
Historical Consciousness in Hu Shi and Maruyama Masao

What role does a concept of history play in philosophy? This question is particularly important in Asia, where philosophy was transplanted in the modern period. When Asia confronted modern philosophy, philosophy was a universal science beyond specific histories and, at the same time, a proper science deeply rooted in the modern West. It attracted Asian modernists due to its universality representing modernity, while it urged them to *invent* their own proper philosophies in every country and region of Asia. Therefore, philosophy in Asia was obliged to be both more philosophical and more contra-philosophical from its beginnings. Because it needed to be more universal than modern Western philosophy in order to transcend the propriety of the latter and, at the same time, it needed to be put into parentheses to protect its own propriety other than the modern Western one. Therefore, terms like “thought 思想” or “current of thought 思潮” were often used in Asia to explain something that was similar to philosophy, but was different from philosophy.

When modernists in Asia had to take a path to pursue philosophy through their own examples, the concept of *history* was introduced. Philosophy was regarded as the history of philosophy or the history of thought. Nevertheless, it did not mean writing a chronology of philosophy, because such a chronological narrative could never be philosophical. The important thing was to get a philosophical historical consciousness, and to find a genealogy of this historical consciousness in history. However, this must cause complicated and difficult problems. On the one hand, to get a historical consciousness and trace its genealogy in history was an extremely modernistic approach that radically cut off the former worldview constituted upon “tradition” (i.e., succession of historical

facts). On the other hand, it was going to recover tradition at an ideal level, and it would result in contributing to a modern nationalism.

Even though it was inevitable to operate such a process of the nationalization of philosophy using the concept of history, it could not reduce all of the possibilities of philosophy in Asia. Because philosophy in Asia was a kind of transplantation from modern Western philosophy connected to *universal* values, it was impossible to remain a strongly nationalized philosophy. Its own historical consciousness was no more than a peculiar consciousness, so that, even unconsciously, it intuited somehow the existence of philosophy based upon another history. There must be another historical consciousness beyond its *own* historical consciousness.

This paper considers the process of the nationalization of philosophy using the concept of *history* through two Asian thinkers. One is Hu Shi (1891–1962), who wrote “History of Chinese Philosophy.” The other is Maruyama Masao (1914–1996), who wrote “History of Japanese Political Thought.” I would then like to touch on the possibility of connecting the history of the Others and returning justice to the Others, who have been outside this process of nationalization.

Historical Consciousness in Hu Shi 胡適

1. *The First Philosopher in China: Laozi*

When Hu Shi published *Outline of History of Chinese Philosophy* in 1919, he positioned Laozi at the beginning of the history of Chinese philosophy. Although many scholars criticized this, he did not renounce his opinion because this problem touched upon the essence of his understanding of Chinese philosophy and the history of Chinese philosophy.

Hu regarded Laozi as “the revolutionist Laozi.”¹ The philosophy of Laozi was a “reaction” or a “revolution” against “the epoch of Poets.” Its central meaning lay in the political philosophy of non-action *wuwei*. It

1. Hu Shi, *Outline of History of Chinese Philosophy (Volume I)*, in *Collections of Hu Shi: History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.1: 37–52.

was a *laissez-faire* policy that insisted if the government did not intervene in people’s activities (especially economic activities), everything would go well (governed).

However, why Laozi? The main reason Hu chose Laozi was that he wanted to find an older tradition of philosophy than Confucianism, which had lost its vitality for a long time. This other tradition of philosophy should prove that there was a soil that conformed to the “most outstanding results of Western philosophy and natural science.”² In addition, it must contribute to creating the future of Chinese Philosophy. For this purpose, Laozi was best suited, because “the revolutionist Laozi” was a revolutionary in terms not only of bringing a new paradigm into China, but also in having the potential to break the subsequent long tradition of Confucianism.

Nevertheless, in what sense was the thought of Laozi philosophy? It is because it was so conscious of *history* that it could systematize thought to become a paradigm. In 1921, two years after the publication of *Outline of History of Chinese Philosophy*, Hu gave a talk entitled “The line of Chinese Philosophy.”

We can say that Chinese philosophy did not get the term “philosophy” until Laozi and Confucius. This does not mean that there was no thought before Laozi, but it means that there was no systematized/genealogical 系統 thought.³

Philosophy is nothing but “systematized/genealogical” thought. The reason why the thought of Laozi could become philosophy was that it became aware of history in the form of the “inner line,”⁴ so it could accomplish the systematization of thought. In short, when Hu wrote a history of Chinese philosophy beginning from Laozi, he regarded it as a philosophy that was conscious of its inner history.

2. Hu Shi, *History of Logic in Xian Qin period*, in *Collections of Hu Shi: History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.2: 773.

3. Hu Shi, “The line of Chinese Philosophy,” in *Collections of Hu Shi: History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.1: 520.

