

The Genealogy of Takeuchi Yoshimi's Notion of "Multiple Asias" and the Significance of the Asia Discourses by Mizoguchi Yūzō, Chen Kuan-hsing and Izutsu Toshihiko

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Introduction

In postwar Japanese theory, the critique of Japanese nationalism and modern universalist or totalitarian thinking appeared in many different fields of research. It is quite well known that the thus inclined discourse, simultaneously with the influx of discourses led mainly by postmodern theories and postcolonial studies, picked up topics popular outside of East Asia. This kind of discourse, even though it did on one hand develop in Japan without originating from postmodern theories or post colonialism, did on the other hand conform closely to postmodern discourse and its awareness of potential subjects by questioning the definition of the present subjects in modernity. In this way, this thinking gave shape to one unique genealogy of discourse in Japan.

And yet, the fact of their shaping of East Asian discourses and their intent are only scarcely studied so far. Japanese discourses of this kind, although small in number, are starting to connect to those of East Asia and Chinese speaking regions, and their mutual influence is increasing. Today, exclusivism and nationalism are obvious again throughout the world, especially in East Asia. Hence, it needs further rethinking of the discourse of what is outlined by the concept of the East. This is because this discourse is connected with modernity, and the self-awareness or identity of East Asians. By such a fundamental discussion, we can deal with the modern and contemporary problems in East Asia.

The way of thinking of modernity or discussion on Eastern frameworks has required the Orient and necessarily objectified the Orient. In such debates the concept of Orient has been an indispensable medium in order to identify the Occident itself. In this context the definition of both, the East and Asia, was subjected to Western identity shaping. Following this logic, it seems inappro-

priate to keep on referring to what is called the East or Asia by those rough uncritical concepts. But it remains a fact that we more or less still live in a world determined by these conceptual frameworks and experience our reality in terms of these rough concepts. In order to think further in this given situation, we should apply criticism of Orientalism to the identification of self as Asia in East Asia. However, is it possible to shape an unsubstantial and non-Eurocentric identity that is seen as an other by the West?

Unsubstantial identity does not mean some holistic unison determined by its substantial immutable identity which asserts its autonomous character, but it is a pluralistic and multiple origin view on Asia, as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (*1942) has elaborated.¹ I do agree with Spivak, when she speaks of the inevitability of a dedicated discourse on the problem of imagination in order to achieve such a perspective. Imagination will entail the self-evidence of the unquestioned self-perception we became used to. Characteristic of the imagination Spivak is talking about, is the avoidance of a fantasized, uniformalized and generalized identity, cultural self-evidence, or a holistic and substantializing thinking that is inflexible and stiff in the way to imagine Asia as a substantial unit, geographically or conceptually. A flexible imagination based on critical thinking enables perception of otherness, mobility, fluidity, asynechia, and diversity. This points to the freedom of a thinking that always remains able to an external view of one self.

One example of such an extensive and uncompromising critique is a lecture titled “Hōhō toshite no Ajia” 方法としてのアジア (Asia As Method) held by the sinologist Takeuchi Yoshimi 竹内好 (1910–1977) before the Kokusai kirisutokyo daigaku Ajia bunka kenkyū iinkai 国際基督教大学アジア文化研究委員会 (Committee of the Institute of Asian Cultural Studies of the International Christian University) in February 1960.² Chen Kuan-hsing 陳光興 (*1957) in the fields of postcolonial studies and cultural studies, has discussed how to avoid a path that leads to “empire”. In his interpretation of Takeuchi’s text, he refers to this Japanese sinologist as “one eminent Japanese post-war intellectual” who “thoroughly thinks through his methodology” and who did “turn on the critique of the whole of the structure of knowledge”.³ Chen’s debate has been translated into Japanese and has gained in notoreity in Japan. This is an example of an evolving discussion that arises from one of Takeuchi’s topics.

1 Spivak 2003, 13ff; 2008, 2ff.

2 Takeuchi Yoshimi 1961 [1993].

3 The Chinese, English, and Japanese editions of Chen’s work published 2006, 2010, and 2011 all differ from another. Included in the Japanese edition is the discourse of Takeuchi, which I referred to. Chen Kuan-hsing 2011, 236f, also 194, 223.

In this paper I want to pick up the development of this conceptual discourse. I wish to show that in East Asia the discourse evolving around the concept of modernity as well as the discourse of a multi-layered and multiple Asia is regarded as Takeuchi's genealogy. It is not the aim of this paper to discuss whether there are multiple modernities or not. That which came to an end in the mid-twentieth century and which we labeled modern – which Toulmin believes was the end of modernity – this modernity may imply multiple origins.⁴ However, at this point I do not emphasize that connecting this multiple dimension of theory directly with the idea of multiple modernities would result in a consequent basis. Rather, I believe that discourses evolving around modernity and Asia of Takeuchi's type, by focusing on modernity and Asia's multiplicity and multi-dimensionality, are in fact enriching our discourses. I do believe that, by following Takeuchi's genealogy, at least some discourse being an independent part of the Japanese intellectual world, did introduce a way of thinking that, although developed independent of Chen and Spivak, nonetheless shares some problems with them. More specifically are we dealing with topics that connect back to Spivak's emphasis on the importance of imagination and a flexibility of thinking. Since then, it is known that this discourse, which is regarded as being independent, has been directly serialized in other discourses recently.

In the following, I am going to focus on one aspect, namely the avoidance of the substantialization of Asia, which is emphasized by Takeuchi. Following this, I would like to shed light on a new side of Izutsu Toshihiko's 井筒俊彦 (1914–1993) thought, namely the possibility of historical and political theory, and to mount a philosophical challenge to the Kyōto School, especially Nishida Kitarō. From this point of view, I believe, we are able to place Izutsu's discussion about "East" or "Asia", and "identity" of the Eastern or Japanese in a wider context and in an appropriate way, and we can reconsider Takeuchi's significance. If we want to examine the conceptual value of the ideas of "the East" or "Asia", we need also to discuss this aspect, since Izutsu pointed out the necessity of imagination and flexibility of thinking in the context of his ideal "Asia". Moreover, the genealogy of Takeuchi as Asia discourse contains criticism of Nishida and his school, just as Izutsu's did.

