

MIKI KIYOSHI AND THE CRISIS OF THOUGHT

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Miki Kiyoshi and the Crisis of Thought

edited by

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CHISOKUDŌ

Cover design by Claudio Bado

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ISBN: 979-8883701817

Nagoya, Japan

<https://www.chisokudo.org/>

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Editors' Introduction

This collection seeks to provide a first introduction in English to various dimensions of the work of Miki Kiyoshi, one of Japan's most important intellectuals of the 20th century. While Miki is not a forgotten author, as interest in his work has endured over the years, it would be no exaggeration to say that he is relatively understudied and often misunderstood.

Admittedly, Miki is a protean figure. During his lifetime, his philosophy transformed and was expressed through diverse mediums. In the postwar period, philosophers such as Nakamura Yūjirō and Hiro-matsu Wataru recognized his importance, even if they did not systematically engage in his work. In the secondary literature about Japanese philosophy, he is often considered a marginal figure of the Kyoto School as many of his writings are considered journalistic and thus not philosophical. Moreover, Miki's work is undoubtedly politically ambiguous, which has been an exegetical challenge for commentators. After being imprisoned for the first time in 1930, Miki abandoned Marxist terminology and moved closer to the values of liberalism, humanism, and finally to the ideal of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.¹ The permeation of certain imperialist slogans into his work is undeniable and needs to be carefully and critically investigated. We hope this collection will be a starting point for taking Miki's vast oeuvre seriously, whose critique is not exhausted.

1. The Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere was a concept promoted by Imperial Japan during the early to mid-20th century, and presented as a vision for regional cooperation and economic integration in East Asia, with Japan in the position of leadership.

But it is precisely because of these ambiguities and tensions that we understand Miki as a *thinker of crisis*. It could be argued that Miki himself is both a symptom of Japan's crisis in the 1930s and a thinker of the crisis who reflected on the causes of the crisis and its possible solution. At the beginning of the twentieth century, a crisis in Japan was brought about by a loss of identity brought about by the rapid transformation of its culture, and Japan faced the continued threat of being colonized by Western thought and values. These tensions are reflected in Miki's philosophy, especially in his dialectical concepts of existence and fact, *pathos* and *logos*, subject and object, etc. The Greek word *krisis* comes from the verb *krinein*, which means "to separate," "to judge," or "to decide." For Miki, the crisis is mainly characterized by the contradiction between two dialectical moments, such as the subject and the object, *pathos* and *logos*, when the discourses describing the objectivity do not correlate with the anxiety experienced by acting subjects. It is a historical dislocation that demands a decision. After all, Miki was an intellectual who took sides and considered that philosophers should not be mere spectators of historical events. This attitude can be seen in his text "To the Intellectuals" (「知識階級に与ふ」, 1938), where Miki declared:

If it were possible to be an observer until the end, it would also be good to be an observer now. However, given that life is inevitable, it is appropriate for the intelligentsia to rise to the occasion and take an active part in solving the problems of the present. However, leaving life to its own devices does not mean leaving it to the intellect.²

For Miki, one always philosophizes within a certain situation, which demands a critical and active attitude from intellectuals. This is equally true for Miki's philosophy, which is a situated philosophy. Of course, this does not mean it is invalid to criticize the problematic aspects of Miki's thought, but it is necessary to do so from the historical understanding of a particular situation. We hope this collection

2. MKZ 15: 241.

contributes to promoting the serious scholarship and problematization of Miki's work and rethinking the relationship between the philosophical activity and its historical context.

MIKI'S LIFE

Miki was born on December 28, 1896, although his officially recorded birth date is January 5, 1897.³ He was the eldest son of Miki Seisuke, a farmer whose grandfather was a successful rice merchant, and his wife Shin, who lived in Isseimura, Hyōgo (now part of Tatsuno).

In 1914, at the age of 17, Miki moved to Tokyo and was admitted to the prestigious First High School (第一高等学校) and had the psychologist Hayami Hiroshi as one of his teachers. It was also here that Miki first read *An Inquiry into the Good*. This book proved to be formative of Miki's philosophy and his decision to pursue the path of philosophy.

