

# Edo as Method: An Introduction to Koyasu Nobukuni's Recent Scholarship

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The tenth and final volume of the series of thematic journals called *Edo no shisô* 江戸の思想 (Edo Thought), edited by Koyasu Nobukuni 子安宣邦, is entitled *Hôhō to shite no Edo* 方法としての江戸 (Edo as Method).<sup>1</sup> The volume is also introduced with an essay by Koyasu of the same name, a modified version of an essay that first appeared as the preface to the 1998 collection of Koyasu's essays called *Edo shisô shi kôgi* 江戸思想史講義 (Lectures on Edo Thought, Iwanami shoten, 1998). As will be apparent to those familiar with China-related scholarship in postwar Japan, this title is inspired by a famous essay by Takeuchi Yoshimi 竹内好 (1910–1977), *Hôhō to shite no Ajia* 方法としてのアジア (Asia as Method).<sup>2</sup> Takeuchi, whose views had affinities with advocates of a pan-Asian cultural renaissance such as Okakura Tenshin 岡倉天心 (1862–1913) and Ôkawa Shûmei 大川周明 (1886–1957), was an authoritative interpreter of Chinese literature and culture and the translator of Lu Xun's 魯迅 works. What he proposed in this essay was the construction of a new science of knowledge, an "alternative method to understand the Asian experience," based on a sympathetic understanding of the different responses to the challenge of modernity on the part of the Chinese, Japanese, and other Asian peoples. This new methodology was based on Takeuchi's own experience of "seeking the traces of the 'heart' (*kokoro* 心) of living Chinese," after discovering that his classically oriented sinological training had given him no preparation for comprehending or communicating with the Chinese people as they really existed. He believed that Japan's own efforts to direct China's modernization had

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<sup>1</sup> The first volume, entitled *Kyûsai to shinkô* 救済と信仰 (Salvation and Faith), was published in June 1995. The subsequent volumes were entitled *Gengoron no isô* 言語論の位相 (The Phases of the Theory of Language), *Jukyô to wa nani ka* 儒教とは何か (What is Confucianism?), *Kokka(jiko)zô no keisei* 国家 (自己) 象の形成 (The Formation of the Image of the State and the Self), *Dokusho no shakai shi* 読書の社会史 (The Social History of Reading), *Shintai/josei ron* 身体・女性論 (Theories of the Body and the View of Women), *Shisô shi no jûkyû seiki* 思想史の十九世紀 (The Nineteenth Century in Intellectual History), *Rekishî no hyôshô* 歴史の表象 (The Representation of History), and *Kûkan no hyôshô* 空間の表象 (The Representation of Space). All were published by Perikansha.

<sup>2</sup> *Hôhō toshite no Ajia* was originally the title of one of a series of lectures given at International Christian University on methodology in intellectual history. These lectures, given by Takeuchi, Maruyama Masao, Ôtsuka Hisao 大塚久雄, and others, were published in Takeda Kiyoko 武田清子, ed., *Shisô shi no hôhō to taishô—Nihon to Seiô* 思想史の方法と対象、日本と西歐 (The Method and Object of Intellectual History: Japan and the West) (Tokyo: Sôbunsha, 1961). *Hôhō toshite no Ajia* was also used as the lead title for a collection of Takeuchi commentaries (*hyôron* 評論) and for the posthumous collection of his writings (Tokyo: Sôkisha, 1978).

failed because of precisely the same methodological fault—the failure to recognize the human presence in China and the possibility of vast differences between the Japanese and Chinese responses to modernity.<sup>3</sup> However, this was not only a matter of the relationship between Japan and China, but also a symptom of Japan's excessive propensity to identify with Western techniques and methods.

The Asian-centered method Takeuchi had in mind, he explained, "is a cultural rerolling, or a rerolling of values, that rewraps the West anew from the East, reversing the direction to transform the West itself from our side, transforming the West in order to raise to a higher level the universal values that were themselves engendered by the West.... When this rerolling is done, we must have something in ourselves that is distinctively our own. What is this something? One would not expect that it exists as an entity (*jittai* 実体). But can it not exist as a method?"<sup>4</sup> As Koyasu interprets it, "Asia as an entity" is Asia as conceived by imperial Japan in its opposition to the world dominion of modern imperial Europe, while "Asia as method," by contrast, is a critical view of history that situates its perspective *outside* the West, in a China whose revolutionary potential has been recognized.<sup>5</sup> Analogously, Koyasu proposes "Edo as method" as a critical perspective aimed at rereading and reconceptualizing Japan's modern history—formed as a resistance against Western modernity in the very process of pursuing that modernity—from the point of view of the Edo period, through treating Edo not as an entity resisting modernity, but as the methodological foothold *outside* of modern Japan for a critical rereading of modern Japanese history.