4 Toulmin 1990.

Takeuchi Yoshimi's Critique

Takeuchi experienced the Second World War, Japanese nationalism, imperialism, and colonialism. This experience is the starting point of his postwar activities to engage in the problematic of modernity. This unique Sinologist fostered on his own a way of thinking concerning what the Western modernity came to label roughly as “Chinese studies”. The topics he brought up, which fundamentally question modernity, draw interdisciplinary attention today.⁵ In 1948 Takeuchi took up the topic of modernity in the example of Japan and China. In 1951 he thought about Japan's progressivism in his *Kindaishugi to minzoku no mondai* 近代主義と民族の問題 (Modernism and the People). Takeuchi's lecture in 1961 on “Asia as Method” was in several respects probably ahead of his time.

It is believed that Takeuchi's ability to think through problematic concepts of modernity on a philosophical level already at this time is testimony to the depth of his experiences and their consequences. This is especially concerning his thinking on modern problems in connection with his wartime experience of Japan's invasion of China, his experiences with East Asian culture during his stay in China, and his knowledge of Chinese literature and politics concentrating mainly on Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881–1936). Drawing on that he stressed that if modern research and the development of concepts themselves would not be renewed completely and fundamentally, the world could not overcome modernity. He never received Asia as something that existed substantially. His unsubstantial thinking probably has to be regarded as the most profound critique of all the different understandings of Asia there are. Looking at the longer lasting – that is, theoretical – values of the different levels of discourse, should this not be regarded as his most valuable effort? I would like to take a closer look at Takeuchi's unsubstantial Asia.

Although Takeuchi concentrated on Chinese studies, in his writings it is clearly visible that apart from China he included South East Asia, North East Asia, India and Muslim cultures into his view of Asia. Thus he thinks that these cultural regions all have something peculiar or individual that sets them apart. Its individuality is perhaps useful to overcome the negativity of modernism, or to find a method to overcome modernism, a method to turn negative aspects of modernity into positive ones, so he thinks. He calls it “something” Asian, which

5 Uhl 2003; Calichman 2005; Chen 2010.

these different cultural regions share in common. And since he regarded this as "something" that was not to be substantialized, he avoided self-Orientalism.

If one refers to such cultural regions as "Asia", like Takeuchi did, this concept of "Asia" naturally presupposes multidimensionality. The unit called Asia is thus a place of interpenetration, or of the intercourse of different domains and spheres. What follows is that this place is a dynamic field governed by liquidity, and it is therefore impossible in that field to presuppose some substantial and firm attribute as something essential or quidditative. This image of Asia, a place of conceptual interpenetration, is the very idea of Asia in Izutsu, as I will discuss in the end.

If such a movement was to be holistically or universally unified, mono-linearized and replaced by a historical development, which puts Western modernity as its telos. Takeuchi's critique would effectively turn towards what Modern Japan has adopted. In this regard Takeuchi's critique of Orientalism is effectively also a critique of Japanese modernism. Firstly, I will take a look at Takeuchi's critique focusing on modernism and Orientalism. Takeuchi shows as follows an Orientalism in which the East turns up as the mirror image of the West, and in this context he understands as a dialectic movement the relationship of Europe and its mirror image Asia:

ヨーロッパの自己実現であるこのような運動が、高次の文化の低次の文化への流入、その同化、あるいは、歴史的段階の落差の自然調節として、客観的法則の形で眺められたのは、ものを等質において見るヨーロッパの目からは、当然であった。

The movement of European self-realization in its flooding of a high culture into a lower culture, that is to say, this assimilation or natural regulation of different steps on a historical ladder, considered to be an objective law was taken as by Europe, that considered things to be homogeneous, as a matter of course.⁶

東洋を包括したことで世界史は完成に近づいたが、そのことが同時に、それに含まれた異質なものを媒介として、世界史そのものの矛盾を表面に出した。

Being an inclusion of the East, the world itself was nearing its completion, but at the same time as for the mediation of the also included heterogeneous things, an antinomy of world history itself became visible.⁷

Takeuchi's thoughts could be put this way: In order to pursue its self-realization, Europe discovered vis-à-vis itself or in itself an antinomy or heterogeneity. This received the name "East". Takeuchi understood Europe's self-

6 Takeuchi Yoshimi 1966 [1993], 14f.

7 Ibid., 15.

conception or self-formation and the formation of the concept of the “East” as interrelated events. To conceive of history Euro-centrally means that world history via the implication of the East by the West is approaching the end of history. But, by this implication an antinomy became eventually obvious. This antinomy was either the East as included by the West or an antinomy in the West itself that sprouted on contact with the East. Accordingly, by furthering its modernization, the way the self-identification has been realized in the West, Japan embraced the same antinomy. Takeuchi, together with other critical theorists, understands Japan’s behavior during the Sino-Japanese War and the Pacific War as such, which this had to be its result. In particular, regarding the point of the relation of praxis and theory, Takeuchi’s critique of the prewar Kyōto School (Kyōto gakuha 京都学派) was serious:

京都学派の教義学が「戦争の侵略的性格をおおいかくす」ことができると考えるのは過大評価である。彼らは戦争とファシズムのイデオロギイをつくり出したのではない。公の思想を祖述しただけである。あるいは解釈しただけである。それがイデオロギイ的にはたらいしたのは、別の要因からであって、彼らの思想の力が現実を動かしたのではない。

To think the dogmatism of the Kyōto School was able to “conceal the truth about the invasive character of the war” is an overestimation. They did not make the war or fascist ideology. What they did was just to perpetuate the official philosophy – or rather only to interpret it. That it turned out to work ideologically is due to another cause. Their philosophy did not possess the power to move reality.⁸

The “other cause” Takeuchi had in mind, is thought to be the following:

もし対米英開戦がなければ、京都学派は空論のストックを一つふやしただけで、世間の関心はひかなかつたにちがいない。たまたま時機よく開戦になったために、空論が生き返った。...日華事変の解決は無期延期されただけであつて、無期延期されたために事実が京都学派に証明の責任を解除しただけのことである。

If the war against America and England did not break out, the Kyōto School would just have added one more to their empty theory, and it would certainly not have drawn any public interest. Only due to the favorable opportunity of the outbreak of the war did their empty theory revive. [...] A solution to the Chinese-Japanese war was adjourned indefinitely, and it was for this indefiniteness that reality freed the Kyōto School from the responsibility of proof.⁹

8 Takeuchi Yoshimi 1966 [1993], 208.

9 Ibid.

In the thinking of the Kyōto School the Chinese-Japanese war was unsolvable, Takeuchi thinks. The Pacific War was begun as means to adjourn a definite solution. This meant that, this being in reference to permanent war, the only thing the Kyōto School did do in fact was to explain permanent war.