The book I loved the most was Nishida-sensei's *An Inquiry into the Good*; in it, I was delighted to find a complete satisfaction that I had never felt before. If this is philosophy, and if this is how the true philosophy should be, then I was forced to believe that it is a philosophy that I cannot help but demand, a philosophy that in no way denies the increase of passion (情熱).⁴

Three years later, in September 1917, Miki entered the Philosophy Department of the Faculty of Letters at Kyoto Imperial University, where Tanikawa Tetsuzō, Hayashi Tatsuo, and Tosaka Jun would soon arrive. Among the faculty were Nishida Kitarō in philosophy, Asanaga Sanjūrō in the history of philosophy, Fukada Yasukazu in aesthetics, Sakaguchi Subaru in Western history, Naitō Konan in Chinese studies, Uchida Ginzō in Japanese history, Hatano Seiichi, and Tanabe Hajime, among others.

3. For this biography, we mainly follow the information reproduced in the annexes of the *Complete Works of Miki Kiyoshi* and TOWNSEND's biography (2009).

4. MKZ 18: 29.

Miki graduated from Kyoto Imperial University in 1920 with a thesis on “Critical Philosophy and Philosophy of History” (『批判哲学と歴史哲学』) and was called up for military service, as was normal at the time.

Two years later, with financial support from Iwanami Shigeo, and on Hatano's recommendation, Miki traveled to Europe: first to Germany, where he would study with Heinrich Rickert in Heidelberg⁵ and with Martin Heidegger in Marburg, and then to Paris. The change from Heidelberg to Marburg shows how Heidegger's existentialist hermeneutics and phenomenology shook Miki's interest in Neo-Kantianism.⁶ Other authors Miki encountered in Germany and worth mentioning include Karl Mannheim, Eugen Herrigel, Hermann Glockner, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and Karl Löwith.

In contrast to Germany, Miki seemed disillusioned with the philosophical life of Paris, a city that was massive compared to Marburg and Heidelberg and which affected him with a certain loneliness.⁷ Bergson had already retired but attended Léon Brunschvicg's classes at the Sorbonne. During this time, Miki was taken by Pascal, absorbed by him, and began to write the chapters of his first book. Although originally he intended to visit Oxford and Greece, in the end, he remained in Paris.

In 1925, Miki returned to Japan. He moved to Kyoto, hoping to obtain a position at Kyoto Imperial University. In 1926, he published his first book, *A Study of Human Being in Pascal* (『パスカルに於ける人間の研究』). In Kyoto, he also organized a reading group on Aristotle (no doubt inspired by Heidegger's lectures on the Greek philoso-

5. When Miki stayed in Heidelberg, he got to know many Japanese students who were at the same period, such as Hani Gorō, Ōuchi Hyōei, Amano Teiyū, Kuki Shūzō, Kuruma Samezō and so forth. See MKZ 1: 413.

6. Certainly, Marburg was still a significant city for Neo-Kantianism, where Hermann Cohen and Paul Natorp taught, and where Ernst Cassirer studied, but in principle the reason for Miki to move was the figure of Heidegger, since neither Cohen, Natorp nor Cassirer were there anymore.

7. MKZ 19: 427.

pher) attended by Nishitani Keiji and Tosaka Jun. In the interim, Miki became a teacher at the Third High School. A year later, in 1927, he moved to Tokyo and became a professor at Hōsei University.

