

Zhu Xi and “Zhu Xi-ism” — Toward a Critical Perspective on the Ansai School —

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The people of today are more than ever incapable of understanding the fine points of Zhu Xi's 朱熹 commentaries on the Four Books, but with a proud look on their faces they call themselves the representatives of Zhu Xi learning. How laughable! In this country, the only person who has understood Zhu Xi's meaning is Yamazaki Ansai.

Preface to the *Nihon Dôgaku engenroku* 日本道學淵源錄
(Record of the Origins of the Japanese School of the Way), 1842.

There is almost no place in the whole country of Japan that has not been influenced and inspired by the Kimon 崎門 school.

Tokutomi Sohô 徳富蘇峰 (1863–1957)

A Perspective on the Ansai School

I have discussed in considerable detail elsewhere how the Yamazaki Ansai 山崎闇齋 school's “Zhu Xi-ist” reconstruction of Zhu Xi learning developed and expanded as a discourse regarding the formation of a Japanese “interior” (*naibu* 内部).¹ What I refer to as “Zhu Xi-ism” is the reconstitutive (*saikôseiteki* 再構成的) discourse of the inheritance of Zhu Xi's teachings among the successors of Zhu Xi. The construction of this concept will be explained in more detail later. What I wish to discuss in this paper is the problem of what perspective we should take in approaching the Yamazaki Ansai (Kimon) school. The Ansai school made a strong claim to have inherited the orthodox (*seitô* 正統) teachings of Zhu Xi, which they regarded as the basis of their own orthodoxy and legitimacy as a school.² Moreover, the intellectual lineage of the Ansai

¹ Koyasu Nobukuni, “Yamazaki Ansai gakuha no ‘keisetsu’ to ‘shinpô’ no gensetsu—Nihonteki ‘naibu’ keisei no gensetsu” 山崎闇齋学派の「敬説」と「心法」の言説、日本的「内部」形成の言説 (The discourse of “reverence” and “mind-method” in the Yamazaki Ansai school—the formation of a Japanese “interior”), *Shisô* 思想 842 (August 1994). Republished in *Edo shisô shi kôgi* 江戸思想史講義 (Lectures on the History of Edo Thought) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1998), pp. 45–76.

² In the study referred to below in note 3, Maruyama distinguishes two different meanings of the concept of *seitôsei* 正統生 using the terms “O-orthodoxy” (the *orthodoxy* of a teaching or a lineage of learning, the orthodoxy of a world view) and “L-orthodoxy” (the *legitimacy* of a ruler,

school was held in very high regard in Japan from the early part of the Shōwa period, on account of its distinctive concept of the national polity (*kokutai* 国体). My motive in examining the Ansai school is the problem of what perspective we should take in approaching this school. As a matter of course, my inquiry into this problem of perspective cannot avoid crossing paths with the highly sophisticated critical examination Maruyama Masao 丸山真男 makes of the school in his work, "Orthodoxy and Legitimacy in the Kimon School" (1980).³ Or, perhaps it would be better to say that it is only through a positive engagement with Maruyama's study that we can clarify our perspective on the Ansai school.

To elucidate what we are talking about here it will be useful first to quote some passages representative of the *kokutai*-centered discourse regarding Ansai and his school that was flooding the country in the first two decades of the Shōwa era.

Since they provided a rigorous critique of their times while investigating to the full the "supreme duty" between lord and vassal (*kunshin no taigi* 君臣の大義), not stopping at the level of cognition and argument but trying to verify its truth in their own lives, they were able to stand firm through innumerable difficulties and carry on their teaching mission generation after generation, maintaining the same purpose inflexibly through a hundred teachers for over two hundred years, both in Eastern and Western Japan, giving themselves without end to the cause of the imperial throne. This sort of thing can only be seen in the Kimon school.⁴