京都学派にとっては、狭義が大切なのであって、現実はどうでもよかった。「既成事実の弁護」でさえもなかったと私は思う。

Since their own doctrine meant everything to the Kyōto School, but reality itself meant nothing to them. They did not even present something like an "advocacy of the war as an accomplished fact", I think.¹⁰

この伝統から形成されたのが「東亜共栄圏」のユートピア思想であり、そのために「大東亜戦争」は不可欠の条件であった。しかし、京都学派の「総力戦の哲学」が「絶対無」の無内容に行きつくと同時に、「東亜共栄圏」もまた「大東亜共同宣言」（1943年11月）の美辞麗句にいきついた。

What has been formed by this tradition was the utopian thought of the "East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere", and therefore a "Greater East Asian War" was a necessary condition. But, by the time the Kyōto School's "philosophy of total warfare" had ended up in the very poorness in content of their doctrine "Absolute Nothingness", the "East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere" ended up with contentless flowery words of the "Manifest of Greater East Asian Cooperation" (November 1943).¹¹

The reason for the inability of the Kyōto School to present a philosophy that could guide to a practical implementation of a solution to end the war, was to be found in the anti-intellectualistic depleted state of Japanese philosophy, as Takeuchi finds. The reason why neither the Kyōto School nor other thinkers could lead to a solution, was that they were in reality "Western modernists" and "they did not created any real intellectual conflict" in addition, while they were trying to "overcome modernity". Therefore they could not acknowledge their defeat, and this inability is the real problem. It is not the question that Japan was (or has been) reigned by premodern "mythical" thinking. One should say, the pseudo-intellect, that had not been able to overcome a "mythical" thinking, had been there before the war and is still there after the war. The problem is namely, that "modernists" and "Japanists" are mixed together in one persona that cannot realize this aporia by means of self-reflection.¹²

10 Takeuchi Yoshimi 1961 [1993], 208.

11 Ibid., 211.

12 Ibid., 227.

Universalism and its Implications in Takeuchi Yoshimi's Thinking

How could one resolve this aporia between uniformism (standardization, modernism, globalism, or universalism) and pluralization or localism like Japanism? The solution could be, following Takeuchi, directly linked to the adjournment of a solution to the issue of the Sino-Japanese war. That is to say, Japan must overcome the dualistic – that is modernist, paradigm or conceptual – scheme. Takeuchi finds a way out of it and calls it “Asia as method”. According to Takeuchi, Asia in this sense must not be understood as any substance. Meaning, that it should be understood as a process, that is method, of subjective construction:

その巻き返す時に、自分の中に独自なものがなければならない。それは何かというと、おそらくそういうものが実体としてあるとは思わない。しかし方法としては、つまり主体形成の過程としては、ありうるのではないかと思ったので、「方法としてのアジア」という題をつけたわけですが、それを明確に規定することは私にもできないのです。

In order to recapture, it needs something properly individual. As to what this could be, that it could possibly be existent as something substantial, I do not think. But I do think, as a method, which is to say as a process of subjective construction, it could exist, and even though I therefore chose the title “Asia as method”, even I cannot present a clear definition.¹³

Unfortunately, Takeuchi did not pursue his methodological questions. These were pursued instead by Mizoguchi Yūzō 溝口雄三 (1932–2010) or Chen Kuan-hsing, for example, whom I will deal with in the following sections. In particular, the one who thought on a more theoretical level about the aporia, as Takeuchi presented here, was Izutsu, who is usually not considered from such a perspective. But from this viewpoint one can situate Izutsu in the discourses of social political problems on one hand, while on the other the significance of Takeuchi's ideas can be recognized.

I will point out the following problematic aspects. The first problem is the taking of Asia for the movement of “recapturing” it. The second problem is the discussion of subjective construction while negating substantialization. These two points present two sides of the situation of Asia being the agent of recapturing. However, although Takeuchi holds it to not exist substantially, how could

13 Takeuchi Yoshimi 1961 [1993], 469f.

something that is not a substance get to be the agent of the action of recapturing? How can this solve the aporia of modernism?

Stressing the fact that the East's general property does not exist as something substantial, means to cut off the possibility of a discourse on whether the East exists or not. The reason is that the concept of the East is a term of the self-conception of the West, if one follows critiques of Orientalism. By this concept the West had created the modern as well as the Orient, and Western modernity formed history as the process of its self-realization. Prewar Japan adopted this historicist worldview, an understanding of historical development. It is not only that the definition of a self on the part of Japan and the East bears no meaning, but it could also give rise to an uncritical implementation of Western modernity. The East as the mirror image of the West turns on this occasion into the internal other to be eliminated, the reflection of its desire, the reflection of invasion.

Takeuchi himself is unusually critical of the Kyōto School's "philosophy of world history" (*sekaishi no tetsugaku* 世界史の哲学), that is the "world historical standpoint" (*sekaishiteki tachiba* 世界史的立場). Takeuchi does discover the critique of historicism and the theory of historical development on their part. However, this critique, by adopting Western modernism and not overcoming "mythical thinking", remains anti-intellectualistic. It follows from the type of Japan they determined being a modernistic one; they eventually perceive Asia as the reflection of conquest. Takeuchi's critique is that Japanese modern intellectuals as represented by the Kyōto School did indeed plead for Japanism in their self-identification with something modern.