Now this concern for establishing a critical perspective on modernity *outside* of modernity is essentially what is meant by taking a "postmodern" perspective. The inseparable relationship between the conception of "modern Japan" and the conception of the Edo period has been noted by many scholars, and while this relationship is obvious just from the fact that "modern" Japan is defined as "post-Edo" Japan, in recent years it has formed a major theme in the writings of Japan scholars and Japanese scholars influenced by postmodernism.<sup>6</sup> The literary critic Karatani Kôjin 柄谷行人, for instance, has noted that the concepts of poststructuralism and postmodernism function in Japan not only in the senses imported from the West, but also "in a self-sufficient space where the 'other' of the West is as yet unknown," because of the presence of a *context* of modernity that was formed in the Edo period.<sup>7</sup> In other words, conceptions of the Edo

<sup>3</sup> The description of Takeuchi in the above four sentences is paraphrased from Tetsuo Najita and H. D. Harootunian, "Japan's Revolt Against the West," in Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, ed., *Modern Japanese Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 268–69.

<sup>4</sup> Takeuchi Yoshimi, *Hôhō to shite no Ajia, waga senzen, senchû, sengo* 方法としてのアジア：我が戦前・戦中・戦後 (Tokyo: Sôkisha, 1978). For an alternate translation, see *ibid.*, p. 270.

<sup>5</sup> "Hôhō to shite no Edo," in *Edo shisôshi kôza*, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> For an excellent example of such a study, see Carol Gluck, "The Invention of Edo," in Stephen Vlastos, ed., *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 262–84.

<sup>7</sup> Karatani Kôjin, "Ri no hihan: shisô ni okeru puremodan to posutomodan" 理の批判：思想におけるプレモダンとポストモダン (The Critique of Confucian Principle: Premodern and Postmodern in Philosophy), *Gendai shi techô* 現代史手帳 (May 1995): 40. Quoted in J. Victor Koschmann, "Maruyama Masao and the Incomplete Project of Modernity," in Masao Miyoshi and H. D. Harootunian, eds., *Postmodernism and Japan* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1989), pp. 124–25.

period have been the essential element in defining not only Japanese uniqueness, but also “modernity” and “postmodernity” in Japan. Thus on one level, in attempting to reconceive modern Japan in relationship to Edo Japan, Koyasu’s scholarship continues an endeavor that has been a concern of Japanese scholars and social commentators since the early Meiji period.

If we consider that, as Koyasu himself points out, the Edo vs. modernity discourse has tended to be dominated by antimodernist or anti-Westernizing viewpoints since the late nineteenth century, the element of continuity with previous scholarship is even more apparent. Takeuchi himself had views that were “close to the antimodernist temperament of the romantic movement,”<sup>8</sup> and his determination to stand up against the epistemological dominance of a Western-defined “modernity” and to reverse the direction of conceptual world-formation is certainly reproduced in Koyasu’s methodological stance. For Koyasu, however, the reversal is not between the concepts of “West” and “East” but between the concepts of “modern” and “Edo”: instead of reconstructing the Edo period from the point of view of modernity, as has been done over and over again by the modernists and modernizers, he wants to deconstruct the modern period from the standpoint of Edo. What this means in the field of Japanese intellectual history, of course, is abandoning or reversing the effort to find impulses toward modernity within the world of Edo thought. For when Edo Japan is treated as an entity in opposition to modernity, Koyasu explains, then what we get is nothing but a reconstructive narrative in which Edo Japan serves as another “modernity” opposing the modernity of modern Japan that exists as a transference of Western modernity.<sup>9</sup> In other words, the perspective is not one that is secured from *outside of* modernity.

The image of Edo and of Edo thought, Koyasu continues, is already formed, but it is formed as a result of intellectual work that constituted the “self-modelling” (*jiko sokei* 自己塑型) of modern Japan. The image we have of an Edo thinker like Satô Nobuhiro 佐藤信淵 (1769–1850), for example, is a construction of the modern period reflecting modern concerns. If we trace the construction of that image, we will find the traces of the self-imaging of modern Japan, which is to critique and deconstruct the historical image of *modern* Japan that has been constructed on the basis of “Edo.” Moreover, washing out the traces of this self-imaging that has been built up around the figure of Satô also presents us with the task of re-asking the meaning of Satô’s words and actions in his own time, so it compels us to take a new approach to his period as well. Similarly, if we take up Ogyû Sorai 荻生徂来 (1666–1728), our task is not to apply a fresh coat of paint to the existing image of Sorai, but to *deconstruct* that image, to bring to the surface the specific characteristics of the various political discourses of modern Japan that have constructed that image. At the same time, this deconstruction—which Koyasu undertook in his book *Jiken to shite no Sorai-gaku* 事件としての徂来学 (Sorai Learning as an Incident, Seidosha, 1990)—should reveal Sorai to us as he existed within the particular discursive space of eighteenth century Japan. This sort of deconstruction of the existing image of a thinker is one way of rereading modern Japan with Edo as the methodological perspective. The other way, he continues, is what he calls the “archeology of modern

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<sup>8</sup> “Japan’s Revolt Against the West,” pp. 256–57.