The great mission (*daiganmoku* 大眼目) of Ansai's learning lay in fostering the Way of the three bonds and five constants in our country and teaching the meaning of the "supreme duty in accord with name and status" (*taigi meibun* 大義名分), in order to promote the dignity of our national polity (*kokutai*).... It goes without saying that scholars who endeavored to arouse the national consciousness (*jikaku* 自覺) and make manifest the *kokutai*—the very foundation upon which our country is established—possess an especially great historical significance. Ansai and those of his school not only proclaimed this like a lion's roar in their studios, but when the time arrived they also expressed it in practice. When one died the next would take over, not fearing any difficulty, giving themselves totally to the cause of the nation with the same single mind, becoming one great stream leading to the realization of the great enterprise of the Restoration. There was absolutely no other school of learning in the history of our country's early modern period that presented such a magnificent sight, and the extent of its influence exceeds our ability to imagine.... The spirit behind Ansai's desire to

a system of rule, or a lineage of rulers). Legitimacy, however, can also refer to the legitimacy of a partisan claim to orthodoxy. As Maruyama also recognizes, a claim of doctrinal orthodoxy always stands on the basis of the legitimacy of a faction or school. A claim of doctrinal orthodoxy (O-seitou) is always found at the basis of the legitimacy of a faction or school (L-seitou). What I refer to as the discourse of Zhu Xi-ism is just such a discourse in which the claim of orthodoxy gave rise to the legitimacy of a faction or school.

³ "Ansaigaku to Ansai gakuha" 闇齋学と闇齋学派, in *Yamazaki Ansai gakuha* 山崎闇齋学派 (The School of Yamazaki Ansai), *Nihon shisō taikai* 日本思想大系, vol. 31 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1980), pp. 601–74. Translated by Barry D. Steben under the title "Orthodoxy and Legitimacy in the Kimon School," in *Sino-Japanese Studies* 8. 2 (March 1996), pp. 6–49; 9.1 (October 1996), pp. 4–33.

⁴ Hiraizumi Tomi 平泉澄, "Ansai sensei to Nihon seishin" 闇齋先生と日本精神 (Master Ansai and the Japanese spirit), in Hiraizumi Tomi, ed., *Ansai sensei to Nihon seishin* 闇齋先生と日本精神 (Master Ansai and the Japanese Spirit) (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1932).

compile a national history was learned from Zhu Xi's *Tongjian gangmu* 通鑑綱目 (Outline of the *Comprehensive Mirror*). What it comes down to is elucidating the spirit of the founding of the country, honoring the uniqueness of the *kokutai*, distinguishing between our country and foreign countries, revering lord and father, extolling the great rectitude of loyalty and filial piety, revering the legitimate lineage (*seitô*), and praising honor and integrity.... Ansai once wrote in a poem that "learning is nothing other than loyalty and filial piety." Moreover, his loyalty and filial piety were the loyalty and filial piety of a Japanese. He held that if there is learning that departs from loyalty and filial piety, that learning is in the final analysis useless, and the person [who engages in this learning] is also useless.⁵

The Kimon lineage of learning constitutes one of the three great Tokugawa-period sources of our country's concept of *kokutai*, the others being the Mito 水戸 school and National Learning. Its contributions to the Meiji Restoration were extremely great. Moreover, in a sense the Kimon lineage constituted the source of the other two schools.⁶

There is almost no place in the whole country of Japan that has not been influenced and inspired by the Kimon school.... Master Ansai, like Tokugawa Mitsukuni, was extremely thorough about investigating the Way, and he had grasped the true essence of our nation (*waga kokumin no shinzui* 我が國民の眞髓). To state what that is, it is to look into the deepest core of Japanese history. One must consider the essence of Japanese history by starting from the origins of the imperial house.⁷

This is the monotonous *kokutai*-theory refrain for which Maruyama expresses his disdain in his study when he says: "that I would find it unbearably tedious to quote one by one." But is it enough for us just to dismiss this early Shôwa *kokutai* discourse surrounding the Ansai school—this discourse depicting the personality of the founder in glowing terms while emphasizing the unbroken genealogical continuity of the philosophy of *kokutai* and the idea that it had never been lost through the history of his school—with a look of disdain? Of course, like Maruyama, I feel a sense of repugnance toward this discourse. But it seems that the attitude with which I regard this discourse is different. This difference is also a difference in the way we look at the image of Ansai and his school that comes to us through this discourse. Let us first look at what Maruyama says about this *kokutai*-theory discourse that he says he would find too tedious to cite.