4. Ibid.

2. *Marriage Between Philosophy and History: Dai Zhen* 戴震

For Hu Shi, the history of Chinese philosophy was not an external history that simply arranged philosophical thoughts chronologically, it was an internal history, which was found through a consciousness of history. In other words, to be philosophical meant to be conscious of history, so the history of Chinese philosophy was nothing but a philosophy. This was more apparent in the case of Dai Zhen, a philosopher who opposed Neo-Confucianism.

Then there appeared the great thinker Dai Zhen. Using a scholastic method of historical investigation at that time and his historical insight, he re-evaluated Neo-Confucianism over 500 years. This resulted in overthrowing the former Neo-Confucianism and building a new one.⁵

Dai Zhen built a new philosophy from his “historical insight.” Hu explained how this philosophy opposed Neo-Confucianism as a marriage between philosophy and history.⁶ If there only existed a new type of philosophy, it would not be easy for people who had been tired of philosophy to accept it. It must end in failure.⁷

What was necessary was the historical method brought by Jingxue 經學 as a revolutionary history: “historical insight; invention of tools; inductive research; reliance upon evidence.”⁸

However, on the other hand, philosophy must go beyond history.

What we must not forget is that Jingxue [history] is, after all, different from philosophy. Scholars of Jingxue just try to find the original meaning of the classics, but philosophers do not need to be restricted by such a historical investigation. The latter have to express their own ideas independently, and build their own genealogical system. The lack of a

5. Hu Shi, “Some thinkers against Neo-Confucianism,” in *Collections of Hu Shi: History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.2: 1154.

6. Hu Shi, “Philosophy of Dai Dongyuan,” in *Collections of Hu Shi: History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.2: 997.

7. Ibid: 1004; 1006.

8. Ibid: 1001.

distinction between Jingxue and philosophy is a serious illness in history of Chinese philosophy.⁹

Even here, the attitude of Hu Shi was coherent. For him, philosophy was a science with an internal history and history of Logos. It was a science that made up a “genealogical system.” Therefore, to be philosophical was to bring about a completely new paradigm from being aware of the original “inner line” beyond history of facts.

3. *Being Aware of History*

As Hu explained, if there existed a philosophical historical consciousness in the past, why did Chinese philosophy have to wait for Hu Shi and his “History of Chinese Philosophy” in the 20th Century? Hu found the reason in the “lack of an awareness of a historical mission.”

In his article “Renaissance in China” (1933), he compared the New Cultural Movement since 1917, in which he took part, to the Western Renaissance. There was a decisive difference between China and the West, because China had several Renaissances.¹⁰ One of them was a philosophy that opposed Neo-Confucianism in the Qing dynasty as mentioned above, which Dai Zhen represented. In what sense was Hu’s Renaissance distinct from other Renaissances?

Whenever historical movements appeared, they periodically played important roles in reviving the vitality and the energy of the old civilization. Every movement had a reality that deserved the name Renaissance. However, they had the same defect: they lacked an awareness of their own historical mission. They made neither a conscious effort nor an explicit expression of their intention. There only existed a natural development of a historical tendency. They just fought the unconscious and obscured the struggle against a conservative force in the tradition.¹¹

9. Ibid: 1071–72.

10. Hu Shi, “Chinese Renaissance,” 1933, in *Collection of Polemics*, vol.2: 1629.

11. Ibid: 1630.

Contrary to the former Renaissances, which had been too unconscious to radically make a revolutionary change, the latest Renaissance in which Hu participated was a “completely conscious and intentional movement.”¹²

However, why could only the latter be conscious of history? Hu said, “this element of awareness in the movement was derived from a long contact with Westerners and their civilization.”¹³ “If there had been no close contact with the Western civilization, the ‘Chinese Renaissance’ would have been impossible.”¹⁴ The Chinese people could not re-evaluate their own culture until a new standard of values was brought by Western civilization.

In short, for Hu Shi, the *awareness of history* was not only a consciousness of Chinese tradition, but was also connected to that which was outside China (here, Western civilization). The historical consciousness was a kind of *in-between* consciousness coming from what was between Chinese tradition and Western modernity. It was none other than Hu Shi, who was the most idealistic person for such an *in-between* historical consciousness. As Cai Yuanpei commented, only Hu could understand the genealogical systematization of the history of Western philosophy and, at the same time, had “inherited traditional *Hanxue* Chinese scholarship.”¹⁵

4. *In-between: Coming from Halfway*

Concerning this notion of *in-between*, Hu Shi mentioned it in the other context of “plain language *Baihua*.”

Probably, the authors like us who came from *halfway* cannot write a genuine style of literature written in the national language. A creator of new literature must appear from our children. They come from the *right way*.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid: 1631.

15. Cai Yuanpei, “Preface to *Outline of History of Chinese Ancient Philosophy*,” in *Collections of Hu Shi: History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.1: 8.