Here Takeuchi sees the element for Japan's approaching nationalism by voting for Pan-Asianism and invading Asia. Thus, he is convinced that Asia should not be understood either as a regional unit or as a higher-level concept that implies a substantial peculiarity or fixed characteristics. What this means is that whenever he discusses China, Japan or Asia, he takes the position to avoid any substantialization of concepts. This is Takeuchi's unique contribution and its significance in managing to recognize that the danger of substantializing thinking is far-reaching.

But there is an essential problem. What "recapturing" (*makikaesu* 巻き返す) means was before identical to the movement of "comprehension" (*tsutsu-minaosu* 包み直す). Then, this can mean the movement of implication of the East by the universal nature of Western values. More precisely, the East would in turn create as an agent universal values and by the time these universal uni-

versals¹⁴ take an active and creative part in the re-formation of the West, and Europe revises its obsolete values, only then would modern values truly be made universal. This revision, the movement that requires a more universal universality, was meant by Takeuchi in this context “to recapture”, “to comprehend”. However, is that not identical to what in terms of the Kyōto School was called “implication” (*hōsetsu* 包摂)? Does that not hypothesize Asia as a region in which the others are universalistically and totalitarianistically implied?

Takeuchi succeeded to point out that the reason for the Kyōto School's being trapped in a discourse in defense of modern Japanese imperialism, colonialism and nationalism has to be seen in their inability to overcome substantializing thinking. For us, since we are familiar with Emmanuel Levinas' (1906–1995) critique of Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), this fact is not readily understandable. Takeuchi's reflection on the philosophy of the Kyōto School, that adopted a view based on buddhistic “*shih shih wu ai*” 時事無碍 (jap. *jiji muge*), meaning literally “thing-thing-non-obstruction”,¹⁵ thinking the whole as in the part and the part as in the whole, and their fundamentally substantializing things Eastern, coincides with the postwar critique of Heidegger by Levinas. Heidegger's support of nationalism is, according to Levinas, the result of a totalitarian philosophy that is realized politically as totalitarianism.

To think subjective construction while negating substantialization, that is to view the construction of Asia as a process, even if the subject is regarded as a process or movement without being substantialized. This probably means to weave Asia back into a one dimensional order of a developing world history. But that contradicts Takeuchi's concept. Although Takeuchi criticized a concept of Asia as a substantializing thinking, in which the others are uniformly implied by such a totality, it should always be a possibility to point out philosophical implications of Takeuchi's discourse. He himself did not purposely develop a discourse of the concept of Asia in a philosophical direction. The philosophical value was discovered by later discourses of Mizoguchi or Chen. Either way, it seems, substantialization enters this thinking, that negates it. By fending off this situation by all means, is it possible to establish a perspective that accounts for a solution to the above mentioned aporia? I will try to point out clearly a way to develop Takeuchi's “reconquering” in a direction that is not an universalistic implication movement.

14 I am calling “ideals” of a genuine universalism “universal universals”. On a “genuine universalism” or “universal universalism”, see Wallerstein 2006, xii.

15 Izutsu 2008, vol. 2, 152.

From Takeuchi Yoshimi to Mizoguchi Yūzō: Working out Asia as an Agent

In his book *Hōhō toshite no chūgoku* 方法としての中国 (China as Method) published 1989, which was extremely successful in Chinese speaking regions, Mizoguchi took over Takeuchi's discourse and developed it into a theoretical dimension.¹⁶ Simply, his discourse does not conclude with the influence or echo of Japanese Chinese studies on discourses in Chinese speaking regions. Moreover, he did not simply take over Takeuchi's thinking of "Asia as Method" and change it to "China". Mizoguchi's development of Takeuchi's thoughts, taken as a principle, as well as the fact that his own thoughts on history are closely related to those of Takeuchi and Chen, who refers to him, are quite interesting points.¹⁷

According to Chen, as Japan's pre-and post-war understandings of China show, there exists a mutual relationship between Japanese political consciousness and Chinese studies. More precisely, the fact that pre-war Japan's adoption of modernism, which had the effect of its invading the thus understood China, and that this counted as an excuse, demands, in Takeuchi's epistemological inversion, a method to critically think modernist Japan or the West.¹⁸ Carrying on this demand, Mizoguchi's discussion proceeds in line with considerations of historians. This shows the ability of Takeuchi's discourse to bridge deconstructivist and historical thinking.

In concluding Mizoguchi's demands, it turns out to be unrecognizable under which conditions the actual Asia, which what is to be "Asia" taken as a pre-modern "substrate" (jap. *kitai* 基体), would emerge in pre-war Japan's negative understanding of Asia as well as in Takeuchi's positive understanding. Mizoguchi puts it as follows:

このような反あるいは没歴史的な観点によっては、日本にせよ中国にせよ、それぞれの近代が、それぞれの前近代をどのように基体にし、それを基体とすることによってどのように—ヨーロッパとの対比においても—相対的に独自であるか、いいかえればそれぞれがどのように固有の過去を背負い、否定的な継承であるにせよ、その継承によって現在がどのようにそれに制約されているかを、客観的・歴史的にみてとることはできない。

Such a-historical or non-historical points of view, be they on China or be they on Japan, do not recognize how the pre-modern of their respective modernities each is

16 Mizoguchi Yūzō 1989; Chinese translation 2011.

17 Chen Kuan-hsing 2011, esp. 193ff.

18 Ibid., 196f.

substrated, and what relative autonomy they possess by their respective substrates within them, or even in contrast to the Europe. In other words, such a viewpoint would not give any empirically objective or historical perspective of how their presence is conditioned by their own proper background, or by inheriting of the past, even if it is a negative inheritance.¹⁹

By pointing to the conditioning limits of the presence, Mizoguchi avoids a serialization of the phenomena, as in the case of an Asian adaptation to the values of the previously defined norm that was Europe. By serialization, a developmental view of history is meant. That is a causal relation which represents and arranges events in a series, and automatically gives rise to a concept of developed and backward values. Arranging in this way narrowly combines regions other than Europe into a process that ultimately reaches a European modernity. Such a historical view recognizes the differences between modes of living in regions other than Europe by assuming Europe as the norm. But historical studies in the twentieth century have shown that there are almost exclusively phenomena that cannot be recognized by this method.²⁰ In this sense Mizoguchi spoke of the inability that “such a viewpoint would not give any empirically objective or historical perspective”.²¹