<sup>9</sup> “Hôhō toshite no Edo,” p. 2.

knowledge.”<sup>10</sup> An example of this is the attempt taken up in his two books on Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長 (1730-1801) to inquire into how the ideal of the linguistic identity of Japan represented by modern Japan’s “national language” was established in the thought of Motoori Norinaga through his study of the language of the *Kojiki* 古事記 (Record of Ancient Matters).<sup>11</sup> What has to be asked, then, is what sort of view of the *Kojiki* text made it possible for Norinaga to read *Yamato kotoba* (the pristine ancient language of Japan) out of the text, and what had to be hidden and what eliminated from his gaze toward antiquity in order for the ideal of *Yamato kotoba* to be established? Here the perspective of “Edo as method” meant to elucidate how perilous and uncertain the discursive construction actually was by which the ideal of Japan’s linguistic identity was established.<sup>12</sup>

Now, if Koyasu truly wishes to revolutionize the methodology of the field of Edo intellectual history from a postmodern perspective, there is no way that he can avoid taking on the most prominent figure before him in the postwar construction of the field, Maruyama Masao 丸山真男 (1914-96). Through his studies of Japanese political thought both before and after the Edo/post-Edo divide, Maruyama became a major figure in the postwar intellectual reconstruction of Japanese national identity. Moreover, he was also “perhaps the era’s leading theorist and advocate of modernity,”<sup>13</sup> and his faith in the project of modernity was deeply imbedded in his methodological approach. Koyasu was compelled in his 1990 book on Ogyū Sorai to deal with Maruyama’s famous reconstruction of Sorai as a harbinger of modernity.<sup>14</sup>

The other school of Edo thought that exerted the greatest influence on the formation of Japanese political ideology is the Kimon school, founded on the teachings of Yamazaki Ansai 山崎闇齋 (1618-82).<sup>15</sup> As part of his life mission of revealing the historical roots and development of modern Japanese political concepts in order to defuse their power to mesmerize, Maruyama in his later years produced a study of the Kimon school that did a great deal to clarify the core issues within the school, the conceptual structures in which these issues were expressed, and the reasons behind the peculiar tendency of the school to give rise to intense factional arguments and interpersonal

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<sup>10</sup> This was also the title of one of his recent books: *Kindaichi no arukeorōji—Kokka tō sensō to chishikijin* 近代知のアルケオロジー：国家と戦争と知識人 (The Archeology of Modern Knowledge: The State, War, and the Intellectual) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1996).

<sup>11</sup> *Motoori Norinaga* (Iwanami shoten, 1992) and “*Norinaga mondai*” to wa nani ka 宣長問題とは何か (What is the “Norinaga Problem”) (Tokyo: Seidosha, 1995).

<sup>12</sup> “Hôhō toshite no Edo,” pp. 2-6.

<sup>13</sup> “Maruyama Masao and the Incomplete Project of Modernity,” p. 125.

<sup>14</sup> Based on his concept of interpreting history in the light of present concerns, Maruyama exalted Sorai because of his emphasis on making a clear distinction between the public and private spheres of life, a distinction which granted a certain legitimacy and autonomy to the private sphere but gave priority to a legally-constituted public order. The distinction between public and private was closely related to the conception, equally necessary for “modernity,” that institutions were made or “invented” by man to fulfil specific practical functions and hence could be changed through the power of reason. This conception of Sorai was the reverse side of Maruyama’s belief that fascism had arisen in Japan because of the failure in modern Japanese political thought to separate the public and private spheres, so that the existing political order was still viewed as rooted in nature.

<sup>15</sup> On this subject see Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), esp. pp. 194-286;

ruptures.<sup>16</sup> In revealing the structural dynamics of the arguments within the school, this study did much to expose the fabricated nature of the image of the school that had been promoted until 1945—particularly the idea of the school’s unbroken linear continuity (parallel to its exaltation of the unbroken continuity of the imperial line) and the idea that it deserved most of the credit for engendering the loyalist thought that brought about the Meiji Restoration. But the study also, inevitably, constructed a certain image of the school, an image that reflected the intentionality that Maruyama brought to his study. Out of the vast quantities of Kimon school writings, Maruyama chose certain passages and certain ideas that he felt were important because of their later influence on the *kokutai* 国体 ideology or their ability to reflect the universal structure of ideological arguments focused on the definition and defense of “orthodoxy.” In the process he almost completely ignored the religious and philosophical concepts within the school and the dimensions of practice, self-cultivation, and ritual. For instance, Tani Shinzan 谷秦山 (1663-1718) is presented as the quintessential “particularist” within the school, but it is not mentioned that his particularism grew out of his experience of the futility of trying to propagate Chinese rituals in Japanese society—something the Kimon school was noted for—and his consequent localized search for genuine native ritual practices surviving from ancient times.