The sort of "emanationist" (*ryûshutsuron* 流出論) explanation of the meaning and role of the Ansai school in intellectual history that was, so to speak, popularized by the new Kimon school in modern Japan, was also nothing other than a correlate of the school's appearance of "diachronic continuity" and "self-completing nature." It took

⁵ Abe Yoshio 阿部吉雄, "Yamazaki Ansai to sono kyôiku" 山崎闇齋とその教育 (Yamazaki Ansai and his education), in *Kinsei Nihon no Jugaku* 近世日本の儒學 (Neo-Confucianism in Early Modern Japan), ed. Society for the Celebration and Commemoration of the Seventieth Anniversary of Duke Tokugawa Iesato's Succession (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1939), pp. 335-42.

⁶ Gotô Saburô 後藤三郎, preface to *Ansai gakutô to kokutai shisô* 闇齋學統と國體思想 (The Ansai Lineage and the Concept of the National Polity) (Tokyo: Kinkôdô shoseki, 1941).

⁷ Tokutomi Sohô 徳富蘇峰, "Rekishî yori mitaru Yamazaki Ansai sensei oyobi Yamazaki-gaku" 歴史より観たる山崎闇齋先生及び山崎學 (A historical view of Master Yamazaki Ansai and the Ansai school), in *Denki gakkai* 傳記學會, ed., *Yamazaki Ansai to sono monryû* 山崎闇齋と其門流 (Yamazaki Ansai and His School) (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1943).

for granted that the “spirit” inherent in the character and thought of the founder of the school, Ansai, was passed down without interruption through several generations of disciples, developing in one straight line into one of the great moving forces of the imperial restoration movement. Needless to say, this tune played in close harmony with the pre-war “national polity” (*kokutairon* 國體論) ideology. The essence of Ansai’s learning—(1) the elucidation of the origin of the nation in a unity of Heaven and man, (2) the elucidation of the supreme duty (*taigi*) between lord and vassal and father and son grounded in that national origin, and (3) the exaltation of the moral duties (*meibun*) of “revering the emperor and expelling the hegemon” and of distinguishing civilization from barbarism and native from foreign—was further carried on through the two centuries of the Tokugawa shogunate to gush forth as the *sonnô jôi* 尊王攘夷 doctrine of the *bakumatsu* period, thus furthering the glorious undertaking of the Meiji Restoration. This argument became the undercurrent of a whole series of “scholarly” books..., which I would find it unbearably tedious to quote one by one.⁸

Here Maruyama takes the *kokutai*-centered discourse regarding the Ansai school that started in the early Shôwa period as an explanatory discourse regarding the “meaning of the Ansai school in intellectual history,” seeing in this discourse a pattern of “a sort of ‘emanationist’ explanation that was, so to speak, popularized by the new Kimon school in modern Japan.” Further, he sees the establishment of this “emanationist” explanation as a phenomenon related to the repetitive insistence by the Ansai school on its orthodoxy as a school. The “self-completing nature” and “diachronic continuity” that Maruyama has identified as the distinguishing characteristics of the school are the characteristics of the group discourse unique to this school, which can be observed in its self-righteous and exclusivistic assertions of being the inheritor of orthodoxy and its claim of the genealogical continuity of its orthodoxy embodied in the tradition of oral transmission from teacher to disciple. Maruyama’s study analyzes the various dimensions of this unique collective discourse regarding orthodoxy within the school, which at times gave rise to ferocious doctrinal disputes within the school, and he fully exposes their “pathology.”