1927 was also significant in other respects. The Iwanami publishing house started to publish their famous series of small collected books *Iwanami Bunko* (岩波文庫), which were inspired by the German publisher Reclam.⁸ As we will see,⁹ Miki's collaboration with Iwanami, which had already begun during his time in Europe, will intensify. From December to January 1928, he made a two-week tour of Korea, Manchuria, and North China with Iwanami Shigeo.¹⁰

It was also in 1927 that "Theses on Japan" was published as a noteworthy and much-debated document since it emphasized Japan's ideological backwardness. The Theses stressed the significance of a two-stage revolutionary process to eliminate feudal remnants. Yamakawa Hitoshi, the founder of the Japanese Communist Party and husband of the famous writer and activist Yamakawa Kikue, advocated for a more pragmatic approach involving an alliance with the farmer movement. Conversely, Fukumoto Kazuo emphasized the importance of theory and a vanguard party. Fukumoto influenced Miki, and Miki's texts from this time could probably be interpreted as an attempt to participate in the debate. As Tosaka recalled:

Miki returned to Japan about three years later. He returned to Japan as a Pascalian, but he suddenly developed a kind of ambition when he saw the rise of Fukumoto Kazuo. I remember him saying arrogantly: "Even I (俺) can do something as good as Fukumoto." He was unrivaled in his intuition at the time and quickly recognized the promising significance of Fukumoto in the new world of thought. We must not forget that it was extraordinary for a man in Kyoto's field of philosophy to have noticed this point. He eventually became a Marxist in his own right.

8. See KOJIMA 2006.

9. In the chapter by Ōsawa Satoshi included in this volume, pages 23–42.

10. MKZ 19: 867.

This “Marxism” is what moved me so much. Perhaps I was the first to learn of the left (?) under the influence of my *senpai*.¹¹

In October 1928, Miki Kiyoshi, Hani Gorō, and Kobayashi Isamu launched a journal *Under the Banner of New Science* (『新興科学の旗のもとに』). The title was inspired by the journal *Under the Banner of Marxism*, edited by Fukumoto. This journal offered a broad and unorthodox understanding of materialism, and in its pages wrote authors such as Tosaka Jun, Hani Gorō, Honda Kenzō, and even Tsuchida Kyōson.

In 1929, Miki married Higashihata Kimiko, who would abruptly die in August 1936. The couple had one daughter in 1930, Nagazumi Yōko, who later became a historian. The stability of Miki's life would be short-lived. The so-called Peace Preservation Law (治安維持法), enacted in 1925 to suppress communists and anarchists, evolved institutionally and, in 1927, established its counter-ideological branch. In this context, more and more intellectuals were arrested. Miki's sympathies for Marxism were evident, although he never defined himself as a Marxist. Miki was arrested in 1930 on suspicion of having donated money to the Japanese Communist Party.¹² Although he was released a few months later, this episode marked the end of his academic career. From that moment on, Miki would primarily devote himself to writing books and articles for newspapers and working as an editor, although occasionally, he would also work as a professor in some educational institutions.¹³

As pointed out by Max Ward,¹⁴ the rising number of political prisoners played a role in finding a solution to the growing prison popula-

11. Tosaka 1968, 103. Tosaka writes “(?)” when some expression is not completely appropriate. On the other hand, he calls Miki “his *senpai*” because Miki was three years older than him and both studied at Kyoto University.

12. See the afterword by Kuno Osamu in MKZ 3: 528.

13. Certainly, Miki did not give up teaching completely and occasionally taught at the Bunka Gakuin (1935) and the Tama School of Fine Arts (1938), but never again at important universities.

14. See WARD 2019, 21.

tion, and rehabilitation proved to be an effective approach. In Japan, this 'rehabilitation' or 'conversion' is called *tenkō* (転向). Other leftists accused Miki himself of committing *tenkō*, that is, of converting to the official ideology. Miki reflects on these accusations in his prison notes, where he states that he never considered himself a Marxist but rather used Marxist philosophy as a tool for his thinking. In these notes, he also declares that, unlike Marxism, his philosophy does not reject the importance of religion.

Nevertheless, even if, after his imprisonment, Miki was cautious not to say anything that would upset the authorities, he never ceased to be interested in actively participating in society. A few years after his arrest, Miki publicly expressed his solidarity with the jurist Takigawa Yukitoki of the Faculty of Law at Kyoto Imperial University, who was accused by the Education Minister Hatoyama Ichirō of promoting Marxist ideologies in his criminal law lectures and suspended from teaching. This is referred to as the "Takigawa Incident" (滝川事件) or the "Kyoto University Incident" (京大事件). Other members of the law faculty resigned in protest.