Nevertheless, the image of the school that Maruyama constructed was quite sophisticated and very widely read, so that if Koyasu was going to develop a new methodological approach he would in the process have to deconstruct that image.<sup>17</sup> As we have seen above, that meant exposing the discourses of modern Japan that were “projected” by Maruyama onto the Kimon school discourse. The translated essay that follows this introduction, entitled “Zhu Xi and ‘Zhu Xi-ism’: Toward a Critical Perspective on the Ansai School,” is just such an attempt at deconstruction. As Koyasu points out at the outset, this essay grew out of his own 1994 examination of the Kimon school discourse, entitled “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”).<sup>18</sup> Therefore, just as in the case of Maruyama’s Kimon study, in which it was impossible to perceive the “strategic” levels of his argument directed to his contemporary intellectual

<sup>16</sup> “Ansaigaku to Ansai gakuha,” in *Yamazaki Ansai gakuha*, Nihon shisô taikai, 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, and 9.1 (October 1996), pp. 4–33. [Please note the errata list for the introduction and Part 1 provided before the beginning of Part 2].

<sup>17</sup> In spite of Maruyama’s somewhat critical stance toward the concept of “historical continuity” in regard to the Kimon school the strongest idea that emerges from his study is still that of a certain continuity between the Edo period and modern Japan. In contrast, it is *discontinuity* between the epistémès or discursive formations of different historical periods that is emphasized in Foucault’s genealogical method. As he says in “Nietzsche, Genealogy, and History,” the duty of genealogy “is not to demonstrate that the past actively exists in the present, that it continues to animate the present, having imposed a predetermined form to all its vicissitudes.... On the contrary, to follow the complex course of descent is to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion.” In Lawrence Cahoon, ed., *From Modernism to Postmodernism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p. 365.

<sup>18</sup> *Shisô* 思想 842 (August 1994). Reprinted in *Edo shisôshi kôgi*, pp. 44–76.

opponents without some knowledge of Maruyama's other writings and of the postwar discourse on "subjectivity" and Japanese national identity in which Maruyama was a key participant,<sup>19</sup> it will be difficult to fully comprehend Koyasu's arguments in the deconstructive essay that follows unless one is familiar with Koyasu's study of the Kimon discourse. Accordingly, as an illustration of how interdependent the deconstructive side and the "archeological" side of Koyasu's "Edo as Method" perspective are in practice, I will here attempt to summarize the argument he presents in this study.

While Maruyama zeroed in on the concept of *seitō* 正統 (orthodox or legitimate line of learning) as the core of Kimon school discourse, Koyasu draws attention to the language of *practice* that surrounds this concept of the diachronic transmission of a single truth (*dōtō* 道統) from mind to mind. Here the core concepts are *kei* 敬 (reverent attentiveness)<sup>20</sup> and *shinpō* 心法 (method of cultivating the mind). He begins by quoting the opening words of a lecture by Ansai on Zhu Xi's 朱熹 (1130-1200) maxims regarding the practice of reverent attentiveness, *Jingzhai zhen* 敬齋箴.

This one character *kei* is the practice (*kufū* 工夫) that constitutes the beginning and the end of Confucian learning. It has been passed down for a very long time. The passing down of the method of the mind by the sages generation after generation since the beginning of heaven and earth is also nothing more than this *kei*. In the time of Fu Xi 伏羲 were still no written characters and the word *kei* did not yet exist. Nevertheless, he was able to vividly express the *image* (*shō* 象) of *kei* by drawing the two trigrams of Qian 乾 (heaven) and Kun 坤 (earth), thus revealing the nameless *kei*. The word *kei* (*tsutsushimi*) only came into existence in the time of Yao 堯.