Their first language is the national language. I believe that they must be able to avoid our defeat.¹⁶

This was a letter that responded to criticism by Peng Haoxu. Peng had pointed out that Hu Shi had started a movement *Zhengli Guogu* to put Chinese original culture in the order, but, as a result of its bad influence, people turned to write a strange style of literature in an impure plain language, i.e., “half was a literary style and half was a plain language style.” Nevertheless, in his letter, Hu did not necessarily think highly of a “style written in a pure plain language.” Instead, he severely criticized the current situation in which the younger generation following the fashion of literature “was just scribbling in their own individual ways,” because they “had neither a conscious opinion, nor literary sense.”¹⁷ In the realm of literature, Hu also requested a historical consciousness. Regarding this point, the following quote is illuminating.

The history of the novel written in plain language for the past fifty years still had a big defect in the same way as literature in plain language has had for the past thousand years. That is, the adoption of plain language was still unconscious. It was neither serious nor conscious. On the contrary, “the revolution of literature” since 1917 is based upon a kind of conscious opinion. Unconscious evolution is too slow and too uneconomical.¹⁸

In order to write an appropriate *plain language*, it is necessary for the writer to be *conscious of history*. That is why plain language in the “revolution of literature” had great success, while other attempts failed because they were unconscious. Many political movements such as *Taiping Tianguo* against the Qing government failed because they were neither deliberate nor intentional.

What is necessary is neither to write literature automatically in plain

16. Hu Shi, “Arrangement of Chinese Original Culture and ‘to drive away the ghosts,’” in *Hu Shi Wencun*, vol.3: 104.

17. Ibid: 103.

18. Hu Shi, “Chinese Literature in the past fifty years,” in *Selected Works of Hu Shi*, vol. 3: 250–51.

language nor to make thought philosophized by itself. We need to be *conscious of history* in order to expose tradition to the light of day, and to connect modern Western literature and philosophy. Only one who reaches this point can radically reform Chinese society and bring about revolution.

5. Reinforcing Tradition or Cutting off Tradition: the Japanese Failure

However, Hu's strategy to be *conscious of history* in order to expose tradition to the light of day did not necessarily succeed. In fact, conservatives welcomed it, and regarded this arrangement of original Chinese culture as the conservation of "national essence *Guocui*." At a theoretical level as well, his notion of "genealogical systematization 系統" mentioned above was set apart from the "genetic method" of John Dewey, or it inherited the most dangerous aspect of the latter. That is, it came to be an "ancestor-descendant method" that stressed a familial lineage from ancestor to descendant. Through the inheritance of this familial lineage, Chinese *propriety* was re-appropriated.¹⁹ Here we again encounter a phenomenon that had been expressed in terms of "*Daotong* 道統."²⁰

Although there was such a dangerousness in Hu's historical consciousness, his modernist thinking could not be reduced fully into it. As for *Daotong*, Hu himself severely refused to accept it in a literal expression. We can see it in his "History of Literature written in plain language." In this article, Hu re-evaluated Han Yu who brought a renaissance in the Tang dynasty as a pioneer of "new poetry written in plain language." Nevertheless, because Han Yu also regarded himself as a person responsible for *Daotong*, he did not take the path of new poetry written in plain language. He fell into the "treacherous way" of seeking "antiquity and refinement" and the need for a "rhyme."²¹ This evil soil

19. Hu Shi, "Professor John Dewey and China," in *Collections of Hu Shi: Philosophy and Culture*: 51.

20. As is generally known, New-Confucianists, who were the next generation after Hu Shi, have by all means been trying to restore the Chinese *propriety* in this *Daotong*.

21. Hu Shi, "History of Literature written in plain language," in *Collections of Hu Shi: History of Chinese Literature*: 365.

produced the *Guwen* literary style, against which Hu Shi would fight in his whole life.

It is very interesting that in the eyes of the modernist Hu Shi, rather than traditional China, modern Japan definitely lacked a historical consciousness. He wrote the article "Movement of Modernization in China and Japan: a comparative research on cultural collision" (1939). In it, he said that the current problem was not "why the Japanese movement of modernization succeeded, while the Chinese one did not," but it was "why China succeeded in subverting the old culture and achieving a Chinese Renaissance, while Japan could not yet abandon the solid core of old customs after 70 years of modernization."²²

Referring to Emil Lederer, Hu answered this question as follows. Japanese westernization was nothing but militarization. Therefore, Japan could maintain the former institutions and traditions, which made rapid modernization possible at the first step. However, ironically, due to this, Japan could not reform its social institutions to realize democracy and liberty. In short, Japanese modernization had limitations. Unlike Japan, China accomplished the *Xinhai Revolution* and the "Chinese Renaissance" to radically reform society. It took time, but it finally succeeded in surpassing the modernization of Japan.²³ Hu Shi regarded Japan as a place lacking in a historical consciousness.