In April 1933, many books labeled as "anti-German" were burned by the National Socialist government in Germany. To oppose this authoritarian event, Tanabe Kōichirō, together with Miki and several others, gathered together and established the Alliance for the Liberal Arts and Sciences (自由学芸同盟). This group was a central base for the anti-fascist movement, criticizing the Japanese government for the Takigawa Incident and Nazi Germany for its attack against culture and freedom. This movement, however, only lasted two years, suggesting that the authorities' control was becoming stricter.

In the subsequent years, Miki continued to write for Iwanami and other publishers, contributing to general interest magazines and engaging in other editorial projects. Among his most important editorial projects, Miki edited the *Dictionary of Contemporary Philosophy* (『現代哲学辞典』, with several re-editions between 1936 and 1949).

As a journalist and public commentator, Miki published between 1935 and 1940 a weekly column titled “One Topic per Day” (「一日一題」) in the *Yomiuri Shinbun*. Miki also participated as a moderator in various interviews and roundtables. These dialogues not only show us a very charismatic side of Miki and his familiarity with diverse intellectuals and politicians, but these conversations also give an account of the cultural situation of Japan. Among some of the people who conversed with Miki, we find the law scholar Kazahaya Yasoji, the minister of education Hashida Kunihiko, the writer Toyoshima Yoshio, the politician Arima Yoriyasu, and the dramatist Kishida Kunio, to name just a few.

Throughout the rest of his life, Miki continued to publish various books, mostly with Iwanami, which were collections of articles previously published in periodicals. One of his most successful books, however, is an original collection of reflections on topics such as happiness and death titled *Notes About Life* (『人生論ノート』). This work has sold over 20 million copies and continues to be reprinted, which implies Miki's broad and constant reception even after his death and in the postwar period.

In 1937, Konoe Fumimaro—who attended Nishida's classes at Kyoto University and was well-versed in Western thought—became Prime Minister and started the Second Sino-Japanese War. In November of the same year, Miki published an article entitled “The Reality of Japan” (「日本の現実」) in *Chūōkōron* (『中央公論』), which drew some attention of the executive office of Shōwa Research Association (昭和研究会).¹⁵ Due to Konoe's intellectual profile and his interest in socialism, many intellectuals saw in him a figure that could lead to important social transformations. The Shōwa Research Association had been organized since around 1933 by Konoe's friend and advisor, Gotō Ryūnosuke, and was fully launched at the end of 1936 to gather the opinions of intellectuals from various fields to develop a cohesive and stra-

15. SHŌWA DŌJIN KAI 1968, 165–6.

tegic vision for addressing the international and internal conflicts. For this purpose, how Miki analyzed the so-called “China Incident” (the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War) at that time must have been appealing. In “The Reality of Japan,” Miki openly recognizes the limits of the “spiritual culture” notion defended by conservative thinkers. The excessive emphasis on the spiritual aspects of Japanese cultural tradition hindered the need for modernization and technological development. Against these more conservative tendencies, Miki wrote: “The China Incident [支那事変] teaches us one thing, at least from the standpoint of thought. The conventional theory of Japanese spirit, which has been focused only on Japan’s peculiarities, has now encountered a serious limitation.”¹⁶ Other intellectuals convinced of the necessity of technological innovation and social reform also followed this analysis.

While actively engaged in this group, from 1937 to 1940, Miki also attempted to formulate his philosophical system. During this time, he wrote one of his most significant books, *The Logic of Imagination*, which was left unfinished. In this work, he sought to articulate various cultural activities (e.g., mythology, technology, institution, and experience) as a developmental process of human imagination and present them in connection with his previous thoughts.