The character of the metaphysical language that constructed the Kimon school discourse, Koyasu explains, is clearly expressed in this passage. There is a true "meaning" hidden behind the "word" called *kei*, and this true meaning has been passed down as *shinpō* through generations of sages from long before the word *kei* existed. This hidden meaning anchors the transmission of the Way (*dōtō*) by tracing it back to a distant origin and defines the inheritors of the transmission of that meaning as "orthodox" (of the legitimate line). The language that tells of this "true meaning" must be a language that transmits the true meaning directly to the human *kokoro*. It is just such a language—aimed at the formation of a Japanese "interior"—that unfolds in the Kimon school in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>21</sup>

The correct meaning of *kei*, which had been lost since Mencius, was restored by Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107), and explicated to perfection by Zhu Xi. The reconstruction of the transmission of the Way accomplished by Zhu Xi is repeated and reproduced in

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<sup>19</sup> Victor Koschmann developed his 1989 essay on Maruyama mentioned above into a full-scale study of the postwar discourse regarding "*shutaisei*" (subjective engagement; autonomous subjectivity) in which Maruyama was a key participant, published as *Revolution and Subjectivity in Postwar Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

<sup>20</sup> *Jing/kei* is also variously translated as "seriousness," "concentration," "composure," and "prudence." Unlike the word "reverence," it refers to a state of mind and does not imply an external object of reverence.

<sup>21</sup> Koyasu's use of the word "interior" would seem to be designed to point to part of what is meant by the concept of *shutaisei* that was so important to Maruyama and his generation, but without bringing in all of the complex discursive associations of the word *shutaisei*.

Ansai and his disciples. The systematic philosophical entity of “Zhu Xi learning” did not exist from the beginning with Zhu Xi himself, but had to be reconstructed by those who claimed to be inheriting his teachings through inquiring what in his thought constituted “orthodox” Confucianism. “Zhu Xi learning” is a discourse reconstructed in the process of the repetition of Zhu Xi’s scholarly discourse on the part of later generations. The learning of Ansai and his school was always said to be the faithful exposition (*sojutsu* 祖述) of Zhu Xi’s teachings. But if “faithful exposition” is not seen as entering experientially into the “interior” of Zhu Xi’s work of reconstructing Confucianism and reproducing in oneself that work of reconstructing, then the inherent meaning of the development of thought in the Kimon school will not be elucidated. To lecture on the theory of *kei*, as the Kimon teachers did, was to repeat the discourse of Song learning and reconfirm the transmission of the Way that was revived in the Song. Koyasu gives the following quotation from Asami Keisai 浅見綱齋 (1652-1711) as showing the ultimate form of this sort of metaphysical language regarding a single esoteric meaning hidden within the words of the sages’ teachings.

[At the root of] the very existence of heaven and earth, the ongoing flow of the four seasons, the engendering and sustaining of the ten thousand things, [it goes on] forever unceasingly and unendingly, [like] the flow of water, the soaring height of the mountains, even if there is no mind to say how great it is, without losing its own way of being, without becoming dispersed, not like looking at a dead person, but something living: this is *kei*.

While the discourse of the “nameless *kei*” points toward a hidden meaning inside words, it develops itself as a hermeneutic discourse that explicates that hidden meaning. This hermeneutic discourse accentuates the unique and closed nature of the discourse of those privileged to inherit the hidden meaning. Thus there is nothing strange in the fact that Ansai’s Suika Shinto school transmitted a closed doctrine as a secret transmission. This hermeneutic language is transmitted from mind to mind by means of a language spoken uniquely by privileged expositors. Thus Ansai was given high praise from inside the Kimon school as the one who had grasped the true meaning transmitted by the sages—as the privileged narrator who knew the heart of the sages. What governs an expositor of the hidden meaning and the group that inherits his hermeneutical discourse is a language that is uniquely narrated and that maintains the uniqueness of the narration in its transmission. The bulk of the scholarly language of the Kimon school is composed of the unique narration of the teacher who is privileged to explicate the secret meaning, and this is recorded and transmitted by disciples who try to preserve even the teacher’s distinctive manner of speaking. The Kimon schools’ distinctive method of teaching through lectures (*kôgi* 講義) is a method of developing thought more than a method of teaching.<sup>22</sup> Koyasu quotes several representative passages from the lectures of Satô

<sup>22</sup> As Tsumimoto Masashi writes, “Ansai’s privileged *kôshaku* 講釈 lectures were faithfully recorded by the disciples in their “lecture notes” right down to the last casual word or remark. These notes were then copied and transmitted over and over by later disciples of the school, as sacred lecture notes that took precedence over all written texts. This “*kôshaku*-ism” of Ansai, in relation to the Confucian scholarly tradition with its high regard for the reading of the classical texts, was certainly something quite out of the ordinary.” See “Theories of Learning and the Construction of Knowledge in Japanese Confucianism,” forthcoming in the *Journal of the Philosophy of Education*.

Naokata 佐藤直方 (1650-1719) and Asami Keisai on quiet sitting and reverent attentiveness, showing to what degree they are filled with vivid colloquialisms and mimetic words (*gitaigo* 擬態語). Such use of mimetic words, he points out, transcends discussion on the abstract level of written language (*moji* 文字) and communicates the true meaning and feeling of *kei* as a practice right to the heart of the listener. Kimon teachers, accordingly, frequently criticized intellectual inquiry that remained only on the level of written language or the literal definition of words, which Naokata, with his characteristic dry humor, ridiculed as nothing but “gossip about *kei*” (*kei no uwasabanashi* 敬の噂話).

