

JAPANESE PHILOSOPHY IN THE MAKING 3  
*ALTERNATIVES WITH TRACKS THROUGH ZEN*

*Studies in Japanese Philosophy*  
Takeshi Morisato, General Editor

1. James W. Heisig, *Much Ado about Nothingness: Essays on Nishida and Tanabe* (2015)
2. Nishitani Keiji, *Nishida Kitarō: The Man and His Thought* (2016)
3. Tanabe Hajime, *Philosophy as Metanoetics* (2016)
5. Nishida Kitarō, *La logica del luogo e la visione religiosa del mondo* (2017)
6. James W. Heisig, *Filosofi del nulla. Un saggio sulla scuola di Kyoto* (2017)
7. Nishitani Keiji, *Dialettica del nichilismo* (2017)
8. Ueda Shizuteru, *Zen e filosofia* (2017)
9. Nishida Kitarō, *Autoéveil. Le système des universels* (2017)
10. Jan Gerrit Strala, *Der Form des Formlosen auf der Spur. Sprache und Denken bei Nishida* (2017)
11. Nishitani Keiji, *La religione e il nulla* (2017)
13. John C. Maraldo, *Japanese Philosophy in the Making 1: Crossing Paths with Nishida* (2017)
14. Nishitani Keiji, *Zen, filosofia e scienza* (2017)
15. Nishitani Keiji, *La religión y la nada* (2017)
16. Nishitani Keiji, *Nishida Kitarō. L'uomo e il filosofo* (2018)
17. Nishida Kitarō, *La Détermination du néant marquée par l'autoéveil* (2019)
18. Andrew Feenberg, *Nishida, Kawabata, and the Japanese Response to Modernity* (2019)
19. John C. Maraldo, *Japanese Philosophy in the Making 2: Borderline Interrogations* (2019)
20. Taitetsu Unno, ed., *The Religious Philosophy of Nishitani Keiji* (2019)
21. Nishida Kitarō, *Intuition and Reflection in Self-Consciousness* (2020, reprint)
22. Taitetsu Unno and James W. Heisig, ed., *The Religious Philosophy of Tanabe Hajime: The Metanoetic Imperative* (2020, reprint)
23. Jacynthe Tremblay, *Le lexique philosophique de Nishida Kitarō: Japonais-français, Français-japonais* (2020)
24. John C. Maraldo, *The Saga of Zen History and the Power of Legend* (2021)
25. Myriam-Sonja Hantke, *Mística en la filosofía alemana y japonesa Schelling, Hegel, Nishitani* (2020)

# Japanese Philosophy in the Making 3

---

---

*Alternatives  
with Tracks through Zen*

---

---

JOHN C. MARALDO



CHISOKUDŌ

Cover graphic: Claudio Bado

Cover calligraphy of “Japanese Philosophy in the Making”: Mary Jo Maraldo

Copyright © 2023, Chisokudō Publications

ISBN: 979-8370916489

Nagoya, Japan

<http://chisokudopublications.blogspot.com>

*For Mary Jo Maraldo  
ever clearing the way for  
my paths through philosophy*



# Contents

Acknowledgments *ix*

Lead-in *1*

## UNDERSTANDING RELIGIONS IN PRACTICE

---

1. Three Stories That Invite Us to Rethink Religious  
Relativism *15*
2. Outsiders and Insiders of Zen, Turned Inside Out *39*
3. Understanding: An Alternative to the Hermeneutical  
Model *56*

## PRACTICE

---

4. Practice: An Alternative Mode *105*
5. Four Things and Two Practices: Taking Heidegger Farther  
East *125*
6. Practice, *Samādhi*, Realization: Three Innovative  
Interpretations by Nishitani Keiji *153*

## SELF AND OTHERS AND IN-BETWEEN

---

7. Writing the Self: The “Autobiographic” Practices of  
Rousseau, Hakuseki, and Hakuin *171*
8. Finding the Self in Mountains: Zen Landscapes of the  
Mindful Heart *200*
9. Personal Autonomy: An Alternative View *218*
10. Alternative Configurations of Alterity in Dialogue with  
Ueda Shizuteru *237*

11. History from a Buddhist Perspective: Nishitani's Account  
and Accountability 266
12. The Alternative Normativity of Zen 294

#### DŌGEN'S ZEN

---

13. The Study of Body-Mind: Dōgen's Alternative 321
  14. Negotiating the Divide of Death in Japanese Buddhism:  
Dōgen's Difference 351
- Follow-up: Ante-Originality and the Alternative Creativity  
of Japanese Pathway Arts 387
- Bibliography 403
- Index 439

## Acknowledgments

This book is dedicated to you, Mary-san, for faithfully encouraging and enabling my long plunges into recondite matters that matter little to most people who cross our path. For more than fifty years you have helped turn my solitary excursions into conversations we can share with others. You've taught me how to *notice* what often escapes my attention and then to articulate it, so that I might know better what I am talking about. You endured every sentence of this book's drafts (and the first two volumes of this trilogy); you inferred words that were supposed to be there but were not, and discovered redundancies in words that were. You noticed abrasive phrases and snags in sentences and then helped smooth them into more transparent prose. When we debated, your uncanny instinct for wordplay lightened my ponderous thoughts, and when together we composed the final essay in this book your experience with Japanese pathway arts grounded my airy ideas. If readers of this volume find their way through it to insight, it is no doubt due to your patience with my writing. And if they do not, let them admonish me.