Some years after the dissolution of the Shōwa Research Association in 1942, Miki was sent as a political adviser to the military administration in the Philippines. Miki’s tasks in the Philippines included writing ordinances or proclamations for the Japanese Military Administration (JMA) and drafting reports sent to Tokyo.¹⁷

16. MKZ 13: 442.

17. See TAIRAKO 2019 and CAMPOAMOR II 2017. Miki has written several articles on his experiences in the Philippines and his cultural anthropological analysis of it. See, MKZ 15: 478–619. Tamada, for example, says that his experiences in the Philippines triggered a change of interest in his last years, especially in his analysis of religion and preparation of *Shinran*. See, TAMADA 2016.

In 1944, his second wife, Kobayashi Itoko, died. The same year, he was forced to evacuate to Saginomiya City in Saitama Prefecture. One year later, in 1945, while under detention in Toyotama prison for alleged violation of the Public Order Maintenance Law by helping the leftist writer and activist Takakura Teru, Miki died on September 26, 40 days after the end of the war. Tragically, he succumbed to scabies and malnutrition, ultimately losing his life to nephritis at the age of 48.¹⁸

THE SCHOLARSHIP ON MIKI

Even a cursory glance at the critical reception of Miki's work makes it clear that there is a growing interest in his philosophy. This panoramic view, however, also reveals that much remains to be done. One of the main objectives of this collection is to highlight the richness of Miki's philosophy and to contribute to the scholarship on Miki by producing a volume that demonstrates the systematic importance of his work today. Miki is one of the most significant philosophers of the first half of the twentieth century in Japan. He is included—or at least mentioned—in almost every handbook and anthology on Japanese philosophy. Miki is present in collections such as *Sourcebook for Modern Japanese Philosophy. Selected Documents* (1998), *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Philosophy* (2014), and *The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Contemporary Japanese Philosophy* (2017) are a few examples.

Generally, Miki is mentioned in relation to the so-called Kyoto School. The Kyoto School was a group of philosophers associated with the Kyoto Imperial University and the figure of Nishida Kitarō, who was the mentor and inspiration of many authors. The Kyoto School includes authors like Nishida, Tanabe Hajime, Nishitani Keiji, Shimomura Toratarō, Kōsaka Masaaki, Kōyama Iwao, Suzuki Shige-

18. See ŌUCHI et al. 1948.

taka, Hisamatsu Sen'ichi, and more recently Ueda Shizuteru.¹⁹ As Heisig points out, the range of this School is problematic, and Miki is included as a member of the Kyoto School “in the wider sense of the term.”²⁰ Ōhashi states:

Miki is still widely read today as an important thinker. As long as the term Kyoto school is used to refer to Nishida's circle of students or a salon of the group around Nishida, Miki can very well be counted among this school since he was a favorite student of Nishida.²¹

Perhaps one of the best descriptions of the Kyoto School is Nakai Masakazu, himself a student of Nishida: “The Kyoto School is not the monolithic entity people think. I remember it never as something static but as a massive shooting star that has left a brilliant glow in its wake.”²² For that reason, it seems logical to understand that Miki not only undoubtedly belonged to the “School” but also that he was a central figure of it and that he influenced many of the authors of his generation.

Miki was very close to Nishida. He regularly visited him at his home, and it is not rare to find a clear resemblance between some aspects of Nishida's philosophy and Miki's. Examples are Nishida's concept of body and his notions of technique (or technology) and tool. It could be said that Nishida's historical world (歴史的世界) of culture was also a response to some of the issues raised by Miki.²³ The influence of Miki may also be seen in Tosaka, Nakai, and Kōsaka.

Again, it is probably too much of an exaggeration to say that we live in a *Miki-renaissance*. It seems, however, undeniable that in recent years, it is possible to observe increasing concern for revisiting his phi-

19. Some older accounts, like the one made by Tsuchida Kyōson in his book *Contemporary thought of Japan and China* (1927) include also Kihira Tadayoshi as one of the original members of this “school” (see CRESPIN PERALES 2023).

20. HEISIG 2001, 276.

21. ŌHASHI 2014, 13.