Historical Consciousness in Maruyama Masao 丸山眞男

1. Historical Consciousness

It was difficult for another modernist Maruyama Masao to accept Hu's diagnosis that Japan lacked a historical consciousness. As a writer of the history of national thought, Maruyama was very similar to Hu Shi. He insisted that Japan had a historical consciousness and China lacked it.

Not only in *Research on the History of Japanese Political Thought* written during the war, but also in *Transcript of Lectures in 1948*, he presented

22. Hu Shi, "Movement of Modernization in China and Japan: a comparative research on cultural collision," in *Collections of Hu Shi: Philosophy and Culture*: 320.

23. Ibid: 321 ff.

his basic perspective that Chinese thought was a “thought based upon a natural order.”²⁴ Because “politics did not occupy its own proper place” in China, an optimistic spiritualism became prevalent: “if a governor put his mind right, government must be accomplished by itself.”²⁵ Once it had fallen into such a “thought of natural law,” the “human essence was often regarded as what was a-temporally valid.” As a result, the “historical consciousness” to grasp the meaning of “historical singularity” was blocked off.²⁶ In short, he positioned Chinese thought as *a-historical*.

On the contrary, he positioned Japan in an antipodal place. Japan had a thought of artificial order, which was represented in particular in Ogyu Sorai 荻生徂徠: the Absolute Prince regarded as a Sage created every institution *ex nihilo* with his “free decisions.”²⁷ The thought of artificial order opened the possibility of political thought, which China lacked. Because it positioned politics at the beginning,²⁸ Japan had the “grounds to make a free cognition of historical individuality possible.”²⁹ In short, being different from China, there was a “maturity of historical consciousness” in Japan.³⁰

This schema upon the dichotomy between artificial and natural, political and a-political, and historical and a-historical was itself *a-historically* oversimplified. Many scholars, from Morimoto Jun'ichiro on, severely criticized it. Maruyama himself said reminiscently and critically that he stood affirmatively upon the common problem in the wartime academism (Japan succeeded in modernization, but China failed to do so), that he had a “viewpoint that contrasted Japanese relative progressiveness with Chinese stagnation.”³¹

Nevertheless, why did he need to find a “maturity of historical consciousness” in Japan? We could easily find the reason in that Maruyama, as a modernist like Hu Shi, wanted to *find* the possibility in Japanese

24. Maruyama Masao, *Transcript of Lectures, Vol.1 History of Japanese Political Thought 1948*: 103.

25. *Ibid*: 98.

26. *Ibid*: 135.

27. *Ibid*: 180.

28. *Ibid*: 172.

29. *Ibid*: 183.

30. *Ibid*: 136.

31. Maruyama Masao, “Postscript,” in *Research on History of Japanese Political Thought*: 7.

thought to be equal to that of the modern West. But, there should be another important reason. That is, despite Maruyama's assertion, the Japan he confronted was a place that not only lacked a historical consciousness, but also had a dominating mechanism to prevent it from being aware of history. That is why, I think, he was obliged to assert the existence of a historical consciousness against such a desperate situation.

2. To Make a Conscious Use of “Reminiscence”

Maruyama took a critical position toward “reminiscence.”

Kobayashi Hideo often expresses his idea that after all, history is nothing but reminiscences. This idea comes from his consistent attitude of refusing to accept the notion of historical development, or more precisely, a special transplantation of this idea into Japan. As long as the pattern of how to *inherit* the former thought in Japan or in the Japanese life of the mind is concerned, his proposition seems to touch *one* of the cores of the matter. Because the Japanese sequentially absorbs what is new and what is fundamentally heterogeneous, without sufficiently confronting the past, a new thought gains victory over the past surprisingly quickly. This means that the past is put aside without a consciously confronting the present, or the past is precipitated into the bottom of the historical memory. In other words, the past disappears from consciousness to sink into “oblivion.” Thus, it spouts out suddenly in a moment as “reminiscence.”³²

In Japan, while there was no conscious confrontation with foreign thoughts, new thoughts were received one after another. Accordingly, whatever they were, the thoughts were interminably “forgotten,” “smuggled and piled up” in the “tradition.” Such “jumbled thoughts,” which had been buried in the depths of “oblivion,” spout out as “reminiscences,” particularly in moments of “national or political crisis.” This is a time

32. Maruyama Masao, “Japanese Thought,” in *Japanese Thought*: 11–12.

when people regard this phenomenon as a “returning to a Japanese ‘original figure’ or ‘proper aspect.’”³³

Apparently, Maruyama tried to resist this amalgam of “oblivion” and “reminiscence.” In order to do so, it was necessary to “make *conscious* use of ‘reminiscence;’”³⁴ in other words, to put a historical consciousness against a-temporal or a-historical “reminiscence,” which was embodied in the discourse from Motoori Norinaga to Kobayashi Hideo. It was only the historical consciousness that could structuralize thoughts in order. This was his consistent methodology.