Now if we summarize these arguments that Maruyama makes about the Ansai school, his perspective and the concerns that he brings to the inquiry will reveal themselves. Undoubtedly, what was superimposed on the group discourse of the Ansai school for Maruyama was the statist discourse of modern Japan that reached its frenzied peak in the early Shôwa period, as well as the Stalinist partisan discourse that left its deep scars on the intellectual world of postwar Japan. The strategic nature of the arguments that Maruyama develops in almost all of his writings is clear here as well. The Ansai school is the prototype of group discourse that can be used to illuminate the pathological nature of the two major group discourses of modern Japan.

From this strategic standpoint of Maruyama, he may be able to say that the *kokutai*-centered discourse concerning the Ansai school that unfolded in early Shôwa was a miniature modern reproduction of the Kimon discourse in the early modern period, but

⁸ Maruyama, p. 607 (emphasis Maruyama’s). As examples of this type of “research book,” Maruyama here first cites Hiraizumi’s book quoted above, followed by Itoga Kunijirô’s 糸賀国次郎 *Kainan Shushigaku hattatsu no kenkyû* 海南朱子學發達の研究 (Studies in the Development of the Tosa School of Zhu Xi Learning, 1935), Gotô Saburô’s *Ansai gakutô no kokutai shisô* (1941), and Denki gakkai, ed., *Yamazaki Ansai to sono monryû* (1943, expanded edition).

he does not see this discourse accurately as the modern statist *kokutai* discourse itself—something that was constructed through the mobilization of the most powerful statist ideologues of modern Japan. The “*kokutai* thought of the Ansai school” is nothing other than this modern statist discourse, which for its own purposes reconstructed the intellectual lineage of the Ansai school in modern Japan. If that is the case, then it means that it is Ansai and his school *as reconstructed* in connection with this modern *kokutai*-centered discourse that is in question. There is certainly validity in the strategic perspective and method that Maruyama uses to analyze the Kimon discourse as a model of collective discourse. However, what falls out of that strategic perspective is the Ansai school as something connected reconstructively with this statist discourse of modern Japan. The Ansai school that is our object of concern is definitely not merely a prototypical case that illuminates the pathology of the modern statist discourse.

Zhu Xi and Zhu Xi-ism

After noting that “it was Karl Marx himself who said ‘I am not a Marxist,’” Maruyama observes that “these words remind us of the fate that inevitably awaits any thought system or world view the moment it leaves the hands of a specific individual and circulates in society.” It seems that this statement of Maruyama distinguishing between Marx and Marxism relates only to his critique of the ideological nature of the emanationist school discourse within the Ansai school. This is apparent when he points out that “Ansai did not give the world any philosophical (*shisôteki* 思想的) work of which we can say ‘*this* represents Ansai’s teaching.” If that is the case, then Maruyama’s observation concerning Marxism is also something said merely for show that shies away from considering the state of affairs that must of necessity develop out of this disjuncture between the founder and the school based on his teachings.

The reason for distinguishing Marx from Marxism is, first, in order to ensure our perspective on the Marxist discourse that developed as the world view of the movement of social thought that attributed the source of its legitimacy to Marx. Second, it is to ensure that we take a new perspective toward the theories of Marx himself, as distinguished from the unfolding of the Marxist world view after Marx. Étienne Balibar has said that with the end of the gigantic age in which Marxism functioned as an organized partisan doctrine (1890–1990), Marxist philosophy no longer exists in the actual world, and that only from this point on can there be a reexamination of Marx’s philosophy in the true sense, apart from all illusions and deceits.⁹ However, the end of a gigantic age for Marxism definitely does not mean the elimination of a perspective from which we can analyze Marxism. Rather, at the end of the gigantic century for Marxism, we must ensure anew that we take a perspective toward Marxist discourse that distinguishes it from Marx himself.