22. NAKAI 2022, 461–2.

23. As suggested by LOFTS 2021, 155.

losophy. The Japanese re-edition of Miki's *The Logic of the Imagination* (with a commentary by Fujita Masakatsu) and the first English translation of the same work (by John Krummel) are two good examples of this. The most recent selection of Miki's works edited by Mori Ichirō (2021) and the recent anthology edited by Tanaka, Fujita, and Muroi, *Rethinking Miki Kiyoshi* (2019), are also good proofs of how his figure continues to provide new and abundant philosophical material for scholarly research. In Japan, as demonstrated in the Collection of Kiyoshi Miki Research Materials (vol. 1–6, 2018) edited by Tsuda, Muroi, and Miyajima, philological research on Miki is also healthy. Other relevant authors who wrote about Miki—just to name a few—are Akamatsu Tsunehiro, Sugawara Jun, Machiguchi Tetsuo, Gotō Yoshihiro, etc.²⁴

Outside Japan, Miki's reception has been rather scarce. Piovesana offers in his book from 1963, *Recent Japanese Philosophical Thought, 1862–1962*, one of the earliest summaries of his life and work.²⁵ Jacinto Zavala made one of the first translations into a Western language, translating “On Tradition” (「伝統論」, 1940) into Spanish, and Nagatomo (1995) wrote the first monograph on him in English. Michiko Yusa's piece on Miki's time in Europe is still the most detailed description of the philosopher's life in Germany;²⁶ Townsend's biography of Miki (2009) is the only one in English and an exceptional document to contextualize his whole work.

Among the scholars of the Kyoto School, Miki is better known for his *The Logic of the Imagination*, which has received increased philosophical scrutiny.²⁷ Miki's political thought and activities, as they might be called, have also attracted much attention among scholars, with the tension between a “Marxist Miki” and a ‘nationalist-conservative

24. See AKAMATSU 1994, SUGAWARA 2013, MACHIGUCHI 2004, and GOTŌ 2008.

25. PIOVESANA 1997, 176–186.

26. YUSA 1995.

27. See EBERSOLT 2012, in relation to Bergson's creative imagination; and KRUMMEL 2016, 2017.

Miki' at the center of the discussion.²⁸ While some authors emphasize his work as a non-Marxist ideologue who collaborated with creating nationalist slogans,²⁹ scholars like Dennis Stromback have investigated the relevance of Miki's thought in the context of contemporary emancipation struggles, including environmental politics.³⁰ The role of religion within Miki's thought has been just partially explored.³¹

ABOUT THE STRUCTURE OF THIS BOOK

As evidenced in this introduction, Miki's work is multifaceted concerning his philosophical interests (Neo-Kantianism, Marxism, humanism, etc.) and his style and format (from academic texts to journalistic essays and interviews). While it is impossible to reflect the totality of this multiplicity in a single volume, this collection has focused on some of the most significant aspects of Miki's work. While there is much to be done, we hope this volume will serve as a starting point to investigate those aspects of Miki's work that could not be included.

The first contribution in charge of Ōsawa Satoshi brings an interdisciplinary point of view from media history as he deals with Miki's role as an editorial collaborator of Iwanami Shigeo, especially in the collection "Philosophy Series, Continued." This reveals a hitherto understudied aspect of Miki, his role as editor and mediator, right after his return from Germany.

28. See BARSHAY 2007, 58.

29. See KIM 2007 and HARRINGTON 2009. For example, Harrington writes: "it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Miki's constant positing of an impossible, abstract universalism resulted ultimately in the empty concept of cooperativism, which contributed, nonetheless, to the justification of imperialist violence throughout East Asia" (2009, 69). Nakata Steffensen will challenge the characterization of Miki as a plain militarist in the article included in this volume. See also STEFFENSEN 2022.

