has lasted for several months now comes to an end. The celebration of life force and its renewal is epitomized in the erection of new pillars in the spaces vacated by the old pillars.

In Shinto thought, *kami* is what descends to this world, to the material, to the bodies; one cannot see the force of *kami* but one can experience it through one's body. The Japanese *kami* symbolizes life force, and in this way, the constant rejuvenation and reinvigoration of *kami* becomes a central theme in Japanese Shinto.

It is often said that Japanese shrines symbolize the womb. By going back to the original place of existence one can regenerate, transform the unbalanced, inactive state of life force into the balanced, active state of life force, in sum, to be reborn to a new mode of being. This is reminiscent of Mircea Eliade's phraseology: "the return to the womb."¹⁴ The womb symbolizes the prenatal, embryonic state, where there is no form, no separation of body and mind, the visible and the invisible yet; it is the Night before Creation. In this womb, we immerse ourselves in the primordial waters in order to dissolve our boundaries; or, more properly speaking, it is not

merely nothing but fullness, from which all beings, all forms are born. In this transformation, the unbalanced, inactive state of mind-body is not regarded as evil to be annihilated, but it is a necessary process for its renewal and reorganization. In other words, the transformation of being is realized, not by overcoming the physical and by transcending toward the metaphysical (the physical being the source of evil in the Judeo-Christian tradition), but by returning to the womb, the original birthplace of being, where body and mind, the physical and the metaphysical, are not yet separated. Another point to note is that shrines are always located in nature, such as in thick forests and mountains, so that this transformation can be experienced with body and mind, physically and spiritually. The theme of the return to the womb thus permeates Shinto thought. Ultimately, the constant rejuvenation and reinvigoration of being becomes the central theme of Japanese *kami* worship. Again, it needs to be emphasized that this rejuvenation is accomplished, not by negating the body and separating it from the mind, but by meaningfully resuscitating it, so that it can bring dynamism into psychosomatic existence.

Conclusion

By evaluating from a Jaspersian perspective this kind of Japanese divinity that is in no regard based on the concept of Transcendence, the question arises if this absence signifies an earlier stage of consciousness or if there is a different way to interpret this disparity between Transcendence and Immanence, West and East. An answer to this question may be found in examining the three concepts that Jaspers emphasized throughout his philosophizing activity: *das Umgreifende*, *Existenz*, and *Existenzerhellung*. The Jaspersian *Umgreifende* is generally translated as "the encompassing," *Existenz* means "irreducible human existence," and *Existenzerhellung* stands for "the illumination of irreducible human existence."¹⁵

Jaspers maintains that philosophy is thinking from totality—the concept that forms the basis of the encompassing and signifies the unity or simultaneity of subject-being and object-being. This concept Jaspers has developed through his criticism of Western

¹⁴ Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, New York, NY: Harper & Row Inc. 1963, p. 79. Eliade discusses here the symbolic meaning of this concept: "From the structural point of view, the return to the womb corresponds to the reversion of the Universe to the 'chaotic' or embryonic state. The prenatal darkness corresponds to the Night before Creation and to the darkness of the initiation hut....The initiation myths and rites of *regressus ad uterum* (the return to the womb) reveal the following fact: the 'return to the origin' prepares a new birth, but the new birth is not a repetition of the first, physical birth. There is properly speaking a mystical rebirth, spiritual in nature—in other words, access to a new mode of existence. The basic idea is that, to attain to a higher mode of existence, gestation and birth must be repeated; but they are repeated ritually, symbolically."

¹⁵ As for these translations, I refer to Gerhard Knauss, "The Concept of the 'Encompassing' in Jaspers' Philosophy," in *The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers*, ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp, New York, NY: Tudor Publishing Company 1957, pp. 141-75.

philosophy, which in philosophizing falls into the trap of the subject-object dichotomy. Western philosophy has striven toward this separation of the subject and the object as a means of obtaining clarity, and precisely this move becomes the target of Jaspers' criticism. To remedy this, he contends that the basic structure of the encompassing is the subject-object unity or simultaneity. There is no other being beyond it, for this unity or simultaneity is the way of being of humans. What constitutes a human being cannot be an object, for instance, an object for empirical investigation. A human being simply "is." Jaspers designates this irreducible human existence as *Existenz*. Although the irreducible human existence cannot be known, as an object is known, it can be illumined nevertheless. As such, the state of *Existenzerhellung* refers to one's existential consciousness—the consciousness that is not cognitive, but experiential and at the same time transcendental.

By examining Jaspers' philosophy, one comprehends that his concept of Transcendence is not equivalent to the generally understood Western notion of the divine, that is, the transcendent, extra-cosmic, eternal God of Logos that is separated from other beings in this world. On the contrary, Transcendence for Jaspers is what illuminates itself only through one's being, experience, through *Existenz*.

In Jaspers' existential philosophy the mind-body dualism appears to be dissolved and overcome. In this respect, Jaspers' philosophy and the Japanese psychosomatic notion of the divine are sufficiently close to allow for reciprocal clarification. Ultimately, a mutual understanding of these two perspectives consists in recognizing the reality of one's *Existenz*, that is, the irreducible transcendence of one's humanity that can never be illumined beyond the unity or simultaneity of the mind and the body—beyond the reality of psychosomatic existence.