Though we speak of Marxism as distinguished from Marx himself, this is something that arises from our perspective of analysis; Marxism is still, needless to say, a worldview-centered thought movement that attributed the source of the legitimacy of its

⁹ Étienne Balibar, *The Philosophy of Marx* (London and New York: Verso, 1995). What Balibar says is that, with the end of the great age in which Marxism functioned as an organized doctrine: “There is, in reality, no Marxist philosophy, either as the world-view of a social movement, or as the doctrine or system of an author called Marx. Paradoxically, however, this negative conclusion, far from nullifying or diminishing the importance of Marx for philosophy, greatly increases it. Freed from an illusion and an imposture, we gain a theoretical universe.”

theory and doctrine in an emanationist way to Marx. Moreover, this movement acquired institutional legitimacy as a state and partisan doctrine beginning in 1931. The establishment of the legitimacy of Marxist doctrine is the establishment of the legitimacy of the interpretation of Marxist theory, and from that Marx's theory itself was formalized and systematized through the Marxist thought movement. Thus, to ask about Marxism as distinguished from Marx is to ask about the discourse regarding the inheritance of orthodox doctrine among the successors of Marx. For that reason, this sort of establishment of a perspective on Marxism is suggestive regarding the way we can establish a valid perspective on Zhu Xi-ism.

Distinguishing Zhu Xi-ism from Zhu Xi means to open a new perspective toward the discourse of Zhu Xi's successors that has been obscured in the general term "Zhu Xi learning" (*Shushigaku* 朱子學), that is, to open a perspective on "Zhu Xi-ist" discourse. Now, the establishment of a "new Confucianism" on the part of Zhu Xi entailed a systematic reconstruction of the classics and the establishment of a new system of interpretive theory regarding the classics, carried out in the form of a thought movement that determined orthodox doctrine through the rejection of heterodox interpretations of the classics. This orthodox system of interpreting the classics established by Zhu Xi, of course, went on to acquire institutional legitimacy in China as the state's official system of interpretation through the examination system. Now the unfolding of Zhu Xi-ist discourse among Zhu Xi's successors, which as I have shown elsewhere through a comparison with the *Go Mō jigi* 語孟字義 (The Meanings of the Terms in the Analects and Mencius) of Itō Jinsai (1627-1705) can be clearly seen in the *Xingli ziyi* 性理字義 (The Meanings of Neo-Confucian Terms) of Chen Beixi 陳北溪 (1159-1223),¹⁰ occurs through their work of re-realizing in themselves the work of reconstructing a "new Confucianism" that was carried out by Zhu Xi. Just as Zhu Xi asserted the orthodoxy of his interpretation of the classics, there is an assertion of the orthodoxy of Zhu Xi's interpretations among Zhu Xi's successors. What I refer to as "Zhu Xi-ist" discourse is a discourse concerning the reconstructive inheritance of the orthodox doctrine known as "Zhu Xi learning." What I refer to as "Zhu Xi-ism" is the reconstitutive (*saikōseiteki*) discourse of the inheritance of Zhu Xi's teachings among the successors of Zhu Xi. The construction of this concept will be explained in more detail later. What I wish to discuss in this paper is the problem of what perspective we should take in approaching the Yamazaki Ansai (Kimon) school. The Ansai school made a strong claim to have inherited the orthodox (*seitō*) teachings of Zhu Xi, which they regarded as the basis of their own orthodoxy and legitimacy as a school. Moreover, the intellectual lineage of the Ansai school was held in very high regard in Japan from the early part of the Shōwa period, on account of its distinctive concept of the national polity (*kokutai*).