30. See STROMBACK 2020; 2021.

31. CURLEY 2008; 2017; IWATA 2021.

Hans Peter Liederbach explores the relationship between Miki and Heidegger, focusing on Miki's use of Heidegger's concept of *Grunderfahrung* in the development of his concept of "fundamental experience" (基礎經驗) and, also in connection with this early stage of his thought. Dennis Stromback establishes the continuity between Miki's early work of Pascal and his Marxist-leaning works in the late 1920s, reading Miki as a "Marxist existentialist."

The book then explores some of Miki's middle-period works. Nakamura Norihito analyzes *Philosophy of History* (1932), highlighting Miki's critique of "organist" projects within the philosophy of history. Against those who interpret history as a closed system, whether by teleology, determinism, or abstract relativism, Miki proposes a dialectical overcoming through his concepts of history as existence and history as fact. Meanwhile, Arisaka Yōko, introduces the main ideas of the posthumous and unfinished work *Philosophical Anthropology*. In this work, Miki pays special attention to the concept of everydayness to reconcile it with world-historicity. Thus, Miki's anthropology appears as an anthropology of the human being who makes history out of its everydayness.

Beginning from essays on religion published by Miki in the early 30s, Steve Lofts provides a reading that interprets Miki's philosophy of history of everydayness as a philosophy of religion. Lofts seeks to follow Miki's philosophical journey from its beginning in Miki's work on Pascal, through his engagement with Marxism in the late 20s, to his engagement with Cassirer and Heidegger in the early 30s.

Miki's philosophical treatment of technology is expanded by John Krummel, who offers an interpretative synthesis of one of Miki's most complex works, his *Logic of the Imagination*, demonstrating its continuity with the technical philosophy and its ontological and productive conception of imagination.

The book closes with two chapters that deal with Miki's political significance. Kenn Nakata Steffensen treats one of the most controversial topics in Miki scholarship Miki's political engagement. Through

analysis of his often-overlooked newspaper articles, Steffensen argues that Miki was a “consistent anti-fascist.” Kwak Minseok examines Miki’s influence on philosophy in colonial Korea. Kwak compares Miki’s crisis thinking with the important Korean philosopher Pak Chong-hong’s criticisms of Miki’s philosophy.

The chapter co-written by Matsui Nobuyuki and Fernando Wirtz presents Miki’s philosophy of technology, arguing that Miki’s late ontology is, in fact, technological.

As noted above, these texts do not exhaust all aspects of Miki’s philosophy. We hope, however, that the reader will be able to approach the philosophy of an extremely complex author in these pages and find elements to think about a world in crisis in his texts.

An additional remark must be made regarding the problem of translating Miki’s concepts. In general, Miki’s language is plain and simple, as he seeks, especially towards the last period of his life, to produce a thought transparent to the general public. However, this is not to say that Miki lacked a special poetic sensibility for language and a particular capacity for subtlety and philosophical wit. In many cases, there is no single way to translate some of Miki’s main concepts, and as editors, we have respected each author’s choice. This can be seen in concepts such as 基礎經驗, which is sometimes translated as “basic experience” and sometimes as “fundamental experience.”

In all cases, for Japanese and Korean names, we have respected the original order: family name followed by personal name.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people collaborated during the making of this book. We would like to extend special thanks to Tekla Nanuashvili and Lisa Torio for their assistance in proofreading and formatting the texts.

Takeshi Morisato has kindly let us reproduce the translation of the list of Miki’s *Complete Works*, so that the reader can easily find the references to Miki’s writings in the 20 volumes of the collection.

This book is the result of a project that started in 2021 when we organized an international workshop on Miki, which was held in December 2022 at Kyoto University with the support of the Toshiba Foundation and the cooperation of the Society for Intercultural Philosophy (GIP) and its president, Niels Weidtmann. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Toshiba Foundation for its financial support, which has also made the publication of this book possible. Uehara Mayuko helped us with the institutional cooperation of the Department of Japanese Philosophy at Kyoto University. That same year, we held a second workshop in collaboration with the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture in December. We thank Matthew McMullen and Enrico Fongaro for their logistic and philosophical support.

Last but not least, we would especially like to thank James Heisig and the Chisokudō team for their guidance and patience during the development of this book.

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