After getting a historical consciousness, thoughts would start a reciprocal dialogue or a real confrontation together. Then, we would be able to inherit them as a legacy.³⁵ Maruyama, like Hu Shi, wanted to find a foundation to criticize political power and its ideology by consciously facing history through a historical consciousness.

3. Dilemma of Maruyama

We have to recall here against what Maruyama fought. It was the National Entity, the “basis of the whole system of Ultra-Nationalism.”³⁶ Through this National Entity, the Japanese State occupied “substantial values such as truth, good and beauty.”³⁷ It could be regarded as a result of an esthetical political theology derived from Motoori Norinaga, and was well represented by Kobayashi Hideo. It was a political mechanism to esthetically and ethically control the interiority or the spirit of the people.

Nevertheless, Maruyama never got rid of nationalism itself. For Maruyama, a reform of the old social structure was *sine qua non*, and it must be accomplished through a democratic revolution. But, this democracy was nothing but a national democracy tied to nationalism. For the purpose of the democratic revolution, Maruyama needed to build a

33. Ibid: 12–13.

34. Maruyama Masao, “Postscript,” in *Japanese Thought*: 188.

35. Maruyama Masao, “Japanese Thought:” 9.

36. Maruyama Masao, “Logic and Mentality of Ultra-Nationalism,” in *Maruyama Masao Collection*, vol.3: 36.

37. Ibid: 22.

“proper nationalism.”

As mentioned above, Kuga Katsunan aimed at a synthesis between nationalism and democracy in *Japanism*. Even though it was not thorough, I think, it must be essentially a correct perspective of the direction of modernization in Japan. A nation that exposes itself to the crisis of being colonized or semi-colonized because of its international inferiority or backwardness, has no option but to cut its own path in this direction. It was unfortunate that Japan failed to complete this synthesis in the past. The tendency of nationalism *for the people* from Fukuzawa Yukichi to Kuga Katsunan was so weak from the beginning that it was easily absorbed into nationalism from above with a strong power to govern. Therefore, the movement of nationalism from below was obliged to have an aspect of internationalism or cosmopolitan citizenship. We have only now got out of the long control by *Ultra*-nationalism. Today, we must unite the proper nationalism or the right movement for nationalism with a democratic revolution. For that purpose, while we take over the mission of Katsunan and others, we need to get rid of *their insufficiency*, which was *halfway* towards the realization of nationalism.³⁸

As this quotation shows, Maruyama was convinced that there was a chance of establishing a “proper nationalism” in Meiji Japan. It was “unfortunate” that Japan failed to obtain a “synthesis of nationalism and democracy.” Therefore, Maruyama would inherit the task of *Japanism* from Fukuzawa to Kuga, and bring about a “proper nationalism” while getting “rid of their insufficiency that was *halfway* through realizing nationalism.”

Here, a dilemma appeared for Maruyama. In the same way as Hu Shi’s arrangement of Chinese original culture, Maruyama also took sides with what he had been supposed to restrain. In order to realize proper Japanese nationalism, he brought again a “reminiscence” that he had once refused.

A definition of a “community with a common destiny” was often used

38. Maruyama Masao, “Kuga Katsunan: his life and thought,” in *Maruyama Masao Collection*, vol. 3: 105–06.

in Japan. Because we could easily find an experience to historically share the destinies of peoples everywhere. The definition [by Fukuzawa Yukichi] that “people hold a feeling of reminiscence in common, through a change in the situation of this world,” which was derived from J. S. Mill’s definition of nationality, is very similar to this notion of “community with a common destiny.” In short, it is a community of nostalgia and one of reminiscence.

This notion of a “community with a common destiny” appeared in one of the Japanese poems composed by Professor Nambara Shigeru during the wartime.

I sincerely agree with a doctrine that the people belong to a community with a common destiny.

I also felt it right at the moment of an air raid. Bombs never avoided a pacifist. As Japanese, we were compelled to shoulder destiny. I felt that we were really in a community with a common destiny.³⁹

Maruyama’s recollection clearly showed that the notions such as a “community with a common destiny,” a “community of nostalgia,” and a “community of reminiscences” deeply infiltrated even his feelings in wartime.