The Ansai school is the school of Confucianism that accomplished this unfolding of Zhu Xi-ist discourse in Japan in its purest and most drastic form. "Faithful exposition" (*sojutsu* 祖述) and "realizing for oneself" (*tainin* 體認) were the methods of pursuing

¹⁰ See Koyasu Nobukuni, "Futatsu no *jigi*: Jugaku no saikōsei to datsu kōchiku—Itō Jinsai *Go-Mō jigi* kōgi no ue" 二つの「字義」・儒学の再構成と脱構築、伊藤仁斎「語孟字義」講義の上 (Two philosophical lexicographies: The reconstruction and deconstruction of Confucianism in Itō Jinsai's Lectures on his *Go-Mō jigi*), in *Shisō* 861 (March 1996). See also John Allen Tucker, *Itō Jinsai's Gomō Jigi & the Philosophical Definition of Modern Japan* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998).

learning that Ansai inherited from the great Korean Zhu Xi scholar, Yi T'oegye 李退溪 (1501–1570). “Faithful exposition” indicates a mode of inheritance of learning premised on a deep admiration of and devotion to the master, as is aptly conveyed by the following words in the *Ansai nenpu* 闇齋年譜 (Chronology of Ansai’s Life):

Zhu Xi’s learning—dwelling in reverence and exhaustively plumbing principle—is a learning that faithfully expounds [the teachings of] Confucius without any discrepancy. Therefore, if in learning Zhu Xi I fall into error, I fall into error together with Zhu Xi. What regret could there be in that?

“Realizing for oneself,” another aspect of this personal continuation of a system of learning, refers to a method of learning centered on an autonomous (*shutaiteki* 主體的) inward reception of the teachings of the master. In the Ansai school, this “faithful exposition” and “personal realization” were not only methods of learning, but also methods of thought. It is through these methods that the school was able to establish a coterie of Zhu Xi-ist scholars with their own distinctive ethos, held together by strong personal relationships between master and disciple, and filled with the pathos that comes from intense subjective engagement in the pursuit of learning (*shutaiteki na shôhakusei o motta gakuteki tsuikyû* 主体的な衝迫性をもった学的追求). As for the way in which “Japanese Zhu Xi learning” came to be established out of this distinctive Zhu Xi-ist school of thought, I have already discussed this in detail in the essay mentioned above. The Ansai school that was reconstructively involved in the *kokutai*-centered statist discourse of Shôwa Japan, along with its distinctive ethos, was this “Japanese Zhu Xi learning.”

The Ansai School and the “My-Country” (*jikokushugi* 自國主義) Discourse

The concentration of concern on the foundation on which the “subject” (*shutai* 主體) of learning stands (one’s own country) constructs a new relational framework that reaprehends the self-other relationship between inside (one’s own country) vs. outside (other countries). Here, an “inside” (the country of one’s birth) is clearly established as something opposed to an “outside” (foreign countries), leading to the formation in the realm of discourse of a strong and resilient consciousness of one’s own country. Moreover, in the clear discrimination between “host” (*shu* 主) and “guest” (*kaku* 客), there is also a consciousness that a “*taigi meibun*” exists clearly in the fact that the “inside”—i.e. one’s self—is the “host” or “master” in the country of one’s birth.¹¹

This passage is from the above-mentioned essay regarding the Ansai school, in which I discuss how the consciousness of “my country” is established along with the construction of a new relational framework defined by the concepts of “host” (or “lord”) vs. “guest” and “inside” vs. “outside.” The Ansai school discourse vividly demonstrates that with the introduction of the new discursive relational framework of “host” vs. “guest” and “inside” vs. “outside” into early modern Confucian discourse, the “my-country” discourse was established. Modern Japanese statism carried out its

¹¹ Koyasu Nobukuni, “Yamazaki Ansai gakuha no ‘keisetsu’ to ‘shinpô’ no gensetsu,” section 8: “Chûgoku iteki ron’ ronsô” 「中国夷狄論」論争 (The debate over the “middle kingdom” and “barbarian lands”), *Edo shisô shi kôgi*, p. 75.