Once again, Wayne Yokoyama put his eagle eye to work in proof-reading and copy-editing, correcting both minutiae and gross errors, and tracking down quotations and references to ensure accuracy. Mistakes that remain can reliably be laid at my door. Many colleagues heard or read versions of the papers that grew into this book and contributed incisive remarks. James W. Heisig unselfishly gave the books in this trilogy their typographical design, and Claudio Bado contributed their cover design. Heisig, Morisato Takeshi, and Pierre Bonneels brought Chisokudō Publications to life and made the entire series, *Studies in*

*Japanese Philosophy*, easily accessible to a wide audience. I AM deeply grateful to all these friends.

Versions of all the chapters in this book have appeared previously in various volumes and journals, but all have been updated and revised or expanded for this volume. I am grateful to the publishers of the following articles for permission to reprint.

A shorter version of Chapter 1 appeared as “Religion and Relativism: A Reappraisal,” in *Zen Buddhism Today: Annual Report of the Kyoto Zen Symposium 9* (1992), 30–45.

A version of Chapter 2 was published under the title, “Can Scholars Understand Zen? A Re-examination of the Opposition Between Objective Study and Religious Practice,” in H. Eisenhofer-Halim, ed., *Wandel zwischen den Welten: Festschrift für Johannes Laube*. Frankfurt, Berlin, and New York: Peter Lang (2003), 439–50.

Chapter 3 appeared in a shorter version as “A Call for an Alternative Notion of Understanding in Interreligious Hermeneutics,” in C. Cornille and C. Conway, eds., *Interreligious Hermeneutics*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books (2010), 89–115. Reprinted with the permission of Wipf and Stock Publishers ([www.wipfandstock.com](http://www.wipfandstock.com)).

A shorter version of Chapter 4 was published as “An Alternative Notion of Practice in the Promise of Japanese Philosophy,” in Lam Wing-keung and Cheung Ching-yuen, eds., *Frontiers of Japanese Philosophy 4: Facing the 21st Century*. Nagoya: Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture (2009), 7–21.

Chapter 5 was published in a previous version as “Four Things and Two Practices: Rethinking Heidegger Ex Oriente Lux,” *Comparative and Continental Philosophy* 4/1 (2012), 53–74.

Chapter 6 appeared under the same title, “Practice, Samādhi, Realization: Three Innovative Interpretations by Nishitani Keiji,” in *The Eastern Buddhist* 25/1 (Spring 1992), 8–20.

A version of Chapter 7 appeared as “Rousseau, Hakuseki, Hakuin: Understanding Self in Three Autobiographers,” in Roger T. Ames, ed.,

*Self As Person in Asian Theory and Practice*. State University of New York Press (1994), 57-79.

Chapter 8 appeared as “A Walk Through Some Zen Landscapes of the Heart,” in Hans-Georg Möller and Andrew K. Whitehead, eds., *Landscape and Travelling East and West: A Philosophical Journey*. London and New York: Bloomsbury (2014), 111-25.

A shorter version of Chapter 9 appeared as “Personal Autonomy: An Alternative View,” in Jason Dockstader, Hans-Georg Möller and Günter Wohlfart, eds., *Selfhood East and West: De-Constructions of Identity*. Nordhausen: Verlag Traugott Bautz (2012), 221-36.

Chapter 10 was published under the same title, “Alternative Configurations of Alterity in Dialogue with Ueda Shizuteru,” in *Comparative and Continental Philosophy* 14/2 (2022), 178-95.

A shorter version of Chapter 11 appeared as “Emptiness, History, Accountability: A Critical Examination of Keiji Nishitani’s Standpoint,” in *Zen Buddhism Today: Annual Report of the Kyoto Zen Symposium* 15 (1998), 97-117.

A version of Chapter 12 appeared as “The Alternative Normativity of Zen” in Raquel Bouso and James W. Heisig, eds., *Frontiers of Japanese Philosophy 6: Confluences and Cross-Currents*. Nagoya: Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture (2009), 190-214.

Chapter 13 was published as “The Practice of Body-Mind: Dōgen’s *Shinjingakudō* and Comparative Philosophy,” in William R. LaFleur, ed., *Dōgen Studies*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press (1985), 112-30.

Chapter 14 was published under the same title, “Negotiating the Divide of Death: Dōgen’s Difference,” in Steven Heine, ed., *Dōgen and Sōtō Zen*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2015), 109-37.

A shorter version of the “Follow-up,” co-authored by Mary Jo Maraldo, appeared as “Ante-originality in Japanese Pathway Arts,” in the *American Philosophical Association Newsletter on Asian and Asian-American Philosophy* (Spring 2022), 7-11.