Mizoguchi took over Takeuchi's standpoint, as he also thinks to be inadequate an understanding that dualistically negates or affirms Asia seen by a serializing developmental view on world history. That is why Mizoguchi does not apply historicism so as to see the Western modern as the climax of history that made up modernity. However, the fact that Mizoguchi identifies an objective apprehension with a historical apprehension evokes other problems. That is to say, to take dualism, objectivity fetishism or agnosticism as a consequence to substantializing thinking is basically just the other side of the coin. While taking up Takeuchi's thought to negate the substantializing thinking, that is to eliminate historicism, here Mizoguchi shows the intent to view history objectively, in other words, to objectify it. This is probably already recognizable by the expression of “substrate”. In Mizoguchi's context that reveals thinking of Asia as an object defined by the dualistic structure of Asia versus Europe, that does exist undefined prior to its definition, but turns out as the basis of the shaping of presence.

The substrate, that constitutes Asia's peculiarity, must not be substantialized, but if not understood historically, it remains indeterminable how presence is

19 Mizoguchi Yūzō 1989, 9; Chen Kuan-hsing 2011.

20 Kotani Hiroyuki 1985.

21 Mizoguchi Yūzō 1989, 9; Chen Kuan-hsing 2011, 197.

conditioned, according to Mizoguchi. Moreover, if Takeuchi was to determine Asia as something positive, this would eventually mean to implement a negating or affirming dichotomic concept of values. That is what Takeuchi himself once undertook in one of his critiques of Orientalism. Actually, it seems implausible to think that Takeuchi would argue in favor of a simple dichotomic value judgement, which he himself criticized. But, as he discussed the movement of Europe's modernity as "globalization", he tried to understand it in terms of a dialectical movement. Such thinking makes it necessary to define two opposing determined units. But, in that case, is that not a substantialization in the form of determination already in operation? By trying to understand the movement of Asia dialectically, Takeuchi cannot avoid, in opposition to his own logic, the advancement of his thinking towards substantialization of something Asian.

To what extent is that self-Orientalism or is it none at all? Takeuchi's aim is to think Asia as a method, that is to not understand it as a substance, and this is his ideal to establish a different universalism from the universalism of modernity. Takeuchi tried to find his concept by inquiring into the fields of politics, literature and philosophy. The possible conclusion, the Asia Takeuchi assumes and set out to find, because it defies substantialization, will logically never turn out to be an object of Orientalism. Will the ideal or concept of Asia being in Takeuchi's discourse really keep off any substantializing view? Is there not actually despite the principle of non-substantialization here and there the moments of substantialization in sight?

The discourses that share Takeuchi's vision and problems can be seen as one concrete area of Asia understanding, in other words they can be understood as a genealogy of discourses by East Asian researchers, thinkers and intellectuals. If so, the indicator of a way of thinking in which Asians do not fall into self-Orientalism, such a possibility or a guiding principle, would be detectable inside their discourses. Such a way of thinking, one that recognizes otherness as well as selfness without substantializing, is sought by Chen Kuan-hsing.

Chen Kuan-hsing's Takeuchi and Mizoguchi Yūzō

Various studies that cite Takeuchi's texts directly mention that Takeuchi's discussion is still unresolved, while acknowledging that importance, and yet no study touches upon the possibility that the problems Takeuchi himself brought up could give rise to self-contradictions. From that perspective, Chen's point of view is highly suggestive. He carefully followed Takeuchi's and Mizoguchi's

discussions, separated the different topics, and being aware of current problems, he connected Takeuchi's thoughts with today's discourses.

Chen discusses in chapter five of the English version of his "De-Imperialization" the subject of Takeuchi's thoughts, and by developing one of Takeuchi-inspired ideas he examines Mizoguchi's theorization and continues to discuss an enriched Mizoguchi. The Japanese version makes up for this by including as the last chapter a section that details this discussion by Chen further. According to Chen, the fact that Takeuchi is drawing attention once more is due to the fact that the problem Takeuchi was facing half a century ago lay unresolved and was not overcome. Chen presents this problem as follows:

[竹内の「方法としてのアジア」という] この短い講演は、一人の戦後日本の重要な思想家の知的情熱による現状への不満だけでなく、自身の方法論を練り上げさらに知識構造全体への批判を深化させたものであることも読み取れた。簡単に言えば、竹内が持ち出した方法は東/西、進歩/遅れといった二元的枠組みの外に新たな分析方向を探し出すことであり、表向きにはインド、中国、日本三者の近代化の歷程を比較するものであるが、実質的には歴史経験の近い地域を相互に参照すれば、「追いつき追い越せ」の錯誤や規範となっている知識状況から身を剥がすことができ、自分に対するより客観的で、歴史的事実に近い理解が可能となる、ということである。50年後に「方法としてのアジア」を精読して分かったのは、目下の知識状況にかかわる困難とは、実際に竹内が出した問題意識を超えたものではないということ、また東アジアの知識界は依然として西洋理論とアジア経験という基本的な二元構造の下にある、ということだ。インドや大陸中国の経済的台頭に伴って、アジアを方法とすることは回避できないものとしてあり、また既に世界の主体性についての問いへと格上げされつつある。ここに、危機とチャンスがある。

This brief lecture [of Takeuchi's "Asia as Method"] is not only the work of one eminent Japanese post-war thinker, whose intellectual enthusiasm turned him on the unsatisfactory status quo, but moreover did he thoroughly think through his methodology and turn on the critique of the whole structure of knowledge, whose deepening he thereby inspired. Simply put, Takeuchi's method discovered outside of a dualistic framework of East/West or developed/backward a new direction of analysis. Formally the text just compares the modernization processes of the three countries of India, China and Japan. But essentially, by mutually referencing these regions, whose historical experiences were that close, detachment from the mistake of "catch up and outdo", which then was the state of knowledge that became the norm, and also a more objective attitude towards oneself allowing for a closer understanding of historical reality as much as possible. Reading "Asia as Method" carefully fifty years later after its publication, it appeared to me that the problems connected to the current state of knowledge really did not transcend the problem consciousness put forward by Takeuchi. Moreover, the intellectual sphere of East Asia is still under the influence of the basic dualistic structure of Western knowledge and Asian

experience. Given India's or Mainland China's economic influence, it seems hardly avoidable to think Asia as method, but more importantly is there a raise to the question of global subjectivity going on. This is a danger and a chance.²²

The important aspects taken from this can be divided into the following three:

1. The problems raised by Takeuchi are still actual problems, that is, they remain unresolved.
2. Takeuchi pointed via his critique of the whole structure of knowledge to dualistic frameworks on various different levels.
3. There is a relationship between the intention of an Asia, a global subject or agent, and Asia as method.