reconstruction of the philosophical lineage of “the *kokutai* thought of the Ansai school” with a heavy reliance on this Kimon school “my-country” discourse. Now what I attempted to do in the essay quoted above was not to identify the origin of *kokutai* thought by tracing back the intellectual lineage that was reconstructed in Shōwa Japan under the name of “the *kokutai* thought of the Ansai school.” Tracing things back to their origin is something done by those with a reconstructive inclination. My intent, rather, was to expose by what sort of discursive arrangement and mechanism the discourse regarding origins that is discovered by the reconstructive inclination came to be established within the specific circumstances of the early modern period. Let me say that again. My purpose is to clarify, using the method of discourse analysis, through what arrangement and mechanism within early modern Confucianist discourse the Ansai school’s conception of *taigi meibun* that modern statism discovered as its own origin came to be established. This is the practice of the method of doing intellectual history known as “the archeology of modern knowledge.”

Now, regarding this “my-country” discourse within the Ansai school, Maruyama sees it as a discourse of particularism, and he proceeds to expose the pathological nature of particularistic discourse. As something that reveals most distinctly just where the problem lies, Maruyama introduces the “ideologue of thorough particularism within the Shinto wing of the Kimon school”—Tani Shinzan 谷 秦山 (1663-1718). Quoting Tani’s statement that “the people of Japan should take Amaterasu Ōmikami as their foundation, and the people of China should take Confucius as their foundation,” he argues:

As soon as you have regional “particularism,” this sort of morality based on the degree of kinship relatedness and geographic proximity must be set up on all kinds of different levels. If one contraposes the Oriental spirit with the way of the Western barbarians, then within the Orient China and Japan are contraposed, within Japan Edo and Tosa are contraposed, and so on and so forth—the principles of regional affiliation and group affiliation are capable of dividing people up *ad infinitum*. In that way, on each level a more distant universality appears “abstract,” and a more nearby individuated particularity appears “concrete.”

The “autonomous subjectivity” (*shutaisei* 主体性)¹² of Japan, if one can use such an expression, cannot be conceived outside of an image of the world constructed in

¹² *Shutaisei*: Being the “subject,” as opposed to an “object”; being in the center as opposed to on the periphery; having a consciousness of one’s self (and one’s nation) as making one’s own choices on the basis of one’s own priorities, not being subject to standards set by someone else. In the development of the Ansai school discourse, this emphasis on *shutaisei* arose in the context of the reorientation of Confucian concepts from the point of view of “us, the Japanese” (particularly, the Japanese samurai, with their strong sense of corporate and individual pride) as the core, rather than China, so that we Japanese have the right, in fact the duty, to reject any element of Confucian teaching (such as the Mencian doctrine of the legitimacy of overthrowing an evil ruler) that does not correspond with Japan’s “*kokutai*.” Maruyama’s own philosophy also focused on the development of the Japanese “*shutaisei*,” which carried a different sense based on postwar disgust at what the *kokutai* ideology had done to the Japanese people in the militaristic period. Mikiso Hane has explained Maruyama’s concern in using the word as “the creation of an autonomous mind that can function as an intermediary between reality and ideas.... Such a mind (subject), because of its sensitivity to the process by which ideas are abstracted from reality, would not turn them into fetishes and worship them as absolute dogmas.” (See *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan*, Translator’s Preface, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974, p. ix) (tr.).

terms of “inside” and “outside,” “intimate” and “unrelated,” and “near” and “far,” with Japan at the center.

