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'Entendendo as Formação Cultural: Sobre a Relevância da Concepção Mesológica de Amor de Nishida Kitaro'

[Understanding Cultural Formations: On the Relevance of Nishida Kitaro's Mesological Conception of Love] trans. André Bueno, in *Extremo Oriente Conectado*, Rio de Janeiro: Edições Especiais Sobre Ontens, Brazil, 2019. ISBN: 978-85-65996-76-1

We may wonder what is the relevance of 'love' to understanding the nature of cultural formation. Various conceptions of the nature of love, whether in its *eros*, *phila*, or *agape* versions run through the history of ideas from Aristotle and Plato to Augustine and Aquinas, from Kierkegaard to Scheler. Be they interested, empathetic, or transcending, such conceptions always implicitly or explicitly suggest a link between love and self-determination and, by extension, identity-formation. Whether aimed at self-satisfaction, friendship or devotion love is an ethical and therefore relational way of being that impacts on what we become. Of course, here, the 'we' has to be understood as a paradigm that includes selves, others, communities, or entities beyond the individuals. Culture is thus no more than a particular instance of the 'we'. And depending on how we love ourselves, fellow human beings, or entities beyond us, cultures understood as complex matrices of values and practices will take shape in such or such a way; they may endure, mutate, or die off.

The history of Western philosophy has broadly elaborated its conceptions of love in metaphysical terms or, more recently, phenomenologically. On the other side of the globe Nishida Kitaro, who was at the origin of the Kyoto School, certainly incorporated sections of Western philosophy in his own studies, but the place of his reflection was East Asian thought – in particular Buddhism and Taoism. It comes therefore as no surprise that his account of the function of love in 'self-determinations' of some kinds is more 'mesological' than metaphysical or phenomenological. Love is conceived as a noticeable part of a 'milieu' (μέσος, middle) made of relational entities that set the conditions for self-formation, identity-formation and, indeed, cultural formations. Of course, Nishida is well known for having elaborated on the concept of 'place' (*basho*) and its role in understanding self-formation, identity-formation, or even history-formation. On one plane, love can be understood as a place that partly allows for the self-determination of entities, precisely because it amounts to a form of disinterested self-emptying *in relatio*. What I have called 'milieu' is, however, more than a place in so far as the former includes the latter. As such, love in the way Nishida formulates it, becomes a part amongst others of a milieu that makes possible the dynamic of self-determinations, including cultural formations.



**ENTENDENDO A FORMAÇÃO CULTURAL: SOBRE
A RELEVÂNCIA DA CONCEPÇÃO MESOLÓGICA
DE AMOR DE NISHIDA KITARO [1]**

Gerald Cipriani

Podemos nos perguntar qual é a relevância do "amor" para entender a natureza da formação cultural. Várias concepções da natureza do amor, seja em suas versões *eros*, *phila* ou *agap* percorrem a história das ideias de Aristóteles e Platão para Agostinho e Aquino, de Kierkegaard para Scheler. Sejam elas interessantes, empáticas ou transcendentais, tais concepções sempre implicitamente ou explicitamente sugerem uma ligação entre amor e autodeterminação e, por extensão, formação de identidade. Seja para a satisfação pessoal, amizade ou devoção, o amor é um modo de ser ético e, portanto, relacional, que impacta no que nos tornamos. Naturalmente, aqui, o 'nós' tem que ser entendido como um paradigma que inclui eu, outros, comunidades ou entidades além dos indivíduos. A cultura, portanto, não é mais que um exemplo particular do "nós". E dependendo de como nos amamos, seres humanos companheiros, ou entidades além de nós, as culturas entendidas como matrizes complexas de valores e práticas tomarão forma e mudar de tal ou tal maneira; por fim, sofrem, mudam e morrem.