*Kei*, Koyasu emphasizes, is nothing other than the practice (*kufū*) of retaining the “lordship of the mind” (*kokoro no shusaisei* 心の主宰性). As Naokata says, “the realm must have a master (*shu* 主), or it will fall into disorder; the domain must have a master, or it will not be well governed. *Kei* is the practice for holding the master (*shusai* 主宰) firm.” If the mind has its master, then it will be calm and collected; otherwise, it will run around in disorder. This is the distinctive learning of “personal realization” (*tainin jitoku* 体認自得) that developed in the Kimon school. Kimon teachers also used metaphorical language. Naokata, for instance, says that one knows the lordship of Heaven (*Shangdi* 上帝) by tasting the lordship of one’s own mind. The natural world itself is kept together by *kei*, that is, by the lordship of Heaven. What Koyasu sees as the significance of this sort of narration of *kei* through metaphorical discourse, apart from its provision of a metaphysical anchor for practice, is the establishment of “Japanese Zhu Xi learning.” He compares the Kimon school’s existential language of *kei* to Chen Chun’s 陳淳 (1157–1223) reconstruction of Zhu Xi’s teachings through his definition of terms in the *Xingli ziyi* 性理字義 (The Meanings of Neo-Confucian Terms, ca. 1223). Here, Chen just focuses on the meaning of reverent attentiveness as concentrating on one thing, without explicitly identifying it with *shinpō*. Koyasu argues that this is a prosaic explanation different from the Kimon style of hermeneutics that makes *kei* the entire foundation of Confucian practice. It is in this sort of hermeneutical language, focused entirely around the practice of firmly and unshakably retaining the “lordship of the mind,” that he finds the distinctive Japanese character of the Kimon school.<sup>23</sup> This, he says, was what constituted the strong attraction of Japanese Zhu Xi learning—the establishment of one’s own subjectivity (*jiko shutai no kakuritsu* 自己主体の確立). All actions, that is to say, are only genuine if they arise from the “lordship of the mind,” and all cognition truly becomes one’s own when appropriated by this autonomous center. This is what he means by the establishment of a discourse that gave rise to a Japanese “interior,” a discourse, that is, that achieved a degree of indigenization and internalization of the Confucian Way that had not been achieved by other schools. And, it is quite natural that with the emergence of such a Japanese “interiority,” such an acute consciousness of one’s

<sup>23</sup> Koyasu points out that in *Daxue huowen* 大學或問 (Questions on the Great Learning) Zhu Xi wrote: “The one character *jing* is that by which the beginning and the end of the learning of the sages is constituted.” Nevertheless, Koyasu still argues that the Kimon school made *jing/kei* even more fundamental and more internalized than Zhu Xi. However, he neglects to mention the thought of Yi T’oegye 李退溪, which exerted great influence on Ansai’s understanding of Zhu Xi, and the fact that T’oegye also regarded *jing/kei* as the core and the totality of Confucian practice. T’oegye, however, was known as a master of classical Chinese, and his school is not known for using colloquial language and gut words to indigenize their understanding of Confucian practice.



own "lordship" or subjecthood would in turn lead to the emergence of a discourse regarding Japanese national identity (*Nihonjin no shutaisei* 日本人の主体性).

The famous anecdote in which Ansai asks his disciples what they would do in the event of a Chinese invasion of Japan led by Confucius and Mencius, Koyasu notes, was used in the modern period to construct a nationalist discourse around the figure of Ansai,<sup>24</sup> but this is probably the opposite of what Ansai had in mind. Rather than Ansai having a nationalistic spirit, the very problem that is perceived in the modern period as "nationalistic" is constructed by the discourse of the lordship of the mind. The practice of the "lordship of the mind" was topicalized both as the *task* of learning and as the *method* of learning, leading to an intense concern for subjective engagement (*shutaisei*) in learning. And, this concern was expressed within the "here/there" relational framework of the "faithful exposition" in *Japan* of the orthodox Way of the sages of *China*. When the topicalization of "lordship" gave rise in discourse to the new problem of loyalty expressed in Ansai's anecdote, the "here/there" relational framework was reconstituted as a relational framework of "inside/outside," so that the question of autonomous subjectivity (*shutaisei*) came to be restated as a question of the autonomous subjectivity of Japan vis-à-vis China (*Kara* 唐). The debate that unfolded in the school over the concepts of the "Middle Kingdom" (*Chûgoku* 中国) and "barbarian lands" (*iteki* 夷狄), of course, concerned this newly constructed question, and the fact that the debate arose within the Kimon school shows that it arose as a result of the topicalization of the lordship of the mind.