As to the first point, it is not the case that Takeuchi's discourse has been ignored completely. For example, Kotani Hiroyuki 小谷 汪之 who, based on his own study of Indian history, brought up numerous researchers and discussed them in terms of theories of history, set out to develop Takeuchi's concept.²³ Mizoguchi's development is a careful study criticizing modern knowledge. His contribution should be counted as a search for thinking beyond modern frameworks or as critical discourses of the whole of the structure of knowledge.

The second point is directly related to the third via the aspect of non-substantializing thinking. In the second point Takeuchi held that substantialization was a peculiarity of modern thinking, which as modernism determined a dichotomic worldview and which is to be overcome by Asia as method he presented in his lecture. More precisely, unresolved Takeuchi-like proposals, that are mentioned in the first point, could be inherited by Mizoguchi or Izutsu as purposes.

But, in recent years the social main stream of various East Asian countries leans towards a thinking that substantializes Asia. That is to say, in numerous countries an exclusive nationalism is surfacing. Those exclusive nationalists persist in calling "tradition" unsubstantial and constantly changing things to use as the basis of their identity, with the result that they substantialize them after all. One cannot say that the same nationalism as it was consolidating modern institutions is flourishing in a globalized situation, nor that it is by having adapted modern thinking. Since nowadays the nationalism of the various regions uses the same rhetoric, what flourishes is a globalization of nationalism.

22 Chen Kuan-hsing 2011, 236f.

23 Kotani Hiroyuki 1985, esp. 169ff.

The third aspect of Takeuchi's concept as pointed out by Chen held that by defining Asia as method and Asia's becoming an agent of world history would be thought in a direction that eliminated the foundation of Pan-Asianism and an inherent Asian nationalism. This having a direction is discussed in detail in Chen's study. Chen, by continuing the concepts of Takeuchi and Mizoguchi, wants to present the image of a trans-border multiple Asia as a new concept. According to Chen, Mizoguchi's theory of historical background or "substrate" is understood in Japan as cultural essentialism, but that is a misunderstanding. To take his concept of historical background for cultural essentialism is not only unproductive, but is a misinterpretation. Since the society is changeable, and if its substrate or background would mean the entirety of society, then, Mizoguchi's theory argues that the nature of the substrate in question is perpetual change. That is the reason his discussion is different from essentialism.²⁴ Mizoguchi discusses this problem further as follows:

いずれにせよ、「世界」によって一元的にアジアを検証するという時代は去った。相対の場が含意されれば、中国、アジアによってヨーロッパを計るもよし、その逆もまたよし、そういった交渉をへて、新しい世界像の創出へとむかうこととしたい。

Either way, the times are gone in which Asia was monodimensionally examined by "the world" as criteria. If the field of mutuality (*sōtai no ba* 相対の場) is included, it should not matter whether China or Asia matches with Europe or the other way around. A new world image will be created by such interpenetration.²⁵

In this sense Mizoguchi entitled his study "China as method". So, "China" does not indicate any substantial unit. The author is creating in this context a kind of field where the criteria can be not only the West, as it acted as an global or modern world agent, or China for that matter, but where any other part can act as such a criteria.

中国を方法とするということは、世界の創造それ自体でもあるところの原理の創造に向かうということなのである。

To think "China as method" means to think the creation of a principle that is at the heart of the creation of the world itself.²⁶

24 Chen Kuan-hsing 2011, 202.

25 Mizoguchi Yūzō 1989, 140.

26 Ibid.

In this respect, Chen writes as follows:

溝口は中国中心主義をもってヨーロッパ中心主義にとりかえようとしていると簡単には考えられない。

One cannot dimly say Mizoguchi would replace Eurocentrism with Sino-centrism.²⁷

溝口が意図したのは、内在的に中国を理解するだけでなく、そのためにこそ内在的にそれを超越し、さらに [研究主体と研究客体という] お互いの相対化を通じ、また客体化を媒介的プロセスとして、「中国」と「日本」についてこれまでと異なった理解に達することであるすなわち、ナルシシクな Being ではあく、相互転化へと解放された Becoming である。

Mizoguchi's intention is not just an immanent understanding of China, but for this very goal to transcend it immanently, and moreover via mutual relativization [of research subject and research object] or via a process mediating objectification, to gain an understanding of "China" and "Japan" as it is unknown till today, that is not narcissistic "being", but "becoming" freely to mutual transformation.²⁸

ここに溝口思想を批判的に継承するキーポイントがある。すなわち、我々は溝口との対話の脈絡を日本国内の中国学内部からアジアの批判的知識人へと移動させ、またここでの「中国」を「アジア」へとずらすことである。

This is a key point in taking up Mizoguchi's thinking critically. It means, we need to transfer the context of the dialogue with Mizoguchi to the critical thinkers of Asia from inside of the Japanese Chinese studies, and in addition to shift the "China" of theirs to "Asia".²⁹

Mizoguchi thinks in this way, and on the one hand he conceptually deepened Takeuchi's thoughts, while on the other hand he demonstrated what kind of historical research is possible in his terms via the example of historical China. By taking up Takeuchi in this direction, Mizoguchi presents a new outlook and a critical thinking departing with Chinese studies and developing it on a universal level in order to deconstruct modern sciences and modern thinking itself, as Chen argues.