In this way, having defined the “my-country” discourse as a particularistic discourse, Maruyama proceeds to critically describe the discursive structure of particularism and parochialism as a negative discursive structure on the basis of its being a particularistic discursive structure inclined toward particularistic and parochial values. It appears that the “my-country” discourse that comes to be established in the intellectual space of early modern Japan in the eighteenth century is being lumped together with the ultranationalist discourse of modern Japan, and, on the strength of a feeling of distaste for the latter, the former is discursively constructed as particularism. Maruyama’s argument, while relying on the theory that different types of behavior are motivated by value inclinations that are more universalistic or more particularistic, proceeds to discursively construct the historical discourse of my-country-ism as typological particularism. However, there is another universalism that we would expect to lie on the other side of such behavioral typology. Here, rather than being described as a polar discourse to particularism, this universalism is kept in reserve to serve as Maruyama’s perspective for describing particularism critically and exposing it as something negative and pathological.

What we have to question at this point, however, is the appropriateness of constructing the problem of national identity and the state on the basis of a discursive typological relational framework of “universalism vs. particularism.”

Universal versus Particular

When he begins his critical analysis of the discourse of particularism, Maruyama argues: “Let us try to approach it from the point of view of the way in which a universal ‘Way’ relates to particular nations or states, like Japan and China—that is, from the point of view of the relationship between the universality of the Way and the particularity of the nation and the state.” In these words, the problematic nature of the very relational framework of “universal vs. particular” that is used to construct the problem is demonstrated. Does what Maruyama speaks of here as universal and particular refer to a relational framework based on a typology of behavior and discourse? Or is it not, rather, that there has been a switch in the construction of the problem using the relational framework of “universal vs. particular”?

The nation-state appears as a problem in discourse always as the problem of *one’s own* nation-state. Moreover, the problem of one’s own nation-state appears only within the relationship of self and other. Until the modern period—that is, until European imperialism reared its head unmistakably in the East Asian world—the problem of the nation-state in East Asia was a problem that arose from the relationship one had with the Chinese empire. When China comes to be distinguished from the country of the sages (the Middle Kingdom) as the “other” counterposed to “oneself,” then one’s *own* country, “Japan,” is established in discourse along with the *other* country, China.¹³ In that case, the fact that Maruyama constructs the problem by counterposing the question of “particular nations or states like Japan and China” against “the universal Way” reveals the vagueness of the relational framework of “universal vs. particular” in Maruyama’s

¹³ The problem of the formation of Japan’s self-image in the modern era is dealt with in detail in my book *Motoori Norinaga* 本居宣長 (Tokyo: Iwanami shinsho, 1992).

analysis, or tells us that a shifting of the problem has occurred on the basis of this relational framework.

The relational framework of "universal vs. particular" begins to constitute a problem in discourse in modern Japan at the same time as European thought and culture appear in Asia as the vehicle of universal values, as the adoption of this European culture begins to be promoted in the various regions of Asia in the name of modernization. The reaction against this trend comes to be counterposed as the self-awareness (*jikaku*) of a particular Asia against a universal Europe. "Universal vs. particular" is the framework that constructs the problem that comes forth from within the cultural and geopolitical self-definition of modern Asia. In modern Japan, as well, has not the collapse of Marxist theory as a universalistic world interpretation served to enhance in the thinking of intellectuals the relative importance of the particularistic Japanese society always beneath one's feet? Moreover, in the world of discourse in postwar Japan, have particularistic theories of Japanese society not appeared unceasingly as a critique of modernist theory, with its inclination toward universal values, or as a supplementary argument in that critique?¹⁴ It was the framework of "universal vs. particular" that originally constructed the problem from within the cultural and geopolitical self-definition of modern Asia, and it is the relational framework that is constructing the problem at the present time.

If this "universal vs. particular" relational framework can be applied to premodern East Asia, it would probably be on the basis of positing an analogy between the cultural and geopolitical relationship between Europe and Asia in the modern period and the premodern relationship between China and the various regions of Asia. "China" here refers to the Celestial Empire (*Chûka teikoku* 中華帝国), which is being likened to the European empires. But the problem that is constructed out of this relationship is of a totally different nature from the problem described by Maruyama's discourse typology.

¹⁴ Maruyama has already positioned himself on the side of modernism in this controversy.