At first, Asami Keisai's attempted solution to the problem was to say that a *Japanese* sage would call *Japan* the Middle Kingdom and *China* a barbarian land. But this is not merely a simple reversal of the names of self and other. It is a reversal made on the basis of the perception that the *taigi meibun* 大義名分 (supreme duty) of the learning of the sages lies in loyalty toward the foundation on which the subject of learning stands (one's own country). This is the same as Ansai's stance that "I would take Confucius and Mencius prisoner in order to repay my debt of gratitude to my country. That is precisely the Way of Confucius and Mencius." This stance was strongly criticized by Naokata and his camp within the school, who saw it as excessive partiality toward one's native country. Keisai later revised his argument so as to recast the self-other relationship referred to by *chûgoku* and *iteki* in the framework of "guest" (*shu* 主) vs. "host" (*kaku* 客) and "inside" (*uchi* 内) vs. "outside" (*soto* 外), noting that the use of these neutral terms instead of the Chinese terms, with their heavy load of cultural and ethical value standards, remains valid no matter where one may be.<sup>25</sup> Thus, the relationship between *China* and *Japan* becomes reconstructed within a new conceptual framework of *uchi* vs. *soto*, my country vs. foreign countries. By concentrating concern on the foundation on which the subject of learning stands, that is to say, a clear conception of *uchi* (one's own country) as something distinguished from other countries is established. Moreover, within the clear discrimination between "guest" and "host," a strong and resilient consciousness of one's own country is established in which *taigi meibun* clearly exists in the fact that one is the master in one's own native country. This

<sup>24</sup> See, for instance, the quotation from Abe Yoshio (1939) given near the beginning of Koyasu's essay that follows this introduction.

<sup>25</sup> Asami Keisai, *Chûgoku ben* 中国弁 (A Treatise on the Concept of "the Middle Kingdom"). For the text of this famous treatise, see *Yamazaki Ansai gakuha*, *Nihon shisô taikei*, vol. 31 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1980), pp. 416-20.

consciousness gave rise to Keisai's more virulent and more my-country centered version of Ansai's hypothetical scenaria regarding an invasion from China: "Having been born in Japan in this time of Great Peace, we are able to live peacefully through the grace of our rulers and nourish our lives. To be partial toward a foreign country is a great heresy. Even now, if Confucius and Zhu Xi should attack Japan on the orders of a foreign ruler, I would be the first to march forward to the front lines and blow their heads off with our cannons.... This precisely is what is called the supreme duty (*taigi*) between lord and vassal."<sup>26</sup>

Naokata objected that the Sinocentric terms of *chūgoku* and *iteki* were names that were had been laid down by the sages on the basis of their objective calculations of the totality of what lies between heaven and earth, and that to arbitrarily change them is the extreme of unscrupulousness. In comparison to the vehemence of his attacks on the narrow and biased nature of the my-country discourse, Koyasu argues, this was an excessively weak position. Naokata's reconfirmation that the object of loyalty in learning was the Confucian sages was not able to shake or demolish the position that perceived the existence of a supreme duty (*taigi*) in loyalty toward one's native country. It seems that Naokata was only spitting out words of disgust at this "demon" that had been born from the discourse of "the lordship of the mind."

I cannot say that I definitely prefer Koyasu's analysis of the Kimon school discourse over that of Maruyama. The latter, after all, is a monumental study that sheds light from many angles on the nature and practical implications of the ethico-political concepts propounded by the school, showing masterfully how the teachings of each individual Kimon teacher drew their meaning from a complex discursive field that was both synchronic and diachronic in structure, defined by two mutually dependent, interacting poles or moments that can be labelled "universalism" and "particularism." It also gave insights into how the ideas of the school related to the objective unfolding of Japanese history, without neglecting the pathos that may arise at the subjective end of the double-edged sword of political loyalty. Koyasu's analysis, however, while it draws much from Maruyama's, certainly does open new dimensions of insight into the school, and allows us to see its political dimensions as a secondary development out of the core concern of Confucian practice—the building of autonomous ethical subjectivity. Some might argue that Koyasu himself is projecting a "modern" concept of subjectivity, such as the autonomous subject that Maruyama claimed was never properly developed in Japanese political thought, onto the texts left over from Kimon school teaching activities in the Edo period. However, I personally believe that the Neo-Confucian mode of character training and ethico-intellectual development, combining textual study, vocal recitation of texts, lectures, and debates with the daily practice of uniting body and mind, inner and outer, in ritual and concentrated quiet sitting, does give rise to an intense sort of interiority and awareness of one's personal subjectivity, even if the fulfillment of this interiority is only achieved in the dissolution of the consciousness of separate selfhood in total, inwardly grounded concentration on the outward tasks that are prescribed by one's duty. In drawing our attention to this subjective and intersubjective side of Confucian practice and to its relationship with language and discourse, Koyasu has certainly opened