Mizoguchi's China, similar to Takeuchi's Asia, certainly takes the actual China as a starting point. However, since that to which Takeuchi pointed in discourses like the above is a new foundation or creation of a new concept, his China is not to be taken as the actual China. China is mentioned as a reference in order to create the field of dialogue that is enabled to mutually relativize each

27 Chen Kuan-hsing 2011, 205.

28 Chen Kuan-hsing 2011, 203.

29 Ibid., 206.

one. Chen argues that in order to form such a dialogue field, one should further “Asia as method” on a conceptual level, and one needs to transform the discourse by “methodizing Asia” in a direction where the below concept becomes reality. This argument is no slogan, but the practice of real mutual recognition. Namely the following five points are what Chen presents, based on Takeuchi and Mizoguchi:³⁰

1. When we imagine Asia, our image consists mainly of Northeast Asia (not of a certain nation state), and it appears as multidimensional heterogeneity.
2. The topic of dialogue, be it within or outside of the nation state, should be operated as something “trans-border”, and since the unit of the nation state is not fundamental criteria, it should be recognized as “trans-continental”.
3. In the dimension of “theory of historical substrate”, it is recognized that the West exists within Asia. Asia as a substance is by necessity multidimensionally heterogenous and carries each respective peculiarity.
4. The thinking, sense of values, and conceptual scheme gained during the modernization are relativized as part of historical realization in multidimensionality, and every substrate is considered multidimensional.
5. Via the image of a new Asia / Third World, more reference axes and object frameworks come into sight and intellectual horizon, and the structure of subjectivity is transformed to be multidimensional and complex.

How should these five ideas be realized? Following point one and two, when discussing a given cultural region or community, it must not be thought as being solid but thought as trans-boundary. To pick up one collective or state, for the moment, its being cannot be thought by effacing its background, be that Asia or the continent. To broaden the horizon some more, by effacing the West, Asia cannot be discussed. By the image of such a multidimensional and heterogenous horizon, Asian phenomena can be discussed in an even more individualized dimension. These phenomena, because they are essentially trans-boundary, naturally act on another (be that the West or an inner Asian other) on various different levels. Imagining Asia as a thus understood horizon that lets such phenomena emerge, is how I would like to interpret the thoughts of Chen.

30 Chen Kuan-hsing 2011, 207f.

Izutsu Toshihiko's East

Takeuchi lectured on unsubstantial thinking or a way of thinking that undermines the generation of nationalism, which usually asserts exclusivism or predominance, so that the heterogeneous and the other do not become objects of desire. But even keeping in mind his critique of Japanese ideology by means of his "Asianism", if the negative aspects would have turned into positive values, and the universal values would be constructed, and such values would ultimately change the West, it would mean to think Asia, and Europe too, substantially and to objectify both. Can we say, however, that the unsubstantial thinking Takeuchi demands could come into being here? Do we have the reference points in the trans-boundary multidimensional Asian image, in which the constructive elements are the various levels of North East Asia or the Asian Continent, just as Chen pointed out?

Izutsu pursued to discover a similar thinking of an Asian subjectivity. Usually it is understood that he made his concept of Asia independently of the discourses of Takeuchi, Mizoguchi or Chen. Izutsu was a colleague of Takeuchi, before the end of World War II at Kaikyōken Kenkyūjo 回教園研究所 (Research Institute for the Muslim World) in Tōkyō, afterwards at Keiō gijuku daigaku 慶應義塾大学 (Keiō University), situated in Tōkyō, too. He was critical of the Kyōto School like Takeuchi, and pursued the development of a philosophy that would overcome the philosophy of the Kyōto School, which was affiliated with totalitarianism in my viewpoint.

Izutsu tried to create a field of dialogue allowing for a mutual understanding of the various concepts or principles Chen brought together. In my opinion, this is the attempt that Chen was discussing too, namely to raise the image of Asia on a conceptual level. Since this Asia is thought unsubstantial and trans-boundary, it is not an agent or subject imagined to be solid, but if one were to use the term subject, then it would be a subject understood as the movement of a multilayered, trans-boundary and dynamic thinking. Therefore, in this sense this is linked to Takeuchi's concept. Moreover, it corresponds also to Mizoguchi's giving concrete shape to the ideas of Takeuchi, conceptualizing them further and working out Asia as a subject to interact in a global context, raising China as an example. Izutsu's work is regarded as a further philosophical sophistication and broadening of this thinking.

In order to present a combined image of Asia as such a movement, Izutsu put as concrete example a philosophical project in practice. Since this image is the conceptual horizon of something Asian, it should become the foundation

for mutual understanding of Asian people. In the case of real mutual understanding, an understanding on a philosophical level is indispensable, since only such a dialogue enables its participants to enter a dialogue on a level that transcends historical conditions:

For the philosophical drive of the human Mind is, regardless of age, places and nations, ultimately and fundamentally one.³¹

Exactly what that urge is, Izutsu does not tell, but he probably means the urge to know truth or the desire in people to know how things truly are. In fact, the way of “recognition” is the topic here.

For at no time in the history of humanity has the need for mutual understanding among the nations of the world been more keenly felt than in our days. “Mutual understanding” may be realizable – or at least conceivable – at a number of different levels of life. The philosophical level is one of the most important of them. And it is characteristic of the philosophical level that, unlike other levels of human interest which are more or less closely connected with the current situations and actual conditions of the world, it provides or prepares a suitable locus in which the “mutual understanding” here in question could be actualized in the form of a meta-historical dialogue.³²

In preparation Izutsu semantically analyzed the key concepts of various philosophical writings of the Eastern world including ancient Greece. More precisely, he apprehends the semantic fields, which let the key concepts come into existence, as networks of semantic elements. Such networks form semantic networks with the contents of one given philosophy, the genealogy of its commentaries and the various groups of thoughts linked to it, and they interpenetrate liquidly and transboundarily with each other. The creation of the horizon of such networks, Izutsu calls synchronic structuring of Eastern thoughts or philosophies.

こうして出来上がる思想空間は、当然、多極的重層的構造をもつだろう。

The structure of thus created spheres of thinking is, of course, multipolar and multi-layered.³³

The creation of this conceptual horizon or space is the primary operation as a foundation of the mutual recognition that Izutsu pointed to. Izutsu shows the historical and conceptual legitimacy of including Greek philosophy into this operation.