Ironically enough, Fukuzawa, to whom he referred here, criticized the “theory of the National Entity” based on a “community of nostalgia.” Fukuzawa said that what we must criticize most is “so-called National Learning 皇学.” It “criticized the current deeds of men as being flippant, because of their ‘obliviousness of the past.’ Meanwhile, it loudly promoted the great Cause in order to return to the past. Therefore, it followed the doctrine, while advocating the theory of the National Entity through the pursuit of past evidence. It planned to maintain the popular mind by means of this doctrine.”⁴⁰ It appealed to “the sincere feeling of reminiscence among the people,” but it was disadvantageous politically. Because

39. Maruyama Masao, *Reading of “Outline of Civilization Theory”* (1): 165–66.

40. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Outline of Civilization Theory*, in *Fukuzawa Yukichi Collection*, vol. 4: 299.

the people had not known for a long time about the existence of the Emperor, it was extremely difficult to “invent the sincere feeling of adoration for the Imperial Household anew.” On the contrary, “for the first time, we need to change the feelings of the people in order to forget the past and follow the new.”⁴¹ In other words, Fukuzawa did not need construct the “National Entity” as a “community of nostalgia,” but he needed to change the “feelings of the people” in order to make Japan stand independently upon a completely new principle, i.e., “Western civilization.”

Maruyama deeply understood Fukuzawa’s intentions. However, in fact, he dared to introduce a “community of reminiscences.” As he agreed, it had the danger both to bid up “Japaneseness” and to exclude other possibilities to remember history. He concluded: “it was the easiest case for Japan to define its [nationality], because race, language, and geography have been almost all the same since the epoch of *Kojiki*,”⁴² when those who were indifferent to the “old stratum” of historical consciousness were decisively excluded.

4. *In-between: Man in “Wartime”*

The people Maruyama excluded were, speaking plainly, those who came from the former Japanese colonies. They had other memories than “reminiscences” ending in “Japaneseness,” and were indifferent to the “old stratum” of historical consciousness. They could criticize not only Ultra-nationalism, but also the national democracy Maruyama was eager to develop. If Maruyama involved them into his “new nationalism,” it must become a completely artificial nationalism. At least in this artificial nationalism, he could criticize the “natural” to invent an ethico-political order and to return justice to the Others.

Moreover, it was certain that Maruyama had some opportunities to do so. Firstly, he understood the importance of the in-between standpoint of the “wartime generation” as being between prewar and postwar. He believed that only this in-betweenness could criticize the National Entity.

41. Ibid: 300.

42. Maruyama Masao, *Reading of “Outline of Civilization Theory”* (1): 165.

There was a keen feeling toward the way the irreligious religion called the “National Entity” had exercised its magical force. But, this feeling has *already* disappeared in the pure postwar generation. Besides, it did not *originally* belong to the former [prewar] generation, who enjoyed “freedom of the thought” *in its* “magic.”⁴³

That is, the generation that can criticize the National Entity is neither the “postwar” one, which had already stood out from the National Entity after its separation from postwar Japan, nor the “prewar” generation before the separation. It is the wartime generation, which belongs to both “*already*” and “*originally*,” and has an in-between standpoint, that can only have a “keen feeling” toward the “National Entity.” This feeling is a unique condition for discussing the separation of the National Entity on August 15 in 1945 as the decisive starting point. Therefore, when Maruyama tried to construct a new nationalism by modifying the criticized “National Entity,” he assigned its possibility only to the wartime generation, even if they were an impure postwar generation. Nevertheless, those whom they had to enlighten about a new nationalism with a liberal subjectivity were the pure postwar generation. It was troublesome enough that the purer the postwar generation was, the more they were haunted by the new “postwar myth,” which was similar to the “magic of the National Entity.”⁴⁴

Anyway, this in-betweenness was the same as Hu Shi’s attitude toward plain language. It was nothing but a difference from before and after (prewar/postwar or literary style/plain language). Only from this subtle standpoint could people be aware of history, and have a “keen feeling” of history. If so, who most represented this in-betweenness? They were the people who came from the former Japanese colonies, who were forced to represent the wartime generation against their will. However, even though they had a “keen feeling” toward the National Entity, they were excluded institutionally and legally from postwar Japan. They were deprived of having experience of postwar Japan.

If Maruyama had taken into account the Japanese coming from the

43. Maruyama Masao, “Japanese Thought,” 31.

44. Maruyama Masao, “Postscript in an enlarged edition,” in *Thought and Behavior in the Modern Politics, 1964*, in *Maruyama Masao Collection*, vol. 9: 183.

former Japanese colonies, his national democracy would have become a modern Western one as he had wished at the beginning. That is, unlike the National Entity ethico-esthetically controlling the interiority of the people, it must be connected with a “neutral State.” In this “neutral State,” the interiority of the people is founded independently (typically by Christianity) from the State and the State’s activities consist of a purely formal legal system.

In his debut article “Logic and Mentality of Ultra-Nationalism” (1946), Maruyama argued it as follows.

As Carl Schmitt says, a distinctive feature of European modern States lies in a neutral State (Ein neutraler Staat). In other words, they take a neutral position on substantial values such as truth or morals. They leave them to other associations (e.g., church) or individual conscience. The foundation of State sovereignty is based upon a purely formal legal system that is abstracted from such substantial values... Therefore, there appeared a compromise between the rulers and the ruled, which divided their domains into form/substance, exteriority/interiority and public/private. As a result, matters of thought such as faith and morality are guaranteed as “private matters,” while public power is absorbed into the legal system with a technical character.⁴⁵

The national democracy, Maruyama imagined, belonged to an ideal modern State, where the “public” and the “private” were divided into two realms. On the one hand, State sovereignty consisted only of its “formal validity,” on the other hand, “freedom of subjectivity” rose independently.