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<sup>26</sup> *Asami Keisai gakudan*, in Kondō Keigo 近藤啓吾 and Kanamoto Masataka 金本正孝, comp., *Asami Keisai shū* 浅見綱齋集 (Collection of the Writings of Asami Keisei) (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1989).

up new directions for the pursuit of significance in the textual records of the Kimon school. It is much to be hoped that other scholars will take up some of the leads that he has given.

Nevertheless, it seems to me that there is a contradiction in Koyasu's argument. He says, on the one hand, that the discourse of the "lordship of the mind" reached its peak in Naokata's teachings, which is certainly true. This observation supports the argument that has been made by Tajiri Yūjiro 田尻祐二郎 against Bitō Masahide's 尾藤正英 influential portrayal of Naokata as a believer in heteronomous morality because of his support for obedience to the law over the traditional samurai honor code in the debate over the forty-seven rōnin vendetta.<sup>27</sup> However, Koyasu ends his study with the implication that the logic of this "lordship of the mind" discourse leads inevitably to Keisai's position of "loyalty to my country," and that Naokata's resistance against this conclusion was totally futile and unconvincing. If the "modern" age was the age of nationalism and ultranationalism, then as a historical observation regarding the development of Japanese political thought, Koyasu's claim for the hands-down victory of Keisai's position would seem to be reasonable, even if it ignores the fact of the continuing viability of the Naokata school into the modern period. But then that would be dangerously close to projecting a discourse of modern Japan onto the Kimon school discourse.

The reason Koyasu ends his essay with a cheer for Keisai's self-assertive Japanocentric stance may be because it corresponds in spirit to Takeuchi's mission of establishing an Asia-centered or China-centered historiography to counter the dominance of the epistémè of Western modernity, but doing so not as a simple rejection of but as a further development of the universal values of the Enlightenment. Moreover, Keisai's "multiple centers" concept of world order corresponds more with the post-Cold War configuration of international power and the postmodern, postcolonial mission of legitimizing hitherto marginalized discourses. If there is some danger that his position might be taken by the advocates of nationalistic historiography as support for their position, one could also point out that Keisai's position was not the extreme particularism of the Suika Shintoists that would undermine the possibility of a dialogue between nations based on mutual respect and understanding, but a middle position between the extreme particularists or ultranationalists and the universalistic position of scholars like Naokata. That is, as in the case of Takeuchi, Keisai's *uchi*-centered perspective for viewing the world retains a universalistic moment. However, Maruyama shows clearly in his study that in spite of his defence of retaining the original geographical references of the terms *Chūgoku* and *iteki*, Naokata was by no means an unpatriotic Japanese, much less a "son of a foreigner" whose secret loyalties lay outside Japan. It is not difficult to surmise with which of the two, Naokata or Keisai, Maruyama felt the most affinity. It is not at all clear that the particularistic and relativistic methodologies of postmodernism will decisively and permanently overtake more traditional historiographical methodologies based on the concept of universal standards of truth, and there is already a

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<sup>27</sup> See Bitō's classic *Nihon hōken shisō shi kenkyū* 日本封建思想史研究 (Researches into the History of Japanese Feudal Thought) (Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1961) and Tajiri's "Futatsu no 'ri'—Ansaigakuha no fūhen kankaku" 二つの理：闇齋学派の普遍感覚 (Two concepts of "principle," the universal feeling of the Ansaigakuha), in *Shisō* 思想 766 (April 1988): 38–53.

growing backlash against them.<sup>28</sup> And it is not at all clear whether, in an age of globalization and internationalization, Japanese people are best advised to adopt a Keisai-like or a Naokata-like worldview. Consider, for instance, what Keisai's style of imperial loyalism led to in Japanese history. What *is* certain is that the two stances will continue to compete with one another in the world of Japanese historiographical discourse.

Every year I have my students conduct a debate between the Naokata side and the Keisai side of either the forty-seven rōnin controversy or the *chūgoku/iteki* controversy. Somehow it is almost always the Naokata side that wins. But then, my students are not Japanese. I would like to see what a group of Japanese students would do with this debate topic, or better still, a group of students from both mainland China and Japan.

But before we make our judgment regarding which team to support, let us see how Koyasu goes about deconstructing Maruyama's study.

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<sup>28</sup> See, for instance, Keith Windschuttle, *The Killing of History: How Literary Critics and Social Theorists Are Murdering our Past* (New York: The Free Press, 1996).