A história da filosofia ocidental elaborou amplamente suas concepções de amor em termos metafísicos ou, mais recentemente, fenomenologicamente. Do outro lado do globo, Nishida Kitaro, que estava na origem da Escola de Kyoto, certamente incorporou seções da filosofia ocidental em seus próprios estudos, mas o lugar de sua reflexão era o pensamento do leste asiático – em particular o budismo e o taoísmo. Portanto, não surpreende que seu relato da função do amor em "autodeterminações" de algum tipo seja, portanto, mais "mesológico" do que metafísico ou fenomenológico. O amor é concebido como uma parte visível de um "meio" (μέσος, meio) feito de entidades relacionais que estabelecem as condições para a autoformação, formação de identidade e, de fato, formações culturais. Naturalmente, Nishida é bem conhecido por ter elaborado o conceito de 'lugar' (*basho*) e seu papel na compreensão da autoformação, formação da identidade ou mesmo na formação da história. Em um plano, o amor pode ser entendido como um lugar

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《自然、文化与崇高:埃德蒙伯克环境美学思想时评》[Culture and the Sublime: On Edmund Burke's Environmental Aesthetics],
trans. Liu Sijie (刘思捷), in *Environmental Aesthetics Frontiers Series* 《环境美学前沿》, ed. Wangheng Chen, Wuhan: Wuhan
University Press (武汉大学出版社), China, 2019. ISBN: 978-7-307-20908-4

Trying to understand the experience of the sublime has always been a challenge for many philosophers across the history of ideas. To understand the sublime, we have to look into how the perceived object that allegedly overpowers us relates to our perceptual response to it. For some, eighteenth century Western philosophy did not manage to offer a satisfactory account of the sublime. For example, the idea of "content-less content" in the experience of the sublime – together with its perceptual correlative, the disinterested autonomous attitude – keeps being debated today and keeps posing problems, especially ethical ones.

Overall, the experience of the sublime as discussed in eighteenth century Western philosophy is thought to affect the perceiving subject or the self. The issue then is to understand how such an experience affects the self, or how the sublime object of perception impacts on the perceiving subject. It is, it should be stressed, an aesthetic experience, just like the experience of the beautiful, as it pertains to sense-perception (*aisthesis* in ancient Greek). This essay draws from Vanessa L. Ryan's reappraisal of Edmund Burke's account of the sublime in order to highlight its ethical relevance in the context of the natural, human, or built environment.



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Culture, War and Sovereignty, C&D Vol. 7.2, ed. G. Cipriani, Leiden/Boston: Brill (2019), 137 pp.
ISSN: 2468-3949 <https://brill.com/view/journals/cad/cad-overview.xml>

Why devote an issue of *Culture and Dialogue* to “war and sovereignty”? The dialogue is at the heart of the question of sovereignty, its possibility, its need and justification. Aspirations for sovereignty do not only concern territories and proprieties in the concrete sense of the terms. We find issues of sovereignty in all layers of life; academia, science, business, the judiciary, or religion, amongst others. Questions of sovereignty have affected individuals as much as groups of people of all sizes in all parts of the globe. Drives to establish sovereignty have mapped the history of humanity and continue to do so. In other words, the question concerning sovereignty is universal, both in space and time.

Culture and Dialogue is an international peer-reviewed journal of cross-cultural philosophy and humanities that is published semi-annually both in print and electronically. The journal seeks to encourage and promote research in the type of philosophy and theory that sees dialogue as a fundamental ingredient of cultural formations, that is to say the ways cultures become apparent and ultimately identifiable. What is meant here by culture is a particular manifestation of human achievement in the arts, languages, forms of expression (whether secular or religious), and customs of all kinds including political ones.

Dialogue, in this context, means a mode of relationship that lets cultural formations unfold by bringing together human beings and, for example, their natural environment, their historical past, traditions, external cultural influences, contemporary trends, other communities, or simply other persons in conversation.

Culture and Dialogue provides a forum for researchers from philosophy as well as other disciplines, who study cultural formations dialogically, through comparative analysis, or within the tradition of hermeneutics. For each issue, the journal seeks to bring manuscripts together with a common denominator. The language of the journal is English, but submissions in other languages including German, traditional Chinese, French and Japanese may be considered for special issues with guest editors.