5. “Seito 正統” as *Legitimacy*

Here we can find another possibility of Maruyama inventing the ethico-political order, to returning justice to the Others. Secondly, this modernist had a perspective to immediately question the foundation of State sovereignty by “Seito 正統” as political legitimacy.

45. Maruyama Masao, “Logic and Mentality of Ultra-Nationalism:” 19–20.

Maruyama continued to argue in the above article as follows. “Even in the case of the Prussia of Friedrich the Great, legitimacy (Legitimiät) is ultimately absorbed into legality (Legalität).”⁴⁶ “Legitimacy” was a key concept for criticizing the political.

Let me give another example of this problem. In his final work *Reading of the Outline of Civilization Theory* (1986), he argued:

According to Guizot, there exists a force, i.e., violence is the origin of all power without exception, but now power does not allow itself to be regarded as a product of violence. “From a warning of insurmountable instincts, any political form knows that violence is not entitled, might is not right. If it has no other foundation than violence, it lacks right completely.”

This idea is one of the most important melodies of European modern political thought. As you are aware, a proposition you can see at the beginning of the Rousseauian theory of social contract is that power does not engender right. That is, *de facto* power relationships do not engender *de jure* normative relationships or legal relationships. That “might does not engender right” is synonymous with that “power does not engender law” . . .

Guizot states his idea based on this European history of legalo-political thought. Any man of power must seek grounds for his own power, which is different from violence. These grounds are the problem of legitimacy.⁴⁷

According to Guizot, the “first characteristic feature of political legitimacy is the fact that while power denies that violence is its origin, it tries to connect itself to some moral idea or some moral power—idea of justice, right, and reason.” The result is an idea of justice. That is why there are two meanings of justice, i.e., “righteousness” and “judicature” in its origin.⁴⁸

These two quotations were picked up from a passage where he took

46. Ibid: 24.

47. Maruyama Masao, *Reading of “Outline of Civilization Theory”*: 170–71.

48. Ibid: 172.

up three important concepts Fukuzawa Yukichi used—National Entity, political legitimacy, and lineage based on blood 国体・政統・血統. Among these, the second concept, “political legitimacy,” is noteworthy, because Maruyama believed that it could best express the concept of legitimacy as distinguished from ethical validity.

Here, he clarified that political legitimacy consisted of a process of establishing political power, not upon violence, but on justice. In other words, there was a possibility in Maruyama’s concept of legitimacy to interrogate violence existing at the origin of every power and State, from the perspective of justice. If so, Maruyama first had to criticize the violence in the National Entity and to return justice to those who had suffered from it. Moreover, if so, he could also attain the viewpoint of questioning not only “bad nationalism” but also nationalism in general.

Nonetheless, he did not thoroughly follow this path. He weakened his demand for justice and allowed political legitimacy to retreat. He shifted the problem of *Seito* from legitimacy and justice to orthodoxy. This orthodoxy was a concept guaranteed by the ideal continuity of “*Dôtô/ Daotong* 道統” and had an affinity with “lineage based on blood.” As a result, this shift led to the failure of *Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy*.⁴⁹

6. History of the Others: Asian Nationalism

Why did Maruyama pass over these opportunities? We might consider several reasons, but the most conceivable one seems to me that his historical consciousness never faced the memories of the Others.

This does not mean that he ignored the situation in Asia. Maruyama did not shut his eyes to Asia. In his article “Nationalism in Japan” (1951), he strongly stressed that Japanese postwar nationalism should have an influence on the world politics as well as Asian nationalism.⁵⁰ He never closed himself to Japanese nationalism, but he included both Asia and the world in his views.

49. Cf. Ishida Takeshi, “Why did *Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy* end up being incomplete?” (1) & (2).

50. Maruyama Masao, “Nationalism in Japan,” in *Maruyama Masao Collection*, vol. 5: 58–59.

Far from that, it is no exaggeration to say that he put his hopes on Asian nationalism. He defined Japan's previous nationalism ending in Ultra-nationalism as what "adhered to Imperialism," because it did not have a "happy marriage" with democracy.⁵¹ By contrast, Asian nationalism, except Japanese nationalism, was highly evaluated, because "there was a consistent interior connection between nationalism and revolution."⁵² Why did they succeed? Maruyama referred to China as a "typical pattern."