31 Izutsu 1983, 469 [original in English].

32 Ibid.

33 Izutsu Toshihoko 1983a, 429.

科学技術に基づく西洋的文化パラダイムが、事実上、人類文化の共通パラダイムになり、好むと好まざるとにかかわらず、その基盤の上に、人類が地球社会化への方向を目指して滔々と流れつつある現在、徒に西洋を無視して東洋だけを孤立させて論じることは無意味だし、また實際上そんなことは不可能に近い。世界に向かって開けた視野において、ものを考えようとするかぎり、人類の現在の状況では、東洋哲学といっても、どうしても西洋が深く関わってくる。

Since the Western paradigm in its being based on science and technology became in fact the common paradigm of human culture, if one likes it or not, and given the contemporary heading of mankind towards a global society, to simply ignore the West and to discuss an isolated East only is meaningless and almost impossible in reality. As long as one tries to think about the things that come into the field of a vision turned towards the world, even the Eastern philosophy turns out to be deeply involved with the West by all means in the contemporary situation of mankind.³⁴

Besides such modern world conditions, Izutsu looks at the mediating influence of Eastern mysticism on the foundation of ancient Greek philosophy. In addition to that, he is believed to assume ancient Greek philosophy to have direct connections with Islamic and Indian philosophy. But, apart from such possible historical relations and influences, and he believes, by introducing Greek philosophy, it becomes possible to make a coherent structural systematization of the various Eastern thoughts.

As the second step of this operation, Izutsu attempts to develop this flexible, transboundary, multidimensional and conceptual horizon into a proper subjectivity. By doing so, within the limits of this self, a multipolar and flexible horizon of consciousness opens clearly up as Eastern philosophical point of view.³⁵ Izutsu believes the establishment of subjectivity in this way to be a contribution to the avoidance of the standardization and uniformation in a globalizing society. He also believes this to be a method of mutual recognition to avoid a situation of uncreative invalidated multidimensionality as it would be the case in the concurrency of multiple powerless cultures.³⁶

The methodology of this project is most sophisticated. It is the working of a network of various concepts of solutions found by clashing cultures to the aporia of standardization or uniformity and disharmony or disaccord as it surfaces in a global context in the form of clashing cultures. In the sense of Izutsu, the mutual understanding is and makes an event field of transcending the aporia of intercul-

34 Izutsu Toshihoko 1983a, 431ff.

35 Ibid., 429.

36 Izutsu Toshihoko 1985.

tural understanding, since the agent of dialogue is establishing the dialogue itself as proper subjectivity. Holding a dialogue, that is the recognition of otherness, is subjectivity as movement, or a dynamic semantic field. On this semantic field, reference axes are conceptual and semantic crystalized substrates that are coherently structured. However, this intellectual horizon is not decontextualized. Izutsu's semantic analysis is able to keep the living historical situations of thoughts in this meta-historical dialogue³⁷. Here we can see that the five points discussed by Chen above are brought into a communication method beyond the difference of times, places and languages. Izutsu called this project "finding a locus of Asia"³⁸.

The subjectivity of such a communication should be linked to other subjectivities in a global context. An "other Asia" in this sense is what Izutsu was looking for. It is not a space that is determined globally or locally. Rather is it a sphere which, by not dividing the phenomena like this, possesses the possibility to transcend their aporia. It is the place where a creative imagination, that reforms concepts thought to maintain such divisions into "other forms", creates new values. The search of possible results left behind by Izutsu on how to create this space and their evaluation probably has to be postponed for another study. In the next study I will deal with Izutsu's structuring in concrete and discuss about its significance in detail.

Conclusion

I presented the attempts to pursue Takeuchi's suggestions as Takeuchi's genealogy. The deepening of thoughts by Takeuchi, Mizoguchi, Chen and Izutsu, I understood as Takeuchi's genealogy. These views are indispensable for the struggle that became gradually popular by the second half of the twentieth century until the beginning twenty-first century, namely the struggle with East Asian and in particular Japanese nationalism. And it is also indispensable for discourses concerned with modern frameworks as they appear in academic or scientific thinking, or for the consequent liberation thereof.

Takeuchi's genealogy shows the changes that occur in the Japanese self-conception and the conception of Asia in Japan. In a more general dimension, it provides for an opportunity to profoundly study the attempts and the possibility of postmodernism, I would argue. Also, this is a joint discourse in Asian regions. The Asia conception of this kind apprehends Asia as multidimensional

³⁷ Izutsu Toshihoko 1983b, 51ff.

³⁸ Izutsu Toshihoko 1983a, 427.

or multipolar and trans-boundary network, which is based on a design that could turn its conceptual dynamics into a proper subject. For a mutual recognition within the bounds of East Asia, these views are also indispensable.

Also, the discourse on an Asia conception is a means to observe how Japanese modernity was constrained by the dichotomy of Western modernity, how this dichotomy actually takes effect, to what ends this dichotomy was criticized and what kind of discussions of it arose. I thereby followed up to Izutsu the deepening of thoughts discussing how Japan once adopted this dichotomy as a universal method, and how it could from there onwards liberate itself from it. This problem does not only concern Japan, to put it in geographical terms, but is a problem that concerns the whole of Asia, according to what Chen's discourse shows. From an even wider standpoint it is as well a problem that concerns modernity.

The understanding of reality in this way, of course, presses to change classifications and categories as epistemological conditions. Thus, the problem of the configuration of Takeuchi's genealogy is naturally linked with problems such as the restructuring of academic disciplines, or the way in which academic activities are constructed. In this study I call a series of problematics as Takeuchi's genealogy. These include questions on modern knowledge, modern world views, modern systems. For historical, political or sociological research, many of these have been created.

Izutsu's suggestions are not limited to Japan as the point of departure. The Asian horizon he presented is a field that can become the departing point of a recognition because of its flexibility and multipolarity for anyone with a mind that does not subjectify this horizon and understands the others via implication or exclusion. In this sense, this genealogy shares the awareness of problems with the likes of Levinas or Derrida, who depart from the unprecedented experience of the Holocaust. I would like to characterize this philosophical effort as reflective thinking of the Japanese invasion of Asia.

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