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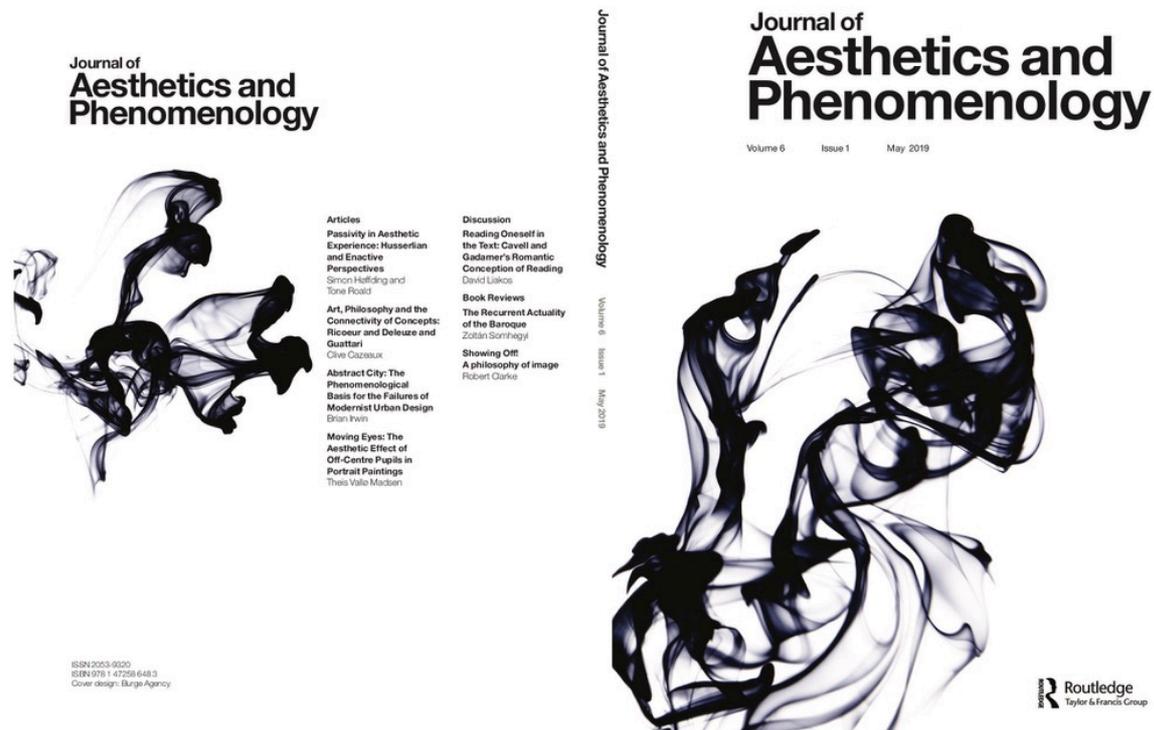
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Journal of Aesthetics and Phenomenology, eds. G. Cipriani & A. Haapala, London: Routledge (2019), Vol. 6. 1, May 93 pp.
ISSN: 2053-9339 <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rfap20/current>

Journal of Aesthetics and Phenomenology aims to encourage and promote research in aesthetics that draws inspiration from the phenomenological tradition as broadly understood, where “phenomenology” is inclusive of, but goes beyond the limits of, intellectual practices associated with the tradition and its well-known representative thinkers. Unique in the English speaking world, the journal welcomes scholarly articles written in a phenomenological vein as well as analyses of aesthetic phenomena by researchers working on phenomenology with in analytic philosophy.

The field of *Journal of Aesthetics and Phenomenology* is further defined by its close connections with the arts and culture, including the reality of human experience and its environment. Besides philosophical rigor, the journal puts emphasis on both creativity of ideas and precision of language. It provides a platform for new innovative ideas crossing the boundaries of both philosophical traditions and traditionally accepted fields of research in aesthetics.



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Dialogue and Creativity, C&D Vol. 7.1, ed. G. Cipriani, Leiden/Boston: Brill (2019), 111 pp.
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Culture and Dialogue 7.1 focuses on “Dialogue and Creativity.” Publishing an issue on a theme that pertains to “creativity” may, for some, appear to be simply a rehash of all-too-familiar debates. It is perhaps less common to understand creativity within the dynamics of the dialogue and from different angles, whether in the sciences or the arts, whether in terms of its forms or its dynamics, its temporality or instrumentality, its metaphysical or ethical dimensions, or, simply, in terms of its historical condition or renewing nature. All essays in this journal issue address in different ways from different perspectives and in different relevant fields what is at stake in the dynamics of creativity.

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