The Chinese ruling class failed to accomplish modernization through the inner modification of the formation, so China allowed itself to be invaded by the Imperialism of the great powers including Japan for a long time. However, this forced Chinese nationalism movement against Imperialistic government radically reformed old Chinese socio-political institutions.⁵³

Maruyama drew a sharp contrast between Japan and China. In Japan, the "success" of modernization brought about an adhesion of nationalism with Imperialism, and then even the counterforce did not appeal to "proper nationalism," but was obliged to appeal to cosmopolitanism. In China, nationalism was so connected with revolution that it resulted in the reform of the old socio-political institutions. On this point, Maruyama finally agreed with Hu Shi. However, his assertion was formed on a decisive oblivion.

Japan is unique among Asian countries, because it has *already* lost the virginity of nationalism. While nationalism in other Far Eastern areas are filled with a youthful energy, and have internally the great chaos associated with youth, only Japan, even if not sufficiently, completed the cycle of nationalism: rise, maturity, and ruin.⁵⁴

Maruyama discussed his argument as if the "other Far Eastern areas" had

51. Ibid: 66.

52. Ibid: 65.

53. Ibid: 64.

54. Ibid: 59.

not yet experienced any nationalism. In this narrative, he showed his longing for the "great youthful chaos" Meiji Japan surely once had. In other words, Asian nationalism was important for Maruyama as long as it repeated the Meiji Restoration. Here, he erased memories of nationalist struggles in Asian countries before 1945. Moreover, he forgot about their struggles against Japanese Ultra-nationalism. He paid sufficient attention neither to the proper history of Asian countries nor to the memory of Japanese invasion.

On the one hand, if he could have considered Asian nationalism in their own history including their connections with Japan, he should have recognized the shadow of Japanese nationalism and its negative legacy on them, but he could also find other possibilities of how to share *our* memories of the past together. On the other hand, if he could have considered Japanese nationalism from the standpoint of Asian nationalism, he would have found various possibilities in the chaos of Japanese postwar, even if they were neither youthful nor great.

These assumptions are just developments of his "methodology:" "If we pay attention to ambivalent possibilities of thought, we can find other possibilities that were not developed as a result. At an earlier stage, the case examined must have had an opportunity to produce another direction that was different from the actual result."⁵⁵

Conclusion

Like Hu Shi and Maruyama Masao, we cannot abandon our responsibility for the inheritance of history. However, this responsibility toward history is not to re-appropriate a strong history as an inner history through *awareness*. Conversely, it should touch on various histories that are neither reducible to the "History of Chinese Philosophy" of Hu Shi nor to "History of Japanese Political Thought" of Maruyama Masao. When light is thrown on such histories, possible alternative thoughts would be invented. At this moment, what is necessary is to connect with

55. Maruyama Masao, "Approach to History of Thought," in *Loyalty and Treason: A Phase of the Intellectual History in Japan's Transformative Period*: 388.

the history of the Others. For that purpose, we have to rethink the in-betweenness once more. In the in-betweenness that is irreducible to the “national,” we can share our memories together, and return justice to the Others against violence. This seems to be more urgent these days, in the face of a severe situation represented by Anti-Japan demonstrations in East Asia.

References:

1. Hu Shi, *Collections of Hu Shi: History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.1 and vol.2, edited by Jiang Yihua, Zhonghua Shuju, 1991.
2. Hu Shi, *Hu Shi Wencun*, 4 volumes, Huangshang Shushe, 1996.
3. Hu Shi, *Collection of Polemics*, 3 volumes, edited by Geng Yunzhi, Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 1998.
4. Hu Shi, *Selected Works of Hu Shi*, 16 volumes, Guangming Ribao Chubanshe, 1998.
5. Hu Shi, *Collections of Hu Shi: History of Chinese Literature*, edited by Jiang Yihua, Zhonghua Shuju, 1998.
6. Hu Shi, *Collections of Hu Shi: Philosophy and Culture*, edited by Jiang Yihua, Zhonghua Shuju, 2001.
7. Maruyama Masao, *Research on History of Japanese Political Thought*, University of Tokyo Press, 1952.
8. Maruyama Masao, *Japanese Thought*, Iwanami Shoten, 1961.
9. Maruyama Masao, *Reading of “Outline of Civilization Theory,”* 3 volumes, Iwanami Shoten, 1986.
10. Maruyama Masao, *Loyalty and Treason: A Phase of Intellectual History in Japanese Transformative Period*, Chikuma Shobo, 1992.
11. Maruyama Masao, *Maruyama Masao Collection*, 17 volumes, Iwanami shoten, 1995–97.
12. Maruyama Masao, *Transcript of Lectures*, 7 volumes, University of Tokyo Press, 1998–2000.
13. Ishida Takeshi, “Why did *Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy* end up being incomplete?” (1) & (2), in *Misuzu*, Misuzu Shobo, 1998, vol. 450, vol. 451.
14. Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Outline of Civilization Theory*, in *Fukuzawa Yukichi Collection* vol. 4, Keio University Press, 2002.